

Gender Inequality and Labour-Force: An Empirical Analysis from the Paid and Unpaid Services in Self-Employment in Leh-Ladakh

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Abstract:

Background:The gender equality as the 5th sustainable development goal, how far have we reached in achieving it? From observing generally, we still have a long way to go because there are many literatures which are talking of the gender differences or inequality in every aspect of life.

Aim of the Study:Therefore, the primary aim of my study is to add one more proof of gender inequality to the existing literature. The study tries to assess the problem from overall labour force aspect as well as across various social groups. Thus, there are three main objectives of the paper and they are firstly, to examine the gender inequality in the over-all labour force. Secondly, the gender inequality in labour force across the paid and unpaid services in the self-employment.

Research design:The paper uses the primary data and the data has been collected from 705 labour force individuals (both employed and unemployed) through a survey questionnaire. The analyses have been done by using various statistical tools like frequency, percentage and One way-ANOVA test.

Result:The study reveals that the share from females is higher in terms of unpaid services into self-employment than males irrespective of the sectors. Whereas, the males share into the paid services especially as an employer or own account worker is higher than females irrespective of the sectors.

Conclusion:The study concludes that there are significant mean differences between the labour force categories across genders, meaning thereby, the females are highly involved into unpaid self-employment labour force whereas, the males are more into paid services.

Keyword: Gender; Inequality; Labour-force; Paid; Unpaid; Self-Employment; Leh-Ladakh.

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I. Introduction

The problem of gender inequality is still persisting in every aspect of life and many organisations at various level trying their best to dissolve it. However, there are many existing literatures which argue that the gender parity is a distant dream and to achieve it, many commitments are needed. Therefore, the rationale for the study is just to assess the severity of the gender inequality or rather discrimination in the employments. The over-all level of employment or labour force participation is higher from males than females and this itself raise a question on gender parity. The primary goal of the study is to investigate the gender inequality in the labour force which pertains to self-employment and it has been witnessed that females are pushed into unpaid labour force and males retain the superior level of labour force that is as an employer or as an own account worker. These males are get paid for the services they have been rendered. However, on the other hand, the females are almost equally active in to the labour force especially that of self-employment category, but they don't get paid, because they work as a helper in to self-employments. Thus, the primary goal of the study is to examine the gender inequality in the paid and unpaid labour-force category.

The labour force includes all the individuals in the working age groups (16 to 60 years) either usually employed or seeking employment. Therefore, it has employed labour force and unemployed labour force. As per NSS, there are three sub-categories within Self-employment and they are Own Account Worker, Employer and the third category is Unpaid labour. Whereas, the first two come under the Paid labour. Usually, the unpaid labour is that category where those who work as helper in household enterprise, are however, unpaid (Neetha&Indrani).

II. Literature Review

The gender inequality persisting in every aspect of life and especially in the labour force participation. It is that relative to mean, women have far more less access to employment resources (Dunn). However, there are several studies which proved that the trend in female labour force participation globally is increasing but India being an exception has a negative trend (Sumanjeet). Not only this “there is disturbing trend of a steep fall in female work participation rates that had appeared in 2007-08 has continued” (Indrani & Mazumdar). At the same time, the quality of women’s labour is poor ... and most self-employment in the form of unpaid work are indications of women’s disadvantages position in the labour market” (Sundari). There are many studies which further adds to highlight that there is a sharp rise in unpaid labour by women of the self-employment (Neetha & Indrani). On the other hand, the participation of women in to paid activities have declined consistently as argued by Pushpendra & Falguni and they also claimed that women’s participation in to unpaid workforce has increased. Moreover, it has been suggested by Pushpendra & Falguni that the increased in the unpaid activities is more severe for less educated, poor and marginalised women. It has also been studied that the severeness of the problem is high in rural women than urban women (Neetha & Indrani). On the other hand, the women’s participation into the paid labour that is as employer or own account worker is significant low, which “generally represents just one quarter of rural self-employed women” (Neetha & Indrani). Therefore, it is very important to look in to the problem of gender inequality because as quoted by Olsen & Mehta “Most western feminists would argue that the unpaid work done by women tends to get too little attention, and that its social economic valuation is unreasonably low”. Hence, it is must to know the extent of women’s participation in the unpaid labour.

