Understanding Work:Paid And Unpaid Labour

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***Abstract*—I see women add a lot to development by doing paid work and work. Women work hard. I see women try to mix those jobs with caring for their families. I see women, in the sector and many other women also do invisible tasks. I see women often carry the burden of paid work and unpaid labour. I have seen that the unpaid work of the tasks that involve the household maintenance, the provision and the reproduction and that women or female children usually do does not get counted in the labour calculations. I have noticed that with the increasing participation of women, in the sector women spend time at the work site. I have observed that if the conditions are bad, for the workers women suffer more. I know that women manage the burden of work, home and child care. Healthcare, workplace and family are the three things that shape the life of a woman. I see that the women, in the organized sector can choose to hire help and can afford to set aside their home chores. The women who are poor cannot do that. I think it is necessary to study how healthcare, workplace and family affect the women who work in the sector. People call the work of women manual and repetitive. The women still carry much load, as the men.**

I see that the unpaid work that women do creates obstacles, for women to enter the workforce. The unpaid work that women do lowers women's earning potential. The unpaid work that women do also keeps the gaps alive. Because the unpaid work that women do takes up time women miss chances, for involvement, skill development and education. Those missed chances are the cost of the work.

The study explores gender differences, in care work. Paid work in India. The study focuses on six states: Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Haryana, Maharashtra, Bihar and Meghalaya. The study looks at differences. The study examines how care work. Paid work differ for men and women across the six states and the study shows that the gap in responsibilities can affect economic outcomes. I think women are the key, to economic progress. I think women matter for a society. The study stresses that gender inequality must be addressed to create a society. When I look at the Time Use Survey 2019 data, I see how time men and women spend on caregiving, domestic work, paid employment and other activities. I use analysis. I make visual charts to show the differences. The unpaid care work is important, for families and the economy. The unpaid care work stays undervalued and unevenly shared. The uneven sharing limits women's participation, in the workforce. Slows growth. The uneven sharing also creates the dual workload that women face. The findings highlight significant gender disparities, with women dedicating far more time to unpaid care work than men.

To reach the goals the researcher uses a time use survey, correlation analysis, graphs and percentages. I look at the numbers. I see that women, in the income group and women with the least education are more likely to do a lot of domestic work. I also see that women who work without pay have a status than women who work for wages in the study region. I also see that women who work without pay spend time caring for their children and doing household tasks, then women who work for wages.

The social and familial standing of unpaid women workers is the primary emphasis of our research. Researcher study mainly focused on comparison of the position of paid and unpaid women workers in the society. This study also focuses on intensity of outside job according to their education level.

I. INTRODUCTION

Work is the idea that holds societies together. Work lets individuals add to the economy keep their families fed and join the life. People have argued about the meaning of work, for a time. Most economic and policy systems see work, as paid labor – work that brings in money is counted in money and is officially recorded in accounts. Paid work is easily quantifiable, visible in employment statistics, and central to concept such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and labour market performance. However, this narrow focus conceals a vast domain of labour that takes place outside formal markets. Unpaid labour-ranging from domestic chores, caregiving, subsistence farming, and voluntary community service – remain essentials to

the survival of household and the though it is neither adequately recognized nor remunerated. The distinction between paid and unpaid labour is not merely economic but also social and political.

For Example, housework and caregiving, through vital the reproduction of the labour force is often dismissed as 'Natural' responsibilities rather than acknowledged as labour demanding time, skill, and effort. This undervaluation not only marginalizes Women's contribution but also sustains broader hierarchies in which men's paid work is prioritized in terms of prestige, authority, and economic independence.

People talk about work, over the world today. I notice that the line, between paid work and unpaid work is becoming more mixed. Internships gig work and informal sector jobs often do not pay enough do not give protection. Do not give recognition. Internships gig work and informal sector jobs look a lot like work because they are risky. Unpaid work also creates a lot of value. I have read studies that say if we put a price on work and caregiving unpaid work would make a part of global GDP. In countries like India, time- use survey revel that women spend multiple hours daily on unpaid tasks compared to men, pointing to a systemic imbalance in the distribution of labour. This duality underscores the need to broaden our understanding of work beyond market definitions, situating it within definitions situating, cultural norms, and development priorities.

