

Women in the Economy



A SELECT ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ASIA AND PACIFIC

Compiled by
Vanita Nayak-Mukherjee



Asian and Pacific Development Centre

DAWN



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- 3 NOV 1992

WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT
EXTRA MURAL DEPARTMENT, UWI

Table 3

Distribution (Per Cent Economically Active Population in 1990) of the Female Labour Force by Sector in Selected Countries. It is an attempt to provide a practical response to the development of the region and assist them through the study and analysis of the data. The study is intended to provide a practical response to the development of the region and assist them through the study and analysis of the data. The study is intended to provide a practical response to the development of the region and assist them through the study and analysis of the data.

WOMEN IN THE ECONOMY

India	33.3	41.2	50.3	34.8	45.3	34.4
Indonesia	23.3	29.2	10.5	3.8	3.8	4.0
Nepal	42.2	44.1	48.2	30.7	37.0	43.8
Pakistan	25.2	28.4	28.7	34.4	42.0	42.0
Sri Lanka						

A SELECT ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ASIA AND PACIFIC

Development Alternatives with Women (DAWN) is a global network of activists, researchers and policy-makers committed to developing new strategies and methods to attain social and economic justice, peace and development free of all oppression by gender, class, race and nation. The programme consists of research, analysis, training, advocacy, communications and publications. The Network was initiated in Bangalore, India in 1981 and has since its founding Secretariat in New Delhi, India, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and currently based by the Women and Development Unit of the University of the West Indies in Barbados. DAWN's research now focuses on the themes of Alternative Economic Frameworks, Reproductive Rights and Population, and Environment.

Lebanon	81.4	87.4	72.4	76.1	81.1	83.2
Qatar	91.5	97.0	98.1	100.0	100.0	100.0
Saudi Arabia	38.0	50.0	39.1	51.1	51.1	51.1
Syria	50.8	72.5	79.7	42.4	59.5	57.4
UAE	85.7	95.2	97.1	100.0	100.0	100.0
The Industrialized Countries						
Japan	94.9	96.0	94.8	73.5	86.0	91.6
S. Korea	87.1	89.1	80.9	37.8	53.1	64.7
Singapore	96.5	98.0	98.8	96.8	98.2	99.5
Hong Kong	95.8	97.9	98.8	95.3	98.0	98.9

Source: World Demographic Estimates and Projections, 1980-2015. Report jointly prepared by United Nations, ILO and FAO, New York, 1986.

Note: All 1990 figures are projections.

and temporally? It is evident that there are no simple relationships, both intra and inter-country wise. And there can be no universal hypothesis across space and time on the question of female LFPRs. Keeping the regional specificities in mind, certain policy lessons can be learnt from the experience of different countries with regard to female LFPRs. From the available literature, it has been observed that there is a very

APDC

The Asian and Pacific Development Centre (APDC) was established in 1980. It is an autonomous, regional institution designed to provide a practical response to the development problems faced by countries of the region and to assist them, through the study and analysis of development options, in formulating appropriate development strategies, policies and programmes. It aims to help member countries enhance the innovative quality of their development planning within both governmental and non-governmental organizations. In its search for appropriate solutions, the Centre seeks to provide regional focus for national studies in development issues through a multiplicity of networks of individual researchers and administrators as well as national training and research institutions, and through its activities, strengthen those institutions at the national level.

DAWN

Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) is a global network of activists, researchers and policy-makers committed to developing new strategies and methods to attain social and economic justice, peace and development free of all oppression by gender, class, race and nation. The programme consists of research/analysis, training, advocacy, communications and publications. The Network was initiated in Bangalore, India in 1984 and has located its rotating Secretariat in New Delhi, India, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and currently is housed by the Women and Development Unit of the University of the West Indies in Barbados. DAWN's research now focuses on the themes of Alternative Economic Frameworks, Reproductive Rights and Population, and Environment.

The opinions expressed in this publication are the responsibility of the author and not of the Centre or DAWN.

THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

The distribution of women in the agricultural sector across the different Asian-Pacific countries shows a significant decline in the proportion of economically active female population over time (Tables 2, 4, 5 and 6). Although women agricultural labourers dominate this sector, women farmers have become visible in the latter half of the last decade. The figures on women's participation in agriculture do not differentiate between these two distinct categories of economically active women, making it difficult to assess their relative incidence. However, an analysis of the Tables gives us the following picture:

1. In the countries with large agricultural sectors, there is a steady decline over the decades, the only exception being Nepal which is more or less stable over time.
2. In the Pacific, while Fiji is showing an increase, Papua New Guinea shows a decrease in the proportion of women in this sector.

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WOMEN IN THE ECONOMY

A SELECT ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ASIA AND PACIFIC

Country	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
The Pacific Island Countries					
Fiji	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7
Papua New Guinea	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
Countries with Large Agricultural Sectors					
Bangladesh	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4
China	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0
India	14.4	14.4	14.4	14.4	14.4
Indonesia	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9
Nepal	8.7	8.7	8.7	8.7	8.7
Pakistan	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.5
Sri Lanka	18.2	18.2	18.2	18.2	18.2
The Newly Industrializing Countries					
Malaysia	21.5	21.5	21.5	21.5	21.5
Philippines	23.9	23.9	23.9	23.9	23.9
Thailand	47.9	47.9	47.9	47.9	47.9
The West Asian Countries					
Democratic Yemen	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4
Iran	49.1	49.1	49.1	49.1	49.1
Iraq	40.6	40.6	40.6	40.6	40.6
Israel	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Jordan	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3
Kuwait	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5
Lebanon	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2
Qatar	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
Saudi Arabia	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Syria	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
United Arab Emirates	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
The Industrialized Countries					
Japan	36.1	36.1	36.1	36.1	36.1
S. Korea	23.1	23.1	23.1	23.1	23.1
Singapore	18.6	18.6	18.6	18.6	18.6
Hong Kong	29.5	29.5	29.5	29.5	29.5

Compiled by
VANITA NAYAK-MUKHERJEE

Sources: World Demographic Statistics and Projections, 1960-2025, Report jointly prepared by United Nations, ILO and FAO, New York, 1983.

Note: All 1990 figures are projections.

iv. In the newly industrialized economies (NEs) of Hong Kong, Singapore and South Korea, sharp increases in female LFRs are noted over time. The exception is Japan, an industrialized country recording a slight fall in the female LFR.



Asian and Pacific Development Centre

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	Agricultural Males			Agricultural Females		
	1970	1980	1990	1970	1980	1990
The Pacific Island Countries						
Guinea	16.4	17.9	23.4			
Countries with Large Populations						
Bangladesh	81.6	75.0	68.7	78.6	72.0	66.7
China	75.0	71.0	64.2	83.0	75.3	71.8
India	80.7	79.2	76.3	80.7	79.2	76.3
Indonesia	49.7	49.7	49.7	65.3	64.7	63.0
Nepal	91.7	90.8	89.5	87.2	87.0	86.0
Pakistan	57.8	56.0	51.8	69.3	63.0	51.2
Sri Lanka	51.9	51.7	50.3	65.6	56.0	55.4
The Newly Industrialized Countries						
Malaysia	48.0	37.5	29.8	66.4	49.3	36.0
Philippines	62.1	59.0	54.1	60.0	57.0	50.5
Thailand	76.3	68.0	61.8	83.7	74.2	67.8
The West Asian Countries						
Democratic Yemen	48.0	40.0	31.1	79.6	50.1	37.0
Iran	45.7	34.0	25.0	31.0	49.4	36.9
Iraq	47.7	22.0	14.0	57.5	65.1	41.7
Israel	18.4	7.3	6.1	7.9	4.1	2.8
Jordan	29.6	11.0	6.6	18.7	2.0	1.0
Kuwait	1.8	2.1	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lebanon	19.0	12.6	7.6	23.9	19.9	13.8
Saudi Arabia	38.4	52.3	42.9	35.8	19.8	11.6
Syria	10.5	3.0	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
United Arab Emirates	55.0	50.0	40.9	48.9	25.0	17.7
	49.2	27.5	20.3	57.6	60.5	42.4
	14.3	4.8	2.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
The Industrialized Countries						
Japan	9.4	8.2	8.2	26.3	14.1	9.4
S. Korea	10.2	10.2	10.2	22.2	46.9	35.0
Singapore	1.3	1.3	1.3	3.3	0.8	0.8
Hong Kong	4.2	2.2	1.3	4.7	2.0	1.2

Source: World Development Estimates and Projections, 1950-2025, Report jointly prepared by United Nations, ILO and FAO, New York, 1986.

Note: All 1990 figures are projections.

v. In the West Asian region all countries record an increasing trend at varying levels of female participation.

The description of female LFPR elaborated above defines a given pattern over with countries in the broad economic sense. The DAWN and Pacific Development Centre are the factors or determinants that facilitate (or inhibit) female LFPRs both spatially

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FEMALE LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES (LFPRs)

The analysis of female Labour Force Participation Rates (LFPRs) in the Asia-Pacific region brings us to a very important issue which has been much debated in the literature on women's participation in the economy.¹ One of the major thrusts of the debate has been the issue of "invisibility" of women's work. In various national surveys, capturing of women's contribution to the economy in the various national surveys, bias coming into the censuses are of two types: (1) conceptual bias (with respect to concept of "work" and definition of "labour force activity" and (2) respondent bias (under-reporting by women themselves or by proxy respondents). Other reasons for underestimation are a short reference period used for assessing the employment status, a wrong ordering of questions and the use of key word questions. Authors repeatedly point to the fact that the bias in the censuses make it very difficult for intra-country and inter-country comparisons.

Table 1 indicates the female and male LFPRs in selected countries for two years (1970 and 1980) and the percentage increase in female LFPRs were provided to the United Nations by the national statistics authorities of the different countries, the limitations outlined above have to be kept in mind. Table 2 shows the distribution of women's and men's participation in the agriculture and the industry and the following observations can be made on the data (Table 1).

