

Unpaid Work and Time Use Patterns of Women Workers in North East India: Special Reference to Tripura

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Ellina Samantroy



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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

APL: Above Poverty Line

BMI: Body Mass Index

BPL: Below Poverty Line

CRSE: Cash Scheme for Rural Employment

CSO: Central Statistical Office

CSW: Commission on the Status of Women

EAS: Employment Assurance Scheme

EC: Executive Committee

FGD: Focus Group Discussion

FUG: Forest User Groups

GDI: Gender Related Development Index

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

GER: Gross Enrolment Ratio

GII: Gender Inequality Index

GOI: Government of India

GPI: Gender Parity Index

HDI: Human Development Index

HDR: Human Development Report

ICDS: Integrated Child Development Scheme

IHDI: Inequality-adjusted Human Development

ILO: International Labour Organisation

JGSY: Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana

JRY: Jawahar Rozgar Yojana

KSY: Kishori Shakti Yojana

LFPR: Labour Force Participation Rate

MEGS: Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme

MGNREGP: Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme

MHRD: Ministry of Human Resource Development

MWCD: Ministry of Women and Child Development

NER: North Eastern Region

NGOs: Non-Governmental Organisations

NREP: National Rural Employment Programme

NSS: National Sample Survey

OECD: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

PMJDY: Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana

RLEGP: Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme

SABLA: Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls

SC: Scheduled Caste

SDG: Sustainable Development Goals

SHRY: Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana

SNA: System of National Accounts

ST: Scheduled Tribes

TUS: Time Use Survey

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

UPSS: Usual, Principal and Subsidiary Status

WPR: Work Force Participation

Preface

The World Employment and Social Outlook Report of the International Labour Organization 2017 reflected on a gender gap in labour market participation of women with exceeding a gap of 50 percentage points in the South Asian region. Women workers participation in the South Asian region is the lowest i.e., below 30 percentage points, compared to the global average of 49 percent. Within the South Asian context, India has witnessed a decline in the female labour market participation from 34.1 per cent in 1999-00 to 27.2 per cent in 2011-12 as per the National Sample Survey Organization. While on one hand, the employment trends for women in India has been discouraging, on the other hand, women's participation in domestic duties has increased which is an important concern from a policy perspective.

The recent Sustainable Development goals 2015 recognized the centrality of women empowerment and gender equality to the elimination of poverty and hunger and the achievement of truly sustainable development. More jobs and quality jobs for women, universal social protection and measures to recognise, reduce and redistribute unpaid care and household work are indispensable to delivering on the new transformative sustainable development agenda, which aims to reduce poverty and inequalities to achieve gender equality and promote inclusive and sustainable growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all (ILO, 2016). One of the main targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is to achieve gender equality as well as to empower women and girls all over the world and to recognize and value unpaid household work and care work through the public services infrastructure and social protection policies and promotion of shared responsibilities within the household and the family.

It is recognized that women's participation in unpaid work has been an obstacle for their participation in paid employment. In India, as well as North East India, the labour force participation of females has been abysmally low with the engagement in household and related activities being one of the prominent reasons. The north eastern region is no exception as it has portrayed tremendous diversity in terms of the cultural norms, ethnicity, geographical area etc. The employment trends in the region have reflected on fluctuations and differing trends. Though the combined average of the North Eastern States portrays a decline in female labour force participation, yet Tripura and Sikkim are two States which show an increase in female labour force participation that demands a systematic investigation.

Particularly, in States like Tripura, though there is an increase in female labour force participation, there has been a corresponding increase in domestic duties participation which is disturbing and demands thorough probing on the nature of employment and employment protection in the region. In this context, the present study tries to analyze the trends of female labour force participation in rural and urban Tripura residing in hills and plains. It also explores the inter-linkages between education and labour market participation of women. Further, the study tries to understand women's unpaid work with a focus on capturing the time distribution patterns of women in their engagement in unpaid work. The study also tries to provide an analysis of the participation of women in employment guarantee programmes and their access to financial institutions. The socio-cultural realities of female are highlighted throughout the study with their constraints being identified for spending most of their time in household and related activities. Finally, there is an attempt to inform governmental policy for improving the lives of female workers in North East, particularly Tripura.

I am sure that, this work will definitely prove a valuable asset in guiding planners, policy makers, social scientists, researchers, civil society organizations and trade unions in improving women's economic participation in the north eastern region and access to social protection coverage. This work will be a contribution to the wide-ranging discourses on declining labour force participation of women and increasing gender gaps in labour market. It will also help the policy makers and academicians to work towards promotion of gender equality and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.



Dr. H. Srinivas
Director General

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

The concept of unpaid work has remained as one of the central themes of the feminist discourses in many parts of the world. Unpaid work has been getting increased attention since the sixties and seventies and thereafter thirty years this issue has been widely discussed at two United Nations World Conferences. In the Social Summit Conference held in Copenhagen, March 1995 and the Fourth World Conference on Women held at Beijing, September 1995 focused on the measurement of valuing unpaid work. The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) first took up the issue on unpaid work in the early seventies and named as the issue of 'family responsibilities of working women' and their double burden (CSW 2013, Resolution 2 XXIII). In 1975, the Mexico Conference addressed the issue on the equity of the sharing of household responsibilities between men and women as well as the role of governments and the society in creating the atmosphere of family and work obligations. However, the approach of the Mexico Conference has caught little attention in the international forums on women's issues. After the Mexican Conference, the second UN World Conference on female held at Copenhagen, 1980 had clearly demarcated that apart from the responsibilities of child care, other basic public facilities and social services like housing, safe water and energy supply also should be put in place. In 1995, in the World Conference on women held at Beijing accepted the means of measurement called time-use survey¹. In the time use survey, women can lists their tasks and time, the time taken to complete the task and also whether the task was paid or unpaid. The advantage of the time use survey is that it has the potential to capture multiple and simultaneous activities, which is important for women who carry out a number of tasks at the same time. Apart from these developments, the goal number 5 of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targeted to end all forms of discrimination against women and girls and to recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as a nationally appropriate (UN women, 2015; Swiebel, 1999). Even the recent report of the ILO has recognized that unpaid and care work are

¹ Time use surveys are quantitative summaries of how individuals allocate their time over a specified time period - typically over 24 hours of a day or over the seven days of a week on different activities and how much time they spend on each of these activities.24 hours of a day or over the seven days of a week on different activities and how much time they spend on each of these activities.

crucial for the future of decent work as it makes a substantial contribution to the economy of a country and individual and social well-being and needs to be adequately addressed particularly in the context of women's secondary status in the labour market (ILO,2018).

However, the declining female labour force participation in India and increasing domestic duties calls for a need to engage in a deeper investigation on women's access to labour market and the burden of unpaid work. The labour force participation of women in India as per the National Sample Survey (NSS) in 2011-12 was estimated as 37.8 percent in rural areas and 22.2 percent in urban areas. On the contrary, the labour force participation for males was 83.5 percent in rural areas and 81 .0 percent in urban areas. However, in the north eastern region the female labour force participation rate (LFPR) was recorded as 27.0 percent in rural areas and 22.7 percent in urban areas as per the 68th round of NSS, 2011-12. On the contrary, the LFPR for males in rural areas was 84.8 percent and 79.9 percent in urban areas (GOI, 2011-12).

In India, mostly women workers are undercounted or invisible in National Accounting Statistics. Some studies on estimating workforce by using time use statistics in India, have discussed that even though there have been considerable efforts in the estimation of accurate data on work force in India, still the size of the workforce particularly the female workforce is underestimated. The major reasons have been, women were majorly engaged in the activities which are seasonal, intermittent and uncertain and work as unpaid workers on family farms/enterprises or in other informal activities (Hirway 1999). Most often the household work and their economic work get mixed and is difficult to demarcate between the two at the conceptual level. At the operational level also it is difficult to assess their work due to the methodological issues. Secondly; the existing socio-cultural values in many developing countries hinder them to involve themselves in the paid employment outside the home. Thirdly; the investigators are tend to be biased in the inclusion of women's work, they count it as the household work.

There are many studies which have already discussed the problems related to female workforce all over India. However, there is not enough evidence which reveals that there is any improvement in the conditions of the female labour when compared with men. In many parts of the country, still there are wide variations in the wage structure of women and men. Mostly, women spend ample amount of time in household and related activities which at the same time is very tedious and is considered as unproductive. These structural problems continue to persist mainly because of cultural and social norms that have institutionalized housework for women since

times immemorial. Further, the intersections of caste, gender, geographical location, ethnicity etc have a significant impact on women's labour market choices and preferences.

In this context, the next section discusses about women's participation in paid and unpaid work in the North Eastern region.

1.2 Participation of Women in Employment in North Eastern Region (NER): A Brief Review

Most of the studies conducted in India on the participation of female in the employment, have highlighted that the female labour force have been engaging in multiple tasks which are mostly invisible and unpaid. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report (HDR), nowhere in the world women enjoy equal opportunity than men, even though many countries have adopted measures to attain gender equality (HDR, 2005).

The studies which have reflected on the relationship between employment, education and poverty have analysed that one of the reasons of declining female labour force participation is, the increasing rate of educated women in the rural areas. Neff et al (2012) discussed that, there is a declining trend in the workforce participation in all age groups due to the education effect; however, it majorly affects the workforce participation in the age group of 15-24. It is identified that, there is an increase in the number of women pursuing higher education in the rural areas. The authors pointed out that even though there is an increase in the rate of the education level of the urban female there has not been a decline in the workforce. India has one of the lowest urban LFPR for women in the world. The authors discussed that, the National Sample Survey (NSS) data for the last 25 years revealed that, the poverty among the women is not the reason for their low rate of labour force participation. In India, while comparing the developed countries, the age groups in between 15-24 are considered as eligible for work, in the real sense are the school going population. Their study reflected on the fact that, income and education growth has a positive effect on female participation, however, the education of their spouse have a negative effect and there is a discrimination against the women in terms of their entry in to the workforce. There are studies which have discussed the relationship between the labour force participation and the structure of the economy (Bhalla and Kaur, 2011). The definition of workforce participation in India also changed with the structure of the economy. The authors mentioned that in the 2001 Census, for the first time, the activities of female like milk production even for purely household consumption was included in the economic activity in India. This Census also tried to ensure that either the

male or female who take care of the cattle are also included in the category of 'worker' according to the 2001 Census Report. After this attempt, the female work participation rates in many states have increased in India. According to the author, it is a difficult task to conceptualise women's work due to the economic invisibility and compulsory nature of the work performed by the women and is expected to fulfill, especially in the case of India (Kalita, 2012). Das et al (2015) examined the determinants of female work participation rate (WPR) in India in the context of one of the countries which have lowest female labour force participation. They conducted a household based study all over India and stated that while many studies have looked in to how demographic characteristics and educational attainment affect the labour force participation of women their study concentrated on the analysis of how labour market rigidities affect female labour force participation as well as the drivers of formal and informal sector employment. The study identified that there is a large gap in the labour force participation rates in between men and women.

The economic participation of women is important not only for lowering the levels of poverty but also raising their household income and encouraging economic development. Though, it is also important to understand the quality of employment available for women. The main challenge is that women may easily avail jobs, but mostly it is underpaid or is an unskilled one. Generally, they tend to be in the job which being lowest paid have limited or no opportunities for advancement in future.

Some studies have put forward the argument that, there is a clear cut demarcation between the rate of female workforce participation in urban and rural areas, in terms of wage rate and other socio-cultural aspects. The work participation rates for women in rural India has witnessed a decline though in urban areas there was a marginal increase as reported by the Employment and Unemployment Surveys. In the urban areas almost 80 percent of the female work force are in the unorganised sector like household industries, petty trades and services, buildings and construction (Pegu, 2015). The reason for the backwardness in female workforce participation apart from their reproductive roles and responsibilities are their engagement in religious rituals, kinship ties and celebrating festivals etc. It is also a reason that their lack of autonomy in decision making about their work. Such engagements are peculiar to the North Eastern Region (NER) and women generally tend to spend ample amount of their time in ritual practices (Chatterjee, 1989; Banerjee, 1998). The wage rates and payment patterns in India differ widely across the country. The division of labour on gender lines has serious implications for earnings of men and women. The legislature has enacted civil and criminal laws to specifically address issues that might hinder productive work or availability of

employment opportunities. Despite the presence of various legislations that cover specific aspects of equality it cannot be denied that there is a need of an all-encompassing anti-discrimination law and suitable policies that would extensively address the varied dimensions of inequality (Mishra, 2013). There is a specific demarcation among gender in the employment pattern in the agricultural sector in the rural areas, due to the reason which they hold across cultures and regions. Among them the major reason are the engagement in household activities and child rearing that compel them to engage more in the self-employment activities rather than high income earning activities. The occupational segregation of women in to low technology embodied activities limits them to find opportunities in high skilled activities which hinder their professional development. There is a clear cut demarcation of wage gap in urban labour market too, that women are paid less even for the equivalent jobs and comparable levels of education and experience (State of Food and Agriculture and Doss, 2011).

India has undergone tremendous changes in the last few years. In terms of economic growth and urbanization and increase in the level of education and declining fertility rates. The main challenge of women's engagement in economic activities is influenced by both the family and the market forces (Lahoti and Swaminathan, 2013). High work participation rate and poverty are more correlated than the work participation rate and economic well-being. In rural areas, even if the women are employed as the agricultural labourers, they still have to work on their own land to meet their needs. The main reason behind that they are being discriminated to get an equal wage to men. On a study based on household survey in India revealed the fact that women are facing double burden as a result of their compulsory participation as a wage earners and the household activities. Factors like income earnings would be calculated with the economic participation of a women and the low work participation would be termed as gender backwardness (Rustagi, 2000).

Studies in the north eastern region have clearly brought out the issue of unpaid labour as prevalent in the region. The workforce participation in the north eastern region among men shows an increasing trend when compared to female. The overall trends of the WPR registered an increasing trend; however, the overall WPR of females had increased in 1991 and 2001 but remained stagnant in the year 2011. The WPR of the main workers² among men has declined, but the marginal workers are increased during the last three decades. As far as the female WPR is

² Main Workers are those workers who had worked for the major part of the reference period i.e. 6 months or more. Marginal Workers are those workers who had not worked for the major part of the reference period i.e. less than 6 months (Census of India).

concerned, it has increased in between 1981 and 1991 and declined in between 1991 and 2001 but again shows an increasing trend in between the year 2001 2011. The female WPR among the marginal workers shows a declining trend in 2011 (Das, 2013; Pegu, 2015). The factors which decide the WPR among women in north east India are that the socio-cultural factors like family, caste, region and environment etc. Some of the studies in the NER have clearly emphasized as also reflected in the Human Development Report of the northeastern states, women in this region are in the backward position compared to men (Mahanta and Nayak, 2013). Women have been the victims of poverty, unemployment, exploitations, inequality even though they have been the major contributors in the economy. They have been lacking adequate microfinance, infrastructure, training and development for any kind of skill development activities. However, women in NER have been enjoying greater mobility and economic control over their labour than women in any part of India. Due to the unfavorable customary laws, and the lack of conceptual clarity of their economic activities, most of them are engaged in the unpaid work (Singh and Sinha, 2013).

Some other studies in the NER have tried to understand the capturing of women's work through Time Use Surveys. There are issues such as socio-cultural constraints and overburden of work in the household preponderance and forest related work that pulls women back from the labour market economy. Such issues need to be carefully studied by using the time use survey method (Samantroy, 2012). The north eastern state of India has been considered as the one of the most backward region in terms of the growth of per-capita income. However, there is a general belief that the status of the women in this region is high when we compare the status of women in all India average. The creation of gainful employment opportunities is a serious issue in NER, because this region is still an agricultural based economy with low industrial growth, lack of infrastructure, high dependency on public sector employment, political insurgency and violence and negligence by the centre and respective state government towards the overall development of this region (Das, 2013). The women workers in NER are mostly engaged in the agricultural activities and their share has increased overtime. The share of women workers has increased from 27.8 percent in 1993-94 to 35 percent in 2004-05. However, the share of women workers in non-farm activities has declined from 19 percent to 17.9 percent at the same time period. Within the non-farm activities, high proportions of women are engaged in manufacturing and community based services. The general education attainment trends among the women workers are low when

compared to their male counterparts. Thus the entry in to the non-farm sectors became difficult for the women in the recent years (Sahu, 2012).

With regard to the employment status and engagement in the household activities of women in the north east districts, Shimray (2004), discussed that in Naga society household economic activities consists of both market and non-market production meant for household consumption. It was found that, many women who were working outside home did not help them to get away from household duties. Even though, women have started engaging in many traditionally male dominated areas of work like construction work, they still had to concentrate in the household activities like caring for children, sick and elderly people. In Manipur, amongst the rural labourers, most of them were engaged in agriculture and cultivation such as transplanting, weeding applying fertilizers and harvesting. In the urban areas, women workers were primarily a part of the unorganized sector as household industries, petty trade and services and construction works etc. (Sinha, 2013) Women in Arunachal Pradesh are engaged both in the economic and non-economic activities. They are not only engaged in cultivation and other agricultural activities but also in the household activities and religious functions. Due to the resultant economic development urbanization and growth of education, a large section of them are engaged in the activities like producing and selling of fruits and vegetables, weaving and selling of handloom products, selling of domestic animals and birds in the market and some run shops and small enterprises. Apart from this, they also perform various household works such as child care, food preparation, beer preparation, fetching water, collecting fuel wood etc. Even though they work very hard inside and outside the family their status is comparatively low (Lama, 2013). The Khasi women from Meghalaya have been traditionally engaged in the economic activities such as trading and commercial ventures. They have been working both for livelihood and household activities at the same time. They always try to find out new ventures outside their homes and be more independent. In the Naga society, even though the spread of Christianity and modern education have played a remarkable role, the customary laws, still prevails in the society and specific role in the life of the people. In the traditional Naga society, females supposedly stay inside the home and the men were engaged in economic activities. However, the studies show that the female in the Naga society have contributed significantly in the society as well as household activities. However, their contribution have never been recognized properly (Shadap, 2013; Ngullie, 2013). Singh and Sinha (2013) in their study based on Cachar district in Assam discussed that the females who are educated are more aware about various facilities provided by the government and non-governmental organizations which

helps the overall development of the society. Moreover, the females who are educated are more concerned about their health and they enjoy more freedom than the others.

There are studies, which have highlighted on the female labour force participation in different sectors in Tripura. In Tripura, most of the tribal communities are dependent upon agriculture and the less employment opportunities compel them to concentrate in the unorganized sector (Darlong, 2013). Ray (2014) argued that even though tribal female are actively engaged in the productive work they are not getting treated as they are in economic activity. Saha and Kalita (2015) observed that the limitations to create economic opportunities and lack of support to take care of children are the main factors which negatively affect the female participation in the labour force. Dasgupta and Sudarshan (2011) and Panda (2016), discussed the role of MGNREGP in the creation of employment opportunities in Tripura. They argued that, MGNREGP created the person days of work for women which have been greater than the set forth 33 percent working days in Tripura. All of the studies discussed so far, have analysed various reasons of the declining female labour force participation in India. These studies have clearly discussed that one of the major reason behind the declining labour force participation in India is the less involvement of the male counterparts in the household activities. However, as (Budlender, 2010) pointed out, housework (unpaid care work) occurs in homes and communities which has not been discussed with its seriousness by many of the development actors. In this context, time use survey can be used as a better tool to analyse the engagement of women in paid as well as unpaid activities. This will help to reach in to a better analysis of various dimensions of household activities such as, the duration of the female/male workers engaged in unpaid/paid activities, kind of activities they are engaged, the assistance received in the household work etc.

1.3 Context of the Study

The NSS reports that the share of women in the labour force participation have been declined over years and the share of rural female labour force participation has been declining considerably across the country. Interestingly, in Tripura the paid as well as unpaid female labour force have been showing an increasing trend at the same time unlike rest of the north eastern states in India. As per the National Sample Survey various rounds, female labour force participation (15-59 age group) in Tripura has increased from 20.8 percent in 2004-05 to 32.2 percent in 2009-10 and further to 39.6 percent in 2011-12 but most of the women

have remained as marginal workers.³The present study is contextualised within the backdrop of declining labour force participation and women's increasing unpaid work. The study is based in Tripura as a state that has shown an increase in female labour force participation and an increase in unpaid work, particularly domestic duties. The study tries to analyse the recent labour market trends as well as the relationship between education and employment in Tripura. It also attempts to understand the situation of unpaid work particularly women's contribution to unpaid work and access to paid employment in Tripura. The study also provides an insight into the gender and social protection through examining women's access to social protection. The major objectives of this study are as follows;

1.4 Objectives

- To examine the socio-economic profile of women in NER
- To understand the dynamics of women's employment in North East and specifically in Tripura.
- To explore the relationship between education and labour force participation.
- To analyse the constraining factors for women's participation in paid employment.
- To understand women's unpaid work within the context of household division of labour thereby exploring the role of cultural practices, social norms, caste affiliations, and ethnic identities.
- To examine women's access to the existing social protection provisions including employment guarantee schemes and analyze the impact of same on women's lives.
- To reflect on appropriate policy for promoting women's employment and well-being.

1.5 Methodology and Data Source

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. The secondary data was collected from books, journals, periodicals, and official records (Official website of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2016-17), published government reports including (Annual Report (2006), Ministry of Child and Development), Census (2011), National Sample Survey (NSS) various rounds the Time-Use reports of Central Statistical Office (CSO), World Development Report (2012) and various ILO documents. The NSS data for employment estimates of the

³ As reported in NSS surveys various years

15-59 age group and the concept of Usual (Principal subsidiary) status has been taken into consideration across various rounds of the NSS. Since the study is based on the north eastern state, Tripura separate estimates for the region has been taken through NSS unit level data which was used to generate information from a more disaggregated level.

The primary data was collected from both the urban city and rural villages of Tripura for comparability. According to 2011 Census, Agartala city constituted 400,004 numbers of total urban population and Laxmibil is the largest village (with highest number of population of 9,046) in West Tripura. Dhalai district has the highest population (377,988) in the hilly region, in which urban city Manu CT has of 8,515 population and Purba Nalichera has 9258 population which are the highest in numbers. The cases were selected on the basis of the population and the total number of households. The data was collected by using simple random sampling through questionnaires and Time Use Survey. According to the 2011 census, the number of households in Agartala was 90, 000, among them 200,132 were males and 199, 872 were females. Laxmibil district is 2129, out of which 4669 were males and 4377 were females. Dhalai is the largest district of Tripura. In Dhalai there are 5 Development Block (Salema, Manu DB, Ambassa, Chhamanu and Dumburnagar). Among them one rural village and one urban town were selected on the basis of the highest number of households namely; Purba Nalichera village (2204 households) and Ambassa District Block and Manu CT town (1986 households) from Manu District Block. The target group in the survey focused on, one adult female and one adult male (15-59 years of age group) in a family. Information was also collected regarding other members of the family such as, children, in-laws, parents etc. Primary data was also collected from the members from Non-Governmental Organisations and Panchayat through focused group discussions (FGDs). The sample included total 250 households with a distribution of 175 households from urban areas and 75 households from the rural areas of Tripura. Based on the primary survey, 47.3 percent of the rural villages were having more than 4 members and 21.6 percent of the urban districts were having more than 4 members in their family.

