

Demography and Workforce: Women Contribution on the Rise

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Abstract

Various factors influence the demography of a region. In developing or developed regions, employment opportunities and resulting migration is one of the key factor. The study looks at contribution of females in the working and non-working population of the state of Maharashtra. The census shows that although there is a greater number of non-working women in the state, there has also been a significant increase in the Main Working population.

Keywords: Demography, Maharashtra State, Women employment, Main Working population, Non-workers

Demography is the use of statistics to analyze the population of a place. It involves the collection of data about the population of a place - age, gender, social status, religion, caste, work habits, income, standard of living etc. - to track and compare changes from previously recorded numbers. Census is the best example of a demographic survey. It gives a snapshot of the region.

India Census snapshot (Source: www.censusindia.gov.in)

Year	Population	Males	Females	Rural population	Urban population	0-6 yrs old	Literates (7yrs+)
2001	1,028,618,821	532,161,079	496,457,742	742,490,639	286,128,182	163,820,573	560,693,434
2011	1,210,854,977	623,270,258	587,584,719	833,748,852	377,106,125	164,515,253	763,638,812

But the demography of a region keeps changing, and a multitude of factors influence this *shift*. Better employment opportunities and consequent migration is one of the key factors, especially in developing or developed regions – upcoming cities and metros. Other causes can be a change in the age structure of its people – number of children, senior citizens and youth. Social evils like the killing of the girl child

or a rise in the incidence of crimes against women, can seriously affect the gender balance of a region. Environmental disturbances and disasters can affect the overall demography in a big way.

This paper studies the impact of such **demographic shifts** and the **influence** it has on the male-female ratio of the employed. For ease of understanding, the focus is on a single region – the data for Maharashtra state from census data of 2001 and 2011 for comparison.

Maharashtra State Census data analysis

Maharashtra Census snapshot (Source: www.censusindia.gov.in)

Year	Population	Males	Females	Rural population	Urban population	0-6 yrs old	Literates (7yrs+)
2001	96,878,627	50,400,596	46,478,031	55,777,647	41,100,980	13,671,126	63,965,943
		52%	48%	58%	42%	14%	66%
2011	112,374,333	58,243,056	54,131,277	61,556,074	50,818,259	13,326,517	81,554,290
		16% ↑	52%	48%	55%	45%	12%

A glance at the state level census data 2011 indicates that the overall population of the state increased by 16% over the last count. Male-Female ratio has not changed much overall, although the percentage of children in the population has marginally reduced. Urban population has increased and so has the rate of literacy in the state.

Factors to study to understand the changing role of Women in employment

To better understand the changing role of women, the following factors are relevant:

- ♦ Working population in the state – Main workers and Marginal workers and Non-workers
- ♦ Classification of the working population –males to females, main to marginal etc
- ♦ Comparison of the data against the figures in the last census

Working population table

Year	Total Workers	Main Workers		Marginal Workers		Non-workers	
2001	4,11,73,351	3,47,48,053		64,25,298		5,57,05,276	
	42%	84%		16%		58%	
		Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
		2,44,16,295	1,03,31,758	24,35,800	39,89,498	2,35,48,501	3,21,56,100
		70%	30%	38%	62%	42%	58%
2011	4,94,27,878	4,37,62,890		56,64,988		6,29,46,455	
	44%	89%		11%		56%	
		Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
		2,99,89,314	1,37,73,576	26,27,561	30,37,427	2,56,26,181	3,73,20,274
		69%	31%	46%	54%	41%	59%

***Notes:**

Main workers: Those workers who had worked for the major part of the reference period (i.e. 6 months or more) are termed as Main Workers.

Marginal Workers: Those workers who had not worked for the major part of the reference period (i.e. less than 6 months) are termed as Marginal Workers.

Non Workers: A person who did not at all work during the reference period was treated as non-worker.

The table above shows that overall contribution of females the workforce is limited. 59% of non-workers are females, and so are 54% of the marginal workers. In fact, there has been an increase in the non-working population in females to the extent of 16% over 2001 data.

The table alongside gives an age wise breakup for the non working population. Again there is a high percentage of females even in the working age of 15-59 in the state.

Non-workers in Population - 2011 census				
	Total	Males	Females	% Females
Total	6,29,46,455	2,56,26,181	3,73,20,274	59%
15-59	2,70,77,941	78,53,896	1,92,24,045	71%
	43%	31%	52%	

Analysing the age breakups, primarily, this ratio gets skewed post the age of 20. Considering that the average marriage age of women in the state is around 21 years^[2], marriage can be attributed as one of the causes of this rise in non-working population.

Non-workers in Population - Age group wise breakup				
	Total	Males	Females	% Females
5-9	96,06,192	50,62,528	45,43,664	47%
10-14	1,02,21,065	53,75,522	48,45,543	47%
15-19	81,44,806	41,34,689	40,10,117	49%
20-24	53,11,872	20,30,950	32,80,922	62%
25-29	32,67,363	6,04,710	26,62,653	81%
30-34	23,55,936	2,24,337	21,31,599	90%
35-39	20,48,580	1,50,353	18,98,227	93%
40-49	32,66,002	2,59,136	30,06,866	92%
50-59	26,83,382	4,49,721	22,33,661	83%
60-69	33,64,360	10,96,745	22,67,615	67%
70-79	21,60,491	8,29,731	13,30,760	62%
80+	9,26,374	3,68,487	5,57,887	60%

So far, there has been no conclusive evidence for the increasing contribution of women in the workforce of the state. We also look at the primary working population – those that are employed for more than 6 months in a year – Main workers in the state.

Working population table – Main workers

Year	Main workers	Males	Females	Rural population		Urban population	
2001	34,748,053 36%	24,416,295 70%	10,331,758 30%	21,853,804 63%		12,894,249 37%	
				Males	Females	Males	Females
				13,528,493 62%	8,325,311 38%	10,887,802 84%	2,006,447 16%
2011	43,762,890 45%	29,989,314 69%	13,773,576 31%	26,510,066 61%		17,252,824 39%	
				Males	Females	Males	Females
				16,188,697 61%	10,321,369 39%	13,800,617 80%	3,452,207 20%
Change over 2001		23%	33%	20%	24%	27%	72%

From the above data, it can be seen that amongst the main workers in the state, about 31% are women. At first look, it seems like a marginal increase of 1% over the last census data. However the gender ratio in the state has also not changed much over the last census period.

Hence, it is better to rely on the sheer number of female main workers in the state. Overall, the no of main workers in the state has increased by 26% over the last census, from 3.47 crores to 4.37 crores. And the number of female main workers has increased from 1.03 crores to 1.38 crores i.e. a huge 33% increase, when compared against a 23% increase in the number of male workers.

However, taking into account the fact that the population of both males and females has risen by roughly 16% from 2001 to 2011 – nearly equally, then the above 33% increase seems much more remarkable. Main workers among Urban female population have risen tremendously, but Rural female main working population has also risen considerably.

Conclusion

The above presented Census data for Maharashtra state indicates that although there is a greater number of females in the non-working population of the state, it cannot undermine the fact that the number of working women has increased, and especially in the Main Working population. Overall, we can safely conclude that the contribution of females in the Main working population of the state is rising, and at a good pace. Therein lies the proof that there is a good economic reason to encourage gender equality.

References

1. www.censusindia.gov.in
2. <https://nrhm-mis.nic.in/SitePages/DLHS-4.aspx>