(i) The consistent lower level of participation rate of women across all countries with different development levels in the region, is largely attributed to definitional bias, rather than "inherent" or "unavoidable" social phenomenon (Nos. 49, 117, 239).

(ii) A combination of high or low participation rates with an increasing or declining trend in female participation is observed in the region.

(iii) In the Pacific economies, the two countries Fiji and Papua New Guinea show contrasting patterns. In Fiji, although there is a very low level of female participation, it is increasing over time, while Papua New Guinea indicates a high level of female participation in the economy which is decreasing over time.

(iv) Among the countries with large agricultural sectors, China stands out with a high participation rate that is increasing over time. Indonesia, Pakistan and Bangladesh, both Nepal and India show a decline over time in female LFPRs, while Sri Lanka indicates a fluctuating trend.

(v) The Newly Industrializing Economies (NIEs) of Malaysia and Thailand indicate an increase in female LFPRs over time. The only exception is the Philippines. Thailand is conspicuous with its very high female LFPR.

Acknowledgements

The support and inspiration for this publication has come from the Asian and Pacific Development Centre (APDC), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN). For entrusting this work to me, I am indebted to Noeleen Heyzer, Co-ordinator, Gender and Development Programme of APDC who is also DAWN's Asian Regional Representative, and Gita Sen, the co-ordinator of DAWN's research project on Alternative Economic Frameworks. Indeed, it has been a very fruitful and rewarding experience. I would also like to thank Sebastian Mathew, Nata Duvvury and Sunil Mani who gave me useful comments on an initial draft of the book.

For the preparation of the bibliography, many known and unknown people, from near and far-off countries, have been most generous and posted materials and references to me. My deep gratitude goes to Ifazul Haq-Chowdhury (Jamal) from Bangladesh; to Ines Smyth and Jeff Glasgow of the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, the Netherlands; Gerry Rodgers of the International Labour Organization, Geneva; La Rainne Abad-Sarmiento of the Centre for Women's Resources, Quezon City, the Philippines; the Centre for Women and Development, Kathmandu, Nepal and the Centre for Developing Area Studies, McGill University, Quebec, Canada. Thanks also to Nata Duvvury, Haseeb Drabu and T. K. Sundari.

The POPLIN CD-ROM Database, release 1.6, April 1990, Rural Development Abstracts (various issues) and the Agricultural and Rural Development CD-ROM Database, 1989 of the Royal Tropical Institute (K.I.T.), Amsterdam have been very useful sources for the preparation of the bibliography. APDC's useful editorial support of Rashidah Abdullah and Yap Chin Yean, with the assistance of Olga Fernandez is acknowledged.

Funding for the printing of this publication from Ford Foundation is very much appreciated.

As the bibliography was prepared in India, this allowed better access to Indian materials compared to other countries in the region. Thus the section on India is more comprehensive. Efforts were made to identify and obtain the most relevant up to date materials in countries concerned. Unfortunately, this was not always possible.

The arrangement of the bibliography moves from publications dealing with at least two countries together to country-specific abstracts. The South Pacific country publications have been abstracted first, followed by countries with large agricultural sectors like Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Subsequently, the Newly Industrializing Economies (NIEs) of Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand and a very small number of publications from the (Newly) Industrialized Economies (IEs) of Japan, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan are covered. The West Asian country coverage is limited to one, or at the most two, abstracts from the different countries in the region.

An entry in the abstract first mentions the author by last name, followed by initials. After that, the title of the text is followed by reference numbers, publishing authority, year of publication and page numbers. The initials are the main reference source. Abbreviations have been used for main reference titles (mainly)

The support and inspiration for this publication has come from the Asian and Pacific Development Centre (APDC) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWNE) for sponsoring the work. I am indebted to Noeleen Heyzer, Co-ordinator, Gender and Development Programme of APDC who is also DAWNE's Asian Regional Representative, and Gillian, the co-ordinator of DAWNE's research project on Alternative Economic Frameworks. Indeed, it has been a very fruitful and rewarding experience. I would like to thank Sebastian Matthews, Niall Duvvury and Sami Maniyya for their valuable comments on an initial draft of the book. My thanks go to the World Employment Programme which is a tripartite initiative of the ILO, UNCTAD and the World Bank. I am also grateful to the staff of the preparation of the bibliography, many known and unknown people, from near and far-off countries, have been most generous and posted materials and references to me. My deep gratitude goes to Hazratul Haq Chowdhury (Jama) from Bangladesh; Ines Smyth and Jeff Glasgow of the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, the Netherlands; Gerry Rodgers of the International Labour Organization, Geneva; La Rainne Abar-Sarmiento of the Centre for Women's Resources, Quezon City, the Philippines; the Centre for Women and Development, Kathmandu, Nepal and the Centre for Developing Area Studies, McGill University, Quebec, Canada. Thanks also to Niall Duvvury, Haseeb Dabu and T. K. Sundan.

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Funding for the printing of this publication from Ford Foundation is very much appreciated.

Preface

Background

APDC and DAWN have come together to produce this publication from a shared deep concern emerging from the individual work done by both organizations in the area of women and the economy. APDC has completed substantial research and publications on women in the agricultural and industrial sectors and on women, economic growth and poverty and is currently engaged in policy-research on women and international migration. DAWN has been active in research projects related to development of alternative economic frameworks from the perspective of poor women. From this context, and in view of the need to make country material available, to create a national and regional picture of women in the economy and to identify research gaps, APDC and DAWN gave full support to the compilation of this bibliography.

Scope and Organization

This publication deals with the issues confronting women in the economy of the Asia-Pacific region in the latter half of the 1980s. It is divided into two sections – an overview and a select annotated bibliography.

The overview uses a sector-wise analysis to examine women's participation in the economy. The bibliography concentrates on selected books, journals, doctoral theses, research monographs, discussion and working papers, conference and seminar papers, both published and unpublished. In addition, chapters from books focusing on women's work have also been included. The areas of research covered include Time-Allocation Studies, the "invisibility" of women's work, Female-Headed Households, Migration of Women, Technology and Women, Women Farmers and Extension Services, Government and Non-Government Programmes for Women, and Development and Policy and Planning for Women.

As the bibliography was prepared in India, this allowed better access to Indian materials compared to other countries in the region. Thus the section on India is more comprehensive. Efforts were made to identify and obtain the most relevant up to date materials in countries concerned. Unfortunately, this was not always possible.

The arrangement of the bibliography moves from publications dealing with at least two countries together to country-specific abstracts. The South Pacific country publications have been abstracted first, followed by countries with large agricultural sectors like Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Subsequently, the Newly Industrializing Economies (NIEs) of Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand and a very small number of publications from the (Newly) Industrialized Economies (IEs) of Japan, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan are covered. The West Asian country coverage is limited to one, or at the most two, abstracts from the different countries in the region.

An entry of the abstract first mentions the author by the second name, followed by initials. After that, the title of the text is followed by reference numbers, publishing authority, year of publication and page numbers. The italicised titles are the main reference source. Abbreviations have been used for main reference titles (mainly journals) and source/publishing authority. For example,

Agarwal, B., "Rural Women, Poverty and Natural Resources: Sustenance, Sustainability and Struggle for Change", *EPW*, Vol. 24 (43), 1989.

Sen, G., Gulati, L., *Women Workers in Kerala's Electronics Industry*, WEP, No. 10/45, ILO, Geneva, 1987, p. 53.

In the first entry, the main reference is *Economic and Political Weekly*, Volume 24, No. 43. In the second, the title of the paper, *Women Workers in Kerala's Electronics Industry* is the main reference. World Employment Programme papers of the International Labour Organization is the publishing source. A list of abbreviations is given at the end of the bibliography.

Overview of Women in the Economy

INTRODUCTION

Ester Boserup's pioneering work, *Women's Role in Economic Development* published almost two decades ago, was only the beginning of the burgeoning literature on women's participation in the economy. Over the years, many studies have highlighted the many complex nuances of women's work, which present difficulties for strict categorization. In the process, notions of what is "productive" work have undergone a serious change as domestic work was brought to the centre of the debate in the early 1980s. A wide range of issues concerning women in the economy keep surfacing, precipitated among other things, by the development policies and programmes of different countries. This overview will concentrate on the literature published in the latter half of the 1980s to outline the issues that confront women in the Asia-Pacific region.

The Asia-Pacific region encompasses countries with diverse economies at different levels of development. This spectrum covers countries with large agricultural sectors and very low levels of growth at one end (like Nepal and Bangladesh) and countries which are highly industrialized (like Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore and South Korea) with high levels of sustained economic growth at the other end. In between are countries with different levels of growth and development. The West Asian economies, along with the oil-rich Gulf states which have a well developed service sector, present yet another variation. This varied and rich canvas is the focus for analysing women's participation in the economy.

In large parts of Asia, a significant majority of the working population among women are concentrated in agriculture. "Women in Agriculture" as a subject has been dealt with extensively in the existing literature. Although the manufacturing and service sectors are increasingly employing women, especially in the South-East and East Asian countries, there is only scattered literature in this area. The growing informal/self-employed sector is also conspicuous by the dearth of publications on women working within it. Two distinct phenomena have become obvious in the last decade which are intrinsically (though not exclusively) linked to women's participation in the economy. They are (1) Migration and (2) Female-Headed Households (FHHs). The following sections will outline these significant issues concerning women workers. First, we will deal with the female Labour Force Participation Rates.

FEMALE LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES (LFPRS)

The analysis of female Labour Force Participation Rates (LFPRs) in the Asia-Pacific region brings us to a very important issue which has been much debated in the literature on women's participation in the economy.¹ One of the major thrusts of the debate has been the issue of "invisibility" of women's work, and an incomplete capturing of women's contribution to the economy in the various national surveys. Bias coming into the censuses are of two types: (1) conceptual bias (with regard to concept of "work" and definition of "labour force activity" and (2) respondent bias (under-reporting by women themselves or by proxy respondents, most often male). The other reasons for underestimation are: a short reference period adopted for assessing the employment status, a wrong ordering of questions and the use of key-word questions. Authors repeatedly point to the fact that the bias in the censuses make it very difficult for intra-country and inter-country comparisons over time.

