
CHAPTER II

STATUS OF FEMALE WORKERS

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CHAPTER II

STATUS OF FEMALE WORKERS

2.1 INTRODUCTION :

The Indian women has not yet won back the proud position she held in the early times of Indian society. She is still largely dependent on her menfolk and legal and formal equality can become meaningful only when backed by everyday social equality. To achieve this status is an uphill task. Women continue to remain the greatest untapped resource of India. Their legal equality is counterbalanced with social prejudice, due to their own lack of education, and lack of effective opportunity for employment.

After Independence, it was made obligatory to consider women as a weaker section and the constitution has guaranteed certain Fundamental Rights and special provisions for protection of women. Several efforts have been made to enhance the status of women from time to time. The integration of women in Urban/rural development has been going on since the beginning of the post-Independence era with varying successes. For the first time, the matter was discussed in Development commissioners conference in 1954.

The recent emphasis on the thinking that women can also contribute to the economy of the nation led social scientists, policy makers and administrators to devise ways of developing planned entrepreneurship with reference to women.

However, the Government of India is implementing Education, Health, Science and Technology, Social welfare, women and child Development etc.

Women form a large part of the reserved army of the labour in the unorganized sector. This has a great relevance over the production system and the resultant social relations in the Indian context. Coupled with this the low and inferior status of women's social, structural and process related aspects of our society make the problem relevant today.

2.2 FEMALE IN INDIA :

INTRODUCTION :

"You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women"

The Fourth world conference on women at Beijing in 1995 put women's issues in the forefront of the global arena. The world summit for social Development at Copenhagen, also in 1995, the Beijing plus 5 conference at the united Nations in 2000 cairo, and the world summit on social Development at Johannesburg in 2002, all have taken the agenda forward.

The Government of India is a signatory to Beijing Declaration and has endorsed its platform for Action. The Government in thus keen that policies in all the economic and social sectors are framed on the basis of proper analysis and understanding of gender perspectives and inequalities that exist.

India, with a population of 1028.7 million, is the world's second most populous country. Of that number, over 70 percent of India's population currently derive their livelihood from lanc resources, which includes 84 percent of the economically active women.

The Indian constitution grants women equal rights with men, but strong patriarchal traditions persist, with women's lives shaped by customs that are centuries old. The status of women in the contemporary context reflected in the state of their health, education, employment and life in society.

India is one of the few countries where males significantly outnumber females, and this imbalance has increased over time.

The population census of India, records the population of India in March 2001 to be 1028.7 million, comprising 532.2 million males and 496.5 million females, making the female share to be 48%. The rural population of India accounts for 742.6 million – 360.95 million urban population, 135 million are females and 150 million are males.

The all India sex ratio as per the census 2001 is 933, the rural sex ration being 946 and in the urban areas, it is 901. Thus, there are far fewer women than men in the co. 933 females per 1000 males, according to 2001 census in India.

The data of Indian female of 2005 is presented in the following table.

TABLE NO. 2.1
INDIAN FEMALE OF 2005

Sr. No.	Item No.	Millions and Percentage
1	Total female [In Millions]	531.9
2	percentage of women in Age i) less than 15 year ii) 15-49 year iii) more than 50 years	32 52 16
3	Life time Births per women [TFR]	3.1
4	Percentage of married women using contraception i) Any methods ii) Modern	48 43
5	Meternal deaths per 100000 live births [year 2000]	540
6	Percentage literate [15-24 years, 2000-04] i) Female ii) Male	65 80
7	Percent economically active ages 15 + [1995 – 02] i) Female ii) Male	41 86
8	Women as percent of Parliament 1995 2004	8 8

[Source : Women of our world 2005 Population Reference Bureau.]

In the above table, The population reference Bureau [PRB] 2005, records the population of Indian female in 2005 to be 531.9 millions. The their age wise details are given out of these the percentage of less than 15 is 32. The other group is lying between 15-49. The percentage of this group is 52. Mainly the female labour force comes from this group.

