

## **CALL FOR PAPERS**

### **National Seminar on Gender Discrimination in Rural Labour Market in India**

28-29 March 2017

Department of Economics

Ravenshaw University, Cuttack

Sponsored by Indian Council of Social Science Research

#### **Theme**

Women have always played a crucial role in agricultural production. But most of their contributions go unnoticed and invisible. Traditionally women's place is considered as inside the house. They perform manifold services to maintain their family which include preparing food, securing water, fuel and fodder, bearing and rearing children, growing crops in family farm, which of course go unpaid. However, during the last few decades women are increasingly taking up paid work outside their house to increase their personal or family income. Particularly in the post-reform period of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation, rapid expansion of trade, capital flows and economic restructuring have taken place accompanied by significant changes in working conditions. Fierce global competition, improvement in communications and technology, and changes in the organisation of production have resulted in the increasing shift of jobs from the formal to the informal sectors. In response to these changing conditions, rural households also reallocate labour and male members outmigrate to urban areas for employment at higher wage. These changes have brought new opportunities for employment to many, especially women, but they have also created gaps and imbalances particularly for women working in rural informal sector.

Gender discrimination against women in rural labour market is a well established fact. In rural areas of India, gender discrimination in hiring labour exists in two ways: paying less to women for similar work and the other is restricting women to low paid unskilled jobs and denying them access to better paid jobs. A few specific jobs such as transplanting, weeding and winnowing are termed as women's jobs and they are paid less than the rates paid to other agricultural operations carried out by men under the pretext that males' jobs are non-competing ones. Mostly tedious, boring, monotonous, repetitive, unskilled jobs are allotted to women labourers, which create work fatigue and human disease. Transplantation of seedlings usually performed by women is a tough job. There are several reasons for such discriminations against female agricultural labourers in terms of wage payments and employment. Some invoke the human capital theory argument that women are unskilled, lack physical ability, education, training to undertake the jobs that men can perform. Due to their role in child rearing and child bearing they are not able to provide continuous service and they lack bargaining power due to immobility, low literacy level and ignorance. Others view

segmentation of labour market and segregation of women as a capitalist institution and an instrument variable used to dilute the class solidarity of the labourer class.

The level of female participation in a region is determined by a host of social, economic and cultural factors. It is also characterised by several entries and exits associated with the life cycle of the woman and events such as marriage, child birth, and divorce. Participation of a woman is strongly associated with her family composition, poverty, caste and social custom. Usually low income, low caste and poor women hire out labour and work in others field on wage payment. It is very often argued that technological change has a gender equalising effect. With the introduction of High Yielding Varieties of seeds timely completion of agricultural operations assumes utmost importance and all available labourers are engaged irrespective of sex. However, technical change also induces mechanisation of certain operations like increased use of tractor for ploughing and use of harvester. Men usually operate machines and mechanisation may displace female labour. Thus technological development can be both a threat and an ally to women in their various roles.

Recently due to outmigration of male members to urban areas for employment, there has been feminisation of agriculture. Increasing female participation in rural labour market is no doubt a welcome trend. But matter for concern is that discriminations against women are widely prevalent in low-income countries and tend to persist. Women are discriminated against in the labour market by engaging them in low-paid and low-status jobs and paying lower wages than that of their male counterparts, which is observed not only in rural India but also in most of the South Asian and African countries. Despite the emphasis laid on equality of sexes in the Indian Constitution and different legislative enactments, women are still subjected to various discriminatory practices in the social and economic spheres. With technological change and growing feminisation of agriculture it is expected that gender disparity in agricultural wage will be reduced.

## **Objectives**

This seminar will provide a platform for social scientists drawn from several disciplines such as Economics, Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology etc. to analyse the gender based disparity in agricultural wage in a multidisciplinary framework. The work participation of women in rural labour market depends on various cultural, sociological, economic, anthropological and religious factors. Mostly low caste and poor women hire out labour to meet their family maintenance needs. In tribal family the women are the major bread winners. Thus work participation of rural women varies according to caste, class, ethnicity, economic status, education, age and family structure. Thus, a multidisciplinary approach will be applied to analyse complex issues relating to participation of women in labour market, wage payment system and wage differential between male and female labourers. The seminar will provide an opportunity to the researchers to present their empirical findings in different socio-economic contexts and exchange their ideas with participants.

Besides social scientists, social activists, PRI and NGO functionaries, farmers' representatives will be invited to participate in the seminar to share their experiences and express their views. The primary goal of the ILO today is to promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. In this context, the assimilated ideas that will emerge from discussions and deliberations in the seminar will help the Indian policy makers and planners to formulate appropriate policies, plans, programmes and gender friendly technology for upliftment of socio-economic conditions of female labourers in India.

### **Sub-Themes**

1. Discriminatory practices against female labourers in rural labour market
2. Wage differential between male and female labourers in rural labour market
3. Impact of technological advancement on female participation in rural labour market
4. Female participation in agriculture with regard to caste, class, culture, tradition and social norms
5. Determinants of participation of women in rural labour market
6. Policy, plan and programme forempowerment of women labourers to promote gender equality in rural labour market

Date of Seminar: **28-29 March 2017 (Tuesday and Wednesday)**

Venue: Department of Economics, Ravenshaw University

Abstract Submission Last Date: **13 March 2017** (in approximately 500 words)

Communication regarding Acceptance of Paper: 14 March 2017

Last Date for submission of Full Length Paper: **20 March 2017**

### **Contact Address:**

#### **Convener**

Prof. Mamata Swain

E-Mail: [mama\\_swain@hotmail.com](mailto:mama_swain@hotmail.com)

Mob: 9337109300

#### **Co-conveners**

Dr. Lipishree Das

E-Mail: [drlipi\\_das@yahoo.co](mailto:drlipi_das@yahoo.co)

Mob: 9861460154

Mr. Manoj Kumar Das

E-Mail: [manojdas4@yahoo.co.in](mailto:manojdas4@yahoo.co.in)

Mob: 9439619650