

MISSING GENDER FROM INDIAN LABOUR FORCE : FINDINGS FROM 2001 AND 2011 CENSUS

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ABSTRACT

Economically active population is one of the most important human resources for any growing economy. But the issue is how the country capitalised these resources. The country like India which experienced demographic transition is unable to reap the benefits of an on-going demographic dividend. Even though half of the population in India are women, only 25.51 per cent of them are in workforce to the total female population. Thus, economic boom bypassed nearly 75 per cent Indian women. It is also observed that over the time period female work participation rate declined. Improvement in socio-economic status of household may be the main driving force to withdraw women from labour market.

Introduction

The twenty first century witnessed lots of historical movement in human history to provide space for women empowerment. The developed and developing nations, organisations and reputed NGOs came up with the slogan of equality and justice, women empowerment, and women autonomy (decision making power independently). On one hand, it is said that all the people will be benefited from the fruits of inclusive economic development irrespective of their creed, colour, race, religion, sex and caste. On the other hand, the contrast gap between poor and rich is continuously increasing globally in

terms of all social and economic indicators. At the same time, gender gap (male and female) in terms of all social, economic and political indicators is also widening. India is not exceptional in this case. India is ranked 11th from the bottom out of 131 countries in terms of female labour force participation (ILO, 2009-2010). Even the country like Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka recorded increase in female work participation. The recent census 2011 which presented quite interesting picture of the States in India in terms of different social indicators, gender inequality is good example in this regard. It is a well known fact that Female Work Participation Rate (FWPR) in India is very low as compared to

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many western countries since earlier period and till date. But females played a crucial role in the extended family labour force in agrarian society like India which is unnoticed in many cases. Female population in India accounted nearly half of the Indian population while Work Participation Rate (WPR) among women is only 25.53 per cent. The female WPR in India and few States of India is much lower than many African countries. This indicates how women are being treated in India. It may be a major drag, not just on the empowerment of women but on the Indian growth story as well in the long run. Traditionally stereotype attitudes are associated with women, where role of female is only household works like cooking, looking after family members and taking care of husband and children. At the same time, aged members of the households look upon suspiciously the work of women outside home. Participation in the labour market and earning for oneself with dignity and esteem by securing one's economic independence and decision making power, is often been cited as means by which women can overcome the state of seclusion and confinement to the four walls of household. Data on women WPR in last two decades in India showed that women of India are passing through quite pathetic and deplorable situations.

Information on economic activity of the individual was collected in India right from the 1872 census and till 1961 census though it passed through a lot of modification. Finally in 1961 census, economic data were collected on the basis of work i.e. the population divided into two classes, 'Workers' and 'Non-workers'. Since 1971, 'Census of India' defines a worker as "a person whose main activity is participation in any economically productive work by his physical or mental activity". The Census also explained that "A man or woman

who is engaged primarily in household duties such as cooking for own households should not be treated as a worker". From 2001 census data it was found that more than one-fourth (25.63 per cent) of the Indian women worked as either main or marginal workers to the total women in India. But in 2011 census, WPR among women recorded only 25.51 per cent which showed the negative growth rate (-.44 per cent) over the 2001 to 2011 census. It also indicates that 75 per cent women in India still depend on males for their sustenance or livelihoods. This aspect provides due justification for paying special attention to women in WPR analysis. Even a few States showed higher percentage Female Work Participation Rate (FWPR) which could be discussed in detail latter by using 2001 and 2011 census. One thing should be mentioned that the Female Work Participation Rate is low due to crude estimate to include all the females irrespective of the age. In India generally age group 15-59 is considered as the economically productive age. So in that sense the present consideration of FWPR is crude rate.

Methodology

The present study is an attempt to see the changing pattern of FWPR across the States of India over the period of 2001 and 2011 census. It also studies the regional variations in terms of women work participation in India within different residential settings (Rural-Urban).

One of the hypotheses of this study is that Female WPR declines with that of economic development, higher percentage of urban population, spread of education, higher percentage of non-scheduled population and growth of modern organised industries.

The present study is based on secondary data collected by Census of India 2001 and 2011. Census of India is the main source of information on the economic tables provided in the B series. Information on economic activities is also collected from the primary census abstract (PCA) for both the time periods. Information of per capita income at the State level was collected from Economic survey - 2010-2011, Indiabudget.nic.in.

