



**GLOBAL WORK-LIFE BALANCE OF WOMEN : ITS IMPACT AND AN ASSESSMENT
ON SUSTAINABILITY.**

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“In July 1997, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) define the concept of gender mainstreaming as: “Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies and programmes, in any area and at all levels” and “is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated”(ILO).

Abstract:

The post pandemic witnessed as a medical emergency but its crises got magnifying in inequality. This inequality took away women jobs as nearly twice as likely to men and low income women are the most at risk especially those in low income countries. So more than few years in pandemic i.e. appended lifestyles touching almost every aspect of daily lives highlighting challenges to face accessing education, higher rates of domestic violence, the severity of mental health this times had laid bare how far the world remains to achieve has set the gender inequality. United nation predicts 47% millions of women and girls push into poverty and further 13% child marriages. Images of museum London prediction is Local banks don't usually give loans to women so they often have to turn to friends and family for money if they want to start a business they usually work. There are two jobs one which pays them the other doesn't i.e. cooking and cleaning. Many of these women have struggled for years to put their lives and their families on solid economic route but the virus started spreading around the world and sustained them on hold. The billion people receive money from their governments to meet their basic needs amidst chaos. The emergency cash transfers show often the cash doesn't end up in the woman's pockets all because they are not identified as the head of the household. Their purse does not allows

women to spend it on their own rather children and families. So increasing woman's economic power does creates a vicious cycle of disempowering women economically by cash transfers addressing unpaid care and other work. For reference, France then turn recovery into one solution to ensure women have economic power the ability to spend it in a way it's best for them and their families.

Keyterms: Gender, work, labour, Power, government statistics

Introduction

Post the national crises there were several posts circulating of social media but the idea that the world is going to be better was just a myth. UN secretary General Amina Mohammed said the global emergency is compounding existing imbalances even though men more likely to die than women; they are being disproportionately affected by the impact of coronavirus from socio-political to economy to security and social protection to the impacts of diseases. This was simply because they are females hence poor and marginalised and wants to begin with the hard hit, they likely will be as they are pushed into care economy. This has had effect as women are disproportionately engaged in unpaid care of the family and household. By our calculation, women's jobs were 1.8 times more vulnerable to this crisis than men's jobs. Women make up 39 percent of global employment but account for 54 percent of overall job losses. This, among other factors, means that women's employment is dropping faster than average, even accounting for the fact that women and men work in different sectors (Mckinsey Report). Emerging data suggests that domestic and sexual violence has increased in several countries since pandemic. That has led to stress and tension around health and finances for millions of people from around world and this coupled with the fact that lockdowns and isolation need us to spend more time at home in confined spaces. Meaning thereby, does woman experience domestic violence more frequently? At the same time services that can help women have now left them to assist care economy because they are overwhelmed under their own financial pressure and face with restrictions on their movement. The Malala fund documents this is worse than *Ebola* as crisis in other areas estimate the 20,000,000 more girls did drop out of school. Although, even after the covid 19 has passed girls are often the first to drop out of school in the crisis hits and they are invisible to increase the rates of poverty and household responsibilities. This has further pushed them back into child labour and even teenage pregnancies occur more frequently. These children become child carriers and are more than doubled in Sierra Leone alone as per the statistics. Epidemics also reduce carbon finding and aid for education because funds are diverted to the health crisis which further pushes risking food insecurity and push poor families into extreme poverty and hunger. Meaning thereby, family is more likely to marry girl off to reduces the burden because they have no amounts to feed, and nothing could be done and come through dowry data is difficult to come.

