

Inclusive growth with Gender Mainstreaming: An Analysis

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Abstract

Inclusive growth ensures that all the marginalised and excluded groups are part of the development and growth process. To address gender gap and improvement of women's well-being is considered as pre-requisite for inclusive society. This research paper provides an insight into the gender related employment inequalities, which creates a great hurdle to obtain equitable society. It provides socio-economic perspective of gender inequality through the Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR), wage disparity, financial inclusion, participation at professional front and decision making role of women. Lastly, it gives suggestive measures to remove gender stereotypes for having inclusive growth.

Keywords: Inclusive Growth, Labour Force Participation rate, Wage Disparity

Introduction

Inclusive growth ensures that all the marginalised and excluded groups are part of the development and growth process. According to United Nations Development Programme most of the marginalised groups are excluded from growth process because of their gender, ethnicity, age, disability or poverty. Road to development cannot be travelled without the health, education and empowerment of women through employment who form almost 50 percent of Indian population. More than 75 percent of world's population lives in societies that are more unequal today than 20 years ago. In many parts of the world, income gaps have deepened despite impressive growth performances. Thus, the benefits of growth have not been distributed fairly across society and the notion that growth needs to create equitable opportunities for all were motivating concerns of the concept of inclusive growth.

To make growth more inclusive and benefit women and men equally, it is important that the growth helps to improve women's well-being and address gender gaps. Gender inclusion necessitates harnessing women's power, utilizing their potential and encouraging women to work towards goals defined by them. This research paper provides an insight into the gender related employment inequalities, which creates a great hurdle to obtain equitable society. It examines socio-economic perspective of gender inequality through the Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR), wage disparity, financial inclusion, participation at professional front and decision making role of women.

Need of Study

Gender inequality refers to unequal treatment or perceptions of individuals based on their gender. As the Global Gender Gap Report 2017 pointed out that talent is important for competitiveness and to find the best talent, everyone should have equal opportunity. When women and the girls are not integrated, the global community loses out on skills, ideas and perspectives that are critical for addressing global challenges and harnessing new opportunities. Regarding social equality, it is said that there must be an absence of such distinctions in society as are based on caste, colour, religion etc. Thus all must enjoy an equal position in society and possess equal legal and economic rights.

The Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2017-18 of National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) had estimated Female Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) at 23.3% which is much lower comparative to other Asian countries. As according to World Bank Data, India's female labour force participation rate ranks much lower than Asian economies in 2019 such as Vietnam (73%), China (61%), Singapore (60%), Bangladesh (36%) and Pakistan (24%) etc. The exclusion of women has now put India as one of the countries with low women's LFPR and stands in the company of Pakistan with 24 percent of LFPR.

Table: 1

Global Ranking based on Gender Inequality

South Asian Countries	Global Index (Rank)	Economic Participation and Opportunity (Rank)
Bangladesh	48	133
Sri Lanka	100	125
Nepal	105	110
India	108	142
Bhutan	122	104
Pakistan	248	146

Source: Global Gender Gap Report, 2018

Thus according to the Global Gender Gap report 2018, the ranking of India in terms of Global Index and Economic participation and Opportunities is 108 and 142 respectively out of the total 149 countries, which is comparatively very less even from South Asian Countries Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

The new set goal of “Equality with Inclusiveness” in the light of current scenario is to be achieved with much broader scope and perspective. Despite many efforts towards gender mainstreaming, several bitter truths regarding discrimination and inequality found in our society concerning wage disparity in employment, nature of job, participation at professional front and interdependence in decision making. Thus to deal with the problem of gender inequality, it is imperative to have a clear idea of this exclusiveness of women in the society.

Objective

This study examines the need of gender equality for inclusive growth with socio-economic perspective. The objective of this current study is to analyse the inequality prevailing for women concerning their employability, social status and decision making power in the society. Regarding employability, this paper enquires the female Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) and wage inequality between men and women for the similar work. Further from the sociological perspective, it examines the position of women concerning participation at professional front and decision making in the society. At the end it also gives suggestive measures for inclusive growth with gender mainstreaming.

Data and Methodology

This paper is primarily based on the secondary data collected through different sources like newspaper, internet, journals, various publications, official websites and various issues of economic survey, employment and unemployment surveys and reports of National Sample Survey Organisation. etc.

Gender Mainstreaming and Inclusive Growth

Inclusive growth policies required equal jobs and economic opportunities for all segments of the population. For women in many societies this would mean dismantling barriers to their participation in economic, social and political life. Although the status of women has improved, yet there is a considerable gap in the economic opportunities available to women and men. Some societies exclude women from work. Across the world, 49 percent of women over the age of 15 are employed as compared with 75 percent of men. Men outnumbered women in almost every occupation. Only about a quarter of managers are women and women are about 39 percent of professionals. Across occupations, women have a relatively higher presence in both clerical support and services and sales occupation (44 percent) (The Global Gender Report 2018).

