

**UNPAID CARE WORK AND EMPLOYMENT
DYNAMICS AMONG FEMALES IN INDIA:
A CASE STUDY OF UTTAR PRADESH**

**ABSTRACT OF THESIS
SUBMITTED TO**

**BABASAHEB BHIMRAO AMBEDKAR UNIVERSITY
(A CENTRAL UNIVERSITY)
LUCKNOW**

**BABASAHEB
BHIMRAO
AMBEDKAR
UNIVERSITY**



• LUCKNOW •

प्रज्ञा शील करुणा
ESTABLISHED 1996

FOR THE AWARD OF DEGREE OF

Doctor of Philosophy

IN

ECONOMICS

Submitted by

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(Enrolment No: 741/20)

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2024

ABSTRACT

Introduction

Since 90's declining FLFPR around the globe and association of unpaid work as its major determinant has been gaining widespread attention not only in academic researches but also in gendered policy discourses and development. It is well known that women are the preferred gender worldwide for domestic and care work needs since ages because these activities are burden of women not only due to social norms and rules of our world but they are also intertwined with affection, care, love and selflessness for which women are always glorified ((Folbre & Nelson, 2000; Kabeer, 2008). But in particular, Asian and African region women fared most poorly - 4.1 times and 4.7 times than men, respectively (Oxfam India, 2020).

The underpaid and unpaid labour of women are used for capital accumulation by generating high surplus labour values by taking an advantage of socially segmented labour markets. Thus, this traps the women in a vicious cycle of gender stereotyped roles for eternity thus hampering their crucial role in an overall inclusive development goal of economies (Rajeev & Sinha, 2023). The incompetency of the state to provide care work infrastructure to ease such burden has been pointed out as one of the critical reason for this disparity in work distribution (Singh & Pattanaik, 2020; Hirway, 2016). This demand for unpaid household caregiver very evidently, is going to expand exponentially in near future, globally, in face of declining demographic dividends.

Although there has been several studies and organizations working to integrate unpaid work into the mainstream economy by reducing it and by re-organizing it between the paid and unpaid work (Singh & Pattanaik, 2020) but despite significant progress in recent decades, labor markets across the world remain divided along gender lines (S. P. Mishra, 2018) and progress toward gender equality seems to have stalled. Thus, this gender-based segregation of labour both at home and in the market does not allow an economy to realize the full potential of its labour force.

There have been previous studies and researches to study time use among women on the broad areas of women employment and unpaid work but there has been a vacuum of study of contextual variables which plays an important role in determining women's intensity and

duration of unpaid work and due to lack of regular time-use surveys and data there is restricted empirical evidences on the consequences of such unpaid labour. In this regard, it becomes pertinent to explore how these contextual variables are manifested in women's time-use. This study, thus aims to cover all such hidden nuances in women's work and its impact on state GDP through the time use survey conducted for Uttar Pradesh, the country's most populated state. This study aims to give a push to Elson's 3 R concept of recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid work of women.

Objectives

1. To examine the employment trend of women at global and national level.
2. To examine the significance of Time Use Survey in unpaid work analysis and study the distribution and nature of women's unpaid work in India and in Uttar Pradesh.
3. To identify demographical, social, economic, cultural and other determinants of unpaid work of women in Uttar Pradesh.
4. To study the existing estimation methods of inclusion of unpaid work in national GDP and make an attempt of the same for Uttar Pradesh using the input method.
5. To study the role of household appliances and state's provisioning of public utilities that may have an effect on the duration and extent of unpaid work of women.
6. To assess the implications of unpaid work on well-being and the overall life satisfaction of women.

Hypothesis of the Study

1. Unpaid work is a major factor responsible for declining FLFPR.
2. Women spend substantially more time than men on unpaid work.
3. Unpaid work differs across various other cultural and social factors besides economic and demographic factors of the households.
4. Women's unpaid work has a major contribution in GSDP if included in the state accounts.
5. Household appliances and state provisioning of public utilities ease the burden of unpaid work on women significantly.

Methodology

Data Source and Data Collection Method

The study utilizes both primary and secondary data. Secondary data is collected from reports and datasets released by Government, International Organizations, private agencies, think tanks and media reports. The method adopted for primary data collection is the Convergent Design Model of mixed methods. It is a household-based survey, with both quantitative and qualitative components.

