

# WOMEN AND WORK: THE CASE OF INDIA AND ASSAM

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper explains the trends and types of women employment and sectoral employment of women in both rural and urban areas of India and Assam from 1993-94 to 2011-12 based on the NSS data. The employment estimates is based on usual status (Principal Status + Subsidiary Status). The work participation rates in the usual status are remained considerably higher for males than that of females at both the rural and urban areas of India as well as of Assam during the above mentioned period. The study also finds that the regular salaried employment for both rural and urban females has been increased in India. But in case of Assam the regular salaried employment is decreased for both rural and urban females during the period between 1993-94 and 2011-12. Moreover, the casual employment is also declined for rural and urban females at both national and state levels. moreover, a shift in the employment of women is observed from primary to secondary and tertiary sectors in India. In case of Assam, the study finds that there is a sizeable decrease in the share of rural and urban females employment in the secondary sector. As far as tertiary sector is concerned there is a clear pattern in the increase of female work participation in both rural and urban areas of Assam during the above mentioned period.

**Keywords:** Women, Employment, Work Participation Rate

**1. INTRODUCTION:** Women workforce participation is an important factor in the growth and development of a country. It has acknowledged as one of the major factors that enhance their autonomy. Their entry in the occupational field is of tremendous social significance. It brings about the advantages of getting immediate economic rewards and decline in economic dependency. Moreover, women's participation in the workforce is important for widening their outlook, raising their quality of living standards and well-being in the society. The female workforce participation rate is defined as the percentage of total female workers to total female population of a country. In developing countries like India women's participation in the workforce is crucial because it has positive effects on the level of output and negative effects on population growth. In India, women workforce constitutes an integral part of total workforce and it is an essential factor in the process of production which contributes to its growth and development. But women workforce participation rate of the country has shown that the women lag behind men in terms of workforce participation. This is a result of the lack of recognition given to the various tasks which women perform both as unpaid and reproductive labour. Women typically perform a bulk of household activities including preparing food for the family, collecting firewood and water, and also all sorts of care work like taking care of children, the ill and the elderly. But such works are not subject to direct market relations and hence do not bear any economic value. As a result, most of their works remain unpaid, unrecognised and undervalued in contrast to the work done by their male counterparts. The Indian Constitution grants women equal rights with men, but due to the prevalence of strong patriarchal traditions, the lives and economic status of women is lagging far behind their male counterparts. However, due to modernization, industrialization, globalization and technological advancement coupled with the increased level of literacy and educational attainment, the role of women in economic activities has shown an increase in recent years. So, it is essential to examine the nature of work taken up by women in the country.

**2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:** There are a large number of studies that have studied the issue of women employment in India. Shaw (2013) in his study shows that the average growth in employment between 2004-05 and 2011-12 remains low at 2.5 million per year. The study also reveals that more and more people are finding employment in non-farm activities, both in the secondary and tertiary sectors. However, rural female workers engaged in agriculture as a proportion of total workers has declined since 1999-00, but the fall is more drastic between 2004-05 and 2009-10 and continued till 2011-12. Further, no significant increase in the proportion of female workers is seen in either secondary sector or tertiary sector employment in rural areas. Kumar (2017) has made an attempt to explain the trends and pattern of women employment in India from 1993-94 to 2011-12 based on the NSS data. The study finds a minor shift in employment from

agriculture to non-agriculture sector in case of both rural and urban female. But the female employment has shown a continuous decline in all sectors than their male counterparts. Kaur (2016) has attempted to examine the trends and patterns of female workforce participation among the Northeast states of India by using 1991, 2001 and 2011 Census data. The findings of the study shows that female work participation rate in Northeast region is higher than national average but it is low compared to male work participation rate for all the periods under study.

Hence, with the above evidences, an analysis of women workforce participation rate and their occupational pattern in India as well as in Assam is vital towards understanding their participation in the labour market.

**3. OBJECTIVE:** In this paper, an attempt has been made to present an overall picture of women's work in India as well as in Assam and also to capture the existing rural-urban scenario of work participation rate of males and females, both at the all-India and state level.