India enjoys the stage of higher demographic dividend as compared to most of the countries in the world however it is unable to utilize its benefits, which is a great cause of concern. According to the report of PLFS the proportion of active labour force declined twice for females between 2011-12 and 2017-18. Compared to 2011-12, the LFPR for females fell by 8 percentage points to 23.3 percent in 2017-18, whereas the LFPR for males dipped by 4 percentage point to 75.8 percent. So, only a quarter of females in the country were either working or seeking jobs. Though the female LPFR in urban areas stayed almost at the same level at 20.4 percent in 2017-18, yet it declined sharply by more than 11 percentage points in rural areas at 22.9 percent in 2017-18.

Inclusive growth with gender mainstreaming requires to have a clear vision of gender based socio-economic inequalities. It helps for having necessary policy interventions required for inclusive growth

Economic Perspective

The Indian economy is dualistic in nature both in terms of employment . The dualistic nature of the economy has led to the segmentation of labour market into regular/salaried employees (mostly formal covered when they are covered by social security) and self employed and casual workers (informal). According to Employment-Unemployment survey (2011-12), Out of the total employment of 402 million persons (between the age of 15-64), 290 million were men and 112 million were women. Further of all employed persons 206 million (51 percent) were self employed and 195 million (48 percent) were wage employees and out of 195 million wage employees 74 million were regular/ salaried employees and 121 million were casual employees. Out of this total employed persons, the gender wise segmentation of labour market in rural and urban areas is as follows.

Table: 2

Gender wise segmentation of Labour market in 2011-12 (in Percentage)

Structure of Employment	Rural			Urban		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Self Employed	53.3	59.0	55.0	41.0	42.5	41.3
Regular/Salaried Workers	10.5	5.8	9.0	44.2	43.6	44.0
Casual Workers	36.2	35.2	35.9	14.8	13.9	14.6

Source: Employment-Unemployment Survey 2011-12, ILO 2018 Report

It is quite clear from the above table that the proportion of self employment was higher among women employees than men in rural as well as in urban areas and the maximum disparity found in rural areas for females in terms of regular/ salaried workers. Further in case of casual workers, the proportion of urban females is comparatively lesser than rural females.

To view the **gender based economic inequality**, the difference between women and men in Labour Force Participation Rate, wage equality between men and women for similar work and financial inclusion among female workers is to be considered.

➤ **Share of Women in Labour Force Participation Rate**

LFPR measures the number of persons aged 15 and above who are employed and unemployed, but looking for a job divided by the total working age population. The rate of LFPR provides an opportunity to women not only to enhance their individual and household income and wealth, but a greater say over household decisions. Thus it provides an outlook for the participation of women in economic terms. Workforce Participation Rate (WPR) measures the number of persons actually working for productive activities.

The overall LFPR in India averaged 53.90 percent from 2005 until 2018, reaching an all time high of 63.70 percent in 2005 and a record low of 49.8 percent in 2018.

Table: 3

LFPR, WPR and UR for persons Aged 15 years (in Percent)

Parameter	Rural			Urban			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
LFPR*	78.0	31.7	55.8	69.1	16.6	43.7	75.5	27.4	52.4
WPR**	75.7	30.2	53.9	67.1	14.8	41.8	73.3	25.8	50.5
UR***	2.9	4.7	3.4	3.0	10.9	4.4	3.0	5.8	3.7

*LFPR: Labour Force Participation Rate;**WPR : Work Force Participation;*** UR : Unemployment Rate

Source : Fifth Annual Employment-Unemployment Survey, Labour Bureau, Ministry of Labour and Employment (2015-16)

Thus it is evident from the above table that gender wise segmentation of LFPR, WPR and UR in rural as well as in urban areas represents a gloomy picture of female workers and further the disparity is more visible for female workers in rural areas than in urban areas.

➤ **Wage Disparity among Men and Women**

In India women still encounter significant obstacles regarding job opportunities and payoff packages. In India, the discrimination on the basis of employment status (regular/casual) in rural and urban areas reveals large pay gaps in terms of average daily wages.

Table: 4

Average daily wage/salary received by subgroup and gender 2011-12

(INR in nominal terms)

Type of Worker	Rural			Urban		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Regular Workers	324	201	300	470	365	449
Casual Workers	151	112	138	184	104	171

Source : Labour Bureau, NSSO 68th Round CSO, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, GOI

Thus this table represents the fact that the average daily wages of urban female casual workers is the lowest and further there is great disparity among rural female for both regular as well as casual workers.

