# WOMEN EMPLOYMENT IN ORGANIZED AND UNORGANIZED SECTORS IN HARYANA: A SOCIO-SPATIAL ANALYSIS

**Doctoral Dissertation Abstract**

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The labour force participation rate (LFPR) of women in 2018 at world level has been 48.50 percent. While, the LFPR for women in India is only 20.70 percent and it has declined in the recent years. The declining trend in women's work participation is largely attributed to the interplay of factors such as increasing levels of women's education, changes in the occupational structure with a withdrawal from agricultural activities, limited opportunities in other occupations, and measurement errors in work participation data. The division of labour in India is highly gendered where women are largely involved in unpaid domestic work and care giving services, making them invisible workers. Even when they are visible in labour market, majority of them are in unorganized sector i.e. working either in agriculture (own account worker) or informal sector activities. Women face discrimination in the Indian labour market, specifically in terms of employment status and wages. Their entry into the workforce is often considered secondary to male workers and their contribution is seen as supplemental or marginal. This perception makes women vulnerable to exploitation and denies them many opportunities for advancement. The deep-rooted biases in society lead to inequality in the labour market, where preferences are given to men over women. In addition to this, limited access to education and lack of employment opportunities, women are often pushed to the unorganized sector, where they face more challenges. The present study examines both explicit and implicit challenges, trends, and social relations that affect women's work participation in both the organized and unorganized sectors of Haryana.

## Objectives of the Study

Major objectives of the study are:
- to study the levels, trend and spatial pattern of women work participation rate(WWPR) in Haryana over a period of 28 years (1993-94 to 2020-2021);
- to study the levels and trend of sectoral employment of women and its pattern vis-à-vis socio-economic correlates in the study area;
- to study the trend in employment status of women from 1993-94 to 2020-21and
- to explore the vulnerability of women workers in terms of efficacy of social security coverage vis-à-vis socio-economic characteristics in study area.

## Database and Methodology

The study is based on both the secondary as well as primary sources of data. The unit

level Employment-Unemployment Survey (EUS) data of 50th round for 1993-94; 61st round relating to year 2004-05; 68th round for 2011-12 and Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS, annual survey carried out in absence of regular EUS survey) for the year 2017-18 have been utilized. In order to supplement secondary data and to study the reasons for declining WWPR, primary data have been collected. A multi stage sample survey has been designed. At the first stage, the districts of Haryana have been categorized into four groups with levels to women work participation rate (WWPR). At second stage, the proportion of unorganized women workers as proportion of total workers have been calculated. At the third stage, both variables, WWPR and unorganized sector women workers have been plotted in relation to each other. A total of three districts have been selected based on WWPR and their sectoral participation. One district has been selected where both WWPR and unorganized women workers have been high and the district from this group has been Jind. The second selection has been made from such group of districts where WWPR has been moderate and the proportion of unorganized sector women workers has been low. Gurgaon has been selected from this group. The third district has been selected from such group of districts where WWPR has been low and the proportion of unorganized women workers have been almost equal to organized workers. Rewari has been selected from this group. Hence, three typologies of districts have been selected for the primary survey and these have been named as Region-I, II and III respectively. At the fourth stage, two villages in each of these three districts have been selected randomly. The stratified random sampling technique has been used for selection of households from the

villages. The selected households in these villages have been representative of their size and socio-economic characteristics. A total of 450 sample households have been surveyed.

Women work participation and its various aspects have been studied vis-à-vis socio-economic characteristics. The chi-square test has been employed to assess the significance level of socio-economic characteristics in relation to women work. The social characteristics have been studied with three components. These are caste affiliation, educational status and demographic or age-group. Caste affiliation has been studied with reference to three broad categories namely, (i) lower castes (Scheduled Caste), (ii) other backward castes/artisan caste (OBC) and (iii) upper and dominant castes (non-SCs and non-OBCs). The standard educational categories (as listed in census and NSSO surveys) and relevant working age-groups are considered while analysing the data with reference to social characteristics. A patriarchal index has also been computed in order to understand WWPR across caste and educational background of an individual household. Economic characteristics related to land holding and other assets have been taken to calculate wealth index.