1.6 Time Diary used in the Study

As a part of the present study, women respondents were provided with time use charts/time dairies to note down their various activities on 5 days in a week. This includes a time-use chart for a working day, and weekends were excluded. Time use statistics are important indicators to analyze women's contribution and time spent in activities like fetching water, fuel, firewood, forest produces etc. in hilly and mountainous regions like the

NER. The 24-hour time use chart with time slots of 30 minutes each was provided to capture all activities in the day⁴. This study has also tried to make use of context variables such as ‘where the activity was performed’, ‘for whom the activity was performed’, and if the activity was paid or unpaid and if they received any assistance from someone in carrying out the task. Such context variables have the potential to capture the multiple and simultaneous activities of female, and in what contexts they multitask. The time diaries have enabled an understanding of the differential time allocation patterns of females engaged in different sectors, specifically with regard to time spent on unpaid and care work and time spent on forest and related activities.

1.7 Socio-Economic Profile

This section provides an overview of the socio-economic profile of the respondents which includes, age, income distribution of the family, marital status, household size (type, women and children), poverty line and religion

1.7.1 Age

Sex	Age						Total
	15-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-59	NA**	
Female	1(0.4)	81(32.4)	87(34.8)	51(20.4)	30(12)	0(0)	250(100)
Male	1(0.4)	28(11.2)	101(40.4)	61(24.4)	52(20.8)	7 (2.8)	250(50)
Total	2(0.4)	109(21.8)	188(37.6)	112(22.4)	82(16.4)	7(1.4)	500(100)

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

N==500

*Figures in parenthesis show percentage, calculated from the total number of respondents.

** NA is the Missing Male Population.

The above table (1.1) shows the age profile of the women and the men respondents. According to the table, among women, highest percentage of respondents (34.8 percent) were from the age group of 31-40 years followed by the age group of 21-30 (32.4 percent). The highest percentage of male members were also from the age group of 31-40 (40.4 percent), and

⁴ The Classification of activities is followed from the Time Use Statistics (1998- 99) conducted in India had a three fold activity classification drawn from UN-SNA 1993 that classifies various activities as the following: (I)*System of National Accounts (SNA) Activities*: Primary Production Activities, Secondary Activities and Trade, business and Service which are purely economic activities. (II)*Extended SNA Activities* include Household Maintenance, Management and Shopping for Own Household, Care for children, the sick, elderly and disabled for own household, Community Services and Help to other Households. (III) *Non-SNA Activities* include Learning, Social and Cultural Activities, Mass Media, etc. personal care and self-maintenance

the second highest percentage of respondents were from the age group of 41-50 years of age (24.4 percent). The third highest percentage of the women respondents were in the age group of 41-50 years and the male respondents were in between 51-59 years of age group.

1.7.2 Income Distribution

Place	Monthly Income						Total
	>5000	5000-10000	10000-20000	20000-30000	30000-40000	<40000	
Rural	1(1.3)	26(34.7)	32(42.7)	10(13.3)	3(4)	3(4)	75(100)
Urban	18(10.3)	14(8)	14(8)	33(18.9)	40(22.9)	56(32)	175(100)
Total	19(7.6)	40(16)	46(18.4)	43(17.2)	43(17.2)	59(23.6)	250(100)

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

*Figures in parenthesis show percentage, calculated from the total number of respondents.

The table above (1.2) shows the percentage of the respondents belonging to different income groups in the family in rural and urban Tripura. It is found that, there is a sharp contrast in between rural and urban Tripura while comparing their monthly income status of the family. In rural Tripura, highest percentage of respondents belonged to the monthly income group of Rs.10000-20,000 (42.7 percent) followed by the monthly income group of Rs.5000-10,000 (34.7 percent). Only 13.3 percent belonged to the income group of Rs 20000-30,000 .While comparing rural Tripura with urban Tripura, the highest percentage of respondents belonged to the monthly income group of Rs. <40,000 (32 percent) and the second highest percentage of respondents belonged to the monthly income group of Rs.30000-40,000 (22.9 percent). The striking fact is that the percentage belonging to the lowest monthly income group of the family (less than 5000) were also comparatively high (10.3 percent) in urban Tripura.

1.7.3 Poverty Line Household Distribution

Place	APLBPL				Total
	APL	BPL	NA**	No Response	
Rural	64(43.2)	81(54.7)	2(1.4)	1(0.7)	148(100)
Urban	302(87)	45(13)	0	0	347(100)
NA**	0	0	5(100)	0	5(100)
Total	366(73.2)	126(25.2)	7(1.4)	1(0.2)	500(100)

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

*Figures in parenthesis show percentage, calculated from the total number of respondents.

**NA is the Missing Male Population.

Note: APL (Above Poverty Line), BPL (Below Poverty Line).

The above table (1.3) shows that in rural Tripura, highest percentage of the respondents belonged to the BPL family (54.7 percent) and 43.2 percent of the respondents belonged to the APL family. Contrastingly, in Urban Tripura, 87 percent of the respondents were from the APL family and only 13 percent of the respondents are in the BPL family.

1.7.4 Marital Status

Sex	Marital Status				Total
	Married	Unmarried	Widow	NA**	
Female	239(95.6)	9(3.6)	2(0.8)	0(0)	250(100)
Male	241(96.4)	2(0.8)	0(0)	7(2.8)	250(100)
Total	480(96)	11(2.2)	2(0.4)	7(1.4)	500(100)

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

*Figures in parenthesis show percentage, calculated from the total number of respondents.

** NA is the Missing Male Population

The above table (1.4) shows the marital status of the total respondents where total female members who were married among the respondents were (95.6 percent) while it was 96.4 percent in the case of male respondents. The total female respondents who were unmarried were higher (3.6 percent) than the male respondents (0.8 percent).

1.7.5 Household Type, Size, Women and Children

Place	Family Type	Place			Total
		Rural	Urban	NA**	
	Traditional	58(39.2)	48(13.7)	0	106(21.2)
	Nuclear	89(60.13)	299(85.5)	0	388(77.6)
	NA	1(0.67)	0	5(100)	6(1.2)
	Total	148(100)	347(100)	5(100)	500(100)

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

*Figures in parenthesis show percentage, calculated from the total number of respondents.

**NA is the Missing Male Population.

The table above (1.5) shows the details of the type of the family of the respondents. In rural Tripura highest percentage of the respondents belonged to nuclear family (60.1 percent) than the traditional family type (39.2 percent). It is evident that even though there is no greater variation appearing, yet, the type of the family is gradually shifting from traditional

to nuclear in rural Tripura. However, in urban Tripura, it showed that, there is a huge variation in the percent of respondents belonging to nuclear and traditional type of family; here, 85.4 percent of the respondents belonged to the urban family type and only 13.7 percent of the respondents belonged to the traditional family.

Place	Table 1.6: Number of Family Members						Total
	1	2	3	4	<4	NA	
Rural	0	0	24(16.2)	52(35.1)	70(47.3)	2(1.4)**	148(100)
Urban	1(0.28)	31(9)	153(44.1)	87(25.1)	75(21.6)	0	347(100)
NA**	0	0	0	0	0	5(100)	5(100)
Total	1(0.2)	31(6.2)	177(35.4)	139(27.8)	145(29)	7(1.4)	500(100)

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

*Figures in parenthesis show percentage, calculated from the total number of respondents.

**NA is the Missing Male Population.

The above table (1.6) shows the number of family members of the respondents in rural and urban Tripura. In rural Tripura, 47.3 percent of the respondents had more than 4 members in their family and 35.1 percent of the respondents' had 4 members in their family. However, in urban Tripura, 44.1 percent of the respondents had 3 members in their family; 25.1 percent had 4 members in their family and 21.6 percent had more than 4 members in their family.

Place	Table 1.7: Number of Female Members in the Family					Total
	Female					
	1	2	3	<3	NA**	
Rural	24(16.2)	45(30.4)	36(24.3)	41(27.7)	2(0.4)	148(100)
Urban	110(31.7)	166(47.8)	49(14.1)	22(6.3)	0	347(100)
NA**	0	0	0	0	5(100)	5(100)
Total	134(26.8)	211(42.2)	85(17)	63(12.6)	7(1.4)	500(100)

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

*Figures in parenthesis show percentage, calculated from the total number of respondents.

**NA is the Missing Male Population.

The table above (1.7) shows the number of the female members in the respondent's family. In rural Tripura 30.40 percent of the respondents had only 2 female members in their family followed by 27.7 percent had more than 3 female members and 24.3 percent had 3 female members in their family. In urban Tripura, as in rural Tripura, highest percent of the respondents (47.8) had only 2 female members in their family followed by 31.7 percent which had only 1 female member and 14.1 percent had 3 female members in their family.

Table 1.8: Number of Children in the Family

	1	2	3	4	<4	NA**	No Children	No Response	
Rural	44(29.7)	66(44.6)	15(10.1)	7(4.7)	2(1.4)	3(2)	7(4.7)	4(2.70)	148(100)
Urban	174(46.5)	71(20.5)	20(5.8)	6(1.7)	0	3(0.9)	73(21)	0	347(100)
NA**	1(0.0)	0	0	0	0	4(0.80)	0	0	5(100)
Total	219(43.8)	137(27.4)	35(7)	13(2.6)	2(0.4)	10(2)	80(16)	4(0.8)	500(100)

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

*Figures in parenthesis show percentage, calculated from the total number of respondents.

** NA is the Missing Male Population.

The table above (1.8) shows the number of children of the respondents. In rural Tripura highest percent of respondents had 2 children in their family (44.6 percent) followed by 29.7 percent had only 1 child, 10.1 percent had 3 children, 4.7 percent had 4 children in their family. Contrastingly, in urban Tripura the highest percent of respondents had only 1 child in their family (46.5) followed by 20.5 percent who had 2 children and 5.8 percent who had 3 children in their family.

1.7.6 Religion and Household Distribution

Table 1.9: Sex wise Distribution-Religion

Sex	Religion					Total
	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Buddhist	NA**	
Female	230(92)	2(0.8)	3(1.2)	15(6)	0	250(100)
Male	225(90)	2(0.8)	3(1.2)	13(5.2)	7 (2.8)	250(100)
Total	456(91.2)	4(0.8)	6(1.2)	28(5.6)	6(1.2)	500(100)

Source: Primary Survey, (2017). *Figures in parenthesis show percentage, calculated from the total number of respondents. ** NA is the Missing Male Population.

The table above shows the details of the respondents belonging to different religious groups. Highest percent of the respondents, both the female and male, were majorly concentrated in the Hindu religion (92 and 90 percent respectively). There was a sharp variation in the concentration of the respondents from other religions. Among the other religions, the female respondents from Buddhist religion constituted 6 percent among the females and 5.2 percent among the males. The representations of both the Christian and Muslim religion were equal among the female and male respondents (1.2 percent and 0.8 percent each).

1.8 Outline of the Study

The second chapter examines the relationship between women's education, employment and the labour market trends in North East India particularly

Tripura by using both the primary as well as secondary data. The secondary literature discusses that, the total female labour participation in the north east has been showing a declining trend especially in the rural areas. It has many reasons; due to the increase in income of the household, due to shrinking activities of men in the household, less effective social security programmes and other socio-cultural reasons. The third chapter analyses the unpaid work of the women in Tripura by using the Time Use Survey. This chapter looked at the major household activities of the female in rural and urban Tripura. It also tried to analyse the assistance received from the family members, their preference of work, the reasons of their preference to work inside and outside the family and the engagement of the female and male members in SNA, Ext-SNA and Non-SNA activities.

The fourth chapter discusses the social protection measures and the involvement of female in the social protection schemes. The chapter looked at the participation of female members in the MGNREGP scheme. It also tried to analyze the duration of the female respondents participated in MGNREGP activities and the relation relationship between the socio-economic factors such as age, education and caste and the participation of female in MGNREGP.

The Fifth chapter provides a summary of the major findings of the study with a focus on some policy measures that need to be adopted for the improvement of female labour market participation in Tripura.

Chapter 2

Women's Education and Employment in North East India- An Overview of Labour Market Trends in Tripura

2.1 The Context

The employment trends of women in India have shown a decline over a period of time which raises serious concerns on continuance of women in the labour market. The NER is not an exception, since the female labour force participation in many of the north eastern states have declined, though few states have reported an increase. The female labour force participation in India as recorded in National Employment and Unemployment Surveys conducted by the National Sample Survey Office shows female labour force participation fell in rural areas from 126.49 million in 2004-05 to 106.2 million in 2009-10 which further declined to 103.6 million in 2011-12. In urban areas, there was a decline in female labour force participation from 26.50 million in 2005-0 to 24.2 million in 2009-10, though there was a marginal increase to 28.8 million in 2011-12 (Samantroy and Khurana, 2015). The paradox is that, in the Indian context of development in these years, India has experienced high average annual growth of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) around 8 per cent (WDR, 2012). It was expected that the rate of increase in GDP ultimately lead to the creation of new employment opportunities and reduce the disparity in the society. As far as the north eastern states are concerned, none of the states except Sikkim comes under the category of least developed HDI. No state could score the HDI of equal to or above 0.5. The HDI value for the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland and Tripura are 0.32, 0.24, 0.28, 0.32, 0.26 and 0.27 respectively. Here, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram are in better position, while considering the states Tripura, it is slightly better than Assam (Bhagowati, 2012). In this context, while considering the labour force participation rates (LFPR) registered an increase in all the states of north eastern region in the period of 1994-2005. However, in the period of 2005 -12, most of the north eastern states started showing varying degrees of declining trend in LFPR. The urban areas of Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura as well as the rural areas of Tripura and Sikkim showed a slight increase in the LFPR in the same period. There was a significant variation in rural-urban and male female differences; First, in all the north eastern states, the rural LFPR is higher than the urban LFPR and second, in both

the rural and urban areas, the female LFPR is lesser than the male LFPR (Sahu and Kumar, 2017).

However, various arguments have been put forth on the declining labour force participation in the country (including increasing educational attainment, increase in household level incomes etc.) (Chowdhury, 2011; Rangarajan et al., 2011; Thomas 2012). Some of the arguments have referred to a U-shaped relationship between educational level and LFPR, i.e., with rising educational level, the labour force participation of rural female declines and rises significantly with a university degree (Neff et al, 2012). In case of urban India as reported by some scholars on the income effect and labour force participation have emphasised that, rising male income and education have reduced female labour force participation rate. As female labour mobility is very low (and most migration of female happens for marriage reasons), local excess supply of educated workers causes many educated women to withdraw from the labour force. This is related to shifts in the sectoral employment structure towards employment that is less acceptable to educated female (Klasen and Peters, 2013). Valorization of domestic activities and stigmatisation of paid work among women by the patriarchal society limits their choice to domestic activities rather than paid work. The quest for social status and social mobility, with rising incomes, seems to be associated with domestication of women and discouragement of women's participation in the labour market (Abraham, 2013). However, the statistical invisibility of female's work in National Accounting Statistics has also been highlighted by many scholars (Hirway, 2012; Hirway and Jose, 2011; Jain, 2008).

While reflecting at the development indicators and the initiation of employment generation policies, some scholars have pointed out that inspite of the declining fertility rates from 3.9 in 1990 to 3.1 in 2000 to 2.6 in 2011 which would have been an imperative of the growth of female labour force participation in the labour market, not much improvement has been made. Further, the flagship employment generation programme from rural areas under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (MGNREGP) in the year of 2005 has also not contributed significantly to the increase in female labour force participation (Kapsos et al., 2014).

Some studies in the NER have reflected on differential dimensions of female education and its relationship with labour market participation. Based on their research on female education and work participation in the Dhemji district of Assam, Goswami et.al, (2008) pointed out that women

have very little access to education and majority of women had education up to primary level and below. Their level of education is directly proportionate to their share of main workers. One of the reasons for less diversification of occupational structure of female workers in Dhemji district was related to family and domestic responsibilities, women preferred to work closer to their homes. On the basis of an analysis of the time use patterns of women and men, some studies highlighted that men's responsibility of household activities is shrinking. At the same time, women's work responsibilities are expanding, including activities like caring for children, sick and elderly persons, knitting and weaving (Shimray, 2004). The transformation of the agrarian economy from collective/subsistence to individual/commercial agriculture has turned women in many of these communities into peasants without land rights, while increasing their overall work burden (Mishra, 2007).

In this context, the present chapter tries to understand the trends of education and employment in the NER, particularly the state of Tripura which has experienced an increase in female labour force participation. The chapter also focuses on the sectoral participation of north eastern women in employment and their status as workers with specific focus on Tripura. The chapter provides an overview of the economic activities where women are engaged as workers on the basis of primary survey conducted among women in the working age population (15-59 age groups) in Tripura and tries to understand the factors that hinder them from participating in paid employment.

2.2 Education and Employment Scenario in North East India

The relationship between education and employment has been quite contradictory in nature. With increasing levels of education for women, there has not been corresponding increase in labour market participation. Some of the debates on inter-linkages between education and labour market have argued that in India's recent growth experience a major part of the labour force participation among women has been declined due to the increased enrolment of girls in schools (Mehrotra et al., 2014; Rangarajan; Kaul, and Seema, 2011; Rangarajan, Seema, and Vibeesh, 2012). Rawal and Saha (2015) analysed that, due to the low level of education and technical training, women remain marginalised from the limited employment opportunities that are available. According to the authors, there is a huge deficit in terms of formal education and training among the women workers. In the year of 2011-12, only 0.66 percentage of the rural female workers and around 7.6 percentage of the urban female workers had secondary school education and some technical training. Among the manufacturing sector workers, only

0.14 percentage of the rural female workers and 2.14 percentage of the urban female workers had secondary education and some technical qualification. Studies in the NER on the relationship between education and employment have discussed that after globalization even though, the literacy rate of some north eastern states have increased than the national average, (India 74.08 percent Female 65.46 percent- Male 82.14 percent) while the literacy rate of Manipur is 79.85 percent (Female 73.17 percent-Male 86.49 percent); Mizoram-91.58 percent, Nagaland- 80.11 percent and Tripura-87.75 percent. it has not translated into employability or productivity (Krishnan and Devi, 2014). The slow growth of industrialization and the limited capacity of the labour force to engage in the economic activities denotes high rate of unemployment/underemployment. In a study by Dhar (2015), on gender inequality in education, health and employment in North-East India, it was discussed that the eight sister states of North East India practice different levels of inequalities in education, employment and health based on gender. This study pointed out that, as per the Census 2011, nearly 50 percent of population of all the north east states are females.

The Economic Survey 2012-13 reported that about gender inequality in education in Tripura compared to all other states of north east is in the middle level ie; 8.8 (Female 82.7 and male 91.5). The gender wise analysis of Gross Enrollment Ratio by the Economic Survey 2012-13, till class VIII revealed the fact that, compared to all other north east states, Tripura, has not shown much difference in the enrollment ratio in the age group of 6 to 10 years (Boys 134.9 percent, girls 133.3 percent), 11 to 13 years (Boys 92.2 percent, girls 91.5 percent) and 6 to 13 years (Male 116.0 percent, Female 114.7 percent) (GoI, 2012-13). The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) shows that, there is a decreasing trend in terms of enrollment between men and women in the higher education level. In Tripura, the enrollment rate of men for PhD/M.Phil has decreased from 16 numbers in the year 2008-09 to 13 numbers in the year 2009-10 and among women it has decreased from 9 to 6 in the same time period (GoI,2008-09,2009-10).NSSO, 68thround, 2011-2012 also stated that, in Tripura the rural female labour force participation is 28.7 percent while compared to 56.2 percent of male labour force participation rate. At the same time period, the urban female labour force participation is 26.0 percentage and the male labour force participation is 59.4 percentage. The state wise unemployment rates according to the NSSO 2011 -2012 shows that the female participation in both in the rural and urban areas was very low in the NE region. In both the rural and urban areas, it is highest in Tripura ie. the female unemployment rate was 32.7 percentage and 57.9 percentage against 6.6 percentages and 11.5 percentages of unemployment rates among men (GoI, 2011-12).

Thus it is evident that though the state of Tripura has performed well in terms of primary education, its performance in higher education needs to be thoroughly probed. As reflected in some of the studies conducted in the region, the disparities in higher education are greater among the girl students in rural Tripura. However, there is a progress reflected in terms of reducing the inequality of opportunity in the case of students residing at the capital of Tripura. This study also stated that, even though there are many provisions, there is a wide gap between male or female, rural or urban, accessibility and inaccessibility and so on in India (Das et al 2015). The number of educational institutes for higher studies has increased in Tripura overtime. In recent years there is a considerable improvement at each level of education among the boys and girls in Tripura. Based on the data on the national census, the studies and reports showed that there has been an increasing trend in the literacy rate mainly in the female literacy in the period of 2001-2011. After independence, Tripura has witnessed highest rate of growth in the literacy level including the school and higher education enrolments. One of the major reasons behind this is the declining trend in the drop outs over years. The main feature of higher education in Tripura is that, the mostly the technical and professional education has concentrated on the capital of the state. In Tripura, the disparities in higher education have been occurred on the basis of geographical division between state capital and outside the capital of Tripura. Tripura Higher Education Perspective plan 2009-2020 also calculated that, the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in higher education of Tripura was 7.12 percent during 2010 has been projected to be achieved 15 percent by 2020. The Gender Parity Index(GPI) at the All India level has been increasing however when we consider the case of Tripura, there is a declining trend in GPI from 0.80 in 2007-08 to 0.69 in 2010-11. Among the Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) students it has been declined from 0.79 to 0.71 and 0.67 to 0.61 consecutively in the year of 2007-08 to in 2010-11. In this context, it is important to analyse the relationship between educational and sectoral participation of women's employment in Tripura.

2.2.1 Education and Participation of Women in Employment

The section below discusses on women's access to professional, technical and skill development opportunities. It also explores the relationship between education and marital status across gender. Further, it discusses on issues related to schooling, particularly with regard to gender dimensions, reasons on dropout, transportation to school and other facilities.