The governments and the international organizations often make rules that focus on the jobs. They leave the labour out of the picture. That leaves the labour without the security the health coverage or the welfare help. People who do the labour become vulnerable. During the COVID pandemic the public services fell apart. The fall of the services added load to the unpaid care work. Women felt the load most. The extra load shows how essential the unpaid care work is, for keeping the economy going in a crisis. The extra load also shows how little the world values the care work. Addressing such challenges requires reimagining economic frameworks that integrate unpaid labour into policy discourse, ensuring recognition, redistribution, and reward. Moreover, the discourse around work must account for the cultural and ethical dimensions of labour while paid labour is associated with independence, dignity, and social mobility, unpaid labour often reflects values of care, responsibility, and community service.

Scholars of social development argues that an inclusive approach to work acknowledges not only productivity but also well- being, equity, and sustainability. By valuing unpaid work alongside paid employment, societies can move toward more holistic measures of progress, such as the Human Development Index or well – being economies, which consider care, leisure, and community participation as essential aspects of development.

I argue that a comprehensive understanding of work must go beyond the split of paid and unpaid labour. A comprehensive understanding of work must look at the connections, between paid and unpaid labour. A comprehensive understanding of work must examine the inequalities that affect paid and unpaid labour. A comprehensive understanding of work must examine the values that support both paid and unpaid labour. A comprehensive understanding of work shows more, about work.

By analysing historical contexts, theoretical debates, and contemporary challenges, it seeks to highlight how unpaid labour sustain the paid economy, how inequalities are reproduced through invisibility, and how revaluing all forms of work is necessary for achieving social justice and sustainable development. In doing so, the study contributes to ongoing debates on labour rights, gender equality, and the redefinition of economic progress in the twenty –first century.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

When I think about work, I see that work is a part of the life and society. Work does not mean jobs that give money. Work also means tasks that happen at home or, in the community. Work can be cooking, caring for children or helping people. These activities are called labour. Work that gives money, such as jobs, in offices, factories, schools or hospitals is called paid labour.

Understanding the paid labour and the unpaid labour matters because the paid labour and the unpaid labour shape the economy shape the structures and shape the quality of life. I notice the paid labour; in the hours people work and in the wages they receive. I notice the labour in the cooking, cleaning, caring and other tasks that keep the families and the community running. The paid labour is visible. Is measured in the hours and the wages. The unpaid labour is invisible. The unpaid

labour is equally important, for the functioning of the society.

Conceptual Overview

Paid Labour:

Paid labour is work, for money. When I think about paid labour, I see that paid labour includes jobs in businesses, government, schools, hospitals and factories. Paid labour gives income, social security and economic independence. Economists such as Becker (1965) explain that people split their time among paid labour, unpaid work and leisure based on wages, needs and responsibilities. Paid work is recognized by the community. Paid work offers chances, for growth and career development.

Unpaid Labour:

Unpaid labour includes domestic chores, childcare, eldercare and voluntary community services.

Unpaid labour does not earn money. Unpaid labour is essential because unpaid labour supports the families and lets people take part in the paid work. Fedrici (1975) argued that unpaid labour is often invisible and undervalued in the systems. I see labour in my home and I notice the impact of unpaid labour every day.

Unpaid Labour Can Be Divided into Three Main Types:

- Physical labour: Tasks such as cooking, cleaning, washing, and household repairs.
- Mental labour: planning, organising, and managing household tasks such as creating schedules, making shopping lists (Reich-Stiebert et al, 2023).
- labour: I see labour when I care for family members when I comfort others when I manage household relationships. Recognising unpaid labour helps the society see the range of labour, beyond money.

Gendered Dimensions of Labour

Research shows that women do labour, then men. I have seen women juggle a paid job and household chores at the time. That situation is called the " burden" or "second shift". Studies show that unpaid labour hurts women's health and lowers women's life satisfaction while men feel impact (Lancet public health,2022). A woman who works time in an office can spend hours each day on housework and caring for children.

Major Problems Related to Gender Equality in Paid and Unpaid Labour

I see gender equality, in the world of work as an issue today. The division between paid work and unpaid work shows unfairness that hurts women in society in money and in politics. Men's work in the economy gets recognition and reward. Women's contributions, household work and caregiving work stay hidden from most people. I think we need to understand the problems of gender equality to reach gender equality at home and, at work.

1. Unequal Distribution of Unpaid Work

One of the problems is the not sharing of unpaid house and care work. I see that women are usually expected to take the job of house chores taking care of children taking care of people and other unpaid work. Unpaid house and care work creates the care burden. Because unpaid house and care work is not paid or officially recognised, unpaid house and care work limits womens time. Limits womens chance to go to school get a paid job or join community activities. Men, on the other hand, spend far fewer hours performing such work, which gives them more freedom to pursue careers and income-generating activities.