More than ever now due to lost opportunity's and access to jobs women had been vulnerable to live in extreme poverty and helplessness. This also states that when pandemic threatens food security -it hits women more likely to go hungry in favour of men and boys eating full proportion

in undeveloped nations. The employed women were also adversely affected as it did disproportionately affected the working women due to lay-off's in jobs. The data from the US and UK states that more women have lost their jobs than men as per International Labour Organization. Given trends it is observed over the past few months a gender-regressive scenario in which no action is taken to counter these effects. To estimate that global GDP growth could be \$1 trillion lower in 2030 than it would be if women's unemployment simply tracked that of men in each sector (ibid.). These estimates build on the McKinsey Global Institute's (MGI's) Power of Parity work since 2015. This research maps 15 gender-equality indicators across four categories:

equality in work, essential services and enablers of economic opportunity, legal protection and political voice, and physical security and autonomy. Utilising a Gender Parity Score, or GPS, calculated using these indicators, MGI has established a strong link between gender equality in society and gender equality in work—and shown that the latter is not achievable without the former.

I. Objectives and Hypothesis

- To assess the impact on women in new world order and economic recession.
- How women are more marginalised in the scale of extreme poverty and vulnerability as compared to men.
- The analysis of socio-economic parameters leading to disproportionate inequality in new world order.
- To analyse a negative relationship between critical times vis-à-vis marginalised sections of society i.e. women and children.
- To establish demands and representation as correlational with paid and unpaid labour into the work sphere.

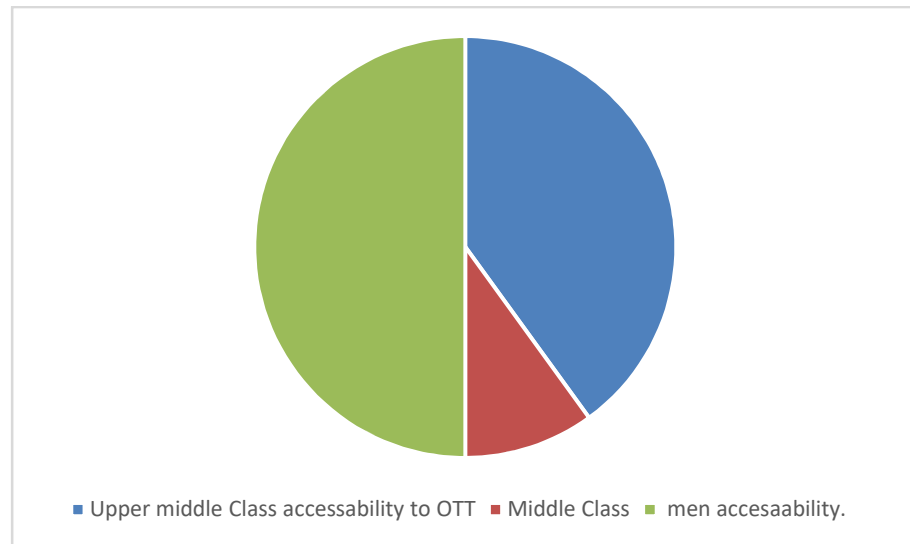
III. Methodology:

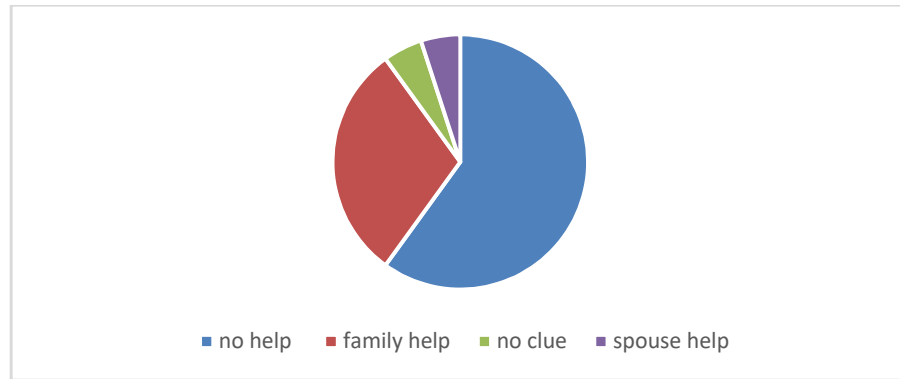
The study is primarily done based on secondary and primary sources in both their paid and unpaid economy. For the purposes of this study, a qualitative approach alongside review of the literature has taken place with theoretical framework of scholars and statistical reports. For this a systematic survey was carried out with the help of students that interviewed almost 50 samples taken randomly from the household with the help of snowball sampling. It was conducted with reference to friends and relatives from the records of students coming from North-east; West Bengal; and other parts of national Capital Region. For this purpose, a structured open ended and close ended questionnaire was prepared which was then circulated by google forms to the target working mixed group of women. And later its analysis and interpretation has been conducted alongside observations over some

facts.

