



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

## EXPLORING THE GENDER GAP IN LABOURFORCE PARTICIPATION AFTER MARRIAGE AND ANALYZING THE CONTRIBUTION OF MEN AND WOMEN IN FAMILY INCOME IN KERALA

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### ABSTRACT

*Families are the building blocks of our society. They are the places where people share their resources, care for each other, and nurture the next generation. Families often play a crucial role in our identity and sense of belonging. The economic development of a nation or a world depends on each family that belongs to it. For the better prosperity of each family, it is necessary to work hard for every member of that family. There is no gender inequality in any way, especially from an economic point of view. However, married life has a gendered impact on women's and men's labor market outcomes, such as their labor force participation and the type of jobs that they hold, etc. It is through this study that we can understand the economic gap in a family, the type of occupation, the challenges that married women face, and whether there is any gender inequality in the family. The study was conducted with special reference to Changanacherry municipality of Kottayam, Kerala. The study only includes families that are solely dependent on the income of one spouse or both spouses and does not include the income of other members.*

**Key words:** labour force participation; gender gap; family income

### INTRODUCTION

Human well-being is fundamentally dependent on the freedom to choose to work in conditions of dignity, safety, and fairness. It is a significant goal in and of itself to ensure that women have access to this right. The reduction of gender disparities in labor force participation has the potential to significantly boost global GDP from an economic standpoint. Female workforce support is essentially lower among ladies living with an accomplice and youngsters than among ladies living just with an accomplice. This, thus, is essentially lower than the cooperation pace of ladies living alone. Men exhibit the exact opposite pattern. The workforce

cooperation rate shows the portion of individuals who are in the workforce (either employed or jobless). It doesn't recognize the jobless individuals or the people who are employed but might want to work longer hours than they do.

The marital status of workers appears to be linked to their occupation, again reflecting a strong gender imbalance. Gender roles and the pressure to conform to them for women differ from region to region, from religion to household structure. One way in which this pressure to conform is felt is through marriage. For example, in developed and developing economies, women who are married or have a spouse are less likely to have a job or to be actively searching for a job. This is often due to the economic security of a partner's income which can strengthen the "male breadwinner" bias in some marital relationships. In developing countries, the economic situation in the region forces all women to work, regardless of their marital status. According to ILO statistics from 103 countries worldwide, employed women tend to work shorter hours compared to employed men, and the time-related unemployment rate is higher for employed women than for employed men.

. According to ILO data from 103 countries, employed women are more likely than employed men to work fewer hours, and this gendered aspect of time-related underemployment is more pronounced among married people. The time-related underemployment rate is higher for ladies than for men

Women Entrepreneurship in India can contribute \$0.7 Trillion to India's GDP by 2025, according to an Indian Express report. By starting and managing their businesses, women entrepreneurs not only create jobs for other women but also encourage them to enter the labor market. This can result in substantial economic growth. However, surprisingly, India's female labor force participation rate (FLLR) has been on the decline for the past 20 years. From 32% in 2005, the FLLR has fallen to 19% as of 2021. Women's FLLR has decreased across social classes, religions, and age groups.

In 2016, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and Gallup joined forces to ask women around the world which they prefer: working in paid jobs, caring for their families, or doing both. The results showed that 70% of women (regardless of their employment status) prefer working in paid jobs. According to ILO data, the employability gap between men and women is 50.9% in India, with 19.2% in the labour force for women and 70.1% for men.

This paper aims to explore the role of husbands and wives in family income after marriage. It will also look at the impact of the labour force participation gap on the individual and society at large.

## **NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The gender gap in labor force participation after marriage has been a significant issue in the economic and social life of many countries. Over the past few decades, there has been a significant increase in the number of married women opting out of the labor force. This has led to a decrease in the contribution to family income from married women.