The Fertility Rate [TFR] is 3.1 for the consecutive year 2005. Illiterate women are careless and hesitate in using contraception. Only 43% take keen interest in using modern contraception. They are becoming more conscious modern contraception using it.

Maternal deaths in India is 540 per 1,00,000 live births, highest in the case of Rajasthan [670] followed by Madhya Pradesh [498] and Bihar [452]. The Infant mortality is highest in the poor states – Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. The majority of women go through life in a state of nutritional stress they are anaemic and malnourished. Poverty, early marriage, malnutrition and lack of health care during pregnancy are the major reasons for both maternal and infant mortality.

India's constitution guarantees free primary school education for both boys and girls up to age 14. This goal has been repeatedly reconfirmed but primary education in India is not universal. Females continue to lag behind male on the literary front. PRB 2005 indicates that only 65% are literate as compared to 80% men.

Females in the Economically Active Age group [15 + years] constitute 41% and Male is 86%. According to National sample survey 2001. Though the share of the female population is 48%, yet 55% are part of the workforce-indicating a higher share of women to

contribute towards the economic needs. Women are bearing more responsibilities for earning as compared to men.

The Gender Empowerment rank of India is 1995 and 2004 women hold only 8% of seats of parliament.

Although Indian women played a major role in the freedom movement, it did not translate into continued participation in public life in the post independence era. On the contrary, many women withdrew into their homes, secure in the belief that they had ushered in a democratic republic in which the dreams and aspirations of the mass of people would be achieved.

Women are under-represented in governance and decision making position. Though the experience of the Panchayati Raj Institutions and Urban Local bodies more than one million women have actively entered political life in India owing to 1/3 reservation in these bodies through the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution. These amendments have spearheaded an unprecedented social experiment which is playing itself out in more than 500000 villages that are home to more than 600 million people.

2.3 CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

The present study mainly concentrate on female workers in tobacco industry. Initially when the work was taken up, the idea was to concentrate on the study of mainly the female workers in the tobacco industry in the Unorganised sector :

In so far as the female workers in the tobacco industry are concerned as mentioned above, the classification of unorganised appears more relevant than informal though even in this case the characteristic features are overlapping.



It is therefore necessary to have a clear perception of the various terms mentioned above. The present section seeks to clarify the various concepts that have been used in the latter chapters in this thesis.

The discussion of the definition and distinguishing features of the concepts here will be followed by the statistical account of female work participation rates in order to get an insight into the magnitude of the various discussion of the problem under study.

We begin, therefore with the discussion on the concepts.

2.4 WORK – IT'S DEFINITION

The work 'Work' is often used rather casually in our common parlance. In fact the exact meaning of the word 'Work' is taken for granted as 'given' not require to be questioned about or debated. Thus 'to Work' means 'to do something skilled or unskilled, physical or mental in exchange of wage'. The oxford dictionary defines work as an "Application of effort for a purpose and any means of earning money." In the context of female work this can be used and interpreted in a number of ways. Man may say 'My wife does not work' whereby he means that she is not selling her labour in market. Employers may comment 'woman opt for light work; where the Work 'work' is used with a different shade of meaning. Thus the same work is perceived in various ways by the persons using it. " The way in which the work is commonly used and officially defined has let to the elevation of certain types of work and workers at the expenses of a large part of society namely Women."

After discussion of concept of work and worker, we switch over to the important discussion relating to the concepts of organised and unorganised sectors and the formal and informal sectors. This

discussion is relevant here since the female workers in tobacco industry the group under study, belong to all possible sectors and unless the distinction is clear, it may not be appropriate to label them by any of these terms.

2.5 FORMAL INFORMAL AND ORGANISED –UNORGANISED SECTORS CONCEPTS

International labour organisation (I.L.O) put forward in its report in 1972, the concept of informal sector. In fact it was regarded as 'residual Sector' i.e. those workers who were not covered by any organised and formal category of work belonged to this 'residual category.' It also highlighted the contribution of this informal sector to the economic activities and domestic production of a nation.