Data Interpretation and Findings:

This data was collected from the married women and primarily engaged in organised/formal work both partially and full-time working capacity in the urban households. They were all from middle class to upper middle class ranging in medium income group families. The study was methodical as 60 % of the respondents were of the similar perception that household chores along with their paid jobs had to be performed in individual capacities along with extra burden of the care economy and more variety of the cooking was also demanded from them in due course of time. Out of these 5% had no clue of how it was managed and was this something indifferent to their rights in both home and work. However, remaining 30% were managing with the support of extended family members and more 5% were rigorously helped by their spouses. None of them could afford to leave the jobs taking the extra responsibility of unpaid household work as this time the domestic helps were not available seeking their graver responsibility of both the purse and the house. As is clearly depicted in the graphs below stating the share of the households by men and the share of the recreation of watching television and Netflix while being at home.





Pie Chart: The share of the Work done and Recreation share of men and women.

This not only increased gender parity as compared to previous times by burdening and glorifying them as uniquely gifted gender. The traits of managing both the house and work worsened gender norms. However, such perceptions were felt at individual levels and were only realized at the cost of compensation and substitution at the time of work. Most of them realised while filling the questionnaire realised the imbalance between the mental state and physical capacity. This, therefore, elaborated more on the need to create an opportunity to bring a change in gender norms regarding unpaid household chores, particularly when women are engaged in full-time employment or are financially independent. In households where one or more member is unemployed, the interviewees suggested that the unemployed member, generally a woman (housewife/homemaker), should take up greater burden of unpaid work. Another important facet insisted that spending time on active leisure activities such as socializing or exercising that promotes happiness were seen to be dismal in women. Again there were discrepancy in middle to upper middle income group with the availability of OTT platforms at home and television of course. Yet the percentage varied drastically from 40% to 10% ranging from upper to middle income group as clearly mentioned above in the pie chart. However, certain groups in society primarily low-income tend to spend most of their time on necessities (for example household chores and caretaking responsibilities) leaving them "time-poor" with little time for leisure activities. During these times there has also been negative interactions between parents and children whereby, mothers tend to be more busy and stressed. Parents who experience job and income loss are more likely to lose their temper or yell at their child. Given that the sample mean on this outcome is only five percent, but their overall effect is quite high in the deficiency of job loss or reduction in income scenario. Moreover, the economic stresses of the economic crisis have worsened children parents parameters; mental health and stress has increased due to diminishing returns and worry of the future with young children. Among many such open-ended questions there were many women who were candid in responding to questions such as;

Response I

Q. How has your total household income changed since the start of the current crisis ?

Q. What do you feel regarding the work division of household responsibility and office-work ?

Q. Do you feel gender roles are more disaggregated in terms of new normal?

Q. Do you ever feel burdened and overworked?

Q. what values or quality time you wish to instil in your children?

Response I:

--'It has totally gone down and am managing somehow'!

Shalini a mother of the student replied: I think that me being a woman is enough for me to contribute more to the household. My husband and I are both working and live in the same house so we share the tasks based on our capabilities and interests although I tend to work more at home as he is not equipped in the life skills and increases my work burden when I need to improvise it.

Similarly, Rajeev, a 47-year old married man and an IT Manager narrates.

Response II

Pooja a distant relative of “ I usually don't get enough time and thus often lack in multi tasking as I am also engaged in full time work and similar commitment at home and work demands more contribution .We help each other but yes the outcome is produced more by me than him with no domestic help. My husband did the dusting and clean up the floor but this all is also possible as we still don't have kids.

Response III

Namrata: 'I feel like running and hiding but the thought of children stops me as I have nowhere to go, it becomes impossible to manage as I wake up at 5 and sleep by 12 after both the house and office work. It is unjust to be a women and more so if you are working'.

