

The Study of Effects of Education on Women's Occupation in India

Nahid Sarikhani

Azad University, Roudheh Branch, 136, vahidiyeh st. Tehran, Iran
E-mail: na_s_16@yahoo.com

KEYWORDS Gender. Sex- ratio. Marginal Workers. Main Workers. Non- workers

ABSTRACT The present article aims at investigating the study of effects of education on women's occupation in India based on population census in 2001. Descriptive method was used in this research. The researcher compares main and marginal women workers in different educational levels. Meanwhile, this study presents the number of main and marginal women workers by main activity nationally, and whether marginal women workers seeking classified jobs have a suitable educational level, and/or whether non-worker women seeking a job are mostly illiterate or poorly literate? Moreover, results show households pay more attention to males' education than that of females among household members. In general, it suggests to increase educational level of women so that they can take up suitable and specialized positions in the society.

INTRODUCTION

The role of women in a society is very important and no nation can ignore it. They can affect economic development. If they improve higher education levels among themselves, they will earn more job opportunities than last time in their communities. Unfortunately, today, data indicate that most of the women have acquired low educational levels and have lost proper job opportunities in the society. As a result, most of them are faced with unemployment phenomena, and unemployment has become a vital problem for the women seeking jobs. In this competitive world, it has become more acute. As a matter of fact, in most of the private and government offices men's applications were accepted. Therefore, education has worked as the prime factor to motivate the women to work.

Undoubtedly literate rate of women can be strongly influenced by socio-economic factors. Because they feel that whatever they have acquired through education has to be utilized. It should not be wasted. They should make proper use of their abilities and do something for the service of the society and the nation. They want to use their leisure time in some gainful activity. Again they are fully conscious of their own individuality and they want to maintain the personal status and independent social standing by working and earning for their own needs. They want to be self-sufficient. They understand very well that economic self-sufficiency has improved their social status. They have accomplished more freedom and personal security. They enjoy more rights and if they are questioned they can fight it better. In short, education

and self-earnings increased their self-confidence and they are able to come out of the dependency. This is an outstanding achievement of this age (Dak 1989).

Education has also served as a discriminatory tool to limit work opportunities and wages for women. Since men are better educated, they can use modern technology more efficiently than women. Further, sex-based division of work is imposed in sex stereotyping of "curricula" (that is, home science for girls), and occupational placements (that is, nursing or teaching), and it has been reflected in enrolling men and women in different fields of studies and courses as well as in occupational choices. All these have greatly restricted the areas of employment and work participation of women (Dak 1989). On the other hand, urbanization has weakened the influence of joint families and the rigidity of social norms affecting women's traditional role has been perpetuated by the system.

In India, formal education of women began a hundred years ago. In spite of this early start, improvement in general literacy was painfully slow especially in the higher educational levels, and it has influenced the work participation rate. As according to the census in 2001, the work participation rate of women in India is only 25.6 per cent and that most of them engage in the informal sector and low levels of economic activities. Meanwhile studies of professional women elsewhere report discrimination and role conflict as major problems (Kumara and Aknayak 1997).

Early marriage is also very common among the Indian families. This creates problems for the women to acquire education and jobs for

themselves. After marriage, they cannot continue their education.

In addition, even when women are professionally trained and aspire to utilize their skills to produce the best performance and to earn fame and name, their in-laws do not accept their working. In this way, women forget their professional skills and abilities (like doctors, engineers and technicians).

In the study, the author attributes analyzing the study of effects of education on women's occupation in India based on population census in 2001.

Study Areas

The research considers the whole of India as study area and used the censuses during 1981-2001. Moreover, women are selected as the study population for fulfilling the research purpose.

Aims

To explore of effects of education on women's occupation in India

- The study of the number of workers by sex-ratio, educational level and residential area and states.
- To investigate of the number of main and marginal woman workers by main actives at national level.
- The study of non-workers by educational level and gender.

METHODOLOGY

In the present study, the researcher has adopted a descriptive method of collecting and analyzing the data. The researcher gathered the data from secondary sources. For the purpose of collecting secondary data concerning the topic, information was collected from the census reports (The Population Census in 1981-2001), books, documentary reports and works related to the topic of study.