In Kerala, India, the gender gap in labor force participation after marriage is a topic of great concern. In general, married women display lower levels of labor force participation compared to their unmarried counterparts. This is further corroborated by the fact that women with limited literacy skills are more likely to seek employment after marriage than their better-educated peers. The agricultural sector remains the dominant employer of women in India. Several factors contribute to women's limited participation in the labor force, including religious and caste affiliations, geographic location, household wealth, and societal norms. The labor market entry of women in Kerala, India, is influenced by individual and societal factors that impact married women to a greater extent than unmarried women. In terms of family income, both men and women contribute

to household income in Kerala, India. However, men are more likely to work outside the home and participate in the labor market, while married women are less likely to do so. The contribution of men and women to family income is a key area of study in Kerala, India, as is the exploration of the gender gap in labor force participation after marriage.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The gender gap in labor force participation refers to the difference between the proportion of men and women who are actively participating in the workforce. This has been an area of interest for economists, sociologists, and other social scientists for years, as it has a profound effect on the economic security of individuals and families.

The gender gap in labor force participation is particularly pronounced after marriage. As marriage is typically seen as the beginning of a family unit, it is important to understand how the gender gap in labor force participation affects the contribution of husbands and wives to the family income.

It is important to note that the gender gap in labor force participation is not only a problem in the developed world. In many developing countries, the gender gap is even more pronounced. This has a significant effect on the economic security of families in these countries, as well as on the overall economic growth of the country.

The gender gap in labor force participation after marriage is an issue of growing concern in many countries around the world. Even though women have made great strides in terms of educational attainment, economic emancipation, and increased access to job opportunities, the gap in labor force participation between married women and married men continues to exist. Married women are often more likely to leave the labor force or reduce their hours of work after marriage to devote more time to their family responsibilities, such as childcare and housework. This phenomenon has led to decreased income and career opportunities for married women, creating a gender gap in the labor force participation and contribution to family income by husband and wife.

The purpose of this paper is to explore the gender gap in labor force participation after marriage and the contributions to family income by husband and wife. This paper will explore the literature on the issue and will analyze the factors that influence the gender gap in labor force participation after marriage. The paper will also examine the implications of this gap on family income and the family as a whole. Finally, the paper will propose potential solutions to reduce the gender gap in labor force participation after marriage and to increase the contribution of both husband and wife to family income.

## OBJECTIVES:

The study was undertaken with the following objectives.

- To determine how many men and women participate in the labor force after marriage
- To assess how much each gender contributes to family income
- To identify any gender inequalities in the home

## METHODOLOGY

The methodology used to analyze the gender gap in labor force participation after marriage and its contribution to family income relies on a combination of qualitative and quantitative research. Qualitative research was used to examine the reasons behind the gender gap in labor force participation after marriage and its contribution to family income. This included interviews with married women and data collected from female family members. Quantitative research was used to examine the gender gap in labor force participation and its contribution to family income. This includes the survey method, which involves collecting data through a structured

questionnaire that will be administered to a sample of families in 5 wards of Changanacherry, Kottayam, Kerala.

## DATA COLLECTION METHOD

To conduct the study, the data was collected from families residing in the Changanacherry village of Kottayam district. Primary and secondary data was collected through pre-test questionnaires, journals, websites, etc.

Primary data: - the data observed or collected directly from firsthand experience.

Secondary data: - published data and the data collected in the past or by other parties are called secondary data.

The scope of the study was to collect data from 100 families sampled from 5 wards in Changanacherry. Changanacherry is one of the municipality cities located in the district of Kottayam in Kerala. The municipality is spread across 34 wards. The population of the municipality is estimated to be around 63,000 in 2023. According to Census India 2011, the total population of the municipality was 47,685, out of which 22,854 were male and 24,831 were female. Out of the total population, the total number of people engaged in work was 15,699, out of which 11,435 were male and 4,264 female. In the census survey, workers are defined as persons who do business, jobs, services, cultivators, and labour activities. The sample was chosen based on random sampling.

Random Sampling: Random sampling is the process of randomly selecting a sample from a large number of people. Each person is randomly selected and has an equal chance of being selected.

## LIMITATION OF STUDY

The study is not without its limitations. The main limitations are as follows:

- Only 100 respondents from the municipality of Changanacherry were included in the study.
- Lack of time and resources is another limitation to the rapid changes taking place in this area.
- Some respondents are hesitant to share some of their personal data.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature on gender gap in labour force participation after marriage and the contribution to family income has seen a growing number of studies in recent years.

One study by Zuberi and MacLean (2017) found that married women tend to experience greater job losses than married men in the wake of a recession. This study highlights the importance of understanding the gender gap in labour force participation after marriage and the contribution to family income.