**4. DATA SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY:** This paper is mainly based on the secondary data revealed by the employment and unemployment surveys of the NSSO. The NSS reports of the 50th (1993-94), 55th (1999-00), 61st (2004-05), 66th (2009-10) and 68th (2011-12) rounds have been used in the study. This paper uses the employment estimates based on usual status (Principal Status + Subsidiary Status) to look at the trends and types of women employment and sectoral employment of women in both rural and urban areas of India and Assam .

**5. TRENDS OF WOMEN EMPLOYMENT IN INDIA AND ASSAM:** The work participation rate of women in India has been changing overtime. In this section an attempt has been made to study the changing trends of women as well as men employment in both India and Assam. At all-India level the work participation rate in usual status (ps+ss) for rural males has decreased from 55.3% in 1993-94 to 53.1% in 1999-00 and then increased to 54.7% in 2009-10 and then declined to 54.3% in 2011-12. For the rural females, the work participation rate has decreased from 32.8% in 1993-94 to 29.9% in 1999-00 and then increased to 32.7% in 2004-05 but it again declined to 26.1% in 2009-10 and then to 24.8% in 2011-12. In case of urban males, the work participation rate in 1993-94 is 52.1% which has declined to 51.8% in 1999-00 and then increased to 54.9% in 2004-05 and again declined to 54.3% in 2009-10 and then increased to 54.6% in 2011-12. More or less the same story is repeated in case of work participation rate of urban females also. The urban female work participation rate is 15.5% in 1993-94 and it has declined to 13.9% in 1999-00 and then increased to 16.6% in 2004-05 and again declined to 13.8% in 2009-10 and further increased to 14.7% in 2011-12. Between 2009-10 and 2011-12, work participation rate in usual status has increased by about 0.9% points for urban females in the country.

In case of rural Assam, the male work participation rate in usual status (ps+ss) has increased from 51.6% in 1993-94 to 52.9% in 1999-00 and then increased to 55.1% in 2004-05, 55.3% in 2009-10 and 54% in 2011-12. However, the percentage of rural female work participation rate has declined from 15.9% in 1993-94 to 15.1% in 1999-00 and then increased to 20.9% in 2004-05 but the rate has again started to decline to 15.8% in 2009-10 and then to 12.2% in 2011-12. For their urban counterparts, male work participation rate has decreased from 52.8% in 1993-94 to 52.2% in 1999-00 and then reached the level of 55.1% in 2004-05 but again declined to 52.8% in 2009-10 and then increased to 54.2% in 2011-12. In case of work participation rate of urban females, the rate has shown an increase from 9.2% in 1993-94 to 11.2% in 1999-00 but further it started to decline to 10.9% in 2004-05, 9.3% in 2009-10 and then to 9.0% in 2011-12. According to usual status, it is seen that the female work participation rates in both the rural and urban areas of the state are lower than the corresponding all-India rates during the period between 1993-94 to 2011-12.

**Table 1: Trends of Work Participation Rates in India and Assam by Sex and Region from 1993-94 to 2011-12**

Rounds	Rural Male (India)	Rural Female (India)
	(PS+SS)	(PS+SS)
50 <sup>th</sup> (1993-94)	55.3	32.8
55 <sup>th</sup> (1999-00)	53.1	29.9
61 <sup>st</sup> (2004-05)	54.6	32.7
66 <sup>th</sup> (2009-10)	54.7	26.1
68 <sup>th</sup> (2011-12)	54.3	24.8
	Urban Male (India)	Urban Female (India)

50 <sup>th</sup> (1993-94)	52.1	15.5
55 <sup>th</sup> (1999-00)	51.8	13.9
61 <sup>st</sup> (2004-05)	54.9	16.6
66 <sup>th</sup> (2009-10)	54.3	13.8
68 <sup>th</sup> (2011-12)	54.6	14.7
	Rural Male (Assam)	Rural Female (Assam)
	(PS+SS)	(PS+SS)
50 <sup>th</sup> (1993-94)	51.6	15.9
55 <sup>th</sup> (1999-00)	52.9	15.1
61 <sup>st</sup> (2004-05)	55.1	20.9
66 <sup>th</sup> (2009-10)	55.3	15.8
68 <sup>th</sup> (2011-12)	54.0	12.2
	Urban Male (Assam)	Urban Female (Assam)
50 <sup>th</sup> (1993-94)	52.8	9.2
55 <sup>th</sup> (1999-00)	52.2	11.2
61 <sup>st</sup> (2004-05)	55.1	10.9
66 <sup>th</sup> (2009-10)	52.8	9.3
68 <sup>th</sup> (2011-12)	54.2	9.0

