



Employment Stories of East India: A Detailed Research Piece

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Abstract

It is a common knowledge for us that India, our motherland, is carved by states, namely, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal in its eastern part since a long span of time back. In fact, the varied economic diversity that can be noted across the major states of India is worth noting parallel to its geographical, linguistic and cultural diversity since the inception of her existence. The main objective here is to analyze the employment stories of East Indian residents particularly considering their participation in various major economic sectors in a detailed manner. The concerned research work will put forward the stories of employment solely for Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal during the years 2009-10 to 2011-12. The employment trend has shown prominent demand and supply side fluctuations with regard to the workers of Eastern India. Parallel to this, a sharp rise in urban women workers participation in the work force for Orissa and West Bengal over the years. An interesting point to be noted here is that in spite of the fact that the women of Jharkhand are employed less in comparison to their peers of the remaining Eastern Indian states yet they are performing better quality jobs– which indicates the retardation in the proportion of ‘working poor’.

Keywords: East India, Women, Jobs, Quality Employment, Rural

Background:

Research pieces investing on different aspects and issues regarding livelihoods of the people of the nation has repeatedly been published over the years. It is well known to us that the impact of carving out new geo-political boundaries out of a nation is pertinent considering the economic well-being of the residents. The concerned philosophy of thought remains valid for India as well – in the year 2000 when Jharkhand became the new entrant amongst the eastern states of India. The tribal dominated culture and means of living opened new trajectories of growth for the economy of India. In fact, the need of the hour is to understand in depth about the close linkage of the pattern of economic and employment growth in India to the structural transformation of its work force in close connection to the new eastern state entrant (Thomas & Jayesh, 2016).

Objectives:

Given the backdrop of assessing the contribution of the new eastern state entrant towards livelihood expansion, the present paper aims at:

(1) Evaluating the demand and supply side of employment dynamics for the people of the East India.

- (2) Understanding the sectoral composition of the people of East India.
- (3) Harping upon the quality dimensions of employment of the workforce of East India and
- (4) Tracing out the rationale of sectoral variations if at all noted across the livelihood options for the people of East India.

Data Methods & Methodology:

Keeping the goals and moto of the paper in mind, the researcher has attempted to look into the variation in employment for the four major states of East India– namely, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal. Having the quest of fulfilling the objectives in a befitting manner, the study has been conducted for a span of time period commencing on and from 2009-10 to 2011-12.

The unit level data of the employment/unemployment surveys conducted by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) for the 66th and 68th round of its investigation has been used here. Having the objective of getting a clear picture about the employment scenario prevailing in the chosen states, the analysis has been conducted in the context of rural-urban male-female disaggregation. The methodology that has been followed to quantify the status of workers in this paper is the usual status approach both principal and subsidiary one. Also, all the unit level information on employment have been extracted and processed using STATA 12 software package and MS-EXCEL is used to compute required analytical exercises.

Analysis:

i) Labour force & Work force Interpretation: Sector Wise & Gender Wise

Table 1 and Table 2 caters to the prime objective of the concerned research work – evaluation of the employment dynamics from the demand and supply side projections. As can be seen, a particular U-pattern has been noted regarding participation of rural men of the Eastern states in the work force of the economy. The bent of the 'U' is the steepest for the rural men of Jharkhand in and for the entire period 2009-10 to 2011-12. This can be thought of as a reflection of the problem of illiteracy bias in favour of rural men in the concerned state. (Singh, 2013). However, distinct variations are been noted for the rural women of the East Indian states during the chosen period of study.