Response IV : 'I do not have much time available to help me with household chores. So, they help me as and when they can. I am a housewife, it is my responsibility to keep the house running. And the house will come to a halt if I stop doing the domestic work'.

Response V: Amita with one girl child states that I wish I have another baby boy for me to instil cooperation and gender understanding in to help in domestic chores.

The above examples are good enough to respond to the disproportionate relationship of the women to men already existing in pre covid to post covid situation, thus fitting misappropriately in the new world order. In households where one or more member is unemployed, the interviewees suggested that the unemployed member, generally a woman (housewife/homemaker), should take up greater burden of unpaid work. In the above survey conducted there were two assumptions that came out testing the hypothesis: firstly that the extra burden of the household was taken care by the female member of the family preferably the daughter in -law and; secondly as women are more proficient in the domestic chores and are glorified in household chores are often fixated and structured to maintain strict discrepancy to the gender roles being played at home. Thus, the remaining proportion of women are presumed to be the consumers and not producers. In non-paid work also they tend to be more proactive in contributing to the household chores as compared to men. The reason most cited for this is that since these women are not involved in income generating activities they have more time available to perform the domestic work. In addition, the interviewees also stated that since other members of the household are working full time they did not have spare time to contribute to domestic chores. Therefore inadvertently taken up by the unemployed women of the house either mothers or wives. This has been observed in the interviews with both men and women. As some people have stated that if not them then who would take care of the household. Finally, it should be mentioned that the data used in this study was based on a rapid survey post COVID-19-as earlier induced social distancing and lockdowns did not allow face-to-face interviews. This limited the amount of information collected and the generalisability of our findings. However, the data provided useful information for exploring some of the immediate implications of research involving representative and longitudinal samples alongside alternative survey methods.

IV. Paid versus Unpaid work Matrix:

Everything has changed and is still in transition post the pandemic times. The universal criteria of pushing the marginalised under the vulnerable life chances of urban poverty and migration from rural areas. Setting the trends by the statistics of India and Abroad , the highly dense populations of the world have been facing the wrath of economic and social marginalisation. The term unpaid work, as given by the International Labour Organization, is the ‘non-remunerated work carried out to sustain the well-being and maintenance of other individuals in a household or the community, and it includes both direct and indirect care (i.e. routine housework). The ILO estimates show that time spent in unpaid work accounted for ‘16.4 billion hours per day, with women contributing more than three-fourths of the total’ which is ‘equivalent to 2.0 billion people working on a full-time basis without pay’ . In India, women spend an average of 351.9 min/day on unpaid work as compared to an average of 51.8 min/day by men , In addition, data show that time spent on total paid and unpaid work by women in India is 536.6 min/day as compared to an average of 442.3 min/day being spent by men(OECD) . On the contrary, densely

populated nation like India, the information is often misguided and began to continuously speculate on the media portals as the politicians are often misleading subject to the fear of losing credentials in critical times. The political economy most often neglects the public opinion as they are caught in insignificant policies and press statements. Meanwhile, these false rumours made all this viscerally convincing to the masses and this social construct the dictatorial democratic agencies. Indian women also spend more time doing unpaid care work at home than men. As per the data on covid women elaborates on an average, they spend 9.8 times more time than men on unpaid domestic chores and 4.5 hours a day caring for children, elders and the sick. During the pandemic, their share of unpaid care work grew by nearly 30 per cent. Projections from the International Labour Organization suggest the equivalent of 140 million full-time jobs is lost; and women's employment is 19 per cent went at risk than men. These women are the faces behind the headlines, the people most affected by the economic impact of crises. Unless, policies intentionally enable economic relief measures and deliberately target women, support women-led businesses and their income security, their situation will only worsen.

