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GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN WAGE DETERMINATION OF TEXTILE INDUSTRY LABOURERS- A STUDY IN SOLAPUR DISTRICT (MAHARASHTRA)

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Abstract:

Indian economy is an textile industry economy, as about 65 percent of population depends on textile industry sector for their subsistence. Now India's population passed 100 crores with large share of female population that is up to 50 percent of the total population, but 71 percent of the total population living in rural areas. In total female population or rural areas i.e., 89 percent females are engaged in textile industry and allied sector. For this reason textile industry continues to be the mainstay of the Indian economy. Its contribution to the national GDP is about 25 percent. In the new millennium with the globalization and liberalization of the economy the challenges in Indian textile industry sector are the quite different form those met in previous decades.

KEYWORDS:

Gender Discrimination, Wage, Textile Industry, Labourers,

INTRODUCTION:

Female laborers remain overwhelmingly major section of textile industry labour. The remarkable increase in the textile industry labour force in recent years has been one of the most significant social transformations in the history of India. There is no chance for escape from textile industry as source of employment, because, majority of population depends on textile industry for their livelihood.

In India females as textile industry labourers participate in several activities such as chilli picking, cotton picking, groundnut picking, sowing, transport and storage, threshing, transplanting, watering, seeding, cutting Plant protection, thinning, harvesting, processing, winnowing etc. thus by participating in above textile industry activities, they directly or indirectly influence the course textile industry.

In textile industry allied activities as a labour performance made by women is equal and more when compare to men for support the female labours the constitution of India has provided. Equal rights and privileges for men and women. Although the women labourers are discriminated in wage payments in the textile industry operations that are better performed by female labourers. This not only violates the established principle of "equal pay for equal work" but also lowers their income level, which in turn affects adversely on their socio-economic status, standard of living efficiency and their productivity (Sharma N.P,1993).

The present study provides that, the wage differences among men and women will be revealed through the secondary as well as primary data, which is obtained from the field work.

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OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study carried out based on the following major objectives.

- 1) To study the female textile industry labourers in India.
- 2) To examine the wage difference between male and female textile industry labourers in study region.
- 3) To study the problems of migration in connection with textile industry labourers in the study area.
- 4) To give the suggestions for the improvement of female textile industry labourers pertaining to wage differentials.

METHODOLOGY

The present study has been undertaken in Maindargi and Hotagi, are the villages in Solapur district (Maharashtra). Majority of the population in the study region depends on textile industry labour force participation in this area.

Sample Design

Sl.No	Name of the Villages	Labourers	
		Male	Female
I	Skilled		
	1. Hotagi	25	25
	2. Maharashtra Industries Development Corporation (MIDC)	25	25
II	Non-Skilled		
	1. Hotagi	15	15
	2. Maindargi	15	15

TYPES OF FEMALE LABOURERS IN TEXTILE INDUSTRY

There are two types female labourers in Indian textile industry practices viz., Casual and Contract gang labour. Casual labour as known as Majduri (Rojandari) as wage for a day. This is an important segment for the hired labour market in the India as well as study region. The labourers are hired for a certain period a day, a week or more. This type of labourer are engaged in sowing, manuring, weeding, threshing, transplanting and harvesting, etc., and they are always ready to work for any employers, who preferred to pay the current market wage. The labour received the payment weekly i.e., on bazaar day or in intervals. Both land less and landed households hire themselves out as casual labourers.

Another type of labour hiring system prevalent in the study region is contract gang labour. This practice holds a significant position in the labour market, as known as "Tathed as Tantrara (Gutta)" who works in employers field in a day, no fixed of time, another side called Kamgar Sangha Kamgar. In the study region a group of families from these gang and work together.

Characteristics of female textile industry labourers

Before any attempt is made to evolve a rational policy for improving the living conditions of a female textile industry labourer who happens to belong to the lowest socio and economic ladder, it is essential to know the distinguishing features that are characteristics of female textile industry labourers in India.

1. Female textile industry labourers especially from villages.
2. Generally they are unskilled workers carrying on their textile industry operations in traditional ways.
3. The bargaining power and position of female textile industry labourers in India is very weak.
4. Female textile industry labourers are the most exploited class of people in India.
5. Female textile industry labourers working as casual and contract gang labour. The nature of employment, wage and the employer-employee relation differ across these groups.
6. In some parts of India, female textile industry labour are found to be migratory, moving in search of jobs especially at the time of sowing and harvesting in near by areas.