Female work participation rates are calculated for India (States) total and rural & urban residential settings to see the trend between the period 2001 & 2011 in the changing roles of women in workforce.

FWPR= Total female workers/Total female population*100

Rural-Urban gaps have been studied and the change thereof in this gap over the period 2001-2011 analysed to see the spatial differences in women participation across the country. The growth rate of female workers and WPR is also calculated over 2001 and 2011 census to see whether there is increased or decreased WPR among the Indian women. The study also further used the 'Pearson correlation' method to see the relationship with FWPR and the social and economic development indicators.

Scenarios of Work Participation Rate in India: An Overview

In India where majority of the workforce are engaged in agriculture and allied sectors, have very low carrying capacity compared to the secondary and tertiary sectors of the developed countries. But in recent times, the proportion of working population in India is shifting towards service sector which is a good sign for the growing

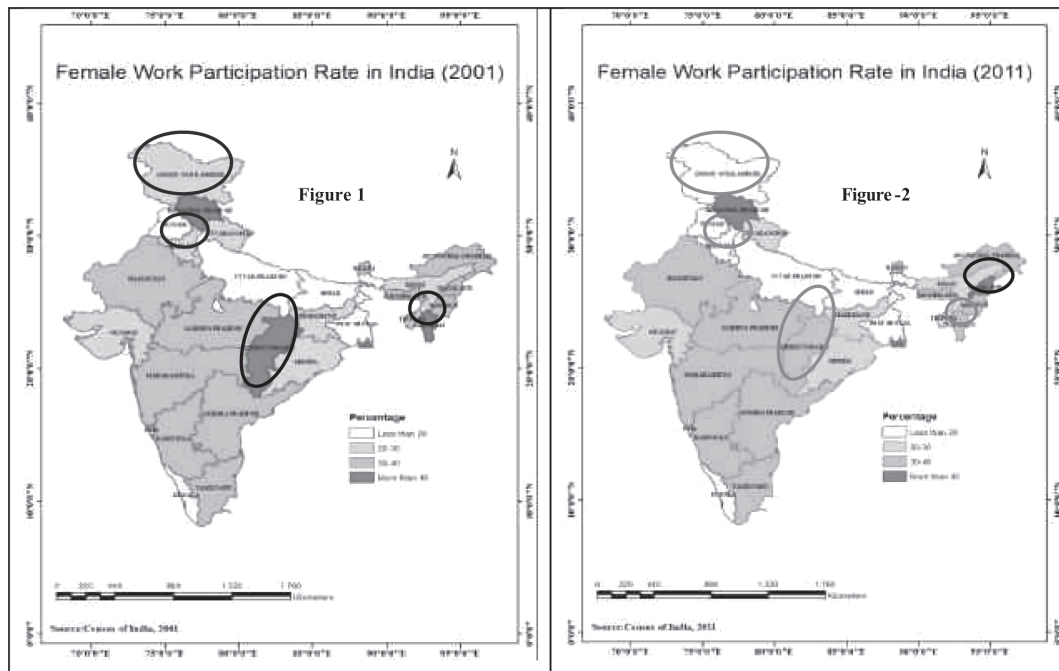
economy. Even many economists came up with the criticism that India is passing through the phase of jobless growth. The findings of NSS, 68th round 2011-2012 showed that incidence of unemployment rate among the educated population is much higher. According to usual status (PS+SS), WPR is 39 per cent at the all-India level. WPR in rural areas (40 per cent) is higher than its counterpart in urban areas (36 per cent) (NSSO report, 2011-2012). Similar picture is observed from the recent 2011 census where it was reported that WPR is 39.79 per cent at the all India level. The WPR recorded 1.76 per cent growth rate over 2001 census (WPR, 39.10 per cent). The dependency ratio also registered in 2011 census (2.56 per person) was higher over 2001 census (2.51 per person). It is a positive sign for the growing economy like India. At the State level it is the Himachal Pradesh State which recorded highest WPR than rest of the States in both 2001 (49.24 per cent) and 2011 (51.85 per cent) census. On the other hand, the major States having experienced low level of WPR have higher population growth. The States like Uttar Pradesh which raked top in population size in 2001 and 2011 census experienced very low level of WPR i.e. 32.48 and 32.6 per cent, respectively. But the questions to be kept in mind on gender-wise WPR and current situation in rural & urban area also which leads to the further analysis of census data.