The ILO report mentioned above brought out certain important characteristic features of the informal sector. The major characteristics of the informal sector were

- ❖ Easy of entry.
- ❖ Reliance on indigenous resources.
- ❖ Family ownership of enterprises.
- ❖ Small scale operations.
- ❖ Labour intensive and adopted technology.
- ❖ Skills acquired outside the formal schooling.
- ❖ Unregulated and competitive markets.

Thus the sectors that fulfill most of the above conditions could be regarded as informal sectors.

Subsequently, two sets of criteria have emerged that formed the basis of distinction.

Between formal and informal sector.

- i. The type or size of enterprises and
- ii. The conditions of employment.

The ILO, described the informal sector on the basis of enterprises related criteria which are mentioned above.

The second criteria use the basis of conditions of employment, which include the following:

- i. Absence of a formal work contract.
- ii. Irregularity of employment.
- iii. Unregulated working hours.
- iv. Unregulated wages or earning etc.

It is these characteristics which have given rise to the concept of organised and unorganised sectors.

The unorganized sector in fact signifies an absence of organization amongst the Labour force. As such it has similarity with the informal sector. The organized sector on the other hand reveals clear working conditions and contract as also the organization of Labour force into trade unions in order to endure the implementation of those contracts. The organized sector to a large extent overlaps with the formal sector.

Though the discussion of these concepts so far is useful for understanding most of important distinctions between the formal informal organised- Unorganised sectors, it falls short of bringing our

the diversity in these sectors, their changing nature, linkages with each other and the others sectors of the economy.

It is obvious that the informal sector as also the unorganised sectors, often leads to unequal conditions and also the exploitations of labour forces.

2.6 SOME ISSUES RELATING TO THE UNORGANISED SECTOR:

Who are the unorganised workers? The vast majority of the workforce including agricultural labourers, construction labourers and labourers in traditional industries including leather tanning, handloom, fishing, forestry, salt making, and the household industry as also village artisans, who fall under the generic categories of the unorganised sectors are wholly out of any reckoning in the various statutory laws in the country. These workers are unprotected by legislation and most of them are poor. A questionnaire circulated by the National Commission on Rural Labour spells out the following as the generally recognised categories of unorganised labour.

a) Agriculture labour b) Persons engaged in animal husbandry including sheep and goat rearing. c) Persons working in cottage and village industries including sericulture d) Weavers and workers engaged in carpet manufacture e) rural artisans such as blacksmiths, carpenters, potters and basket makers. f) Fisherman g) workers engaged in the collection of raw hides and skin tanning and leather work. h) Persons engaged in the production and collection of minor forest produce such as tendu leaves, gums, resins, essential oils and sal seeds i) beedi workers j) Workers engaged in stone quarries, fire clay and lime. l) Building and construction workers m) contract and migrant labour n) Workers engaged in the preparation of marketing

Co-operatives for forest produce and felling of timber , preparation of charcoal, and loading and unloading of timber in forests : o) Workers engaged in Khansari Units, Saw mills , Oil mills etc.

In addition we have workers in the urban informal sector. Some of their problems are different from those of rural labourers. However, many components of the urban informal sector in the Indian context are a phenomena more akin to rural than of an urban origin.

Table No 2.2 gives data on the number of workers and the shares of unorganised workers by sectors on an all- India basis. Around 93% of the shares of unorganised sectors in the year 1999-2000 basis. It is clear that even in the manufacturing sector more than 80 percent of the total workers belonged to the unorganised . Similarly the services sector also had a high share of unorganised workers.



TABLE NO. 2.2**Organised and Unorganised Workers and Percentage share of
Unorganised Workers in the Total : 1999 –2000.**

Sector	Organised Workers [Millions]	Unorganised Workers [Millions]	Total Workers [Millions]	Share of Unorganised Workers .
Agriculture & allied activities.	1.39	236.11	237.61	99.42
Mining and quarrying	1.01	1.25	2.23	55.31
Manufacturing including repair services	6.79	37.27	44.02	84.67
Electricity, gas & water	1.00	0.05	1.05	4.76
Construction	1.18	16.41	17.59	93.29
Trade, hotels & restaurants	0.49	40.77	41.26	98.81
Transport storage & Communication	3.15	11.59	14.74	78.63
Financial Services	1.65	3.37	5.02	67.13
Community Social & Personal Services	11.49	21.95	33.44	65.64
All Sectors	28.11	308.89	397.00	92.92