Table 1 indicates the female and male LFPRs in selected Asia-Pacific countries, for two years (1970 and 1980) and the projected figures for 1990. As these figures were provided to the United Nations by the national statistics authorities of the different countries, the limitations outlined above have to be kept in mind. Table 1 gives us a picture of women's economic participation over time, and Tables 2 and 3, the distribution of women's and men's participation in the agriculture and non-agriculture sectors respectively.² The following observations can be made on analysing the data³ (Table 1).

1. The consistent lower level of participation rate of women *vis-a-vis* men across all countries with different development levels in the region. In South Asia, this has been largely attributed to definitional bias, rather than "some inexplicable social phenomenon" (Nos. 49, 117, 239).
2. A combination of high or low participation rates with an increasing or declining trend in female participation in the different countries as follows:
 - i. In the Pacific economies, the two countries Fiji and Papua New Guinea show contrasting patterns. In Fiji, although there is a very low level of female participation, it is increasing over time, while Papua New Guinea indicates a high level of female participation in the economy which is decreasing over time.
 - ii. Among the countries with large agricultural sectors, China stands out with a high participation rate that is increasing consistently. It is followed by Indonesia, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Both Nepal and India show a decline over time in female LFPRs, while Sri Lanka indicates a fluctuating trend.
 - iii. The Newly Industrializing Economies (NIEs) of Malaysia and Thailand indicate an increase in female LFPRs over time. The only exception is the Philippines. Thailand is conspicuous with its very high female LFPR.

Table 1
Labour Force Participation Rates (LFPRs)
in Selected Asia-Pacific Countries, by Gender (per cent)

Country	LFPRs Male			LFPRs Female		
	1970	1980	1990	1970	1980	1990
The Pacific Island Countries						
Fiji	51.2	53.8	53.9	7.1	11.5	13.7
Papua New Guinea	57.8	55.4	55.7	45.0	42.1	37.9
Countries with Large Agricultural Sectors						
Bangladesh	56.1	51.8	52.1	3.4	3.7	4.4
China	58.4	60.6	66.8	44.3	48.9	53.9
India	54.9	54.2	56.5	24.8	21.7	20.4
Indonesia	53.5	51.5	54.2	22.7	23.2	24.4
Nepal	57.4	53.3	54.0	31.8	29.9	28.9
Pakistan	51.7	51.0	50.6	5.6	6.4	7.8
Sri Lanka	50.2	52.8	53.2	18.2	20.2	19.6
The Newly Industrializing Countries						
Malaysia	46.2	50.4	52.7	21.5	27.0	28.9
Philippines	48.5	48.6	50.5	24.5	23.9	23.1
Thailand	51.6	53.5	58.5	46.7	47.9	47.5
The West Asian Countries						
Democratic Yemen	49.9	47.1	46.3	4.9	5.5	6.3
Iran	49.1	47.8	47.8	7.6	8.9	10.9
Iraq	46.9	42.9	42.0	3.4	10.0	12.0
Israel	51.1	49.8	52.0	22.3	24.9	26.3
Jordan	46.3	39.2	40.4	3.3	3.6	4.9
Kuwait	53.7	55.4	55.3	6.2	11.1	13.0
Lebanon	42.9	43.5	45.9	10.2	12.6	16.7
Oman	50.9	50.8	48.5	3.5	4.3	5.0
Qatar	66.3	70.1	65.8	4.2	8.4	8.8
Saudi Arabia	51.1	50.8	49.7	2.9	4.0	4.7
Syria	43.1	41.6	40.1	6.0	7.4	8.6
United Arab Emirates	65.5	74.4	69.3	4.9	9.0	9.7
The Industrialized Countries						
Japan	63.4	61.9	63.4	39.1	36.3	37.5
S. Korea	48.2	50.4	54.6	23.1	26.6	28.4
Singapore	50.7	59.4	64.1	18.6	32.6	31.4
Hong Kong	53.6	62.2	65.1	29.5	37.3	36.6

Source: World Demographic Estimates and Projections, 1950-2025, Report Jointly Prepared by United Nations, ILO and FAO, New York, 1988.

Note: All 1990 figures are projections.

- iv. In the newly Industrialized Economies (IEs) of Hong Kong, Singapore and South Korea, sharp increases in female LFPRs are noted over time. The exception is Japan, an industrialized country recording a slight fall in the female LFPR.

Table 2
Distribution (Per Cent Economically Active Population) in the
Agricultural Sector in Selected Asia-Pacific Countries, by Gender

Country	Agricultural Male			Agricultural Female		
	1970	1980	1990	1970	1980	1990
The Pacific Island Countries						
Fiji	56.1	49.9	43.5	16.4	27.9	23.4
Papua New Guinea	81.0	71.0	80.0	89.0	84.1	78.1
Countries with Large Agricultural Sectors						
Bangladesh	81.6	75.0	68.7	78.6	72.0	66.7
China	75.0	71.0	64.2	83.0	78.5	71.8
India	68.0	66.2	63.9	80.7	79.2	74.3
Indonesia	66.8	58.4	49.7	65.3	54.7	45.0
Nepal	91.7	90.8	89.5	97.2	97.0	88.0
Pakistan	57.8	56.0	51.8	69.3	43.0	34.2
Sri Lanka	51.9	51.7	50.3	65.6	58.0	55.4
The Newly Industrializing Countries						
Malaysia	48.0	37.5	29.9	66.4	49.3	36.0
Philippines	62.1	59.0	54.1	40.0	37.0	30.5
Thailand	76.3	68.0	61.8	83.7	74.2	67.3
The West Asian Countries						
Democratic Yemen	48.0	40.0	31.1	79.6	50.1	37.0
Iran	45.7	34.0	25.0	31.0	49.4	38.9
Iraq	47.7	22.0	14.0	37.8	68.1	41.7
Israel	10.4	7.3	5.1	7.9	4.1	2.8
Jordan	28.6	11.0	6.6	18.7	2.0	1.0
Kuwait	1.8	2.1	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lebanon	19.0	12.6	7.6	23.9	19.9	13.8
Oman	58.8	52.3	42.9	26.8	19.8	11.6
Qatar	10.5	3.0	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Saudi Arabia	65.0	50.0	40.9	48.9	25.0	17.7
Syria	49.2	27.5	20.3	57.6	60.5	42.4
United Arab Emirates	14.3	4.8	2.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
The Industrialized Countries						
Japan	15.3	9.4	5.2	26.5	14.1	8.4
S. Korea	43.0	31.0	19.1	62.2	46.9	35.3
Singapore	3.5	2.1	1.3	3.2	0.8	0.5
Hong Kong	4.2	2.2	1.3	4.7	2.0	1.2

Source: *World Demographic Estimates and Projections, 1950-2025*, Report Jointly Prepared by United Nations, ILO and FAO, New York, 1988.

Note: All 1990 figures are projections.

- v. In the West Asian region all countries record an increasing trend at varying levels of female participation.

The description of female LFPRs elaborated above defies a given pattern even within countries with broad economic similarities, and brings us to a very crucial issue. What are the factors or determinants that facilitate (or inhibit) female LFPRs both spatially

Table 3
Distribution (Per Cent Economically Active Population) in the
Non-Agricultural Sector within Selected Asia-Pacific Countries, by Gender

Country	Non-Agricultural Male			Non-Agricultural Female		
	1970	1980	1990	1970	1980	1990
The Pacific Island Countries						
Fiji	43.9	50.1	56.5	83.6	72.1	76.6
Papua New Guinea	19.0	29.1	40.0	11.0	15.9	22.0
Countries with Large Agricultural Sectors						
Bangladesh	18.4	25.0	31.3	21.4	28.0	33.3
China	25.0	29.0	35.8	17.0	21.5	28.3
India	32.1	33.8	36.1	19.3	20.8	25.7
Indonesia	33.3	41.7	50.3	34.8	45.3	54.4
Nepal	8.3	9.2	10.5	2.8	3.0	4.0
Pakistan	42.2	44.1	48.2	30.7	57.0	65.8
Sri Lanka	48.2	48.4	49.7	34.4	42.0	44.6
The Newly Industrializing Countries						
Malaysia	52.0	62.5	70.1	33.6	50.7	64.0
Philippines	37.9	41.0	45.9	60.0	63.0	69.5
Thailand	23.8	32.1	38.2	16.3	25.8	32.7
The West Asian Countries						
Democratic Yemen	52.0	60.0	68.9	20.4	49.9	63.0
Iran	54.3	66.0	75.0	69.0	50.6	61.1
Iraq	52.3	78.0	86.0	62.2	31.9	58.3
Israel	89.6	92.7	94.9	92.1	95.9	97.4
Jordan	71.4	89.1	93.4	81.3	98.0	99.0
Kuwait	98.2	97.9	98.3	100.0	100.0	100.0
Lebanon	81.1	87.4	92.4	76.1	80.1	86.2
Oman	41.2	47.7	57.1	73.2	80.3	88.4
Qatar	89.5	97.0	98.3	100.0	100.0	100.0
Saudi Arabia	35.0	50.0	59.1	51.1	75.1	82.3
Syria	50.8	72.5	79.7	42.4	39.5	57.6
UAE	85.7	95.2	97.1	100.0	100.0	100.0
The Industrialized Countries						
Japan	84.8	90.6	94.8	73.5	86.0	91.6
S. Korea	57.1	69.1	80.9	37.8	53.1	64.7
Singapore	96.5	98.0	98.8	96.8	99.2	99.5
Hong Kong	95.8	97.9	98.8	95.3	98.0	98.9

Source: *World Demographic Estimates and Projections, 1950-2025*, Report Jointly Prepared by United Nations, ILO and FAO, New York, 1988.

