

INCREASING GENDER GAP: WOMEN AND WOMEN WORKER IN DISADVANTAGED SITUATION

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ABSTRACT

Evidence shows that in terms of participation of male and female in the economy, education, employment, politics and many other areas of human life, the relative position of women has remained much below their male counterparts.

The position of women varies in different socio-cultural situations. There are many reasons for this situation, and historically, the position of women remains still subservient to men. This paper examines such situations and highlights the issues which have remained intractable so far.

The paper highlights certain areas of employment and education in which women's participation has been very low as compared to their male counterparts. It suggests some broad policy measures and concludes that even in designing and formulating policy and programmes women's involvement is very necessary.

KEYWORDS: *Economy, Education, Employment, Politics and Human Life*

INTRODUCTION

During the past several decades, the issues relating to women's development in general and women workers' role in economic development in particular, have been receiving gradually increasing attention. The issues are discussed in different perspectives from different dimensions. The issues broadly are: discrimination against women in social, economic, education, cultural arenas of life. Historical and present evidence show that she has been treated unfairly despite her enormous contributions to human development and human civilization from time immemorial. This is because of several reasons. For example, her contribution to sustaining family and society has not yet been properly recognized in economic terms.

As a result of this non-recognition of women's contribution, their status has remained still subordinated to their male counterparts. The discriminatory process has been legitimized by powers in all ages and powers were always waged by the males. The power equation still remains the same – in the domain of men.

Ostergaard Observes

The women in development movement, whether in its scientific, political or popular form, has definitely drawn the world's attention to the fact that women present powerful human resources in development, that unnoticed they perform the major part of the world's labour and that they do so under very underprivileged conditions (Ostergaard, 1992:5).

The socio-religious conflicts today in India relating to women's entry to temples, shrines, mosques, etc. are the eloquent reflection of the discriminatory practices prevailing in the society not only in India but across different parts of the world.

The disadvantages which women suffer have been systematically linked to women's biological status. Her biology has been used a parameter for her segregation and congregation. First, she has been segregated as a female. Second, this segregation as a female has been used as a tool to divest her from rights to property, employment, education and participation in many other social and political activities. Wherever some rights have been available to her, it has been given to her not as a human being but as women. Today this sex-based discriminatory practices against women have been conceptualized as 'gender-based discrimination'. The gender-based discrimination is a socially constructed concept. Once the concept is internalized as a natural phenomenon, it seeps into all aspects of life. Gaily explains this in the following terms:

While sex differences are physical, gender differences are socially constructed concepts of gender are cultural interpretations of sex differences. Gender is related to sex differences but not necessarily to physiological differences as we see them in our society. Gender depends on how society views the relationship of male to man and female to the woman. Every culture has prevailing images of what men and women are "supposed" to be like that (Gaily, 1987:34).

This Aspect of Gender Relation has Been More Clearly Explained by Ostergaard

The relations between men and women are socially constituted and not derived from biology. Therefore the term gender relations should distinguish such social relations between men and women from those characteristics, which can be derived from biological differences. In this connection, **sex** is the province of biology, i.e. fixed and unchangeable qualities, while **gender** is the province of social science, i.e. qualities which are shaped through the history of social relations and interactions (Ostergaard, opp.cit: 6).

An objective analysis of the conditions and constraints in which women live indicates that the discrimination against women has been practiced for only one reason – to exploit her labor without making any corresponding compensation. This is the only mystery – nothing beyond.

Almost half of India's population is constituted by women. In 1901, the total number of the female population of the country was 117.4 million. The figure rose to 407.1 million in 1991, thus accounting for 48.10 per cent of the total population. During 1911 total number of female population was 123.7 million. The number declined in 1921: it was 122.8 million. However, the total number of women has been increasing since then and the total has reached to 586.4 millions in 2011. But the interesting aspect of this growth has a worrisome dimension - the number of women as compared to men is declining (see Table 1).

Table 1: Population and Sex Ratio

Year	Population (In Millions)		
	Female	Male	Total
1901	117.4	120.8	238.2
1911	123.7	128.4	252.1
1921	122.8	128.5	251.3
1931	135.8	142.9	278.7
1941	154.7	163.7	318.4
1951	175.6	185.5	361.1
1961	212.9	226.3	439.2
1971	264.1	284.1	548.2
1981	329.9	353.4	683.3
1991	407.1	439.2	846.3
2001	495.7	531.2	1027.1
2011	586.4	623.7	1210.1

Source: Registrar General, India, General Population Table 1981, Census of India 1991, Paper 2 of 1992. Census, 2001 and 2011.

