

Work Participation Behaviour of Married Women with Living Husbands : A Case of Rural and Urban Pondicherry

**V. Nirmala
K. Sham Bhat
MD. Mohsin
B. Kamaiah**

Work participation models were estimated using OLS and Tobit methods to investigate into the behavioural response of married women with living husbands in Pondicherry region. Data for the study were collected through personal interviews during April 1990 and 1991 from two samples of 125 women each, residing in urban and rural areas respectively, thus contributing a total sample of 250 observations. The analysis revealed almost identical and significant response of women to change in education and income variables, regardless of regional differences. However, the response to child variables and dependents in family varied considerably across the rural and urban samples. The Chow test conducted to examine whether the sets of coefficients for the rural and urban samples remained the same, showed that the overall pattern of labour participation behaviour was significantly distinct between the two regions in Pondicherry.

I Introduction

Women form an important segment of the human resources of a country. In the past, they were confined to only home and hearth. As a consequence, half the manpower resources remained dormant. Gradually, the realization of women being a partner in a country's development process dawned upon the society. Thus, with the spread of education, more and more women started taking up paid jobs. Generally in rural areas, most women take up paid employment due to economic pressures, while in urban areas it has been either to have a career, to contribute comforts to the family or because the family economic conditions required the income.

The rising trend in female labour force participation the world-over, has caught the attention of social scientists and policy makers. The pioneering contributions of Becker (1965),