

REGIONAL REALITIES

TOURISM & MINING IN GOA

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Does a high economic growth rate translate into more empowerment for women? Does it improve women's control over decisions about the family, their ability to earn and their ability to control finances? The term women's empowerment is defined as the extent to which women have control over their own lives, bodies and the environment. It has been defined as 'control over material assets, intellectual resources and ideology' (Batliwala, 1994:193) and also the 'processes by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire such an ability' (Kabeer, 2005). This paper looks at Goa, a small state on the western coast in India, which has witnessed rapid economic growth in per capita income in the recent past and is currently the highest per capita income state in India and examines the status of women in two of its leading sectors – tourism and mining, that are also directly linked to the global production of goods and services and therefore to the dynamics of globalisation. Tourism and mining have been drivers of Goa's economic growth in the last few decades. Goa, like Kerala, presents an interesting developmental case study: high achievements in many of the development indicators – high literacy rate, per capita incomes, health indicators – life expectancy, fertility measures, age at marriage. One of the (Portuguese) colonial legacies has been the Common Civil Code that continues till now and which provides for equal inheritance between men and women in a family. Yet, the indicators of women's empowerment cast a shadow of doubt on the state's social development process.

There is growing evidence that in Goa, like the rest of the country, there is a male child preference among eligible couples (NFHS 2009). The juvenile (0-6 years) sex ratio in 2001 (at 933F to 1000 M) is lower than the adult sex ratio (960F to 1000M) implying that in the near future there will be even less female to male adults. At the taluka level, in Bardez, where a part of the tourism study is located, the sex ratio is not favourable to women (956F to 1000M) with a difference in urban and rural areas (996F in the rural areas but only 929F to 1000M in urban areas) (see). The juvenile (0-6) sex ratio is more skewed (925F to 1000M) with a negligible urban rural difference. In Sanguem taluka where the mining study is based, the sex ratio was a little higher than in Bardez (967F to 1000M) and here the sex ratio in urban areas (980F to 1000M) was higher than that in rural areas (964F to 1000M). The juvenile sex ratio was high (981F to 1000M) but a significant difference exists between the rural areas (997F to 1000M) and the urban areas (911F to 1000M). In both these talukas, the juvenile sex ratio was lower than the adult sex ratio.

The mining and tourism sector, the focus of this study, by 2007-8, were the highest contributors to the state domestic product. They also absorb a large part of the labour force but they operate in geographically non-overlapping zones. While tourism is concentrated in the coastal areas – primarily Salcete and Bardez, mining is concentrated in the hinterland adjoining Maharashtra and Karnataka – the talukas of Sattari, Bicholim, Sanguem and Ponda (Noronha, 2000). While sectoral contribution to GSDP is available, there are no accurate estimates of the number of people employed in both these sectors. Tourism in Goa is largely concentrated in the coastal areas. The main beach stretch in North Goa is from Sinquerim to Baga, and in South Goa it runs from Velsao to Cavelossim. However, there is wide heterogeneity in tourist concentration and therefore of infrastructure quality. The category of hotels across the two districts also differs. While most of South Goa has a concentration of up-market accommodation, North Goa is largely for the mid-segment and budget category tourists except for the Taj group. We segmented the tourism areas into three – luxury, budget and back packing. Three villages were purposively chosen – Calangute, Vagator/Chapora – (North Goa), and Varca (South Goa). Calangute is the most frequented tourist destination in Goa attracting largely budget and mid-category domestic tourists. Vagator/Chapora attracts back-packing category tourist and is exclusively a foreign tourist destination of the low-budget category. Varca on the other hand is home to up-market luxury hotels. In the tourism area survey, a stratified random sampling technique was used to select a total of 300 women but due to non-response from 20 selected women a total of 280 were covered. The hotels and beds data was taken as a proxy for tourism concentration. Bardez in North Goa and Salcete in South Goa had the highest number of hotels in the two districts and were selected for the study. Of the 280 women interviewed, the village-wise breakdown was – North Goa: 69 from Calangute, 156 from Chapora and Vagator, South Goa: 55 from Varca