Table 2.1: Education and Sectoral Employment (in percentage)										
Sector Employed	Sex	Educational Status								Total
		Primary	Upper Primary	High School	Higher Secondary	Degree	Post-Graduation	Above Post-Graduation	No Education	
Education	Female	0	0.4	0.8	0.4	9.2	6.8	0	0	17.7
	Male	0	0	10.4	0.8	14.8	8.8	0.8	0	26.3
Self Employed & Manufacturing	Female	0	0.4	0.4	0	2	0.4		0.4	3.6
	Male	0.4	0	2	1.2	0.8	0	0	0	4.5
Banking & Administration*	Female	0	10.4	31.2	0.8	5.2	4.8	0.4	0	12.9
	Male	0	0	0.8	1.2	13.2	7.2	0.8	0	23.8
Health & Social Work	Female	0	0	0	0.4	3.6	2.4	0	0	6.4
	Male	0	0	0	0	3.2	1.2	0	0	4.5
Agriculture, Daily Wages & Construction	Female	1.6	5.2	5.6	0.8	0.8	0.4	0	0	14.4
	Male	1.2	4	10.4	8.4	3.2	0.4	0	0	28.3
Unemployed	Female	1.2	3.6	11.6	7.6	2.8	7	2	5	44.9
	Male	0.4	1.6	2.4	1.2	3.2	0.8	0.4	1	12.3
Total	Female	2.8	10	19.6	10.4	36.9	17.6	0.4	2.4	100
	Male	2.05	5.7	16.4	13/16	38.27	21.3	2.4	0.4	100

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

*Administration comes under Clerical Section in the public departments

The above table (2.1) shows the relationship between educational qualification and gender distribution among the sectors. The table revealed the fact that, highest percentage of female labour force who had Degree (9.2 percent) and Post-Graduation (6.8 percent) were employed in the education sector. Second highest percentage of female labour force were concentrated in Agriculture, Daily wages and Construction (5.2 percent and 5.6 percent) with the educational qualification of high school and higher secondary level. At the same time, highest percent of males who had Degree and Post-Graduation were employed in the education sector with the percent of 14.8 and 8.8 percent respectively. Second highest percentage of male labor force were concentrated in Agriculture, Daily wages and Construction (10.4

percent and 8.4 percent) with the educational qualification of high school and higher secondary level. It was revealed that, a greater percentage of unemployed workforce were among the females who had high school (11.6 percent) and higher secondary level (7.6 percent) educational qualification. It is evident that female workers who were educated up to high school level were mostly in the informal sector as they were engaged on the basis of daily wages in construction and agriculture.

In a study on the employment opportunities of the youth in agricultural sector in Tripura, it was revealed that the tribal communities are more dependent on the agriculture and allied activities in Tripura than any other sectors. Tripura is a state which has a relatively undiversified economy with a low manufacturing base. The high and rising levels of unemployment are the major concerns here. These state has undergone many literacy awareness programmes which had helped to change the socio-economic condition of the state. However, the least employment opportunities here compelled the youth to concentrate largely on the unorganised sector. Agricultural sector appears to be major sector in Tripura's economy. It has been discussed that, to create more employment opportunities, agriculture must be a breakthrough that can pave the way for the growth and opportunities in the economy. Besides lack of employment opportunities, finding decent work is also a problem as far as this state is concerned. There is no adequate education and skill based programmes which can meet the labour market demands (Darlong, 2013). However, the access to professional, technical and the access to other skill development activities also an important factor to determine the female labour force participation in the paid employment which is discussed below.

Table 2.2: Access to Professional, Technical and Skill Development Activities (in percentage) - Sex-wise distribution

Place	Sex	Professional education		Technical education		Access to Skill Development activities	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Rural	Female	4.0	48.0	1.6	50.8	41.4	11.4
	Male	4.0	44.0	1.6	45.9	35.7	11.4
	Total	8.0	92.0	3.3	96.7	77.1	22.9
Urban	Female	10.2	41.5	6.0	45.7	18.6	33.6
	Male	9.3	39.0	5.2	43.1	15.9	31.9
	Total	19.5	80.5	11.2	88.8	34.5	65.5

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

Note* Access to attend workshops/trainings by using modern equipment's/techniques to contribute to professional growth and development.

The table above (2.2) shows access to professional, technical and other skill development initiatives. With regard to access to professional education, 48.0 percent females in rural areas and 41.5 percent females in urban areas did not have access to same. Comparatively, the males had greater access to professional education in both rural and urban areas. It was found that 44.0 percent males in rural areas and 39.0 percent in urban areas did not have access to professional education. The gender differentials in technical education and access to skill development initiatives were also evident as women had lesser access in comparison to men. However, 77.1 percent people had access to skill development activities while only 22.9 percent did not have access. This may be attributed to the recent initiatives of the government of India for the promotion of skills. The Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana launched in 2015 by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship is a skill certification scheme to enable Indian youth to take up industry relevant skill training for obtaining better livelihood.⁵ The National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) is a new scheme of Government of India to promote apprenticeship that was launched on 19th August 2016. Currently, over 40 Skill Development Programmes (SDPs) are being implemented by over 20 Ministries/Departments of the Government of India (GoI, 2017a). In spite of these efforts, the gender gaps are still prevalent and there is a need to extend coverage of such programmes to the huge informal sector in the country.

2.2.2 Gender, Education and Marital Status

There are studies which have discussed the decreasing rate of labour force participation among the married women. In both rural and urban areas, marriage had a negative impact on female labour force participation. (Sorsa et al, 2015). This is a normal tendency in the rural areas since rural women are engaged in the agricultural activities at their own home. The study done by Roy and Mukherjee, (2013) discussed the situation of women's employability on the basis of their education and marital status. The general perception is that the education and work participation of women may vary due to marriage. The fact is that, the highly educated females have to withdraw themselves from the job market after marriage due to the change in their preferences, and the child care is the major constraint for them for their withdrawal from the job market.

The contrasting factor is that, large proportion of married women who are highly educated, are found to be engaged in domestic duties, however, women who are illiterate or having low education are more in the labour force than the educated women during their post marriage stage as in the

⁵ For details please see : <http://www.pmkvyofficial.org/Index.aspx>

later case, they continue to do household work or other unpaid family work.

Sex	Female			Male		
Place	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
Primary	2.7	3.6	6.4	3.6	0.9	4.5
Upper Primary	8.2	9.1	17.3	2.7	6.4	9.1
High school	24.5	10.9	35.5	18.2	12.7	30.9
Higher Secondary	5.5	4.5	10.0	12.7	4.5	17.3
Degree	2.7	13.6	16.4	7.3	19.1	26.4
Post-Graduation	0.9	9.1	10.0	0.9	8.2	9.1
Above Post-Graduation	0.0	0.9	0.9	0.0	1.8	1.8
No Education	3.6	0.0	3.6	0.0	0.9	0.9

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

From the above table 2.3, it is reflected that a greater percentage of females (24.5 per cent) in rural Tripura who were married had attended high school in comparison to urban Tripura (10.9 percent) respectively 8.2 percent of women who were married in rural Tripura had attended upper primary education and 9.1 percent in urban areas had attended upper primary education. It was evident that education had a close relationship with marital status and women in rural Tripura, who were married had not received higher education till post-graduation level while only 2.7 percent were graduates in rural areas. At the same time, urban Tripura had shown slightly better trends with at least 9.1 percent women who were married had education upto post-graduation level and 13.6 upto degree level.

The gender differentials were also evident and in both rural and urban Tripura, the percent of males who were married and had higher education was higher than the females. In rural Tripura, the percent of males (9.1 per cent) who were married and had education till higher secondary was also higher than the females. At the same time, men who were married and had education upto degree level was higher than the females.

FGD conducted among the NGO and the Panchayat members responded that *"we wanted to engage more in paid work, however, due to the early years of marriage we are compelled to leave education and due to household burden we cannot participate in the paid employment"* (FGD, 2017).

Sector Employed	Sex	Age of Marriage							Total
		>18	18-20	21-23	24-26	27-29	30-32	<32	
Education	Female	0	1.6	0.8	8	4.4	0.8	0.8	16.5
	Male	0	0	0.5	5.9	8.1	8.1	3.2	29
Self Employed & Manufacturing	Female	0	0	1.6	1.6	0.4	0	0	3.6
	Male	0	0	0	1.8	0.9	1.4	0.9	5
Banking & Administration	Female	0	0.8	2.4	4.8	3.2	0.8	0.8	12.9
	Male	0	0	0	5	10.9	6.8	3.6	26.2
Health & Social Work	Female	0	0	0.8	3.2	1.2	0.4	0	5.6
	Male	0	0	0.5	0	0.9	0.9	0.5	2.7
Agriculture, Daily Wages & Construction	Female	1.6	6	4.4	1.2	0.4	2.8	0	16.5
	Male	0	0.4	3.2	13.6	7.2	0	0.5	24.9
Unemployed	Female	0.4	15.3	10	12.4	4.4	1.2	0.8	45
	Male	0	0	0	2.7	4.5	3.5	1.8	12.21
Total	Female	2	23.7	20.1	31.3	14.5	6	2.4	100
	Male	0	0.45	4.07	29	35.7	20.4	10.4	100

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

The above table (2.4) shows the age of marriage and the distribution of female and male labour force across sectors. From the table it is evident that, largest number of women workers (8 percent) who got married in the age group between 24-26 years of age were in the education sector. Also a greater percentage of women (15.3 percent) who had early marriage (18-20 years) were unemployed followed by 10 percent of women who got married in the age group of 21-23 years. 6 percent of the female labour force who were engaged in the Agriculture, Daily Wages and Construction got married at the age of 18-20. At the same time, the male respondents who were associated with the agricultural and allied activities got married at the later age than the female ie at the age of 24-26 years. The second highest male respondents were 10 percent (at the age of 25-27) and 9.6 percent in the Banking and Administration within the age group of 27-29. So early age at marriage has a relationship with employment as female tend to discontinue education and seek non-regular employment which is mostly informal in nature.

2.3 Gender and Schooling

Since, it has been found that the level of participation of women in education is comparatively lower than men, it is important to analyse the problems with regard to access to education. In India, the disadvantageous position of females in India in comparison to males can be understood better through an analysis of gender gap in education. As we know, in India, the access to education for girls is still limited and due to many factors such as; non-enrolment, high dropout rate, slow progress of the enrolled through school and differential access to education by gender, caste etc (Sivakumar and Anita, 2012). The gender bias in the society in every sphere of life has been explained by the religious and cultural factors and also various positions assigned to women in the labour market. These problems get further accentuated when the disadvantages are linked with factors such as class, caste and religious discrimination. While compared to men, women have attained much lower literacy rate, fewer girls are enrolled in schools and few of them are dropouts.

Table 2.5: Commuting to School (in percentage)

Place	Sex	Means of Transportation			
		Walk able distance	Personal cycle	School bus	public transportation
Rural	Female	94.2	0	0	5.8
	Male	92.5	0	0	7.5
Urban	Female	74.7	5.2	2.3	17.8
	Male	68.6	11.0	2.9	17.4

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

The table above (2.5) reflects on the mode of transport for commuting to school in rural and urban Tripura. The table reveals the fact that, a greater percentage of students from Tripura commute by walking to the schools (females 94.2 percent) and (males 92.5 percent). However, in urban Tripura, 74.7 percent females and 68.6 percent males were commuting to school by walking. Among those who depended on public transport in rural areas, the percentage was greater for males (7.5 percent) in comparison to females (5.8 percent). While in urban areas the situation was slightly better. One of the significant fact is that, none of the female and male respondents from rural Tripura were using personal cycle or school bus. While in urban Tripura, 5.2 percent females and 11 percent males were using cycle and 2.3 percent females and 2.9 percent males were using school bus.

Facilities in Academic Institutions	Place	
	Rural	Urban
All facilities	24.3	58.2
Drinking water, Toilets and Playground	60.1	41.5
No facilities	6.8	0

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

The table above (2.6) shows the facilities available in the educational institutions in the rural and urban areas. All of the facilities (including library) available in the urban areas (58.2 percent) was higher than the rural areas (24.3 percent). The facility such as drinking water, toilet and playground was higher in rural areas (60.1 percent) than the urban areas (41.5 percent). In the rural areas the percent of 'no facilities available' in the academic institutions was 6.8 percent while it was zero in the urban areas.

School	Sex	Dropouts from the Family			Total
		Yes	No	No Response	
Primary	Girl	0.5	0	0	0.5
	Boy	0.5	0	0	0.5
	Both	0	0	0	0
	NA*	13.2	59.3	26.5	98.9
	Total	14.3	59.3	26.5	100.0
Upper Primary	Girl	3.7	0	0	3.7
	Boy	3.2	0	0	3.2
	Both	2.1	0	0	2.1
	NA*	0.5	0	0	0.5
	Total	14.3	59.3	26.5	100.0
High School	Girl	1.6	0	0	1.6
	Boy	3.7	0	0	3.7
	Both	1.6	0	0	1.6
	NA*	7.4	59.3	26.5	93.1
	Total	14.3	59.3	26.5	100.0

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

NA* is either no children in the family or above the age of schooling.

The above table (2.7) shows the percentage of dropout of female and male students from the family. From the table it is clear that, more boy students at the high school level dropout (3.7 percent) in comparison to female students (1.6 percent). On the contrary, female students from the upper primary level show higher percentage of dropout (3.7 percent) dropout in comparison to male students (3.2 percent). However, there are differential reasons for drop out in rural and urban areas as discussed below

**Table 2.8:
Reasons for Dropouts from the household (in percentage)**

	Rural	Urban	Total
Disinterestedness	1.9	5.5	3.9
Financial backwardness	7.7	9.4	8.7
Other socio psychological reasons	0.0	1.6	0.9
NA	85.6	83.5	84.4
Disinterestedness, Financial Backwardness and Low self esteem	1.0	0.0	0.4
disinterestedness and financial backwardness	3.8	0.0	1.7
Total	100	100	100

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

NA* is either no children in the family or above the age of schooling.

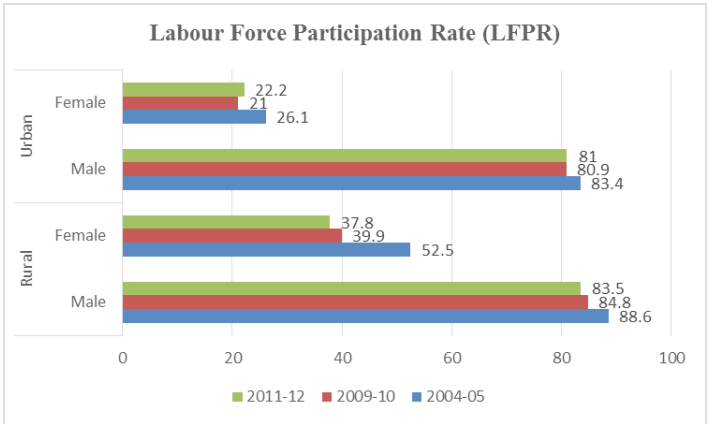
The above table (2.8) shows that the major reason for drop out in the household was financial backwardness in both rural and urban areas. In rural Tripura, 7.7 percent of people had dropped out due to financial backwardness and 9.4 percent in urban areas had dropped out due to the same reason. However, the prominent reason for drop out in rural areas was disinterestedness (1.9 per cent) and disinterestedness and financial backwardness (3.8 per cent). However, in the urban areas the prominent reasons to drop out from school was financial backwardness (9.4 percent), followed by disinterestedness (5.5 per cent) and other socio-psychological reasons (1.6 per cent).

2.4 Labour Market Trends in India

The employment and unemployment survey of the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) across various rounds reflect on declining female labour force participation across the country. In the working age population (15-59 age group), which is considered for all analysis in the present study, the labour force participation of females fell from 52.5 percent in 2004-05 to 39.9 in 2009-10 and further to 37.8 in 2011-12 in rural areas. In the urban areas, the participation of females fell from 26.1 percent in 2004-05 to 21.0

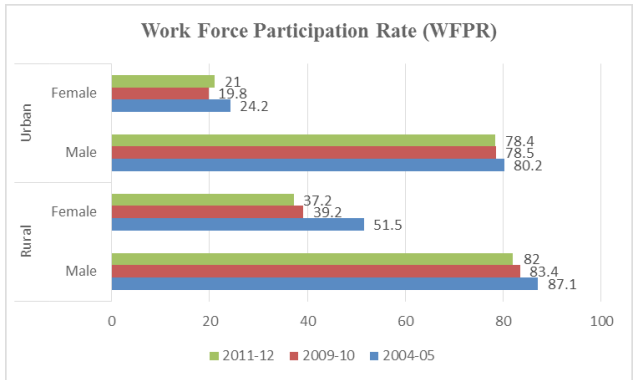
percent in 2009-10 and marginally increased to 22.2 percent in 2011-12⁶. The figures below provides an analysis of labour force participation as per usual status (ps+ss)⁷.

Figure 2.1:
Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) per 100 Population for Age Group (15-59) (UPSS) (in percentage)



Source: NSS, (2004-05, 2009-10, 2011-12).

Figure 2.2:
Work Force Participation Rate (LFPR) per 100 Population for Age Group (15-59) (UPSS) (in percentage)



Source: NSS, (2004-05, 2009-10, 2011-12).

⁶ NSS various rounds

⁷ According to the NSS various rounds, three reference periods are used (i) one year i.e.usual status, (ii) one week i.e. current weekly status and (iii) each day of the reference period i.e current daily status. The Usual Status (ps+ss) includes ;(i)people who are engaged in the activity for a relatively longer period of the 365 days preceding the date of the survey and (ii) those people from the who had worked at least for 30 days during the reference period of 365 days preceding the date of the survey.

The above figures (2.1 & 2.2) on labour force and workforce participation rates of females also shows a similar trend with a significant decline in rural female workforce participation from 51.5 percent in 2004-05 to 39.2 percent in 2009-10 and a further decline to 37.2 percent in 2011-12. In the urban areas, though there was a decline from 24.2 percent in 2004-05 to 19.8 percent in 2009-10, yet in 2011-12 there was a marginal increase in workforce participation rates of female to 21 percent. However, the gender gaps in workforce participation rates were quite evident with the participation of males being 78.4 percent while for female it remained at 21 percent in the year 2011-12.

Kapsos et al (2014) analysed that effect of increased education and higher levels of household consumption together constituted around 18 per cent of total decline in female labour force participation between 2005 and 2010. It was also analysed that around 42 per cent of the decline in labour force participation was due to the lack of employment opportunities. They have also come to the conclusion that, female labour force in India could have increased by additional 20.7 million in between 1994 and 2010 if there was no occupational segregation in the labour market. The econometric analysis of this study revealed that, religion and social perceptions of women, women's level of education, household size and income, presence of young children in the household influence the possibility of women to participate in the labour market.

The analysis of emerging dependency ratios and labour force participation rates in India in comparison with BRICS Nations⁸ have showed that though India might see a progressive fall in dependency ratio⁹, yet it reports most glaring gender disparities in LFPR across all age groups (Paul, 2014). However, the declining female labour force participation within a context of high informality appears to be a serious concern for policy makers for not only addressing inequalities in the labour market but also promoting policies aimed at well-being of workers. The issues with regard to the relationship between income and labour market participation is also brought out clearly in certain studies which analyse that the labour force participation of rural female falls with a higher male household wage levels. Also an increase in the wages among the lower income groups have led to the situation of women not being compelled to work in order to manage the household expenditure. It had also been identified that, there is a significant difference in the employment opportunities and rural LFP across the states (Neff et al, 2012).

⁸ Brazil, China, Russian Federation and South Africa.

⁹ Defined as population below age 15 and above 60 as a proportion of population in the age group of 15-60.

Though there has been an increase in economic growth and advancements in education in almost all States, yet the labour market participation of women has seen a decline except few states in India. The north eastern region is one such region where the labour market participation has witnessed major fluctuations with decline in many states and increase in few states like Tripura and Sikkim.

2.5 Labour Market Trends in the North East

An analysis of trends of labour market participation in the north eastern region reveals that there is a declining trend in the female labour force participation in the states except Sikkim and Tripura. The states like Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Manipur have showed a declining trend in the female LFPR. So far as the labour force participation in the north east is concerned, women experience low labour force participation and the gender inequality is more evident in urban areas than in rural areas (Dhar, 2015).

States	Year	Rural		Urban		Rural + Urban	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Arunachal Pradesh	2004-05	81.3	64.9	73.7	21.7	80.3	59.2
	2009-10	75.4	44.7	70	22.4	74.3	39.9
	2011-12	74.4	43.1	69.9	21.5	73.5	39.1
Assam	2004-05	88.7	34.1	86.1	18.3	88.4	32.5
	2009-10	87.3	25.6	80.6	14.8	86.5	24.3
	2011-12	85.7	18.9	83.3	13.2	85.4	18.2
Manipur	2004-05	76.3	48.5	72.3	33.9	75.3	45.1
	2009-10	79.6	32.7	78.3	21.6	79.3	29.8
	2011-12	77.7	40	78.1	28.9	77.8	37.1
Meghalaya	2004-05	90.5	76.9	72.5	46.5	88	72.1
	2009-10	83.8	56.4	72.3	35.7	82	52.4
	2011-12	81.2	62.2	69.5	30.8	78.7	55
Mizoram	2004-05	87.5	63.7	74	41.1	82.2	54.2
	2009-10	90.3	59.7	78.1	42.9	84.9	51.9
	2011-12	89.7	62.4	76	38.8	83	50.2
Nagaland	2004-05	81.8	75.2	76.1	40.5	80	64.2
	2009-10	74.6	48.8	68.3	21.9	72.9	42
	2011-12	81.6	47.9	72.8	30.1	78.3	41.8
Sikkim	2004-05	81.7	47.9	78.9	24.1	81.4	45.1
	2009-10	82.1	47.5	87.8	21.9	82.8	44.4
	2011-12	82.7	70.6	85.4	39.1	83.2	64.9

Tripura	2004-05	88.1	18.7	84.8	32.4	87.6	20.8
	2009-10	88.8	33.6	82.8	26.4	87.7	32.2
	2011-12	87.4	40.2	83.4	36.7	86.8	39.6
North East (Combined)	2004-05	87.7	38	82	26.6	87	36.5
	2009-10	86.2	30.4	78.9	21.1	85.1	29
	2011-12	84.8	27	79.9	22.7	84.1	26.4
All India	2004-05	88.6	52.5	83.4	26.1	87.1	45.4
	2009-10	84.8	39.9	80.9	21	83.6	34.5
	2011-12	83.5	37.8	81	22.2	82.7	33.1

Source: Computed from NSS Unit level data of Round 61st2004-05, 66th2009-10 and 68th2011-12.

As evident in the table above (2.9) in Tripura, the LFPR for females in rural areas was 18.7 per cent in the year of 2004-05 which showed an upward trend to 33.6 per cent in the year 2009-10 and again increased to 40.2 per cent in the year of 2011-12. In urban areas, the LFPR was 32.4 percent in 2004-05 which decreased to 26.4 percent in 2009-10 and further increased to 36.7 percent in 2011-12. Similarly, in Sikkim, the LFPR for females in rural areas in the year of 2004-05 was 47.9 per cent which declined to 47.5 per cent in the year of 2009-10. However it started showing an increasing trend to 70.6 per cent in the year of 2011-12. Further, urban Sikkim showed fluctuating trends with a decline in LFPR from 24.1 percent in 2004-05 to 21.9 percent in 2009-10 and later increased to 39.1 percent. On the contrary, the remaining states like Arunachal Pradesh and Assam showed a declining trend, in Arunachal Pradesh, the rural LFPR for females was 64.9 percent in 2004-05, which declined to 44.7 percent in 2009-10 and further decreased to 43.1 percent in 2011-12. The urban areas showed slight fluctuation with 21.7 percent in 2004-05 to an increase of 22.4 percent in 2009-10 but later declined to 21.5 percent in 2011-12.