Source: Employment and Unemployment Situation in India, NSS Report No. 409 of 50<sup>th</sup> Round, 458 of 55<sup>th</sup> Round, 515 of 61<sup>st</sup> Round, 537 of 66<sup>th</sup> Round and 554 of 68<sup>th</sup> Round. Note: 'PS+SS'-Principal status and subsidiary status taken together

The data shows that the work participation rates in the usual status have remained considerably higher for males than that of females at both the rural and urban areas of India as well as of Assam during the period between 1993-94 and 2011-12. It is also seen that the work participation rate of rural women is significantly higher than that of urban women at both national and state levels. Moreover, there is a gap in male-female work participation rate which is more pronounced in the urban areas than in the rural areas. This may be due to the fact that in urban areas there may be difficulty of combining work with other household duties for women compared to rural areas where work on the family farm or in the family enterprise tends to be the principal activity. In case of urban areas of India, the male-female work participation gap in usual status has increased from about 36.6% points in 1993-94 to 39.9% points in 2011-12, whereas in rural areas it has increased from 22.5% points to 29.5% points during the same period. Similarly, the male-female work participation gap in urban Assam has increased from 43.6% points to 45.2% points, whereas in case of rural Assam the gap has increased from 35.7% points to 41.8% points during 1993-94 and 2011-12. It is seen that the male-female work participation gap at both the rural and urban areas of Assam is higher than that of all-India levels.

**6. TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN INDIA AND ASSAM:** In this section, an attempt has been made to examine the type of work taken by the female workers of both rural and urban areas of India and Assam by examining the status of their employment. It will provide information about the nature of women's work in the country. From the NSSO data, it is found that the percentage of self-employed rural males in India has declined by about 3.2% points during the period between 1993-94 and 2011-12. But the percentage of self-employed rural females has increased by about 0.7% points during the same period. For urban males, self-employment has decreased from 41.7% in 1993-94 to 41.5% in 1999-00 and then increased to 44.8% in 2004-05 and again declined to 41.1% in 2009-10 and then reached the level of 41.7% in 2011-12. For urban females, self-employment has declined by about 3% points between 1993-94 and 2011-12. In Assam, during the period between 1993-94 and 2011-12, the self-employment of rural males and females has increased by about 11.1% points and 14.8% points respectively. During the same period, for urban males and females, self-employment has increased by about 7.2% points and 18.4% points respectively at the state level. It is seen that in Assam the percentage increase in self-employment of rural females is more than that of at the national level by almost 14.1% points during the above mentioned period.

**Table 2: Type of Employment of Male and Female Workers in India**

NSS Rounds	Category of Employment (PS+SS)		
	Self-Employed	Regular Wage/Salaried Employees	Casual Labour
	Rural Males		
50 <sup>th</sup> (1993-94)	57.7	8.5	33.8

55 <sup>th</sup> (1999-00)	55.0	8.8	36.2
61 <sup>st</sup> (2004-05)	58.1	9.0	32.9
66 <sup>th</sup> (2009-10)	53.5	8.5	38.0
68 <sup>th</sup> (2011-12)	54.5	10.0	35.5
Rural Females			
50 <sup>th</sup> (1993-94)	58.6	2.7	38.7
55 <sup>th</sup> (1999-00)	57.3	3.1	39.6
61 <sup>st</sup> (2004-05)	63.7	3.7	32.6
66 <sup>th</sup> (2009-10)	55.7	4.4	39.9
68 <sup>th</sup> (2011-12)	59.3	5.6	35.1
Urban Males			
50 <sup>th</sup> (1993-94)	41.7	42.0	16.3
55 <sup>th</sup> (1999-00)	41.5	41.7	16.8
61 <sup>st</sup> (2004-05)	44.8	40.6	14.6
66 <sup>th</sup> (2009-10)	41.1	41.9	17.0
68 <sup>th</sup> (2011-12)	41.7	43.4	14.9
Urban Females			
50 <sup>th</sup> (1993-94)	45.8	28.4	25.8
55 <sup>th</sup> (1999-00)	45.3	33.3	21.4
61 <sup>st</sup> (2004-05)	47.7	35.6	16.7
66 <sup>th</sup> (2009-10)	41.1	39.3	19.6
68 <sup>th</sup> (2011-12)	42.8	42.8	14.3

Source: Employment and Unemployment Situation in India, NSS Report No. 554 of 68<sup>th</sup> Round.

