



Globalization And Its Impact On Dalit Women: A Case Study Of Thiruvallur District In Tamil Nadu

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ABSTRACT :

This paper examines the globalization and its impacts on Dalit women: A case study of Thiruvallur district in post economic reforms period by using primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data was collected among SC women either working or small hawkers. The secondary data were collected from relevant literature, books, articles and other academic publications. The methodology used for gathering secondary data from literature has been that of the snowballing approach. This study examines the socio-economic conditions of marginalized women, patterns of occupational mobility, influence workers' decision to switch occupations after globalization, impact of institutional factors on the job market. Challenges and constraints for their livelihood, the impact of globalization on the job market and small vendors, analyse equity and efficiency in the job market, the suitable policy measures for ensuring the development of the weaker sections. This paper confirms that globalization is a complex phenomenon. It has a very profound impact on both Indian rural and urban life. The paradox of globalization is that urbanization and rural development have shown remarkable growth but could not reduce poverty and inequality; Dalit women are affected considerably. This paper finds that with the introduction of new farming techniques such as mechanization for harvesting and transplanting, women have lost their traditional work in the agricultural sector. Food crops have been replaced by cash crops. Horticulture has been introduced by big agribusiness corporations for export purposes. This has deprived Dalit women of their land and the common resources in the village.

Introduction :

Globalization refers to a method of economic integration and cross national flows of goods, capital, production and technology. It depends on technological innovations in the area of information technology. (Bordo; Taylor and Williamson 2001). It is a capitalist expansion of imperialism and neo-colonialism. It emerged through territorial division of labour and exploitation of labour and unequal exchange rate. The structural adjustment policy implications and reforms made many countries' self-sufficient economies into crisis (Chalam 2004). Shrinking role of state, privatization of public sectors, no creation of new jobs, high rates of savings, investment and development of new productive forces (Nayyar 2017). The public sector transferred to the rich. The poor, Dalits and women are more vulnerable to get employment in this globalized era due to rigidity labour market and labour market discriminations (Thorat, Madheswaran, Vani 2003; Banerjee and J.B. Knight 1985). The less developed countries with low capital and high interest rates could not compete with imperialist countries. There are inequalities in terms of achievement in the area of creation of technology and diffusion of recent innovations, diffusion of old innovations and human skills (HRD report 2001; Patel 2014). Therefore this study analyses the socio-economic conditions of marginalized women, patterns of occupational mobility and how socio-economic factors influence workers' decision to switch over occupations after globalization, and finds out perceptions of the selected respondents on the impact of institutional factors on the job market. Challenges and constraints for their livelihood, the impact of globalization on the job market and prospective for the small vendors, analyse equity and efficiency in job market, the suitable policy measures for ensuring the development of the weaker sections.

Economic Significance of Women's Role :

Women play a key role in the family. The biological division of roles in the family assumes that generally men engage themselves in productive economic activities outside the household, and women are to be engaged in caring the hearth and home. Usually, any economic value is not attached to the multifarious jobs women perform in the family. In some of the families, women are the breadwinners who sustain the family by toiling whole day inside and outside the household (Agrawal, 1993). The history of rural women's relationship to nature's resources has been marked by a struggle to provide for family subsistence. Women are noted to have been the first farmers, potters and weavers. In hunting gathering societies, childe notes: "to accomplish the Neolithic revolution... womankind had not only to discover suitable plants and appropriate methods for their cultivation but must also devise special implements for tilling the soil, reaping and storing the crop and converting it into foods. Technologies such as the digging stick (used to dig out tubers

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and wild plants, and precursor to the plough), hoe, the saucer shaped stone for grinding grain, baskets and vessels for grain storage, jars, jugs, strainers and beakers for holding water and fermented liquor, the over for baking bread and the loom, are all attributed to women, as are techniques such as hoeing, winnowing, making bread, spinning and weaving, and the chemistry of pot making. "Food gathering itself demanded and elaborated knowledge of food and medicinal properties of plants, fruits and trees-including wild 'reserve' knowledge of edible plants not normally used but critical to tide over prolonged shortage of other foods during climatic disasters." Women collected edible seeds of wild grass ancestral to our wheat and barley, and to them are attributed the decisive step of deliberately sowing such seeds on suitable soil and cultivating the sown land by weeding and other measure. "Indeed it is women's daily activities that are assessed to have sustained the family, male hunting typically being supplementary, less dependable and more risky source of food supply (Bina Agarwal 2001).

