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WOMEN WORKFORCE OF BIHAR AND THEIR PRODUCTIVE OCCUPATION

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Abstract

Many reports show that Indian women who do work don't have great jobs. More than one third is unpaid helpers, as opposed to just 11 percent of working men. Women are also over represented in works of low productivity, agriculture and small-scale manufacturing units. Only 6 percent of employed women get formal benefits like pensions or maternity leave. Illiterate women are more possible to be in the labour force than educated women, though participation is more among women who are high-school pass outs. The correlation between female participation and income is direct. The richer a family of women is, the less likely she is to work. Women have a tendency to work in less productive jobs than men, as in many developed and developing countries (World Bank 2012). This paper is based on a preliminary examination of female occupational participation covering the period 1981-2011 .It was felt necessary to probe into the critical policy question: are the majority of women workers in Bihar relegated to performing hard labour or do they continue to be engaged in low productivity cum low social status-cum low pay work?

KEYWORDS: Productivity, sex-ratio,

Introduction

According to the 'ILOs Global Employment Trends 2013 report,India's labour force participation rate for women fell from just over 37per cent in 2004-05 to 29 per cent in 2009-10. Out of 131 countries withavailable data, India ranks 11th from the bottom in female labour forceparticipation. “Despite very rapid economic growth in India in recentyears, we're observing declining female labour force participationrates across all age groups, across all education levels, and in bothurban and rural areas,” said ILO economist Steven Kapsos during apresentation of the report in India. Many reports show that Indianwomen who do work don't have great jobs. More than one third isunpaid helpers, as opposed to just 11 percent of working men. Womenare also over represented in works of low productivity, agriculture andsmall-scale manufacturing units. Only 6 percent of employed womenget formal benefits like pensions or maternity leave. Illiterate womenare more possible to be in the labour force than educated women,though participation is more among women who are high-school passouts. The correlation between female participation and income isdirect. The richer a family of women is, the less likely she is to work.Women have a tendency to work in less productive jobs than men, as inmany developed and developing countries (World Bank 2012).

Research Methodology

The analysis is mainly concerned with identifying the spatial andtemporal variations in the occupational work participation of femaleversus the male and finding the changes that have occurred during theperiod of study. Secondly, for the purpose of comparisons of relativepositions of female vis-à-vis male workers, the occupationalparticipation sex ratio has been used as the main instrument of analysisthroughout the study. Thirdly, the analysis centers on one singlevariable, i.e., participation sex ratio of the workers and no exogenousvariable has been used to explain why female work participationdeclined .It has been done because of the paucity of reliable andrelevant data. The level of female participation has been measured bythe participation sex ratio, which has been computed as the ratio of thenumber of females employed in a particular occupation to the numberof males employed in same occupation, multiplied by 10,000. Theparticipation sex ratio has been calculated for avoiding values of verysmall fractions which would have otherwise resulted due to the factthat the female working population is much lower when compared tothe male working population. To calculate growth from 1981-2011,compound growth rates has been used

Conceptual framework

Women are squeezed in limited occupations in the especially in highestlevel of the occupations in occupational ladder. In 2010 in India; about43% of female workers are employed in farming, fishing and huntingoccupations. On the other side, about 23% of women are employed inprofessional occupations, and 14% as technicians and professionalassistants.This paper is based on a preliminary examination of femaleoccupational participation covering the period 1981-2011 .It was feltnecessary to probe into the critical policy question: are the majority ofwomen workers in Bihar relegated to performing hard labour or dothey continue to be engaged in low productivity-cum low social statuscumlow pay work? Of course, low wages may not necessarily demotethese women to a life of deprivation: women who receive low wagesmay live in families with other wage earner, so that their total familyincome may lift them above the poverty level. Or these women maylive in nuclear families, so that their income can adequately supportthemselves and their lesser number of family members. Thus, in orderto better know the consequences of being paid low wages, it isimportant to observe the extent to which low wages result in womenliving in or near poverty.With this idea, an attempt was made to devise a tentative scale of paycum-socio-economic status rank of various occupations. The higheststatus job was given rank 1 and various occupational groups arearranged according to decreasing rank order.Due consideration was also paid to substantial evidences that wereavailable in regard to pay and income levels of different occupationsand these were applied to determine the relative status of particularoccupational group with respect to all other groups.

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Table-1:'PARTICIPATION SEX RATIO' IN BIHAR DURING 1981-2011

NCO-168 Code	Decreasing Status Rank	Occupations	Sex Ratio	Rank	Sex Ratio	Rank	Sex Ratio	Rank	Sex Ratio	Rank		
			1981	1981	1991	1991	2001	2001	2011	2011		
2	1	Administrative, Executive & Managerial Workers	92	8	282	7	501	8	548	8		
0-1	2	Professional, Technical and Related Workers	3837	1	4584	1	4714	3	4758	4		
7,8 & 9	3	Production & Related Workers, Transport Equipment Operators & Labourers	311	6	339	5	1457	5	1952	5		
3	4	Clerical And Other Supervisors	516	3	874	3	1254	6	1667	6		
4	5	Sales Workers	99	7	155	8	511	7	749	7		
5	6	Service Workers	971	2	1021	2	4478	4	5355	3		
6	7	Farmers, Fishrsmen, Hunters, Loggers & Related Workers	341	5	675	7	38245	1	41775	1	8543	49410
X	8	Workers Not Classified By Occupations	483	4	298	6	7123	2	11405	2	4561	21535