Table 1: Labour Force Participation of East Indian States: Sector Wise & Gender Wise				
2009-10				
Eastern States	Rural		Urban	
	M	F	M	F
Bihar	36.11	19.06	19.89	10.78
Jharkhand	10.61	13.17	11.96	10.60
Orissa	18.09	32.92	14.15	14.49
West Bengal	35.20	34.86	54.00	64.13
2011-12				
Eastern States	Rural		Urban	
	M	F	M	F
Bihar	37.93	17.30	16.31	6.66

Jharkhand	10.39	12.50	12.01	7.76
Orissa	17.82	28.59	13.92	16.78
West Bengal	33.87	41.61	57.75	68.80

Table 2: Work Force Participation of East Indian States: Sector Wise & Gender Wise				
2009-10				
Eastern States	Rural		Urban	
	M	F	M	F
Bihar	36.22	19.24	19.48	9.84
Jharkhand	10.37	13.31	11.84	10.12
Orissa	17.96	32.78	14.20	14.90
West Bengal	35.45	34.67	54.48	65.14
2011-12				
Eastern States	Rural		Urban	
	M	F	M	F
Bihar	37.77	14.69	16.23	6.59
Jharkhand	10.60	14.52	11.97	7.02
Orissa	17.75	29.19	13.87	15.40
West Bengal	33.88	41.59	57.94	70.99

A record rise has been noted in the workforce participation of the rural women workers of West Bengal in between the years 2009-10 to 2011-12. Further, the urban women workers of Orissa and West Bengal have recorded sharp rise in workforce participation over the years. It must be noted here that there is gender disparity with regard to participation in labour force and work force of the remaining East Indian States – Bihar, Jharkhand and Orissa barring West Bengal. The Bengal women are found working in greater proportion than their male counterparts in both the villages and cities for the chosen span of time - single women also suffer from becoming the sole earning members of their families and poverty can make life drudgery and at subsistence level, when they are the only earners (Talwar, 2018). Also, the same outcome can be thought of the interplay of several macro and micro level factors (Chakrabarty & Chakrabarty, 2009).

ii) **Analysis of Employment Nature: Sector Wise & Gender Wise:**

Amongst all the states of Eastern India, the dependency on the primary sector (i.e, agriculture, forestry and fishing activities) is seen to be highest for the rural men of Bihar followed by West Bengal, Orissa and Jharkhand in between the years 2009-10 and 2011-12. Speaking particularly for these rural men of Jharkhand, the bare minimum livelihood dependency on crop and animal production, hunting and related service activities can be coined as a reflection for progressive economic development.

Table 3: Nature of Employment: Sector and Gender Wise- 2009-10

Rural Males	Agriculture	Mining	Manufacturing	Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	Construction	Trade	Transport	Finance	CPSS
Bihar	38.4 5	1.27	22.38	28.45	37.4 7	35.3 5	16.46	32.8 7	38.81
West Bengal	34.3 9	31.36	54.61	8.16	21.9 6	39.1 4	52.21	41.4 0	36.13
Jharkhand	8.38	33.53	8.68	18.64	23.0 7	10.6 9	7.12	9.28	6.81
Orissa	18.7 7	33.84	14.32	44.76	17.5 0	14.8 2	24.21	16.4 5	18.26
Rural Females	Agriculture	Mining	Manufacturing	Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	Construction	Trade	Transport	Finance	CPSS
Bihar	24.4 5	0.00	8.08	0.00	2.62	16.1 4	6.13	46.6 6	13.23
West Bengal	22.5 0	79.01	66.38	0.00	9.73	51.9 5	62.23	30.8 1	59.36
Jharkhand	14.8 2	12.17	7.49	0.00	33.2 3	5.27	0.32	21.3 0	8.70
Orissa	38.2 3	8.81	18.05	0.00	54.4 3	26.6 4	31.32	1.24	18.71
Urban Males	Agriculture	Mining	Manufacturing	Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	Construction	Trade	Transport	Finance	CPSS
Bihar	41.6 2	0.00	11.95	0.04	24.2 6	22.2 8	17.22	17.6 2	17.29
West Bengal	31.3 8	26.74	69.91	55.48	37.8 6	54.5 3	55.68	58.1 6	55.11