Scenario of Female Work Participation Rate in India: Here the study will focus on the condition of female Work Participation Rate which is the major concern of this study. It is generally assumed that the proportion of women who are at work has considerably increased in recent times. In what sense, and to what extent this belief is borne out by the facts? In order to answer this question,

it is better to rely on the recent information of census of India. In both rural and urban areas, WPR for females were considerably lower than the WPR for males. WPR for males and females were nearly 54 and 25 per cent, respectively while in the urban areas, WPR for males and females were nearly 55 and 15 per cent, respectively (NSSO report, 2011-2012). While male participation is high, female labour force participation (FLFP) has been dropping at an alarming rate. It fell from a high point above 40 per cent in the early-to-mid 1990s to 29.4 per cent in 2004-2005, 23.3 per cent in 2009-2010 and 22.5 per cent in 2011-12 (NSSO, report 2011-2012). Similar pattern is noticed in the 2011 census where it is found that the national level average female WPR is only 25.51 per cent and experienced negative growth (minus 0.44) of FWPR over 2001 census. In 2001, the average FWPR at all India level was 25.63 per cent. This may not be the good thing for the growing by excluding the major chunk of population how one economy may grow and sustain for long run. The contribution of female to the production of goods and services other than those rendered by their housekeeping activities, is of two-fold importance to the HHs and for the community. On one hand, it materially influences the size of the national income and the standard of living; on the other hand, it has a powerful influence on family relationships and on women's status within family and community (Leser, 1958).

The regional level analysis of FWPR shows a wide range of differences among the States. It is the State of Himachal Pradesh which recorded higher percentage of female

work participation rate in both 2001 and 2011 census accounting for 44.82 and 43.67 per cent, respectively. The State recorded 2.62 per cent growth rate in the last decade (2001 to 2011 census year). It was followed by the North-Eastern State Nagaland where FWPR accounted for 44.74 and 38.06 per cent, respectively in the same time period. It can be inferred from Figures 1 and 2 which present the general profile of FWPR at the State level of India 2001 and 2011 census that majority of the States have average FWPR between 30-40 per cent in both the census. Another important thing is that the southern and western States (Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Rajasthan) have higher percentage of FWPR. In 2001 census, the State Mizoram recorded highest FWPR (47.54 per cent) it was followed by the State Himachal Pradesh 43.67 per cent (Appendice:1). On the other hand, newly emerged Chhattisgarh State from Madhya Pradesh also recorded considerable percentage of women in workforce, accounting for 40.04 per cent. But the story is quite different for the southern and western States. The western State like Rajasthan accounted for 33.49 per cent of FWPR in 2001 census that indicates the demand of female workers in the agricultural and allied sectors in Rajasthan. On the other hand, most of the females work with their husbands in the agricultural field as the extended labourers. Southern States like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat have higher WPR due to the development of social and economic sectors.



Similarly, higher percentage of WPR are recorded in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha due to higher percentage of scheduled population in these States. It is also found that women among the scheduled caste population worked as either daily labour with their husband or they collect forest products (timber, woods, crop residue, etc.) independently to sustain their family. The northern States like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar which ranked first and fourth in terms of size of population in 2011 census have very low percentage of WPR. It may be due to the higher fertility rate. There is a strong inverse relationship between female participation rates and fertility in economically developed countries. Just as the age-specific fertility reaches the lowest among the 40-49 age group, the rural female activity rates touch the peak in India (Reddy, 1979). In the age group 20-29 years when majority of the girls in India become mothers give less time for

any productive work because most of the time they are engaged in taking care of the babies and families.

In 2011 census, more or less similar pattern is observed but with few exceptions. It is noticed that over the decade, the growth rate of female WPR declined both at the national and State level, except few in North-Eastern States. Most of the States recorded negative growth rate of WPR over the time. The Himachal Pradesh State emerged as the first rank State accounting for 44.82 per cent in 2011 census replacing Mizoram State. The North-Eastern State of Nagaland also emerged as the second top most State accounting for 44.74 per cent. At the same time average FWRP at all India level falls down from 25.63 per cent in 2001 to 25.51 per cent experiencing negative growth rate minus. 44 per cent (2001-2011). The State Nagaland recorded highest growth rate of FWPR (17.57 per cent) in the

same time period. Even the States like Gujarat, Uttarakhand, Odisha, Jharkhand and Assam maintained their position as in 2001 census, but experienced negative growth rate of female WPR. The lowest ever female WPR was recorded in the Punjab State accounting for

13.91 per cent but in previous census it was 19.05 per cent experiencing negative growth rate (-26.98 per cent) in the same time period. In between the intercensal time period, highest fall in FWPR is observed in the Haryana State which experienced minus 34 per cent.