Sampling Method for Primary Data Collection

For drawing out the intended sample, multistage sampling approach is used. Firstly, using the purposive sampling the state is chosen as Uttar Pradesh as it is the state having the highest number of population in the working age. Furthermore, in second stage, two districts are chosen based on their HDI (Human Development Index) and GDI (Gender Development Index) values. One with low HDI and GDI while the other district with higher HDI and GDI are chosen. The districts chosen for study are - Lucknow and Raebareli, Lucknow with high HDI (0.65) and high GDI (0.58) and Raebareli with low HDI (0.52) and low GDI (0.49), as per the data released by UPHDR report of 2008. This will help us in bringing up the difference in unpaid work duration between areas where women are experiencing better development standards versus areas where women are not so developed in terms of health, education and living standards. Third stage is - from each chosen district, one ward, having the highest population, is chosen. After this stage, fourth stage is, out of the selected ward, two areas are picked up purposively- one developed and one less developed, that is, a notified slum area. In Lucknow, out of 110 wards, ward number 35 is chosen (population 57,500) while in Raebareli, out of 31 wards, ward number 13 is chosen (population 8,524). Thereafter, in Lucknow, from ward number 35, developed area chosen is Vineet Khand while the slum chosen is Chinhat. Similarly, in Raebareli, from ward number 13, developed area chosen is Shakti Nagar while Kallu Ka Purwa is the selected slum. Furthermore, last and fifth stage is where households are chosen from each selected area randomly for administering the survey.

The sample size using the Cochran's formula at 95% confidence level with 6% as margin of error, is computed to be 267. So, we take **280 households** as our sample size which is a round

figure. 280 sample size is distributed between the two districts using the proportional stratified random sampling, from Lucknow district we covered 163 households and from Raebareli district 117 households. Because the study explicitly focusses on women thus the survey is administered to the women of the households falling between the age group of **15 years to 64 years**, that is the working age group. The survey was conducted in both English and Hindi language.

Data Analysis Method

The collected primary and secondary data are analysed using graphical methods, descriptive statistics along with scatter plot, regressions and correlation analysis using Microsoft Excel and STATA. These methods not only help in descriptive and thematic analysis of the unpaid work but also help in ascertaining the trend of the unpaid work in India and gather empirical evidence as to what factors are playing a role in unpaid hours and how they affect the well-being and life satisfaction of women. Different estimation measures like input method which comprises of replacement cost method and opportunity cost method and output method; for measuring the contribution of women's unpaid work to national GDP is reviewed using the available literature (George et al., 2009; Hirway, 2000b; R. N. Pandey, 2009; Sidh & Basu, 2011) along with their shortcomings. Besides these, monetary estimation of unpaid work hours is also attempted using the input method.

The Present Study

This study, thus aims to cover all such hidden nuances in women's work and its impact on state GDP through the time use survey conducted for Uttar Pradesh, using primary and secondary data analysis. Thus, this work focus on the above-mentioned themes of unpaid work. This study aims to give a push to Elson's 3 R concept by utilizing the information thus collected to develop policies that promote not only female labour force participation in paid work according to their skills and expertise but also give a push to recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid work between men and women, as a measure towards women's economic empowerment, by releasing them to participate more fully in the paid labour force.

Rationale of the Study

In the analysis of gender-based discrimination in labour economics, there is no doubt about the fact that **unpaid work is the missing link**. Doing away with the restraints on women's

time entails reducing the burden borne by women. There have been previous studies and researches to study time use among women on the broad areas of women employment and unpaid work but there has been a vacuum of study of contextual variables which plays an important role in determining women's intensity and duration of unpaid work and due to lack of regular time-use surveys and data there are restricted empirical evidences on the consequences of such unpaid labour. In this regard, it becomes pertinent to explore how these contextual variables like - availability of househelpers, mother's education level, access to public utilities and consumer durables, women empowerment indicators are manifested in women's time-use. All of these factors may affect not only the duration and distribution of burden of unpaid work hours on women but also may have serious consequences on their physical and mental well-being which needs to be gauged. Besides this, non-inclusivity of women's work in national accounts since ages, due to faulty concept of labor force participation, has led to limited attempts of scholars of its valuation in national income accounting. Therefore, accurate estimation of unpaid work as a percentage of GDP becomes important for getting this work recognized and valued.