**Major Findings of the Study**

The workforce participation rate (WPR) in India for males during 2017-18 has been 52.1 per cent, whereas for women it has been considerably lower i.e. 16.5 per cent. Although it has been observed that the WPR for women has always remained lower than that of men at the national level, yet the gap has become more prominent in recent years. It has been noted that throughout the study period (1993-94 to 2017-18), the WWPR of Haryana has consistently remained lower than the

national average, both in urban and rural areas. However, in Haryana the rural WWPR has consistently been higher than the urban WWPR, except for the year 2017-18. Over time, the WWPR has witnessed a downward trend from 1993-94 to 2017-18, and this decline has been steeper in rural areas than in urban areas. The decline in WWPR can be attributed to the factors like the increasing literacy and levels of education, technological advancements and increase in household income which resulted in withdrawal of women from farm and animal related economic activities. Additionally, it is worth noting that the non-enumeration of women engaged in subsidiary activities, such as livestock rearing, has also contributed to the decline of WWPR. The cross-section of education and WWPR showed a notable disparity between the WPR of women with graduate-level education and those with lower levels of education in rural areas. WWPR vis-à-vis social group revealed that during 1993-94 to 2004-05, inter group variations in WWPR have not been very large. Though high participation of non-SC and non-OBC women has been observed but variations have not been substantial. This can be attributed to the fact that women belonging to higher castes (others) in rural areas, have been generally engaged in agricultural activities either as independent farmers or family labourers.

The intersectionality of gender, caste and education in rural Haryana indicates a concerning trend, particularly for women belonging to the Scheduled Caste (SC) group for all time period. The analysis suggests vulnerability of SC women increased due to reduction in work opportunities for uneducated 'Dalit' women in rural Haryana. In urban Haryana, an intriguing pattern has been observed where illiterate SC women showed large participation in economic activities pointing to their flexibilities and vulnerability in wages and work in all time periods.

The employment landscape revealed that a significant majority of workers (86.70 per cent) have been involved in the unorganized sector. However, the rural urban variations in the state are quite striking (86.00 and 63.50 per cent respectively).The sectoral composition of women workers underwent significant changes over 14-year time period (2004-05 to 2017-18) in Haryana. These shifts must be understood in the context of a declining WWPR. It is distressing to find that the absolute number of women workers in the state has decreased from 27.31 lakh in 2004-05 to 15.73 lakh in 2011-12 and further to 11.38 lakh in 2017-18. This decline primarily stems from a reduction in unorganized sector women workers.

The study reveals that self-employment is the dominant form of employment for women throughout the study period spanning from 1993-94 to 2017-18.This category encompasses individuals working as own account workers, employers, and unpaid family helpers. It may, however, be noted that after 2004-05, the decline in self-employed women is largely due to decline in unpaid family helpers. Casual workers also accounted for 31.76 per cent of the total in 2017-18. Conversely, the percentage of women workers on regular wages showed a significant increase from 2 per cent in 1993-94 to 10 per cent in 2017-18.

The study shows that women predominantly have been engaged in primary activities within the unorganized sector, in both rural and urban areas. In the secondary sector, women predominantly contributed to the construction

industry. Within the tertiary sector, women primarily work in community, social, and personal services, which include educational, public, and health services. Their employment in this sector is predominantly within the organized sector.

The study about social security measured in terms of provident fund, pension, gratuity, paid leave for maternity and other health benefits reveals that the women workers are not sufficiently covered under such securities both in organised and unorganised sectors. During 2017-18, a significant proportion of women in both rural (64 per cent) and urban (90 per cent) Haryana worked without written job contracts. Furthermore, 99 per cent rural women workers and 92 per cent urban women workers lacked social security. The job and social security have been available to a small section of women workers in organized sector. It is also evident from primary survey that the level of job security pertaining to paid leave among employed women is significantly low across various social groups.

The study raises concern to gender discrimination in the labour market which need urgent attention by prioritizing equal opportunities for females in education and training and reduction in wage discrimination. The findings call for proper enforcement and implementation of the existing laws to ensure adequate protection and benefits for women workers in organized sector. Further an awareness campaign and educational program aimed at providing comprehensive information on works carried out by women in unorganized sector and household arena vis-à-vis their rights, entitlements and support services is the need of the hour.

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