

Unpaid Care Work – High Time To Care

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Abstract - From cooking to cleaning, to caring children, elderly and ill, the endless seen or hidden unpaid cared work ensure overall wellbeing of families and societies, with women contributing almost ten times more than men in unpaid care work. Pity, until recently, the works that ensure wellbeing of families and societies does not had any social recognition or measure. On account of Gendered men dominated social norms that define unpaid care work is female responsibility, women from all walk of life from all socio economic background need to devote sizeable part of their day and energy to this unpaid care work. This gives them no time at all for paid work or they need to work additional hours for the paid work. This either left them economically dependent on male members of family or working long hours adversely affect their health. In both cases, be economic or health overall well being of women are at stake. This gender gap in unpaid care work result in gender gap in labor outcome. This gender gap restrict women from actively part in labor market and diminishes the opportunities available to them. This unpaid care work not only put hurdles on job opportunity, but also restricts women up gradation academically, professionally and vocational skills. This in turn affect quality of work force organization can be benefited from and ultimately overall growth of economy of the state. Thing are even more critical for women from low income group having limited employment opportunities and long list of necessary works under unpaid category.

This research paper highlights how unpaid care work by women are affecting women economically and its overall impact on job market and economy of the state. All the reference and data are with reference to Indian women unpaid care work..

Keyword : Unpaid care work, women employment, , Economy, Society and women

I. INTRODUCTION

There is broad consensus that women's empowerment underpins the success of the new 2030 Agenda for Development (also known as the Sustainable Development Goals). While gender equality itself constitutes one of the seventeen development goals (Goal 5), it is widely acknowledged that the empowerment of women and girls is an important prerequisite for the realisation of all other goals, including the reduction of poverty (Goal 1), inequality (Goal 10), and the promotion of inclusive and sustainable economic growth through decent work for all (Goal 8).

Women in India do almost 10 times as much unpaid work as men - a much higher ratio than the global average - leaving them out of the formal workforce and unable to contribute to the economy, consultancy firm McKinsey said in a new report. Women are responsible for 17 percent of

India's GDP, much less than in many nations, the McKinsey Global Institute said. China's women account for 41 percent of GDP, those in sub-Saharan Africa 39 percent and women in Latin America 33 percent.

"The below-potential contribution of women to India's GDP today ... contrasts with their higher share of unpaid care work such as cooking, cleaning, and taking care of children and older members of the family," said the report, released on Monday.

"Globally, women spend roughly three times the amount of time spent by men on unpaid work. In India, the situation is more extreme - women perform 9.8 times the amount of unpaid care work than men."

If that unpaid work were to be valued and compensated in the same way as paid work, it would contribute \$300 billion a year to India's economic output.

In India, before 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' and other women empowerment initiative, Girl child did not had the proper schooling. They were supposed to help her mother

in unpaid care work. Now as their education or skill doesnot had any offering, they were unable to find any employment opportunity in skill sectors with a early age marriage girl child had to do and to greater extent, all their unpaid care work at their husband wife. Without any formal education and skill set, they could get some paid work in the unskilled labour sector. But they hardly get any time from their unpaid care work. This makes them financially totally dependent on earning male member of the family. Even in the middle class family where girl child have the privilege to schooling, their education is sacrificed in any uncomfortable situation whether it is illness of any family members, shifting to new cities or if family is facing any economic crunch. It contributes in increased drop out parents. Now, this much of work pressure from early childhood to the responsibilities of whole world post marriage keep their health at stake. Women health is also one of key player in diminished female contribution in work group. Even for the girls having proper education,