Table 1 : Growth of Female Work Participation Rate in India (2001-2011)

Positive Growth		Negative Growth	
States	FWPR	States	FWPR
Kerala	18.50	Haryana	-34.62
Nagaland	17.57	Punjab	-26.98
Tripura	11.82	Mizoram	-23.92
Jharkhand	10.21	Gujarat	-16.25
Odisha	10.13	Jammu & Kashmir	-14.89
Assam	8.41	Meghalaya	-7.05
Rajasthan	4.88	Arunachal Pradesh	-3.01
Andhra Pradesh	2.98	Uttarakhand	-2.37
Himachal Pradesh	2.62	Goa	-1.93
Sikkim	2.62	Madhya Pradesh	-1.73
Uttar Pradesh	1.30	West Bengal	-1.33
Bihar	1.22	Manipur	-1.20
Tamil Nadu	0.82	Chhattisgarh	-0.86
Maharashtra	0.79	Karnataka	-0.34
India	-0.44		

Source: Census of India, 2011, RGI, Govt. of India.

By comparing the Figure1 and Figure2 which represents the growth history of the FWPR over the intercensal time period (2001-2011), it can be said that majority of the States experienced negative growth of FWPR. The States like Haryana, J&K, census were under the range of 20-30 per cent in 2001. But in 2011 census it falls down to the range of 10-20 per cent in Figure 2 which indicates the negative growth of FWPR over the decade. The

lowest fall in the FWPR is observed in the Karnataka State experiencing -0.34 per cent growth rate. Similarly, the States like Chhattisgarh, Mizoram also shifted to the range of 30-40 per cent from its earlier range, more than 40 per cent experienced also negative growth rate. The State Kerala experienced highest growth rate of FWPR accounting for 18.50 per cent. It indicates the story of sex selective male out-migration in the Gulf

courtiers and the local male labour force scarcity. The number of Kerala emigrants (EMI) living abroad in 2011 is estimated 2.28 million, up from 2.19 million in 2008, 1.84 million in 2003 and 1.36 million in 1998 migrants, especially external migrants, from Kerala are predominantly males. In 2011, only about 14.0 per cent of the emigrants from Kerala were females (Zachariah and IrudayaRajan, 2012). That created enough space for the female work in different sectors especially in the agriculture and allied sectors. The study of Zachariah and Rajan (2013) on 'Diaspora in Kerala's development' between the time periods also showed the same trends. Zachariah study found that in the gainful employment, female workers recorded 4.4 per cent growth rate in Government jobs while male workers recorded negative growth rate (-4.5 per cent). The growth rate in self-employment also showed females overcame males. Similarly, the States like, Rajasthan, Odisha and Jharkhand also experienced positive growth rate. The reason may be same as in the case of Kerala but most of the males are migrating to the developed States rather than immigrating to other countries. At the same time we cannot deny the role of MGNREGA launched by Government of India in 2005 which assured 100 days of legal rights to employment. There is higher proportion of

female workers to total NREGA workers. Drèze and Oldiges, (2009) looking at all India participation rates in the first two years of its implementation, pointed out that there was marginal increase in the participation of women (from 40 per cent in 2006-07 to 44 per cent in 2007-08). Women constitute more than two-thirds of NREGA workers in Kerala (71 per cent), Rajasthan (69 per cent) and Tamil Nadu (82 per cent) and less than the stipulated one-third in other States. The provision of 40 per cent reservation for the females in the NREGA and implementation leads to the higher FWPR growth rate in these States. The State Maharashtra experienced very low growth rate of FWPR over the time period of 2001-2011 census.

There is a distinction between the FWPR and the growth of female labour force. The increase of size of female labour force does not mean that FWPR will increase. As it is noticed at the all India level that in the intercensal time, female workers experienced positive growth rate accounting for 17.81 per cent but at the same period the FWRP experienced negative growth rate. But the States like Haryana, Punjab, Mizoram and Gujarat stand exceptional where both women workers and FWPR decreased over the 2001-2011 censuses.