Note: 1981 figures include an interpolated population of Assam and 1991 figures include projected the population of Jammu and Kashmir.

According to the census 2011, the total number of females from the total population of India was 587,584,719 and majority of them is concentrated in rural areas of the country (see Table 2)

Table 2: Distribution of Total Workers by Main, Marginal Workers

Total Workers	48,18,88,868
Main Workers	36,25,65,571
Marginal Workers	11,93,23,297

Table 3: Women as Workers

		%Age
Total Workers	48,18,88,868	100.00
Males Workers	33,19,39,875	68.88
Females Workers	14,99,48,993	31.11

Source: Primary Census Abstract: Total Population: Table A-3, India Series 1. 2013

Table 4

	Total	Rural	Urban
Persons	1,21,08,54,977	83,37,48,852	37,71,06,125
Males	62,32,70,258	42,77,81,058	19,54,89,200
Females	58,75,84,719	40,59,67,794	18,16,16,925

Source: Primary Census Abstract: Total Population: Table A-4, India Series 1. 2013

Table 5: Distribution of Workers by Broad Industrial Classification

Sl. No.	Category	Number	%Age
1	Cultivators	11,88,08,780	100.00
	a) Male	8,27,62,934	69.66
	b) Female	3,60,45,846	30.34
2	Agriculture Labour	14,43,33,690	100.00
	a) Male	8,27,42,337	57.32
	b) Female	6,15,91,353	42.68
3	Household Workers	1,83,38,168	100.00
	a) Male	97,76,530	53.31
	b) Female	85,61,638	46.69
4	Other Workers	20,04,08,230	100.00
	a) Male	15,66,58,074	78.16
	b) Female	4,37,50,156	21.84

The India Country Report presented to the Fourth World Conference of Women in Beijing graphically described the major emerging problems which women in India experience:

- Inadequacy of institutional mechanism for the advancement of women.
- Persisted and institutionalized discrimination against girl child.
- Feminisation of poverty.
- Gender blindness in macro-economic policies.
- Invisibility of women's contribution to the economy and environmental sustenance.
- Poor participation by women in decision making structures and processes.
- Gender-gaps in literacy, education, and health.
- Growing trend of violence against women.
- Barriers encountered by women in accessing legal entitlements.
- Gender-biased social norms.
- Negative portrayals and perpetuation of gender stereotypes by mass media.

Since the Beijing Conference, her conditions have not improved much. The onslaught of liberalization, privatization and globalization, has further added to her problem especially in the labor market.

In the general social milieu, the position of women as workers has suffered two types of disadvantages, first, though every able-bodied woman is working, either at home or in the workplace, she is not being recognised as a worker. Second, wherever she is employed, the status of her employment and remuneration has remained much low both qualitatively and quantitatively as compared to her male counterparts. Lastly, she does not inherit property as her natural birth right which is indeed the fundamental human right. Another important issue is her position in the world of emerging employment scenario, where the introduction of new technology has been either pushing her out of employment market or bringing her down the ladder of employment opportunities, though some technology has helped her in many ways. (see GOI, 2002; Leonard, 2003; Chauhan, 2009)

To alleviate the situation of women in general and women labor in particular, both the national government and international bodies, from time to time, have taken up a number of steps and announced a plethora of programmes and schemes to empower women in general and women laborers in particular.

At the national level, the government has provided protection in the country's Constitution along with providing legislative safeguards in various laws enacted from time to time. The country's earlier Planning Commission also played special attention to women's development and empowerment. In addition, the government has been constituting and appointing Commissions and Committees to study and examine the conditions of women in general and women labor in particular.

International bodies like the United Nations Organisations, the ILO, etc. have also been promoting and safeguarding women's interests through various conventions and by setting standards. The ILO has, over the years, made commendable efforts to enhance the status of women workers.

But inspire these efforts, still, a large segment of women is deprived of their basic human rights, the right to own and possess property and wealth as compared to their male counterparts. Deprivation from this singular important reality of existence has kept women disempowered for centuries and millennia. As a result, today their condition and status still remained much to be desired.

In the areas of education, employment, politics, health, their participation and access, either has been marginal or qualitatively low. This is indeed a situation which calls for a serious policy, legal and administrative interventions.