V. Gender Norms and perceptions In India:

Globally, and in India, more women have lost jobs during those times of crises. A recent report by the Centre at Azim Premji University in India shows that during the first lockdown in 2020, only 7 per cent of men lost their jobs, compared to 47 per cent of women who lost their jobs and did not return to work by the end of the year. In the informal sector, women fared even worse. This year, between March and April 2021, rural Indian women in informal jobs accounted for 80 per cent of job losses. UN Women data also shows that more girls than boys were left out of school during the pandemic and 65 per cent of parents surveyed were reluctant to continue the education of girls and resorting to child marriages to save costs. This can create an entire generation of young women without education and employment opportunities. According to the National Commission of Women data, India recorded a 2.5 times increase in domestic violence between February and May 2020. Some women's organizations reported that in the first four phases of the lockdown, they received more reports of domestic violence than they had in the last ten years for a similar period. Others indicated that many women were unable to report the violence, as they had less privacy and means to access help. The Indian Government classified domestic violence shelter and support services as "essential" – as an important step covid response. During the first and second waves of the pandemic, 700 One-Stop-Crisis centres remained open in India, supporting over 300,000 women who suffered abuse and needed shelter, legal aid, and medical attention. These data represent one of the most rigorous investigations of gender differences in time use during the forced lockdowns and point toward individual differences that should be considered when designing policies now and post-pandemic. Gender Inequality Index (GII) of UNDP ranks India at 122 out of 162 countries. GII measures gender-based inequalities in three dimensions –

reproductive health, empowerment, and economic activity. In India for every 100,000 live births 174 women died due to pregnancy related problems, women's access to health care remains a big issue. A high adolescent fertility rate of 13.2 births per 1,000 not only means health risks for mother and infant but also points to high school drop-out rates, lower education attainment and child marriage (Gender Development Report).

V. Policy Outcome:

There should be more proactive regional and local approaches in handling the gender disparity occurring in India. Reorienting sustainable development goals into government policies and schemes should be able to target gender inequality as a precursor to food security, livelihood and social justice. There are several government schemes that support Self-help groups that did aid in solving domestic violence and also reported the same. They also have different bank accounts in the name of the female workers the way is done in some NGO's ;whereby only women can deposit and bear the cheque has helped to increase the women credit and accountability of maintain one's own purse. As given this opportunity women are better managers mitigating the economic risks by spending wishfully on their immediate family needs and maintaining accounts. This implies that having the opportunity to borrow from saving groups or access own savings could help stabilize consumption in the face of crises or other disruptions. As it is women had lost financial support and were supported by family and friends to cope with the situation needed financial consultancy and counselling. Except this exerted additional pressure on household consumption due to increased expenses and food consumption is also been managed by women alone. In such situations, formal social protection measures are needed to smooth incomes and restore livelihoods. Secondly; the government needs to implement structural changes in social security schemes that consider packages that are responsive to members' needs during such crises, as an immediate fall-back position. Thirdly; there should be measures to promote and harness the savings and borrowing capacity, especially for low-income earners and rural households. There should be ample opportunities to provide opportunities for borrowing and restoring businesses and livelihoods after a crisis. Alongside, government intervention about female : male ratio highlighting in political campaigns, so that women of this country gets authenticated information of vaccination; health care ,self-earning programmes and vocational training for food security, farming and earning capacities for increased employability. This would help them to identify the research gap coherent in theory and practise with legal assistance and social justice.

VI. Conclusion:

To summarise is to highlight the nuances of the covid times considering the new world order whereby high proportion of women have lost their education and employment. Does this mean they would return in conjunction or by regressive theoretical analysis they would be out of the market; wages; and food security and would be pushed into poverty? This highlights the impact

on gender inequality, specifically on the burden of paid vis-à-vis unpaid work ; where women rushes for unpaid work from paid jobs in order to take care of family members and household care. However, the anxiety is not to create alternate masculine gender ideology similar on the lines of patriarchy; but both men women seeking equality not as subversive and dominant but of harmony. Give this, caution should be taken in utmost details to provide equality in education and making women skill based training so they are never out of funds in employability. As working online should be made mandatory in critical times of the hour with more flexible timing both to men and women. Finally, the new norms of work and related policy, by both the government and the private players should focus on gender mainstreaming where gender perspectives are integrated into the designing, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of policies, rather than addressing these concerns in isolation.

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