[Source : Computed from Government of India 2001]

**2.7 FEMALE WORK PARTICIPATION RATES IN THE VARIOUS
STATES OF INDIA :**

Since independence Mumbai and the state of Maharashtra where the city is situated have witnessed distinct from that of the rest of the country on the eve of Independence Maharashtra was most industrialized of the Indian states and the major share of the foreign

industrial investment in India was located in this region was some what faster as compared to the other industrialised regions of India.

During the second and third plans there was considerable new private industrial investment in the region, but not at rates comparable with those of Bombay, Pune, Ahmedabad, Baroda, Delhi. Since then that channed has also dried up. All these factors have produced a situation where among the more advanced states of India the growth of organised employment has been one of the fast in Maharastra.

The traditional of women economic participation have been particularly very good in comparison with rest of India.

The data of female work participation rates in the various state of Indian is presented in following table.

TABLE NO. 2.3**Female work participation rates in the various states of India.**

State	Rural	Urban
Andhara Pradesh	73.70	71.30
Arunachal Pradesh	2.40	19.60
Assam	59.10	45.90
Bihar ¹	71.80	67.00
Goa	68.20	51.90
Gujarat	57.70	67.40
Haryana	71.30	61.90
Himachal Pradesh	39.60	43.20
Jammu & Kashmir	73.90	35.10
Karnataka	74.80	68.10
Kerala	74.30	58.70
Madhya Pradesh ¹	61.00	68.10
Maharashtra	62.70	67.90
Manipur	79.90	70.20
Meghalaya	39.60	41.90
Mizoram	57.50	59.40
Nagaland	27.80	31.10
Orissa	81.80	63.90
Punjab	61.60	48.70
Rajasthan	75.30	70.90
Sikkim	29.70	44.60
Tamil Nadu	78.20	71.80
Tripura	58.80	34.30
Uttar Pradesh ¹	82.10	80.20
West Bengal	88.30	75.00
All India	75.00	68.50

Source : National sample Survey Organisation report No. 460 Non agriculture workers in informal sector based on Employment -Unemployment survey 55th Round, 1999-2000. *1-

The states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh here include the newly considerable states of Jharkand, Chhatisgarh and Uttaranchal, respectively.

2.8 WORKERS BY INDUSTRIAL CATEGORY :

In the following table we review the data pertaining to main workers by industrial category as classified by census reports of 1981 and 1991.

TABLE NO. 2.4

Main Workers by Industrial sector and sex [1981 & 1991]

Industrial Category	Percentage of female to females	
	1981	1991
Cultivator	33.09	34.22
Agriculture	46.34	44.93
Laborers	1.83	1.6
Livestock, Forestry, etc.	0.35	0.34
Mining and Quarrying	4.57	3.53
Manufacturing in household	3.6	3.88
Construction	0.87	0.66
Trade and Commerce	2.04	2.26
Transport And Communication	0.37	0.32
Other Services	6.94	8.26
Total	100	100

[Source : Government of India Census Reports. 2001.]

The above table indicates that the female workers are mainly concentrated in Agriculture sector. If we add up cultivators, agriculture laborers and livestock and etc. almost 80 % of female workers are engaged in them. The second target composition belongs to the service sector. It is true in case of both the census years i.e. 1981 and 1991.

For the year 1991 we give below the data relating to main female workers in rural and urban areas .

**2.9 MAIN FEMALE WORKERS IN URBAN AND RURAL AREA
IN 1991.**

TABLE NO 2.5

Industrial Category	Rural(%)	Urban(%)
Cultivation	38.90	5.59
Agriculture	47.94	14.84
Household Industry Workers	3.76	10.27
Other Workers	9.32	69.29
Total	100	100

[Source : Govt. of India, Census Reports, 2001.]

