

## ROLE OF INDIAN WOMEN IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT- CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Article history:	Abstract:
<b>Published:</b> 10 <sup>th</sup> March 2022	India has the second population rank in the world; the women's population is almost equivalent to that of man. India has gained swift growth and development in the past years in many provinces. One of the reasons being gender equity. This is disgraceful considering the important role enacted by women in the socio-economic growth of the country. From ancient to modern period, women's condition-socially, politically and economically- has not remained similar and it kept shifting with times. India's Law makers and our founding fathers were very determined to provide equal rights to both women and men in all streams. The Constitution of India is one of the finest equality documents and role model in the world. It provides necessities to secure equality in general and gender equality in particular. Law makers have various articles in the Constitution to safeguard women's rights by putting them at par with men socially, politically and economically. In India, women have tackled a range of structural and social barriers in fully participating in the Indian economy, which not only hinders their individual agency but also limits India's ability to continue to modernize. This research paper aims to focus on the contribution made by the working women in India towards the Indian economy and various problems faced by them.

**Keywords:** Working Women, Rights, Problems, Indian Economy, Opportunities

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Women workforce has been playing a very significant role in the expansion and growth of the Indian economy, and is now a force to reckon with. Over the years their contribution has been increasing - vindicating the hypothesis of leading feminists that women are second to none in the world.<sup>1</sup> Women's participation in work is an indicator of their status in a society. Where women's work participation rates are relatively low, it is safe to say that the surrounding society isn't giving women the capacities, opportunities and freedom to engage in productive work, nor recognizing the vast amount of work performed by women as unpaid labor.<sup>2</sup>

In the era of globalization, the role of Indian women at home and work has taken a multifaceted dimension. India being one of the fastest growing economies, the contribution of women is growing at a steady pace. Most Indian women by and large undertake "productive work" only under the economic compulsion. Most of the women are found to be employed in agricultural activities and in the unorganized sector, the employment of women is high in certain works such as part time helpers in households, construction centers, tanneries, match box etc. A central driver of economic growth over the past century has been the increased role of women. This empowerment comes in many forms: increased female labor force participation, reduced discrimination and wage differentials that encourage greater effort, and improved advancement practices that promote talented women into leadership and managerial roles. Empowerment of women need to begin with her participation in different spheres of life. Education is a great determinant in this regard. To achieve empowerment, women have to be educated to be aware of their rights and privileges in a modern society. It is education which can bring about awareness in them related to their social status, injustice and differentiation meted out to them. Besides, economic independence is a major factor which can contribute in empowering women.<sup>3</sup>

The contribution which is made by the Indian women in the Indian economy has always been understated. Somewhere till the 20th Century, in the early 1900s, women were expected to stay at home, and those who wanted

to work were often stigmatized. Today it's mostly the other way round.<sup>4</sup> In which category, for example, can we place a housewife and her contribution towards generating

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Economic Growth

Economic growth is the development of fiscal production of goods and services prevailing in a country, such as the increase and the amount of production of industrial goods, the development of infrastructure, the increase in the number of schools, the increase in service production sectors and the increase in capital goods production (Sukirno, 2005). Economic growth is measured by the total income of each person in a country (Gross Domestic Product), where an income increasing will increase the consumption of goods and services (Mankiw, 2012). The Theories about economic growth mentioned in Sukirno's 2005 like Classical Growth Theory, Schumpeter Theory, Harrod-Domar Theory dan Neo-classical Growth Theory talked about how to reach economic growth.

Based on those theories, this research use Classical Growth Theory and Neo-classical Growth Theory. There are four factors influence economic growth, namely, population, capital stocks, land, natural resources and technologies. Classical economists place more emphasis on the role of labor because excessive labor will affect economic growth. Neo-classical theory looks at the supply side. The neo-classical growth theory developed by Abramovits and Solow explains that economic growth depends on the development of factors of production. This can be stated in the following equation:

$$\Delta Y = f(\Delta K, \Delta L, \Delta T) \quad (1)$$

Where  $\Delta Y$  is rate of economic growth,  $\Delta K$  is rate of capital growth,  $\Delta L$  is rate of population growth, and  $\Delta T$  is rate of technology growth. Equation (1) showed that according to Neo- Classical Growth theory, capital, population and technology influence ton economic growth. Based on that theory, we can say that economic growth can be influenced by investment, labor force and technology.