Note: All 1990 figures are projections.

and temporally? It is evident that there are no simple relationships, both intra and inter-country wise. And there can be no universal hypothesis across space and time on the question of female LFPRs. Keeping the regional specificities in mind, certain policy lessons can be learnt from the experience of different countries with regard to female LFPRs. From the available literature, it has been observed that there is a very

dynamic interplay of economic, political, social and cultural factors within each country which significantly affects women's participation.⁴ The broad factors that influence female labour force participation rates will now be outlined.

1. The nature of macro-economic development policies and the strategies adopted to implement these is a significant factor. A related issue is the impact on economic growth, and the extent and nature of inequalities created.⁵
2. The promotion of specific sectors within the economy and the choice of technology (promoting labour-using technology) within them is equally important. This has an impact on both the pattern of production (existing or new) and can be employment-sustaining and/or employment-creating for women, affecting their participation.
3. Investment in human resource development, particularly education. In addition, the creation and strengthening of educational facilities, both vocational and technical, with equal opportunities for women are also important, affecting female LFPRs.
4. The "social-infrastructure" of a country has a bearing as ideological factors influence women's participation in the labour force. This is a very complex issue, deeply embedded in the socio-cultural and religious milieu, and related to the prescribed norms of behaviour for women within the different countries of the Asia-Pacific region, especially parts of South and West Asia.⁶
5. The demographic features of a country like the male-female population distribution, population growth rates and the life-cycle of women are also relevant factors influencing female labour force participation.

Having discussed the broad factors which impinge upon the female LFPRs, the trends and issues within the different sectors of the economy for women will now be examined.

THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

The distribution of women in the agricultural sector across the different Asian-Pacific countries shows a significant decline in the proportion of economically active female population over time (Tables 2, 4, 5 and 6). Although women agricultural labourers dominate this sector, women farmers have become visible in the latter half of the last decade. The figures on women's participation in agriculture do not differentiate between these two distinct categories of economically active women, making it difficult to assess their relative incidence. However, an analysis of the Tables gives us the following picture.

1. In the countries with large agricultural sectors, there is a steady decline over the decades, the only exception being Nepal which is more or less stable over time.
2. In the Pacific, while Fiji is showing an increase, Papua New Guinea shows a decrease in the proportion of women in this sector.

Table 4
Changes in the Distribution of Active Female Population by Economic Sector,
in Selected Asian Countries, 1970-1983 (per cent)

Country	1970			1983			1970-83		
	Agriculture	Industry	Services	Agriculture	Industry	Services	Agriculture	Industry	Services
Indonesia	67.0	9.2	23.8	54.2	13.1	32.7	-12.8	3.9	8.9
Malaysia	66.1	10.0	23.9	61.8	11.7	26.5	-4.3	1.7	2.6
Philippines	34.5	21.6	43.9	37.6	13.5	48.9	3.1	-8.1	5.0
Singapore	4.5	3.4	92.1	0.6	36.2	63.2	-3.9	32.8	-28.9
Thailand	83.9	4.4	11.7	74.1	7.8	18.1	-9.8	3.4	6.4

Source: ILO Yearbook of Labour Statistics, 1977, pp. 97-121. Yearbook of Labour Statistics, 1984, pp. 70-84, 239-95, in Heyzer, N., *Women in South-East Asia: Problems and Strategies*, ILO, ARTEP, India, 1987, Table 5, p. 9.

Table 5
Sectoral Distribution of Women Workers in Selected Asian Countries (per cent)

Country	Agriculture			Industry			Services		
	1970s	1980s	1985	1970s	1980s	1985	1970s	1980s	1985
Bangladesh	70.0	-	-	4.2	27.9	-	22.1	14.5	-
India	82.6	57.5	-	8.1	6.6	-	8.1	6.7	-
Nepal	98.2	95.7	-	0.5	0.2	-	1.3	2.7	-
Sri Lanka	43.3	35.9	-	8.8	8.0	-	13.9	19.5	-
Korea, Republic of	58.9	43.3	27.1	15.1	21.4	23.9	24.4	28.6	46.7
Hong Kong	4.1	1.8	1.6	58.6	54.5	46.1	31.9	41.8	51.2
Japan	25.8	13.4	-	25.6	25.8	27.7	47.0	58.6	59.0

Source: ILO Yearbook of Labour Statistics, various issues, in Jose, A.V., *Employment and Wages of Women Workers in Asian Countries: An Assessment*, ILO, ARTEP, India, 1987, Tables 10, 11, 12, pp. 54-55.

Note: The years to which the data corresponded could not be accommodated because three tables were being combined.

- In the NIEs, the decline is sharp in Malaysia, as compared to Thailand and the Philippines.
- In the IEs, Singapore and Hong Kong are conspicuous by the near absence of this sector indicated in the falling and extremely low participation rates for both men and women. South Korea and Japan, both show very sharp decline over time in the proportion of women in the agricultural sector.
- In the West Asian countries, except for Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia, a decline in the proportion of economically active women in this sector is seen to be the norm. The oil-rich Gulf economies of Kuwait, Qatar and United Arab Emirates (UAE) are conspicuous by the total absence, or insignificance of this sector in their economy.

Significantly, the falling trend holds uniformly true for the proportions of male labour in the agriculture sector of different countries of the Asia-Pacific region indicating a

Table 6
Female Employment by Sector in Selected West Asian Countries

Country	Year	Agriculture	Industry	Services
Gulf States				
Bahrain	1971	0.2	4.1	95.7
Kuwait	1975	0.1	1.8	98.1
Qatar	1975	-	-	100.0
United Arab Emirates	1975	0.4	5.7	93.0
Other States				
Iraq	1975	26.7	12.3	61.0
Jordan	1971	23.5	8.8	67.7
Lebanon	1975	21.9	22.0	56.1
Saudi Arabia	1975	66.4	11.5	22.1
Syria	1975	80.9	6.8	12.3
Yemen (A.R.)	1975	87.2	1.6	11.2
Yemen (P.D.R.)	1975	79.5	3.3	17.2

Source: National Censuses of Countries, in Azzam, H., et al. "Women and Development in the Gulf States" in *Women, Employment and Development in the Arab World*, Abu-Nasser et al., (eds.) Mouton, 1985, p. 62.

general shift to non-agricultural sectors of the economies. However, for countries with large agricultural sectors, the decline in the proportion of both female and male labourers over time could have negative implications, especially if it has been in the absence of substantial growth of other sectors.⁷ Among the Asian countries, with regard to sectoral distribution, the pattern is as follows (Tables 4 and 5).

1. In South Asia, India presents a bleak picture where the dramatic decrease in the percentage share of women workers in agriculture is not accompanied by a corresponding increase either in the industrial or service sectors. Bangladesh, on the other hand, shows an increase in the industrial sector, but a decline in the service sector. In Sri Lanka, the compensation for the decline in agriculture is mainly in the services. The industrial sector, however, shows a very minor decline.
2. Both in South-East and East Asia, the decline in agriculture has been adequately compensated with a corresponding rise in both industrial and service sectors. Philippines is the only exception, where the latest available figures indicate a rise in the share of agriculture and services with a significant decline in industries (see Tables 4 and 7).

There are two important factors responsible for the decline in the proportion of women agricultural labourers over time.⁸ One is the macro-economic policies encouraging growth of other sectors like industry and services, and the other is the introduction of technology within agriculture.

In fact, in the latter half of the 1980s, the effects of the introduction of technology on women agricultural labourers has been a major focus of research throughout Asia. In addition, cash crop farming (as distinct from subsistence farming) as a result of

Table 7
Percentage of Women to Total Workers in Various Sectors
of the Economy in Selected Asian Countries

Country	Year	1960/70s			
		Agriculture	Industries	Services	All
Bangladesh	1974	3.9	3.7	6.0	4.2
India	1971	19.9	12.4	9.6	17.4
Indonesia	1971	31.8	37.6	31.8	33.1
Nepal	1971	30.4	11.4	9.0	29.2
Sri Lanka	1963	24.7	15.8	16.3	20.8
Malaysia	1970	37.7	21.2	22.7	32.6
Philippines	1960	14.8	43.4	44.1	25.6
Thailand	1960	50.8	32.8	38.9	48.4
Hong Kong	1961	35.8	27.9	28.3	28.6
Korea, Republic of	1960	30.4	19.6	26.6	28.6
Singapore	1957	34.5	14.4	16.9	18.0
Japan	1960	51.8	26.7	38.0	39.1
1980s					
Bangladesh	1983/84	1.3	23.0	5.4	8.9
India	1981	23.9	13.6	11.0	26.0
Indonesia	1980	31.3	30.8	35.3	32.8
Nepal	1981	36.4	13.9	14.4	34.6
Sri Lanka	1981	24.5	17.3	19.5	25.5
Malaysia	1980	39.0	30.2	27.3	33.7
Philippines	1985	26.3	34.4	53.1	38.1
Thailand	1982	48.6	37.2	47.2	47.5
Hong Kong	1985	35.0	38.3	34.5	36.3
Korea, Republic of	1985	43.4	31.0	42.1	38.4
Singapore	1985	23.4	34.5	37.7	36.4
Japan	1985	47.9	32.3	43.0	39.7

Source: ILO, *Yearbook of Labour Statistics*, various issues, in Jose, A.V., *Employment and Wages of Women Workers in Asian Countries: An Assessment*, ILO, ARTEP, India, 1987, Table 15, p. 59.

commercialization of agriculture and its impact on women's participation, has also been a subject of discussion. More and more empirical studies from different parts of Asia are increasingly concentrating on women's right to land and the impact of land settlement schemes on women. These issues will be dealt with at length separately.

