

WOMEN WORK PARTICIPATION IN RURAL UTTAR PRADESH: A REGIONAL ANALYSIS

UDAI BHAN SINGH*; NRIPENDRA KISHORE MISHRA**

*RESEARCH ANALYST,
POPULATION RESEARCH CENTRE,
INSTITUTE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH, DELHI

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,
DEPT. OF ECONOMICS,
BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY, VARANASI

ABSTRACT:

Women are vital and productive agent in Indian economy but their employment status is critical because their participation in different economic activities is very low as compared to male. Women face various types of discrimination in different walks of life, including education and consequently land up in low paying job. The basic aim of this study is to understand the variations in the growth process of the participation of women in gainful activity at state level in general and at district level in particular. For this purpose, data has been collected from four economic regions such as Western U.P., Eastern U.P., Central U.P. and Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh. A multistage Sampling method has been used to select districts and villages. The results of this study demonstrate that in Uttar Pradesh, women in general have lower participation in work as compared to males. WPR for women is lower in eastern and western regions. The WPR for women is associated with caste structure also. It is generally high for Hindu SC/ST and Muslim OBC women. Education plays an important role in work participation only after more than 12 years of schooling. WPR for women declines after primary education and picks up only after 12 years of schooling as work options other than agriculture open up only after this. The quality of employment is generally bad for Hindu SC/ST and Muslim OBC women as most of them are working as casual labour. The growth of rural non farm sector has affected women workers in an indirect way. While percentage of women is higher than men in employer, helper and casual labour category in agriculture sector, this pattern is altered in non agriculture sector. Here the percentage is higher in own account worker and casual labour category. It seems that the growth of rural non farm sector has not benefitted women as much as men. Within non farm sector tailoring, manufacture, grocery shops and other retail trade are most common activities of women. However, one third of women are reporting to be doing wage work in nonfarm sector.

[I] Introduction

Women constitute almost half of labour force in any economy. But conversion of this labour force into work force is contingent upon many factors. At times their work is hidden either in form of 'home based worker' or as 'domestic duty'. These categories of employment are characterized by either low wages or no wages. Even when they are wage workers their participation in different economic activities is low as compared to male. Participation of women in work and consequent remuneration is conditioned by socio-cultural context. Scale of

urbanization, types of employment and nature and scale of migration are other critical determinants of women's participation in economic activity. Women's participation in economic activities besides increasing total participation and output has other important implications; it tells us about condition of women, about caste and class disparities and gender biasness in society. They are silent critique of the nature of the growth process of society and country. Women's participation will result in their greater access to educational opportunities but education has largely been restricted to males, discriminating females with the assumption that investment on their education and training has a relatively low social and private return and as a consequence low women's participation in economic activity (Kumar, 2008).

In Uttar Pradesh, which is primarily an agrarian economy in terms of share of rural workforce in total workforce, female participation rates are very low as compared to male worker and majority of female workers (85.4%) in rural areas are engaged in agriculture (NSS 66th round report) Rural economy of Uttar Pradesh has witnessed major change in last two decades. Agriculture is growing very slowly and in many areas is almost stagnant and is becoming highly capital-intensive with almost all processes being handled by machines, the latest being combined harvesters. Therefore, labour absorptive capacity of agriculture is very limited now. However, the silver lining for rural economy of Uttar Pradesh is the growth of rural non farm sector (RNFS). RNFS has witnessed phenomenal growth in last two decades. This rural non-farm sector in Uttar Pradesh was distinctly augmented in the late 1990s. It is often debated whether it is a positive economic response or a coping strategy. Nonetheless, RNFS has provided opportunities to rural workers in Uttar Pradesh. But has this come with a gender bias? How and to what extent women have benefitted from this development? In Uttar Pradesh, 52 million workers out of the total numbers of 67 million worked in rural area and has been distributed between farm and non – farm sectors. During 1993-94 to 2004-05 employment growth in agriculture was lower (1.2%) compared to non-farm employment growth (4.76%). But women did not benefit as much as men from this growth of employment in RNFS. While male activities rose considerably from 18.1percent to 33.7 percent over the period 1972-73 to 2004-05, female participation in non-farm employment accounted for only a marginal change from 15 percent to 16.8 percent during the same period (Ranjan, 2009). However, it needs to be emphasized that this type of an aggregate picture for a state like Uttar Pradesh could be quite misleading, as this is the most heterogeneous state of India. Uttar Pradesh needs to be understood at a more disaggregated level. Therefore the basic aim of this study is to understand the variations in participation of women in gainful activity at state level in general and at regional level in particular.

