

## **A Geographical Perceptive of the Economic Condition of Women in Bijnor District**

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### **Abstract**

*Economic empowerment has been understood to be the mainstay of development initiatives in India and the developing world. The role of women tends to get underplayed especially in terms of social capital. The work participation of women tends to remain latent and unacknowledged in terms of adequate remuneration. Elements of caste, class and religious grouping tend to further aggravate the position of the women on the socio-economic ladder. Many of the programs and initiatives are taken up by the government and the corporate sector have suffered setbacks due to the invisibility of the women in the social capital of the region. Not only are the women not acknowledged as partners in economic progress they are waylaid on the road to the development of women's participation in the district's economy which is considered and which are ignored in the gradation of women's inputs and contributions on a regular established basis. However, this paper also attempts to analyze the changing socio-economic status of women in the Bijnor district of Uttar Pradesh and is purely based on primary data and field surveys. The analysis shows that although women in Bijnor have made a considerable progress in every sphere of life, they still have to struggle against the deep-rooted patriarchal mentality of society. The Indian constitution grants women equal rights as that to men but they were never been effective to bring a remarkable change in the status of modern women.*

### **Keywords**

*Society, economic development, household income.*

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## **Introduction**

Women in our society have so far had only a secondary status and the economic dependence of women upon men is one of the primary reasons which has pushed them into the background and resulted in their secondary status both within and outside the family (Wadhera 1976). Women constitute almost half of the labor force in any economy.

But the conversion of this labor force into the workforce is contingent upon many factors. At times their work is hidden either in form of ‘home-based worker’ or as ‘domestic duty’. These categories of employment are characterized by either low wages or no wages. Even when they are wage workers their participation in different economic activities is low as compared to males. Participation of women in work and consequent remuneration is conditioned by socio-cultural context. The scale of urbanization, types of employment and nature and scale of migration are other critical determinants of women’s participation in economic activity.

Socio-economic status is a catchall phrase that takes into account a variety of “variables that characterize the placement of persons, families, households, census tracts, or other aggregates with respect to the capacity to create or consume goods that are valued in a society”. Hauser & Warren, (1996) point out a number of SES indicators including, but not limited to, “educational attainment, by occupational standing, by social class, by income (or poverty), by wealth, by tangible possessions—such as home appliances or libraries, houses, cars, boats, or by degrees from elite colleges and universities”. The socio-economic status of an individual or a group of individuals may be perceived as, “The position or standing of a person or group in a society as determined by a combination of social and economic factors that affect access to education and other resources crucial to an individual’s upward mobility”. Shaikh & Pathak (2017), define socio-economic status as, “as an individual’s or group’s position within a hierarchical social structure. Socio-economic status depends on a combination of variables, including occupation, education, income, wealth, and place of residence”. Over the past few decades, women have been working steadily, their talent, dedication and enthusiasm forming the bedrock of economic growth and prosperity in India. They have ventured into the market, started their own businesses, and worked tirelessly to prove that they are as adept and successful in the entrepreneurial space as their male counterparts. In rural India, women entrepreneurs have forged their own path, emerging as leaders across diverse portfolios, and proving to be capable mentors for future generations. Despite structural exclusion from the socio-economic hierarchy of their families and the immense psychological pressure levied on them, they asserted their right to financial

independence, built their businesses from the ground up and inspired those around them to challenge the status quo.

### **Study Area**

Bijnor is one of the seventy-five districts of Uttar Pradesh. Administratively the District is part of the Moradabad Division. District Bijnor lies on the coordinates 29° 2' and 29° 58' North and longitude and 78° 0' and 78° 59' South latitude. The length (North to South) of the District Bijnor is 102 kilometers and the breadth (East to West) is 90 kilometers to- third of the population of the District lives in rural areas while one-fourth of the population of the District resides in urban centers. The District's Sex Ratio is 917 females per 1000 males which is a little higher than the Uttar Pradesh's average Sex Ratio of 912. The overall Literacy Rate of the District is 68.5% which is slightly higher than the Uttar Pradesh's Literacy Rate of 67.7%.

### **The objective of the study**

In this study, an attempt has been made to examine the economic status of women in the Bijnor district of Uttar Pradesh on the basis of a field survey.