Economic reforms and marginalized sections of the Society :

The economic reforms in the form of macro-economic stabilization and structural adjustment programmes of the IMF and World Bank have essentially a pro-rich bias. The SCs/STs in India, being the poorest of the poor have been hit the hardest. Their social disabilities, largely reinforced by and sustained on the economic deprivations, are bound to get accentuated with these policies. (Chalam 2004). The Indian reforms were essentially 'crisis driven' and not 'strategy driven' when they were adopted. There have since been changes in the formation and key persona. The new government for instance has imparted to them a form of 'strategy' through their Common Minimum Programme. However, there has not yet been any evidence of this strategy being any different from the course followed by the previous government. The complete discourse of the Reforms appears to be either grossly off the mark of Indian reality or to assume out its momentous features.

The reform strategy thus should embody sustainable economic empowerment of the rural masses; investments to enhance their capability and effective measures for accelerated development of the disadvantaged sections like the SCs/STs. The pre-requisite to reforms therefore could be the radical land reforms, massive investments in rural areas into agriculture-related infrastructural projects, universalization of primary education, primary health care system and reinforcement of positive discrimination in favour of the SCs/STs (Deshpande2013)

The policy of positive discrimination policy for SCs/STs will have to be reinforced much more vigorously in all sectors of the economy, than ever before. They need to be reframed and simplified for effective implementation.

Table: 1 Opinion of Globalization on employment generation

| | Yes | | No | |
|--|-----|---------|-----|---------|
| | Nos | Percent | Nos | Percent |
| Globalization enhance employment opportunities | 367 | 91.8 | 33 | 8.3 |
| Got Permanent jobs | 156 | 39.0 | 244 | 61.0 |
| Globalization enhance scope for informal jobs | 345 | 86.3 | 55 | 13.8 |
| Globalization enhance more livelihood opportunities | 367 | 91.8 | 33 | 8.3 |

Source: Computed from primary data.

This table depicts the perception of the selected respondents on the impact of globalization towards generation of employment and other development oriented livelihoods in the study area. With regard to the statement that globalization enhance employment opportunities around 91.8 percent of the respondents endorsed the same and 8.3 percent didn't agree with the same .With respect to the statement that got Permanent jobs around 39percent of the respondents endorsed the same and 61 percent didn't agree with the same .With regard to the statement that globalization enhance scope for informal jobs around 86.3 percent of the respondents endorsed the same and 13.8 percent didn't agree with the same .With respect to the statement that globalization enhance more livelihood opportunities around 91.8 percent of the respondents endorsed the same and 8.3 percent didn't agree with the same . It could be inferred from the empirical verification that the majority of the respondents have opined that globalization has enhanced the scope for employment generation in informal jobs, diminish the structural formal jobs and enrich the prospective for livelihood for the semi-skilled workers across the study area. Further, the findings also implied that globalization has escalated the non-farm employment opportunities in the per-urban areas as the externalities of the globalization in the study area.

Job search methods and its implications

Table: 2 Method of job search followed

| Respondents category | Nos | Percent |
|---------------------------|-----|---------|
| Open advertisement | 75 | 18.7 |
| Consultancy | 247 | 61.7 |
| Direct approach | 31 | 7.7 |
| Referral | 33 | 8.3 |
| Campus interview | 15 | 3.7 |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Source: Computed from primary data.

Table. 2 demonstrates the job search methods adopted by the selected respondents in the study area. Nearly 18.7 percent utilized the open advertisement, 61.7 percent used consultancy, 7.7 percent utilized direct approach, 8.3 percent followed referral method and 3.7 followed campus interview, it is apparent from the empirical findings that major chunk of the respondents have utilized the consultancy as this mode entertain the contractual labour method which delink the direct connection between the employer and employees thereby inhibits the statutory provisions to the labour. Moreover, weaker sections use to get underpaid through consultancy as they couldn't access the same through other selection process due to various cultural inhibitions viz caste and domicile etc.

Table: 3 Impact of job search methods on weaker sections

| Response Category | Nos | Percent |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Job uncertainty | 16 | 4 |
| Low paid | 15 | 3.7 |
| No statutory provisions | 12 | 3 |
| No implications of labour law | 13 | 3.3 |
| Corruption | 16 | 4 |
| Under employment | 16 | 4 |
| All the above | 312 | 78 |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Source: Computed from primary data.

Table.3 depicts the impact of the job searching methods on the job profile by the selected respondents in the labour market structure especially towards weaker sections of the society. Nearly 4 percent stated it generates job uncertainty, 3.7 stated low paid, 3 percent opined no statutory provisions, 3.3 percent opined inhibited the implementation of labour law, 4 percent accentuated the rampant corruption, 4 percent opined under employment and 78 percent stated all the above impacts generated by the job search methods. As the 96 percent of the employment generates through informal sectors in the same line, government disinvestment activities diminish the scope for the constitutional protection for the socially economically deprived sections of the society. Thus, new millennium job search methods don't entail any specific protection for the weaker sections as a result of that weaker sections of the society have been struggling in the new mode of labour market.

