

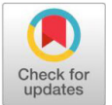
Research Article

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Moser's Triple Roles Framework and the Gender Dynamics of Intra-Household Labor Division in Odisha

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ABSTRACT

To determine the role and status of rural women in the process of empowerment, a study was conducted in 2023 in the Astarang and Kakatpur blocks of the Puri district and the Bijepur and Bargarh blocks of the Bargarh district of Odisha. A comparative analysis was done because Bargarh is an interior district and Puri is a coastal district which was selected purposively. A total of four blocks, each with fifty rural women, were surveyed using the personal interview and focused group discussion methods. Two villages from each block of the district were considered, and each had twenty-five respondents resulting in a total of 200 rural women. The triple role framework developed by Caroline Mosher was used to determine the status and role of rural women in the productive, reproductive, and community contexts. Regardless of the region, more women were involved in reproductive activities i.e., 38% and 40.66% of rural women than in productive i.e., 20.08% and 18.71%, community, or sociocultural activities i.e., 8.75% and 8.00% of rural women in Puri and Bargarh district respectively. This research study faces challenges related to obtaining accurate and sensitive data, and navigating cultural intricacies that impact traditional gender roles, potentially hindering a comprehensive understanding of the topic. A consistent gender analysis is necessary before improving agricultural extension programs, achieving gender-balanced sustainable development of rural and urban areas in emerging nations, and promoting development effectiveness.

Keywords: Gender, Triple roles framework, Rural women, Empowerment, Gender analysis, Productive, Reproductive

INTRODUCTION

India's rural population accounts for a significant portion of the country's total inhabitants, and within this demographic, women form a crucial but often marginalized segment. Despite significant progress in various sectors, women in rural India continue to face a range of obstacles due to deeply ingrained patriarchal norms, limited access to resources, and a lack of opportunities for education and employment. According to recent statistics, India's rural population is estimated to be over 65%, with women constituting nearly half of this population. However, their representation in various social, economic, and political spheres remains disproportionately low (Ahhammad et al., 2013). Approximately 59.1% of women in rural areas are literate, compared to 77.2% of men, according to statistics from the National Sample Survey (NSS).

Women's participation in the workforce is one of the most important measures of their status. The majority of women work in agriculture in rural India, but their contribution is frequently ignored and underestimated. Rural women have limited access to financially independent resources like credit and land, which further limits their economic independence (Ahmed et al., 2011). These issues are particularly acute in Odisha, an agrarian state with a sizable rural population. The specific cultural and social setting of the state may affect rural women's experiences differently than they

would in other parts of India (Jadoun, 2020). Generally speaking, the term "gender" refers to the disparities between men and women who act according to socially constructed realities based on behavioral norms. The distinctions between men and women, which are primarily biological, are encompassed by sex roles; in contrast, gender roles are context-specific and socially produced (Ali, 2012).

Understanding the many different issues that women confront and figuring out how to support their empowerment and well-being requires the use of gender analysis (Alkire et al., 2013). It is a technique used to recognize, examine, and understand how men and women behave differently in terms of gender roles and relationships, as well as to advance social and economic inequality, in order to better influence development policy and practice and provide agricultural extension services. This analysis delves into the current statistics of rural women in India and focuses on the state of Odisha to shed light on the unique circumstances faced by women in this region (Awasthi et al., 2020). Another critical aspect of gender analysis is women's health and well-being. They can also provide benchmarks for monitoring and evaluation, and, most importantly, they can improve the performance of development projects by better resource mobilization and utilization (Chowdhury, 2011).

This current study on gender analysis aims to shed light on the role and status of rural women in Odisha, by examining the average hours spent in productive, reproductive, community, and miscellaneous activities by rural women in a 24-hour work profile. By understanding rural women in this context, policymakers, organizations, and communities can develop targeted interventions to promote gender equality and empower rural women in India, ultimately leading to more inclusive and sustainable development (Kashid et al., 2022).