IMPORTANCE OF FEMALE IN TEXTILE INDUSTRY

Woman is the molder and builder of any nation's destiny. They play a significant role in any economy. They are regarded as the backbone of the rural scene. Most of the Women perform various types of work for their livelihood but textile industry is considered as the biggest, it is comes under unorganized sector where large number of rural women takes part actively. About 75 percent of the Indian female population si from rural families, who belonged to the small and marginal farmers and landless textile industry labourers (Census of India, 1991). Though women's primary responsibility is indulging in domestic work, greater emphasis is laid on women's earning in the form of money by working outside the four walls. In India, a significant proportion of the populations are below the poverty line and it is a fact that labour force participation will increase with poverty, a large Proportion of rural women are under a pressure to participate in the labour force. These unknown and unacknowledged beings are responsible to keep the economy at a steady pace and helped the nation to occupy a significant place in the world.

Table -1 Distribution of female workers in Inda (1995-2001) (In thousands)

Year	Total female population	Cultivators	Textile industry labourers	Industry and Service	Total female workers
1951	173/543	18,368 (45.3)	12,694(31.3)	9,477(23.3)	40,539(100)
1961	212,467	33,103(55.7)	14,171(23.9)	12,128(20.4)	59,402(100)
1971	263,900	9,266(29.6)	15,794(50.5)	6,238(19.9)	31,298(100)
1981	321,357	14,932(33.2)	2,,768(46.2)	9,273(20.6)	44,973(100)
1991	402,813	22,871(34.5)	28,833(43.6)	14,485(21.9)	66,189(100)
2001	495,738	41,299(41.51)	50,093(50.35)	8,083(8.14)	99,475(100)

Note: Figures do not include those of Jammu & Kashmir.

Figures within parentheses denote percentage of women workers.

Source:1. Towards Equality: Report on the Committee on Status of Women, Government of India, Ministry of Social Welfare, New Delhi 1974, pp.153-158.

2. Census of India, 1981 Series India, Primary Census Abstract, General Population, Part 11B(i), pp.7-8.

3. Census of India, 1991 Series-1; Paper-3; Provisional Population Totals: Workers and Their distribution.

The association of women in textile industry is an age-old practice. The 1991 census data indicate that 43.6 percent of women are working as textile industry labourers 34.5 percent are cultivations, but it is increased to 50.35 and 41.51 respectively in 2001 census. Though rural farm labourers work under severe limitations, their contribution towards textile industry⁶ production and development is noteworthy. Apart from the job they do inside the household, the unpaid activities in the domestic sphere go unnoticed and unrewarded. Women workforce outside the four walls is larger in rural areas than in urban India. Women in rural areas help to grow at least about 50 percent of the word's food. They work in all aspects of cultivation including planting, weeding, harvesting, sowing, threshing, etc.,

According to the census reports, there is an increased participation of rural women in economic activities beside doing household duties, though participation of women in textile industry contribute a lot for the economic growth and progress of the country, their problems are shown least concern.

In India female textile industry labourers are not homogeneously distributed all over the country, their percentage varies in different regions due to demographic, technological, ecological and sociological reasons. This may be clearly seen from the following table,

Table-2

Distribution of female textile industry labours in different states in India

SLNo	Name of the States	Total Textile industry labourers	Female Textile industry labourers	% of the female textile industry labourers
1	Andra Pradesh	11850113	7191188	60.68
2	Assam	2509526	437630	17.44
3	Arunachal Pradesh	171565	7972	4.65
4	Bihar	7205937	4652672	64.57
5	Gurajat	5721030	2515045	43.96
6	Haryana	2376211	543088	22.85
7	Himachal Pradesh	1266666	37288	2.98
8	Jammu&Kasmir	940081	50760	50.40
9	Karnataka	6854752	3455460	50.40
10	Keral	1925009	505086	26.24
11	Maharastra	1265748	6121358	48.21
12	Madya Pradesh	8669974	3769434	43.48
13	Manipur	381802	55895	14.65
14	Mizoram	118377	5293	4.47
15	Orissa	4200930	2390685	56.90
16	Punjab	1749465	363685	20.79
17	Rajastan	8496356	1449004	17.05
18	Sikkim	91543	8322	9.10
19	Tamilu Nadu	7175717	3897586	54.32
20	Uttar Pradesh	11799397	5184385	43.94
21	West Bengal	5821973	2244803	38.55

Source: Provisional Population Totals, paper 3 Census of India 2001

The above table reveals that, distribution of female textile industry labourers in India, among all the state's highest female textile industry labours in Bihar State i.e., 64.57% to the total textile industry labourers in India, and followed by Andra Pradesh i.e., 60.68%. the lowest female textile industry labours in Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh (2.94%, 4.65%) respectively. Karntatka is secured fifth place having female textile industry labourers in India i.e., 50.40% to the total textile industry labourers.