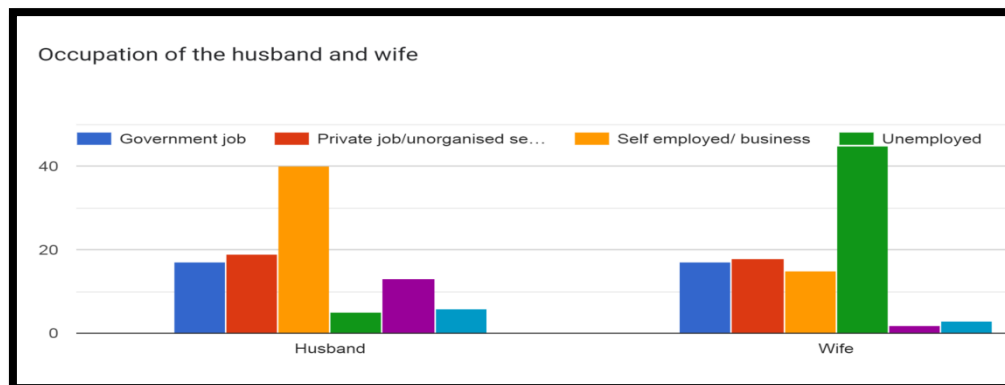
Another study by McCall (2017) found that married women's labour force participation is often negatively impacted by cultural and social norms. McCall's study suggests that policy makers need to take these cultural and social norms into account when considering policies regarding the gender gap in labour participation.

Finally, a study by Kiel and Zuberi (2018) found that married women's contribution to family income is often underestimated. This study suggests that employers need to be aware of the varying contributions of married women in the workforce, and that policy makers need to consider these contributions when creating policies that affect the gender gap in labour force participation.

## FINDINGS

The findings of this study suggest that there is a gender gap in labor force participation after marriage and a decrease in contribution to family income from married women. This has implications for the economic well-being of families, as well as for the economic security of married women. The decrease in labor force participation among married women is likely to lead to a decrease in their income, which could hurt their economic security and ability to contribute to their families.

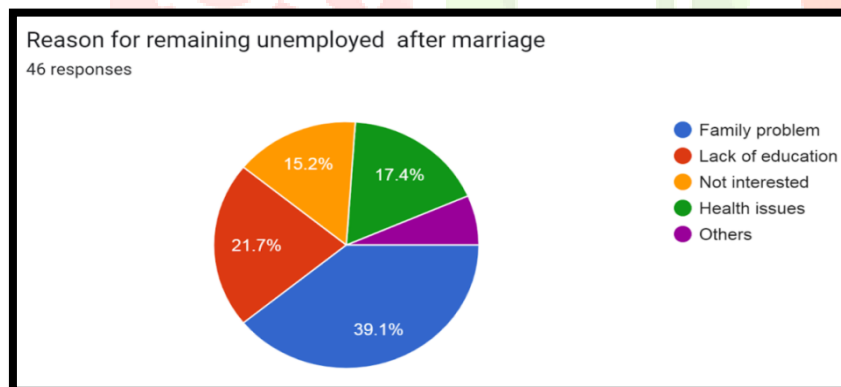
The following figures show the major findings of the study:



### Source: primary data

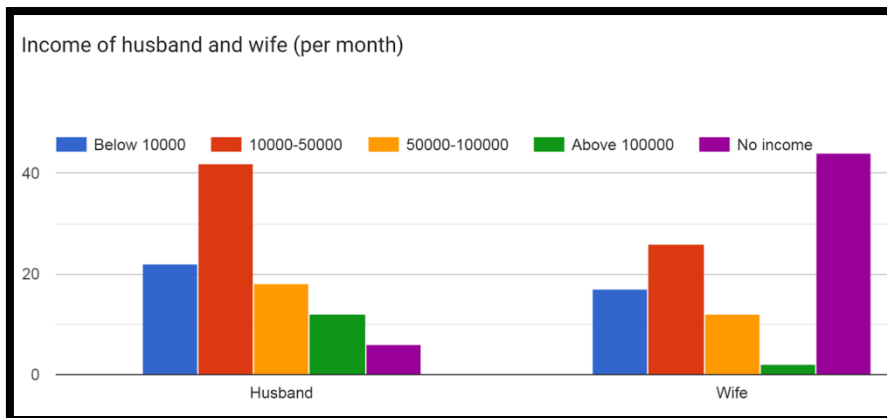
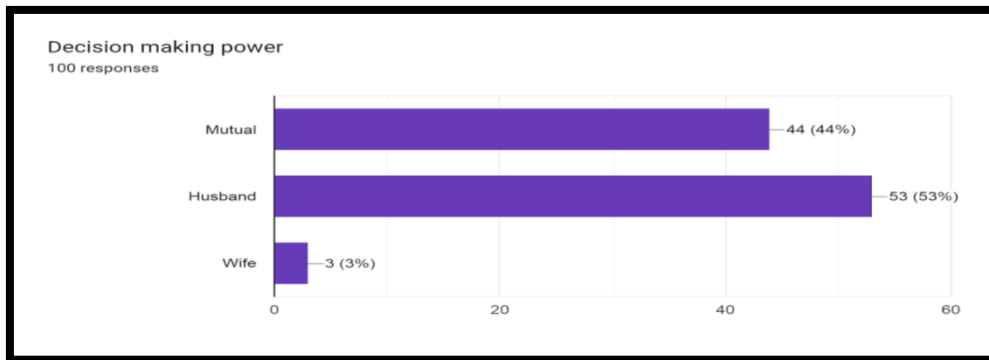
An analysis of the data shows that the majority of women are unemployed and the majority of employed men are self-employed or running their own businesses. The majority of working women are employed in private or unorganized sectors such as textile shops, manufacturing companies etc.

The following pie chart illustrates the different reasons why women stay unemployed after getting married.



### Source: primary data

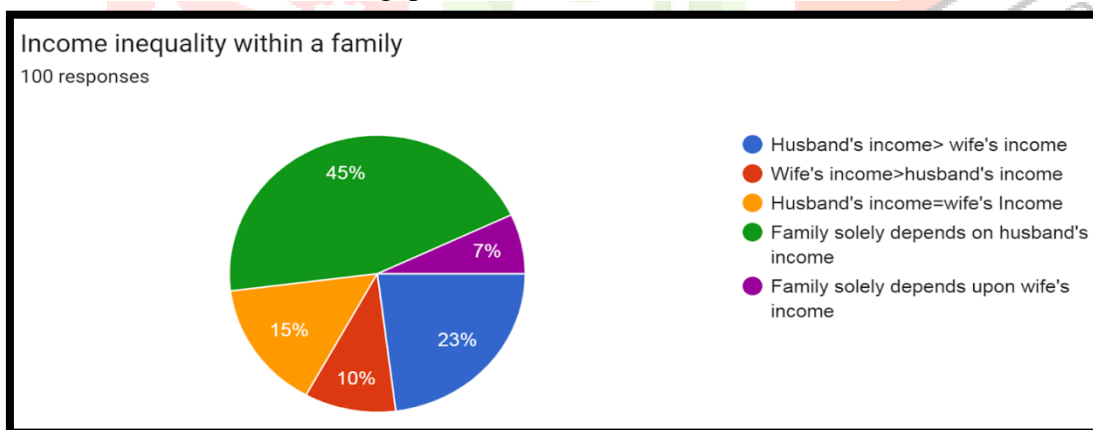
An analysis of the reasons why married women are out of work shows that most of them choose family issues, such as child care, family forbidding them to work after marriage, family responsibilities, inability to balance housework with outside work, etc.



Source: primary data

The above diagram illustrates the monthly income of men and women. It can be seen that the majority of women do not have any income, and the majority of men have an income ranging from 10000 to 50000. On the other hand, the majority of working women have an income between 10000 and 50000.

Now let's look at the income gap between men and women.