This study, a byproduct of a study on rural diversification in Uttar Pradesh, is based on primary data and covered all four economic regions such as Western U.P., Eastern U.P., Central U.P. and Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh. A multistage sampling method has been used to select districts and villages. In the first stage of this process, one district has been selected from each economic region on the basis of highest percentage of rural non-farm employment in total rural employment. This exercise resulted into selection of Ambedkar Nagar from Eastern U.P., Saharanpur from Western U.P, Kannauj from Central U.P. and Hamirpur from Bundelkhand region. From each district two villages, on the basis of distance from the district headquarter/urban centre, have been chosen, categorized into rural and urban village. In final stage, one hamlet has been chosen from each village and all household of the hamlet are selected. Therefore, household numbers were not equal in all four districts. This study uses principal usual status definition of NSS to classify women's work participation. Of course, it may be argued that

a better picture of women's work may emerge only after taking into account subsidiary work of women. However, due to limitations of data this study sticks to usual principal status definition only.

[III] Women's Work Participation by Socio – Economic Characteristics

Women work is complex and important because their engagement in both productive activities and domestic duties are necessary. In developing economies, workers combine multiple activities over different part of the year (Srivastva & Srivastva, 2010) and participation in those activities is restricted by the caste and class category, education level and biasness of male about female working. In India, especially in U.P., caste category plays an important role in participation of female workers in specific activity.

Table 1: Female WPR

| Region | Age Group 15-59 | | | All Age Group | | |
|---------------|-----------------|--------|---------|---------------|--------|---------|
| | Male | Female | Persons | Male | Female | Persons |
| Eastern | 43.07 | 41.42 | 42.30 | 41.66 | 37.94 | 39.92 |
| Central | 47.49 | 48.12 | 47.78 | 46.10 | 44.79 | 45.52 |
| Bundelkhand | 49.37 | 46.25 | 47.99 | 45.34 | 41.10 | 43.47 |
| Western | 37.44 | 39.95 | 38.64 | 38.03 | 36.43 | 37.25 |
| All Districts | 44.17 | 43.72 | 43.96 | 42.79 | 39.98 | 41.49 |

Source: Field Survey

Female participation rate (WPR) in economic activity is lower than male in Uttar Pradesh. Actually, women's primary duties are supposed to be in the household. For economic reasons they have to work, but must do so in addition to their domestic responsibilities. Therefore, her participation will be accounted for in a subsidiary status. Table 1 show that WPR for female for all age group are lower than male in all regions of Uttar Pradesh. WPR declines for male as well as female in all age group, which is quite natural to expect. However, age specific WPR (age group 15-59) shows a slight variation. Female WPR in age group 15-59 is higher in western and central UP as compared to male WPR. One reason for this observed phenomenon is that in central and western region due to the scarcity of male labour force in agricultural activity female could get greater opportunity. Therefore, their participation is higher than male for age group 15-59.

Women's participation in economic activities is determined by many non economic factors such as social, religious, demographic, reproductive and cultural. These factors are by nature diverse and heterogeneous. Table 2 shows that WPR is the high for Hindu SC/ST and Muslim OBC women and lowest in Hindu general caste women. Table 2 throws further light on the phenomenon observed above. WPR for female in eastern region was higher than their male counterpart in Hindu OBC group and the same pattern is followed by central and western region for Muslim OBC women. However, in other regions, WPR pattern for women was different by different social category. Higher female WPR in central region and Bundelkhand is attributable to larger participation of women from a specific caste group. In central U.P participation of

women from Hindu general caste and Muslim OBC caste is higher than their male counterparts. However, in Budelkhand Hindu general caste women are showing greater participation in work force. Therefore, the status of work is required to be understood in the actual story of participation. In Uttar Pradesh, different regions have different story of women participation. In eastern region, WPR is high in Hindu OBC and Muslim OBC women because they are engaged in own account small enterprise. In central region WPR is high for Hindu SC/ST and Muslim OBC. Actually, Hindu general and Hindu OBC are main land owning castes and women from these caste groups are primarily engaged in domestic duties. But, other two caste categories depend on wage for their livelihood. Cold storages have proved to be an important source of employment for male as well as for females in central region. In Bundelkhand region, WPR is high in Hindu general category women because men have moved out of agriculture to non agriculture sector due to scarcity of irrigation facility and resultant vacuum in agriculture has been filled by women.