III. Research Objectives

1. To examine the extent of gender inequality in labour force
2. To examine the gender disparity across various social groups
3. To study the difference of means of labour force across genders

IV. Data and Research Methodology

The research design adopted for the study is concurrent where the descriptive as well as causal analysis has been taken place. The study uses a primary data of 705 individuals in the labour force in order to examine the extent of gender disparity across various social groups. At the same time, the paper also tries to explore the causal relation between various independent variables and the dependent variable gender-based labour-force. The various statistical tools have been used like percentage, mean, frequency, one way ANOVA test, etc.

V. Discussion and Findings

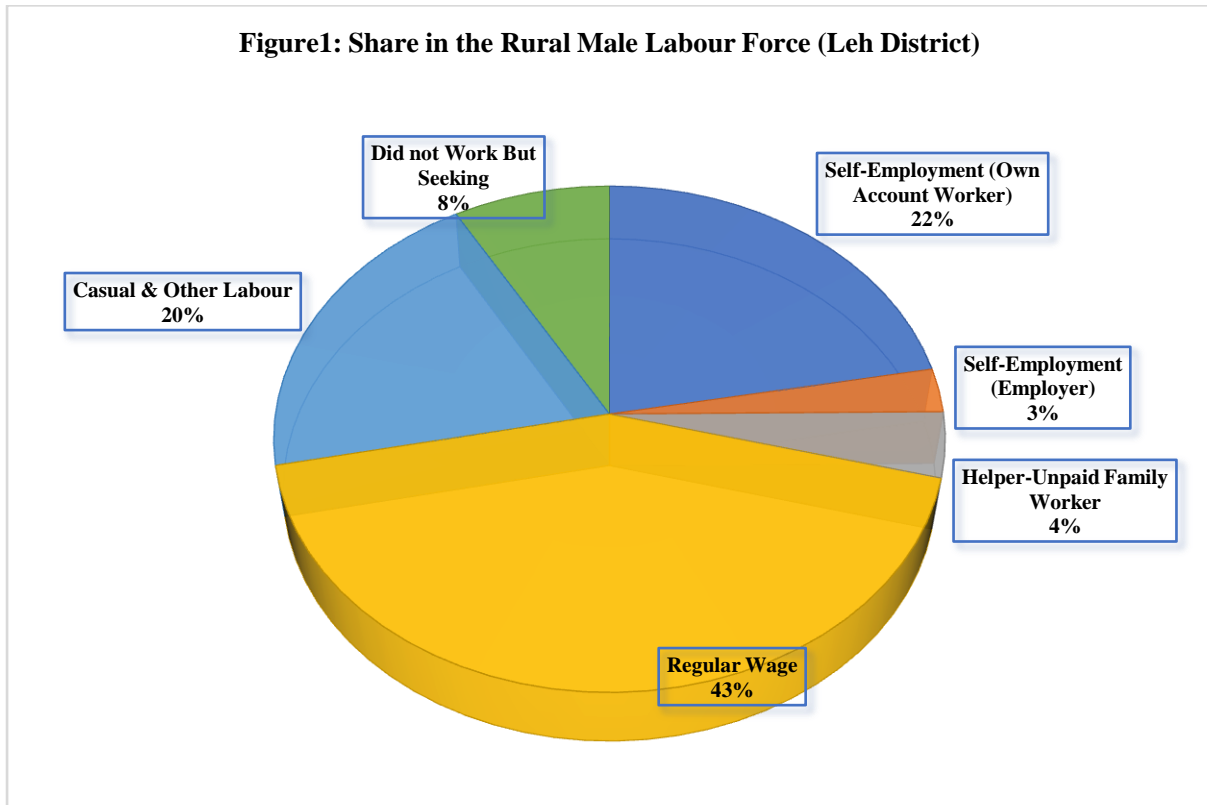
Over-All Labour-force and Genders: The data estimations reveal that the males have higher share (i.e., 59.3 percent) than their counterparts (i.e., 40.7 percent) in the overall-labour force. Furthermore, their respective frequencies are 418 Males and 287 Females out of 705 persons. Thus, this depicts that the males are more economically active than their counterparts in the region, whether being as an employed labour-force or unemployed labour-force and this phenomenon is almost everywhere.