RESULTS

Education is an indispensable means for helping women out of their economic misery because economic dependency is a factor contributing to the low status of women. Educated women ev-

erywhere show the tendency towards increasing economic independence. The awareness of the need to become financially independent and to supplement family income have forced women to accept jobs outside the home.

According to censuses, sex ratio among population of women at the national level has been 934 in 1981, 927 in 1991 and 933 in 2001. It probably presents that the position of women has worsened considerably, a decline in the sex ratio due to absolute condition of health and survival for women.

On the other hand, the population of women is steadily increasing as the growth rate is 23.1 per cent in the 2001 census.

As per 2001 census, of the total population of women, 84.1 percent consist of population aged 7 years and above in India, (Census of India 2001) literacy rate for women is 53.7 while it is 75.3 per cent for men. In the rural areas, the male and female literacy rates are 86.3 per cent and 72.8 per cent respectively, and in the urban areas, these are 70.7 per cent and 46.1 per cent respectively in country.

According to the 2001 census, the number of literates by completed educational level to total women aged 7 years and above at the national level indicates 3.4 per cent of men and 3.9 per cent of women are categorized as 'Literates without educational level'. Also 24.1 per cent of men and 28.4 per cent of women come in the category of 'Below Primary'. More than one-fifth of the men (24.8%) and over one-fourth of women the (28.2%) have completed 'Primary'. Nearly one-sixth of the men (16.6%) and over one-sixth of the women have completed 'Middle level' and more than one-fifth of men the (22.5%) and less than one-fifth of the women (18.4%) have completed the educational level of 'Matric/Secondary' or 'Higher Secondary/Intermediate/Pre-University/Senior Secondary'. Literacy rates of men and women in the category 'Non-technical and technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree' and 'Graduate and above' are less than 10 per cent for men and less 6 per cent for women at the national levels. The proportion of the population with higher level of education is more in urban areas (men 22.5% and women 15.3%) than in rural areas (men 7.6% and women 2.7%). Therefore, there are significant gender differentials among the distribution of the population by educational levels.

The statistics above indicated that women comparing men have not been able to take

educational advantage of especially higher educational levels in the society, because there are several factors such as the governing traditional attitude to women, social, structural and institutional factors in communities like early marriage.

Also, of the total population aged 7 years and over, 35.2 per cent are illiterate. This rate in rural areas (41.3%) exceeds the urban areas (20.1%). In addition, the data have shown, rate among the women is 46.3 per cent higher than the men (24.7%) and this pattern, similarly blinks among rural areas (male is 29.3 and female is 53.9%) and urban areas (male is 13.7% and female is 27.1%). So it is women and not men who cannot take up suitable opportunities of occupation in society.

As a matter of fact, available literature indicates that there is a close relationship between the spread of female education on the one hand and the development status on the other.

In other words, literacy rate can affect the work participation of population, especially women in societies. The work participation rate is defined as the percentage of the total worker (main and marginal) to the total population. This is often considered as a very crude measure since this does not take into account the age structure of the population. According to the census of 2001, in India, of the total population of 1,028,610,328 the number of populations returned as workers is 402,234,724. In other words, 39.1 per cent of the population of India constitutes workers. That is to say, nearly two-fifths of the country's population at the national level is reported to be participating in economically productive activities. Of these workers, those workers who had worked for the major part of the reference period (that is, 6 months or more) were termed as Main Workers and who had not worked for the major part of the reference period (that is, 6 months or more) were termed as Marginal Workers, 59.5 per cent were literate and 40.5 were illiterate. Sex ratio between literate population is 234, and among illiterate population is 1008.