However, the lowest LFPR was seen in both rural and urban Assam with declining trends. In rural areas, the LFPR was 34.1 percent in 2004-05 which decreased to 25.6 percent in 2009-10 and further decreased to 18.9 percent in 2011-12. In urban Assam, the LFPR was recorded as low as 18.3 percent in 2004-05, which declined to 14.8 percent in 2009-10 and further declined to 13.2 in 2011-12.

Some studies conducted in the region have identified the factors for declining female labour force participation through an analysis of the socio-economic determinants of working women in communities like the Tiwa tribe in Morigaon and Nagaon districts of Assam. These studies identified that the dependency ratio and the size of household are positively correlated with the participation of economic activities of women the probability of the participation of women is positive if the earning member is engaged with the agriculture and allied activities. Since education has a positive

relationship with female labour force participation, there is a need for enhancing adequate skills for females in the region. On the contrary, among the women engaged in informal work in Manipur higher educational attainment in general did not explain better outcomes in employment (Saikia and Mazumder, 2016). Such studies have reflected on the vulnerability of women in taking up informal employment due to economic necessity and the development of adequate infrastructure, institutional support, access to vocational and technical training and effective implementation of social protection would contribute in addressing the situation (Devi, 2014).

However, the following sections provide an in-depth analysis of the work participation rates of Tripura which is taken into consideration for this present study.

2.5.1 Work Force Participation in Tripura

This section tries to provide an overview about the work participation rates across sex and different geographical regions in Tripura. The various trends in sectoral participation are also discussed in the section. The results from the field insights on social group distribution and occupational choices are analyzed in this section.

The table below (2.10) shows the percentage of workers and the work participation rate of both the male and female workers in Tripura during Census 2011. It was revealed that the male workforce participation was higher than females in all districts of Tripura. From the table it is clear that, in both the rural and urban Tripura, the work participation rates among males was higher than the females ;

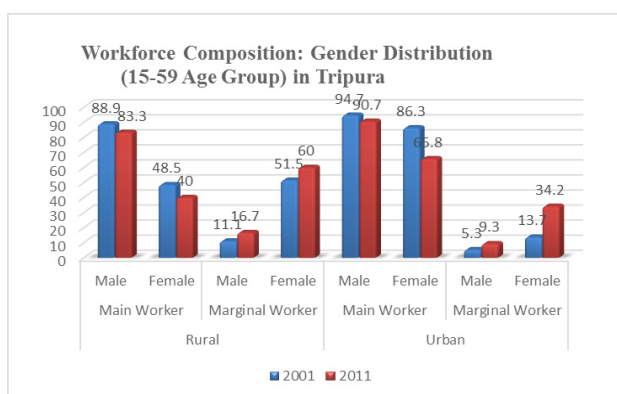
Name of District/State	Area	Work Participation Rate		
		Persons	Males	Females
Tripura	Rural	41.1	55.3	26.3
	Urban	36.8	57.0	16.0
West Tripura	Rural	42.5	56.7	27.6
	Urban	37.3	57.2	16.9
South Tripura	Rural	42.7	56.4	28.5
	Urban	36.6	57.8	14.6
Dhalai	Rural	41.9	54.1	29.1
	Urban	35.1	56.4	12.6
North Tripura	Rural	36.1	52.3	19.4
	Urban	34.5	55.0	13.5

Source: Census, 2011.

55.3 percent (males), 26.3 percent (females) in rural Tripura and 57 percent (males) and 16 percent (females) in urban Tripura.

In West Tripura, the total work force participation among males was 56.9 percent while the female work force participation was 23.4 percent in rural areas. West Tripura recorded high workforce participation among males with 57.2 percent and 16.9 percent for females. The hill district of Tripura, Dhalai showed relatively higher work participation for females in comparison to plains and other districts of Tripura. The total workforce participation among males in rural areas was 54.1 percent and among females it was 29.1 percent. However, in urban Dhalai the work participation rates were 56.4 percent for males and 12.6 percent for females. It was disturbing to note that North Tripura, the workforce participation for females was strikingly low as 19.4 percent while for males it was 52.3 percent in rural areas. Similarly, in urban areas the workforce participation for females was 13.5 percent while for males it was 55.0 percent. This may be due to lack of adequate job opportunities owing to the absence of large scale industry or public sector undertakings. There is no industrial unit due to the lack of transportation, finance, raw-materials and marketing. The people of North Tripura are mostly engaged in tea plantation, food processing, brick kilns, wood processing units, light engineering, rubber based units, spices, plastics and polymers, milk diary, handloom, handicrafts and other small scale industries.¹⁰

Figure 2.3:
Sex wise Distribution: Workforce Composition (15-59 Age Groups) in Tripura (in percentage)



Source: Census, 2001 and 2011.

¹⁰ Please see Government of India, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Brief Industrial Profile of North Tripura District, <http://dcmsme.gov.in/dips/dips%20north%20tripura.pdf> (Last accessed on 21 February 2018).

The figure above (2.3) on thesex –wise workforce composition in Tripura revealed that a higher percentage of females were engaged as marginal workers both in rural and urban areas in the 15-59 age group. It was also revealed that, the concentration of females as marginal workers become more pronounced and increased considerably in Tripura ie. 51.5 per cent in 2001 to 60.0 per cent in 2011 in rural Tripura and 13.7 percent in 2001 to 34.2 in 2011 in urban Tripura.

Name of State/ District	Area	Main Workers			Marginal Workers		
		Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
Tripura	Rural	83.0	40.1	69.6	17.0	59.9	30.4
	Urban	90.4	65.3	85.0	9.6	34.7	15.0
	Total	84.9	44.6	73.3	15.1	55.4	26.7
West Tripura	Rural	83.4	39.2	69.4	16.6	60.8	30.6
	Urban	90.8	65.5	85.1	9.2	34.5	14.9
	Total	86.3	46.7	75.1	13.7	53.3	24.9
South Tripura	Rural	82.8	39.2	68.6	17.2	60.8	31.4
	Urban	89.6	59.9	83.8	10.4	40.1	16.2
	Total	83.7	40.8	70.5	16.3	59.2	29.5
Dhalai	Rural	82.9	36.8	67.4	17.1	63.2	32.6
	Urban	94.1	73.5	90.5	5.9	26.5	9.5
	Total	84.1	38.6	69.5	15.9	61.4	30.5
North Tripura	Rural	82.5	46.7	73.1	17.5	53.3	26.9
	Urban	87.5	67.5	83.7	12.5	32.5	16.3
	Total	83.4	49.3	74.8	16.6	50.7	25.2

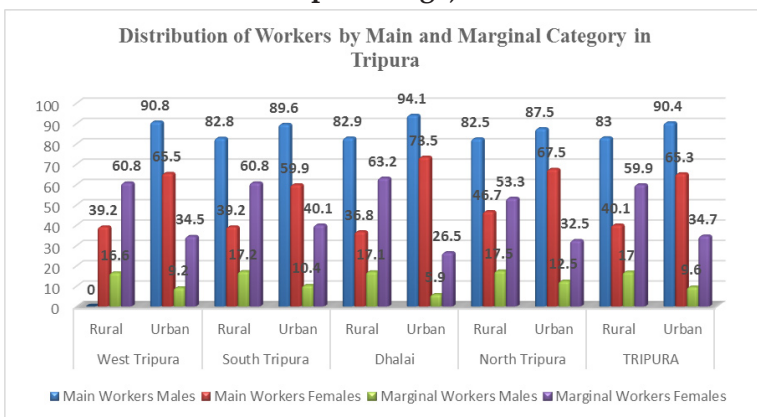
Source: Census, 2011.

The table above (2.11) shows the percent distribution of main and marginal workers in Tripura across various districts. It was evident that the percentage of total male main workers was higher as 84.9 per cent than the females which was 44.6 percent. This trend was seen both in rural and urban Tripura. As per Census 2011, in Tripura, the percentage of main male workers in the rural areas was higher as 83.0 per cent in comparison to female workers as 40.1 percent. While in urban areas, the percentage of males engaged as main workers was 90.4 percent and only 65.3 percent females were engaged as main workers. The gender gaps in participation rates became quite evident in both rural and urban areas. On the contrary,

among females the percentage of marginal workers was higher as 55.4 percent in comparison to only 15.1 percent males who were engaged as marginal workers. In rural areas, 59.9 percent females were engaged as marginal workers in comparison to 17.0 percent males who were engaged as marginal workers. While in urban areas, 34.7 percent females were engaged as marginal workers and only 9.6 percent males were engaged as marginal workers.

An analysis of districts revealed that the hill district of Dhalai emerged as having the highest number of females as marginal workers (63.2 percent) in rural areas. The other districts which followed are West and South Tripura both with 60.8 percent females engaged as marginal workers and North Tripura with 53.3 percent as marginal workers. In urban areas, the district with highest percentage of females engaged as marginal workers was South Tripura with 40.1 percent females. This was followed by West Tripura (34.5 percent), North Tripura (32.5 percent) and Dhalai (26.5 percent).

Figure 2.4:
Distribution of Workers by Main and Marginal Category in Tripura (in percentage)



Source: Census, 2011.

Some of the studies on Tripura have clearly brought out the challenges women face in the labour market. As reported in one of the studies, the agricultural market set up in Tripura is periodical in nature and women need to travel long distances by carrying the goods they produce to the market. Mostly, these types of periodic markets are monopolised by the agents of the whole sale merchants and they collectively decide not to offer the existing prices to the sellers who sell their products in the market. Further, the conditions are aggravated by less equipped markets, lack of storage facilities, drainage, poor road and other facilities. Most of these markets are situated in the

hilly regions and do not have proper transportation facilities. The point to be noted that, mostly, small and marginal farmers depend up on these markets to sell their products, while the big farmers sell their products in the wholesale markets. As part of the empowerment of the women a plan was set up to register a women's body under the Companies Act in order to promote the development of the agri-business sector. The main aim of this organization was to set up Village/ District Advisory Committees to assist and aid itself as well as to help the poor women in the area of economic development (Rajagopal, 2006).

Some other studies have stated that though women spent a considerable amount of time in production process like milk production, their work is not recognized as they perform several activities like boiling of milk, cow feed preparation alongwith householdwork (Acharjee 2013). The issues related to unavailability of financial support was also highlighted by some studies which have reported that even though they got enough support from their family, they could not get success due to the financial constraints (Sinha et al, 2013). As far as the women are concerned from the north east, several factors have influenced them to start the enterprises such as family background, motivation, ambition etc. and though they have the potential to take the entrepreneurship they are discouraged due to financial constraints and continue to be engaged as marginal workers.

2.5.2 Work Participation: Sectoral Distribution

Rural									
States	Male			Female			Male+ Female		
	Pri- mary	Sec- ondary	Ter- tiary	Pri- mary	Sec- ondary	Ter- tiary	Pri- mary	Sec- ondary	Ter- tiary
Assam	57.8	13.7	28.5	79.1	6.7	14.1	61.5	12.5	26
Arunachal Pradesh	69.8	8.0	22.3	90.1	1.4	8.5	77.1	5.6	17.3
Manipur	53	18.6	28.4	21.9	62.6	15.5	42.8	33	24.2
Mizoram	75.6	7.6	16.8	73.9	14.7	11.4	74.9	10.4	14.7
Megha- laya	59.4	15.2	25.4	72.9	6.4	20.7	65.2	11.4	23.4
Nagaland	66.1	6.3	27.6	89.7	4.2	6.1	75	5.5	19.5
Sikkim	60.8	16.9	22.3	85.1	5.4	9.5	71.8	11.7	16.5
Tripura	34.1	43.6	22.3	19.5	69.5	11	30.1	50.8	19.2

Urban									
States	Male			Female			Male+ Female		
	Pri- mary	Sec- ondary	Ter- tiary	Pri- mary	Sec- ondary	Ter- tiary	Pri- mary	Sec- ondary	Ter- tiary
Assam	3.5	23.5	73	7.7	13	79.3	4	22.2	73.8
Arunachal Pradesh	9.9	16.4	73.8	32.3	9.8	57.9	14.3	15.1	70.7
Manipur	19.8	22.7	57.5	8.9	48.9	42.2	16.9	29.6	53.5
Mizoram	21.3	15.5	63.2	35.2	4.7	60	26.1	11.9	62.1
Megha- laya	3.3	19.7	77.1	7.6	8	84.4	4.7	15.9	79.4
Nagaland	12.8	14.2	73	30.4	16.2	53.5	16.8	14.7	68.5
Sikkim	0.7	24.9	74.4	2.7	9.9	87.4	1.2	20.7	78
Tripura	2.5	23.4	74.2	4.3	18.5	77.2	2.8	22.5	74.8

Source: NSS Unit level Data NIC, 2008.

The table (2.12) above shows the sectoral participation of male and female workers in rural and urban areas in the NER. It was revealed that in the rural areas, in Tripura, the female workers were largely concentrated in the secondary sector (69.5 per cent) in comparison to the male workers (43.6 per cent). At the same time, in the primary sector, the female workers were lesser (19.5 per cent) than the male workers (34.1 per cent). In the urban areas, the female workers were higher in the primary sector (4.3 per cent) than the male workers (2.5 per cent) and in the secondary sector, the participation of female workers was lesser (18.5 per cent) than the male workers (23.4 per cent). In the tertiary sector, both in the rural and urban areas the male workers were higher than the female workers ie; 22.3 percent and 19.2 per cent in the rural areas and 74.2 per cent and 14.8 per cent in the urban areas respectively.

As reported in some studies in north east, women dominate the weaving sector in the NER and they are mostly engaged in several activities from being handloom producers to trading of handloom products. Weaving has been the second largest sector which generates employment after agriculture; mainly the female who produces clothes for the family members as their traditional occupation. However, it had been analysed that this sector is not contributing much to the household economy as in the other states. The main reason behind it is that, in the North East, this sector was dominated by domestic production and part time weaving. The female

weavers still depend up on the manual labour with little technology base inversely affects the production. Though women are engaged in economic activities particularly in traditionally feminine occupation like weaving, yet the sector does not provide adequate social protection coverage in terms of access to government schemes, health insurance, credits and market linkages to these female workers (Devi, 2013).

Name of State/ District	Area	Main Workers		Cultivators		Agricultural Labourers		Household Industries*		Other Workers**	
		Males	Fe- males	Males	Fe- males	Males	Fe- males	Males	Fe- males	Males	Fe- males
Tripura	Rural	82.0	18.0	31.7	26	23.3	31	1.5	4	43.5	39.7
	Urban	83.5	16.5	3.2	1.4	3.3	3	1.4	3	92.1	92.2
	Total	82.4	17.6	23.7	19	17.7	24	1.4	3	57.2	53.4
West Tripura	Rural	82.1	17.9	30.6	22	24.9	34	2.0	5	42.5	39
	Urban	82.8	17.2	2.6	1.1	2.7	3	1.5	3	93.2	92.7
	Total	82.4	17.6	19.1	13	15.7	22	1.8	4	63.4	60.4
South Tripura	Rural	81.4	18.6	33.1	28	24.9	38	1.0	1.7	38.8	31.9
	Urban	86.0	16.3	4.2	1.8	2.7	7.8	1.0	1.4	89.4	89.0
	Total	82.0	18.0	28.6	25	23.8	35	1.0	1.7	55.5	38.4
Dhalai	Rural	81.6	18.4	38.2	35	17.5	26	0.9	2.3	41.0	36
	Urban	85.7	14.3	7.0	2.2	6.2	5.1	0.9	1.4	85.8	91.3
	Total	82.1	17.9	34.4	32	18.2	24	0.9	2.2	46.5	41.5
North Tripura	Rural	83.2	16.8	27.9	24	17.0	16	1.5	4	53.6	56.5
	Urban	84.4	15.6	4.8	2.8	3.1	2.8	0.9	2.6	91.3	91.8
	Total	83.4	16.6	23.6	20	14.4	13	1.3	4	60.7	62.7

Source: Census, 2011.

Note* "Household Industry is defined as an industry conducted by one or more members of the household at home or within the village in rural areas and only within the precincts of the house where the household lives in urban areas". Largely the workers in the household industries consist of the members in the household. Generally, this industry do not run as a registered factory, however, if in case there are more than 10 persons with power or 20 persons without power is in use, it would qualify to be registered under the Indian Factories Act (Census, 2011).

**Workers other than cultivators, agricultural labourers or workers in household industries are termed as other workers. For eg:- government servants, municipal employees, teachers, factory workers, plantation workers, those who engaged in trade and commerce etc. (census, 2011).

However, an analysis of sex wise distribution of main workers in economic activities (Table 2.13) reveals that in rural Tripura, a greater percentage of females (39.7 percent) were engaged in other work, 31 percent were working as agricultural labourers, 26 percent were cultivators and 4 percent were in the household industries. The hill district of Dhalai emerged as a prominent district where 24 percent females were engaged as agricultural labourers. In urban Dhalai, greater percentage of females participated in other work (91.3 percent) than their male counterparts (85.8 percent) and greater percentage of females participated in the household activities (1.4 percent) in comparison to male members (0.9 percent). In rural Dhalai, large percent (36 percent) of females were working in the other category, however, 35 percent females were cultivators and 26 percent females were working as labourers in urban Dhalai.

Table 2.14: Distribution of Marginal Workers by Category of Economic Activities in Tripura (in percentage)

Name of State/ District	Area	Marginal Workers		Cultivators		Agricultural Labourers		Household Industries		Other Workers	
		Males	Fe- males	Males	Fe- males	Males	Fe- males	Males	Fe- males	Males	Fe- males
Tripura	Rural	38.5	61.5	13.7	14	41.8	44.2	2.9	7.2	41.5	34.2
	Urban	50.4	49.6	2.9	2	9.5	8.4	0.3	9.1	84.1	80.2
	Total	40.1	59.9	11.9	13	36	40.2	3.0	7.5	48.8	39.4
West Tripura	Rural	37.1	62.9	15.8	14	47.0	48.2	4.2	10.0	33.0	28.2
	Urban	48.1	51.9	2.2	2	8.5	7.0	3.6	9.9	85.6	81.3
	Total	39.5	60.5	12.3	11	36.9	40.6	4.0	10.0	46.8	38.0
South Tripura	Rural	37.0	63.0	10.7	14	43.5	43.3	1.9	3.8	43.9	39.0
	Urban	51.6	48.4	3.0	2	13.3	15.1	3.3	5.7	80.36	77.1
	Total	38.0	62.0	10.0	13	40.7	41.8	2.0	3.9	47.3	41.0
Dhalai	Rural	34.8	65.2	21.0	19	39.2	48.8	1.6	4.5	38.3	27.5
	Urban	51.4	48.6	5.3	6.5	17.6	20	2.7	6.2	74.3	67.3
	Total	35.3	64.7	20.3	19	38.3	48.2	1.6	4.5	39.8	28.3
North Tripura	Rural	47.8	52.2	9.7	12	31.4	29.5	2.6	9.6	56.4	48.6
	Urban	61.5	38.5	5.5	4.4	9.1	7.4	3.1	9.0	82.4	79.2
	Total	49.3	50.7	9.1	12	28.3	27.7	2.6	9.6	59.9	51.1

Source: Census, 2011.

The table above (2.14) shows the distribution of marginal workers who were engaged in different economic activities in Tripura. The females were found to be generally concentrating in household industries across all districts of Tripura.

In Tripura, the total percentage of marginal workers among the females was higher than (59.9 percent) the total marginal male workers (40.1

percent). In West Tripura, the total marginal female workers was higher (60.5 percent) than the marginal male workers (39.5 percent). In rural West Tripura, the females were working in the household industries and engaged as agricultural labourers (10 percent and 48.2 percent) which was higher than the males who were engaged in household industries and as agricultural labourers (4.2 and 47.0 percent respectively). In urban west Tripura a greater percentage of females were working in the household industries (9.9 percent) than the males (3.9 percent).

In Dhalai, the percent of total marginal female workers was higher (64.7 percent) than the marginal male workers (35.3 percent). In rural Dhalai, a significant percent of females were working in the household industries and as agricultural labourers (4.5 percent and 48.8 percent) which was higher than the participation of males (1.6 percent and 39.2 percent) respectively. In urban Dhalai, higher percent of females were working in the household industries (6.2 percent), as agricultural labourers (20 percent) and as cultivators (6.5 percent) than the males who were engaged in Household industries (2.7 percent), as agricultural labourers (17.6 percent) and as cultivators (5.3 percent).

It is disturbing to note that the hill districts which recorded greater participation of females in the workforce also reflected on the vulnerability of workers with their marginal status. Further, the concentration of female in household industries portrays their informal status that largely remains outside the purview of social protection coverage.

2.6 Status of Employment of Women Workers in Tripura-Insights from the Field

As discussed above, though the workforce participation was higher among females in Tripura, yet it was evident that their status as workers remained mostly marginal. Their status as marginal workers reflects on the precariousness of employment marked with high degree of informality. In this context, the coverage of social protection remains an important question that needs a systematic investigation. The primary survey conducted in two districts of Tripura, revealed status of females in employment and sectoral participation of female workers.

Sex	Employed			Unemployed		
	Place		Total	Place		Total
	Rural	Urban		Rural	Urban	
Female	24.6	43.2	34.9	97.4	69.8	82.9
Male	75.4	56.8	65.1	2.6	30.2	17.1

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

The table above (2.15) shows that out of total employed population 24.6 percent females were employed in comparison to 75.4 percent males in rural Tripura. Similarly, in urban areas 43.2 percent of females were employed in comparison to 56.8 percent males. Also, the concentration of females as unemployed (97.4 per cent) in rural Tripura was greater in comparison to only 2.6 percent of males. In the urban areas, the gender differentials in unemployment was quite prominent with 69.8 percent females being unemployed in comparison to 30.2 percent males.

Age Group	Sector Employed	Place	
		Rural	Urban
15-20	Education	0	0
	Self Employed & Manufacturing	0	0
	Banking & Administration*	0	0
	Health and Social Work	0	0
	Agriculture, Daily Wages and Construction	0	0.3
	Unemployed	0	0.3
21-30	Education	0	4.6
	Self Employed & Manufacturing	0.7	0.9
	Banking & Administration	0	5.2
	Health and Social Work	0	1.2
	Agriculture, Daily Wages and Construction	11.6	2.6
	Unemployed	11.0	7.2
31-40	Education	2.7	11.2
	Self Employed & Manufacturing	2.1	2.0
	Banking & Administration	3.4	9.8
	Health and Social Work	0	2.6
	Agriculture, Daily Wages and Construction	19.2	3.7
	Unemployed	11.0	8.6

41-50	Education	6.2	7.5
	Self Employed & Manufacturing	2.7	0
	Banking & Administration	2.1	4.0
	Health and Social Work	0	1.4
	Agriculture, Daily Wages and Construction	11.0	2.3
	Unemployed	4.8	5.8
51-59	Education	0.7	3.7
	Self Employed & Manufacturing	0.7	0.3
	Banking & Administration	0	4.6
	Health and Social Work	0	2.6
	Agriculture, Daily Wages and Construction	6.8	1.2
	Unemployed	3.4	6.3

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

*Administration comes under Clerical Section in the public departments.