Despite more than sixty-eight years of independence and constitutional safeguards, the conditions of women in general and women labor in particular, have remained disturbingly worse in the country. The Government has initiated a sizeable number of programmes and schemes for the development of women, but their overall impact has not been very encouraging.

General Profile

According to 1991 census, out of 314,903,642 million workers, 91,397,489 were females. They constituted 22.69 per cent of the total workforce of the country. The participation rate of women workers from the total women population was 14.22 per cent. Out of the total workers, 285.9 million were main workers and 28.2 million were marginal workers. The percentage of main female workers from the main total workers was 23.37 while the percentage of male main workers was 77.62. Out of the total marginal workers (18.2 million), 90.42 per cent were female (25.5 million) and 9.57 per cent were male (2.7 million). The former constituted the vast majority of the marginal workers, though in reality, they contributed equally to the generation of the country's wealth.

Here we further examine the emerging scenario of women's participation in the labor force in 2011. It can be observed in Table 2 that in 2011, the total labor force in the country was 48, 18, 88,868 out of which the percentages of male and female workers are 68.88 and 31.11 per cent respectively (Table 2).

Further classification by industrial categories is presented in Table 3. It could be seen in 2011 (according to Census, 2011), of the total cultivators, 30.34 per cent were female, and out of the total agriculture labor 42.68 per cent were female. With regard to household workers, the percentage of female workers accounted for 46.69 per cent. In the category of other workers constituted by "government servants, municipal employees, teachers, factory workers,

plantation workers, those engaged in trade, commerce business, transport, banking, mining, construction, political or social work, priests, entertainment artists, etc.” (Census, 2011), the share of female workers is 21.84 per cent. What these figures reveal is that the proportion of female workers is very high in agriculture and household industries followed by cultivators. It reveals the fact that the majority of female workers are concentrated in the unorganised sector, and their conditions have been observed very vulnerable (NCEUS, 2007).

According to the National Sample Survey Organisation, the workforce participation rates of a female in the rural area was 31.8 per cent in 1972-73 which registered a slight increase in 1977-78 and 1983 but declined in 1994-95. A Similar pattern could be noted in the case of female urban workforce participation during the corresponding years (see Table). The declining participation in labor force has been ascribed to women’s growing participation in education, household rising income effect, etc. (Rustogi; 2013).

Table 6: WorkForce Participation Rate (Percent) by Sex

Year	Rural		Urban	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
1972-73	31.8	54.5	13.4	50.1
1977-78	33.1	55.2	15.6	50.8
1983	34.0	54.7	15.1	51.2
1987-88	32.3	53.9	15.2	50.6
1993-94	32.8	55.3	15.5	52.1
1999-2000	29.9	53.1	13.9	51.8
2004-2005	32.7	54.6	16.6	54.9
2005-2006	31.0	54.9	14.3	54.0
2007-2008	28.9	54.8	13.8	55.4
2009-2010	26.1	54.7	13.8	54.3

Source: National Sample Survey Organisation, New Delhi, (Various Rsounds)

Note: Figures for all the years and based on usual status approach and includes principal status and subsidiary status workers of all ages.

State-Wise Distribution of Workers

India is a vast country with diverse geographical characteristics and socio-economic situation. This diversity is reflected in the various level of participation of women labour in different states of the country. In Table 4, it may be observed that more than half of the female laborers in the country is concentrated in six states, namely, Maharashtra (12.21), Madhya Pradesh (8.17), Andhra Pradesh (10.89), Tamil Nadu (8.18), Uttar Pradesh (11.41) and Rajasthan (8.28).

There are three more states where more than 20 per cent female laborers are concentrated, namely, Bihar (6.79), Karnataka (6.86) and West Bengal (5.75) and Gujarat (4.48).

In other States and Union Territories, the percentages of female workers range from 4.03 per cent to 0.02 per cent.

The figures in the Table also show the proportion of female workers in each State. It may be seen that in 1991, in Himachal Pradesh, the proportion of female workers constituted 42.59 of the total workers which are the highest in the country. It may be seen that in the developed states, like Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, the proportions of female labor had been considerably lower than their male counterparts.