A comparative statement of the number of literates among workers by educational levels at the national level, census of 2001, shows that 62.9 per cent of literate workers are categorized as 'literate but below matric/secondary' while 25.8 percent, come in the category 'matric/secondary but below graduate'. 1.1 per cent of the literates have completed 'technical diploma

or certificate not equal to degree'. Less than one-tenth have completed 'graduate and above other than technical degree' and 1.5 per cent of the literates have completed the educational level of 'technical degree or diploma equal to degree or post-graduate degree'. Therefore, the majority of literate workers are in the category 'literate but below matric/secondary' but could not complete middle level of education at the national level. Also, more job opportunities are reported in category 'graduate and above others than technical degree'. There are significant gender differentials among literate workers, and it is reported that participation of men are appreciably higher across all levels of education. The proportion of literate workers with higher level of education is more in urban areas (22.9%) than rural areas (6.1%). Sex ratio of literate workers with higher level of education in rural areas and urban areas are 132 and 209 respectively.

Table 1 shows 63.6 per cent of the 'main workers' are 'literate' according to 2001 Census. From among the literate main workers the highest proportion of literacy is reported in the category 'literate but below matric/secondary', and the second group is level of education 'matric/secondary but below graduate'. The smallest population group with 1.2 per cent is recorded at 'technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree' forms. The proportion of literate main workers of females than males in the all categories is less because men who are heads of families are presented as supplementing family earnings in the society. On the other hand, men, the principle bread earners, are dominant in all categories of literate main workers. Moreover, illiterate men than illiterate women have found more job opportunities in main workers level. Meanwhile, the proportion of literate main workers of women against men is less in urban areas and rural areas. As a matter of fact, more job opportunities with main workers are allocated to men. Of course, among the literate women, proportion of educated female main workers is higher in the urban areas against rural areas.

Table 2 shows that sex ratio of literate population in the age group under 15 years is 452, in the age group 15-19 is between 168 to 264, in the age group 20-24 is between 141 to 437, in the age group 25-29 is between 107 to 332, in the age group 30-34 is between 94 to 282, in the age group 35-39 is between 94 to 266, in the age group 40-59 is between 60 to 243, and in the age group 60 year and above is between 32 to 113 at

Table 1: Distribution of main workers, by education of level and gender in India- 2001

	<i>Educational level</i>	<i>Main workers</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Total</i>	Total	3,130,04,983	72,857,170	23.3
	Illiterate	113,928,238	44,923,253	39.4
	Literate	199,076,745	27,933,917	14.0
	Literate but below matric/secondary	113,911,636	17,327,096	15.2
	Matric/secondary but below graduate	51,015,376	4,657,228	9.1
	Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	2,231,975	358,422	16.1
	Graduate and above other than technical degree	18,596,928	2,521,897	13.6
	Technical degree or diploma equal to degree or post-graduate degree	3,314,253	685,868	20.7
<i>Rural</i>	Total	229,186,552	60,085,301	26.2
	Illiterate	98,539,379	40,271,642	40.9
	Literate	130,647,173	19,813,659	15.2
	Literate but below matric/secondary	85,495,660	14,171,354	16.6
	Matric/secondary but below graduate	29,219,970	2,797,562	9.6
	Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	933,206	163,205	17.5
	Graduate and above other than technical degree	6,387,642	554,371	8.7
	Technical degree or diploma equal to degree or post-graduate degree	982,173	162,193	16.5
<i>Urban</i>	Total	83,818,431	12,771,869	15.2
	Illiterate	15,388,859	4,651,611	30.2
	Literate	68,429,572	8,120,258	11.9
	Literate but below matric/secondary	28,415,976	3,155,742	11.1
	Matric/secondary but below graduate	21,795,406	1,859,666	8.5
	Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	1,298,769	195,217	15.0
	Graduate and above other than technical degree	12,209,286	1,967,526	16.1
	Technical degree or diploma equal to degree or post-graduate degree	2,332,080	523,675	22.5

Source: B3 Table, India: Census of India 2001

the national level. In general, the level of participation of children in school going age is considerable special girl's children. There are job opportunities for 'working age group 15-59 years' of men against women in level of main workers, and participation rate of females are higher in low literacy levels. Significant proportion of the elderly persons aged 60 years and above is economically active at the national level that a share was allocated to women. Meanwhile the data reveals appreciable rural-urban differentials. In the rural areas the women do most of the work on farms and perform other economic activities of the villages. These activities do not need to high skill and specialisation.