Issues of Technology and Women Within the Agricultural Sector

White (No. 218) has raised a very pertinent issue on the impact of technology induced agrarian transformation. It is not "technology" per se, but rather the agrarian relations determining ownership and access to income it generates, that should be the focus for analysis, given the unequal nature of access, allocation and evaluation of work for women in Asian agriculture. The conditions of work for women in Asian agriculture all indicate a marked prevalence of the Gender Division of Labour (GDL). Within

importance as a large majority of the women workers come from poor families in the

this, women are repeatedly allocated the most laborious manual work, and are consistently evaluated less than men, at times even for the same kind of work. Due to the GDL in agriculture, the choice of tasks available to women is much less than those available to men within a given crop and season. In many countries, socio-cultural norms of behaviour further restrict this choice.⁹ Especially in countries where other sectors do not offer employment for women, displacement due to innovations in technology has very serious implications for women agricultural labourers.

The choice of technology assumes importance for another reason. The positive effect of technology, like raising productivity and reducing work burden and drudgery, is nullified by the negative effect of reducing women's employment opportunities in the labour-surplus economies of certain parts of Asia. Furthermore, the discussion on technology¹⁰ has extended to its impact on the quality of the lives of both men and women. But as there are significant differences across countries between men and women in (1) the nature of involvement in agriculture work, (2) the extent and nature of involvement in non-field work like livestock-rearing, household work and child-care, (3) the extent of control over the pattern of distribution of household earnings and expenditure, authors have pointed out that technological change has different implications for men and women in the overall work burden, and on the intra-household distribution of income/consumption (No. 81).

The impact of high yielding varieties (HYV) of rice on female work participation has also been well documented in the literature across all Asian countries. The introduction of HYV of paddy has either led to technical innovation (introduction of new implements/machines) and/or a set of interlinked innovations such as the water-seed-fertilizer package affecting the production process (see note 10) and altering women's employment opportunities as follows.

In India, the changes in production process have led to the following observations (Nos. 81, 117, 184):

1. There is significant increase in the demand for total labour time per acre across all regions and all crops.
2. The rise in demand for hired labour has been greater than the increase in demand for family labour.
3. The rise in demand for female labour has been sharper than the rise in demand for male labour because of the predominance of women workers in labour-intensive tasks like weeding and transplanting of paddy.

Yet HYV technology, with its high growth rates in agriculture and increased demand, has not kept pace with the increased supply of female labourers, unleashed through a process of pauperization¹¹ in India. Moreover, the options of wage-work available to women are very limited as compared to men. This further increases their dependence on employment in agriculture (Nos. 109, 117, 118, 199, 212, 219).

In Indonesia and the Philippines, women agricultural labourers have been affected in strikingly similar ways by changes in both the rice cultivation techniques and the

production process. Shifts in labour organization for harvesting¹² (No. 218), and shift in harvesting implements from sickle to knife¹³ (both processes observed in the Philippines also), and new post-harvest technologies with the advent of rice-hullers (parallels in Bangladesh) have displaced and/or reduced women's work participation in the agricultural labour force.

In Bangladesh, where women's major contribution in paddy cultivation is in the post-harvesting activities, mechanization of paddy hand-pounding has displaced women from a very major source of income without creating other opportunities (Nos. 35, 40).¹⁴ In the Philippines, women's contribution to rice production declined absolutely as well as relatively¹⁵ (No. 292). In Malaysia, the proportion of women in agriculture declined drastically in the last three decades, with over half the women working in the agricultural sector engaged in rubber cultivation, and less than one-third in paddy. The sharp decline and small growth in numbers can also be attributed to growing modernization, mechanization and increased opportunities for women in other sectors of the economy.

In the Philippines, apart from HYV paddy cultivation, a recession in the world demand for sugar, leading to mechanization, has led to large-scale displacement of agricultural labourers in the Negros area (Nos. 283, 291). How do we then account for the marginal rise in distribution of women in the agricultural sector within the Philippines over the last one-and-a-half decades (Table 4)? While the decline in paddy cultivation holds true, an increase in the multinational agri-business cultivation of cash crops, like pineapples and bananas, seems to be the current trend. This, however, needs to be verified, as research on the shifts within the agriculture sector in the Philippines is conspicuously absent.

An *a priori* observation across the literature reviewed indicates a strong relation between increased women's participation in agriculture as family labourers in small family plots. Although more data is needed to substantiate this observation, the following case studies of Thailand, Nepal and China lend support to this view. More significant is the "visibility" of women family labourers which is captured in the national statistics of these countries.

China, Thailand and Nepal, all countries with the highest female LFPRs (48.9 per cent, 47.9 per cent and 29.9 per cent respectively, Table 1) and with a major proportion of women in the agriculture sector (78.5 per cent, 74.2 per cent and 97 per cent in 1980 respectively, Table 2) show striking similarities. Paddy cultivation has concentrated on the family plots where women work as family labourers (though in China it is more prevalent from the last decade with the "household responsibility system" introduced in 1979). In both Thailand and Nepal, paddy cultivation has been mostly rain-fed with low yields and low levels of mechanization on small family plots (Nos. 3, 229). Other issues affecting women in agriculture in Asia and the Pacific will now be examined.

Women And Cash-Crop Cultivation

In the available literature, what constitutes "cash-crops" is not clearly defined, but understood as i) non-subsistence crops, ii) crops with high economic returns in the

national and international market. Although historically women labourers have been employed as unskilled labourers in cash-crop cultivation, for the most labour-intensive operations, women as "managers" of cash-crop cultivation are a rare phenomenon.

A notable development in Asian and Pacific agriculture is the dilution of boundaries for women's access to cash crop cultivation, both as labourers and cultivators. The neat demarcation existing in the 1970s "subsistence food-crop cultivation for women and commercial cash-crops for men" has given way to a more diffused pattern. In fact, the decade of the 1980s has seen the promotion of cash crop programmes being entrusted to women, like in Papua New Guinea through land settlement schemes (Nos. 19, 25), smallholder rubber cultivation in Malaysia (Nos. 252, 262, 265, 269) and promotion of agri-business in the Philippines. According to Heyzer (No. 5), in Malaysia, a decrease in the proportion of male workers in the rubber estates has been noticed. Many displaced male workers are being absorbed in oil-palm cultivation.¹⁶ Furthermore, the rigid gender division of labour existing in the estates during the early 1970s (male labourers as tappers and supervisors, both considered as skilled jobs, and female labourers as weeders, considered unskilled) has given way to women emerging as tappers in a big way in the 1980s. In addition, women have been lured by estate owners with facilities like housing, creche and equal pay to encourage their shift to full-time rubber estate work (No. 5).

But a hangover of the past for women labourers in the cash crop and plantation sectors of some Asia-Pacific economies continues, with women's allocation of work in the labour-intensive and less valued jobs like tea picking in Sri Lanka and India (Nos. 241 and 133), cotton picking, tobacco grading in India (No. 114) and pineapple cultivation in the Philippines (No. 291). Though women's role in agriculture continues to expand in the South Pacific with increasing participation in both subsistence and cash crop cultivation (No. 23), a general trend towards cash crop cultivation in the South Pacific islands, with a decline in food production, has been observed (No. 31). The implications of this for the work burden of women who are responsible for providing the family's food is difficult to gauge due to lack of comprehensive data.

Women's Ownership of Land and Property Rights

In the large agricultural economies of Asia, and in the rural areas of other economies in Asia and the Pacific, land constitutes the most important means of production linking the incomes of the vast majority of rural households to the access, control and ownership of agricultural land. Lack of access to land is strongly related to poverty (Nos. 19, 84). It is important to examine this issue in two ways: (1) in relation to males and (2) as members of a group/community in relation to the rest of the society. While examining women's rights to land, the recent past indicates a gradual erosion. The two main factors responsible for this are (1) state policies, which have played a negative role and (2) economic and demographic factors of the individual countries.

Women, except in a few traditional matrilineal and tribal societies, have lacked customary rights to land (Nos. 19, 83, 184, 143, 219). Consistently, men's rights to land have improved with land reforms (except China)¹⁷ and land settlement schemes

implemented in the different countries of Asia. One interesting exception is Malaysia, where rapid industrialization and male migration to urban areas have led to a "feminization of land", both formally and informally (Nos. 267, 269).

A related issue for discussion has been women's formal rights to property and inheritance rights in the different Asia-Pacific countries, and women's limited capacity to exercise them (Nos. 19, 83, 84, 143, 219). According to Wazir (No. 16), "Perhaps the only thing in common between personal laws of different religious communities is that they all discriminate against women, though the nature and degree of discrimination varies across countries as well as across laws." Interestingly, China presents the most paradoxical situation in Asia. In China, the State's attempt to strengthen the new household economy is encouraging women to replace male labour in agriculture (No. 74). This directly clashes with the new inheritance law of 1985 (No. 73, Johnson, 1985 in No. 19) which confers equal share on men and women. As land is an immovable property, it is unlikely that the clause will be implemented to favour women who move out of their natal homes, in a patrilocal and patrilineal set-up.

The Impact of Land Settlement Schemes on Women

Over the last few decades, land settlement schemes have gained ground as a part of the development policy pursued by the governments of the different Asia-Pacific countries in Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and the proposed scheme in India¹⁸ (Nos. 25, 242, 249, 252, 258, 265, 272 and Otten, 1986, Osbornes, 1985 in No.19). In terms of their impact on the resettled population, especially women, the patterns are very similar across the different countries of Asia and the Pacific. The experiences in many of the schemes have been recorded to be detrimental to the living standards of the poor, both men and women. Loss of land, reduction in the sources of income, a reduced variety of nutritious foods, as well as drudgery is the observed pattern. The projects provide little scope for local participation and the implementation is often insensitive to local needs, especially the poor and women. For their impact on women, three major issues stand out.