The table above (2.16) shows the participation of women workers across various sectors in rural and urban Tripura. The table reflected on the fact that, in rural Tripura while majority were working in agriculture, daily wages and construction, in urban Tripura highest percentage of workers were in the education, banking and administration. In rural Tripura, 11.6 percent in the age group 15-20, 19.2 percent in the age group 31-40, 11.0 percent in the age group 41-50 and 6.0 percent were in the age group 5-59 were working in agriculture, daily wages and construction. Contrastingly, in urban Tripura, 4.6 percent in the age group 21-30, 7.2 percent in the age group 31-40, 7.5 percent in the age group 41-50 and 3.7 percent in the age group 51-59 were working in education sector. 5.2 percent in the age group 21-30, 9.8 percent in the age group 31-40, 4.0 percent in the age group 41-50 and 4.6 percent in the age group 51-59 were working in the banking and administration. One of the prominent reasons for the declining rate of female labour force is the occupational segregation in the labour market. The Indian women are forced to be in certain industries and occupations like basic agriculture, sales and handicraft manufacturing. Sectoral and occupational segregation contributes significantly to gender gaps both in terms of the number and the quality of jobs (ILO, 2016).

Some of the studies have pointed out that, the occupational segregation of women in the labour market is very prevalent in recent years. It appears

in the form that, there is a concentration of workers in major occupational divisions. In a study Duraisamy and Duraisamy (2014) found, around 83 percent of the female labour force and 68 percent of the male labour force have been engaged in three sectors. That are mainly; (i) skilled agricultural and fishery workers (ii) craft and related trade workers and (iii) elementary occupations, female shows over representation in all these three sectors. The harsh reality is that while male labour force concentrated mainly in the managerial positions, sales jobs and extraction and building related trade works, the female labour force are concentrated in fisheries and craft related work. As revealed in the study, in India, the indices show that an alarming rate of sex segregation was evident in regular wage activity followed by self-employed activities and casual wage work is the least segregated area of job. Some studies have reflected on shifts in employment from agriculture to construction and the plights of female workers who face discrimination in the labour market like harassment and wage discrimination. Such adverse situations push them to disadvantageous position than their male counterparts (Devi and Kiran, 2013). The massive decline in employment opportunities in agricultural sector, has contributed to the decline however, this gap was not compensated with the employment. Contrastingly, among men the decline in the availability of employment was compensated by the increased opportunity in construction sector. The decrease in agriculture related employment is explained with the adoption of labour displacing technology, lack of basic amenities which restrict the physical mobility of the female and low level education and limited technical training which are also factor of low level of female employment (Rawal and Saha, 2015).

Some other studies have also highlighted on the occupational segregation along with educational segregation. The gendered division of labour can be understood as a multi-dimensional phenomenon (Agrawal and Agrawal, 2015; Borghans and Groot,1999).The relationship between occupational segregation and human capital characteristics is also evident in some studies which have argued that with increase in education, occupational segregation differs across human categories and women choose jobs where there is less depreciation of their skills even in the case when they leave their jobs. (Mora and Ruiz Castillo, 2003). Spriggs and Wlilliams (1996) have analysed the importance of education in the occupational segregation by gender and race.

Understanding gender segregation in the Indian labour market is important due to various reasons. In many developing countries there is a trend that the educational level of female is increasing, however, the female labour force participation is also increasing. The level of educational achievement and labour market outcomes are closely interrelated in the modern

societies (Charles and Bradely, 2002). The structure of the economy and the opportunities available for women are likely to affect women's educational choices and employment prospects. Further, it would be interesting to understand the relationship between caste and participation in the labour market to understand the occupational choices of men and women.

2.7 Social Groups and Occupational Choices

The relationship between caste and labour market participation has been quite critical to understand the situation of certain social groups that have remained economically backward over the years. As far as the women in certain social groups which have remained marginalised are concerned, their participation in the labour force is higher than the women in the general category. Generally, it has been observed that, the high rate of poverty and lower restrictions on mobility may be the reason for high rate of participation of the female from these categories in the labour force (Sorsa et al, 2015).

Sector Employed	Sex	Caste				Total
		General	OBC	SC	ST	
Education	Female	14.1	0.8	2	0.8	17.7
	Male	20.9	2.6	3.4	1.3	27
Self Employed & Manufacturing	Female	2	1.2	0	0.4	3.6
	Male	1.3	0.9	0.4	2	4.7
Banking & Administration	Female	9.2	1.2	0	2	12.4
	Male	17.1	2.1	0	1.7	21
Health & Social Work	Female	4.4	0.4	1.6	0	6.4
	Male	3	0.4	1.6	0	5
Agriculture, Daily Wages & Construction	Female	4.8	4	4	4	14.9
	Male	12	6.4	4.3	6.8	29.5
Unemployed	Female	23.7	6	6.8	8.4	45
	Male	7.7	1.3	0.4	3.4	12.8

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

The above table (2.17) shows the concentration of workforce across social groups. It was evident that there is a predominance of females belonging to the general category in the education sector i.e 14.1 percent while only 2 percent of female were from the scheduled caste communities and 0.8 percent each from the other backward castes and scheduled tribes.

Contrastingly, larger percentage of males were in the education sector (20.9 percent) and the males participating in the other sectors were also higher than the females from OBC (2.6 percent), SC(3.4 percent) and ST (1.3 percent) communities respectively. The table also shows that, in all the sectors mentioned above, the participation of females and males were very low when compared to the general category. However, the participation of females belonging to the general category was higher in self-employed and manufacturing(2 percent) as well as health and social work(4.4 percent) in comparison to males in manufacturing (1.3 percent) and health and social work (3 percent) respectively.

Women from lower socio-economic groups¹¹ have higher probability of being engaged in the labour force than those who live in the higher strata of socio-economic ladder of the society. This can be attributed to economic necessity for poorest groups to be engaged in the labour force. The most striking fact is the participation of female labour force from all the socio-economic groups are more or less equally distributed in the labour force in the north east, there is a visible and significant difference in the labour force participation of social groups in the South-West region. In the South-West region, due to the caste hierarchy, female from the higher caste are more possibly to stay away from the labour market. The female participation is normally high among the ST communities due to the compulsion of work at the lower wages (Sorsa et al, 2015). Some other studies have corroborated that SC and ST females have the highest LFPR across all socio-religious categories in India. The SC/ST level of education is still lowest among the caste groups in India (Alvi,2016). They are disproportionately distributed as the casual labour and mostly in the rural agricultural sector which is an important concern that need to be considered from a policy perspective.

2.8 Summing Up

This chapter discussed about the trends in the female labour force participation in India and particularly in north east India. The trends reflect on a declining female labour force participation in India and in the north eastern region. Amongst the north eastern States, Tripura becomes an interesting point for investigation with its increasing female labour force

¹¹ National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) have identified that the backward classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes comes under the specific category of socio-economic groups.

participation and increasing participation of female in domestic duties as reported by the National Sample Surveys. However, it has been also analysed that, in Tripura the percentage of male labour force participation as main workers was higher than the main female labour force participation. The female labour force were mostly concentrated in the household sector and were engaged as marginal workers. The females who were less educated and married were higher in percentage than the percentage of the men who were married and less educated. The percentage of the male respondents who were married and highly educated was higher than the females. The insights from the primary survey revealed that in Tripura, the percentage of females who were unemployed was higher than the employed females. An analysis of participation of females across sectors revealed that in rural Tripura, more females were concentrated in the unorganized sector labour force such as agriculture and construction. It was also revealed from the primary survey that they get married at a very early age and are less educated. While in urban Tripura, more female were a part of the organized sector such as education and health sectors.

Keeping in view the employment trends in Tripura and the status of women in employment, it becomes extremely essential to understand the relationship between the household duties and gender roles which have a significant impact on women's participation in paid employment.

Chapter 3

Unpaid Work and Time Use Patterns of Women Workers in Tripura

3.1 The Context

The concept of unpaid work has attracted the attention of many feminist scholars across the world and its recognition is considered integral to achieve gender equality under the global sustainable development goals¹². Unpaid work includes all non-remunerated work activities and its allocation depends upon various factors like age, social class, presence of children, type of household structure etc (Antonopoulos and Hirway, 2010). However, in India women generally spend more time on unpaid activities which are non-market activities and hence remain outside the preview of national accounting statistics. Feminist economists have led the call for unpaid care work to be counted in statistics, “accounted for” in representations of the economy, and “taken into account” in policy making (Elson, 2000). The non-recognition of unpaid care by the policy makers is reflected in various studies on missing labour force conducted in India (Hirway, 2012; Hirway and Jose, 2011; Jain, 2008).

In the Indian context, an important reason for the low labour force participation rates (LFPRs) of women is the under estimation of their work in the national accounting systems. A lack of statistical evidence on women’s unpaid work and time use patterns have led to gross underestimation of women’s capabilities and status as workers (Samantroy and Khurana, 2015). Further, the country has witnessed an increase in domestic duties over NSS years and the north eastern region has also shown similar trends. The domestic duties participation for women in India, in the 15-59 age groups was 61.6 percent in rural areas and 65.1 percent in urban areas. In the NER, the domestic duties participation was 67.5 percent in rural areas and 60.7 percent in urban areas in 2011-12 (GoI, 2014). Further, in the NER women tend to spend more time in animal husbandry, forestry, fetching water, firewood fodder, fruits and vegetables and climbing the hilly terrains to collect forest produce etc which remains statistically invisible. Some of the studies in the region attributed this under -enumeration to cultural norms

¹² Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) No 5 Gender Equality has an important target (5.4) which aims at recognizing and valuing care and domestic work and the public provisioning of care services. One of the indicators is understanding percentage of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work by sex, age group and location. For details see <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/multimedia/2017/7/infographic-spotlight-on-sdg-5>.

which restrict women's entry into the labour market and the frequently held view that the activities women engage in are not economically productive (Desai, 1994). As discussed in the previous chapter, the region has portrayed fluctuating trends in labour force participation rates of females as reported by the National Sample Survey Office. Particularly in Tripura, it was observed that the female members were engaged in different unpaid activities like; household chores including, cooking, cleaning, washing, marketing, collecting fuels, collecting water, and taking care of the child and the elder members of the family. Also women in hilly regions spent considerable amount of their time in firewood and water collection. The burden of women's unpaid work often constraints them from participating in paid work for a longer times. The Census estimates on status of women workers reflect that women were engaged mostly as marginal workers (Samantroy, 2017).

In this context, it would be interesting to investigate women's participation in unpaid activities and time spent in these activities. The present chapter aims to analyse the household division through women's participation in unpaid work such as cooking, cleaning, washing, collecting water, collecting fire wood, care work etc. It also tries to explore the time spend by the women and men members in various activities particularly, the SNA, Extended SNA and Non-SNA activities.

3.2 Unpaid Work and Time Use Survey

Unpaid work varies from paid work and is generally not accounted in National Accounting Statistics. As discussed above, the burden of housework and other unpaid domestic responsibilities restricts them from participation in economic activities and acts as a deterrent to economic empowerment. Women working within the household rarely get any help from other members of the family, since the unpaid work is considered as their primary work and if they are engaged in any kind of paid work, it is considered as a work with less priority. Women workers who get engaged both in the paid and unpaid work at the same time, often find it difficult to reconcile both work and family life and do not get enough time for leisure or other activities that would contribute to their well-being. Unpaid household work includes all forms of household activities done in the home for the members of the household such as; preparation of food, shopping food and other items, collecting fuel and water etc. and also all types of care work including child care and elderly care. In many societies, women undertake the responsibility of the unpaid household work which is required to sustain the households. Throughout the world, women perform most of the domestic work including both the household and childcare, the mean time spent on unpaid domestic work by women

more than twice of that of men (Frances and Russel, 2005; Kulshreshtha and Singh, 2005).

Women's participation in unpaid work has been extremely high in Tripura which is also revealed in the domestic duties report of the NSS¹³. Women are constrained to participate in paid employment due to their additional household burden and often negotiate with the socio-cultural structure that institutionalizes household care work for women. Non-remunerated work or unpaid work is sometimes domestic work which is carried out in the household for oneself or for other members of the household. This type of work does not provide to any immediate monetary transactions and remains largely non-remunerated work (Heras, 2012). There is no denying the fact that women's participation in unpaid or non-remunerated work to a greater extent limits their opportunities to take up paid unemployment. The time use surveys are the best tool to capture unpaid work. In subsistence economies, children start to join in with non-remunerative domestic work very early in order to produce services for themselves and the rest of the family such as carrying water and fuel, taking care of the firewood or of younger siblings which usually help the adult to spend their time mostly into very tedious and difficult task (Heras, 2012). In the subsistence economies, children are engaged in the unpaid work like water collection, fuel collection, taking care of younger siblings etc. from a very early age. Instead of remunerative work, domestic work is the major threat to attend the school, as far as the girl children are concerned. Most of the developed countries where there are extensive social system services, girls are engaged more in to domestic work than boys (Bonke, 2010)

3.3 Time use Surveys as a Potential Tool to Capture Unpaid Work

Indian women have been suffering from lack of education, access to land, credit, technology as well as unequal household and unpaid workload distribution which affect their prosperity. A report by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) stated that, unpaid labour is the production of goods and services by the family members which are not for sale in the market; including work that is for consumption of the members in the family, for eg., cooking, gardening, house cleaning etc. and the work consumed by people not living in the household, for eg., cooking for friends and relatives, assisting others etc. The report also classified that, the paid and unpaid work can be defined on the basis of the 'third-person' criteria. This states that, if a third person could be paid for activities such as cooking, cleaning, childcare etc, the activity comes under the category of work. At the same time, if someone cannot be paid for

¹³ (NSS, (2011-12), "Participation of Women in Specified Activities along with Domestic Duties", Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India.

watching TV or reading newspaper, then it will be considered as leisure and not work (OECD,2011).

Most of the activities in which women were spending more time in the household consumption remain statistically invisible. Further, women face innumerable invisible constraints that remain invisible and discourages them to participate in full employment. The Time Use Surveys (TUS) are considered the best tool to capture unpaid work. The first TUS was conducted on a pilot basis in 1998-99 (GOI, 2001). The Time Use Survey was conducted in rural and urban areas in six major states of India, namely; Haryana in North India, Madhya Pradesh in Central India, Tamil Nadu in South India, Gujarat in West India, Orissa in East India and Meghalaya in Northeast India. One of the main objective of this pilot survey was to mainstream the TUS in the national statistical system. The analysis done by TUS has proved that TUS based workforce participation are much higher for both the male and female than what the NSSO had captured on workforce participation rates (Hirway, 2000).

The Indian TUS was designed by using the potential time use survey technique with the aim of improving the data base of the economy. There has been a lot of academic intervention by academicians and statisticians for estimating women's SNA and extended SNA work. According to the Indian TUS, the activity classifications were divided in to three categories, viz; Systems of National Accounts (SNA) Activities, Extended SNA activities and Non-SNA activities. The SNA activities included mainly the primary production activities like crop farming, animal husbandry, fishing, forestry, processing and storage, mining and quarrying, secondary activities like construction, manufacturing and activities such as trade, business and services. Extended activities comprises of household maintenance, care for children, sick and elderly. Non-SNA activities are mainly learning, social and cultural activities, mass media and personal care and self-maintenance. The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation formed a technical committee for conducting a pilot survey. Some of the tasks assigned to the technical committee included advising the government to design and plan the survey, suggest suitable definitions, concepts etc, and suggest a methodological approach for conducting the surveys (Hirway, 2000). Some of the studies that have pointed out on the relevance of time use surveys have shown that in India, the reported rates of economic activity of women were abysmally low, even though they have been spending long hours each day in the paid activities to support their families. One of the reasons for adopting time use study in India was to collect information on various household activities, mainly by women, since there was no data available at the state level (Pandey, 2000).

While some other scholars have recognized the potential of time use surveys in capturing multiple and simultaneous activities, TUS engender the national database, as it is mainly women who are contributing for the human well-being through multiple activities, both economic as well as non-economic that remains unrecorded. TUS is an attempt to capture women's activities and women's work which are ignored in the traditional way of counting. It also tries to assess women's stress and time burden who are comparatively involved in more simultaneous activities than men (Hirway, 2007). TUS can act as an effective tool for solving the statistical invisibility of unpaid work all over the world. Time diary method is the reliable method of obtaining time use data by considering all types of days (weekdays and weekends) at different seasons of a year. TUS is generally preferred over other methods because it tends to be more reliable (Juster, 1985).

The TUS have the potential to capture a wide range of activities as they capture both market and non-market activities. Also, the pilot time use survey conducted in the country has revealed that women were spending more time on Extended SNA activities than SNA activities. This has also been reported by some scholars working on gender and time use (Budlender, 2010; Antonopoulos, 2009; Munoz et al., (2014) etc). Men get more time than women to spend on the activities like leisure, learning, personal care and other social and cultural activities which are under the non-SNA activities. Unless, both the women and men get equal time to spend in different activities, their human capabilities may not be equally distributed for the productive purposes such as; leisure or for to be active in cultural and other socio political activities which is the unavoidable part for the gender development (Bhatia, 2002). A study conducted by the McKinsey Global Institute in 2015 found that women spend three times the amount of time spent by men on unpaid work around the world. In India, the picture is much more serious as women perform 9.8 times the amount of unpaid work than men. If that unpaid work is to be counted in the same way as paid work, it would share \$0.3 trillion to India's economic output (MGI, 2015).

Apart from being used to capture various activities, time use surveys also have the potential to capture context variables like *where the activity took place, with whom the activity took place, the beneficiary of the activity and motivation factor for the activity*. Simultaneous and multiple activities could also be captured through time use surveys. The context variables are important to understand the context in which the activity was carried out and contribute in addressing larger concerns of female's well-being.

In this context, the section below discusses gender differentials in participation in unpaid and paid activities. Women's participation in

household activities across various age cohorts, assistance received in household activities are analysed in detail in the following section.

3.4 Women and Unpaid Work

The Kind of Activities	Sex	Age					Total
		15-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-59	
Unpaid*	Female	0.4	16.1	15.7	10.1	4.4	46.8
	Male	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.8	1.6
Paid**	Female	0.0	0.4	1.2	0.4	0.4	2.4
	Male	0.4	8.5	25.8	18.2	8.5	61.4
Both***	Female	0.0	16.1	18.1	9.3	7.3	50.8
	Male	0.0	2.5	14.4	7.6	6.8	31.4
None	Female	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Male	0.0	0.8	1.7	0.0	3.0	5.5
Total	Female	0.4	32.7	35.1	19.8	12.1	100
	Male	0.4	11.9	42.8	25.8	19.1	100

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

*Unpaid work includes the work such as cooking, cleaning, washing, taking care of children and elders, collecting water, collecting fuels etc.

**Paid work refers all the work which receives remuneration. It includes the government sectors such as education, banking, administration, health and social work, and the other sectors such as agriculture, construction, manufacturing, daily wage labourers, self-employed and MGNREGP.

*** Both refer to the engagement of Paid and Unpaid work at the same time.

The table above (3.1) shows the age wise distribution of female and male workforce in the paid and unpaid activities. The table depicted that, a greater percent of females were engaged in unpaid work in comparison to males. While 46.8 percent of female across all age group were engaged in unpaid work, only 1.6 males were engaged in unpaid work. An analysis of female participation across various age groups showed that in the younger age groups, a greater percentage of females were engaged in unpaid work in 21-30 age groups and 31-40 age groups the participation rates were 16.1 percent and 15.7 percent respectively. Among the male respondents, only 0.8 percent were engaged in the unpaid activities in between 31-40 and 51-59 age groups. While considering paid activities, only 0.4 percent females were engaged in between the age group 21-30, 1.2 percent in between 31-40 age group. At the same time, 8.5 percent males were engaged in the age group of 21-30 and 25.8 percent males were engaged in the paid activities in the age group 31-40.

The table also shows that, large percent of females were engaged in both the paid and unpaid activities at the same time. 18.1 percent in the age group 31-40 and 16.1 percent in the age group 21-30.

3.4.1 Main Household Activities in Tripura : Sex wise distribution

As discussed above, in Tripura also the females were engaged in various kinds of unpaid activities such as cooking, cleaning, washing, collecting fuels, collecting water and care work etc.

Major Household Work	Sex	Age Group					Total
		15-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-59	
Cooking, Cleaning and Washing	Female	0	11.15	10.75	6.89	4.86	33.67
	Male	0	0.60	2.93	1.62	2.43	7.70
Collecting Water, Collecting fuels and others	Female	0.20	2.43	2.02	1.21	0.20	6.08
	Male	0	0.60	1.21	0.20	1.21	3.04
Taking Care of Children & Elders	Female	0	0.81	2.43	0.40	0.20	3.85
	Male	0	0.40	3.44	2.02	0.20	6.08
None**	Female	0	0	0.40	0.20	0.20	0.81
	Male	0.20	3.65	11.35	7.70	5.27	28.19
All***	Female	0	2.02	2.02	1.62	0.60	6.28
	Male	0	0	0	0	0	0
Others****	Female	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Male	0	0.20	5.88	0	0.40	1.01

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

** Not participating any of the aforementioned activities.

*** Participating in all the aforementioned activities.

**** The activities which is not included in the aforementioned activities such as taking care of animals, gardening etc.

The sex-wise participation in household activities across different age groups (Table 3.2) reveals that the 21-30 and 31-40 age group emerges as a major age cohort where a greater percent of female were engaged in household activities like cooking, cleaning and washing (11.15 percent and 10.75 percent). This corroborates with the domestic duties report brought out by NSSO which reflects on an increase in domestic duties in the 30-44 age group (72 percent) (GOI, 2011-12). 6.89 percent in between 41-50 and 4.86 percent in between 51-59 age groups among the female respondents were participating in cooking cleaning and washing. The table also shows

that, 2.43 percent of the female respondents were participating in collecting water and collecting fuel in the age group of 21-30, 2.02 percent in between 31-40, 1.21 percent in 41-50, and 0.20 percent in between 51-59 and 15-20 age group. While considering women's participation in care work, it was found that 2.43 percent women were engaged in care work in the 31-40 age group, 0.81 percent in 21-30 age group, 0.40 percent in 41-50 age group and 0.20 percent in 51-59 age group. So far as the male respondents were concerned, highest percent of males were participating in the activities of cooking, cleaning and washing in the age group 31-40 (2.93 percent) and the highest percent of males were participating in the activities of collecting water and collecting fuels in the age group 31-40 (1.21 percent) While considering the care activities and men, 3.44 percent were engaged in the age group 31-40 and 2.02 percent in the age group 41-50, 0.40 percent in the age 21-30 and 0.20 percent in the age 51-59.