Work-situation and number of working days:

The peace and tranquility of the work-spot and the efficiency of labourers depends to a considerable extent upon the wage structure and the amenities provided at the field or work-spot. Further the psychological conditions of the women workers are influenced by the situation prevailing at the work-spot.

Table : 4 Reason to choose the current job

| Respondents category | Nos | Percent |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Job uncertainty | 16 | 4 |
| Low paid | 15 | 3.7 |
| No statutory provisions | 12 | 3 |
| No implications of labour law | 13 | 3.3 |
| Corruption | 16 | 4 |
| Under employment | 16 | 4 |
| All the above | 312 | 78 |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Table 4 illustrates the causes that perpetuate the respondents to choose the current job. Nearly 22.3 percent of the respondents were opined that they have Low education qualification hence the opt to choose the job for their livelihood, around 6.7 percent of the respondents have opined that their job oriented to qualification, 26.7 percent of the respondents have revealed that they have been bound to do the work since they don't have any other job, 18.7 percent of the people stated that Friends persuasion is the reason why they became worker and it is not applicable to 14 percent as they yet to find the job. It could be inferred from the empirical investigation that most of the people opt the job since they don't have formal education, as the area known for industrial cluster which facilitate the people to get the job in the study area, in the same line women use to get more informal household jobs in the residential areas and jobs pertaining to housekeeping jobs and other jobs in the companies across the study area. On the whole globalization has enhanced the scope for job opportunities to the women in various companies across the study area.

Table 5 : No of Hours in work per day

| Respondents category | Nos | Percent |
|----------------------|-----|---------|
| 8 hrs | 136 | 34 |
| 9 hrs | 120 | 30 |
| 10 hrs | 89 | 22.3 |
| Depends on the work | 55 | 13.7 |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Source: Computed from primary data.

Table 5 illustrates the working hours engaged by the selected respondents in the study area. Nearly 34 percent of the respondents stated that they use to work for 8 hrs per day, 30 percent of the respondents have opined that they worked for 9 hrs per day, 22.3 percent of the respondents were stated that they are engaging in the work around 10 hrs per day, 13.7 percent of the respondents have stated that they use to depends on the condition of the assignment. Almost all the respondents have opined that hours of the work may vary according to the season of the work, in the same line majority of the women respondents opined that no of working hours is relatively more to them without any specific incentive. However, many respondents stated that they have been working more intensively and for longer periods of time in the workplace which clearly indicate the gender based discrimination existing in the study area.

Table.6 Employment Patterns by Hierarchy

| Response category | Nos | Percentage |
|---------------------|-----|------------|
| Managerial Staff | 3 | 0.7 |
| Supervisory Staff | 28 | 7 |
| Skilled Workers | 104 | 26 |
| Non-Skilled Workers | 209 | 52.3 |
| No Applicable | 56 | 14 |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Source: Computed from primary data.

Table 6 portrays the designation of the selected respondents across the study area. Employees are more concentrated at the lower levels of hierarchy in the organizations. Hence, amongst managers sampled respondents only comprise roughly 0.7 % of employees while at the non-skilled worker level they comprise about 52.3 % which consist of household work and housekeeping work both in companies and other informal jobs, at the supervisory level 7 % comprise whereas 26% percent of the employees constitutes in skilled workers category, This might be because of low level of skill and education amongst the weaker sections viz SC&STs, migrant people from rural areas on account of cultural and opportunity barriers. In addition, this could also be the result of weaker women not pursuing a career and leaving the workforce early on accounts of marriage and household management liabilities further the size of the organization plays a role in the employment of weaker sections at each level of the organization. Smaller companies exhibit lower employment at all levels with no women hired in these firms. As the size of the organization increases, female participation also increases for all levels of the hierarchy including management. On the whole it is apparent from the empirical findings that a major chunk of the workforce comprises semi-skilled and low paid jobs in the study area.

Table. 7 Kind of Difficulties in workplace

| Response category | Nos | Percentage |
|-------------------------------|-----|------------|
| Health problems | 43 | 10.7 |
| Oppression of the supervisors | 31 | 7.7 |
| Forced to work more time | 28 | 7 |
| wage discrimination | 27 | 6.7 |
| Uncertainty of employment | 16 | 4 |
| All above five | 200 | 50 |
| Not applicable | 56 | 14 |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Source: Computed from primary data.