It can be noted from the above table that while in the rural areas, the female workers are mainly engaged in cultivation and agriculture, in the urban areas, this proportion is significantly small and most of the female workers are engaged in household or other works.

2.10 EMPLOYMENT IN THE ORGANISED AND UNORGANISED SECTOR IN INDIA.

Before concluding this chapter we present below the data on Employment in organised and unorganised sectors for the years 1991.

TABLE NO 2.6
Employment in the Organised and Unorganised Sector [1991]

	Organised	Unorganised	Total
Male	229.53 [10.23]	2014.11 [89.77]	2243.64 [71.42]
Female	37.81 [4.21]	859.86 [95.79]	897.67 [28.58]
Total	267.34 [8.51]	2873.87 [91.49]	3141.31 [100]

[Source : Government of India, Census Reports, 2001.]

The above data shows that major source of employment for female labour is in the Unorganised sector. In the case of male workers as can be seen from above, 89.77 % workers belonged to unorganised sector, for female workers the percentages is even higher on it is 95.79 %. The policy implications therefore are that, special attention has now to be given to the female workers in the unorganised sector and suitable policy changes have to be made.

2.11 LITERACY AND WOMAN :

2001 was announced as the year of woman Empowerment. Despite this year was announced the Indian women reels under the control of male in family from womb to tomb. When she is a child she is under the control of her father. At her later age after her marriage, she is controlled by her husband and at the old age, by her son. This has reduced herself confidence and will to make independent initiative. Women are said to be the main pillars of a family, but they never even think or dream that this can be true in any real sense. They are also denied education, whereby they become victims of inferiority complex. The fact is that the Indian renaissance of the 19th Century opened the way to the middle class women only. Hardly any poor women did have access to education. They were not even made aware of the utility of education or what it meant to the life of an individual.

The census Report gives a clear glimpse of the lack of balance in the literacy figures of males and females in various states of India.

TABLE NO 2.7
Literacy Rate in India, 2001

Year	Percentage [%]	Males [%]	Females[%]
1901	05.4	9.8	00.6
1911	05.9	10.6	01.1
1921	07.2	12.2	01.8
1931	09.5	15.6	02.9
1941	16.1	24.9	07.3
1951	16.7	24.9	07.9
1961	28.31	40.40	15.34
1971	34.35	45.95	21.97
1981	43.36	56.37	29.75
1991	52.11	63.86	39.42
2001	65.49	75.86	54.28

[Source : Monthly Commentary on Indian Economic Conditions. Feb-2006]

2.12 MALE AND FEMALE WORK FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE BY SEX AND BY SECTOR FOR INDIA :

The data of Government of India Ministry of statistics and programmed Implementation –2004 reports from 1972-73 to 2002 regarding the Male and female Workforce participation are presented in the following table.

TABLE NO. 2.8

Workforce participation Rate by Sex and by Sector for India.

Year	Rural		Urban	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
1972-73	31.8	54.5	13.4	50.1
1977-78	33.1	55.2	15.6	50.8
1983	34.0	54.7	15.1	51.2
1987-88	32.3	53.9	15.9	50.6
1993-94	32.8	55.3	15.5	52.1
1994-95 ^a	31.7	56.0	13.6	51.9
1995-96 ^a	29.5	55.1	12.4	52.5
1996-97 ^a	29.1	55.0	13.1	52.1
1998 ^a	26.3	53.9	11.4	50.9
1999 –2000	29.9	53.1	13.9	51.8
2000-2001 ^a	28.7	54.4	14.0	53.1
2001-2002 ^a	31.4	54.6	13.9	55.3
2002 ^a	28.1	54.6	14.0	53.4

[Source : National Sample Survey Organisation.]

a : Based on thin Sample.

Note : Figures for all the years are based on usual status approach and includes principal status and subsidiary status workers of all ages.