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METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in the Puri and Bargarh districts of Odisha. Puri and Bargarh districts were chosen purposively because of the highest number of women self-help groups (WSHGs) amongst the coastal and interior districts in the state respectively. Two blocks, Astarang and Kakatpur of Puri district and Bargarh and Bijepur of Bargarh district, were specifically chosen as having the highest numbers of WSHGs according to secondary data from the Department of Mission Shakti, Odisha. Then, two villages were randomly chosen from each of those chosen blocks. Eight villages were thereafter randomly selected from each of their four distinct blocks making a total sample size of 200. Focused group discussion and personal interview methods were used for data collection. At the beginning of each activity, participants received a thorough explanation of the triple role's paradigm. At the start of each exercise, participants

were asked to decipher local definitions and conceptualizations of each function as a way of triangulation.

The participants were then asked to list their tasks and how long they typically took on a 24-hour day. These were the general activities that were agreed upon by the participants. After an agreement was reached and the various responsibilities were made apparent, participants were asked to count the number of hours given for each "role" (productive, reproductive, community, miscellaneous). Participants were instructed to count the number of hours allotted for each activity separately after the various roles had been defined and agreed upon. This information was to be recorded on a separate piece of cardboard paper that had been prepared in advance and contained three columns: the category, the number of hours, and a summary of the activities in each category.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

TABLE 1. Moser's triple roles framework and contextual interpretations in Puri and Bargarh

Roles	Moser's Conceptualization	Conceptualization within Context
1. Reproduction	Definition: Taking care of children and performing household chores including cooking, cleaning, and getting things.	Domestic duties (such as cooking, cleaning, getting the water, and caring for kinship relationships with in-laws; getting kids ready for school; "Discussing" with the partner Understanding.
2. Production	Producing goods and services for trade or consumption, such as raising crops for market, consumption by households).	Activities that generate products and services for household usage and income savings and commerce. Theorization: Both men and women can participate in these pursuits.
3. Socio-Cultural	Definition: Community service includes organizing social gatherings, activities, and other events. management of resources.	Definition: Church activities and community service; social gatherings like visits, socializing, and consolation (For instance, drinking with pals) networking)

Context-Specific Definitions of Reproduction, Production, and Sociocultural Roles in Odisha

Table 1 presents a summary of productive, reproductive, and socio-cultural roles as defined through focus group discussions in the selected communities in Odisha. The Table demonstrates striking similarities between Caroline Moser's initial definitions and conceptualization with the empirics from Odisha. Nevertheless, there are also context-specific conceptualizations that fundamentally differ from the original gender theorizing. For instance, while Moser's original conceptualization assumes that women's productive roles tend to be less visible and blurred by their heavy reproductive functions, the latter seems to be a justification for why men should generally get more involved in productive activities than women. In all the research communities, men generally acknowledged the importance of the reproductive functions of women for household well-being. In addition, both men and women were generally of the opinion that the functions performed by each of them were rather a coordinated division of labor based on competence, rather than a form of gender bias. In summary, from an empirical perspective, the link between sex and gender roles in Odisha seems to be understood as a modicum for effective division of labor rather than gender bias as generally echoed in the topical literature.

TABLE 2: Distribution of rural women according to their role & status (n=200)

Roles	Puri (n=100)			Bargarh (n=100)		
	Total time spent (in hours)	Avg. time spent (in hours)	Percentage	Total time spent (in hours)	Avg. time spent (in hours)	Percentage
Work as employed	97	0.97		68	0.68	
Own business work	35	0.35		38	0.38	
Farming/livestock/fishing	238	2.38		305	3.05	
Weaving, sewing, textile care	112	1.12		48	0.48	
Total	482	4.82	20.08	449	4.49	18.71
Cooking	389	3.89		354	3.54	
Domestic work	452	4.52		498	4.98	
Care for children/ adults	71	0.71		124	1.24	
Total	912	9.12	38	976	9.76	40.66