In India, the proportion of rural male regular salaried employee has increased by about 1.5% points during the period between 1993-94 and 2011-12. In case of rural females, regular salaried employment has shown an increase by about 2.9% points. In case of urban males, regular salaried employment has increased by about 1.4% points during the same period. Moreover, for urban females, regular employment has increased by about 14.4% points. There is a continuous rise in the regular employment of rural and urban females from 1993-94 to 2011-12 at all-India level. From the standpoint of women, this increase is a positive development because regular employment brings to them better working conditions and higher incomes. In contrast to urban females, there is marginal increase in regular employment of rural females during the period between 1993-94 and 2011-12 which indicates that stable employment opportunities for rural females have not increased significantly in the country.

In case of Assam, the regular employment has decreased by about 3% points for rural males and decreased by about 6.8% points for urban males during the period between 1993-94 and 2011-12. Moreover, the regular employment has decreased by about 1% points for rural females in the state as against about 2.9% points increase in regular employment for rural females in the country during the same period. In case of urban females also the regular employment has decreased by about 5.6% points in the state as against 14.4% points rise in regular employment for urban females in the country between 1993-94 and 2011-12. Thus, during this period among usually employed persons (ps+ss) the proportion of regular salaried employees has decreased for rural males and females and also for urban males and females in Assam and the decline is more for urban females (about 5.6% points) than rural females (about 1% points). It is also seen that for both males and females, the proportion of regular wage/salaried employees in the usual status (ps+ss) is much lower in rural areas than in urban areas of India as well as of Assam.

**Table 3: Type of Employment of Male and Female Workers in Assam**

NSS Rounds	Category of Employment (PS+SS)		
	Self-Employed	Regular Wage/Salaried Employees	Casual Labour
Rural Males			
50 <sup>th</sup> (1993-94)	60.0	13.4	26.6
55 <sup>th</sup> (1999-00)	59.0	15.7	25.3
61 <sup>st</sup> (2004-05)	71.3	9.3	19.4
66 <sup>th</sup> (2009-10)	71.8	9.1	19.1
68 <sup>th</sup> (2011-12)	71.1	10.4	18.5
Rural Females			

50 <sup>th</sup> (1993-94)	49.1	18.2	32.7
55 <sup>th</sup> (1999-00)	54.8	19.8	25.4
61 <sup>st</sup> (2004-05)	70.3	8.4	21.3
66 <sup>th</sup> (2009-10)	65.3	10.8	23.9
68 <sup>th</sup> (2011-12)	63.9	17.2	18.0
Urban Males			
50 <sup>th</sup> (1993-94)	47.8	42.0	10.2
55 <sup>th</sup> (1999-00)	48.3	40.5	11.2
61 <sup>st</sup> (2004-05)	45.3	43.3	11.4
66 <sup>th</sup> (2009-10)	49.0	45.0	6.0
68 <sup>th</sup> (2011-12)	55.0	35.2	9.8
Urban Females			
50 <sup>th</sup> (1993-94)	28.3	50.0	21.7
55 <sup>th</sup> (1999-00)	25.1	55.6	19.3
61 <sup>st</sup> (2004-05)	26.4	54.5	19.1
66 <sup>th</sup> (2009-10)	48.8	36.7	14.6
68 <sup>th</sup> (2011-12)	46.7	44.4	7.8

Source: Employment and Unemployment Situation in India, NSS Report No. 409 of 50<sup>th</sup> Round, 458 of 55<sup>th</sup> Round, 515 of 61<sup>st</sup> Round, 537 of 66<sup>th</sup> Round and 554 of 68<sup>th</sup> Round. Note: 'PS+SS'-Principal status and subsidiary status taken together

In India, the proportion of casual labour among workers in the usual status (ps+ss) for rural males has increased by about 1.7% points during 1993-94 and 2011-12. For rural females, casual employment has decreased by about 3.6% points during the period between 1993-94 and 2011-12. In case of urban males, casual employment has decreased by about 1.4% points. For urban females also, casual employment has declined by about 11.5% points between 1993-94 and 2011-12. In Assam, the proportion of casual labour among workers in the usual status (ps+ss) has decreased by about 14.7% points for rural females as against about 3.6% points decline in casual employment for rural females in India during the period between 1993-94 and 2011-12. In case of urban females, the casual employment has also decreased by about 13.9% points in the state as against about 11.5% points decline in casual employment for urban females in India during the same period. Moreover, the casual employment has decreased by about 8.1% points for rural males and decreased by about 0.4% points for urban males during the above mentioned period in the state.