Jharkhand	8.92	54.49	5.87	18.17	20.6 9	10.1 1	14.81	10.1 9	13.18
Orissa	18.0 9	18.77	12.27	26.31	17.1 9	13.0 8	12.28	14.0 3	14.42
Urban Females	Agriculture	Mining	Manufacturing	Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	Construction	Trade	Transport	Finance	CPSS
Bihar	31.0 1	0.00	3.56	84.01	0.00	14.4 3	30.97	0.00	6.99
West Bengal	27.8 0	14.71	79.99	0.00	5.34	58.6 0	50.01	61.2 8	73.87
Jharkhand	8.82	79.90	1.31	15.99	39.8 9	19.5 9	12.79	5.40	10.91
Orissa	32.3 7	5.39	15.14	0.00	54.7 7	7.38	6.24	33.3 2	8.23

Similarly, if we consider the scenario for the rural women workers residing in the Eastern states of India, then here also we find that a very low proportion of rural women of Bihar and Jharkhand are engaged in agriculture, forestry and fishing during the period of study.

Table 4: Nature of Employment: Sector and Gender Wise- 2011-12									
Rural Males	Agriculture	Mining	Manufacturing	Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	Construction	Trade	Transport	Finance	CPSS
Bihar	41.62	8.64	21.21	2.15	33.07	36.94	39.23	29.27	39.14
West Bengal	31.85	35.34	52.46	15.23	27.19	34.48	32.43	45.29	37.30
Jharkhand	9.14	36.45	9.44	48.87	19.82	10.79	6.58	8.82	6.38
Orissa	17.39	19.58	16.89	33.74	19.92	17.79	21.76	16.62	17.18
Rural Females	Agriculture	Mining	Manufacturing	Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	Construction	Trade	Transport	Finance	CPSS
Bihar	18.47	0.00	5.03	0.00	9.90	23.27	6.78	2.74	16.29

West Bengal	28.37	0.00	73.12	100.00	28.21	38.16	61.40	26.74	59.28
Jharkhand	20.06	41.61	4.23	0.00	8.68	14.16	11.12	0.41	4.71
Orissa	33.10	58.39	17.62	0.00	53.20	24.41	20.70	70.11	19.72
Urban Males	Agriculture	Mining	Manufacturing	Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	Construction	Trade	Transport	Finance	CPSS
Bihar	27.52	1.10	10.48	4.12	15.72	20.43	23.83	11.25	17.78
West Bengal	30.51	36.58	78.61	60.92	48.63	51.77	51.30	59.31	55.24
Jharkhand	7.59	53.71	5.27	6.92	20.37	14.14	9.04	13.08	11.26
Orissa	34.39	8.61	5.64	28.04	15.28	13.67	15.84	16.37	15.72
Urban Females	Agriculture	Mining	Manufacturing	Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	Construction	Trade	Transport	Finance	CPSS
Bihar	21.75	0.00	4.65	0.00	9.94	9.96	5.46	0.00	5.04
West Bengal	17.08	17.88	82.89	93.64	19.29	59.85	53.33	63.74	78.44
Jharkhand	8.96	82.12	3.50	1.69	14.08	6.28	3.49	18.66	7.64
Orissa	52.21	0.00	8.96	4.68	56.69	23.91	37.71	17.59	8.88

In fact, what emerges from the analysis, the workers of Jharkhand (both men and women of the rural and urban areas) are mostly found working in mining and quarrying tasks during the chosen years (2009-10 to 2011-12). Parallel to this, it is noted that, during the entire period of study, half of the majority of the women workers (in both the rural and urban areas) performing tasks related to construction of buildings, civil engineering and other specialised construction activities belong to Orissa. A notable observation that has been made here is that there has been a phenomenon rise in the per cent of rural women workers of Orissa (as compared to the other chosen states) employed in financial and insurance service activities in 2011-12 (close to 70.11 per cent). The community, personal and social services has mostly absorbed men and women workers of West Bengal in all the years of analysis.

iii) Quality of Employment Interpretation: Sector Wise & Gender Wise:

As well portrayed in the table given here, amongst all the states of Eastern India, the incidence of casual employment is the highest for the rural men and women in comparison to their urban peers during the years in between 2009-10 and 2011-12. The rural men of West Bengal are seen performing casual jobs in highest proportion during the chosen period of

study. The same observation is noted for the rural women workers of Bihar (who are found performing works related to trading) for the concerned period. In urban areas, men and women workers of these states are crowding themselves more into self-employed jobs.