Table 7: State-Wise Distribution of Workers in India in 2011

Sr. No.	States	Total Workers	Female Workers	%Age (Col. iv)	Total %Age (Col. iii)
(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
	India	48,23,88,866	13,99,49,044	100.00	29.01
1	Jammu & Kashmir	43,22,713	11,27,623	0.81	26.09
2	Himachal Pradesh	35,59,422	15,16,049	1.08	42.59
3	Punjab	98,97,362	18,23,205	1.30	18.42
4	Chandigarh	4,04,136	75,977	0.05	18.80
5	Uttarakhand	38,72,275	13,20,354	0.94	34.10
6	Haryana	89,16,508	21,09,872	1.51	23.66
7	NCT of Delhi	55,87,049	8,25,023	0.59	14.77
8	Rajasthan	2,98,86,255	15,89,179	1.14	5.32
9	Uttar Pradesh	6,58,14,715	1,59,67,953	11.41	24.26
10	Bihar	3,47,24,987	95,02,789	6.79	27.37
11	Sikkim	3,08,138	1,13,780	0.08	36.93
12	Arunachal Pradesh	5,87,657	2,37,384	0.17	40.39
13	Nagaland	9,74,122	4,26,765	0.30	43.81
14	Manipur	18,04,610	5,65,202	0.40	31.32
15	Mizoram	4,86,705	1,95,965	0.14	40.26
16	Tripura	14,69,521	4,24,195	0.30	28.87
17	Meghalaya	11,85,619	4,81,910	0.34	40.65
18	Assam	1,19,69,690	34,28,130	2.45	28.64
19	West Bengal	3,47,56,355	80,40,308	5.75	23.13
20	Jharkhand	1,30,98,274	46,73,505	3.34	35.68
21	Orissa	1,75,41,589	56,38,934	4.03	32.15
22	Chattisgarh	1,21,80,225	50,46,359	3.61	41.43
23	Madhya Pradesh	3,15,74,133	1,14,27,163	8.17	36.19
24	Gujarat	2,47,67,747	67,66,833	4.84	27.32
25	Daman & Diu	1,21,271	13,897	0.01	11.46
26	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	1,57,161	37,868	0.03	24.10
27	Maharashtra	4,94,27,878	1,68,11,003	12.01	34.01
28	Andhra Pradesh	3,94,22,906	1,52,37,311	10.89	38.65
29	Karnataka	2,78,72,597	96,02,481	6.86	34.45
30	Goa	5,77,246	1,57,712	0.11	27.32
31	Lakshadweep	18,753	3,435	0.00	18.32
32	Kerala	1,16,19,063	31,67,494	2.26	27.26
33	Tamil Nadu	3,28,84,681	1,14,49,703	8.18	34.82
34	Poducherry	4,44,968	1,12,037	0.08	25.18
35	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	1,52,535	31,646	0.02	20.75

Source: Census of India, 2011

Industries with Preponderance of Women's Employment

There are some industries in which the proportion of employment of female workers is higher than their male counterparts. For example, in the processing of edible nuts, the percentage of employment of women is more than 60 per cent. In the manufacture of beedi, the percentage is more than 90 per cent. In case of spinning, weaving and finishing of coir textiles, more than 70 per cent of the employees are female. Another important area where female employment is higher than the male is the domestic services. In the plantation also the preponderance of women's employment is quite high.

The concentration of female in these occupations demonstrates the fact that they are engaged in low paid as well as in difficult jobs in which their future prospect is virtually absent. Apart from these, the occupations are in the unorganized sector which is highly unregulated.

Women in Organized Sector

In 1992 the total number of workers in the organized sector was 27055.7 Women constituted 14.38 per cent of the total. Out of the total, 12.84 per cent were in the public sector while 19.41 per cent were in the private sector. In 1995, the number of women worker rose to 27524.7 from 27055.7 in 1992. In fact, the most significant development was that the employment of women has registered an increase over the years. For example, it increased from 14.38 per cent in 1992 to 15.36 per cent in 1995. (See Table

Table 8: Women in Organised Sector

Year	Public Sector		Private Sector		Total	
	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total
1992	2467.0	19209.6	1522.7	7846.1	3889.8	27055.7
%age	(12.84)		(19.41)		(14.38)	
1993	247.7	19326.1	1549.7	7850.5	4026.3	27176.6
%age	(1.28)		(19.74)		(14.82)	
1994	2564.6	19444.9	1589.3	7929.9	4153.9	27374.8
%age	(13.19)		(20.04)		(15.17)	
1995	2600.4	19466.3	1627.7	8058.5	4227.9	27524.8
%age	(13.36)		(20.20)		(15.36)	

Source: Quarterly Employment Review, Directorate General of Employment & Training, Ministry of Labor

Opportunity Denied: Educational Composition of Female Labour Force

The country's majority of the labor force is still illiterate. The level of illiteracy is very high in rural areas as compared to urban areas. The gender-specific educational level of the workers shows that the number of illiterate female labor is much higher than their male counterparts. As could be noted in **Table 3.1** in 1993-94 the percentage of the female illiterate labor force was 79.0 while percentage of the male illiterate labor force was 43.7. The gap was as high as 35.3 per cent.