However, in order to have a deeper understanding of the labour force in the region, it is worthwhile to see the representation from the different sectors. Therefore, the study studies the representation from both males and females in the sector-based labour force and the estimates show that no doubt the rural sector has a higher share than urban sector in the overall labour force. That is, out of the 705 labour force persons, 473 persons belong to rural sector and the rest i.e., 232 persons to urban sector. This indicates that rural people are more economically active overall. Whereas, the distribution of these labour forces across the genders, tells that in rural sector, the majority that is 60.7 percent of them are males and the rest are females. In other words, the rural sector has a higher representation from males than females whether in the form of either employed or unemployed. If we look into the participation from females in to the labour force across sectors, it seems that the rural females are less economically active than the females in urban sector. Thus, it is concluded that the urban females are more economically active than rural females. But, amongst males, the rural males are more active than urban males.

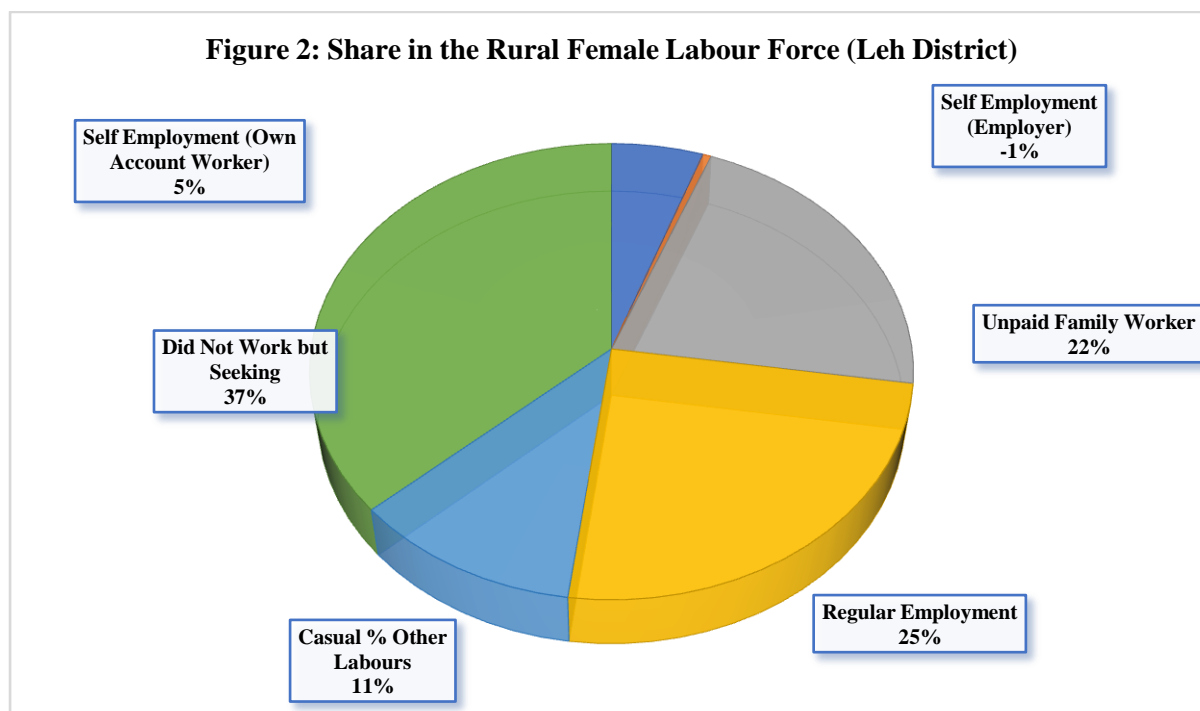
Over-All Labour-Force and its Distributions: According to the NSS, the labour force consists of both employed and unemployed persons and furthermore, the employed persons consist of the persons engaged in various economic activities. So, it is necessary to look at the gender-wise distribution of the labour force among these economic activities. Thus, the study reveals in the *Figure 1* that in terms of the rural males, it is around 4.2 percent of the rural males are engaged in the regular employment and this is highest share of the rural males among the different economic activity. This is followed by the Own-Account worker in the Self-employment with 22.3 percent and then followed by Casual labour % Other Works with 20.0 percent. The prominent feature of the rural male labour force is that only 8.4 percent seeks job or employment.