Table 2: WPR by Socio - Religious Group in Age Group 15-59

| Region | Sex | Hindu GENERAL | Hindu OBC | Hindu SC/ST | Muslim OBC |
|---------------|--------|---------------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Eastern | Male | 57.14 | 41.80 | 46.67 | 42.45 |
| | Female | 27.27 | 44.19 | 34.69 | 40.44 |
| Central | Male | 32.14 | 39.58 | 60.78 | 54.55 |
| | Female | 41.18 | 36.92 | 58.02 | 59.69 |
| Bundelkhand | Male | 32.50 | 53.62 | 46.48 | 0.00 |
| | Female | 45.45 | 47.62 | 42.31 | 0.00 |
| Western | Male | 50.00 | 40.54 | 37.86 | 34.16 |
| | Female | 33.33 | 35.46 | 43.69 | 41.91 |
| All Districts | Male | 35.06 | 43.86 | 48.21 | 43.22 |
| | Female | 40.63 | 41.31 | 45.96 | 46.43 |

Source: Field Survey

It is often argued that education is a great driver of participation in work and higher level of education has been found to be associated with higher WPR. It is established that higher levels of education are indeed associated with higher WPR for male, both in rural and urban areas. However for female, WPR is higher for illiterate women than for women with higher levels of school education but this trend is reversed for women with graduates or technical/vocational education (Srivastva & Srivastva, 2010). Our field data shows that WPR is higher in illiterate workers both male and female and follows the same pattern till middle level of education. Again, this percentage is higher in graduate and professional workers for both male and female.

We observe that work participation declines with education level in all districts. It accelerates only after 12 years of schooling. This acceleration is very sharp in case of women except for central region. This has to do with our sample itself. This sample consists of essentially rural women and therefore, what we have is that illiterate or below primary education level is

associated with primarily manual work and in case of our sample it is agricultural work. Since other than agricultural work are nonexistent in rural areas, so women with secondary education withdraw from labour force. It picks up only with tertiary education. Women of eastern and western region with tertiary education have joined work force in a very forceful way. Of late newer employment opportunities have come up in villages of these regions in form of ASHA, Anganwadi, private schools, coaching centers and small business opportunities in form of sub contracted production units of nearby towns, like tailoring. Women going out to work are a common sight in villages of these regions. These are essentially young and women with tertiary education.

Table 4: Workers Participation by Education Level and Sex in Age group 15-59

| Region | | Up to Primary | Primary to 10+2 | Graduation/PG and Professionals |
|---------------|--------|---------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| Eastern | Male | 45.27 | 42.22 | 42.37 |
| | Female | 40.98 | 40.12 | 48.00 |
| Central | Male | 57.71 | 43.21 | 37.50 |
| | Female | 54.98 | 40.13 | 26.09 |
| Bundelkhand | Male | 57.14 | 49.50 | 40.00 |
| | Female | 50.71 | 40.21 | 43.75 |
| Western | Male | 40.45 | 33.65 | 48.00 |
| | Female | 40.25 | 38.85 | 50.00 |
| All Districts | Male | 48.94 | 42.15 | 41.03 |
| | Female | 46.38 | 39.82 | 42.27 |

Source: Field Survey

However, this participation of women in economic activity does not tell us anything about the quality of employment. One needs to look at type of employment to understand the quality dimension of employment. Self employment is always qualitatively a better work option than casual labour. Within self employment all three categories of employment denote varying degree of quality of employment. Employer being the best quality of employment, followed by own account worker and helper in household enterprise. Helper in household enterprises also hides unpaid work of women. Working as casual labour is the worst type of employment. Table 3 shows that about half of Hindu OBC women are self-employed and this proportion is 29.23 percent and 18.19 percent for Hindu SC/ST women and Muslim OBC women respectively. Interestingly employer category of employment is present only in case of Hindu general and Hindu OBC women. It shows absence of women entrepreneurship in Hindu SC/ST and Muslim OBC women. This absence may be culturally determined or contingent upon availability or access to resources. In case of Hindu SCs, more than 50 percent women are employed as a casual labour and this goes up to 62 per cent in case of Muslim OBC women which is not a positive outcome of growth process. What we find here is that women from these groups have to resort to casual labour either to generate supplementary source of income or to cope up with extreme poverty. This leaves them with little choice but to work.