In the urban area, the percentage of the illiterate female labor force was 44.5 percent while the male illiterate labor force was 17.9 per cent and the difference was as high as 26.6 per cent. The interesting point, which could be noted in the table, is the fact that in the graduate and above educational level, the proportion of labor force is almost same, either in the rural area or in urban area. This is because of qualification requirements which are the same for both the sexes.

Women as Workers

In the world of work, her status is not only subordinated to man's but it is perpetuated for generations by certain norms and practices with broad social sanction. For example, in the general social milieu, the position of women as workers has suffered two types of disadvantages, first, though almost every able-bodied women are working, either in home or workplace, she is not being recognized as a worker. Second, wherever she is employed, the status of her employment and remuneration has remained much low. Another important issue is concerning her position in the world of emerging employment scenario where the introduction of new technology has been either pushing her out of the employment market or bringing her down the ladder of employment opportunities.

In addition, gender bias in the employment market is quite rampant either in terms of a type of employment quality or remuneration package. Besides, a majority of the female workers are marginal. Despite the existence of the Equal Remuneration Act, it is more often found that women workers are paid less than their male counterparts in many economic activities across different occupations.

With regards to working conditions, they work mostly in unhygienic conditions; and workplace facilities are rarely provided. Most of them being illiterate, they are also less skilled and job which they get are also low paid and manual.

Because of the scattered workplace and homebased and piece rated nature of their employment, they are also highly unorganized. The traditional mindset of the trade union has virtually ignored the need for their organization. This lack of organisation has accentuated their so-called 'invisibility' in the main-stream employment scenario.

Problem in Employment

The profile of women workers highlights the fact of their underestimation and also their concentration in low paid jobs and under-presentation in high profile jobs.

The working conditions of low-paid employment are equally applying. As a result, women may be more prone to health hazards and drudgery as compared to their male workers.

Moreover, the skill requirement for performing low-paid jobs is less. Hence, the prospect for enhancing the skill-level of women is also very low.

Besides, the majority of women workers are in unorganized sector which means their job security is conspicuous by its absence.

Majority of them either work in the agricultural sector or in home-bases activities where virtually no social security is provided. Whatever, is extended that covers a miniscule section of the women labor in unorganized sector.

Because of low level earning and high dependency ratio, their role in different spheres of life is also marginal. The continuation of this situation creates a vicious circle which can be broken down by strong policy measure and programme designs in which women's participation is prerequisite.

Though women constitute almost half of the country's population yet they suffer from multiple disadvantages, like, their inadequate access to education employment, politics, health services, etc (Drize and Sen, 2013:224-225).

Towards Equality: Report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India, 1974, examined the overall condition of women in India and subsequently guided the government's policy formulation for the upliftment of women in the country (GOI, 1974).

Education is the key to development, and education of women is the most important key. Without proper education, any development effort will be in jeopardy. For the participation of people, particularly women are most important for sustainable development. Mahatma Gandhi said more clearly: "*As women begin to realize their strength as they must, in proportion to the education they receive, they will naturally resent the glaring inequalities to which they are subjected to*"

Women in All India and Central Services

The Central Government employs a large number of employees to manage different functions. A brief appraisal of employment of women has been attempted here;

First, with regards to Indian Administrative Service, it could be seen that in 2012, out of the total 4532 officers, women accounted for only 641.

Second, with regards to Indian Audit & Accounts Service, the total number of officers was 666 in 2012, Out of the total, 160 officers were women.

In Indian customs and Central Excise Service, the total number of the Officers in 2009 was 2381, out of which the number of women officers was 170.

In Indian Economic Service, the total number of officer was 420, not of which the number of women was 125.

The same situation could be observed in the Indian Forest Service, Indian Foreign Service, Indian Police Service, etc.

The question is to bring parity between male and female and this requires appropriate policy and programme interventions.

Religious Group and Work Participation

Work participation rate also varies among different religious communities in India with women as well as men.