Source-Computed from India, Registrar General, Census of India, General Economic tables-Table B-series, Bihar, 1981, 1991 and 2001,*2011-estimated

The sex ratio of sum of main and marginal workers has been taken inthis chapter. Data shows high participation ratio has been observed inlow status jobs.Table 1 clearly displays that the highest ranked occupation i.e.,Administration, Executive and Managerial workers have lowerparticipation rank in 1981 i.e., eight and continued be eight in 2011.Moreover, highest participation sex ratio rank has been observed inoccupation having status, rank two in 1981 and 1991 but in 2001 and2011 participation rank slipped from one to third and fourth rankrespectively, because of high participation sex ratio in occupation,Farmers, Fishermen, hunters Loggers and related workers that has aseventh status rank in 2001 and 2011. Earlier this occupation washaving fifth and forth ranks in 1981 and 1991. The reason of upwardshift in rank of this occupation is change in the definition of worker incensus of India in 2001.Second highest participation rank has beenobserved for occupation, Workers not classified by occupations, rankof this occupation has increased because of change in classification ofoccupations in 2004. To compare the participation from 1981 to 2011the workers which were not included earlier in previous classificationof 1968 now came to be included in this head. Occupation salesworkers remained on same rank i.e., seventh during the whole period.Hence, the table depicts that women in Bihar are engaged in lowstatus and

low paid occupations. And participation ranks remainedmore or less same for majority of occupations.Further compound growth rate reveals that maximum growth during1981 to 2011 was in rank seven and rank eight occupations i.e., 17.67and 9.72 percent respectively. Lowest growth has been observed inrank two occupations i.e., 0.71 percent and this occupation did notwitness any considerable growth during last two decades whileparticipation sex ratio is at rank four. And occupation clerical andother supervisor's shows second a lowest growth rate which is rank fouroccupations. Participation sex ratio is least in Administration,Executive and Managerial workers and sale workers but theseoccupations have third highest growth rates i.e., 6.02 percent. If welook at inter census growth maximum growth in all the occupationswas during 1991 to 2001 expect professional, technical and relatedworkers.

Table-2: COMPOUND GROWTH RATE OF 'PARTICIPATION SEX RATIO' IN BIHAR DURING 1981-2011 (IN PERCENT)

NCO-168 Code	Decreasing Status Rank	Occupations	Growth From 1981 to 1991	Growth From 1991 to 2001	Growth From 2001to2011	Overall growth rate from 1981 to 2011
2	1	Administrative, Executive & Managerial Workers	13.25	6.99	1.00	6.02
0-1	2	Professional, Technical and Related Workers	2.00	0.31	0.10	0.71
7,8 & 9	3	Production & Related Workers, Transport Equipment Operators & Labourers	0.96	17.59	3.30	5.47
3	4	Clerical And Other Supervisors	6.03	4.09	3.21	3.11
4	5	Sales Workers	5.11	14.17	4.34	5.82
5	6	Service Workers	0.56	17.85	2.01	5.41
6	7	Farmers, Fishrsmen, Hunters, Loggers & Related Workers	7.88	56.61	0.99	17.67
X	8	Workers Not Classified By Occupations	-5.22	42.29	5.37	9.72

Source-Calculated from table 1

Due to male dominating society and glass ceiling in Bihar, women arealways restricted to enter in this occupation. Male do not want femaleto head them. With the efforts of government and increasing awarenessamong women participation sex ratio has improved but remained atlast participation rank.In 2001, only 68 elected women officials were from urban areas ascomparison to 260 women from rural areas. Introduction of PanchayatiRaj Act, gave the reservation to women in villages as Sarpanch andPanch which helped to increase the participation sex ratio. Despitereservations this occupation remained at last participation rank.Male participation in professional occupations has increased whichlower the participation sex ratio. Reason of very low growth rate in thisoccupation is increase in male

participation over the period. Becausemales remain insulated from job crises because they are still seen as primary bread winners. Whenever work is available it is men who optit.

Conclusion

During the whole period of study it has been observed thatparticipation sex has been remained completely in favour of men.Women are concentrated in low-productivity, low pay jobs. They workin small farms, they are overrepresented among unpaid workers andthey rarely rise to positions of power. Women bear a disproportionateshare of house and care responsibilities and consequently faceimportant fixed costs associated with market work. Fixed schedulesand minimum hour requirements, particularly in (formal) wage jobs,and the difficulty in adjusting responsibilities at home result in barriersto market work for women. Social norms around the role of women inthe household and society also influence these trade-offs. Women arethus more likely to value flexible work arrangements and to supplyfewer hours of market work on average than men, putting them at riskof being channeled into lower-quality jobs. They may also reflectdiscriminatory preferences within households that favor men in theallocation of productive resources. Women's limited presence incertain occupations may create barriers to knowledge and learningabout women's performance, which in turn reinforces women's lack ofaccess to these occupations.

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