Table 3: Percentage Distribution of Women across Different Status for All Districts

| Status of Work | Hindu GENERAL | Hindu OBC | Hindu SC/ST | Muslim OBC |
|----------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. Self - Employed | 36.84 | 50.00 | 29.23 | 18.19 |
| a. Employer | 10.53 | 8.99 | 0 | 1.95 |
| b. Own account worker | 21.05 | 20.22 | 21.54 | 13.64 |
| c. Helper in HH Enterprise | 5.26 | 20.79 | 7.69 | 2.6 |
| 2 Regular Salaried | 46.32 | 18.54 | 10.77 | 18.18 |
| 3. Casual Labour | 11.58 | 27.53 | 56.92 | 62.34 |
| 4. Seeking work | 5.26 | 3.93 | 3.08 | 1.3 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey

[III] Employment status of women workers in Agriculture and Non – Agriculture sectors

The above analysis proves that employment status of women workers does have a definite pattern. However, one need to have further disaggregation to understand whether there is any variation in agriculture and non-agriculture sector. This is important for the fact that NSSO employment unemployment data from 1983 to 2009 shows that Uttar Pradesh (UP) has experienced a transformation of rural work force from agriculture sector to non – agriculture sector. Therefore, it is needed to make further enquiry into female participation in different economic activities and to understand why they do so. Thus we classify this women's work into agricultural and non agricultural work.

Table 5: Percentage Distribution of Workforce by Sector and Sex

| Region | Male | | Female | |
|--------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| | Agriculture | Non-agriculture | Agriculture | Non-agriculture |
| Eastern | 27.80 | 72.20 | 31.32 | 68.68 |
| Central | 45.80 | 54.20 | 46.46 | 53.54 |
| Bundelkhand | 34.48 | 65.52 | 41.18 | 58.82 |
| Western | 33.10 | 66.90 | 39.58 | 60.42 |
| All District | 35.83 | 64.17 | 39.62 | 60.38 |

Source: Field Survey

There has been phenomenal growth in rural non farm sector in U.P. But this growth has benefitted men more than women. Percentage of women in agriculture is higher than men and this percentage is lower in case of non agricultural sector. However, this is also true that more than half of women are employed in agricultural sector in all regions of Uttar Pradesh. It is interesting to note that around 70 percent women of eastern region are working in non agricultural sector (Table 5). Field evidence indicates that NREGA is providing better opportunity to female workers and consequently higher work participation among female in non agricultural activity.

About 45 percent women are engaged in agriculture, out of which 65 percent work either as casual labour or as helper in household agricultural work in U.P. These works are paid lower

wage. An examination of table 6 shows that percentage of women reporting to be employer is either equal or greater than percentage of men reporting so in all regions of Uttar Pradesh. However the percentage reporting working as own account worker is always low in case of females than males. One would have expected higher percentage of women working as helper in household work. But what we find is that except for Bundelkhand there are no significant gender differentials in other regions of Uttar Pradesh. Regular salaried employment is almost nonexistent. However, the most disturbing trend is that a large percentage of women are working as casual labour in agriculture (agricultural labour) and except for central U.P., there is huge gender differential in all other regions of state. This proportion was around twice in eastern and Bundelkhand region. Actually, in eastern region land holding size is very small. Consequently, men are mainly engaged in non – farm activity and women carry out work on agriculture. However, evidence shows that farmers are no longer interested in farming due to the lack of irrigation facility in Bundelkhand region. They are moving away from agriculture and leasing out land. Thus, ones with better irrigated facility became large farmers and provided employment to women as casual labour. In central region, a large number of potato cold storage is running providing better work opportunity to both men and women. Therefore, farmers are producing potato with the help of men labourers and women are engaged in cold storage as casual labour.