Women constitute 90% of the total marginal workers of the country. As per National Sample Survey Organisation, in 2002, the workforce participation rate of females in rural sector was 28.1 while that for males was 54.6. In Urban sector, it is 14 for females and 53.4 for males. According to census 2001, in urban area total population of workers is 92.28 million, of which only 16.10 million are female. In rural areas out of 310 million, 111 million are females, 42.95% of the rural female working population is involved as agriculture labour [not in cultivation]. The total employment of women in organised sector is only 18 % [Quarterly employment Review Ministry of Labour].

Women work is undervalued and unrecognised. Women work longer hours than men, and carry the major share of household and community work that is unpaid and invisible. There are far fewer women in the paid workforce than there are men. There are more unemployed women than there are unemployed men.

Woman Generally earns lower wage than men doing the same work. It has been estimated that women's wages rates are on the average, only 75% of men's wage rates and constitute only one fourth of the family income. In no state do women and men earn equal wages in agriculture. Also women generally work in the informal sector where wages are lower and they are not covered by labour laws. Within organisations, women generally hold lower paid jobs. Women workers are also engaged in piecework and subcontracting at exploitative rates.

In the urban sector, the workforce participation of women is a mere 14 %. The figures are slightly better in the rural sector where women constitute 28 % of the workforce.

Women's contribution to agriculture whether it be subsistence farming or commercial agriculture when measured in terms of the

number of tasks performed and time spent is greater than men. Most of the work that women do, such as collecting fuel, fodder and water, of growing vegetables, or keeping poultry for domestic consumption, goes unrecorded in the census counts.

- ❖ To recapitulate in this chapter we have seen that the theoretical review shows that women, their work and their contribution to economic development has not been paid adequate attention in economic theory. The concept of formal – informal and organised sectors – unorganised sectors have shown that female workers in case of tobacco industry belong to calling them unorganised, we better treat them as regulated and unregulated workers. The macro data relating to LFPRs among female labour shows a disappointing picture and it also deprived of fair wages salaries and work conditions.

2.13 DOES EMPLOYMENT EMPOWER WOMAN?

The main role of the women in most of the society all over the world is expected and confined to perform the household job, child bearing and care of entire family. But with the advancement of science and technology there have been tremendous changes in the life cycle of men and women especially in urban areas. In the modern world the role of women goes much beyond the home and the bringing up of children. She is now developing a career of her own and sharing equally with man the responsibility for the development of society in all its aspects. The last five decades have been extremely important for Indian Women. This period witnessed for reaching developments in almost all spheres political economic and social.

The concept of empowerment of women is only the later development especially after 1990's. Though concern is being expressed for women's emancipation in every field. Economic independence is of paramount important. Efforts are on to ensure that she is economically not dependent on any one. But have these efforts helps? Does the employment really empower woman?

It is accepted that economic empowerment of women is based on their participation in decision making process with regards to raising and distribution of resources, income, investment and expenditure at all levels. The entire efforts of empowering women is to help them to exercise their rights is decision making at all levels and in every where both within and outside the household as equal partners in the society.

Women's involvement in decision making within family in important matters like saving, debt, purchasing, budget and access to resources power, dependence in enjoying the income all are considered to be important factor in determining the empowerment of women.

Large number of working women admitted that they have not got adequate recognition besides long hours of work they put in their office and money they earn. Working married female position is still worst, as they have to do the household work, looking after the children, besides attending their office work. Most of the women were emphatic that they are not getting any assistance from their husband or inlaws in the matter of household work. This is mainly because the man thinks the domestic work is meant for women and they have nothing to do in the matter.

It would appear that control over the family pursue must automatically give some degree of authority and this is often

assumed to be so. But the study revealed that in most of the cases the women are the custodians of her salary only still she arrives homes. Later the husband receives his wife's pay from her pays all bills and makes decision on major expenditure, with perhaps some mutual Consultation. More than half of them accepted that their husbands / head of the family takes care of savings investments, and budgeting themselves. Most of the women have no participance in the budgetory matters.

Empowerment of women is influenced by and determined to a very great degree by social attitudes towards gender issues. Empowerment of women can take place only in an atmosphere of 'give and take' attitude and partnership accord, so if women have to bring about improvement in their social status they have to becomes more aware of their rights and more vigilant in preventing violation of their rights.