The mining belt extends over 14 – 18 per cent of Goa's land area. Mining operations are carried out in lease holdings of about 100 hectares or less. There is no local market for the 'low grade' ore produce of Goa so all of it is exported. Goa accounts for 60 per cent of India's iron ore exports. In the 1960s, mining was the driver of growth and employment in Goa. It also led to in-migration of workers from neighbouring states. Women have been involved in the mining industry either as direct workers or as supporters, care givers, housewives to those employed in the mines. A different strategy for respondent selection was followed in the mining area. The survey was conducted in the twin township of Savordem/Curchorem (Sanguem taluka). The reasons for this are: (a) this town is the hub of the mining area in south Goa and is expected to show the greatest beneficial impact in socio-economic outcomes due to mining and, (b) the smaller hamlets in the mining area are sparsely populated and geographically distant. A listing of households was done in this town to ascertain which households had their chief source of income from mining activities. A random sample of 300 households was then selected based on the criterion that their chief source of income was from a mining related activity. This includes direct employment in mines as well as ancillary activities including transport. Of the total 300 respondents interviewed for this study, 41 (of the total number of 52 working women) were paid workers in the mining industry. The remaining 259 had either husbands or children who were working in the mines or related activity.

Since there is little socio-economic data on women in the tourism and mining industries, we used information from two surveys on women residents of these areas. These two surveys independently collected information from women in the age category of 15-65 in the mining area and 18 to 70 years in the tourism area and included not only those who were working (outside their homes) but also those who didn't undertake paid work. Our expectation was that workforce participation in the tourism and mining sectors would be significantly higher than the state average. Goa's combined (rural and urban) female workforce participation rate (PR) at 22 per cent is lower than the all-India figure 32 per cent (as per Census, 2001). However, the urban female participation rate in Goa (18 per cent) is larger than the all-India average (11 per cent). The state's urban female PR was 18 per cent and rural was 26 per cent. In the tourism area only 19 per cent of the women reported as being employed in comparison to only 17 per cent in the mining area which is near equal to the state's urban average and much higher than the all-India figure. The male workforce participation rate in Goa was about 54 per cent for both rural and urban segments indicating a large gender divide in the economic domain. The low female PR in the two sectors is most likely a combination of a lack of opportunity on the demand side as well as social inhibitions from the supply side in the labour market. This would be especially true in the mining area which reported a lower PR as the work in this sector is probably considered 'dirty' or not women-friendly. A closer look shows that married women are less likely to be part of the workforce than the never married category in both the sectors in Goa. This is interesting because some see such a phenomenon as reversion to patriarchy – once a woman is married, she has to follow the stereotypical role of a housewife rather than a working independent woman.

In tourism areas the most frequently reported family size was 5-6 (36 per cent) closely followed by the 3-4 (34 per cent). In the mining area the most frequently reported family size was 3-4 (46 per cent) followed by 5-6 (33 per cent). This indicates a preference for a smaller family size in mining areas in comparison to the tourism area. This difference in family size could be due to higher average economic status in tourism resulting in larger family size. A related demographic indicator is the number and composition of children in the family. In the tourism area we found no families that have more than two children but no male child. Presumably, those who did not have male child within the space of two children presumably did not seek to have a third child. There are 32 families that have 1-2 girl children but no male children. In contrast there were 39 families that had children but no girl child. In the mining area, there were 51 families that had 1-4 girl children but no male child (of which 11 had 3-4). There were however 72 families who had only male children (ranging from 1-5 children of which 63 of them had 1-2 children and no girl child). These numbers need careful interpretation. In both these areas the number of women reporting single girl child exceeds single boy child.

However, for higher number of children this trend reverses, lesser number of families had two or more girls than boys. This implies that while people are acceptable of one or two female child they prefer to have more male children than female as the number of children increases in the family. This could be interpreted as an indicator of male child preference.

The degree of equality achieved at home can be inferred from the extent of sharing of household duties (Kabeer, 2005). In our surveys, respondents were asked about the participation by wives and husbands (only for currently married couples) in four routine household jobs: cooking, washing, swabbing/sweeping and shopping. The total score (one for each activity, and zero if not) was calculated for each respondent and her husband. The maximum score indicating participation in all activities was four and minimum was zero. Only scores between one and four were considered for analysis as it is reasonable to expect that the husband would at least undertake shopping if not any of the other activities. While 81 per cent of the women in mining undertake all four activities, only 24 per cent of the husbands in mining do the same. In comparison, only 65 per cent of women in the tourism sector undertake all four activities while only 2 per cent of the husbands undertake all four activities. The gender gap in household activity is larger in the tourism sector.