➤ **Financial Inclusion among Women**

Financial inclusion is considered as an essential tool for reducing gender inequality and to provide a boost to inclusive growth. In case of India, the proportion of women having bank or saving account that they use independently have increased from 15.5 percent to 53 percent (Economic Survey 2018-19). However a lot of work has to be done to match with the international standards.

Social Perspective

India is the ‘fourth most dangerous country’ in the world for women. India was also noted as the worst country for women among the G20 countries. Gender discrimination often begins at home and gets accentuated in the society. The system of patriarchy is inbuilt in our Indian social system, in which the male acts as primary authority figure to social organisation and where fathers hold authority over women. India is still a male dominated society, where woman are often seen as subordinate and inferior to men. Even though India is moving away from the male dominated culture, discrimination is highly visible in rural as well in urban areas. India is changing but due to the existing deep-rooted traditions and archaic societal notions, they still have unequal access to work. Women’s equality in power sharing and active participation in decision making especially in domestic and social sphere will enhance their social status. The status accorded to women in society symbolises its level of progress. The sociological perspective can be represented in terms of social background, women’s place at professional front and its role in decision making.

- **Women’s place in professional front:** It has been considered that if a woman chooses motherhood, she must lower her occupational goals and expectations. A woman with children would fall behind a childless woman in earnings, as the childless woman goes up the corporate ladder faster. Women with children thus have to sacrifice with their career. Moreover, during recruitment exercises of companies, women having children are generally neglected and are not given a fair chance to achieve heights in their career. The rural women are restricted from employment to a great extent. They are not allowed to work at distant places from home. Women in urban areas are at a better position than rural women in terms of employment. But they are rarely promoted to executive and supervisory posts. Women’s primary responsibility is considered to be at home. Even the employer attitude is not favourable towards women.
- **Social background:** The Indian labour market is segregated on the basis of social background that is caste. Some disadvantaged groups such as SC’s and ST’s have been historically marginalized and secluded with regard to unequal access to employment opportunities thereby widening income inequality. Further these differences becomes acute when it include women with specification of SC and ST groups.

- **Participation of women in decision making:** As women constitutes 48.5% of the India's population, yet their presence in the key decision making positions is far from proportionate be it governance, corporate leadership or law enforcement.
1. As per the Central Group A services is concerned, 30% of officers are women in Indian Economic Service (2014), compared to 24% in Indian Statistical Service (2016), 17% in Indian Administrative Service (2016), 9% in Indian Police Service (2016), 8% in Indian Foreign Service (2014), and 4% in Indian Forest Service (2016).
 2. Further as per the NSSO's report of 'Women and Men 2018' in India:
 - a) The percentage of women nominated in Rajya Sabha has been around 11% in 2016.
 - b) There are 3 women judges out of 31 judges in Supreme Court and there were 73 women judges out of 689 judges in different high courts.
 - c) As of 2018, the percentage of women in central council is 12.2%, same as in 2016.
 - d) The number of women members in Rajya Sabha has decreased from 31 in 2014 to 27 in 2016.
 3. Further According to National Family Health Survey-III (2005-06) in the rural sector married women can take only 26% decisions regarding obtaining health care for herself and 7.6% in case of purchasing major household items. 10% decisions are taken by females in respect of visiting their family or relatives. For urban areas, these figures are 29.7 %, 10.4 % and 12.2 % respectively.

Findings

The major findings of the study shows that the overall LFPR is falling in India from 57.1 percent in 2010-11 to 49.8 percent in 2017-18. Further in terms of Labour Force Participation Rate, Work Force Participation Rate and Unemployment Rate, the state of female is very depressing specifically in urban areas than in rural areas. However, the disparity on the basis of wages is more acute in rural areas than in urban areas for females regular workers. Lastly, from social perspective, the gender based discrimination causes lesser decision making power for females.

Suggestive Measures

Although government has taken many initiatives for having inclusive growth with gender equality. But effective steps are required to implement law regarding 'Equal Pay for Equal Work'. As there is a need for proper implementation of sustainable wage policies which promotes decent work and inclusive growth. with the announcement of Good and Services Tax (GST), government wants to formalise the informal sector. But in the process of formalisation of informal sector, there is a dire need of extending legal coverage provided to all the workers in employment relationship. Last but not the least a minimum wage structure with more simplified form and the direct participation of all the social partners without any discrimination is desired for gender mainstreaming.

Conclusion

To deal with gender disparity, women must get equal opportunity in economic terms. for gender mainstreaming, it is imperative to improve women's well being by lessening their workloads and by removing the disparities in the wages. On social front, women's representation in community affairs should be increased to strengthen their decision-making and their role at professional front. Women as half of the human capital of India, will need to be more efficiently integrated into the economy in order to boost India's long term competitive potential. Thus to attain inclusive growth, gender inequality in all spheres must be acknowledged and should deal with appropriate measures by the government.

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