### **Data Source and Methodology**

The study is primarily based on primary data and wherever necessary secondary data has also been collected. The data are mainly collected from the field survey, Census reports of the government, National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO), Registrar of India etc. Survey Questionnaire was the mainstay of my research. The status of women in Uttar Pradesh in comparison with the rest of India is examined on the basis of different indicators, namely distribution of economic status, distribution of women's employment, annual household income, personnel saving bank account, house ownership, and Discontinuation of studies. The Survey Questionnaire contained a total of seventy-two binary/multiple choice and one objective question and one short answer question. The Survey Questionnaire was divided into some sections. Section I *Demographic Details* contained nine multiple-choice and one short-answer question. Section II *Educational Attainment and Career Options* was composed of five multiple-choice questions. Section III *Family Type and Household Size* carried two binary and four multiple-choice questions. Section IV *Household Income and Economic Status* consisted of six binary and five multiple-choice questions. Section V *Household Type and Amenities* comprised of three binary and nine multiple-choice questions.

### **Factors Affecting Female Employment**

In every circumstance, in every set of key of development and socio-economic status, females have faced worse than men in all areas and at all levels of

the population. The factors influence of female labor force participation depends on several factors which may separate from one category to another. These factors respond to economic, social, cultural, demographic and psychology. These classifications of factors play important role in every life of females. In every society, female has a vital role to develop the nation. She always plays a specific and crucial role, whether visible or not. In our society, women act as mothers, wives, and sisters and perform a very important role. She always depends upon males for survival in their society. There is a very clear difference between male and female entitlement such as, in work, employment, earnings, education, health status and decision-making powers. Female average earning is time after time or constantly very lower than those of male.

**Table-1 Distribution of Economic Status**

Sr. No.	Status	Frequency	%	Valid %
1.	Good	322	63.51%	63.89%
2.	Bad	142	28.01%	28.17%
3.	Very Good	26	5.13%	5.16%
4.	Very Bad	14	2.76%	2.78%
5.	Total	504	99.41%	100%
6.	Invalid	3	0.59%	
<b>Total</b>		<b>507</b>	<b>100%</b>	

Table 1 gives the frequency distribution of the Economic Status of the women respondents in District Bijnor. Out of the total 507 respondents the maximum number of 322 (63.51%) women respondents reported their Economic Status as 'Good'. 142 (28.01%) women respondents reported their Economic Status as 'Bad' followed by 26 (5.13%) as 'Very Good' and 14 (2.76%) as 'Very Bad'. There were three invalid responses.

**Table-2 Distribution of Employment Status**

Sr. No.	Status	Frequency	%	Valid %
1.	Homemaker	366	72.19%	72.48%
2.	Private	59	11.64%	11.68%
3.	Unemployed	34	6.71%	6.73%
4.	Government	24	4.73%	4.75%
5.	Self-Employed / Business	22	4.34%	4.36%
6.	Total	505	99.61%	100%
7.	Invalid	2	0.39%	
<b>Total</b>		<b>507</b>	<b>100%</b>	

Table 2 puts out the frequency distribution of Employment Status of the women respondents in District Bijnor. Out of the total 507 respondents the maximum number of 366 (72.19%) women respondents were Homemakers. 59 (11.64%) women respondents were employed in the private sector followed by 34 (6.71%) women respondents who were 'Unemployed' while 24 (4.73%) were in government jobs. 22 (4.34%) were Self Employed or run their own businesses. There were two invalid responses.

### **Distribution of Household Income**

Household income plays a very important role in getting employment. Household income influences a female's decision of working or not to enter the labor force. A household's income consists of the income of the husband, income of family members. Neoclassical economics recommended that labor market involvement depends seriously on the degree of supply and demand of workers in the economy.

**Table-3 Distribution of Annual Household Income**

Sr. No.	Income (in Rs.)	Frequency	%	Valid %
1.	0-99,999	364	71.79%	72.08%
2.	100,000 - 199,999	75	14.79%	14.85%
3.	200,000 - 299,999	31	6.11%	6.14%
4.	More than 5 lakhs	16	3.16%	3.17%
5.	400,000 - 499,999	9	1.78%	1.78%
6.	300,000 - 399,999	8	1.58%	1.58%
7.	0 - 99,999, 200,000 - 299,999	1	0.2%	0.2%
8.	100,000-199,999, 200,000 - 299,999	1	0.2%	0.2%
9.	Total	505	99.61%	100%
10.	Invalid	2	0.39%	
<b>Total</b>		<b>507</b>	<b>100%</b>	