Travelling & commuting	33	0.33		37	0.37	
Social activities & hobbies	45	0.45		32	0.32	
Religious activities	61	0.61		56	0.56	
Voluntary work for the community	19	0.19		18	0.18	
Attending social events	20	0.20		23	0.23	
Participating in groups or farmer's organization	18	0.18		17	0.17	
Attending political meeting	14	0.14		09	0.09	
Total	210	2.10	8.75	192	1.92	8.00
Sleeping & resting	600	6.0		623	6.23	
Eating & drinking	84	0.84		80	0.80	
Personal care	12	0.12		04	0.04	
Watching tv	90	0.90		70	0.70	
Exercising	10	0.1		6	0.06	
Total	796	7.96	33.16	783	7.83	32.62

The data provided in the Table 2 unveils the exhaustive scope of activities rural women in Puri and Bargarh engage in within a 24-hour timeframe. Their day is marked by a multitude of responsibilities and roles, evident from the allocated time for various activities. Starting with productive activities, it's evident that these women balance employed work remarkably, dedicating 97 hours in Puri and 68 hours in Bargarh, summing up to 165 hours. Additionally, their entrepreneurial spirit shines through with 35 hours in Puri and 38 hours in Bargarh dedicated to personal business endeavors, totaling 73 hours. Their substantial contribution to agriculture is notable, spending 238 hours in Puri and 305 hours in Bargarh on farming, livestock care, and fishing, summing up to 543 hours.

In terms of reproductive activities, their commitment to sustaining the household is apparent. They spend considerable time on cooking, devoting 389 hours in Puri and 354 hours in Bargarh, totaling 743 hours. Simultaneously, domestic chores claim a significant portion, with 452 hours in Puri and 498 hours in Bargarh, amounting to 950 hours. Additionally, they dedicate time to care for children and adults, investing 71 hours in Puri and 124 hours in Bargarh, totaling 195 hours. Community engagement also forms a crucial part of their daily lives. Despite packed schedules, these women allocate time for traveling and commuting, with 33 hours in Puri and 37 hours in Bargarh, totaling 70 hours. Moreover, they actively participate in social activities, religious pursuits, and community-related endeavors, spending varying yet substantial hours in each category. The table also highlights the significance of miscellaneous activities. Sleeping and resting claim a significant chunk of their time, with 600 hours in Puri and 623 hours in Bargarh, totaling 1223 hours. Other essential activities like eating, personal care, and leisure pursuits are also evident but occupy comparatively lesser portions of their day.

In essence, these numerical representations vividly paint the picture of rural women's lives, showcasing their unwavering dedication to various roles—be it in economic contributions, household sustenance, community engagement, or personal well-being. Their everyday routine is a testament to their resilience, versatility, and indispensable contributions to their families and communities. Rural women, as depicted by the data, invest significantly more hours in roles associated with household maintenance and sustenance, such as cooking, domestic work, and caregiving, collectively dedicating substantial time to these reproductive activities. Conversely,

they allocate comparatively fewer hours to activities categorized as productive, despite their undeniable contributions to employed work, personal business endeavors, and agricultural pursuits. The data underscores their extensive engagement in nurturing the family and community, demonstrating their pivotal roles in sustaining the household economy and social fabric, while also illuminating the limited time available for pursuits that might directly contribute to economic growth or personal leisure.

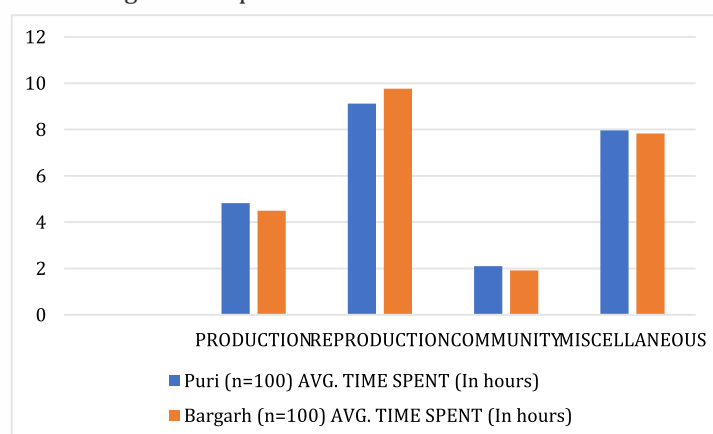


Fig.1. Comparative analysis of rural women of Puri & Bargarh according to their role & status