Table 2 : Growth of Female Work Forces in India (2001-2011)

States	Growth Rate	States	Growth Rate
Jharkhand	35.50	Maharashtra	17.38
Tripura	29.24	Tamil Nadu	17.10
Assam	28.51	Sikkim	16.90
Rajasthan	27.76	Himachal Pradesh	16.10
Bihar	26.85	Uttarakhand	16.04

(Contd...)

Table 2 (Contd...)

States	Growth Rate	States	Growth Rate
Odisha	26.02	Karnataka	15.70
Kerala	25.78	Andhra Pradesh	15.16
Arunachal Pradesh	25.41	West Bengal	13.35
Uttar Pradesh	22.81	Goa	6.82
Chhattisgarh	21.66	Jammu & Kashmir	5.01
Meghalaya	19.98	Gujarat	-0.17
Madhya Pradesh	19.04	Mizoram	-4.01
Nagaland	18.93	Punjab	-15.88
Manipur	18.08	Haryana	-20.74
India	17.81		

Source: Census of India, 2011, RGI, Govt. of India.

This indicates the positive relationship between increase in FWPR and the increase in female workers. Whereas majority of the States (Jammu & Kashmir, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal), in spite of increase in FWPR experienced negative growth rate. Thus, it indicates further micro level study in the context of different socio- economic norms in these States which may restrain women to work beyond/outside the boundary of home. The highest growth rate of female workers is recorded in Jharkhand State (newly carved State from Bihar, 2001) accounting for 35.50 per cent followed by Tripura State (29.24 per cent).

Thus, this may be the cause of concern for the growing economy like India where over the time FWPR declined. One thing should always be kept in mind that nearly half of the population in India are female and by keeping them behind (the major chunk of the population), how a society or economy will sustain in long run? On the other hand, it is the time to question the implementing authority

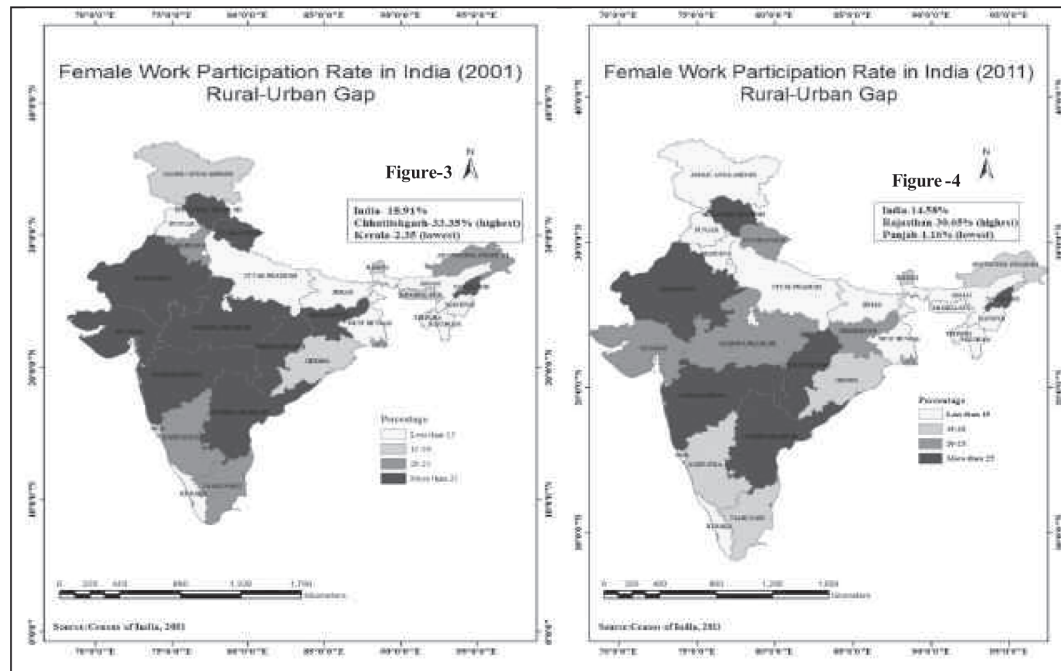
of laws where it is clearly said that there are equal opportunities in jobs irrespective of the sex and lots of safety measures are taken to give security to the women who are working outside home in different fields. It should be mentioned here that economic and demographic factors play a major role to determine the FWPR but at the same time we cannot deny the crucial role played by the culture which is very difficult to overcome by the females. On the other hand, it is very difficult to quantify culture in the number to see the role in FWPR.