1. The process of discrimination is first and foremost reflected in the way land titles, registrations and land-lease are made in the settlement schemes. They are all uniformly made in the name of male heads. In order to prevent land fragmentation, only one heir is allowed to inherit. Though the sex is not specified, in most cases it is inherited by the son¹⁹, thus depriving the daughters of their rightful share of equal inheritance under traditional customs, if any, like in Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea.
2. Women's traditional role in the agricultural production process and their significant contribution to the income of the household are ignored in the design of the settlement schemes. Though they perform a majority of the agricultural tasks, they do not have access to agricultural credit, market and inputs, as well as extension services. This happens despite the fact that large-scale male migration takes place, due to low productivity of land, leaving the women as de facto heads of households. In Sri Lanka and Malaysia, the training given to women is in home

science (cake-making, embroidery), which is far removed from their reality and felt needs (Nos. 5, 241).

3. Women have to cope with the reproductive tasks and child-care, in the absence of extended social support systems. (Most often child-care is intensified with increased morbidity due to a new environment, and the prevalence of water-related diseases due to shift to surface sources of drinking water.)

Women Farmers

Women farmers have been defined as women who manage the cultivation of the land (which they may or may not own) either singly or jointly with men. Although women farmers have been an integral part of Asian agriculture, there has been a wide gap in information about their incidence and other characteristics in the literature. They have been overshadowed by agricultural wage labourers who have been recorded to form a large majority. Significantly, there are all indications of the growing "visibility" of the women farmers of Asia and Pacific, if the bulk of literature on women and agriculture extension service is an indicator²⁰. The latter half of the 1980s has witnessed a plethora of publications on this issue, from almost all countries in the Asia-Pacific region without exception. This is due firstly to the increasing numbers of women farmers in certain countries of Asia, and secondly, to the explicit policy of "targeting" women in development programmes like Agriculture Extension Services.

In the newly industrializing and industrialized countries of Asia, the predominance of women farmers²¹ in the rural areas, in the older age group, is due to the major changes in the economies of these countries. There is a large-scale migration of men and young women to urban areas, leaving the agricultural sector in the hands of older women and/or men. This pattern comes across from Malaysia, South Korea and Japan (Nos. 269, 303, 307). In China, due to the conscious policy (No. 71) to replace men in the agricultural sector, the state has literally entrusted the management of farms to women. If the "new household responsibility system" is added to the scenario, a picture emerges of dynamic women farmers constantly diversifying and maximizing production (Nos. 71, 75, 77). Elsewhere in Asia and the Pacific, where subsistence farming on small plots continues (Nepal, Thailand and parts of India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia), women farmers jointly carry out the management with men.

The three issues that pertain to agriculture extension service *vis-a-vis* women farmers are:

1. Identification of constraints that face women both in receiving and dissemination of extension information.
2. Appropriate training methods and funding to improve women's contribution to agricultural progress.
3. Investigation of the most effective use of media for women.

The literature indicates that the experience of women farmers in the Asia-Pacific region is mixed.

1. On the positive side, women are developing skills in management of the farm in all its various aspects, but their ability to carry this out very much depends on (a) access to agriculture extension services and marketing outlets, and (b) absence of social and institutional barriers to their mobility, access to the public markets, etc. Both these factors vary within and across the different countries.
2. In a majority of countries women are still constrained by lack of adequate agriculture extension training, credit and marketing facilities (Nos. 21, 28, 77, 100, 117, 217, 223, 299).
3. As the role of the agriculture sector in certain economies is seen as subsidiary (but necessary all the same), women's relegation to this sector, despite their major role, becomes more of a "ghettoisation" of a job-role and is not necessarily "status-enhancing".

Our survey indicates an overwhelming literature focusing on women and agriculture extension service. And our analysis of women farmers shows there is a glaring discrepancy where intended efforts have not yet reached the women. This brings us to the very crucial issue of the wide gap between intended policies and programmes and their implementation. Apart from women's lack of time due to their double burden there are several factors like inappropriate courses and inaccessibility (lack of time or inappropriate timing plus other socio-cultural factors like restrictions of women's movements in South Asia) which bring about this discrepancy for women farmers²². In some countries of the South Pacific, Larcom (No. 28) cites an interesting case of women extension service agents who were successful, and yet perceived working inequities resulting from their gender.

There is a big gap in the literature on women's status as farmers and the impact this has on women's decision-making and control of income within the household. There is a tendency in the existing studies to make an assumption of women farmers' greater control over decision-making and income, especially in the female-headed households²³. Probably China stands out as an exception, where the "household responsibility system", despite its overburdening and other negative aspects, has given women greater control over income and decision-making (Nos. 75 and 77).

THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR

The literature on the manufacturing sector presents a mixed scenario, as employment in certain export-based industries and occupations has been rising since the 1970s. Recent literature (in the last three years), continues to focus on the same issues discussed in the 1970s, with minor shifts. The overall policy of manufacturing for export still continues in large parts of Asia. The export sector, that is, the free trade zones with investment from foreign or local capital, the small-scale workshops and home-based putting-out work seem to be on the increase with many more Asian countries joining the bandwagon for export-led industrialization.

The studies also indicate that the structural transformation due to the export-led industrialization in South-East Asian economy has resulted in dramatic changes in the industrial distribution of the female work-force, more than that of the male. Many authors have forcefully argued that the dynamism and economic growth witnessed in the economies of South-East Asian countries have been achieved largely due to the female participation, as the sectors that have been crucial frontiers of growth have also been the sectors with female-dominant work-force (Nos. 5, 13, 165). This seemingly syllogistic argument has its basis, when one examines the extent and nature of women's employment within this sector, and the way this sector capitalizes on existing economic and social facets of the gender dimensions of labour within these countries.

The Free Trade Zones/Export Processing Zones

The South-East Asian and South Asian economies (notably Sri Lanka, and very recently Bangladesh) are characterized by the presence of the Free Trade Zones (FTZs) or Export Processing Zones (EPZs). Set up in the mid-1960s, with the explicit purpose of increasing the host countries' foreign exchange earnings, they attempt through state policy to attract foreign and domestic investment by providing a long list of incentives²⁴. The nature of the industries and the workers are as follows:

1. The type of industries are light manufacturing, producing textiles, garments, electronics (mainly semi-conductors), toys, in addition to food processing, gem cutting, rubber-based industries (last two in Sri Lanka only).
2. The workers are predominantly (75 to 90 per cent) female, single, young (15 to 29 years). This is no coincidence as the recruitment policies of the firms target women workers with the above characteristics.
3. The highly publicized manual dexterity, low wage rates and docility of women all combine to create a very cheap, manageable yet highly productive labour force.²⁵
4. There is an international division of labour created by placing the research, design, development and the capital-intensive operations in the technologically advanced countries (especially electronics), and the labour-intensive, monotonous operations in the Asian countries. This is because of the neck-and-neck competition and the rapid technological obsolescence among the investing industries. It has led to a search for a cheap source of labour to cut down production costs, which has more than easily been found in Asia.
5. It is this last factor – the search for cheap labour – that has been fully exploited in the Asian region pitching one country against the other in addition to making the industries "foot-loose" due to recession or fluctuations in the international market. A relocation of the industries has been noticed from Singapore to Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and from there on to Sri Lanka and very recently, Bangladesh (No. 51) and even China (No. 5). These relocations have resulted in the retrenchment of female labourers in the Philippines and Malaysia. The insecurity of employment for the women workers also arises from:

- i.. The lack of labour legislations and the conscious strategy of the firms within the FTZ to prevent build-up of senior workers with claim to higher wages, as well as experience. This is done by not employing women for more than a fixed number of years.
 - ii. Marriage and certainly pregnancy are usually grounds for dismissal.²⁶
 - iii. There is a high "burn-out" rate among the workers due to the monotonous, long hours of work and other occupational health hazards associated with assembly line work.²⁷
6. The organization of the production is dictated purely by high production targets. It is organized in a way that intensifies the work process in two ways: one, by installing newer, faster machines in the assembly lines; and, two, by setting production quotas and points for each worker, failing which disciplinary action is taken²⁸. Another ruse employed by the management is paying piece-rate wages and occasional economic incentives like bonus for meeting set targets. At times, wages are tied to various incentive schemes for achieving increased productivity, thereby putting women workers through severe pressures.
7. Another significant feature is the way firms capitalize on existing socio-cultural methods of control to keep the workers docile and malleable. There is a sub-culture of factory life-style, created distinctly from the general society, to make the workers identify with the company. Subtle social mechanisms of control exist. They differ from one factory to another, depending on who owns the factory (Europeans, Americans or Japanese, or the local capitalists). Values of passive, ornamental femininity are inculcated by arranging "beauty contests".

Almost uniformly, all these above characteristics have been repeated and discussed throughout the decade of the 1980s (Nos. 5, 13, 185, 241, 247, 253, 275, 289). The effects of these on the women workers has been a major subject of discussion. The stress and strain of coping with very high productivity targets, working seven days a week at odd shift hours, coupled with poor working conditions and the cramped lodging facilities (in some FTZs) often lead to migraine, nervous breakdowns and, in extreme cases, mass hysteria (reported from Indonesia and Malaysia, Nos. 210, 254). Other health hazards peculiar to assembly line requiring manual dexterity and keen eyesight (endless peering through microscopes, stitching fine embroidery or small buttons, etc.) are deterioration of vision, leading to a loss of employment.

Why is it that there is a never-ending supply of women workers, despite such harsh and demanding conditions of work? The "supply" side of the story highlights the following factors (Nos. 5, 13, 185).

1. A lack of employment options for women with the existence of large labour reserves in both rural and urban parts of the countries in South-East Asia, ready to move and migrate.
2. Decrease in employment opportunities in the agriculture sector and other traditional activities.