In the focus group discussion among the members of the Panchayat, it was revealed that, *"apart from the Panchayat work, the other work we are engaged mainly are in agriculture, kitchen gardening and household work. We have divided our work as, in the morning, we are engaged in agricultural activities, cooking, cleaning and washing. In the afternoon, we spend time in the Panchayat work. In the evening we take rest. And in the night, we were engaged in cooking, taking care of children (most of the time we have to carry the children while we work), and taking care of the elderly people at home"*.

The female respondents from the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) responded that, *"apart from our engagement in the activities of our organizations, we are also engaged in all the household activities. The main household activities we are engaged are; cooking, cleaning etc. Rarely we get assistance from the men in our family"* (FGD, 2017).

Sex	Reasons						Total
	No Em- p-loy-ment oppor- tunity	Do- mestic Duties and care work	unfa- vor- able condi- tions	Not inter- ested	Others	No Quali- fication	
Fe- male	55.6	7.1	22.2	5.1	5.1	4.0	100

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

The above table (3.3) shows the reasons for non-participation in paid employment The table shows that, large number of female labour force

were not engaged in paid employment due to the lack of employment opportunities (55.6 percent) while 22.2 percent did not participate due to the unfavorable situation in the family, 7.1 percent due to domestic duties and care work, 5.1 percent were not interested and 5.1 percent did not participate due to other reasons (socio-cultural) and 4 percent did not participate due to the lack of enough qualification. In the above situation, one can perceive that, the respondents pointed out that the lack of professional and lack of technical education was the main factor leading to the lack of employment opportunities even if they achieved some amount of education. It can also be inferred that, women's participation in paid employment is also constrained by certain socio cultural barriers.

3.4.2: Assistance Received and Unpaid Work

Place	Main House Hold Activities	Cooking, Cleaning and Washing	Collecting Water, Collecting fuels, and others	Taking Care of Children & Elders	Total
Rural	Self	25	10	13	48
	Husband	16	10	10	36
	Daughter and Mother	3	1	3	7
	Daughter in Law/ Mother in Law and Sister in Law	3	3	3	9
	Domestic Worker	0	0	0	0
Urban	Self	41	1	5	47
	Husband	19	1	6	26
	Daughter and Mother	7	2	1	10
	Daughter in Law/ Mother in Law and Sister in Law	9	1	3	13
	Domestic Worker	4	0	0	4

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

The above table (3.4) reflects on the assistance received from the family members in rural and urban Tripura. According to the primary survey, most of the activities in the household activities were carried out by themselves both in rural (48 percent) and urban areas (47 percent) of Tripura. With regard to the kind of activities carried out by self, in rural Tripura, 25 percent of the female respondents were engaged in cooking, cleaning and washing, 13 percent, in care work and 10 percent in collecting water and collecting fuels. In urban Tripura, 41 percent of the female respondents were engaged in the household activities such as cooking, cleaning and washing, 5 percent in the care work and only 1 percent in collecting water and collecting fuels by themselves. The table also revealed the fact that, the female respondents received the assistance from the male counterparts in cooking, cleaning and washing in both the rural and urban Tripura. In rural Tripura, while 16 percent of the male counterparts were giving assistance in the main household activities such as cooking, cleaning and washing and at the same time, in urban Tripura, 19 percent of the male counterparts were giving assistance in cooking, cleaning and washing. From both the rural and urban Tripura the contribution of the male counterparts in the care work was comparatively higher (10 percent and 6 percent respectively). In rural Tripura, the assistance received in collecting water and collecting fuels from the male counterparts were equal to the female counterparts (10 percent). From the table it is clear that, in all the main activities such as cooking, cleaning washing, collecting water and fuel and care work, the participation of other family members were not so significant. However, the table also reveals the fact that in urban Tripura, 1.2 percent of the domestic workers were employed to get assistance in cooking, cleaning and washing.

The status of an activity can be judged through various indicators like the time spent in an activity, the pace of the activity and the assistance received. Assistance received is an important indicator to understand the context in which an activity took place. Context variables are extremely important to understand where, with whom and the motivation derived from that activities.

With regard to assistance received in rural areas, it was found that the husband had assisted in activities like cooking, collecting water and taking care of children and elders. However, in urban areas, husband provided less assistance i.e. 22 percent. At the same time, it is also important to investigate the time spent in these activities as women generally tend to spend more time on unpaid activities even if they receive some assistance from men and other household members.

Moreover, the focus group discussion conducted among the female members from the Panchayat and different NGOs revealed the fact that

“the burden of the household work among the female increases day by day. They seldom get any kind of help from the male counterparts. The help received from them is only for a limited time duration and not regularly. Even though they wanted to work outside, due to the low literacy level it is not attainable for them” (FGD, 2017).

3.4.3 Support from Family Members

With regard to the constraints and support received from members in the family, it was revealed that majority of the respondents had reported that family members were co-operative (84.8 percent) in both rural and urban areas. But, 10 percent of the women respondents had reported that the family members were not co-operative. 2.5 percent women reported that they had the burden of household work which was greater in case of rural women (6.7 percent). However, 1.3 percent of women with a greater percentage residing in urban areas (2.0 percent) reported that they had social constraints due to which they had to participate in household and related work and they do not get the opportunity to seek the work outside home.

Here, one needs to understand that, even though higher percentage of the respondents agreed that the male counterparts of their family are supportive in nature, the household burden is not lessened. In this case, one cannot come to the conclusion only on the basis of the sole reason that the male members are cooperative. Along with household responsibilities there may be many reasons to be counted such as, the gender and interpersonal relations in the family, other ‘invisible’ support they give to the male counterparts even in their paid activities, the mind set and approach towards housework and the socio-cultural practices they have been following through generations, the burden they take to handle multiple household activities etc. Moreover, it should also be considered that the location of women in diverse socio-cultural and geographic contexts imposes certain invisible constraints on them that may not be favorable for women to enable them to participate in economic opportunities. Gomez and Reca et al (2010) found that the freedom to opt for the paid work of the female is based on the balance between the paid and unpaid work in the household. This balance is mainly dependent upon the internal agreements between household members on the distribution of household responsibilities, the access to the public services of the dependent, the ability to pay for the private services, the rate of flexibility available in the paid work, existing labour policies that allow the harmony between both the sexes in the public as well as private sectors and more importantly reduction in domestic violence which further contributes in limiting their options. Besides the economic opportunities, the responsibility in the

unpaid work on the women often limits their mobility and confines them to the domestic arena. It also limits their opportunity to develop any kind of social relationship which can improve their access to public decision making.

Apart from this, in the focussed group discussion conducted among the female members from different Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) responded that, *“both the men and women are not equal in the urban parts of Tripura. They wanted to pursue their education after their marriage, but it is not possible at their place. They are engaging in various household activities and it is becoming burden for them. Divorce becomes very common at their place. Generally, the women counter parts take the initiative to get divorce due to the torture from the male counterparts. It ultimately lead to the loss in their self-esteem and they compel to stay back at home and engage in household activities”* (FGD, NGOs, 2017)

3.4.4 Preference for Work

The table below (3.5) revealed the fact that while considering the urban districts, Agartala and Manu CT, more number of female respondents preferred to work outside home. From the table, it was evident that a greater percentage (47.5 percent) in Agartala preferred to work outside. In the urban district, Manu CT, 56.0 percent of the female respondents preferred to work outside home. However, the female respondents who prefer to work inside the family in these two districts were 23.1 percent and 40.0 percent respectively which is comparatively lesser than the percent who wanted to work outside. At the same time, while considering the rural districts like Laxmibil, the female respondents who preferred to work outside home were lesser than (34.5 percent) than those who preferred to work inside the home (62.1 percent). However, in Purba Nalichera, only 0.44 percent of the female respondents wanted to work outside. Since, Purba Nalichera is a tribal district the sample size was quite limited and there was no response in most of the cases. Therefore, it was difficult to draw a broader generalization and this remained as one of the limitations of the study.

Preference to work	Manu CT	Agartala	Laxmibil	Purba Nalichera
Outside	56.0	47.5	34.5	0.44
within the household	40.0	23.1	62.1	0
Both	4.0	29.4	3.4	0

3.4.4 (a) Reasons for Preference to Work among Women

Place	Reason1: Preference to Work Outside		
	Need Upward Growth/want to have an Identity	As Educated Looking for Better Options	Other Reasons
Rural	85	15.0	0
Urban	74.21	10.15	15.62
Reason 2: Preference to Work at Home			
	Burden of HH work	Child and Elderly Care Work	Cultural and Social Norms
Rural	70.96	25.80	3.22
Urban	58.33	38.88	2.77

Source: Primary Survey (2017).

The table above (3.6) gives the reasons for preference of work either outside home or inside home. Both the reasons; to work outside home and inside home have depended up on several variables. From the table, it is clear that, in rural Tripura, the female respondents who preferred to work outside home were 85 percent due to the reason that they need upward mobility as well as identity, and 15 percent of them were looking for better options since they are educated. At the same time, the table also depicted that, in urban Tripura, 74.21 percent of the female respondents wanted to work outside home due to the reason that they were seeking upward mobility and identity and 10.15 percent of the female respondents wanted to work outside home since they are educated and also looking for better options. Apart from that in urban Tripura, 15.62 percent of the female respondents wanted to work outside due to 'other reasons' such as they are skilled and they want to have mobility etc. The table again draws the reason behind the female respondents who preferred to work inside the home. In rural Tripura, 70.96 percent of the female respondents who preferred to work inside the home did so due to the burden of household work and 25.80 percent of them were compelled to work inside home, due to the responsibilities of care work. When we see the situation in urban Tripura, the table revealed the fact that in urban Tripura, 58.33 percent of the female respondents preferred to work inside home due to the household burden and 38.88 percent of them were compelled to work inside the home due to the care work. In rural Tripura due to cultural and social norms, 3.22 percent and in urban Tripura, 2.77 percent of the female respondents were compelled to work inside home.

There is an inverse relationship between the duration of time spend by the women on unpaid household work and their economic empowerment. The burden of unpaid household work hinders them to engage in paid employment and income, which further restricts their economic empowerment. In a study, it was reported that, the hard work they invest in the household activities negatively affects the income and well-being of women again turns a stumbling block in front of them to engage in other economic, social and political activities. The author discussed that, there are many factors such as marriage and child bearing and the resultant household responsibilities may lead to the situation of either the female have to withdraw themselves from the labour market or to find out other part time jobs which have time flexibility. The belief existed that, in the affluent families, the women can afford to pay for child care, while the poor women have to always taken care of their children, sick people and other elderly people. However, this may not be true in all case, in rich families, women members always get restricted to enter in the paid labour market due to their tradition and prestige and the women in the poor families forced to enter in to paid unorganized sectors to meet their livelihoods (Sengupta, 2016).

Apart from that the focussed group discussion conducted among the female members from the Panchayat representatives mentioned that, *“we mainly wanted to work outside of the family and to have proper identity in the society. We have the aspiration for our children that our children should not be in the same area of work we are engaged at present”*. The female members from the NGOs responded that, *“we wanted to work outside home for getting educated and to take own decision in the family. However, in the village, the society gives priority for the marriage of the girl child. We believe that the women should acquire the capability to take decisions according to their will. At our place, women have started engaging in NREGA”* (FGD NGOs, 2017).

(b) Kind of Work Acceptable

Place	Preference of kind of Work						Total
	Tailoring & Weaving	Dairying & Farming	Sewing	Others*	Maintaining kitchen garden and preparing cow dung cake for fuel	Tutoring own children or others for free of charge (including care work)	
Rural	32.0	21.0	0	0	13.0	34.2	100
Urban	19.06	5.0	1.0	5.0	8.0	62.0	100

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

- Others include activities like horticulture.

The table above (3.7) shows the preference of kind of work acceptable for women if they get an opportunity to do so. From the table, it is evident that, in rural areas 32.0 percent of the female respondents preferred to be engaged in tailoring and weaving; 21.0 percent preferred to be involved in dairying and farming; 13.0 percent wanted to be engaged in maintaining kitchen garden and preparing cow dung cakes and 34.2 percent of the female respondents wanted to be involved in tutoring children for free of cost. A greater percentage of women who wanted to be engaged as tutors were educated and the response clearly reflects on a work that is confined to the ambit of the household. Since women have to spend a majority of their time in household work and have additional burdens of care work, they tend to opt for work at home.

The table also reflects on the situation of women in urban Tripura where it is revealed that 19.06 percent of the respondents preferred to be engaged in tailoring and weaving; 5.0 percent preferred to be engaged in dairying and farming; 8.0 percent of them wanted to be engaged in maintaining kitchen garden in future, 62.0 percent of them were preferring to give tuition for free of cost, (it was found that, it takes place mostly with own children and sometimes with the children of others), 1.0 percent in sewing, 5.0 percent wanted to be engaged in dairying and farming and 5 percent in 'others' (included horticulture etc).

The household structure and familial ideology also plays a vital role in limiting female's participation in wage labour, and it is specifically related to relevant structure of the family. These processes are reciprocal in nature and difficult to break both analytically and politically. Education and training systems also played the role to reproduce the concept of division of labour not only to reflect, but also to reinforce the role of men and female in the family. Some of the feminist scholars have clearly reflected that women have always been considered as the 'reserved army' and to be used their labour at the time of emergency (Barret, 1980). According to Mies (1998), in the housewifization process, in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the marriage and family form were only possible among the propertied class of the bourgeoisie- ie; among peasants, artisans and workers; female always had to share all of the work. It was under the bourgeoisie, the social and sexual division of labour established with the character of capitalism. One of the remarkable issue related with the international division of labour is that the characteristics of this strategy defines that the third world female cannot be considered as workers, but as housewives. By universalizing the ideology of housework, all the sectors the female have been engaged; whether it is formal or informal started considering as supplementary work, and the income is considered as the supplementary income to add with the main bread earner of the family; husband. - Moreover, the focussed group discussions with the female respondents from the Panchayat members,

reflected on their limitation for getting a proper job. They responded that “household work is something like liabilities. However, due to the personal attachment we failed to go out of the family which hinders us from upward mobility. The divorce rates among the girls are very high due to the unfavorable situation in the households which again lead to the situation to fall in the vulnerable section of the society”.

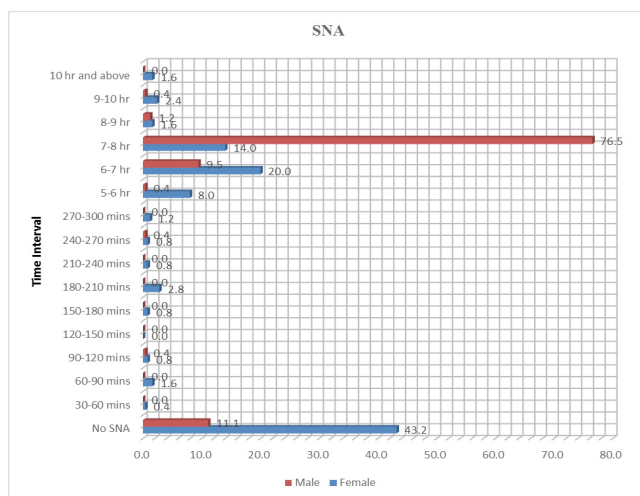
The female respondents from the NGOs responded that “We have been suffering due to lack of education. We realized that, if we would have been educated, it would have helped us to look at for better opportunity including service sectors. Due to the nature of our job, we cannot meet our requirements in the daily life. However, we find pleasure through giving security to the society; likewise we try to find out the satisfaction in our job” (FGD, Panchayat Members and NGOs, 2017).

3.5 Women’s Participation in Paid and Unpaid Activities: Time Distribution Patterns

An analysis of time distribution patterns of men and female would ensure an understanding of the unequal household distribution of labour, gendered nature of housework and additional burden of household and related work on women.

3.5.1 Time Use Analysis of Gender Wise Participation in SNA

Figure 3.1:
Sex wise Participation in SNA Activities: Time Use Patterns (in percentage)



Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

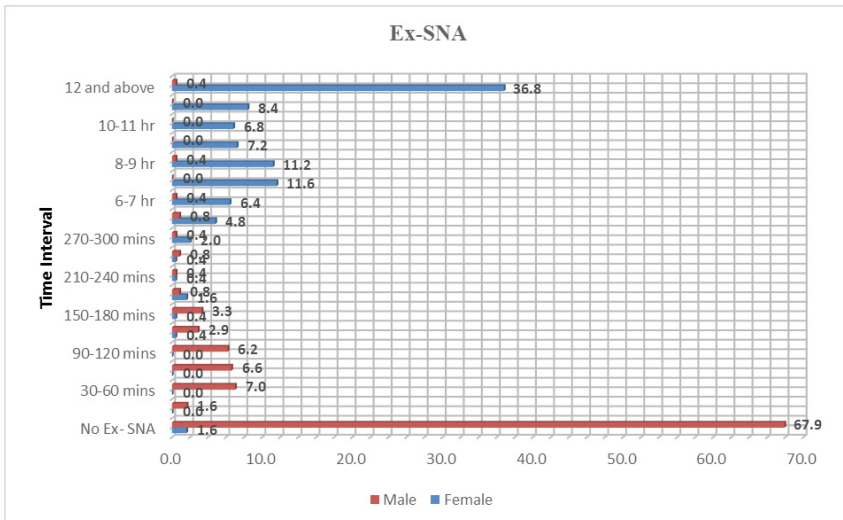
**SNA involves economic activities it captures paid activities such as education, banking, administration, agriculture, daily wage labourers etc. and also other economic activities.

With respect to the paid activities, the figure above (3.1) shows that the highest percent i.e (20 percent) of the female respondents were engaged for 6-7 hr in SNA activities, 14 percent for 7-8 hr, 8 percent for 5-6 hr, 2.8 percent for 180-210 mnts, 2.4 for 9-10 hr, 1.6 percent for 60-90 mnts, 8-9 hr, 10 hr and above, 1.2 percent for 270-300 mnts, 0.8 for 90-120 mnts, 150-180 mnts and 210-240 mnts and 0.4 percent were engaged for 30-60 mnts of SNA activities.

While considering the male respondents, the highest percent (76.5 percent) of them were engaged in SNA activities for 7-8 hr, 9.5 percent for 6-7hr, 1.2 percent for 8-9 hr, 0.4 percent for 90-120 mnts, 240-270 mnts, 5-6 hr and 9-10 hr of SNA activities. The figure also highlighted that, while only 11.1 percent of the male respondents were not engaged in any of the SNA activities, 43.3 percent of the female respondents were not engaged in any of the SNA activities. From the figure, it was evident that the participation of males in SNA activities was much higher than females and the gender gaps remained quite pronounced.

3.5.2 Participation in Extended SNA Activities: Time Distribution Pattern

Figure 3.2:
Sex-wise Participation in Ex SNA Activities: Time Use Patterns (in percentage)



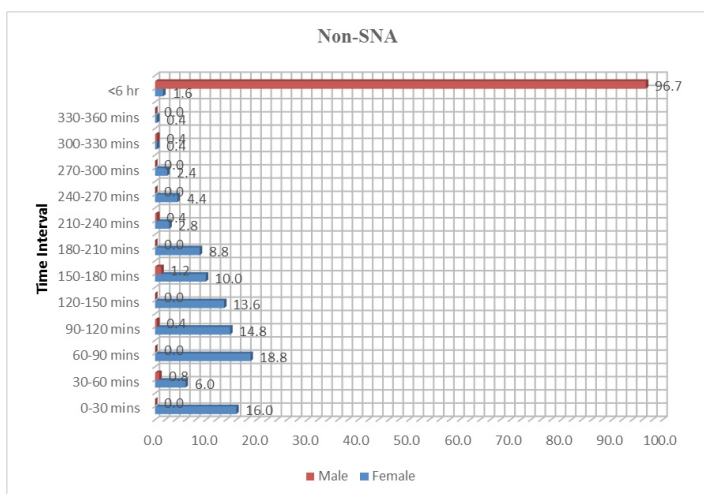
Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

**The activities comes under Ext-SNA are the unpaid household activities like cooking, cleaning, washing and care work etc.

With regard to the Ext-SNA activities, the figure above (3.2) showed that, highest percentage (36.8 percent) of the female respondents were engaged in Ext SNA activities for more than 12 hours. 11.6 percent for 7-8 hrs, 11.2 for 8-9 hrs, 8.4 percent for 11-12 hrs, 6.8 for 10-11 hrs, 6.4 percent for 6-7 hrs, 4.8 for 5-6 hrs, 2 percent for 270-300 mnts, 1.6 for 180-210 mnts, 0.4 percent for 120-150 mnts, 150-180 mnts, 210-240 mnts, and 240-270 mnts, of Ext SNA activities. While considering the male respondents, highest percent (7 percent) of male respondents were engaged for 30-60 mnts of Ext SNA activities. 6.6 percent were engaged for 60-90 mnts, 6.2 percent for 90-120 mnts, 3.3 percent for 150-180 mnts, 2.9 percent for 120-150 mnts, 1.6 percent for 0-30 mnts, 0.8 percent for 180-210 mnts, 240-270 mnts, 5-6 hrs and 0.4 percent for 210-240 mnts, 270-300 mnts, 6-7 hrs, 8-9 hrs. And above 12 hrs of Ext SNA activities. One of the significant points to be noted here is that, while only 1.6 percent of the female respondents were not engaged in any of the Ext-SNA activities, 67.9 percent of the male respondents were not engaged in any of the Ext-SNA activities thus reflecting a huge gap. The figure revealed that the male respondents were not engaged in Ex-SNA activities for a longer duration which clearly reflects on the additional burden on women.