Table 6: Employment Status of Workers in Agriculture by Sex

| | Sex | Own Account Worker | | Helper in Household Enterprise | | Regular Salaried | Casual Labour | Total |
|---------------|--------|--------------------|----------|--------------------------------|----------|------------------|---------------|-------|
| | | Worker | Employer | Enterprise | Salaried | Labour | | |
| Eastern | Male | 46.8 | 1.6 | 48.4 | 0.0 | 3.2 | 100 | |
| | Female | 28.1 | 1.8 | 49.1 | 1.8 | 17.5 | 100 | |
| | Total | 37.8 | 1.7 | 48.7 | 0.8 | 10.1 | 100 | |
| Central | Male | 29.9 | 9.4 | 28.0 | 0.0 | 32.7 | 100 | |
| | Female | 28.3 | 18.5 | 30.4 | 0.0 | 22.8 | 100 | |
| | Total | 29.2 | 13.6 | 29.2 | 0.0 | 28.1 | 100 | |
| Bundelkhand | Male | 38.0 | 2.0 | 46.0 | 2.0 | 12.0 | 100 | |
| | Female | 19.1 | 2.4 | 54.8 | 0.0 | 23.8 | 100 | |
| | Total | 29.4 | 2.2 | 50.0 | 1.1 | 17.4 | 100 | |
| Western | Male | 14.9 | 12.8 | 25.5 | 0.0 | 46.8 | 100 | |
| | Female | 10.5 | 15.8 | 24.6 | 0.0 | 49.1 | 100 | |
| | Total | 12.5 | 14.4 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 48.1 | 100 | |
| All Districts | Male | 32.7 | 6.8 | 35.7 | 0.4 | 24.4 | 100 | |
| | Female | 22.6 | 11.3 | 37.5 | 0.4 | 27.8 | 100 | |
| | Total | 27.8 | 9.0 | 36.6 | 0.4 | 26.1 | 100 | |

Source: Field Survey

Table 7 shows the percentage distribution of workers in non agriculture activity by sex. About 44 percent women are engaged in non agriculture activity in U.P. in which 62.2 percent are employed as casual labour. Only 15.2 percent are employed as regular salaried employee, which is lower than their men counterpart. Employer as a category is nonexistent in non agricultural sector. Whatever is present, they are essentially women. Interestingly, percentage of female own account workers is close to their counterparts in all regions except for eastern where it is higher

than male percentage. Here too, the percentage of female workers working as helper in household enterprise is lower than males in all regions. Regular salaried employment is lower for females in eastern and central regions and higher in Bundelkhand and western region. However, casual work is more wide spread in women than men in all regions except for Bundelkhand. It needs to be noted that casual work in general for men as well as for women is much more wide spread in non agriculture than that of agriculture in all regions of Uttar Pradesh. It is always more than half of work force in non agriculture sector.

Table 7: Employment Status of Workers in Non – Agriculture by Sex

| | Sex | Own Account Worker | Employer | Helper in Household Enterprises | Regular Salaried | Casual Labour | Total |
|---------------|--------|--------------------|----------|---------------------------------|------------------|---------------|-------|
| Eastern | Male | 22.2 | 0.0 | 7.6 | 22.2 | 48.1 | 100 |
| | Female | 27.6 | 0.8 | 5.7 | 15.5 | 50.4 | 100 |
| | Total | 24.6 | 0.4 | 6.8 | 19.2 | 49.1 | 100 |
| Central | Male | 10.1 | 0.0 | 1.6 | 20.2 | 68.2 | 100 |
| | Female | 9.4 | 0.0 | 0.9 | 16.0 | 73.6 | 100 |
| | Total | 9.8 | 0.0 | 1.3 | 18.3 | 70.6 | 100 |
| Bundelkhand | Male | 17.9 | 0.0 | 4.2 | 10.5 | 66.3 | 100 |
| | Female | 16.7 | 1.7 | 3.3 | 13.3 | 65.0 | 100 |
| | Total | 17.4 | 0.7 | 3.9 | 11.6 | 65.8 | 100 |
| Western | Male | 17.0 | 0.0 | 6.4 | 13.8 | 59.6 | 100 |
| | Female | 17.2 | 0.0 | 2.3 | 14.9 | 63.2 | 100 |
| | Total | 17.1 | 0.0 | 4.4 | 14.4 | 61.3 | 100 |
| All Districts | Male | 17.0 | 0.0 | 5.0 | 17.7 | 59.5 | 100 |
| | Female | 18.4 | 0.5 | 3.2 | 15.2 | 62.2 | 100 |
| All Districts | Total | 17.6 | 0.2 | 4.2 | 16.6 | 60.7 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey

As we have pointed out earlier, there has been a phenomenal growth of rural non farm sector in U.P. Though right now women have not benefitted as much as men from this growth, it may be expected that in future women may share some gains out of this growth. It is often argued that there is an inherent gender bias in rural nonfarm sector and employment opportunities being offered by RNFS to women are by default limited to those sectors where employment conditions are not so good. Therefore, it is essential to know which nonfarm activities are absorbing women workers. Table 8 indicate that wage work is the most common category of employment where industry is flexible and women get to work where ever they find an opportunity to work. This is something like a floating casual labour ready to work in any industry. Obviously this category entails very low wages as this is purely unskilled manual labour. It absorbs almost 40 per cent women in Bundelkhand and western U.P and close to 30 per cent in eastern and central U.P. Ironically, manufacturing does not come up as an important category; absorbing less than 10 per cent women in eastern U.P. and between 16 to 19 per cent women in Bundelkhand and western U.P. However, it appears to be nonexistent in central U.P but *biri* making is also manufacturing and it alone absorbs almost one third of women in central U.P. Other important activities

absorbing women are tailoring and grocery shop in eastern and central U.P, grocery shop in Bundelkhand and carpentry, grocery shop and transport in western U.P. The analysis of this table indicates that women participation in gainful non – farm activity is highly diversified but follow the similar pattern in case of wage work in all regions.

Table 8: Percentage Distribution of Women in Non – Agricultural Activities

| Non – Farm Activity | Eastern | Central | Bundelkhand | Western | All Districts |
|------------------------|---------|---------|-------------|---------|---------------|
| Carpentry | 2.44 | 0 | 1.67 | 8.14 | 2.93 |
| Transport | 5.7 | 0 | 5 | 4.65 | 3.73 |
| Mason | 2.44 | 0 | 5 | 3.49 | 2.4 |
| Repairing /Maintenance | 0.81 | 0 | 1.67 | 1.16 | 0.8 |
| Manufacturing | 7.32 | 1.89 | 18.33 | 16.28 | 9.6 |
| Tailoring | 13.01 | 17.92 | 0 | 3.49 | 10.13 |
| Grocery Shop | 4.07 | 4.72 | 11.67 | 5.81 | 5.87 |
| Veg./Fruits Seller | 2.44 | 0 | 1.67 | 3.49 | 1.87 |
| Tea/Sweets shop | 4.07 | 0 | 1.67 | 3.49 | 2.4 |
| Betel Shop | 2.44 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 |
| Other Retailed | 8.94 | 2.83 | 1.67 | 2.33 | 4.53 |
| Barber | 4.88 | 0.94 | 0 | | 1.87 |
| Washer man | 4.07 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1.33 |
| Biri Making | 0 | 34.3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Wage Work | 26.02 | 30.19 | 41.67 | 40.7 | 33.07 |
| Others | 11.38 | 7.21 | 10 | 6.98 | 18.67 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey

This pattern of employment of women in non-agriculture sector suggests that women have gained entry in select non-farm activities only. One problem with this limited entry could be higher skill requirement of non-farm sector. It is generally accepted that with limited education and training women are confined to low skill activities. Probably, this also explains moving out of male workers and educated workers from agriculture to non-agriculture sector. Therefore, agriculture remains a low skill and low wage work dominated by women workers. The most powerful expression of quality of employment is wage rate or remuneration paid for work. We have calculated per day wage rates in agriculture and non agriculture sector as shown in table 9 below. This table highlights some very interesting points. It is strikingly clear that wage rate of women has to be lower than men irrespective of region and sector. Wage of women are generally one third of wages of men. This difference is sharper in eastern U.P than other regions of state. It is also interesting to note that wages in non agricultural sector are generally higher than that of agricultural sector and the difference between skilled and unskilled wage is sharper in non agriculture than agriculture.