In terms of educational levels, in both the sectors, the most women belonged to the category 'upto 10th class'. The next largest group was the 'illiterate' segment followed by 'upto Class 6 category'. The proportion of illiterate respondents was significantly higher in the mining area. This could be due to: a) access to better education infrastructure in the tourism areas, b) social demand for literacy in tourism areas (which has traditionally) been a more economically prosperous area, and c) demand for better educated labour force considering that the clientele is largely non-Goan (Indian as well as foreign). The employment outcomes suggest a non-linear relationship in both the sectors. There is a U-shaped relation between education and work status. In the tourism belt, 31 per cent of the women who are in the paid labour force are in the graduate and above category and it declines to 8 per cent for those who have less than Class X but rises to 11 per cent for women who have less than Class VI attainment. However, for the illiterate category, the percentage increases to 22 per cent. In the mining area the story is similar except that the highest participation is from the 'illiterate' category.

The data suggests that those who are literate but have only studied upto 10th have lower levels of absorption in the workforce than the other three groups in both the sectors. It seems that those who are illiterate take on unskilled work while those with higher secondary education and above are more likely to be in the workforce than anyone else. Those who do not complete higher secondary education are the least likely to be in the workforce either because the skills required are higher than they have and/or they are unwilling to accept wages that are paid to unskilled workers. This throws up interesting differences in the empowerment debate of the two sectors.

It seems that the nature of work that these two zones offer result in educationally empowered women to participate more in the workforce in tourism than in mining. So, educational intervention seems to be economically empowering if it has a conducive industry in the vicinity (i.e. in a segmented labour market). It is possible that the tourism sector which is part of the services sector offers better opportunities to educated women. This has important policy implications for Goa where the drop-out rate at 22.5 per cent (at primary level) is alarmingly high

A woman may or may not be part of the workforce but her ability to control the purse-strings is a good indicator of her position in the family. The presence of an individual bank account is one such indicator. The percentage of women who had individual accounts is

marginally higher in the tourism sector (19 per cent) than the mining sector (17 per cent). In the tourism sector, half of those who have individual accounts are also involved in paid labour. In mining, however, the proportion of those who have an individual account and are part of the workforce is much less.

To conclude, women's empowerment in this paper was discussed along 3 broad measures – demographic, social and economic. The family size in mining areas was smaller but more families had only male children in comparison to the number that had only female children than that in tourism. In mining areas, husband's contribution to household work was significantly lower than their wives while husbands in tourism areas contributed a lot less than in the mining sector. In the paid labour market, while the women's participation rate (in the studied sectors) was much higher than the national average it was not different from the state average (urban) with tourism having marginally higher rates than mining. In any case, women had much lower workforce participation rate than the male in Goa. Interestingly, fitting the stereotypical traditional women's profile we find (in our sample) that married women are less likely to be in the paid labour force than unmarried women.

In terms of educational attainment, the literacy rate in the mining area matches the state average but in the tourism areas it is significantly higher. Did this help women achieve economic independence? In the tourism sector the graduates and above had the highest participation rates while in mining it was the illiterate category that had the highest contribution to paid labour (though the second highest category was graduate even in mining). So education does seem to matter. Also, women are better off pursuing a higher degree than dropping out after 12 years or less as they have a better chance of employment. This seems to payoff in the labour market as the average reported incomes among women there is Rs 4000 but the mining figures are significantly lower.

It is significant that even in the lead sectors, women have not been able to break the glass ceiling. Also increased economic opportunity does not lead to automatic breaking of traditional patriarchal shackles within the household. However, emergence of a modern service sector offers hope for entering into the paid workforce with higher educational attainment and is an area of public intervention that needs to be further explored. It is also clear that links to the global dynamics does not necessarily imply libertarian options that enhance women's empowerment. The nature of the industry makes a significant difference in the nature of employment offered.

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