However, in terms of females, the **Figure 2** reveals that the rural females are more prone to the status of seeking job or employment than their counterpart and percentage is as high as 36.6 percent as it has been reflected from the estimations. This is one of the main features of the rural female labour force of Leh. Apart from this, the other feature is that, rural females are more engaged as a Helper in to the household enterprise i.e., 21.5 percent than their counterparts and the percentage is only 4.2 percent in terms of latter. No doubt, the rural females also engaged in Regular employment but the percentage is quite low i.e., 24.7 percent as compared to the rural male labour force. Only 0.5 percent of the rural female labour force is engaged as an Employer, while the percentage is 2.8 percent in terms of rural male labour force. Similarly, only 5.4 percent of the rural female labour force engages as Own Account worker in the household enterprise and the corresponding percentage for rural males is quite high i.e., 22.3 percent.

Figure1: Share in the Rural Male Labour Force (Leh District)



Source: Author's Own Computations



Source: Author's Own Computations

Table 1
Distribution of the Urban Labour Force across Genders

Employment Category	Male		Female	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Paid Self-Employment (Own Account Worker)	27	20.6	6	5.9
Paid Self-Employment (Employer)	11	8.4	1	1.0
Helper (Unpaid Family Worker)	8	6.1	16	15.8
Regular Salaried Employment	60	45.8	49	48.5
Casual Labour & Others	7	5.4	6	6.0
Did Not Work but Seeking	18	13.7	23	22.8
Total	131	100.0	101	100.0

Source: Author's Own Computations

Unlike rural sector, the **Table 1** reveals that the higher percentage of the urban females engaged into Regular employment than the urban males. The former has the percentage of 48.5 percent and the latter has 45.8 percent. But the job seekers tend to higher among females (i.e., 22.8 percent than males (i.e., 13.7 percent) in urban area as well. Apart from this, the other prominent feature of urban females is that 15.8 percent of the total urban females involved in an economic activity as a Helper-unpaid family worker (i.e., 15.8 percent) and only a handful of them are work as an Own-Account worker (i.e., 5.9 percent). Whereas an Employer, the urban females have very low representation and the percentage is as low as 1.0 percent and corresponding estimate for urban males is 8.4 percent.

Table 2
Results of One-way ANOVA Test between Labour force and Genders

Genders	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	21.894	6	3.649	17.720	.000*
Within Groups	134.881	655	.206		
Total	156.775	661			

Note: * The Mean Difference is significant at the 0.01 level
Source: Author's Own Computations

The **Table 2** presents the results of the one-way ANOVA test to assess the importance of genders into the labour force participation and it has been found that the mean differences in the groups of the labour force participation is highly statistically significant amongst the genders. This difference of mean is significant at .01 level of significance. Hence it does reflect that gender disparity is prominent in the labour force participation.

Over-all Labour-force and Religion Groups: The **Table 3** portrays the respective share of the religion groups in to the Labour force participation in Leh and the estimates reveal that Buddhism is the religion group with the highest share (i.e., 83.0 percent) in the Labour force, which is followed by the Islam religion group with 16.2 percent share and then at last, with the lowest share the Christianity with 0.9 percent share. The findings under the religion groups are quite obvious because, the representation of each and every individual religion group in the total population of Leh is parallel to their respective shares in the labour force. Therefore, a further attempt has been made to look in to the in-depth role of religions in Leh labour force participation.

Table 3
Religion-wise Share in to the Labour Force

Religion	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Buddhism	585	83.0	83.0
Islam	114	16.2	99.1
Christianity	6	0.9	100.0
Total	705	100.0	

Source: Author's Own Computations

Therefore, the following sections reveals the share of the religion groups in the labour force gender wise and the **Table 4** depicts the estimates. So, from estimates it has been concluded that in the Buddhism religion group, the males (i.e., 57.9 percent) have higher share than females (i.e., 42.1 percent). In other words, out of 583 individuals, 339 are males and 246 are females. As far as the gender-wise share in the labour force participation is concerned, the estimates under the Buddhism religion group seems obvious because the males have higher share at Leh-Ladakh region level itself. Moreover, the share of rural males is higher than urban males and their corresponding shares are 70.2 percent and 29.8 percent respectively. On the other hand, the rural females have 65.9 percent and the urban females have 34.1 percent shares into the total Buddhist female labour force. Hence, in order to assess the nature of labour force more deeply, the paper also studied the distribution of the labour force participation in the Buddhism religion group across the genders.