Table 9: Wage Rate by Sex and Region (Rs. Per day)

| Region | Sex | AG | | Non - AG | |
|---------------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| | | Skilled | Unskilled | Skilled | Unskilled |
| Eastern | Male | 78.10 | 59.60 | 178.00 | 88.30 |
| | Female | 61.33 | 39.60 | 125.50 | 74.06 |
| Central | Male | 80.26 | 74.71 | 219.42 | 103.71 |
| | Female | 63.12 | 65.70 | 225.00 | 96.12 |
| Bundelkhand | Male | 99.77 | 97.67 | 223.94 | 100.12 |
| | Female | 73.78 | 73.42 | 200.00 | 76.84 |
| Western | Male | 134.28 | 131.37 | 275.30 | 146.00 |
| | Female | 0.00 | 95.56 | 275.00 | 105.94 |
| All Districts | Male | 99.34 | 92.20 | 224.47 | 109.62 |
| | Female | 69.24 | 67.44 | 187.50 | 89.52 |

Source: Field Survey

[IV] Conclusion

The above discussion clearly brings out the fact that in Uttar Pradesh women in general have lower participation in work as compared to males. This participation is conditioned by socio economic characteristic and geographical space. The participation is higher in age groups 15 – 59. WPR for women is lower in eastern and western regions. The WPR for women is associated with caste structure also. It is generally high for Hindu SC/ST and Muslim OBC women. Education plays an important role in work participation only after more than 12 years of schooling. WPR for women declines after primary education and picks up only after 12 years of schooling as work options other than agriculture open up only after this. The quality of employment is generally bad for Hindu SC/ST and Muslim OBC women as most of them are working as casual labour. These women work either to supplement low household income or to cope up with distress and economic shocks. Their work in agriculture is primarily in form of casual labour in all regions of U.P, except for central regions. The so called growth of rural non farm sector has affected women workers in an indirect way. While percentage of women is higher than men in employer, helper and casual labour category in agriculture sector, this pattern is altered in non agriculture sector. Here the percentage is higher in own account worker and casual labour category. It seems that the growth of rural non farm sector has not benefitted women as much as men. Within non farm sector tailoring, manufacture, grocery shops and other retail trade are most common activities of women. However, one third of women are reporting to be doing wage work in nonfarm sector. Nonetheless, wage rate of women is always lower than men, irrespective of sector and skill level. Of course, the degree of variation changes across regions. These results have important implications for employment planning in U.P. A single and aggregative policy cannot be implemented in whole of state. The policy needs to be informed about this regional and socio economic characteristics of target groups for a better manpower planning. A spin off of this may result into improvement in women's empowerment. The policy must take cognizance of these variations into account.

References

- Basant, R. and R. Parthasarathy 1991, 'Inter-Regional Variations in Rural Non-Agriculture Employment in Gujrat, 1961-81', Working paper No. 36, The Gujrat Institute of Development Research, Ahmedabad.
- Benerjee, N. 1989, 'Trends in Women's Employment, 1971-81: Some Macro-Level Observations', *Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol. 24, No. 17.
- Bhalla, Sheila 1997, 'The Rise and Fall of Workforce Diversification process in Rural India', In chadha, G.K. and Alakh N. Sharma (eds.), *Growth Employment and Poverty: Change and Continuity in Rural India*, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.
- Dev, Mahendra 2004, 'Female Work Participation and Child Labour-Occupational Data from NFHS', *Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol. 39, No. 7.
- Kumar, Nomita P. 2008, 'Trends and Determinants of Female Work Participation in Uttar Pradesh', Working Paper, Giri Institute of Development Studies, Lucknow.
- Papola, T.S and V. N. Mishra 1980, 'Labour Supply and Wage Determination in Rural Uttar Pradesh', *Indian journal of Agriculture Economics*, Vol. 35, No. 1.
- Ranjan, S. 2009, 'Growth of Rural Non – Farm Employment in Uttar Pradesh: Some Reflections from recent Data', *Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol. 44, No. 4.
- Srivastva, R. 2008, 'Education, Skills and the Emerging Labour Market in India', *The Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, Vol. 51, No. 4, 759-82.
- Srivastva, Nisha and R. Srivastva 2010, 'Women, Work, and Employment Outcomes in Rural India', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XLV, No. 28.
- Singh, A. K. 1994, 'Changes in Structure of Rural Workforce in Uttar Pradesh: A Temporal and Regional Study', in P. Visaria and R. Basant (ed.), *Non-Agricultural Employment in India: Trends and Prospects*, New Delhi, Sage publication.
- Vaidyanathan, A. 1986, 'Labour Use in Rural India: A Study of Spatial and Temporal Variations', *Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol. 21, No. 52.