

Trends of Female Work Force Participation in Indian Unorganized Sector: An Exploratory Study

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Though the economic liberalization process started in the late nineties in India, the female work force participation rate has remained tardy for a long time. The scenario is more distressful in the organized sector as compared with the unorganized sector. The female workforce participation in the organized sector is still low compared with some emerging nations like Indonesia, Brazil, etc. But interestingly, in the unorganized sector such participation is quite impressing in the Indian scenario. Unfortunately, higher participation of females in the unorganized sector is not a sign of improvement and may over represent the actual status. This paper tries to find out the crucial determinants of female workforce participation in the Indian unorganized sector using logistic regression model and has concluding remarks based on the analysis to bring Indian women on the path of inclusive growth providing appropriate knowledge and skills.

I Introduction

India's economic growth has increased rapidly over the past two decades. As compared with it, the workforce participation was surprisingly stagnant throughout 90s and showed a positive sign since 2000. Unfortunately, from 2012-2013 the picture again started to show a phlogistic scenario where overall employment in the country has dropped significantly. It is more glaring when female workforce participation (FWPR) is concerned. It is well avowed throughout the world that female participation has a strong positive impact on economic growth (Klasen and Lamanna 2009). Economic growth without significant female workforce participation implies that human resources are not utilized by the country and enough potential is left for further growth by mobilizing human capital for productive purposes. Therefore, to accelerate economic growth in India policymakers have advocated higher female participation in the job market. Beyond economic benefits, women participation in the labour force reduces discrimination and helps to enhance their socio-economic empowerment within households and society (Mammen and Paxson 2000). However, feminization of the workforce is not necessarily a sign of improvement of women's voice, opportunities and position in the society (Standing 1999, Bhalotra and Umama-Aponte 2010). The issue of female

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