Average yearly wage earnings, employment per worker and per capital in rural India

The NSSO 55th round survey conducted in 1999-2000 found employment in India decreased marginally in rural areas. Employment for females came down by 3% in rural India compared to last survey conducted in 1993-94 (refer the below table).

Table -3

Estimated Average Yearly Wage and Employment Earning Per capita and per workers in the 54th and 55th NSSO survey (1999-2000) in rural India.

SLNo	Particulars	1993-94	1999-00
1	Female Population (000)	317950	344640
2	Female work force (000)	104290	195000
3	Average number of working days (in a year)	241	246
4	Average daily wage earnings of female casual labour	15.15	18.27
5	Yearly wage earnings (RS in crore)	38078	46315
6	Earning per workers (RS)	3651	4494
7	Earning per capita (RS)	1198	1344
8	Growth rate of earnings per worker (% annum)	-	3.52
9	Growth rate of earnings	-	1.95

Source: 55th NSSO New Delhi, 1999-2000

Not: Inflation adjustment for rural India has been made by reference to consumer price.
Index on textile industry labourers (CPIAL base 1986-87=100)

Bihar state is topped the female work participation in textile industry with 650 finding employment in a population of 1000, with Himachal Pradesh at the last estimated average wage earnings and employment per worker and per capital in rural India.

The survey further shows that in the year 1999-2000 the self employed secured for 57% of were as casual labour and 3% of females were regular employees, but it is compared to study region, lot of difference between employed in non-Skilled areas as casual labour. In all surveys between 1972-2000 self-employed people in the rural areas were more than regularly employed.

WAGE DIFFERENTIALS

The general wage rates for casual labourers in the study region between Rs 55 to 70 for male and Rs 20 to 30 for female labourers depending upon the situation. The peak season the wage rate is generally Rs 70 for male and Rs 30 for female labours, but in slack season wage rate would go down to Rs 40 for male and Rs 15 to 20 for female labours for seven to eight hours per day, wages in kind still prevalent. Which to some extent protects the real wages in inflationary situations, but cash payment is becoming more common except harvesting, where wages form generally little part of the crop like, bajra cutting, jawar cutting and groundnut picking inter culture the rate of wage was 1 to 2kg of cereals when paid was also given to labour.

In some situation the labourers also shifting to work on contract basis. This enables to them to engage other members of their family in leading women and men to the complete the work in shorter time and they move to other employers. Here separate of the women and men gangs or may be fixed and wage rate is determined basis on quantity of work, variety of industry and distance form house to company. Transplanting operation is being increasingly subjected to this phenomenon. It was observed that, when transplanting or other such operation was done on contract basis the work was finished quickly as everyone among the workers wanted the work to be complete as early as possible. So that they may find some other contract is still paid on traditional basis but in some villages a few labour households preferred it on contract basis or both contract and casual labour.

In the study region, wage rate is improved from fifteen years, due to irrigation is developed in the study region. Here wage rate is different in skilled and non-skilled areas as well as male and female labourers may be understood by the below table.

Table -4
The average wage rates for male and female textile industry labourers. (Rs)

Sl. No	Name of the areas	Casual labour (per day)			Contract gang labour (per acre)		
		Male	Female	Differential	Male	Female	Differential
I	Skilled	55	25	30	600	550	50
	1. Hotagi 2. MIDC	45	20	25	550	500	50
II	Non-Skilled	60	30	30	-	-	-
	1. Hotagi 2. Maindargi	45	25	20	-	-	-

Source: Field Survey

The above table reveals that, wage rate is differs from village to village. In non-Skilled villages wage rate is higher than Skilled villages, due to, there is less employment days available in only for four to five months in a year. In busy season, the labourers are not available. Hence they paid more. Sometimes wage rate is fluctuating in Skilled area also in peak season. The wage rate is not equal between male and female labourers. Male labourers are getting more wage rate than female labourers. Differential wage rate is more in non-Skilled area i.e., Rs 30 per day, due to customary, they accept them, illiteracy, unequal working capacity. Female labourers suffering from differential wage rate in contract gang labour also. Rs 50 per day wage rate are difference between male and female contract gang labours.