On the other hand, part of the employed population consists of marginal workers who had not worked for the major part of the reference period (that is, 6 months or more). Less than one-fourth of the employed population is as marginal workers that proportion of women to total marginal workers is 60.9 per cent in the 2001 Census at the national level. The proportion of such workers is higher among the 'illiterate', against 'literate' section of the population. Female marginal workers are reported to have considerable proportion both among the 'illiterates' and the overall category of 'literate' (Table 3).

Also, of total 89,229,741 the 'marginal workers' 24,923,666 population (27.9 per cent) at national level are reported to be in the category 'Seeking/available for work' who did not have work for major part of the year and were in the look out for work. The proportion of women of seeking for job to total the category 'Seeking/available for work' is 37.7 per cent that more than 35 per cent of these workers are reported to be 'literate'. Meanwhile 1.5 per cent of the female marginal workers 'seeking/available for work' have a Technical diploma/Degree/Post graduate degree in the national level.

According to data at the 2001 census, 626,375,604 of the total population are non-workers. On the other hand, more than 60 per cent of the total population of the country is unemployed according to the 2001 Census, and the proportion of women non-workers is 58.9 per cent (Table 4). Proportion of literate female among non-workers is 55.6 per cent. Also, the proportion of higher educational level of female non-workers to total of higher educational level non-workers is reported to be 57.4 per cent.

Of the total population of non-workers 45,157,896 of them are reported to be 'seeking/available' for work. Interestingly, only about 19 per cent of the non-workers 'seeking/available for work' are 'illiterate'. Proportion of literate

Table 2: Distribution of main workers by educational level, sex ratio and age

<i>Educational level</i>		<i>-15</i>	<i>15-19</i>	<i>20-24</i>	<i>25-29</i>	<i>30-34</i>
<i>India</i>	Literate but below matric/secondary	452	264	209	206	196
	Matric/secondary but below graduate	-	219	141	107	94
	Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	-	168	213	160	167
	Graduate and above other than technical degree	-	-	284	196	161
	Technical degree or diploma equal to degree or post-graduate degree	-	-	437	332	282
<i>Rural Areas</i>	Literate but below matric/secondary	480	293	245	239	222
	Matric/secondary but below graduate	-	233	157	122	100
	Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	-	132	208	183	205
	Graduate and above other than technical degree	-	-	177	127	100
	Technical degree or diploma equal to degree or post-graduate degree	-	-	347	264	218
<i>Urban Areas</i>	Literate but below matric/secondary	354	171	107	117	128
	Matric/secondary but below graduate	-	192	113	85	86
	Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	-	219	218	143	141
	Graduate and above other than technical degree	-	-	369	246	202
	Technical degree or diploma equal to degree or post-graduate degree	-	-	476	366	315
		<i>35-39</i>	<i>40-49</i>	<i>50-59</i>	<i>60-69</i>	<i>70+</i>
<i>India</i>	Literate but below matric/secondary	186	149	104	70	50
	Matric/secondary but below graduate	94	80	60	32	42
	Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	196	213	228	100	113
	Graduate and above other than technical degree	157	136	101	54	69
	Technical degree or diploma equal to degree or post-graduate degree	266	243	170	95	113
<i>Rural Areas</i>	Literate but below matric/secondary	203	160	106	66	45
	Matric/secondary but below graduate	91	71	42	21	35
	Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	235	238	247	89	94
	Graduate and above other than technical degree	87	70	46	21	39
	Technical degree or diploma equal to degree or post-graduate degree	191	179	110	46	73
<i>Urban Areas</i>	Literate but below matric/secondary	141	120	98	85	72
	Matric/secondary but below graduate	97	91	79	46	50
	Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	171	199	217	109	131
	Graduate and above other than technical degree	198	165	124	70	83
	Technical degree or diploma equal to degree or post-graduate degree	303	269	193	114	128

Source: B9 Table, India: Census of India 2001

Table 3: Distribution of marginal workers by educational level and gender in India-2001