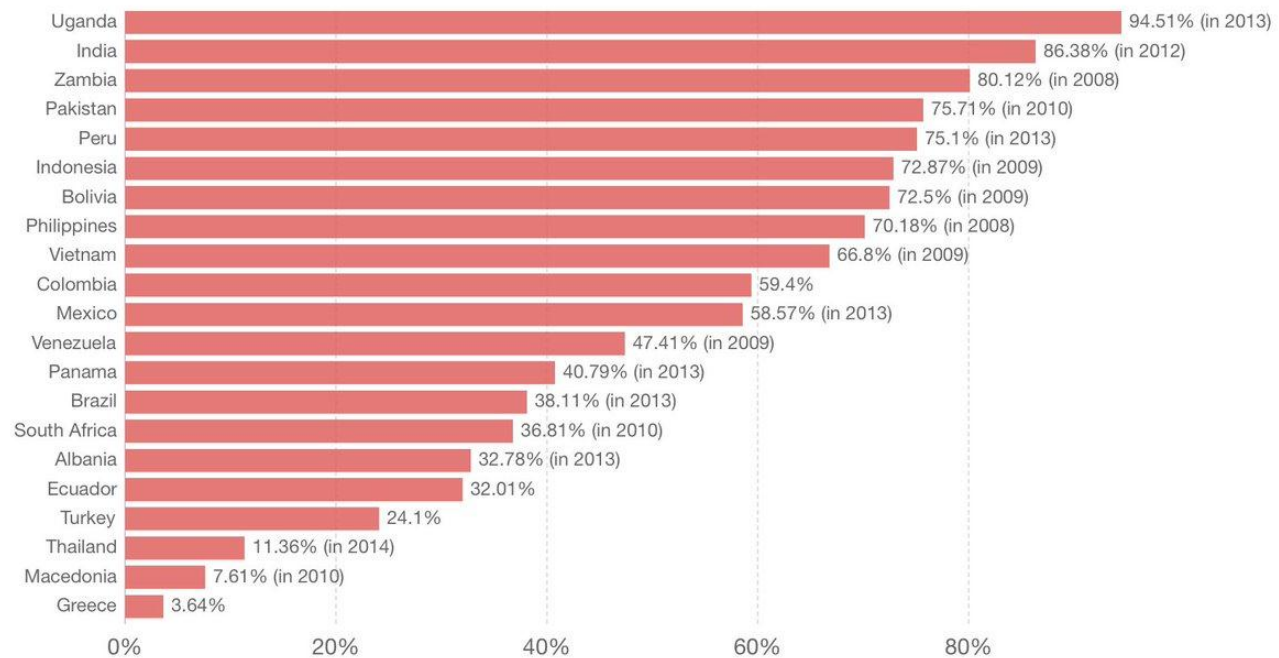
employment is not that easy. Post marriage, even if they managed to get some paid work, it is very difficult for them to upgrade their professional and vocational skill according to present trend of job industry. The paid work with big amount of unpaid care work left them hardly with any time for development of professional skills with all focus on unpaid care work caring family members to ensure their well being, women did not get time for most important work that is self care. Negligence of self care, gradually have adverse effect on their health, which in turn affect their job potentials, especially job retention.

Other major issue that contributes to less women contribution is relocation issues. Still it hardly permitted if a woman gets a job opportunity at a distant place; this adds on good education of girl child from small child from small towns, it is very difficult for them to relocate for quality education. Now this combination of tougher one of significant reason for this relocation denial is dependence of family member on female doing care work.

Women in informal employment as share of female employment, 2015



Employment in the informal economy as a percentage of total non-agricultural employment. It basically includes all jobs in unregistered or small-scale private enterprises that produce goods or services for sale. Self-employed street vendors, taxi drivers and home-base workers, regardless of size, are all considered.



Source: World Bank – WDI

II. FACTS AND FIGURES: ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

When more women work, economies grow. An increase in female labour force participation—or a reduction in the gap between women’s and men’s labour force participation—results in faster economic growth [1].

Evidence from a range of countries shows that increasing the share of household income controlled by women, either

through their own earnings or cash transfers, changes spending in ways that benefit children [2].

Increasing women and girls’ education contributes to higher economic growth. Increased educational attainment accounts for about 50 per cent of the economic growth in OECD countries over the past 50 years [3], of which over half is due to girls having had access to higher levels of education and achieving greater equality in the number of years spent in education between men and women [4]. But, for the majority of women, significant gains in education have not translated into better labour market outcomes [5]

A study using data from 219 countries from 1970 to 2009 found that, for every one additional year of education for women of reproductive age, child mortality decreased by 9.5 per cent [6].

Women tend to have less access to formal financial institutions and saving mechanisms. While 55 per cent of men report having an account at a formal financial institution, only 47 per cent of women do worldwide. This gap is largest among lower middle-income economies as well as in South Asia and the Middle East and North Africa [7].

The world of work

Women continue to participate in labour markets on an unequal basis with men. In 2013, the male employment-to-population ratio stood at 72.2 per cent, while the ratio for females was 47.1 per cent [8].