Rural-Urban Differences of Female Work Participation Rate

The present section will give due emphasis on the regional (State) variation of WPR at rural-urban setting. WPR in rural areas (40 per cent) is higher than that in urban areas (36 per cent). In the rural areas, WPR for females were nearly 25 per cent while in the urban areas, WPR for females were nearly 15 per cent (NSSO, report, 2011-2012). It can also be inferred from the 2001 and 2011 census

that there is still rural urban gap of FWPR at the States and national level. But it shows the trend of narrowing down at the States and national level except few States. In 2001

census, rural-urban gap of female work participation rate at the national level was 18.91 per cent. But in 2011 census it fell down to 14.58 per cent.



It was noticed that urban female participation rates are consistently lower than rural female participation rates for all the States except Kerala. It is due to the nature of work available between the rural-urban sectors. It is a well known fact that majority of the female workforce in rural area are engaged in agriculture and its allied activities. But in urban area, it is basically the skilled labour intensive secondary and tertiary work which absorbed very less female workers. But the interesting fact is that over the decade the urban FWPR increased 4.44 points. The higher female WPR in recent time is the result of emergence of new demand driven services for the urban people due to change in life style. On the other

hand-female migration either independently or associational (both, skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled) towards the urban centre in search of employment as the principal bread winner of the family also leads to the higher female WPR in recent times. Meanwhile the rural FWPR fell down to 30.79 to 30.02 per cent, experiencing negative growth rate (Appendix:2). It may be due to the lower absorption of female workers in agriculture and allied sectors due to stagnation of growth. Further, the invention and development of new sophisticated machinery helps to cut down the demand for manual labour in agriculture.

Figures 3 and 4 which depict the rural-urban gap of FWPR at the regional (State) level, indicate that the gap has come down over the decade in all the States except the State Kerala and Sikkim. In both the States (viz. Kerala 1.86 point and Sikkim .79 point) gap in FWPR increased (Appendice:2). It can also be inferred that in both censuses it is the central and the western States which have higher rural to urban FWPR. This is evident in two northern States (Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand) where the level of FWPR is much higher than the rest in 2001 and 2011. But the lowest gap was observed in low performing States (Jammu & Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Punjab and West Bengal) in terms of FWPR in both the censuses. But quite noticeable narrowing of gaps is observed in 2011 census in southern States of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu than in few central States viz. Gujarat, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh (Appendice:2). It may be due to the result of government policy and programmes to narrow down the rural-urban gap in all development indicators.

However, the inter-State differences for the urban sector are less pronounced as compared with those for the rural sector. The inter-State gap for the rural area between the highest and lowest FWPR performing States is 38.55 points while it is only 34 points in case of urban area (census of India, 2001). But in 2011 census, the gap for urban area has narrowed down drastically from 34 points to 23 points during the inventing period. On the other hand, gap persisted in 2011 census (37.92 per cent) as it was in previous census (38.55 per cent). For both rural areas in 2001 census, Mizoram leads the top position accounting for 54.55 per cent rural and 40.52 per cent for urban area, respectively. But at the bottom case it is the Kerala State which ranked last accounting for FWPR 15.99 per cent

in rural area while in urban sector it is the Jharkhand State that comes last accounting for FWPR 6.52 per cent. In 2011 census on the other hand, Nagaland crowned the top position accounting for FWPR 52.26 per cent in rural area and Punjab comes last accounting for FWPR 14.34 per cent. While in case of urban area, bottom position was maintained by the Jharkhand in earlier census but in 2011 census it accounted for 10.07 per cent indicating increasing trend of FWPR in urban area. At the same time Manipur conquered the top position replacing Mizoram in urban area accounting for 33.17 per cent. Thus, the possible reasons for the rural-urban gap in female worker participation rate at the States of India would be; in rural India women could find work easily on the family farms or in the household industries in the rural sector. Even when work has to be done by women outside the family boundary it can be found in the close neighbourhood. In the urban sector, the scope for participation of women in labour force is possibly more restricted because their participation in work has to be largely outside the home, and very often at great distances away from the home (Gulati, 1975).