The NSSO data shows that among the three types of employment, self-employment is relatively predominant form of employment for females in the country. Normally, regular employment is the most secure form of employment. Therefore, regular salaried workers have better quality of employment and income security than workers who engage themselves in a self or casual employment. Hence, in India the increase in the proportion of the regular female workforce indicates increased stable employment opportunities among female workers through relatively secure job markets. But in case of Assam the regular salaried employment has decreased for both rural and urban females during the period between 1993-94 and 2011-12. Moreover, casual employment has also declined for rural and urban females at both national and state levels.

**7. SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN INDIA AND ASSAM:** With the process of economic development the occupational structure of the workforce in an economy is known to undergo considerable changes. The occupational structure refers to the distribution of the workforce into various types of occupations. All these occupations can be broadly classified into three sectors namely primary, secondary and tertiary. The women workforce participation in these three sectors has been changing in India. The primary or agriculture sector is the largest source of employment for women in the country. Over the time women's work participation in the agriculture sector has declined but still it is much higher than that of secondary and tertiary sectors. In developing countries like India, changes in employment opportunities for women in different sectors can be attributed to globalisation and other related developments. Here, an attempt has been made to present the changing sectoral composition of workforce in India as well as in Assam during the period from 1993-94 to 2011-12.

**Table 4: Sectoral Distribution of Usual Status (PS+SS) Workers in Rural India**

Sectors/Broad Industry Division	50 <sup>th</sup> (1993-94)	55 <sup>th</sup> (1999-00)	61 <sup>st</sup> (2004-05)	66 <sup>th</sup> (2009-10)	68 <sup>th</sup> (2011-12)
	<b>Rural Males</b>				
Primary Sector/Agriculture	74.1	71.4	66.5	62.8	59.4
Mining and Quarrying	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.5
Manufacturing	7.0	7.3	7.9	7.0	8.1
Electricity, Water etc.	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3
Construction	3.2	4.5	6.8	11.3	13
Secondary Sector	11.2	12.6	15.5	19.3	21.9
Trade, Hotel and Restaurant	5.5	6.8	8.3	8.2	8.0
Transport, Storage and Communications	2.2	3.2	3.8	4.1	4.2
Other Services	7.0	6.1	5.9	5.5	6.4
Tertiary Sector	14.7	16.1	18.0	17.8	18.6
<b>Rural Females</b>					
Primary Sector/Agriculture	86.2	85.4	83.3	79.4	74.9
Mining and Quarrying	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Manufacturing	7.0	7.6	8.4	7.5	9.8
Electricity, Water etc.	-	-	0	0	0.1
Construction	0.9	1.1	1.5	5.2	6.6
Secondary Sector	8.3	9.0	10.2	13.0	16.8
Trade, Hotel and Restaurant	2.1	2.0	2.5	2.8	3
Transport, Storage and Communications	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2
Other Services	3.4	3.7	3.9	4.6	5.2
Tertiary Sector	5.6	5.8	6.6	7.6	8.4

Source: Employment and Unemployment Situation in India, NSS Report No. 554 of 68<sup>th</sup> Round.

In rural areas of India, during 2011-12, among workers in usual status about 59.4% of males and 74.9% of females are engaged in agriculture. The proportion of rural males engaged in the agricultural activities has continuously declined from 74.1% in 1993-94 to 71.4% in 1999-00 and then to 66.5% in 2004-05 and again to 62.8% in 2009-10 and further decreased to 59.4% in 2011-12. In case of rural female workers, the proportion engaged in the agricultural activities has shown a steady decline from 86.2% in 1993-94 to 85.4% in 1999-00 and then to 83.3% in 2004-05 and again to 79.4% in 2009-10 and further to 74.9% in 2011-12. During the period between 1993-94 and 2011-12, it has declined by about 11.3% points in the country. In urban India, males employment in the agricultural activities shows a decline from 9.0% in 1993-94 to 6.6% in 1999-00 and then to 6.1% in 2004-05, 6.0% in 2009-10 and further to 5.6% in 2011-12. Moreover, the proportion of urban female workers engaged in the agricultural activities has also declined from 24.7% in 1993-94 to 17.7% in 1999-00 and then increased to 18.1% in 2004-05 and again declined to 13.9% in 2009-10 and then to 10.9% in 2011-12. During the period between 1993-94 and 2011-12, it has declined by about 13.8% points.