3.5.3 Participation in Non-SNA Activities: Sex wise Time Distribution Patterns

Figure 3.3:
Sex-wise Participation in Non-SNA Activities: Time Use Patterns (in percentage)



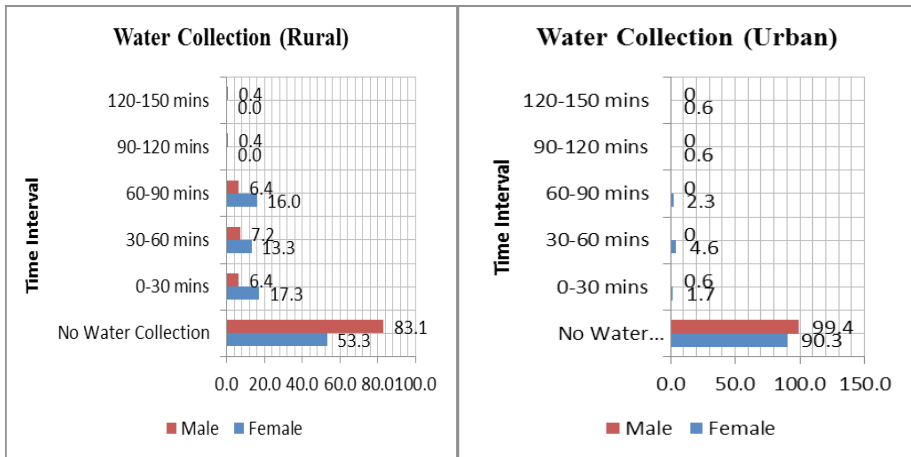
Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

**Non-SNA- The activities contribute to own well-being and time spent on watching TV and other creative activities etc.

Non-SNA activities contribute to own well-being and time spent on Non SNA activities are an important indicator to understand the larger concerns of human development. It is evident that from the above figure (3.3) that men still have time to participate in the Non SNA activities while women do not have. With regard to the Non-SNA activities, the figure above shows that, the highest percent (18.8 percent) of the female respondents were engaged in the Non-SNA activities for 60-90 mnts, 16 percent engaged for 0-30 mnts, 14.8 percent for 90-120 mnts, 13.6 percent for 120-150 mnts, 10 percent for 150-180 mnts, 8.8 percent for 180-210 mnts, 6 percent for 30-60 mnts, 4.4 percent for 240-270 mnts, 2.8 percent for 210-240 mnts, 2.4 percent for 270-300 mnts, 1.6 percent for 6 hr and 0.4 percent for 300-330 mnts and 330-360 mnts of Non-SNA activities. While considering the male respondents, the highest percent (96.7 percent) of them were engaged for 6 hrs of Non-SNA activities, 1.2 percent were engaged for 150-180 mnts, 0.8 percent for 30-60 mnts and 0.4 percent for 90-120 mnts, 210-240 mnts and 300-330 mnts of Non-SNA activities. It is significant to note that the non-SNA activities were recorded as very high for males with 96.7 percent of men spending more than 6 hrs on Non-SNA activities while it was comparatively lesser for females.

3.5.4 Time Distribution Pattern of Women in Collection of Water

Figure 3.4:
Time Distribution Patterns of women in Collection of Water
(in percentage)



Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

From the figure (3.4) it was evident that 17.3 percent females spent at least 30 mnts for collecting water. For water collection in rural areas, the

maximum time which female spent in water collection was 60-90 mnts. (16 percent). In urban Tripura, 4.6 percent of females used to spend time in water collection. On the contrary, in rural Tripura the maximum time spent in water collection among males was 30 mnts.to 60 mnts. (7.2 percent), whereas in urban Tripura men spent only 0-30mnts in water collection (0.6 percent). However, in rural areas Laxmibil village had the highest number of females who spent more than an hour in water collection. The rural-urban and gender differentials became quite prominent in case of water collection as an important activity.

3.5.5 Time Distribution Patterns of women in Collection of Water (District-wise)

Sex	Districts	Water Collection						Total
		No Water Collection	0-30 mnts	30 mnts -1 hr	1 hr -1.30 hr	1.30 hr to 2 hr	2 hr to 3 hr	
Female	Agartala (Urban)	99.3	0	0	0.7	0	0	100
	Laxmibil (Rural)	52	14	10	24	0	0	100
	Manu CT (Urban)	36	12	32	12	4	4	100
	Purba Nalichera (Rural)	56	24	20	0	0	0	100
Male	Agartala	99	1		0	0	0	100
	Laxmibil	79.6	8.2	10.2	2	0	0	100
	Manu CT	100	0	0	0	0	0	100
	Purba Nalichera	90.9	0	9.1	0	0	0	100

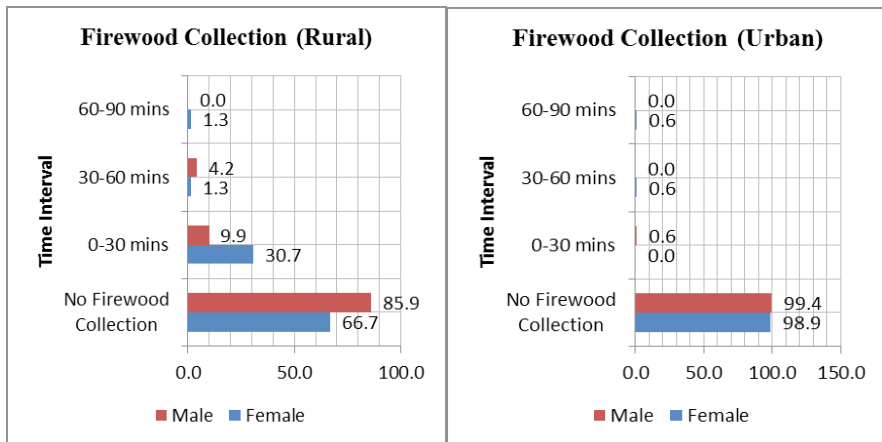
Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

The table above (3.8) shows the time use of the female and the male respondents in water collection in the four districts of Tripura. From the table it is clear that, in rural Tripura more female respondents were engaged in water collection than in urban Tripura. In the urban districts of Agartala, no female respondents were engaged in the collection of water. At the same time, in the rural district Laxmibil, 24 percent of the female respondents were engaged for 1 hr to 1.30 hr of water collection and also 14 percent of the female respondents were engaged for 0 to 30 minutes of water collection. In the rural district Purba Nalichera 24 percent of the female respondents were engaged for 0 to 30 minutes and 20 percent for 30 mnts to 1hr of water collection. In the urban district, Manu CT, 32 percent of the female respondents were engaged in water collection for 30 minutes to 1hr. This trend may be due to the geographical condition of the district

as in Manu CT (urban and rural areas) have more or less similar pattern of geographical characteristics. While considering the male respondents, it is clear that only in the rural district Laxmibil they were engaged in the collection of water (8.2 percent for 0-30 mnts. and 10.2 for 30 mnts. to 1 hr). However, the table clearly depicted that the engagement of the male respondents in water collection, both in the rural and the urban districts was quite low.

3.5.6 Time Distribution Pattern of Women in Firewood Collection

**Figure 3.5:
Time Distribution Patterns of Women in Firewood Collection
(in percentage)**



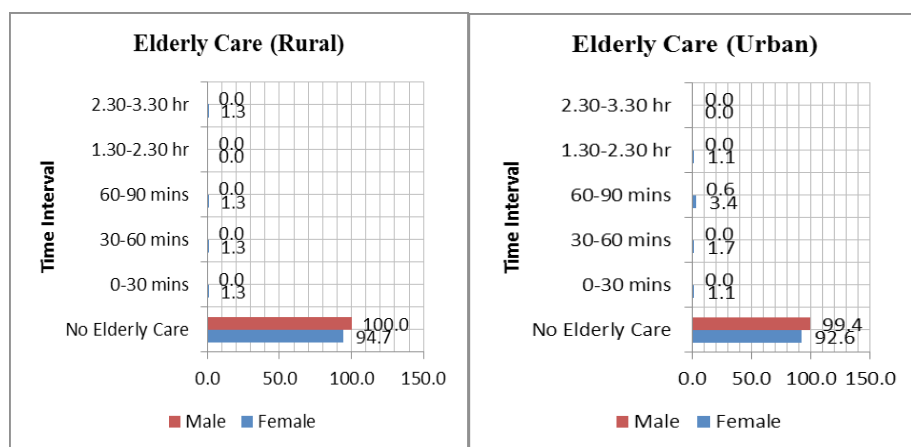
Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

The above figure (3.5) clearly revealed that females spent more time on firewood collection in comparison to males. In rural Tripura, 30.7 percent of the female respondents were engaged in firewood collection for duration in between 0 to 30 mnts. 1.3 percent were engaged in firewood collection for 30-60 mnts and 1.3 percent engaged for 60-90 mnts. However, among the male respondents, the highest percent (9.9 percent) were engaged in firewood collection in between 0-30 mnts and 4.2 percent were engaged for 30-60 mnts. In urban Tripura, 0.6 percent females were engaged for 30-60 mnts and 60-90 mnts in firewood collection. While considering the male respondents, only 0.6 percent were engaged for 0-30 mnts in firewood collection. From the figure it was also evident that in both rural and urban Tripura, the percent who were ‘not engaged in firewood collection’ was high among the male respondents than the female counterparts. Women tend to get engaged in forest and forest related activities. Women also possess extensive knowledge about the use and conservation of natural

resources (Clarke, 1999). Even though, women are not included in the decision making process at the community level based institutions meant for the management of natural resources; they played a vital role in the management of environmental resources and forestry in particular. The new provision introduced in the year of 2009, prioritized the inclusion of female members more in numbers in to the Executive Committee (EC) and Forest User Groups (FUG) as reported by some studies. It was also identified that, after 2009, there is a decline in the collection of firewood at the household level. It was analysed that, this may due to the reason that, while female prioritize conservation; in a decision making level they favor the decisions which tend to ensure a sustainable extraction of firewood (Leone, 2013).

3.5.7 Time Distribution Pattern of Women in Elderly Care

Figure 3.6:
Time Use Patterns of Women in Elderly Care (in percentage)



Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

The figure above (3.6) depicted the fact that the time spent by both the female and male respondents in the elderly care activities in urban and rural Tripura was very low. In rural Tripura, 1.3 percent of the females were engaged in the elderly care for 0-30 mnts, 30-60 mnts, 60-90 mnts and 2.30 -3.30 hr. Among the male respondents, in rural Tripura none of the male members were participating in elderly care. In urban Tripura, 3.4 percent of the female respondents spent their time on elderly care for 60-90 mnts. 1.7 percent spent 30-60 mnts, 1.1 percent for 0-30 mnts and 1.30-1.30 hr of elderly care. Among the male respondents, only 0.6 percent were engaged for 60-90 mnts of elderly care. This was subject to the presence of elderly in the household and the data was analysed on the basis of households that

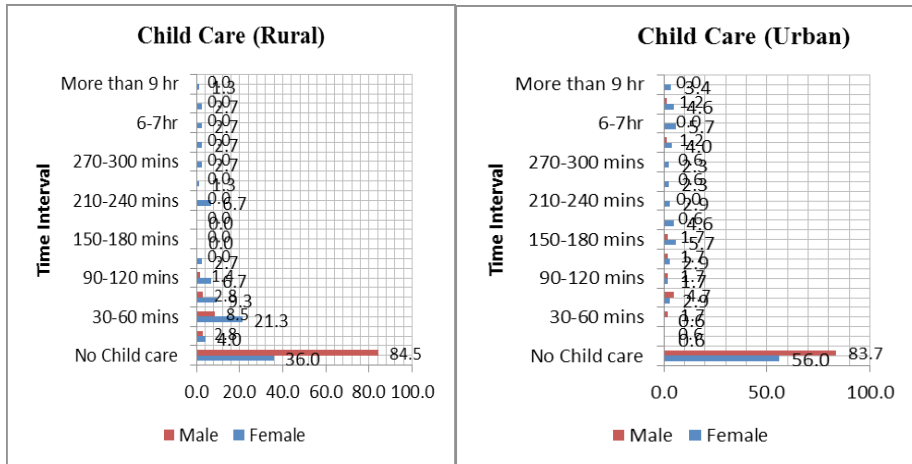
had elderly members. It was evident that the households that had elderly population, the responsibilities of elderly care fell mostly on females.

* The data was analysed on the basis of households that had elderly members.

3.5.8 Time Distribution Patterns of Women in Child Care

Figure 3.7:

Time Distribution Patterns of Women in Child Care (in percentage)



Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

** The table number 1.8 shown that 5 percent of the rural households and 20 percent of the urban households have ‘no children’.

The figure above (3.7) showed that, in rural Tripura, the highest number of female respondents who were engaged in child care (21.3 percent) spent 30-60 mnts, 9.3 percent 60-90 mnts, 6.7 percent spent 90-120 mnts and 210-240 mnts, 4 percent spent 0-30 mnts, 2.7 percent spent 120-150 mnts, 270-300 mnts, 5-6 hr, 6-7 hr and 7-8 hr, 1.3 percent for 240-270 and 8-9 hr of child care. Among the males, in rural Tripura highest percent (8.5 percent) were engaged for 30-60 mnts in child care. 2.8 percent men were engaged for 0-30 mnts and 60-90 mnts and only 1.4 percent for 90-120 mnts is child care.

At the same time, in urban Tripura, highest number of females were engaged in childcare i.e (5.7 percent) who spent 150-180 mnts and 6-7 hr of child care. 4.6 percent were engaged for 180-210 mnts and 7-8 hr, 2.9 percent for 60-90 mnts, 120-150 mnts, 210-240 mnts and 8-9 hr of child care. Among the male respondents, 4.7 percent were engaged for 60-90 mnts of child care. 1.7 percent were engaged for 30-60 mnts, 90-120 mnts, 120-150

mnts, 150-180 mnts, 1.2 percent for 5-6 hr and 7-8 hr, 0.6 percent for 0-30 mnts, 180-210 mnts, 240-270 mnts and 270-300 mnts of child care.

3.6 Summing Up

The chapter discussed that women's participation in unpaid work has been extremely high in Tripura with an increased engagement in domestic duties. Women were constrained to participate in paid employment due to their additional household burden and often negotiated with the socio-cultural structure that institutionalized household and care work as a prerogative of female. An analysis of their preference for work revealed a highly gendered occupational structure with gender stereotypical choice of occupations often created due to deeply entrenched structures of gender inequality. Such stereotypes often disadvantage women from achieving upward mobility and engagement in full time employment.

The primary survey revealed that even when men were engaged in some amount of household work, they failed to contribute to make any significant changes in the life of the females. The chapter also discussed that, due to increased household responsibility, women could not get engaged in the paid activities outside home. Other major reason is that due to the socio-cultural factors and the history of the categorization of household work as a gendered activity which generally remains unquestioned by most of the women has been disadvantageous for them. Moreover, there were many 'invisible' factors such as interpersonal relationship in the household and division of labour which was also one of the major factors that hindered the mobility of women outside home.

While considering the Time Use Survey and the engagement of the women and men in the SNA, Ext-SNA and Non-SNA activities, it was evident that, males spent most of their time on SNA activities i.e; paid work than on Extended SNA activities. However, in comparison with men, the female respondents were spending more time in the Ext-SNA activities and the time spent in SNA and Non-SNA was for a lesser duration among females. The unequal time distribution patterns of men and women are important to analyze for working towards redistribution policies.

Chapter 4

Gender and Social Protection in Tripura

4.1 The Context

The World Social Protection Report of the ILO 2014 reported that a large majority of the world's population do not have regular access to social protection. Only 27 per cent of the global population enjoy access to comprehensive social security systems, whereas 73 per cent are covered partially or not at all. Many of those not sufficiently protected live in poverty, which is the case for half the population of middle and low-income countries (ILO, 2014). Social protection for women has remained as one of the important development goals for policy makers and development practitioners across the world. In a country like India there is a preponderance of the informal sector absorbing a large section of women engaged in casual work, piece rated work and working largely in the confines of the household that remains invisible in the statistical sources. Such constraints, mostly deprive women from access to social protection. Women are often subjected to life-cycle of risks and vulnerabilities emanating largely from gendered divisions of household tasks, poverty and deprivation in the household, customary laws and social practices restricting women's mobility (Samantroy, 2013). Further, the vulnerability of women also stems from their socio-cultural contexts which portray unequal gender relations in terms of their social location across caste, class and ethnic groups. While focusing on the empowerment of women as a group, requires an analysis of gender relations i.e. the ways in which power relations between the sexes are constructed and maintained (Mosedale, 2005).

Women's access to social protection has been a major challenge in the context of informal economy. The social security and welfare of the workers have remained central to policy discourses in India and there have been efforts to promote access to social protection for informal sector workers and reduce their vulnerability. Social protection measures are critical for informal workers, particularly for women workers, to protect them from contingencies and deprivation (GEPD, 2012). There are many initiatives that have tried to address such concerns like the application of minimum wages for the workers, accidental and social security benefits, occupational safety and health, conditions of employment, disciplinary action, formation for trade unions, industrial relations etc which are implemented under various labour legislations. One of the pioneering laws which have been enacted for the welfare and the social security of the labour in the unorganised sector including the handloom workers,

beedi workers, fisherman/female, toddy tappers, weavers, and plantation and leather workers was the Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008. The main provisions under this act had been constituted through the implementation of Social Security Board such as; life and disability cover, health and maternity benefits, old age protection, and other benefits for the welfare of the unorganized labourers. Similarly, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (MGNREGP) under the MGNREGP legislation 2005, is considered as a flagship social protection programme which is aimed at promoting rights of workers.

However, inspite of various efforts of the government, many of the women workers remain outside the purview of access to social protection in the country and the north eastern region is not an exception. Many scholars who have investigated on gender dimensions in social protection have witnessed that women face structural barriers in accessing social protection that are linked to employment. They often stand at the crossroads of paid and unpaid care economy, over represented within the informal economy and disproportionately implicated in the unpaid work that goes into reproducing labour, families and households (Razavi, 2011). Further the issues of geographical constraints also become pertinent when analyzing impact of MGNREGP on women. Some scholars have identified that in some parts of the country the tradition of wage work promotes MGNREGP participation for women whereas it is difficult to reach women in hilly regions who spend most of their time in household provisioning of fuel, firewood etc. in remote tribal areas where the contact with the mainstream is limited (Dasgupta and Sudarshan, 2011). However, some others have reiterated the need to understand how social protection can be aimed at being *promotive* or *transformative* by addressing life cycle risks and vulnerabilities and change in household gender relations (Sabatese-Wheeler and Devereux, 2007 and Sabatese-Wheeler and Kabeer 2003)¹⁴.

Such questions are extremely important in the context of a highly diversified social structure in India and north east in particular. Also, important questions which arise are whether the existing social protection programmes of the country have led to change in gender relations thereby improving women's agency? What constraints women to participate in full time paid employment or employment guarantee programmes? In this context, the present chapter tries to understand the gender dimensions of

¹⁴ "Transformative" view as advocated by extends social protection to arenas such as equity, empowerment and economic, social and cultural rights, rather than confining the scope of social protection to targeted income and consumption transfers. For example, many of the difficulties involved in the provision of social protection for relates to socio-cultural values that leave in vulnerable positions. Clearly, social protection instruments designed for many categories of must include a substantial "transformative" element, in the sense that power relations between men and become more balanced.

social protection in north east. It also makes an attempt to understand women's participation in wage employment schemes like MGNREGP across social groups, income and age cohorts thereby aiming to identify their constraints due to which they are unable to continue in the labour market.

4.2 Understanding Social Protection and Gender in India and the North East

As per the definition *Social Protection describes all public and private initiatives that transfer income or assets to the poor, protect the vulnerable against the livelihood risks and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalized; with the overall objectives of extending the benefits of economic growth and reducing the vulnerability of the poor, vulnerable and marginalized people*" (Devereux and Sabatese-Wheeler, 2004¹⁵; Sabatese-wheeler and Devereux, 2007). The concept of social protection is enshrined as a constitutional right and India and the fundamental rights and directive principles reflect on protection of socio-economic rights. The country has various social protection schemes both at the Central and State levels. The total expenditure by the government of India on six of the major social protection related sectors (elementary education, health and family welfare, labour and labour welfare, social security and welfare and rural development) has increased from 1.06 per cent of GDP in 1995-96 to 1.35 per cent of GDP in 2005-06 and further to 1.75 per cent of GDP in 2010-11 (Srivastava, 2013).

However social protection measures were identified to be of four types as Protective (Providing relief from deprivation), Preventive (averting deprivation), Promotive (enhancing real income and capabilities) and Transformative (which seeks to address concerns of social equity and exclusion) (Devereux and Sabatese-Wheeler, 2004; Sabatese-wheeler and Devereux, 2007). The social protection policies in India also fall under the above broad heads but a concern which arises here is whether the country has been able to provide a transformative social protection which is gender sensitive in nature? Policy makers in many developing countries are finding it difficult to implement the social security schemes due to the administrative tasks associated with the operation of such schemes (Ulrichs, 2016). With regard to the implementation of MGNREGP many challenges like lack of capacity in gram panchayats, issues related to wages, lack of social inclusion in micro planning etc. have been (Srinivasan and Srinivasan, 2017).

¹⁵ (Devereux and Sabatese Wheeler, 2004). This view was later supported by Naila Kabeer in her views on the need for measures specifically designed to reach out the socially excluded or economically excluded groups including (Kabeer, 2010)

As pointed out by many scholars, MGNREGP is believed to be a strong safety net' for the vulnerable groups by providing an effective employment source when other employment schemes failed to play as an alternative of it (Ahmed and Sarkar, 2014). While some others have perceived that in the context of low level of agricultural employment in the rural India, the MGNREGP fill the gap of this lack of employment and keep a stability in between the income and consumption of the rural household (Dasgupta and Sudarshan, 2011). However, there has been limited literature in the context of women's participation in MGNREGP in the north eastern region.

Some of the studies conducted in the north eastern region have pointed out that women in the NER remain as one of the most vulnerable groups and most of the welfare programmes introduced by the government did not reach them due to lack of awareness, corruption and other reasons (Sarker, 2013). On the contrary, some other scholars have analysed how education, family support, government support and skill training can be instrumental in promoting entrepreneurship among tribal women, particularly among Khasis of Meghalaya (Sirabell, 2012). Coming to Tripura, as one of the north eastern State which records increasing female labour force participation, it would be interesting to explore women's participation in MGNREGP and their access to same across social groups, education and age cohorts. The following section tries to analyse the various determinants for women's participation in MGNREGP and also critically examines how far the programme can be instrumental in addressing larger concerns of promoting a transformative social protection agenda.

4.3 Women's Work Participation under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (MGNREGP) in the NER

Women's participation in MGNREGP in the NER has been lower than the all India average which was 56.83 percent in 2016-17. Though some states in the NER has shown an increase in participation rates over the years. Since MGNREGP has been one of the biggest employment guarantee programmes in the country, it is important to understand the reasons for lower participation of women . Though, the participation of women in NER has been considerably low compared to all India average, some states (Tripura and Manipur) have shown a steady increase in MGNREGP participation. However, States like Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Sikkim have shown fluctuating trends.

State	Participation of female			
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Arunachal Pradesh	30.25	29.52	31.61	34.88
Assam	24.75	28.02	32.91	35.79
Manipur	35.26	38.34	39.57	56.49
Meghalaya	42.02	42.79	43.28	0.00
Mizoram	29.94	38.93	36.59	37.85
Nagaland	28.47	31.70	31.31	29.96
Sikkim	44.79	49.10	48.16	49.80
Tripura	47.11	49.60	50.41	52.51
All India	52.46	55.03	55.84	56.83

Source: Official website of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act: <http://nrega.nic.in>

In Tripura, there has been a steady increase in MGNREGP participation for women (Table 4.1) which increased from 47.11 percent in 2013-14 to 52.51 percent in 2016-17. Manipur has also shown a steady increase from 35.26 percent in 2013-14 to 56.49 percent in 2016-17. States like Meghalaya where the participation is nil in 2016-17 due to employment being provided to lesser number of households.