2. Gender Pay Gap in Paid Employment

When women have paid jobs, women face wage discrimination and unequal treatment. I see women earn less, than men for doing the similar jobs and that situation is called the gender pay gap.

3. Lack of Recognition for Unpaid Labour

Unpaid work done by women such, as managing households, cooking, cleaning and caregiving forms the foundation of the family and the society. I notice that society rarely calls work work. Because unpaid work does not bring income governments exclude work from the national economic measures like GDP. The lack of recognition of work makes unpaid work seem valuable. Policy makers then exclude women from social safety nets such, as pensions, insurance and paid leave. I notice the women who spend most of their lives doing work often rely on money, from people. The women's work is essential, to the well-being of the society.

4. Double Burden of Paid and Unpaid Work
I see many working women feel the burden called the second shift. After women finish their paid jobs women must also take care of the house and the caregiving duties. The double burden leads to longer work hours, body and mind tiredness and personal or leisure time. The double burden hurts women's productivity, mental health and the overall quality of life. The double burden is a load.

5. Limited Access to Opportunities and Resources
I see that the cultural and social norms block women, from the education the training and the formal employment. I see that many women are discouraged from the leadership fields. I see that the technical or leadership fields are called male-dominated. I see that the cultural and social norms push men toward the paid work. I see that men are encouraged to focus on the paid work. I see that this push keeps the gender inequality alive.

6. Cultural and Patriarchal Attitudes
I notice that male-run values still shape the way people see gender roles in the society. The society expects women to be caregivers and homemakers. The society expects men to be breadwinners. Traditional expectations affect how labour is divided at home and also affect hiring practices and workplace behaviour. The social expectation that women should put family before career reinforces the split of paid work and work.

7. Policy Gaps and Institutional Neglect
The lack of policies that support gender balance in work is a problem. I notice that many governments fail to include work, in statistics and many governments fail to provide compensation or recognition for unpaid work. The lack of labour laws that ensure pay, maternity leave and workplace safety also exists. Without the policies women continue to face disadvantages at home and, in the labour market.

III. CASE STUDY

The study uses a method. The study looks at how men and women, in the states of Haryana, Maharashtra, Bihar, Meghalaya, Kerala and Tamil Nadu spend their time on unpaid care work. The study also looks at the economic cultures each state shows. I notice that the study says patriarchal traditions limit women's movement and keep women out of the economy, in Bihar and Haryana (Deb, 2021). Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra have the urbanization and the higher literacy rates. I chose Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra because I want to see how the urbanization and the literacy affect the gender roles and the unpaid caregiving. Kerala is the state, in India. Kerala has a literacy rate of 96.2 percent which's far higher, than any state (Swargiary, 2024).

The higher literacy and the higher urbanization levels, in the states make the states important for studying the interplay of attainment, urban environments and the distribution of care work among genders (Government of India et al. 2020). Meghalaya offers a view with its structure. The matrilineal social structure is seen among the Khasi and the Garo tribes. The Khasi and the Garo tribes trace lineage and inheritance through women. The women, in the Khasi and the Garo tribes hold status.

I rely on data, from the Time Use Survey 2019 that the NSSO did. The data give the hours that people spend each day on activities. The research does calculations. Makes charts. The research compares how time men and women spend on tasks such as caregiving and household work; with the time they spend on paid jobs. The research also suggests using methods to make the findings stronger.

IV. METHOD

Unpaid work burden analysis:
I watched the researcher make an equation. The equation calculates the proportion of work, for each gender, in India.
Exploring Paid and Unpaid Care Responsibilities of Women in India's Regional Context
The total time spent on work equals the time spent on domestic work plus the time spent on unpaid care work. That means the total unpaid work time adds up from work and unpaid care work.
$\mathrm{Pr}oportion\ of\ unpaid\ work =$
I take the time, on work and multiply the total time, on unpaid work by one hundred.
$total\ time\ spent\ on\ four\ main\ activitie$s