OPERATION WISE RATE

On the basis of their skill and efficiency majority of the jobs allotted to female labourers in textile industry. Because of high level competency among females they are getting more number of jobs, they work for low wage and they perform work sincerely. Thus, more differentials in wage rate between male and female labourers occurs. The operation wise wage rate differentials in the study region indicated in the following table.

Table-5

Operation wise wage rate among male and female labourers (per day Rs)

Sl.No	Name of the textile industry operations	Male	Famel	Wage differentials
01	Mahaveer Textile Industry	60	30	30
02	Tulaja Bhavani Industry	60	25	35
03	Vithal Pandri Textiles	55	25	30
04	Color Mixing	60	25	35
05	Transport and storage	70	30	40
06	Threshing	55	25	30
07	Drying	-	30	-
08	Weaving	-	25	-
09	Cutting	60	25	35
10	Processing	60	30	30

Source: Field Survey

The above table shows that, the highest wage differentials in transport and storage, cotton picking, sowing and cutting Rs40 and Rs35 per day respectively. Further the important point to be noted here is that, this discrimination against female labourers is not only in the operations like sowing, seeding, cutting transport and storage, which requires more physical labour, but also in female labours intensive operations

such as weeding and transplanting which are better performed by them.

LABOUR MIGRATION

Lack of adequate employment in native is the main reason for labour migration. In the study region labour migration takes place from only non-Skilled area, because of inadequate employment days. So they go to outside villages or urban areas to seek work for their subsistence and they will come to their native during season. They prefer Rabi and summer seasons for migration. The details about migration indicated in the following table.

Table-6

Details about labour migration in non-Skilled area

SLNo	Particulars	Male	Female
1	No. of respondents migrating	66.67%	90%
2	Average days in a year	60	85
3	Wage rates (per day)	100	40
4	Average income (Rs)	6000	3400

Source: Field Survey

The above table shows that, maximum labourers prefer migration in non-Skilled areas i.e., 66.67% of male and 90% of female labourers. They are migrated two to three months in a year, but wage rate is different between native to migrate area i.e., Rs 100 for male and Rs 40 for female, because they are not engage in textile industry activities, most of the labourers prefer to canal work and building construction etc, and they are getting payment on the basis of casual labour. Male labourers earn Rs 6000 in 60 days and female labourers earn Rs 3400 in 85 days, after these days they will come to their native and remaining days they are going on unemployed in non-Skilled area.

FINDINGS

After collection of data observed some findings on the problem as mentioned below.

1. Some jobs are reserved for female labours in textile industry viz., Chili, Cotton and Groundnut Picking, Transplanting and Weeding.
2. Daily wage rate of female labours is different between Casual and Contract Gang labours as well as Skilled and non-Skilled areas.
3. Operation wise wage rate is different between male and female labourers in textile industry as well as Skilled and non-Skilled areas.
4. Migrant labourers are drawn from only in non-Skilled area.

SUGGESTIONS

From the study it is clear that the rural labour community suffers from a lot of social and economic problems. Hence, a multi proposal and organized effort is needed to solve their problems; some necessary measures may be suggested as follows:

1. For female textile industry labourers there is an essential to organized a movement to fight against wage differentials.
2. Policy makers can take consideration of the interests of female textile industry labourers at the time of framing policies for the development and welfare of textile industry labourers.
3. The law enforcement agencies must play a crucial role in implementing laws related to textile industry labourers like equal work to equal wage.
4. Provide awareness about government programmes.
5. Improvement in better employment conditions.
6. Should be improved in minimum wage rate.

7. Female literacy rate should be increased.
8. Abolition of child labour.

CONCLUSION

This study has observed that the conditions of female textile industry labours are better in Skilled workers. Therefore provision of irrigation and adoption of labour intensive cropping patterns may help to improve the conditions of female textile industry labours. Irrigation has increased employment opportunities, but the wage rates have not increased due to excess supply of labour. Female labour market is becoming more flexible. The employment of female labour is increasing as their wage is low. There is actualization of labour and small and marginal farmers are turning into casual labours. They are losing their control over productions. The conditions female labours in non-Skilled workers are miserable. There is a need for comprehensive policy and minimum wage to promote welfare of the rural female labour class in the study region. The Grama Panchayat, the government, the NGOs and the people have to work together for the same.

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