Table 7 explains the kind of difficulties sampled workers has been facing in the study area, 10.7 percent of the respondents have stated that they have health problems. Nearly 7.7 percent of the respondents have opined they have been undergoing lot of oppression from the supervisors ,7 percent of the

respondents have opined that they had been forced to work more than the entitled time schedule, 6.7 percent person faced wage discrimination even among the women workers on the basis of gender, 4 percent of the people stated that uncertainty of employment situation, 50 percent of the respondents have exemplified that they had been facing all the above five problems and it is not applicable to 14 percent as they still searching for the job. Hence it is very apparent from the empirical illustration that women have been undergoing lot of problems in the working area.

Table.8 Experience of the Respondents

| Response category | Nos | Percent |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Up to 2 yrs | 40 | 10 |
| 2yrs -4 yrs | 53 | 13.3 |
| 4yrs-6 yrs | 101 | 25.3 |
| Above 6 yrs | 149 | 37.3 |
| Not applicable | 56 | 14 |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Source: Computed from Primary Survey

Table 8 illustrates the experience of the selected respondents in the current job. Nearly 10 percent of the respondents got the experience up to 2 years, around 13.3 percent of the respondents got the experience between 2 years to 4 years, 25.3 percent got the experience between years to 6 years and 37.3 percent had experience more than 6 years. It could be inferred from the empirical verification that nearly half of the respondents have got the experience more than 5 years and the information regarding the experience pertain to the current job which they are working now as it is essential to assess the work environment in the study area.

Table : 9 Frequency of injury or accidents in workplace

| Response category | Nos | Percentage |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Frequently | 149 | 37.3 |
| Occasionally | 105 | 26.3 |
| Rarely | 36 | 9 |
| Never | 53 | 13.3 |
| Not applicable | 56 | 14 |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Source: Computed from Primary Survey

Table 9 illustrates the opinion of the respondents on the accidents occurring in the workplace in the study area. Around 37.3 percent of the respondents opined that accidents occurred frequently, 26.3 percent stated accidents taken place occasionally, 9 percent revealed rarely accidents occurred in their companies, 13.3 percent of the respondents have stated that accidents never occurred in their workplace, generally accidents related with the protective and precautionary measures taken by the employers. Accidents and injuries were reported to be relatively frequent in the industry. Reported accidents/injuries were, however, relatively minor, e.g. scissor cuts or needle pricks on fingers wound in construction were the most common while sewing machine injuries on fingers were also reported as occupational injuries. Employers were apparently not very keen on implementing safety measures, especially in the construction and other hazardous labourious work. In the companies, about one-third reported occupational safety and protective equipment were being provided. From the responses of the women workers it was quite apparent that employers commonly ignored the stipulation of the labour law regarding occupational safety measures. Among the illnesses most frequently reported, ulcers on hands and coughing were experienced mostly by leather workers. Although it is difficult to say anything conclusively on the basis of just these observations, it certainly raises questions as to whether generally unhygienic workplaces and the inhalation of wool dust were behind the observed frequency of illnesses. In the same manner, fainting incidents were reported by workers but no obvious explanation could be discerned. It could be due to the stress of working to meet production quotas.

Conclusion :

The results from this paper and field work affirmed that globalization has enhanced the scope for employment generation in informal jobs, diminish the structural formal jobs and enrich the prospective for livelihood for the semi-skilled workers across and escalated the non-farm employment opportunities in the peri-urban areas.

The major chunk of the respondents have utilized the consultancy as this mode entertains the contractual labour and no connection between the employer and employees thereby inhibits the statutory provisions to the labour. Moreover, weaker sections use to get underpaid through consultancy as they couldn't access the same through other selection process due to various cultural inhibitions viz caste and domicile etc

As the 96 percent of the employment generated through informal sectors in the same line, government disinvestment activities diminish the scope for the constitutional protection for the socially economically deprived sections of the society. Though globalization has scope for job opportunities for women in various companies across the study area. But, they don't have formal education and skill.

Gender discrimination exists in the companies because women work more intensively and for a longer period of time in the workplace. This study reveals In addition, this could also be the result of weaker women not pursuing a career and leaving the workforce early on accounts of marriage and household management liabilities. Further the size of the organization plays a role in the employment of weaker sections at each level of the organization. Smaller companies exhibit lower employment at all levels with no women hired in these firms. As the size of the organization increases, female participation also increases for all levels of the hierarchy including management. On the whole it is apparent from the empirical findings that a major chunk of the workforce comprises semi-skilled and low paid jobs in the study area. Therefore, the government should have positive discrimination and affirmative policies to provide employment in the private sector with social security.

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