V. STUDY RESULTS:

Women have a burden of the work. Women do more of the work, than men.
to men in India. In rural areas, females spend 75.53 percent of their total time on unpaid work, compared to just 11.88 percent for males.
In areas the females spend 80 percent of the time, on unpaid work. The high share of work by the females shows that gender gaps, in the household and caregiving duties remain strong. Rural and urban combined data show trends. The females dedicate than three quarters of the time to work. The males spend time on work. Source: Author Calculation using Time-Use Survey 2019
The table above shows a gender gap, in care work. Women carry most of the care work in every state. In Bihar women provide 93.82 percent of care work. Men provide only 15.58 percent of unpaid care work. I see that this pattern points to gender norms. The northern region such, as Haryana shows the pattern. In Haryana women are 81.18 percent of the population and men are 6.74 percent of the population. Kerala, on the other hand, exhibits a more evenly distributed population, with men making up 35.42 percent of the total, the greatest percentage of any state, while women still make up the majority at 58.13 percent. Kerala's higher literacy rates and comparatively progressive socioeconomic structure can be responsible for this.Similar trends may be seen in Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Meghalaya, where women continue to perform a disproportionately high percentage of unpaid care work (69.75 percent, 72.9 percent, and 65.7 percent, respectively), while men's participation is less than 16 percent. In contrast to Bihar and Haryana, I notice that Tamil Nadu has a share and that lower female share shows a slightly better gender balance. I also see that Meghalaya, a state, with traditions still shows a gender imbalance. I find that the gender gap is largest in the states and I also see that male participation in unpaid care work is a little higher in the states and, in the northeastern states.

VI. FINDINGS:

The men work for pay for 263 minutes, in India. The women work for pay for 61 minutes, in India.
Source: Author Calculation using Time-Use Survey 2019

One of the main criticisms of feminist care theory is that the labor
market prioritizes paid work over unpaid caregiving. Women's unpaid caregiving and household duties, which are not evident in economic frameworks, frequently limit their participation in paid jobs. Producing things for personal consumption takes very little time for both men (28 minutes) and women (23 minutes), indicating that unpaid subsistence labour is not as important as other unpaid tasks. Even still, men's slightly higher contribution suggests a small level of involvement in fields that are often associated with women.
In Kerala men spend time on paid jobs, then women. Men spend 514 minutes on paid jobs while women spend 404 minutes. Women carry the load of unpaid house work. Women do 316 minutes of house work compared to 100 minutes for men. Women also do the care work. Women do 167 minutes of care work compared to 92 minutes, for men. I see that women have a load of paid work and work. Kerala has economic numbers. Women still have to do both paid work and unpaid house and care work. Feminist care ideas point out that society does not recognize or support care work.
Source: Author Calculation using Time-Use Survey 2019

In Bihar men spend significantly more time (330 minutes) on employment-related activities compared to women (19 minutes). Whereas women dedicate 366 minutes to unpaid domestic
Women spend time on the services. I notice that men only spend 40 minutes on the services. I also notice that men spend a little time on the caregiving, then women. When I compare the numbers, I see that men spend that time on the caregiving while women spend less time on the unpaid caregiving.
Source: Author Calculation using Time-Use Survey 2019
Traditional gender roles and Bihar's largely agrarian economy may account for the disparity, with women doing home chores and men focused on economic activities. This is an example of patriarchal systems that support women's traditional caregiving responsibilities. The undervaluation of domestic and caregiving work echoes the

assertion that cares work, often performed by women, is systematically ignored in the public domain (Tronto, 1993).

In Haryana men spend 308 minutes on employment activities, compared to only 43 minutes by women and women spend 269 minutes on unpaid domestic work versus 15 minutes by men.

I see that in Haryana the culture and the strong gender rules keep women from moving and keep women from taking paid jobs. Tronto (1993) says that care is an political activity. Tronto (1993) framework of care, as a political activity explains why women's caregiving responsibilities are put before women's participation. The system does not value women's work. The lack of value keeps the cycle of dependence and inequality alive.

Source: Author Calculation using Time-Use Survey 2019

In Maharashtra men spend 122 minutes on employment tasks. Women, in Maharashtra spend 364 minutes on work. The numbers show a gender gap, in employment time compared with Bihar and Haryana.

Figure 5 Average time (in minutes)
spent in a day on the activities in Maharashtra

Source: Author Calculation using Time-Use Survey 2019

Maharashtra's urbanization gives women some opportunities, in jobs. Domestic responsibilities stay a barrier. Fraser (1997) discusses the burden that women face when women balance paid work and work. The dual responsibility, in Maharashtra shows how society fails to spread caregiving duties. Maharashtra's urban settings give women chances. Do not lower the gendered nature of care. The theory points out the redistribution of care duties.

Meghalaya's matrilineal structure gives women chance to get paid work. It does not take away the household chores that women still have. I notice that men spend 78 minutes on the paid jobs while women spend 231 minutes on the paid jobs. I also notice that women spend 252 minutes on the house work and men spend 41 minutes on the unpaid house work.