The 'Three R' approach - 'recognize', 'reduce' and 'redistribute', toward unpaid domestic work is important for consideration for changing the work status of women (from Unpaid to Paid) in the economy, which will reduce the unpaid work among women (Singh & Pattanaik, 2020). This study helps in - recognizing the employment status of women and the value of their unpaid work, reduce the burden by providing evidences of how socio & economic factors, household amenities and state provisioning affects the duration of such work and redistribute by sensitizing the government and masses about how the unpaid work burden affects the well-being and quality of life of women.

Outline of the Study

The study comprises of **seven chapters** as follows -

The introductory chapter **of the study titled 'Introduction'** discusses about the background of the study, research questions, objectives and hypothesis of the study, methodology and sample design, rationale for the study and the chapterisation scheme of the study.

The second chapter titled **'Women and their Unpaid Work: Conceptual and Theoretical Background'** tries to connect the varied discourses comprising the theoretical and conceptual

antecedents of paid and unpaid work of women as covered in various international and national level studies and reports published by eminent feminist economists, researchers and academicians.

Chapter 3 titled ‘Employment Trends of Women: A Global and National Picture’ examines the employment trend and gender gap in LFPR over the past years at global, South Asian and at national level by utilising the secondary data from ILO, NSSO Employment and Unemployment Reports of various rounds and Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS). Also, interstate analysis was attempted for the year 2019-20, to ascertain the inter-regional variations in LFPR and it was revealed that female LFPR is mostly concentrated to the few states, namely- highest in Himachal Pradesh with 51.8 % followed by Sikkim 49.1% and Chhattisgarh 40.2% and it was lowest in Bihar 6.4% followed by Haryana 11.9% and Assam 12.4%. The trend analysis of the state of Uttar Pradesh, our study state, revealed to be facing a deepening employment crisis, worse than what is prevailing in the country and the FLFPR are bound to be even more gender-skewed as compared to other states (Kumar, 2020).

The fourth chapter ‘Time Allocation in Paid and Unpaid Work: Insights from the Indian Time Use Survey’ discusses about the evolution and importance of the Time Use Survey and analyses the recent Time Use Survey data revealed by NSO, Government of India and thus try to identify different patterns, distribution and nature of unpaid work prevalent in India. Also, interstate composite gender disparity index (CGDI) was developed using which scatter plot analysis, ranking of states as per gender inequality in unpaid work distribution and multivariate correlation analysis was conducted and thus it was concluded, that the gender disparity negatively affects the female labour force participation and vice versa – higher the disparity, lesser the time spent on paid SNA work and more the time spent by women on unrecognized unpaid work, as compared to men. Moreover, most of the southern and north eastern states were found to have lower disparity and thus higher FLFPR while the northern, eastern and western states have gender disparity on the higher end thus resulting in low FLFPR.

The fifth chapter titled **‘Effect of Socio-Economic and Other Factors on the Paid-Unpaid Work of Women’** includes primary data analysis. This chapter’s focussed on the descriptive analysis of demographical and socio-economic profile of the study households and also the perception of women regarding various cultural norms prevalent in our society was analysed.

Also, this chapter studies the time allocation by women among paid and unpaid work and lastly, identification of the various demographical, socio economic, cultural and other reasons of paid - unpaid work of women is also attempted using binary logistic regression.

Some of the important conclusions, drawn from these analysis were - women of low-income households are more driven to find paid work than women of higher income households, 41% of working women have hired househelp or domestic servant as compared to 31% of non-working women. Analysis further reveals that at lower levels of education (upto primary levels) more women are working than being unemployed, thereafter most of the educated women are non-working but trend reverses again at highest level. Mother's level of education had positive impact on working status of women. Almost five times women in working category than in non-working category, married later than 25 years of age.

Working women had more agency in household decisions but due to 'double burden' of working women, they have lesser time left for leisure and self care as compared to non-working women. Thus, non-working women were found to be spending slightly more time than the working women daily, on unpaid type of work, but women working spent on an average more than 6 hours per day on employment related activities as well in addition to their unpaid work burden of home.