In Assam, the proportion of rural female workers engaged in the agricultural activities has declined by about 4.16% points during the period between 1993-94 and 2011-12. But, during the same period, the proportion of urban female workers engaged in the agriculture has shown an increase by about 4.51% points in the state.

**Table 5: Sectoral Distribution of Usual Status (PS+SS) Workers in Urban India**

Sectors/Broad Industry Division	50 <sup>th</sup> (1993-94)	55 <sup>th</sup> (1999-00)	61 <sup>st</sup> (2004-05)	66 <sup>th</sup> (2009-10)	68 <sup>th</sup> (2011-12)
	<b>Urban Males</b>				
Primary Sector/Agriculture	9.0	6.6	6.1	6.0	5.6
Mining and Quarrying	1.3	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.9
Manufacturing	23.5	22.4	23.5	21.8	22.4
Electricity, Water etc.	1.2	0.8	0.8	0.7	1.4
Construction	6.9	8.7	9.2	11.4	10.7
Secondary Sector	32.9	32.8	34.4	34.6	35.4
Trade, Hotel and Restaurant	21.9	29.4	28.0	27.0	26

Transport, Storage and Communications	9.7	10.4	10.7	10.4	11.7
Other Services	26.4	21.0	20.8	21.9	21.4
Tertiary Sector	58.0	60.8	59.5	59.3	59.1
Urban Females					
Primary Sector/Agriculture	24.7	17.7	18.1	13.9	10.9
Mining and Quarrying	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.3
Manufacturing	24.1	24.0	28.2	27.9	28.7
Electricity, Water etc.	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.4	1.0
Construction	4.1	4.8	3.8	4.7	4.0
Secondary Sector	29.1	29.4	32.4	33.3	34
Trade, Hotel and Restaurant	10.0	16.9	12.2	12.1	12.8
Transport, Storage and Communications	1.3	1.8	1.4	1.4	2.7
Other Services	35.0	34.2	35.9	39.3	39.6
Tertiary Sector	46.3	52.9	49.5	52.8	55.1

Source: Employment and Unemployment Situation in India, NSS Report No. 554 of 68<sup>th</sup> Round.

In rural India, male employment in the secondary sector has shown an increase from 11.2% in 1993-94 to 21.9% in 2011-12. During this period, it has increased by about 10.7% points. In case of Assam, during the period from 1993-94 to 2011-12, employment in the secondary sector has increased by about 9.85% points for rural males. In manufacturing, employment has increased by about 3.71% points and in construction by about 6.46% points during the above mentioned period for rural males in the state. In India, in case of rural females, employment in the secondary sector has increased from 8.3% in 1993-94 to 9% in 1999-00 and then to 10.2% in 2004-05 and further to 13% in 2009-10 and to 16.8% in 2011-12. From 1993-94 to 2011-12, employment in the secondary sector has increased by about 8.5% points for rural females in the country. On the other hand, in Assam, employment in the secondary sector has shown a decline by about 2.02% points for rural females during the period from 1993-94 to 2011-12. For rural females, employment has decreased in manufacturing by about 5.3% points in the state. But over the years an increase in the proportion of rural female workers is seen in construction from 0.1% in 1993-94 to 0.8% in 2004-05 and then to 3.13% in 2011-12 in the state. Again, during the period from 1993-94 to 2011-12 the employment in the secondary sector has increased by about 2.5% points for urban males in the country. Moreover, there is also an increase in employment in the secondary sector for urban males in the state by about 3.38% points during the same period. Moreover, in this sector, employment for urban females has continuously increased from 29.1% in 1993-94 to 29.4% in 1999-00 and then to 32.4% in 2004-05 and further to 33.3% in 2009-10 and 34% in 2011-12 in the country. During the period from 1993-94 to 2011-12, it has increased by about 4.9% points. Employment has increased in manufacturing by about 4.6% points for urban females in the country.