<i>Educational level</i>		<i>Marginal workers</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Total</i>	Total	89,229,741	54,363,078	60.9
	Illiterate	49,012,445	36,884,266	75.3
	Literate	40,217,296	17,478,812	43.5
	Literate but below matric/secondary	28,654,141	13,293,112	46.4
	Matric/secondary but below graduate	7,494,972	2,426,557	32.4
	Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	1,525,777	224,299	14.7
	Graduate and above other than technical degree	1,272,495	299,479	23.5
	Technical degree or diploma equal to degree or post-graduate degree	1,164,033	306,678	26.4
<i>Rural</i>	Total	80,769,518	51,031,616	63.2
	Illiterate	45,871,400	35,128,855	76.6
	Literate	34,898,118	15,902,761	45.6
	Literate but below matric/secondary	25,392,057	12,274,140	48.3
	Matric/secondary but below graduate	6,161,908	2,097,074	34.0
	Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	1,072,355	158,199	14.8
	Graduate and above other than technical degree	882,972	181,632	20.6
	Technical degree or diploma equal to degree or post-graduate degree	704,133	153,554	21.8
<i>Urban</i>	Total	8,460,223	3,331,462	39.4
	Illiterate	3,141,045	1,755,411	55.9
	Literate	5,319,178	1,576,051	29.6
	Literate but below matric/secondary	3,262,084	1,018,972	31.2
	Matric/secondary but below graduate	1,333,064	329,483	24.7
	Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	453,422	66,101	14.6
	Graduate and above other than technical degree	389,523	117,847	30.3
	Technical degree or diploma equal to degree or post-graduate degree	459,900	153,244	33.3

Source: B3 Table, India: Census of India 2001

Table 4: Distribution of non-workers by educational level and gender

<i>Educational level</i>		<i>Non-workers</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Total</i>	Total	626375604	369233308	58.9
	Illiterate	304981848	190491956	62.5
	Literate	321393756	178741352	55.6
	Literate but below matric/secondary	239232389	130563956	54.6
	Matric/secondary but below graduate	58921734	34291838	58.2
	Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	1282128	384990	30.0
	Graduate and above other than technical degree	12746328	7903194	62.0
	Technical degree or diploma equal to degree or post-graduate degree	1623740	695723	42.8
<i>Rural</i>	Total	432534569	249771048	57.7
	Illiterate	236209043	147168292	62.3
	Literate	196325526	102602756	52.3
	Literate but below matric/secondary	160280903	83739049	52.2
	Matric/secondary but below graduate	26888354	14018041	52.1
	Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	559380	152928	27.3
	Graduate and above other than technical degree	3448053	1598581	46.4
	Technical degree or diploma equal to degree or post-graduate degree	389254	132948	34.2
<i>Urban</i>	Total	193841035	119462260	61.6
	Illiterate	68772805	43323664	63.0
	Literate	125068230	76138596	60.9
	Literate but below matric/secondary	78951486	46824907	59.3
	Matric/secondary but below graduate	32033380	20273797	63.3
	Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	722748	232062	32.1
	Graduate and above other than technical degree	9298275	6304613	67.8
	Technical degree or diploma equal to degree or post-graduate degree	1234486	562775	45.6

Source: B3 Table, India: Census of India 2001.

female among non-workers 'seeking/available' for work is 48 per cent, and the proportion of higher educational level of female's non-workers 'seeking/available' for work to total of higher educational level non-workers 'seeking/available' for work is reported to be 42.2 per cent, that is to say, a sizeable group of females non-workers 'seeking/available for work' is recorded to be 'technical diploma/degree/graduates and above'. Meanwhile they have not found place in the job market in spite of their educational attainments.

Looking at the distribution of marginal workers 'seeking/available for work' and non-workers 'seeking/available for work' by broad age-groups, it is seen that majority of the 'seeking/available for work' in the two categories (65.5 per cent for marginal workers and 77.2 per cent for non-workers) have been from the young job seeking age-group 15-34 years. It is interesting to see that whereas the proportion 'seeking/available for work' from amongst marginal and non-workers is appreciably higher for those in the age group 35 years and above, over the age-group 15-34 years for 'illiterates', such proportion for the 'literate' has declined.

Among the illiterates high proportion (43 per cent) of main workers has been reported from rural areas as against 18.4 per cent from the

urban areas. In contrast, proportion of main workers reported from among the literates from urban areas (81.6 per cent) has been more than that reported (57 per cent) from rural areas. The data also reveals significant sex differentials in the proportion of main workers by area of residence. Among the literates, proportion of female main workers is higher in the urban areas. It is more so for literate females with higher levels of education (Technical diploma and above).