4.3.1 Women's Participation in MGNREGP in Tripura: Insights from Primary Survey

MGNREGP		Place		Total
		Rural	Urban	
Yes	Female	60.9	39.1	100
	Male	60.6	39.4	100
No	Female	34.7	65.3	100
	Male	32.4	67.6	100
No Response	Female	25	75	100
	Male	33.3	66.7	100
Total	Female	46.6	53.4	100
	Male	45.7	54.3	100
	Total	46.2	53.8	100

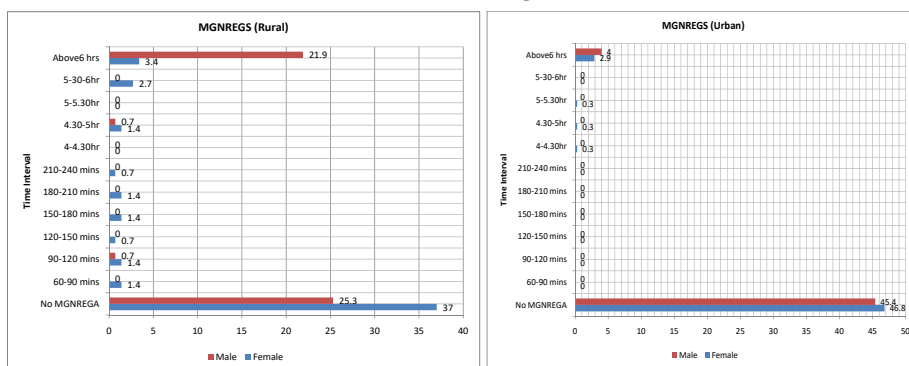
(Source: Primary Survey 2017).

The table above (4.2) shows the coverage of MGNREGP in rural and Urban Tripura. From the table it is clear that, in rural Tripura, 60.9 percent of females participated in MGNREGP and out of the total females surveyed in

urban areas for the present study, 39.1 percent participated in MGNREGP. The urban areas considered for the study was Agartala and Manu CT. As per some media reports, the state has moved for multi-cropping agriculture practices instead of traditional single cropping, which also keeps the men busy in fields, giving female more opportunities to avail of MGNREGP facilities. Dhalai was the first district to be selected for MGNREGP projects¹⁶. Some of the studies in the region have also pointed out that in Tripura, more than 92 percent of the rural households are job-card holders much alike other North-eastern states, where the enrolment is higher than the national average. However, all job-card holders do not seek work from the scheme; around 82-86 percent of the households actually do (Bhowmick, 2013).

The primary survey conducted in the Tripura region across four geographical terrains revealed that participation of women in MGNREGP was highest in rural areas; particularly Laxmibil recorded 36 percent participation. In the hilly areas of Purba Nalichera (rural) the participation rate of women was 17 percent, while in Manu CT it was 30 percent. In Agartala city, only 8.2 percent of women participated in MGNREGP. It was evident that women's access to employment guarantee programmes becomes extremely limited in hilly areas as women spend most of their time in providing for household and participating in household and related activities or spending time for securing inputs for household.

Figure 4.1:
Time Distribution Patterns and participation in MGNREGP
(in percentage)



(Source: Primary Survey, 2017).

The above figure (4.1) shows the time distribution patterns of the participation of men and women in MGNREGP in rural and urban Tripura. The table indicates that, in rural Tripura, the engagement of

¹⁶ <http://www.indiatogether.org/nrega-women>.

female respondents in MGNREGP was comparatively lower than the male respondents.

Apart from this, the focussed group discussions conducted among the Panchayat representatives revealed that women rarely get the help from male counterparts. As one of the respondents stated *“We wanted to participate in MGNREGP, but due to the household burden we cannot go and work outside”*.

A member from the NGOs responded that, *“We believe that the women should acquire the capability to take decisions according to their will. Being engaged in MGNREGP, most of the women have achieved the capability to participate in public decision making”*.

4.3.2 Participation in MGNREGP across Social Groups in Tripura

The issue of social inclusion has been one of the central ideas behind the implementation of MGNREGP. Since the incidence of poverty is more among the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), it becomes important to understand whether social protection programmes like MGNREGP has been able to reach the rural masses located across various social groups. Most of the SC and ST household remain landless and depend largely on wage labour where MGNREGP appears to be a route out of poverty.

It was realized that one of the goals of the programme is to empower the disadvantaged sections of the society such as SCs and STs. In this circumstance, the special provision also made for the promotion of socio economic justice and social inclusion. As per the study conducted by the Government of India there was special emphasis for the inclusion of the SCs and STs in the programmes such as providing awareness, planning process, implementation of the work and monitoring the progress of the work as well as the quality of the works. The programme also adopted a special provision for SC/ST households owning land or homestead to engage in various programmes such as land development works, provision of irrigation facility, plantation and horticulture (GoI, 2008 and 2013). While some other studies also reported that in constructing roads, the priority was given to facilitate access to SC/ST habitations (Manjula and Rajasekhar, 2015).

Table 4.3: Women’s Participation in MGNREGP-Caste Composition

MGNREGP	Caste				Total	
		General	OBC	SC		ST
Yes	Female	20.3	18.8	15.9	44.9	100
	Male	21.2	19.7	16.7	42.4	100

No	Female	69.3	13.3	8.0	9.3	100
	Male	71.8	12.7	8.5	7.0	100
Total	Female	45.8	16.0	11.8	26.4	100
	Male	47.4	16.1	12.4	24.1	100
	Total	46.6	16.0	12.1	25.3	100

(Source: Primary Survey, 2017)

It was evident that participation in MGNREGP differed across social groups. The table above (4.3) clearly showed that the highest percent of female respondents who participated in MGNREGP were from Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities (44.9 percent) followed by the General category (20.3 percent), 18.8 percent from OBC and 15.9 percent from SC categories. The State of Livelihood Report 2016 shows that for SCs, MGNREGP is an important livelihood opportunity since it is free from the largely caste-based relations of subordination, discrimination, and exploitation that mark both agricultural daily wage work and non-farm employment (Srinivasan and Srinivasan, 2016).

4.3.3 Education and MGNREGP

Education has a significant influence on awareness and participation of the respondents in MGNREGP. The awareness and participation scores of people tend to increase with the level of education (Dheraja et al, 2013). In this context, it can be analysed that, education has a specific role in the participation of MGNREGP because the respondents who attained high school level of education were largely participating in it. In the present study, it was revealed that respondents who attained higher education did not participate in MGNREGP due to their preference in other job.

Table 4.4: MGNREGP and Education Composition in Tripura

MGNREGA		Educational Status							Total	
		Pri- mary	Upper Pri- mary	High school	Higher sec- ondary	Degree	Post Grada- tion	Above Post Grada- tion		No Educa- tion
Yes	Female	8.7	26.1	49.3	8.7	1.4	0.0	0.0	5.8	100
	Male	6.1	16.7	42.4	30.3	3.0	0.0	0.0	1.5	100
No	Female	1.3	5.3	14.7	13.3	38.7	25.3	0.0	1.3	100
	Male	1.4	0.0	12.7	9.9	47.9	21.1	7.0	0.0	100
Total	Female	4.9	15.3	31.3	11.1	20.8	13.2	0.0	3.5	100
	Male	3.6	8.0	27.0	19.7	26.3	10.9	3.6	0.7	100
	Total	4.3	11.7	29.2	15.3	23.5	12.1	1.8	2.1	100

(Source: Primary Survey 2017)

The table above (4.4) clearly shows that the highest percent of female respondents who participated in MGNREGP in Tripura were having educational qualification up to high school level (49.3percent), 26.1 percent had upper primary education, 8.7 percent had primary and higher secondary and 1.4 percent had degree educational qualification. It was evident that the respondents with post-graduation or above were not at all participating in MGNREGP. As reported by some of the studies in States like Kerala, West Bengal, Bihar and Andhra Pradesh, since MGNREGP is based on the unskilled labour, education plays a vital role in the awareness and participation in the programme.

4.3.4 MGNREGP and Age Composition

The MGNREGP is believed to be as one of the important initiatives to provide livelihood opportunities to the burgeoning youth population. In this context, the government has formulated a Project for Livelihoods in Full Employment under the MGNREGP that aims at promoting self-reliance and improving the skill bas of MGNREGP workers which is an important skilling initiative for the youth (GoI,2017 b).The study has clearly brought out the engagement of the younger generation in MGNREGP activities in Tripura.

Table 4.5: Age Composition and MGNREGP

MGNREGA		Age					Total
		15-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-59	
Yes	Female	1.4	34.8	37.7	20.3	5.8	100
	Male	1.5	21.2	34.8	25.8	16.7	100
No	Female	0	36	29.3	16	18.7	100
	Male	0	8.5	39.4	21.1	31.0	100
Total	Female	0.7	35.4	33.3	18.1	12.5	100
	Male	0.7	14.6	37.2	23.4	24.1	100
Total		0.7	24.6	36.0	20.4	18.3	100

(Source: Primary Survey, 2017)

The table above (4.5) clearly showed that the highest percent of female respondents who participated in MGNREGP were in the younger age group of 21-30 years (34.8 percent) as well as 31-40 years (37.7percent). However, 20.3 percent in between 41-50 years, 5.8 percent between 51-59years and 1.4 percent in between 15-20 years of age group. However, the younger age groups were also over burdened with household and care responsibilities as discussed in the previous chapter. According to the study based on Rajasthan and Kerala, more than half of the eligible women

in the NRGEGP programme were above 18 years old (Sudarshan, 2011). Similarly, another study also discussed that, majority of the MGNREGS workers belonged to the age group of 30-50 years and the percentage of female population was very high (95 percent) among the MGNREGP workers in this age group (Thadathil and Vineeth, 2012). In this context, it becomes important to understand the opportunities for skill development under the programme in order to continue in the programme.

4.4 Access to Financial Institutions and Small Scale Savings

Women's access to savings in Tripura and the reach of banks for women in Tripura was also analysed as a part of the study. The National Mission on Financial Inclusion or Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) was started by Government of India in 2014 with a vision to provide access to the banking institutions for the people do not have any bank account and hence to be involved in the banking sector for the economic development of the poor people. As part of the financial inclusion, the scheme provided the low cost banking services and facilities to the poorer section with the opening of a zero balance bank account. Most of the states from the north east have achieved the targets of financial inclusion by covering maximum households and it would help them to ensure mass participation of the people and their integration with the formal banking sector (Pranahender and Singh, 2016).

Table 4.6: Own Bank Account

Place		Bank Account		
		Yes	no	Total
Rural	Female	63 (91.3)	6 (8.7)	100
	Male	59(92.2)	5(7.8)	100
Urban	Female	165(98.8)	2(1.2)	100
	Male	163(99.4)	1(0.6)	100
Total	Female	228(96.6)	8(3.4)	100
	Male	222(97.4)	6(2.6)	100
	Total	450(97.0)	14(3.0)	100

Source: Primary Survey, (2017).

*Figures in parenthesis show percentage, calculated from the total number of respondents.

The table above (4.6) indicates that, in the rural Tripura, 91.3 percent of the female respondents had their own bank account while 8.7 percent did not have their own bank account. At the same time, in urban Tripura, 98.8 percent had their own bank account while only 1.2 percent did not have their own bank account. From the table, it was evident that, in rural and

urban Tripura, most of the respondents had their own bank account. It enabled the women engaged in MGNREGP to operate their own accounts independently. In the year 2012-13, to improve participation of females, the Ministry of Rural Development issued further guidelines and operational measures which included (a) individual bank/post office accounts must compulsorily be opened in the name of all female MGNREGP workers and their wages directly credited to their own account for the number of days worked by them, (b) to identify widowed female, deserted female, and destitute female who qualify as a household under the Act and to ensure that they are provided 100 days of work, (c) to give less strenuous works nearer their dwelling to the pregnant female and lactating mothers (Dheeraja *et al* 2013).

4.5 Summing Up

The chapter provided an analysis of women's access to social protection. MGNREGP as a major flagship programme for ensuring social protection and its contribution in access to employment and employment generation are analysed in the chapter. The chapter mainly discussed that, the participation of women in MGNREGP in Tripura, compared to all other states have been showing a steady growth rate from the year of 2012. However, the analysis of the primary data, it revealed that even though the women were participating in MGNREGP, their participation is lesser in comparison to male counterparts. However, the participation rate of women among the ST category was the highest in MGNREGP thereby reflecting on a situation of economic necessity prevailing among them. Also, the younger generation from 21-40 years of age were participating largely in it. It had been also analysed that, the role of education and the participation in MGNREGP is positively correlated; however, the female respondents who acquired higher education were not participating in MGNREGP. The reason for spending less time was analysed through the time distribution patterns which explored that though female were willing to participate in paid employment yet, due to household and other responsibilities they were unable to continue for longer hours of work. The participation of females has also been analyzed through the focus group discussion which brought out quite clearly that one of the important reasons behind women's non-participation in MGNREGA for longer time period was the household burden of the female members. However, it was also clear that participation in the MGNREGP also helped women to actively engage in public decision making. The introduction of the scheme for the inclusion of the people in the financial institutions such as bank also helped them to easily draw their money without the dependency.

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

There is no denying the fact that increasing concentration of women in unpaid work may have a detrimental impact on their participation in paid employment. Keeping in view the massive informality in the country and the need to formalize the informal economy, it becomes extremely essential to address the concerns of unpaid work and understand women's additional burden while they are preparing for the labour market. Within the framework of a larger human development perspective, economic empowerment and ensuring well-being are inter-related and one cannot be dealt with in isolation to the other.

Even though, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) sets out the global commitment for achieving empowerment and well-being of workers, Goal 5 of SDGs (achieve gender equality and empower all female and girls), identified that need to understand the existing inequalities in work, wages and decision making in public etc. The non-participation of women in the economic activities can lead to serious socio, political and economic issues such as poverty and inequality. It evident that women and men have to engage in different types of activities and women tend to be engaged in less hours of paid activities than men, mostly they are unemployed or under paid in the developing economies; they have to work long hours of household activities which are mostly non-monetary in nature (UN, 2015). In the context of declining female labour force participation in India, and increasing participation of women in domestic duties, it has been extremely challenging to promote employment for women in India. However, it had also been registered that, unlike the other states in north east India, Tripura shows an increasing trend in both the paid and unpaid numbers of females.

In this context, the present study tried to analyse the trends of female labour force participation in rural and urban Tripura through primary investigation. This study tried to understand the sectoral participation of the women in the rural and urban areas vis a vis their status in education. The study tried to find out the reason behind the low participation of women in the service sector from the rural areas due to the hurdles such as, early marriages, difficulty in the access to get quality education etc.

The lack of employment opportunities for women who were unskilled was quite prominent in rural areas. It was reported that women from the rural areas were mostly engaged in household activities like cooking, cleaning and washing and also in the activities such as collection of

water and fuel and activities related to care particularly child care and elderly care. Also, in the urban areas women were actively engaged in the activities such as cooking, cleaning, washing etc. Contrastingly, the study found that, there was an increasing level of participation of males in care work, and it is higher in urban Tripura though the study could not find out any significant increase in the level of female participation in paid employment. In this context, the study recommended to address the need of the engagement of the females more in the paid work through balancing the unpaid household activities. In the case of social security scheme and measures, the study found that there is a larger coverage of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in the rural areas than the urban areas. However, in rural Tripura, the participation of women in MGNREGA was quite low in comparison to males and the participation of both males and females was low in urban Tripura. In this context, the study analyzed that the main reason behind the lack of participation of the female in MGNREGA is due to the burden of household chores.

The present study was divided in to three chapters which may be summarized as follows

The first chapter provided a brief background to the study while highlighting on the main objectives and methodology of the study. The second chapter emphasized on the trends in the declining female labour force participation in India; mainly north east India. It discussed various factors which hinder the mobility of the female from home to outside. From the primary field work, it was analysed that in Tripura, the percentage of women who were unemployed were more in numbers than the labour force participation itself. However, the participation of males in the labour force was higher than the unemployed men. While considering the sector-wise participation of the female work force it was evident from the data that in rural Tripura that more females were participating in the unorganized sector such as agriculture and construction and in the urban Tripura, females were concentrated in the organized labour force such as education and health sectors.

The chapter discussed the reason behind the low level female labour force participation and their educational status. Evidence from literature revealed that in India, there were factors such as income and education, decreasing employment opportunities and other socio-cultural factors that affect the level of participation of women in the labour force. From the primary study and the analysis of the data it was evident that, the women who had high educational qualification were in the organised sectors and the women who had less educational qualification were in the unorganized sectors or mostly unemployed. Here, one can also see that in Tripura, there

is a lack of professional education that can accommodate large number of youth population. While comparing the access to education, the girl children from rural Tripura did not have adequate access. From the study it was also found that, the women were getting married at a very early age which can be considered an important reason for not participating in the paid employment.

The third chapter discussed about unpaid work of women in Tripura. The women respondents were participating in all forms of unpaid household work ranging from cooking, cleaning and washing to water and fuel collection. It was disturbing to note that though males were engaged in some amount of unpaid and care work, it did not boost female work participation. Even though, the male members contributed to some household work, it did not turn in favor to the female members to get involved in paid labour force. In Tripura, it was evident that in the urban cities of Agartala and Manu CT, the women respondents showed the aspiration to work outside home, however, in the villages of Laxmibil and Purba Nalichera the women respondents preferred to be inside the household. The study revealed that, in both the rural and urban Tripura, the main reason behind not participating in paid employment was due to the household burden. Other reasons included socio-cultural factors and the institutionalization of housework for women. With regard to time use patterns, it was evident that the male respondents were mainly engaged in the SNA activities i.e; paid work and Non-SNA i.e., leisure activities. The contribution of males to Ex-SNA activities was very low in comparison to females. Comparatively, the female respondents were spending a considerable amount of their time in Ext-SNA activities while time spent in SNA and Non-SNA activities was much lesser.

The fourth chapter discussed about the social security provisions with special reference to MGNREGP. The gender differentials in participation of men and women was quite evident with greater participation of men in comparison to women. Also, the relationship between social groups and MGNREGA participation as an economic necessity was quite evident in case of women belonging to the Scheduled Tribe category. The women were mostly constrained due to the burden of household activities. However, it was also evident that financial inclusion and access to banking had improved in the region due to governmental interventions and opens up lot of opportunities for further policy intervention with regard to strengthening economic empowerment and livelihood programmes for promoting employment.

Policy Recommendations

In the above background, it is evident that the failure to acknowledge and address the problems faced by the women who are in household and other care activities will affect the achievement of gender equality which will be an endangering problem in the society. In reality, unpaid work strongly affects women's employment opportunities, access to quality jobs, their social protection and working conditions. The recent report of the ILO on Care Work and Care Jobs: For the Future of Decent Work clearly stated that unpaid care work is the key factor in determining both whether women enter into and stay in employment and the quality of jobs they perform (ILO,2018)

The following are some of the recommendations that have emerged from the study:

- **Ensuring Quality Education and Skill Training:** The lack of quality education and skill mismatches often constrains women from seeking better employment avenues. Further, the gender stereotypical nature of skill training imparted and high level of occupational segregation in the labour market pushes women to low paying jobs and restricts their access to decent working opportunities. Such segregation as assumed in feminist literature emerges from essentialist arguments on representing women as more competent than men in service, nurturance and social interaction. Men tend to get represented in best occupations as women have substantial share of domestic responsibilities that reduce their incentive to invest in demanding careers (Charles and Grusky,2004).

The present study highlighted that women had lesser access to professional and technical education in comparison to men. There is a need to encourage vocational training for the women in hilly and mountainous regions who spend long arduous hours in collecting forest produce and are not being able to participate in paid employment (Samantroy, 2017).It was also found that, in rural parts of Tripura, girls were mostly walking to school or using public transport to reach the school that sometimes remained unavailable. Such constraints coupled with domestic responsibilities may discourage girl children to continue in education for a longer period of time. In this context, it is important to identify the gender gaps in education with a focus on gender sensitive policy indicators that aim at reducing stereotypes through adequate data on schooling experiences, family and community life constraints and other issues that are peculiar to for girls representing different socio-economic groups.

- **Access to employment opportunities in the region:** It was evident from the primary data that one of the constraints which women faced to take up paid employment was lack of employment opportunity in the region. It is important to identify major livelihood occupations of the rural community, categorize them according to geographical, ecological and watershed clusters and assess their viability based on local resources, infrastructure, support services, technology, policy environment and potential for growth which can be promoted through the north east rural livelihood project that aims to improve livelihood for women, youth and disadvantaged in four North Eastern States (Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura)¹⁷. It is also important to streamline women's role in agriculture for effective participation through the adoption of best practices and innovation in agriculture, animal husbandry, floriculture, fishing, horticulture as well as small and micro level entrepreneur units including information and communication technology will contribute in boosting employment opportunities to a large extent in the State (GoT,2018).
- **Capturing of Unpaid Work through Time Use Surveys:** There is a need to capture women's work through the time use surveys. Generally, in the case of activities carried out within the household and the problems associated with it remain largely invisible in National Accounting Statistics or the conventional labour force surveys. In the study, it was evident that, even though the male members were co-operative and contributed in some household tasks, females were still unable to go and work outside due to many 'invisible' barriers which are mediated by cultural factors. Such factors can be properly identified through the time use surveys in order to inform governmental policy on redistributing household burden to overcome this situation. The time spent in collecting forest produce and hill related activities and water collection need to be adequately captured through the time use surveys so that such activities can be converted into income generating activities through value addition of non timber forest produce, promotion of bamboo products, developing marketing strategies etc.
- **Policies on Redistribution of Household Work:** The study clearly brought out the inequalities in household division of labour. It revealed that women could not receive much assistance from males in household and related activities. Further, due to lack of support

¹⁷ The north East Rural Livelihood Project is a World Bank Funded project undertaken under the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDONER) catering to four north eastern states namely; Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. For details see <http://nerlp.gov.in/institute.asp>

structures within the family, they were unable to participate in paid employment. There is a need for subsequent measures to be adopted at the community level or local level for redistribution of housework through sensitization and awareness generation. It would help the female members also to be engaged in the paid work.

- **Public Provisioning of Care Work and Investment in Water, Energy and Care Sector :** Care work is one of the important and unavoidable tasks of the female who engage in the household work. There is a need for public provisioning of care services. This would also lead to the creation of job in the service sector and increase in care services. It can also attract the female in the household to the job market. There is also a need to encourage greater investment in energy, water and infrastructure in hill areas for reducing unpaid work.
- **Provision of Social Security:** There need to provide adequate coverage of female workers in social security programmes of the country. In India, even though there are measures have taken for the security of the female workers in the organized labour force, yet the coverage remains limited to the unorganized sector. The strengthening of MGNREGA including area based development plans through integration of gender concerns is important. The social security provisions under various labour legislations need to be strengthened for providing adequate coverage to women workers.
- **Provision to ensure fair treatment to migrant workers and convergence of rural and urban development programmes with employment programmes:** Since women are hesitant to go far off places for job due to family constraints, social stigmas or due to their personal limitations there is a need for adequate policy intervention to ensure maximum safe and secure job atmosphere at the place they migrate. Migrant workers are often denied adequate access to social security which is further accentuated due to lack of awareness on their rights. Migrant workers with family responsibilities need to be adequately protected through social security legislations. Further, the rural and urban development programmes need to establish a linkage between livelihood support, housing and infrastructure development.

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