**Table 6: Sectoral Distribution of Usual Status (PS+SS) Workers in Rural Assam**

Sectors/Broad Industry Division	50 <sup>th</sup> (1993-94)	55 <sup>th</sup> (1999-00)	61 <sup>st</sup> (2004-05)	66 <sup>th</sup> (2009-10)	68 <sup>th</sup> (2011-12)
	Rural Males				
Primary Sector/Agriculture	78.2	64.7	69.6	66.6	58.6
Mining and Quarrying	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.16
Manufacturing	2.2	2.9	2.9	3.7	5.91
Electricity, Water etc.	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.02
Construction	0.8	2.2	3.0	4.1	7.26
Secondary Sector	3.5	5.5	6.4	8.3	13.35
Trade, Hotel and Restaurant	8.2	9.9	11.6	11.2	14.66
Transport, Storage and Communications	1.6	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.89
Other Services	8.5	16.6	9.0	10.6	9.52
Tertiary Sector	18.3	29.8	23.8	25.1	28.07
Rural Females					
Primary Sector/Agriculture	83.2	79.4	88.3	86.2	79.04
Mining and Quarrying	-	0	0	0	0.25
Manufacturing	8.7	8.3	3.7	2.8	3.4
Electricity, Water etc.	-	0	0	0	0
Construction	0.1	0.2	0.8	0.9	3.13

Secondary Sector	8.8	8.5	4.5	3.7	6.78
Trade, Hotel and Restaurant	1.9	1.5	1.1	2.8	3.8
Transport, Storage and Communications	0.1	0.3	0.2	0	0.35
Other Services	5.9	10.4	5.8	7.4	10.02
Tertiary Sector	7.9	12.2	7.1	10.2	14.17

Source: Employment and Unemployment Situation in India, NSS Report No. 409 of 50<sup>th</sup> Round, 458 of 55<sup>th</sup> Round, 515 of 61<sup>st</sup> Round, 537 of 66<sup>th</sup> Round and 554 of 68<sup>th</sup> Round Note: 'PS+SS'-Principal status and subsidiary status taken together

In case of Assam, during the period from 1993-94 to 2011-12 employment in the secondary sector for urban females has declined by about 8.14% points as against about 4.9% points rise at the national level. In manufacturing, the employment has decreased by about 5.34% points for urban females during the same period in the state. At both rural and urban areas of India and Assam the share of female workers has remained negligible in mining and quarrying, electricity and water etc. in all the NSS rounds.

In tertiary sector, rural males employment has increased by about 3.9% points in India during the period between 1993-94 and 2011-12, as against about 9.77% points rise at the state level. For rural females, employment in this sector has increased by about 2.8% points during the above mentioned period in the country. It has increased in trade, hotel and restaurants by about 0.9% points, in transport, storage and communications by about 0.1% points and in other services by about 1.8% points during the same period in the country. In case of Assam, during the period from 1993-94 to 2011-12 employment in the tertiary sector has increased by about 6.27% points for rural females. It has increased in trade, hotel and restaurants by about 1.9% points and in other services by about 4.12% points during the same period in the state. In India, for urban males employment in the tertiary sector has increased by about 1.1% points between 1993-94 and 2011-12. It has increased in trade, hotel and restaurants by about 4.1% points and in transport, storage and communications by about 2% points and declined in other services by about 5% points during the same period at the national level. But in Assam, the employment in the tertiary sector has decreased by about 4.45% points for urban males during the above mentioned period.

Again, in case of India, employment in this sector has increased by about 8.8% points during the period from 1993-94 to 2011-12 for urban females. Their employment has increased in trade, hotel and restaurants by about 2.8% points, in transport, storage and communications by about 1.4% points and in other services by about 4.6% points during the same period in the country. In case of Assam, employment in the tertiary sector has increased by about 3.64% points for urban females during the period between 1993-94 and 2011-12 and it has increased in trade, hotel and restaurants by about 9.74% points and decreased in other services by about 6.1% points in the state during the same period.