3. Changing social attitudes to women migrating and working, that is, lack of social and institutional barriers.
4. The skill levels of the women. Most women are socialized from childhood, due to the domestic gender division of labour, in tasks such as sewing, cleaning grains and others. The systematic training in such tasks require nimble fingers, concentration and attention to detail, plus endless patience in the face of drudgery.
5. The obedience and discipline inculcated in young girls in societies governed by Confucian or other patriarchal codes which elicit submissiveness in the face of authority (No. 185). Probably, this is one of the more important factors which combine with rigid labour discipline maintained with government connivance (ban on unionization and vulnerability to dismissal) that make the women "docile".
6. Rising education levels of the women and rising social aspirations. Factory employment is seen to be better "status-wise"²⁹ as compared to agricultural labour. In addition, the "glamour" associated with the cities, where the factories are located, becomes very tempting for these young women.
7. The supply of women workers is also related to poverty, specially in countries like the Philippines, Thailand, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Case studies from the Philippines demonstrate the compelling pressures of poverty that drive young rural women to migrate, earn and contribute to the family (See Nos. 274, 281).

Examining the demand and supply factors of the women workers in the FTZs, which fit so neatly into one another, demonstrates very starkly the curious inter-locking of these factors due to lack of better options for women. An exhaustive account has been attempted because of the continuing trend of this kind of employment for women in the 1980s, with countries of South Asia like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and to a small extent India, catching on. With the opening up of the economy, China is another new entrant in Asia. The policy of retrenchment of the labourers, and the relocation of the factories to fresh pastures with cheaper labour, has been further reinforced throughout the 1980s in Asia.

A very significant feature of this relocation is the entrance made by the Asian business corporate in the NIEs as big time investors in Bangladesh and China. Various Singapore business interests are investing in China, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines (No. 5). Hong Kong, Taiwan and Sri Lanka have joint ventures with Bangladesh to broaden the investments made as recently as 1989 for garment exports (No. 51). In India, the Non-Resident Indians (NRI) have established FTZs in Delhi and Bombay (Nos. 185, 195) but the proportion of FTZs in the total economy of India is insignificant.³⁰ Interestingly, the patterns of "labour hierarchy" that Wong in Safa (1981:433)³¹ observed a decade ago, is intensifying and gaining momentum within Asia with South Asia added to the list.

In South-East Asia, a labour hierarchy has already begun to develop, with more established sites such as Hong Kong and Singapore becoming regional headquarters for the electronics industry, providing jobs which require high skills, and better wages. Meanwhile, Malaysia serves as an intermediary centre for testing; and Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand represent the last frontier, with lowest wages and working conditions.

The only difference observed in the 1980s is that countries like Hong Kong and Singapore, in addition, are emerging as investing capitalists. If the wages in South Asia are compared with those in South-East Asia, the "comparative cost-advantages" and emerging hierarchy is clear. For garment workers, from US\$228 in Taiwan and US\$114 in Hong Kong per month, it plummets down to US\$29 in Bangladesh, US\$55 in India, US\$63 in Pakistan and US\$33 in Sri Lanka (No. 51, Sri Lanka figure, No. 238). Even technology levels differ within Asia. Indonesia uses low-level, second-hand machines imported from Taiwan (No. 5).

Yet another important issue emerging in Asia is the manifestation of women workers' rights. The literature indicates the emergence of two contrasting patterns.

1. Resistance and protest by women, shattering the whole myth of "docility" of the Asian woman (Sri Lanka, India, Malaysia and the Philippines).
2. A reinforcing of authoritarianism, religious fundamentalism and patriarchal ideology by the management to thwart resistance (Indonesia, the Republic of Korea and Singapore).

In the 1970s, resistance had taken³² both "passive" and "active" forms. Even with multiple barriers to women's participation in the unions (like double burden of work, fear of dismissal and threat of violence from military and police), there have been many instances of women workers using "leverage points" within the system (Sri Lanka, Malaysia and the Philippines) or loopholes within legislation (India) to mobilize women workers to protest (No. 182 for India and for others, Nos. 241, 247, 256, 274, 275).

In Malaysia (No. 263), there are very positive indicators of improving working conditions in FTZs of electronics industries, in response to international and domestic pressures, with the formation of a "pro-tem" committee of National Electronics Industry Workers' Union (NEW)³³. Probably the most interesting development leading to this was the solidarity shown by the Labour Unions in the United States who persuaded the U.S. to consider withdrawing the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP)³⁴ status enjoyed by Malaysia for violating workers' rights. The Labour Minister in Malaysia was left with no choice but to permit unionization in the electronics industry.

In NIEs like Hong Kong, Singapore and the Republic of Korea, 10 per cent, 30 per cent and 50 per cent respectively of female factory workers belong to unions (No. 5). Yet, this has not operationalized into action because of the very strict Emergency decree in Korea, de-registrations of unions in Singapore and general apathy of the unions in Hong Kong. In Indonesia, Mather (No. 210) records the using of "patriarchal and religious" ideology to keep young women and men subdued in the factories.

The FTZs have been functioning in some of the Asian economies for well over two decades and the high rate of turnover for women workers has been extensively recorded. However, there is scant literature on the occupational mobility of women before they come and after they leave the FTZs, having spent the most productive years of their life at the assembly line as "unskilled" labourers. This issue assumes importance as a large majority of the women workers come from poor families in the

rural areas, and they are under compelling pressures to work. Qualitative surveys, in addition to quantitative ones, are needed to fill in this gap in the existing literature. The only qualitative study on workers in FTZs from which we could draw some conclusions is an interesting collection of case studies from the Philippines (No.274). Mostly migrants to Manila, these young women started out as domestic maids or sales girls before moving to the FTZ factories.

Small-Scale Workshops

As the literature throughout the 1970s and 1980s has predominantly focused on the FTZs, small-scale export enterprises have received scant attention, except for a few case studies here and there. Whether this is due to their very small proportion in the total economy is difficult to judge. Consequently, it becomes difficult to analyse the growth of small-scale export shops over time. From all appearances, such an exercise would be futile, because of the very transient nature of these small enterprises, which take on a high level of risks, whose existence completely depends on market fluctuations and are therefore always on the run (the runaway shops!). We are therefore limited to examining the nature and conditions of work for women in these "sweat-shops", as they are commonly referred to. Strikingly similar conditions of work prevail all over Asia, and they are like mini-FTZs, except that labour control is almost feudal in its requirements of subservience and dependence. The long hours of work, exploitative wages and very poor surroundings are characteristics of sweat-shop labour as well. The case studies of these sweat-shops in Sri Lanka, India, Bangladesh and the Philippines (Nos. 51, 98, 99, 174)³⁵ also report the following. They employ very young women (15-24), the shops remain "foot-loose" in nature and they require nimble work for prawn peeling (India and Bangladesh), and garment embroidery (India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the Philippines and Thailand (No. 5)). The similarities with the working conditions prevailing in the FTZs are all too evident.

In the industrially advanced countries of the Republic of Korea and Japan, a relocation of women from large manufacturing units to small enterprises has been observed. In Korea, such units employ less than five persons and, in Japan, from the 1970s onwards the proportion of women in units employing less than 100 workers increased (Dore, No. 11).³⁶ Another strategy used in Japan was to classify workers as "peripheral" or "core" workers, with predictably women being entirely a part of the former. Peripheral labour forces were hired against unequal and discriminatory terms, more as a contingency plan for labour fluctuations and flexible use of female labour force (No. 11). This change in employment strategies for women was also due to the transition from a high growth period to a slower growth period in the mid-1970s (No. 302).

A very interesting observation is the division of labour among women along class lines in South Asia with regard to their involvement with the workshops. The role of economically better-off women in running, supervising (directly or indirectly) or establishing such workshops as entrepreneurs (in garments, handicrafts) has been recorded. Both Sri Lanka and Bangladesh³⁷ report such examples (No. 51 and Note 38). In Sri Lanka, the sub-contractor's wife takes on a supervisory role and the jobs of women depend on their relationship with her.

Home-Based Work/Putting-Out Work

There is a growing literature in the late 1980s that focuses on home-based women workers. Historically, home-based production for wages has been an integral part of the South and West Asian economies due to the social and cultural barriers of women's entry into the work domain outside the household. However, with the international restructuring of the economy, the local investors in export have capitalized on this form of labour primarily for its particular characteristics which place the onus of risks and burdens on the women, with an added premium of cheap labour in return. In addition, manufacturers save costs on overheads, which are also borne by the women workers. Not only the export-oriented capitalists, but traditional small-scale industries geared for the domestic market have also "put-out" work to women in South Asia so as to cut production costs (which will be dealt with simultaneously).³⁸ The pre-condition for "putting-out" work is (1) a fragmentation of the production process creating jobs needing minimum skills, (2) availability of surplus labour ready to work under any conditions, (3) development of new communication and transport technologies which allows for partial or complete production processes to be shifted and controlled easily all over the world. (The third condition applies to export-linked home-workers and is not applicable everywhere.)

It is difficult to assess the magnitude of this category of workers, despite their large expansion in the last two decades all over Asia, because home workers are not registered and remain invisible or grossly underestimated. However, estimates by micro-studies reveal that in absolute terms their numbers are quite large.³⁹

The home-based workers are caught in a double bind. On the one hand, in the face of poverty, this work gives an apparent notion of "freedom" of time and work, as one is free to combine paid work with household chores and child-care. On the other hand, it suits women from certain communities in South Asia, where seclusion and "job status" values preclude choice of moving outside the household. But for this, the women end up working long hours, mobilizing children's labour and earning barely enough to make ends meet. In addition, their jobs are very insecure and irregular in being affected by crises and fluctuations in the market. In most cases, women undercut each other's wages to get more work. As the contractor or agent, who mediates for them with the export-house or local market is mostly from the locality (a neighbour or a relative), he is regarded as one of them and the women cannot relate the relationship of their work to a "factory". The contractor also controls the wages by giving a variety of jobs at many different rates. As a result, there is a mystification of what is the "existing rate" and the rationale behind the evaluation of a particular work (No. 174).

The characteristics of home-based work and workers can be summed up from the case studies as follows. The issues are visibly similar all over Asia and the Pacific, with minor variations across the countries.