The provincial economic growth in this paper use Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) in constant price. GRDP is the amount of gross value added arising from all economic sectors in a region. Value Added is the value added from a combination of factors of production and raw materials in the production process. Value added calculation is the value of production (output) minus the intermediate costs. Traditional development approaches are more interpreted as development that is more focused on increasing the GRDP of a province, district, or city (Kuncoro, 1997). According to the Asian Development Bank dynamic economic growth has greatly reduced poverty levels (A. D. Bank, 2018). While economic growth can be seen from the growth in GDP (Gross Regional Domestic Product). Total GDP shows the total value added generated by the population in a certain period. So it can be seen that the GRDP is negatively correlated with the level of poverty in an area.

## 3. METHODOLOGY / MATERIALS

Why the contribution of Indian women towards achieving tremendous progress has not been highlighted so far, finds its reason of the prevalence of gender bias existing at every social stratum, even in the most educated and developed pockets of our society. Their contribution to the economy from the rural areas by direct engagement in direct and allied agricultural activities is notable. They, mostly in rural and semi urban areas run small retail shops, selling by- products, marketing milk and allied dairy items, all contribute in generating additional incomes for the family, a portion of which goes into savings. A study shows that more than 40% of the rural women directly or indirectly contribute in uplifting of their families and thus bring about much desired social change. Even in Urban and Metropolitan areas, their active participation as a labor force is responsible to a larger extent in creating national assets. Not only that, their contribution in building roads, canals, bridges, water bodies in addition to their engagement in various domestic and community services cannot be sidelined. After achieving independence, the critical role played by women in India to work together and forge unity within the families, frustrate fragmentation of land holdings and with the passage of time, their role in Panchayats in taking vital developmental decisions have all shown their capability as well as their contribution towards economic development. Their contribution at the grass root level, apart from Panchayats, in cooperatives like Gujarat's Dairy revolution thus contributing towards socio- economic development and generating incomes, cannot be underestimated. This has undoubtedly paved the way for sustainable development and economic growth of the country. With the spread of education and with doing away with gender bias under schemes like "Beti bachao, Beti Padhao", the role of Indian women in building the economy has limitless scope.<sup>6</sup>

Despite their immensely important and vital role in the economic development of the country, women in the Indian Economy are facing severe problems.

### 3.1 PROBLEMS FACED BY THE WORKING WOMEN IN INDIA

1. Malnutrition: Although the GDP growth rate of the India is 9%, and women are able to subsidize the cost of agricultural products by Rs. 93000 crores per year, we see that 52% of women face the problem of malnutrition. When the whole of the nation enjoys subsidized food, the actual producers of the grain remain deprived of it.<sup>7</sup>
2. Discrimination at Workplace: However, Indian women still face blatant discrimination at their workplaces. A major problem faced by the working women is sexual harassment at the work place. Further, women employees working in night shift are more vulnerable to such incidents. Nurses, for example, face this problem nearly every day. There is nothing that is done in hospitals to tackle and address the danger they face. Such blatant disregard of current Indian laws is one reason why sexual harassment at the workplace continues to increase. Also, Indian women are often deprived of promotions and growth opportunities at work places but this doesn't apply to all working women. A majority of working women continue to be denied their right to equal pay, under the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 and are underpaid in comparison to their male colleagues. This is usually the case in factories and labor-oriented industries.<sup>8</sup>
3. Acceptance as Working Professionals: Most Indian men are yet to come to terms with the fact that women are also capable of working with them, shoulder to shoulder, in any field or professional sphere. They still visualize women as individuals who should be in charge of the kitchen and other domestic affairs. Work is either seen as a temporary evil for women whose husbands do not earn enough, or the domain of women who do not "know their place." As a result, Indian working women do not get the respect they require from their male colleagues in the workplace.<sup>9</sup>
4. Balancing Work-Family Life: No matter how high their position or designation is in the office, women in India are still viewed as the family manager back home.

### 4. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Economic growth is an indicator of the success of economic development. In this study, the provincial economic growth used is GRDP at constant prices. During the study period, the average value added created by India was 12,739,919,287 billion rupiah. DKI Jakarta Province recorded the largest contribution to the formation of this added value. While North Maluku Province contributed the smallest. The following thematic maps show GRDP data showing the added value created by each province. The dark color in Figure 2 shows the regions that have contributed a lot to the creation of gross added value in India. Mostly the province located in Java Island have higher value added than provinces in other islands. Java Island is the island with the most population in India.

### 5. CONCLUSION

The role of women in India is still progressing. It can be seen by the participation of women worker that increase every year. But the sex ratio of women worker in India is still dominated by men. It turns out that after we run the model, the participation of women worker is not statistically significant to economic growth. The model showed that there is no spillover from men worker to women worker. The distribution of women worker by province also showed that women worker is concentrated in Java Island. The poverty is negative significant to growth of economy, and the men worker and government expenditure are positive significant to economic growth.

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