From the estimations, the prominent feature of the Buddhism females labour force is that they are highly consist of job seekers (i.e., 30.9 percent) while, it is just 10.9 percent for Buddhism males labour force. The other prominent feature of the Buddhism female labour force is that they have 20.3 percent of them engaged in economic activity as a Helper in the Household

Table 4
Distribution of the Gender based Labour Force (Buddhism)

Employment Category	Male		Female	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Paid Self-Employment (Own account worker)	77	22.7	16	6.5
Paid Self-Employment (Employer)	8	2.4	2	0.8
Helper (Unpaid Family Worker)	14	4.1	50	20.3
Regular Salaried Employment	150	44.2	76	30.9
Casual Labour & Others	53	15.7	26	10.6
Did Not Work but Seeking	37	10.9	76	30.9
Total	339	100.0	246	100.0

Source: Author's Own Computations

enterprise. Whereas, in terms of Buddhism males, the prominent characteristic is that around 22.7 percent of them engaged in to economic activity as Own-Account Worker in household enterprise. No doubt, both Buddhism males and females somewhat par with each other in terms of Regular salaried employee. The former has 44.2 percent and the latter has 30.9 percent.

Table 5
Distribution of the Gender based labour Force (Islam)

Employment Category	Male		Female	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Paid Self-Employment (Own Account Worker)	14	18.9	-	-
Paid Self-Employment (Employer)	10	13.5	-	-
Helper (Unpaid Family Worker)	5	6.8	6	15.0
Regular Salaried Employment	32	43.2	18	45.0
Casual Labour & Others	9	12.2	1	2.5

Did Not Work but Seeking	4	5.4	15	37.5
Total	74	100.0	40	100.0

Source: Author's Own Computations

The study reveals the results unlike that under the Buddhism religion group. The table reveals that the share of both the genders in the Islam labour force participation and it shows that Islam males have almost 2/3rd (i.e., 64.9 percent) of the total share and Islam females have 1/3rd (i.e., 35.1 percent). The difference in the gender-wise share in the labour force under Islam is huge. The sector-wise shares in to the total Islam labour force as expected. The rural sector has higher share than urban sector even in terms of Islam religion group. More specifically, amongst males the rural males have 66.2 percent share and urban males have 33.8 percent. Likewise, amongst females the rural females have 60.0 percent share and urban females have 40.0 percent. Thus, it has been evident that rural sector contributes more to the labour force than the urban sector. Therefore, the next step is to look in to the detailed characteristics of the Islam Labour force

The **Table 5** tries to depict the gender-wise distribution of the Islam Labour force participation and it has been found that the Islam females are more likely to be job seekers (that is around 37.5 percent of the Islam Female Labour force). However, unlike most of the Males across different socio-groups, the Islam males are more into the self -employment and worked either as Own- account worker or employer. The respective percentages are 18.9 percent and 13.5 percent. The prominent feature of Islam male labour force is that they are relatively a greater number of them as Employer than other religion groups. Both genders have almost equal percentage in terms of Regular salaried employee.

As far as the Christianity is concerned, it has been found that males have distinctly higher share (i.e., 83.3 percent) in the labour force participation than their counter parts (with 16.7 percent share). In terms of the composition of the Christian male labour force, 40 percent belongs to regular salaried employee. They also engaged in the self-employment and 20 percent of them each involved in to the labour force as Employer and Helper as well. At the same time, 20 percent of them also seek job or employment.

Over-all Labour Force and Education: It is generally believed that labour force participation and the level of education have a positive relation. Thus, the study tries to compare the means in five various education groups and the result from F statistics from the One-way ANOVA test confirms that there is significant difference of means in the groups at 0.05 level of significant. let's see what is the nature of the relationship between these two variables shared in the study area. The result reflects a statistically significant mean difference in the educational groups.

VI. Conclusions

The study concludes that there is a significantly low representation from women as compared to men in the over-all labour force irrespective of sectors. Further analysis, indicates that rural women are economically more active than urban women. However, the majority of the rural women are more into unpaid labour than urban women. On the other hand, the women participation in paid labour is significantly low as compared to men and this applies to both the sectors. Thus, it states that many services provided by women are gone unacknowledged and these terrible outcomes experienced by women is mainly due to patriarchal and exploitative capitalist culture. Therefore, it has to be addressed implementing many changes at different structural levels like household, society, institution and at macro level by bringing favourable policies.

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