Source: primary data

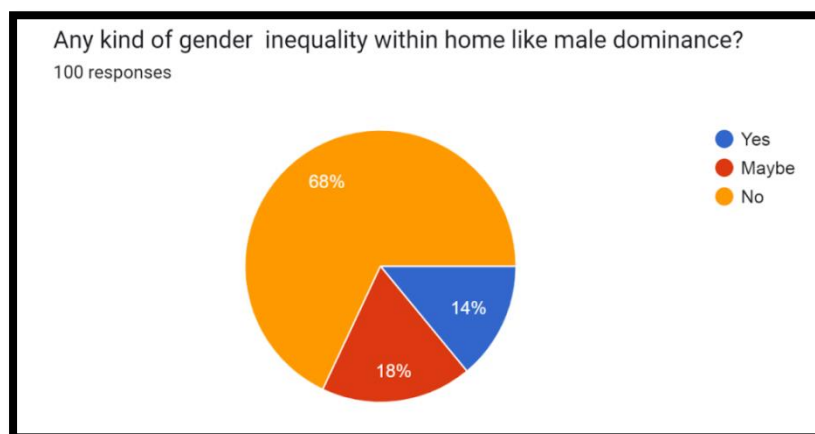
The above diagram shows the income inequality within a family. It is clear that the majority of the family relies solely on the income of the husband. In fact, 23% of the family income goes to the husband who earns more than the wife. This represents the difference in income between male and female workers.



To understand gender dominance and inequality within a family, we can look at the following data:

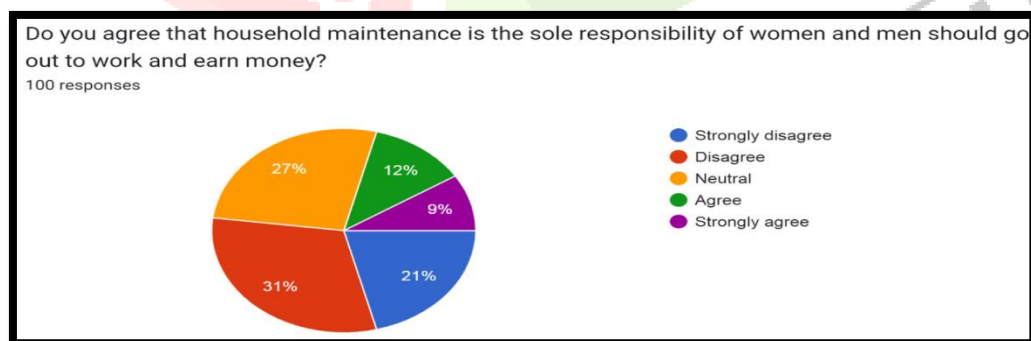
### Source: primary data

In today's society, men and women are equal in terms of rights and responsibilities within and outside of the family. This study includes married couples of different ages, so their perspectives on decision making power are different. 53% agree that in the family, the husband makes the decisions followed by the other members. However, 44% said that the decisions are made between them. A family with a wife who makes decisions is due to a variety of reasons such as a paralyzed husband or other reasons.



### Source: primary data

The analysis of the question on gender inequality in home showed that 68% of respondents said there was no gender inequality in their home. However, some respondents said there was still some type of gender dominance in their home.



### Source: primary data

The above diagram is qualitative in nature as each respondent's opinion is affected by social and psychological elements.

In brief, studies have also shown that the gender gap in labour force participation is more pronounced in developing countries than in developed countries. This is because in many developing countries, women are still expected to take on the majority of domestic responsibilities, which leaves them with less time to participate in the workforce.

In addition, studies have shown that the gender gap in labour force participation can have a significant effect on the overall economic growth of a country. When women are not actively participating in the workforce, the overall economic productivity of the country is decreased. This in turn affects the economic security of families in the country, as well as the overall economic growth of the country.

## CONCLUSION

In the urban labour market of India, marriage functions as a reward for men and a punishment for women, according to a working paper on the subject published by ISEC.

The gender gap in labour force participation after marriage has a significant effect on the contribution of husbands and wives to the family income. It also has a significant effect on the overall economic growth of a country. Therefore, it is important to understand the significance of the gender gap in labour force participation after marriage, both for the individual and society as a whole. It is also important to recognize the need for policies and practices that promote gender equality and reduce the gender gap in labour force participation. As per the World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Report 2022, India ranked 135 out of 146 countries and was behind smaller neighbors such as Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal.

If India's women want to work, several changes need to be made at the individual, social, and government levels to create a conducive environment for women's participation in work. Gender mainstreaming and women's inclusion in the labour market are essential for unlocking India's demographic dividend and sustainable development.

To sustain progress and economic growth, India must address these challenges and recognize the importance of women's contribution, both economically and socially.

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