Globally, women are paid less than men. Women in most countries earn on average only 60 to 75 per cent of men's wages [9]. Contributing factors include the fact that women are more likely to be wage workers and unpaid family workers; that women are more likely to engage in low-productivity activities and to work in the informal sector, with less mobility to the formal sector than men; [10] the view of women as economic dependents; and the likelihood that women are in unorganized sectors or not represented in unions [11].

It is calculated that women could increase their income globally by up to 76 per cent if the employment participation gap and the wage gap between women and men were closed. This is calculated to have a global value of USD 17 trillion [12].

Women bear disproportionate responsibility for unpaid care work. Women devote 1 to 3 hours more a day to housework than men; 2 to 10 times the amount of time a day to care (for children, elderly, and the sick), and 1 to 4 hours less a day to market activities [13]. In the European Union for example, 25 per cent of women report care and other family and personal responsibilities as the reason for not being in the labour force, versus only three per cent of men [14]. This directly and negatively impacts women's participation in the labour force.

Gender inequalities in time use are still large and persistent in all countries. When paid and unpaid work are combined, women in developing countries work more than men, with less time for education, leisure, political participation and self-care [15]. Despite some improvements over the last 50 years, in virtually every country, men spend more time on leisure each day while women spend more time doing unpaid housework [16].

Women are more likely than men to work in informal employment [17]. In South Asia, over 80 per cent of women in non-agricultural jobs are in informal

employment, in sub-Saharan Africa, 74 per cent, and in Latin America and the Caribbean, 54 per cent [18]. In rural areas, many women derive their livelihoods from small-scale farming, almost always informal and often unpaid [19].

More women than men work in vulnerable, low-paid, or undervalued jobs [20]. As of 2013, 49.1 per cent of the world's working women were in vulnerable employment, often unprotected by labor legislation, compared to 46.9 per cent of men. Women were far more likely than men to be in vulnerable employment in East Asia (50.3 per cent versus 42.3 per cent), South-East Asia and the Pacific (63.1 per cent versus 56 per cent), South Asia (80.9 per cent versus 74.4 per cent), North Africa (54.7 per cent versus 30.2 per cent), the Middle East (33.2 per cent versus 23.7 per cent) and Sub-Saharan Africa (nearly 85.5 per cent versus 70.5 per cent) [21].

Gender differences in laws affect both developing and developed economies, and women in all regions. Almost 90 per cent of 143 economies studied have at least one legal difference restricting women's economic opportunities [22]. Of those, 79 economies have laws that restrict the types of jobs that women can do [23]. And husbands can object to their wives working and prevent them from accepting jobs in 15 economies [24].

Women's economic equality is good for business. Companies greatly benefit from increasing leadership opportunities for women, which is shown to increase organizational effectiveness. It is estimated that companies with three or more women in senior management functions score higher in all dimensions of organizational effectiveness [25].

Ethnicity and gender interact to create especially large pay gaps for minority women. In 2013 in the US for instance, "women of all major racial and ethnic groups earn less than men of the same group, and also earn less than white men...Hispanic women's median earnings were USD 541 per week of full-time work, only 61.2 per cent of white men's median weekly earnings, but 91.1 per cent of the median weekly earnings of Hispanic men (because Hispanic men also have low earnings). The median weekly earnings of black women were USD 606, only 68.6 per cent of white men's earnings, but 91.3 per cent of black men's median weekly earnings, which are also fairly low. Earnings for a full-time week of work leave Hispanic women well below, and Hispanic men and black women not much above, the qualifying income threshold for receipt of food stamps of USD 588.75 for a family of four" [26].

III. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

It is nice that this issues is now been discussed and even researched. Lot of initiatives from many stake holders is now been taken to ensure overall women empowerment.

From education to health to employment. One thing for sure, no law can ensure to give any respite to women from this care network pressure. Only the mindset of male family members can provide a way out. Collaborative responsibilities can not only help women physically, but also the saved hours of the day can be used for some productive paid work, profession development or in learning vocational skills that will ultimately contribute to economic betterment of family and state. A social awareness to eradicate the social perception that household care work is women responsibility need to be initiated. If men can involve as much women in unpaid care work it will certainly ensure harmony in the family. Also men involvement will do one amazing thing, the amount of unproductive time men spent other than their paid work will be used for this pious work.

These social campaign will help to establish a new perception that household care work is a joint responsibility and every family member need to do his part to ensure physical mental and economic wellbeing of family. These initiatives coupled with various women empowerment scheme will certainly help achieved women empowerment targets by 2030.

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