Determinants of Female Work Participation Rate

This section will give due emphasis on the hypotheses that Female WPR decline with that of economic development, higher percentage of urban population, spread of education, higher percentage of non-scheduled population and growth of modern organised industries. The present study has taken following proxy indicators as of economic development i.e. Proportion of Urban Population, Proportion of Workforce in Non-Agriculture, Female Literacy, Proportion of Non-Scheduled population to the total

population and per capita income (constant price). Then the data were analysed by using the multiple correlation model. The correlation coefficient range from -1 to $+1$ where -1 or $+1$ indicates a 'perfect' relationship. The geographical differences in the female participation rate among the States of India show a negative correlation with levels of economic development except the level of education. The value of 'r' (coefficients of correlation) for all the indicators in Table 3 is negative except level of education. The available data at the States indicate that there is a negative relationship among the FWPR and per capita income. Even the value of 'r' is $(-.052)$, which is not significant at 5 per cent level. Thus, there is no such significant inverse

relationship between per capita income and female work participation rates. Though negative coefficients tell us that there is an inverse relationship implying that when per capita income increases, the FWPR decreases. Similarly, the correlation coefficient $(-.531)$ between proportion of non-scheduled population to the total population and FWPR also indicates the negative relationship. That means the region which have higher proportion of scheduled population will experience higher FWPR. This argument may be validated from the inference of the above sections where it was noticed that the States like Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and most of the North-Eastern States have higher proportion of female workers.

Table 3 : Relationship Between FWPR and Level of Development (2011)

Development Indicators	FWPR
Proportion of Urban Population	-.160
Proportion of Male Workforce in Non-Agriculture	-.470*
Female Literacy	.063
Proportion of Non-Scheduled population to the total pop.	-.531**
Per capita income (Constant price)	-.052

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Census of India, 2011 and Economic survey, 2010-11.

The study of Stephan Klasen and Janneke Pieters (2013) explores the reasons in detail of stagnant FLFP in urban area of India. Their statistical analysis of urban India between 1987 and 2009 pointed the rising male education and income as the principal reasons which induce women to drop out of the labour force. Similar inference can be drawn from the Table 3 where it is noticed that the correlation coefficient is $-.160$ between Proportion of

Urban Population and FWPR. Though it does not show strong relationship, still there is a negative relationship. On the other hand, the Proportion of Workforce in Non-Agricultural sectors also has negative impact on the FWPR. The decline in female work participation rate would mean that whenever the job opportunities for men improved, women may prefer to withdraw from the labour market (Gulati, 1975). The correlation coefficient value

(-.470) between proportion of workforce in non-agriculture and FWPR also indicates the perfect negative relationship between these two variables. Finally, it was proved in an earlier study that education have positive relationship with the WPR irrespective of sex. Similar results were observed in these cases in most of the States, where the female literacy rate is high, the FWPR is also high. That indicates the awareness among the female population and their capability to enter into the labour force depended on others.

Conclusion and Policy Implications

Pattern in the female WPR rate in India reveal a number of puzzles. Despite strong economic growth, the characteristic features of Indian labour force are falling share/engagement of women from the labour force. The female WPR had been very low and declining in India between the intercensal periods (2001 to 2011 census). The overall picture that emerged from the study indicates women are in greater disadvantaged position in general and those who belong to rural area in particular. The inherited social disadvantages in the patriarchal society, low level of education and skills, limited access to assets and other resources are significant contributory factors. Thus in addition to these issues, the outcome of female WPR in any region and the role of women in the public domain is determined by social norms. The study also observed negative linear relation between female WPR and per capita income. The issue like increasing unpaid domestic work participations among women left less time for 'double burden'. From the study it emerged that tribal dominated States and agriculturally prosperous States have still higher percentage of female WPR. That indicates the double role of female. There is wide rural urban gap in female WPR but

narrowing down over the time. It is also tough to make any 'strong' conclusions as to whether these factors explain or not explain inter-State differences in female participation rate. Last but not least, in a country like India where dependency ratio is still very high, the withdrawing of female labour force from the labour market may have negative impact which India will face in near future.