TABLE 3: Distribution of CHI-SQUARE table of roles of rural women

ROLES OF RURAL WOMEN	PURI		BARGARH	
	z value	P value	z value	p value
Production-Reproduction	13.67	<0.01	11.03	<0.01
Production-Community	11.17	<0.01	10.9	<0.01
Production-Miscellaneous	10.25	<0.01	11.03	<0.01
Reproduction-Community	23.94	<0.01	26.37	<0.01
Reproduction-Miscellaneous	3.49	<0.01	5.78	<0.01
Community-Miscellaneous	20.78	<0.01	21.2	<0.01

In Table-3, The provided table illustrates Chi-Square values ('Z') and their associated p-values for various dimensions—productive role, reproductive role, community role, and miscellaneous roles—within two districts, Puri and Bargarh in Orissa. Chi-Square measures the disparity between observed and expected frequencies within categorical data, helping ascertain if there's a significant association between variables. The 'Z' values represent the extent of deviation between observed and anticipated frequencies: higher positive

values indicate observed frequencies surpassing expectations, while smaller or negative values suggest lower observed frequencies than expected. Simultaneously, the 'p-values' denote the significance level, signaling the likelihood of observing the data if the variables were independent (null hypothesis). A low p-value, often below 0.05 or 0.01 thresholds, indicates strong evidence against independence, signifying a notable relationship between the variables. Conversely, higher p-values suggest insufficient evidence against the null hypothesis, implying potential independence between variables.

In the table, dimensions like PRO-REP and PRO-COM display notably high 'Z' values (13.67 for Puri, 11.03 for Bargarh) with extremely low p-values ('<0.01'), indicating a strong and significant relationship between these dimensions in both districts. Conversely, dimensions such as REP-MIS exhibit smaller Z values (3.49 for Puri, 5.78 for Bargarh) but still possess highly significant p-values ('<0.01'), indicating a noteworthy relationship between these dimensions across both districts, albeit of a smaller magnitude compared to PRO-REP and PRO-COM. This analysis aids in understanding the strength and statistical significance of the relationships between different dimensions across Puri and Bargarh districts, providing insights into the associations among productive, reproductive, community, and miscellaneous roles within these regions in Odisha.

CONCLUSION

Development practitioners, including agricultural extensionists, actively seek innovative approaches to enhance development effectiveness. The integration of gender perspectives emerged as a pivotal concept, evolving from "women in development" to "gender and development" and "gender mainstreaming." Caroline Moser's triple roles framework remains influential, categorizing labor divisions into reproductive, productive, and socio-cultural domains, recognizing women's practical and strategic needs is vital for effective development. Applying this framework to coastal and interior regions of Odisha revealed women's dominance in reproductive tasks over productive and socio-cultural aspects, with some paradigm shifts and context-specific variations. Such gender analyses, although necessitating expanded case studies and diverse tools, hold the potential to optimize development by acknowledging and addressing gender-specific labor dynamics in developing nations.

FUTURE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The future scope of this study lies in exploring additional geographical regions within India to understand the generalizability of the findings. Further research could delve into the evolving socio-cultural dynamics impacting intra-household labor division and incorporate longitudinal analyses to track changes over time. Additionally, investigating the implications of policy interventions or community-based initiatives on gender roles within households could provide valuable insights for promoting equitable labor distribution. Lastly, exploring the intersectionality of factors such as socioeconomic status and education in shaping these dynamics could enhance the depth of understanding in future investigations.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest exist for any of the authors regarding the publication of this article.

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