From the NSSO data it is seen that the proportion of female workers in agriculture has declined in the rural areas of Assam and in both the rural and urban areas of India. One of the reasons of decline in female work participation rate in agricultural sector is the mechanization of agriculture. Due to the growing mechanization and technological changes that takes place in the agricultural sector the requirement of manual labour goes down because it has eliminated many jobs traditionally performed by women. This has reduced the demand for women's work in the agriculture. In India, the decline in the agricultural activities for urban females is more than that of rural females during the period between 1993-94 and 2011-12. It is also found from the NSSO data that in urban Assam female workers have again started to enter in agriculture from manufacturing and services during the period from 1993-94 to 2011-12. The loss of female work participation in the primary sector is gained and shared by both the secondary and tertiary sectors in India which indicates that women are able to take the advantage of the increased employment opportunities in secondary and tertiary sectors.

**Table 7: Sectoral Distribution of Usual Status (PS+SS) Workers in Urban Assam**

Sectors/Broad Industry Division	50 <sup>th</sup> (1993-94)	55 <sup>th</sup> (1999-00)	61 <sup>st</sup> (2004-05)	66 <sup>th</sup> (2009-10)	68 <sup>th</sup> (2011-12)
	Urban Males				
Primary Sector/Agriculture	2.9	5.9	4.3	2.3	3.96
Mining and Quarrying	6.5	0.6	1.6	2.3	4.48
Manufacturing	9.5	7.5	10.1	7.5	9.22
Electricity, Water etc.	0.7	0.6	3.2	2.7	0.48



Construction	3.1	6.1	6.5	8.3	9
Secondary Sector	19.8	14.8	21.4	20.8	23.18
Trade, Hotel and Restaurant	32.5	33.9	30.8	36.5	36.26
Transport, Storage and Communications	8.7	9.2	13.9	12.9	8.84
Other Services	36.1	36.1	29.8	27.2	27.75
Tertiary Sector	77.3	79.2	74.5	76.6	72.85
Urban Females					
Primary Sector/Agriculture	2.9	6.2	7.3	5.6	7.41
Mining and Quarrying	3.3	0	0	0	0.54
Manufacturing	16.5	5.9	8.2	20.6	11.16
Electricity, Water etc.	-	0.5	0	0.4	0
Construction	0.9	0.3	0.5	3.3	0.86
Secondary Sector	20.7	6.7	8.7	24.3	12.56
Trade, Hotel and Restaurant	7.3	9.2	10.4	18.7	17.04
Transport, Storage and Communications	-	3.4	5.8	1.4	0
Other Services	69.1	74.4	67.9	50.1	63
Tertiary Sector	76.4	87	84.1	70.2	80.04

Source: Employment and Unemployment Situation in India, NSS Report No. 409 of 50<sup>th</sup> Round, 458 of 55<sup>th</sup> Round, 515 of 61<sup>st</sup> Round, 537 of 66<sup>th</sup> Round and 554 of 68<sup>th</sup> Round. Note: 'PS+SS'-Principal status and subsidiary status taken together

In case of Assam, the analysis shows that there is a sizeable decrease in the share of rural and urban females employment in the secondary sector. As far as tertiary sector is concerned there is a clear pattern in the increase of female work participation in both rural and urban areas of Assam during the above mentioned period. But it can be observed that more than half of the female workforce in rural areas of India and Assam are still dependent on agriculture. Moreover, the share of rural female in the agricultural activities is also found to be more than the share of rural male in the agricultural activities at both the national and state levels. In addition, the female work participation rate in primary and secondary sectors of urban Assam is lower than that of the urban India. However, the female work participation rate in tertiary sector of urban Assam is much higher than that of the urban India.

**8. CONCLUSION:** The data from the various NSSO rounds, it is observed that the female workers have much lower participation rates than their male counterparts. Although women in urban areas enjoy better health and better education facilities than their rural counterparts the rural-urban division of female work participation rate shows that the work participation rate of urban women is much lower than those in rural areas. But in comparison to the magnitude of rural-urban disparity of female work participation rate, the same is very less for male work participation rate. Moreover, women in rural India and in rural Assam are clearly in an inferior position in the labour market compared to their urban counterparts. This is evident from the fact that most of the rural women are still predominantly engaged in low-paying agricultural activities. On the other hand, most of the urban women are engaged in services where earning opportunities are high. Therefore, it can be suggested that appropriate government intervention along with policy formulation is needed for the upliftment of the work participation rate of women and for the elimination of gender bias in employment from the country as well as from the state.

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