In Table it could be observed that in 2001, as per the census, work participation rate of women in the Hindu religious group was 27.14 per cent for women in the Muslim religious group, it was 14.1 per cent, for women in the Christian religious group it was 28.7 per cent, for women in the Sikh religious group, it was 20.7 per cent, for women in the Buddhist religious group it was 31.7 per cent, for women in the Jain religious group, it was 9.2 per cent and in other religion, it was 44.7 per cent.

The figures clearly indicate that due to several reasons, like lack of education, training, skills, social customs, compulsions women in different religious communities participated differently in different economic activities.

Education of Women by Religions

Education plays an important role in the process of empowerment of women. The generic situation the gap between women and men in the world of education is quite wide.

The regional term, some regions in the country have done well with regard to promoting education among women while some states have not been in a position to do so.

Here a look at the educational status of women in different religious group shows very interesting phenomena.

With regard to literacy, it could be seen in Table that highest literacy rate among women was found among Jains (81.35%), followed by Christian (66.17%), Sikh (55.56%), Buddhist (52.83%), Hindus (44.92%), Muslim (40.63%) and others (27.27%).

With regards to literate without education level, below primary, etc. the pattern vary.

In the case of graduate and above it may be seen that the percentage of women with graduate was highest among Jains (18.64%), followed by Christian (8.58%), Sikh (7.05%), Hindus (5.89%), others (3.79%), Buddhist (2.60%) and Muslim (2.42 %). This clearly shows that the education status of women in different religious groups is different and the lowest education level is found among women belonging to the Muslim community.

Table 9: Education Level by Religious Community and Female (In Percentage)

Education Level	Hindus	Muslim	Christian	Sikh	Buddhist	Jain	Other
Literacy Rate	44.92	40.63	66.17	55.56	52.83	81.35	27.27
Literate without educational level	0.38	4.79	3.31	2.01	2.35	1.34	3.5
Below Primary	28.19	34.49	20.42	18.9	29.8	14.02	36.64
Primary	28.19	30.45	22.52	29	27.71	18.88	26.96
Middle	15.38	14.2	16.61	16.41	17.36	13.16	15.72
Metric/Secondary	12.51	9.53	17.19	18.75	12.55	20.73	9.36
Higher Secondary/Intermediate/ Pre-University/Senior Secondary	5.95	3.85	9.47	7.38	6.28	12.76	3.9
Non-Technical Diploma	0.04	0.07	0.15	0.13	0.44	0.07	0.02
Technical Diploma	0.3	0.15	1.74	0.66	0.1	0.4	0.1
Graduate and Above	5.89	2.42	8.58	7.05	2.6	18.64	3.79
Unclassified	0.0097	0.038	0.011	0.016	0.003	0.012	0.0069

CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, an attempt has been made to map out the position of women are general and women workers in particular in terms of their participation both in the world of work and education. It is found that still there needed much effort to enhance the status of women and empower them so that they can realize their full potential.

Many efforts have been made over the decades and those efforts have undoubtedly made their impact on women's lives. However, still there remains a wide gap which can be narrowed down if proactive policy and programmes are formulated, designed and implemented with the participation of women. Here one can quote Swami Vivekanda: "Educate your women first and leave them to themselves; then they will tell you what reforms are necessary for them. In matters concerning them, who are you."

Thus what is what most important pre-requisite is the universal access of women to education, **albeit** a quality education. This is possible if existing barriers to women's access to education are gradually removed. The barriers are like: distance from home to institutional location, inadequate transport facilities, non-flexible school-time schedule, lack of preparatory opportunities, the absence of special needs of girls in underdeveloped institutions – like a toilet and other sanitation facilities, etc.

Besides, there are socio-cultural norms which discourage women's access to education, training, and finally entry into the labor market. These barriers could be gradually overcome through dialogue, debates, negotiations and advocacy.

Sometimes educational inputs are not very attractive and effective in real life situation. As a result, many find so called education not very useful. This has to be changed by designing appropriate curricula which will help women to empower themselves in the true sense.

Thus investment in education for women will help not only her empowerment process but subsequently she will participate fruitfully in the labor market.

There is now considerable emphasis on women's entry into labor market. In the recent past, the increasing participation of women in the Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme across the country is an example which is worth quoting. "Significantly, female share on work under MGNREGA is greater than their share of work in the casual wage labor market across all states. Women are participating actively than they participated in all forms of recorded work" (MORD, 2012:18-19).

Another important step which is all the time needed is the workplace safety. Along with this, the decent employment aspects have to be gradually enhanced to draw more women in the world of work.

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