Regarding the policy implications, we may draw attention to some of the major issues:

Change the attitudes of the patriarchal society that females not only are the burden of the parents or households or society but also the wealth of society. If they get space they can stand equally along the male in the society. They are not the machine to produce offsprings only. Maximum working hours of 'working age women' in India is either spent to complete reproduction cycle or to care for family kinds. That reduces the actual performances of female work participation in India.

The unpaid work and home based work in which females invest maximum time probably does not get enumerated or reported in the employment surveys (census) or being accounted as unpaid domestic activity. In many cases the head of the household tends to under-report women's work participation due to stigma attached to women's paid work.

A majority of women workers engage in agriculture as extended labour and allied works that in many cases remained under reported and unreported. The recent figures of Planning Commission (2007) indicate an increase in their proportion among farmers. Even in many cases female workers are regarded as peripheral producers. So they are entitled to marginal benefits of government programmes and from development and credit

institutions. There is a strong need for a gender sensitive agricultural strategy which strengthens the role of women workers in all aspects of agriculture (Srivastava, 2009).

There should be changing policy agenda related to labour market from the job protection to security through employability. Provide a higher level of education and employable skills to women workers to improve their levels of productivity and enabling them to shift into non-agricultural sectors. Women's autonomy which could be measured in terms of access to land and control over its operation, mobility, and willingness to join self-help groups that affects their ability to access resources and improve productivity, and also to shift into non-agricultural sectors.

Labour market segmentation and discrimination in wages, allocation of works,

has kept the low returns to women workers, even they get wages below the legal minimum. Thus, this paper supports the creation of a body which can check value of women's work in those activities in which women predominate as well as home based work. The commission should work as Government watchdog for non-discriminatory practices in the informal labour market in India.

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme which has been initiated in 2006 and employment through self-help groups which was extended to all rural areas can stand positively in improving Female WPR in India. These programmes may constitute the axis around which the employment conditions of the women workers can improve in India.

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Appendice 1

Female Work Participation Rate in India		
States	2011	2001
Jammu & Kashmir	19.11	22.45
Assam	22.46	20.71
Himachal Pradesh	44.82	43.67
West Bengal	18.08	18.32
Punjab	13.91	19.05
Jharkhand	29.10	26.41
Uttarakhand	26.68	27.33
Odisha	27.16	24.66
Haryana	17.79	27.22
Chhattisgarh	39.70	40.04
Rajasthan	35.12	33.49
Madhya Pradesh	32.64	33.21
Uttar Pradesh	16.75	16.54
Gujarat	23.38	27.91
Bihar	19.07	18.84
Maharashtra	31.06	30.81
Sikkim	39.57	38.57
Andhra Pradesh	36.16	35.11
Arunachal Pradesh	35.44	36.54
Karnataka	31.87	31.98
Nagaland	44.74	38.06
Goa	21.92	22.36
Manipur	38.56	39.02
Kerala	18.23	15.38
Mizoram	36.16	47.54
Tamil Nadu	31.80	31.54
Tripura	23.57	21.08
India	25.51	25.63
Meghalaya	32.67	35.15

Source: Census of India, 2011, RGI, Govt. of India.

Appendice 2

Rural-Urban Gap of Female WPR in India

States	2011	2001
Jammu & Kashmir	6.34	15.81
Assam	8.83	11.53
Himachal Pradesh	27.52	31.19
West Bengal	4.00	9.29
Punjab	1.16	12.93
Jharkhand	24.90	25.29
Uttaranchal	21.65	25.96
Odisha	15.58	17.09
Haryana	8.72	23.36
Chhattisgarh	28.86	33.35
Rajasthan	30.65	31.08
Madhya Pradesh	24.12	28.75
Uttar Pradesh	7.01	12.25
Gujarat	20.60	29.12
Bihar	9.72	13.14
Maharashtra	25.74	31.04
Sikkim	19.83	18.94
Andhra Pradesh	25.51	30.11
Arunachal Pradesh	18.18	24.18
Karnataka	17.97	23.50
Nagaland	26.39	26.88
Goa	1.16	8.22
Manipur	8.04	9.28
Kerala	4.21	2.35
Mizoram	10.81	14.03
Tamil Nadu	19.44	22.46
Tripura	10.28	10.42
India	14.58	18.91
Meghalaya	11.38	17.64

Source: Census of India, 2011, RGI, Govt. of India.