Table 5: Proportion of Casual Workers of East Indian States: Sector Wise & Gender Wise				
2009-10				
Eastern States	Rural		Urban	
	M	F	M	F
Bihar	44.73	49.51	15.75	28.86
West Bengal	46.44	40.26	15.56	12.14
Jharkhand	34.28	19.19	23.92	28.31
Orissa	36.92	40.37	20.59	33.81
2011-12				
Eastern States	Rural		Urban	
	M	F	M	F
Bihar	43.24	51.68	17.19	18.72
West Bengal	48.62	32.16	17.72	13.49
Jharkhand	31.64	14.52	17.78	21.48
Orissa	31.16	30.51	13.99	14.86

Table 6: Proportion of Self-Employed Workers of East Indian States: Sector Wise & Gender Wise				
2009-10				
Eastern States	Rural		Urban	
	M	F	M	F
Bihar	52.01	47.87	62.78	47.41
West Bengal	45.23	50.89	47.31	51.64
Jharkhand	60.07	77.51	38.00	28.93
Orissa	55.93	55.38	40.50	43.93
2011-12				
Eastern States	Rural		Urban	
	M	F	M	F
Bihar	52.86	41.73	61.02	53.59
West Bengal	43.14	57.50	44.76	46.15
Jharkhand	63.62	82.85	45.07	33.45
Orissa	60.63	66.10	49.60	58.01

Table 7: Proportion of Regular Workers of East Indian States: Sector Wise & Gender Wise

2009-10				
Eastern States	Rural		Urban	
	M	F	M	F
Bihar	3.27	2.62	21.47	23.74
West Bengal	8.33	8.85	37.14	36.22
Jharkhand	5.66	3.29	38.09	42.77
Orissa	7.15	4.25	38.91	22.26
2011-12				
Eastern States	Rural		Urban	
	M	F	M	F
Bihar	3.90	6.59	21.79	27.69
West Bengal	8.24	10.35	37.52	40.36
Jharkhand	4.75	2.63	37.15	45.07
Orissa	8.21	3.39	36.41	27.13

Now, as can be seen from Table 7 that the urban women workers of Jharkhand are absorbed in good quality regular employment in highest per cent in comparison to the workers of the states of East India over the chosen period (in contrast to the findings depicted by Kumar, 2024). Thus, although Jharkhand females are far behind their peers of the remaining states of East India in terms of workforce participation yet the type of activities they are associated with clearly harp upon deterioration in the proportion of '*working poor*'.

Conclusion:

The present paper has narrated employment stories of East India in a detailed and befitting manner. The basic target was to highlight the contribution of the new eastern state entrant towards livelihood expansion of the entire economy of India. As have been observed that there has been a particular U-pattern in participation of rural men of the Eastern states in the work force of the economy. Further, the urban women workers of Orissa and West Bengal have worked in increasing numbers over the years. Also, the '*Bangal ki Mahila*' are seen working in greater proportion than their male counterparts in both the villages and cities for the chosen span of time.

Speaking in close connection for rural men of Jharkhand, the low earning dependency on the different sub-sectors of the primary sector reflects progressive economic development. However, their employment concentration in mining and quarrying tasks during the chosen years have been worrisome. Again, the paper concluded with the deterioration in the proportion of '*working poor*' for urban women of Jharkhand amongst the chosen eastern sisters in study. Now, why such outcomes have been observed needs opens up new avenue of research in the future. In addition to this, the author feels that if the study can be conducted considering the social class disaggregation, then much robust results and implications can be carved out of.

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