The logistic regression analysis helped identify several factors responsible for affecting the womens' role as a domestic worker, like- For Lucknow, four factors were identified - females belonging to nuclear families, to families having a house helper/maid for doing the domestic chores, women whose mother's education levels were above higher secondary levels and having family support for job had higher likelihood to be employed in paid work. Whereas, for Raebareli, four other factors were identified - females of nuclear families of 18 to 40 years of age, having education level below higher secondary levels and who participate in household decisions had higher likelihood to be employed in paid work.

The sixth chapter '**Valuation of Unpaid Care Work and Women Life Satisfaction**' examines different valuation measures for measuring the contribution of women's unpaid work in the national GDP and make an attempt of the same for the state of U.P. Also, how private and public investment in household amenities and public utilities impacts the unpaid work duration of the women and what are the implications of unpaid work on women's well-being and life satisfaction were analysed, using ANOVA and likert scale, respectively.

So, the women's unpaid work when converted to paid work was found to contribute around 56% share of the state GDP. The impact of labour and time saving household appliances and public infrastructure on unpaid work hours of women. revealed that in Lucknow, that is the developed district, only piped water supply had an impact while in Raebareli, which is the lesser developed district, washing machine, access to flush toilets and piped water supply were the significant factors affecting the unpaid work hours.

So, for well-being three indicators were analysed - domestic violence, prevalence of chronic disease among women respondents and frequency of getting injured while doing domestic chores. As per the analysis in the chapter on the basis of field survey undertaken, higher percentage of women of Lucknow (15%) faced domestic violence at home as compared to just 7% in Raebareli. A whopping 39% of women respondents were suffering from chronic diseases in Lucknow as compared to just 18% in Raebareli. The frequency of injury while doing domestic chores, most of the women reported as never or rarely in both the districts and for the combined state. For life satisfaction, women in each district were distributed among working and non-working category. It was concluded that non-working women were not very much happy and satisfied with their career graph in life as significant percentage of non-working women rated their career satisfaction as very dissatisfied or dissatisfied or neutral. For the rest of the fields, majority of women were either very satisfied or satisfied – be it for society, family, at personal level or for overall life. This was true for both the districts individually as well as at combined levels as well as for both the categories of women.

Policy Recommendations

First suggested by the famous feminist economists, Diane Elson in 2009, the 'Three R' approach - 'recognize', 'reduce' and 'redistribute', toward unpaid domestic work is important for consideration for changing the work status of women. Unpaid care work should be integrated in policy making by all levels of government keeping in mind these 3 R's. The study's aim was to explore and analyse the factors aligned to these 3 R's and hence the policy recommendations are as follows –

- **Recognizing the unpaid work of women** requires its monetary valuation. For this to happen at national level, time use data is necessary, thus conduction and publication

of regular and comprehensive **time-use surveys**, inclusive of socio, economic, cultural and demographical variables, at the national level will be a significant step.

- **Reduction of unpaid work burden on women** can be made through state provisioning of public utilities and making consumer durables more accessible and affordable. As made evident by the findings of chapter 6, government should extend the coverage of **piped water supply and flush toilets** in every household. Besides this, **washing machine** is found to have a significant impact and thus women buyers should be provided a subsidy or cashback in the form of DBT.
- **Redistribution of unpaid work** can be done by **family support**, which can play an important role in intrahousehold distribution of unpaid work. Awareness programmes and counselling sessions can sensitize families about the social norms on intra household gender roles and importance of women education and employment. Certain monetary or social incentives can be provided for families which have working females.
- Another important factor that significantly affected unpaid work of women was their and their mother's **education levels**. Thus, government should not only encourage but also subsidise and ease female enrolment at any level of education and provide easy access to distance or online courses by equipping them with technical gadgets. Also, policies should be in place to make vocational and skill based training available and affordable to all females.

As most respondents reported burden of caregiving or domestic chores as the reason for not participating in labour market, **public investment in care infrastructure** and formal care services for children and old age people is the need of the hour and can improve gender equality in labour market as well as within the home. Moreover, expanding investment in social protection and **healthcare for women** will also be a welcome step in this regard. Strict mobilization of **workplace facilities** like availability of creches, ensuring women safety and security, flexible work hours, social security, non-discriminatory wages and parental leaves, will reduce motherhood penalty and marriage effect faced by working women and promote formalisation of women workforce. Finally, in a diverse country like India, it is important to look at the **regional differences** in time use patterns of women and accordingly prescribe policy solution for each regions.