DISCUSSION

In general, in India, literacy rate for women is 53.7 while it is 75.3 per cent for men in national level. Illiteracy rate for the women is higher than the men. Sex ratio between literate population is 234, and among illiterate population is 1008. There is traditional attitude about women that dominate community and family structure that men are the head of the family and should supply the income of the household. Also there are other factors such as early marriage, veiling.

In addition, results have indicated that there exists a wide gap between the work participation rate of males and females. A majority of women workers are employed as marginal workers.

Men have traditional attitudes, and these attitudes have prevented women from entering professional training and also professional work markets. Even though women maybe very good at their jobs, or may have attained high professional levels in the office, the management always preferred to use men. The efficiency of a working woman is always suspected, especially, in the upper cadres.

Besides, in many cases, the women are selected as marginal workers because they can be paid less than men for the same type of work.

As Cockburn (1991) has argued, the culture of masculism deforms both men and women. As individuals we are all trapped and constrained by gender stereotypes. Because he researcher has emphasized the way in which sex-typing of jobs has pushed women into inferior places in the hierarchy and into economic dependency, that does not mean that men, too, do not suffer from the pressures of having to live up to ideas of masculine behavior which may be alien to them as individuals (Bradley 1989).

The culture of masculism can get job opportunities of educated women, and they pull towards informal sectors or temporary occupations. Data have indicated that the proportion of women has inquired higher educational levels in the country, but they cannot take up suitable job opportunities especially as main workers. Then we can observe clearly that are being equality only on the paper, but not in reality.

CONCLUSION

In general, the results reveal that personal laws and traditions have led to unequal educational, social and economic conditions for women compared to men in India. Furthermore, in this society men generally decide whether the women in the family should be educated or not, whether they should work outside home or not, and so on. Overall, women's education could mean breaking traditional stereotypes. It can also help them regain self-confidence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Education of women has a great impact on the individual's social and economic condition. It can help a woman to develop her personality as well as her rationality in her attitude and thinking. Also, it provides many opportunities

for alternatives jobs of respectability and helps to improve the status and role of women.

By virtue of the gathered data the following conclusions were drawn:

The results reveal that conditions of working women are deplorable. The proportion of literate main workers of females than males in all categories is less because men who are heads are presented as supplementing family earnings in society. As a matter of fact, more job opportunities with main workers are allocated to men. Furthermore, the data obtained depict the differentiation and discrimination of male and female roles and responsibilities in the household and society.

Today, various legislations, policies and programmes have been implemented to protect the interests of women and to improve their status. Unfortunately many times they are not properly implemented or they are not adequate.

According to the social situation of women in India, we should implement proper programmes in related to improve and to increase awareness level of women about their equal status with men and this belief should translated into actual practice through several institutions, customs and practices. This can be about a change in men's attitudes towards the women's positions and rights. With use of advertisements, we should create this belief among employers that women like men have abilities and merciless in work's activities. It is essential to implement legislations that protect women's rights by advertisement, plays, and films.

REFERENCES

- Bradley H 1989. *Men's Work, Women's Work: A Sociological History of the Sexual Division of Labour in Employment*. USA: Polity Press, P.239.
- Census of India 1991. *Series-I: Social and Cultural Tables-India*. New Delhi: Registrar General and Census Commissioner.
- Census of India 1981. *Series-I: Social and Cultural Tables-India*. New Delhi: Registrar General And Census Commissioner.
- Census of India 2001. *C8 Table*. New Delhi: Registrar General and Census Commissioner.
- Census of India 2001. *B3 Table*. New Delhi: Registrar General and Census Commissioner.
- Census of India 2001. *B9 Table*. New Delhi: Registrar General and Census Commissioner.
- Dak TM 1989. *Women and Work in Indian Society*. Delhi: Discovery Publishing House, pp. 8, 215.
- Kumar U, Singh A 1997. *Recent Trends in Education Series Women Education*. New Delhi: Commonwealth Publishers, P. 267.