Table 3 shows the frequency distribution of Annual Household Income of the women respondents in District Bijnor. Out of the total 507 respondents the maximum number of 364 (71.79%) women respondents reported their annual household income under one lakh rupees. 75 (14.79%) women respondents reported their annual household income between one and two lakhs followed by 31 (6.11%) between two to three lakhs. 16 (3.16%) women respondents reported their annual household income above five lakhs. 9

(1.78%) and 8 (1.58%) women respondents reported their household income as between four to five lakhs and three to four lakhs respectively. There were two invalid responses.

**Table-4 Distribution of Personal Savings Bank Account**

Sr. No.	Response	Frequency	%	Valid %
1.	Yes	376	74.16%	75.05%
2.	No	125	24.65%	24.95%
3.	Total	501	98.82%	100%
4.	Invalid	6	1.18%	
<b>Total</b>		<b>507</b>	<b>100%</b>	

Table 4 portrays the frequency distribution of the 'Personal Savings Bank Account' of the women respondents in District Bijnor. Out of the total 507 respondents 376 (74.16%) women respondents said 'Yes' they hold their Personal Savings Bank Account while 125 (24.65%) said 'No' they do not hold their Personal Savings Bank Account. There were six invalid responses.

**Table-5 Distribution of House Ownership**

Sr. No.	Response	Frequency	%	Valid %
1.	Yes	469	92.5%	92.87%
2.	No	32	6.31%	6.34%
3.	Yes, No	4	0.79%	0.79%
4.	Total	505	99.61%	100%
5.	Invalid	2	0.39%	
<b>Total</b>		<b>507</b>	<b>100%</b>	

Table 5 communicates the frequency distribution of 'House Ownership' of the women respondents in District Bijnor. Out of the total 507 respondents 469 (92.5%) women respondents replied 'Yes' they own a house while 32 (6.31%) replied 'No' they do not own a house. There were two invalid responses.

**Table-6 Distribution of Reason for Discontinuation of Studies**

Sr. No.	Reason	Frequency	%	Valid %
1.	Marriage	74	15.16%	31.49%
2.	Any Other	52	10.66%	22.13%
3.	Lack of interest in the girl child	50	10.25%	21.28%
4.	Poverty	36	7.38%	15.32%
5.	Illiterate/orthodox attitude of parents/guardians	23	4.71%	9.79%
6.	Total	235	48.16%	100%
7.	Invalid	253	51.84%	
<b>Total</b>		<b>507</b>	<b>100%</b>	

Table 6 explains the frequency distribution of Reason for Discontinuation Studies of the women respondents in District Bijnor. Out of the total 488 respondents,

the maximum number of 74 (15.16%) women respondents discontinued their studies on account of marriage. 50 (10.25%) women respondents were no more interested to pursue their studies. Poverty forced 36 (7.38) women respondents to discontinue their studies while illiterate/Orthodox parents did not allow 23 (4.71%) women respondents to continue their studies. There were 253 invalid responses.

### **Result and Conclusion**

Some of the major findings of my research based on the primary data are:

1. Almost 60% of the respondents were middle-aged women between 21-50 years. (Table 6.2.2). Around 90% of the women respondents were married (Table 6.2.3) and nearly 70% of the married women observed family planning (Table 5.23). Well over 90% of the respondents were never subjected to domestic violence (Table 6.2.20).
2. A close to one-fourth of the respondents were never enrolled in any school, and 18% studied up to Middle whereas the Drop Out rate was as high as around 16% (Table 6.2.7). Marriage emerged out as the single biggest factor for the discontinuation of studies among the respondents followed by the disinterest of the women respondent, poverty and the orthodox attitude of the parents/guardians (Table 6.2.9).
3. The Economic Status of just about 65% of respondents was “Good” while that of more or less 30% of respondents was ‘Bad’ (Table 6.2.11).
4. Two-thirds of the respondents held their personal saving bank accounts (Table 6.2.15). Health status of 65% of the respondent was “Good” followed by “Very Good of 13% (Table 6.2.20).
5. A slightly more than 70% of the respondents “Occasionally” play a role in major household decisions like a marriage proposal and buying household items (6.2.23).

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