Source: Author Calculation using Time-Use Survey 2019

Feminist care theory critiques the essentialization of caregiving roles for women, even in societies where women hold higher social status. Meghalaya proves that matrilineality does not necessarily dismantle the gendered division of care.

Tamil Nadu has literacy rates. Women have employment opportunities. Higher literacy rates and employment opportunities, for women lead women to take a role in both work and paid work. I notice that men spend 131 minutes on employment. I notice that women spend 372 minutes on work. I also notice that women add 231 minutes of services which is far more, than men.

Source: Author Calculation using Time-Use Survey 2019

Care ethics highlight that, despite their importance, caring responsibilities are frequently undervalued and ignored, as is the

I think the case, in Tamil Nadu shows how the feminist care theory calls for changes. The feminist care theory asks the system to recognize caregiving labour. The feminist care theory asks the system to pay for caregiving labour. The feminist care theory wants women to balance responsibilities fairly.

Comparison of 2019 and 2025 – Unpaid Care Work and Women's Labour Participation in India

This section compares the situation in 2019. The situation, in 2019 is described in the research paper "Exploring Paid and Unpaid Care Responsibilities of Women, in India's Regional Context" and the

Emerging trends, in 2025 show changes in women's care work that affect families and communities. Emerging trends in 2025 show changes in women's participation in paid work. Emerging trends in 2025 show the government's role, in addressing gender inequality.

Key Improvements in 2025 Compared to 2019:

- Women's labour force participation rose from, about 23 percent in 2017–18 to 40 to 42 percent in 2025. Women's labour force participation grew because the flexible work, from home option and the digital job opportunities gave women ways to work. I have watched the numbers go up.
- I notice that awareness of shared household responsibilities has increased. I notice that the increase leads to a rise, in men's contribution to care work.
- The government introduced programmes such, as Mission Shakti and Gati Shakti. The

government programmes support women's welfare and the care economy.

- I notice Technology cuts the load at home. Technology lets us order groceries online. Technology brings home services. Technology lets us work from home.
- I have observed that the urban areas have become more aware of gender issues and have changed their thinking. I have observed that rural India is improving slowly.
- I see that discussions have started in the policy circles. Discussions focus on recognizing the care work as part of the economy.

VII. 2019 SITUATION 2025 TREND OVERALL CHANGE

Women's work participation Around 23-37% About 40-42% Gradual increase in women's participation in paid work

Unpaid Care Work Women 75%-93%,

Men have a range of four to fifteen percent. Men are helping a little more. The gap, between men and women is slowly getting smaller.

The government support has policies. The government support includes schemes, like mission Shakti. The government support is improving.

Technology has an impact, on the housework. I see that technology gives apps and online tools that help reduce the workload. I think technology makes a change.

Social Attitude Patriarchal Mindset Gender equality awareness increasing Better awareness and acceptance

- The government is starting policy recognition.
- People ignore the work.
- People are talking about including the care work, in policies.
- Officials are starting recognition of the care work.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Men spend much more time on paid work, while women spend most of their time on unpaid tasks like cooking, cleaning, and caregiving. This imbalance is seen everywhere, even in states like

Meghalaya, where women have higher social status. Unpaid care work is essential but remains disproportionately assigned to women in India, as evident from this study across Bihar, Haryana, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, and Tamil Nadu. Women consistently bear a heavier burden of unpaid care work, dedicating more than 75 percent of their total work time to these tasks in both rural and urban areas. States with highly rooted patriarchal values, such as Bihar and Haryana, show the greatest differences, according to the research of regional differences. The Feminist care theory helps explain this issue by showing how society often undervalues and ignores the importance of unpaid care work, which mostly falls on women. To fix this, we need changes like recognizing the value of unpaid work, sharing caregiving tasks more equally between men and women, and creating policies like better childcare and family support. Only then can we move closer to fairness between genders. The study concludes that unpaid care work must be formally acknowledged as a significant economic contribution. And there is a need for targeted policies, such as affordable childcare, eldercare facilities, and incentives for men to participate in caregiving. Lastly raising awareness about gender roles and promoting shared responsibilities within households can reduce women's dual workload. Policymakers should also ensure that employment opportunities for women are accompanied by systemic support to balance paid and unpaid work. The study concludes that unpaid care work must be formally acknowledged as a I think the economic contribution is big. The economic contribution helps families and the country. I think there is a need, for targeted policies. Targeted policies should include childcare, eldercare facilities and incentives for men to take part in caregiving. Affordable childcare lets parents' work. Eldercare facilities give people care. Incentives, for men encourage men to join caregiving.

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