1. Home-based work is on the increase with the export-led growth strategy of the Asian countries. Competition among the countries for garment making and handicrafts also seems to be on the rise.⁴⁰ These two occupations provide the maximum amount of work for women home-workers across most countries of

Asia that are linked to the export market (Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Thailand, the Philippines, Taiwan, China, Tonga in the Pacific, No. 5, for Thailand No. 22, Nos. 50, 51, 98, 174, 236, 241, 247, Note No. 38, No. 275, 283.) The Philippines Study mentions China and Taiwan.

2. There is an increasing trend among both the traditional and the non-traditional industries to disband or mechanize some operations and "put-out" others to women, like in the tobacco and *beedi* factories of India⁴¹ (Nos.117, 195).
3. Most of the studies indicate a close relationship between home-working and poverty. Home-workers are the lowest paid workers in comparison with wage labour and self-employed labourers (No. 102). In India, female-headed households are disproportionately represented among others, in the home-based and piece-rate workers (No. 9).
4. Among the children, daughters of home-workers bear the unequal burden of work in helping their mothers. This has been uniformly noted from Iran in West Asia to the Philippines in the East. There are negative implications for the young girls as it has meant either non-admission or withdrawal from schools, with either little or no recognition or value accorded to their contribution⁴² (Nos. indicated above plus Nos. 240, 310, 315 for carpet weavers, Nos. 162, 246 for coir workers, Thailand embroidery workers in No. 5).
5. For the home-workers dealing with the domestic markets in traditional occupations of South Asia, the relationship between restrictions on women's mobility, access to the markets and control over income is not a straightforward one. Restrictions on mobility remaining constant, different patterns exist with regard to control over income, making it very difficult to generalize.⁴³
6. In India (No. 9), a proposed legislation on home workers is on the cards, with the possibility of an international standard on home-work, improved monitoring and application of existing legislations through trade union efforts. However, the nature, characteristics and status of the home-based worker in the overall economy, make such an exercise very complex.

THE SERVICE SECTOR

The employment shares for women in the service sector have been rising in all Asian countries, except for Bangladesh in South Asia (Table 7). For Pacific and West Asian regions, it is not possible to make comparisons over time because of the lack of data. The Gulf region in West Asia is conspicuous with almost all its women workers concentrated in the service sector. The pattern in this sector reflects a general "gender typing" of jobs, with minor deviations, within the Asia-Pacific region, as follows:

1. There is a concentration, and rising trend in the incidence of clerical workers (except China), health personnel (nurses) and educational professionals (teachers) within the service sector all over Asia and the Pacific.

2. Among the administrative and managerial workers, women occupy barely one per cent (most often less than one per cent) of the jobs. Singapore, Bahrain, Yemen Arab Republic and South Pacific economies are the exceptions, showing three per cent, 2.2 per cent, two per cent, and 1.4 per cent of women in this occupational category respectively (Nos. 11, 23, 304, 314, 318).
3. There is no one-to-one relationship between economic growth and women in the most skill intensive category of labour force, namely, professional, technical and related workers. Within Asia, Japan, Singapore, the Philippines and Sri Lanka, are in the forefront with long-term increase of women in this occupational category (No. 84).
4. All over South-East Asia, and in the Gulf region of West Asia and China, women are involved in trading, both wholesale and retail (Nos. 15, 76, 314).
5. In Thailand and the Philippines, family enterprises like restaurants and grocery stores managed by women are common (No. 15).
6. In South Asia, the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia, paid domestic service is the most common employment for women. There is also a large-scale migration of women domestic maids to the Gulf region and affluent countries of South-East Asia. Prostitution also seems to be on the rise in Asia, especially in Thailand and the Philippines, and women migrate as a survival strategy for the family. This has also been noted in India (No. 150).

The reasons for stereotyping of gender roles and jobs have been extensively discussed in the literature of the last two decades, and they include a whole range of issues from biased ideology inherent in the gender division of labour, to the policy and planning programmes pursued within the Asian countries. The exceptions to gender typing, as noted in some countries of Asia, indicate a strong correlation with women's education. The impressive strides by Singaporean women as administrators and managers (three per cent)⁴⁴ is largely due to improved educational attainment of women, as well as the strong demand resulting from a rapidly expanding economy (Nos. 11, 304). As for Yemen Arab Republic, a disaggregated analysis indicates that women are predominantly school headmistresses (No. 318). There are no details available for the type of administrative and managerial posts in Bahrain and the South Pacific.

The relatively higher proportion of professional workers in the Philippines and Sri Lanka compared to faster growing economies of Asia are also due to the impressive achievements of these countries in improving the skill composition of the labour force through investments in educational facilities (No. 11).

In fact, the existing literature indicates a strong correlation between women's education and better opportunities for work. In the Gulf region, rights to equal education for women have eroded cultural barriers like "seclusion" and released women for employment. Although they account for only 10 per cent of the total number employed, the predominance of women traders as the second-most popular occupation among women in the Gulf region is significant (No. 314).

China presents an interesting deviation from the norm by having male clerks. But the lack of data on sex differentials in earnings and educational attainment for different occupations across gender make it difficult to interpret this exception.

THE INFORMAL/SELF-EMPLOYED SECTOR

Although the characteristics of home-based workers and self-employed workers are broadly similar, the line⁴⁵ dividing them is very significant. For the self-employed worker, there is a control (with the limitations of available capital, etc.) over the investment and modalities of the job. In addition, the opportunities for entrepreneurship also make it "dynamic" as compared to home-based work. Self-employment cuts across all the three sectors – agricultural, manufacturing and services. The estimation of numbers, and the magnitude of the self-employed is difficult to document, as in the case of home-workers and the range of jobs performed by women in self-employment activities is too wide. By all accounts, the common thread uniting Asia as far as self-employment is concerned is the continuous growth and the rising incidence of women working within this sector. In general, with regard to self-employment, the literature across Asia and the Pacific indicates the following:

1. There are more women than men in the self-employed sector of the Asia-Pacific region. An important factor to influence the rising incidence of women in self-employment is the process of social and economic change, that has given very little choice to women, pushing them into the informal sector. To a minor extent, this is also attributable to an increase of planned interventions or programmes (governmental/non-governmental organizations, co-operatives) which see "income-generation" as a potential development strategy to improve women's lives. In China, the household responsibility system and diversification have essentially meant an intensification of activities in the informal sector.⁴⁶
2. Women are constrained by both, "credits" and "markets" all over Asia. Access to credit with collateral or dependence on moneylenders limits women's choice. The markets are a mixed experience with fluctuations and there are social barriers (in South Asia) to women's entry. Planned interventions like credit and marketing co-operatives have addressed both these problems with success in many instances (with exceptions, of course).
3. There is significant movement, both horizontal and vertical, among the self-employed workers, across different occupations and sectors (especially South Asia, Indonesia and the Philippines). This is done more as a survival strategy to diversify/increase income resources.
4. Though difficult to generalize, the existing literature also indicates a positive relationship between self-employment and women's control over income and decision-making within the household.⁴⁷
5. Among the self-employed, daughters are most often mobilized for help. In China, a decline in school enrollment from full-time education for peasant girls, has been noted in households involved in income-generation (No. 71).

Self-Employment in Agriculture

The prevailing literature on self-employment shows that apart from Bangladesh, where post-harvesting activities of rice and subsequent sale is a very common form of income-earning for women all over rural and urban regions of Asia, livestock rearing and sale of produce is the major economic activity in the agriculture sector. Common issues that emerge from a survey of existing literature are the following (Nos. 46, 60, 116, 141, 146, 156, 158, 179, 192, 233):

1. Women are involved in livestock rearing on a small-scale basis, but shoulder all responsibilities for it within the household. Where large-scale enterprises develop, women's know-how is sidelined, and generally men take over.
2. Livestock rearing forms a very important source of income and nutrition for the poor families.
3. Due to the shrinking of common property resources, access to fodder has become a major problem, increasing women's work load and time spent on collecting fodder. Often women end up buying fodder with their meagre incomes.
4. Lack of extension services and "livestock" centres with access of women to veterinarians.
5. The effect of increasing commercialization in dairying (India) and poultry (Pakistan) in the last decade, has been negative for women. It has resulted in sidelining women's rich experience, through the introduction of exotic varieties, in addition to reducing access to nutritive foods for the children. Even where women's dairy co-operatives have been formed, the hierarchy of members has been negative for the poor and low caste women in India (Nos. 116, 156, 158; for Pakistan, see No. 233).

Self-Employment in Manufacturing

Self-employment in manufacturing takes the form of producing goods within the household by mobilizing family labour. The nature of work resembles home-based workers in all respects, except that there is relative autonomy in the investment on raw material and the benefits derived from sales margin. This "choice" of being independent gives an edge over the home-based workers, but being "petty producers", they are equally vulnerable to the competition and market vagaries as are the home-based workers. It is, therefore, very difficult to generalize about incomes earned in self-employment. Despite these limitations, and the fluctuations in income of self-employed workers, higher incomes than wage workers in the same occupations have been reported. Food processing, textiles, handicrafts, *beedi* (traditional cigar) and coir-fibre manufacture (the last two in South Asia mainly) are the occupations commonly found across Asia and the Pacific.

Self-Employment in the Service Sector

In the service sector, the self-employed comprise mainly of petty traders, hawkers and vendors. Their main problems are the lack of credit and a dependable market. They

depend on moneylenders who charge usurious rates. According to available literature, bank loans still elude them, except if they happen to be a part of a co-operative or credit group. Harassment from the police and muscle-men, lack of space in the markets, and unreasonable rates of market taxes are the main problems of the hawkers. Insecurity and vulnerability to sexual assaults, for both women vendors and hawkers, is a major issue. Lack of creche facilities is yet another problem requiring attention.

MIGRATION: ISSUES AND TRENDS

The patterns of migration in the Asia-Pacific region are both a reflection and cause of some of the major social and economic transformations taking place in the region. Barring certain countries in South Asia (notably Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh) and the West Asian region where migration is related to marriage and customs such as seclusion which restricts migratory tendencies, (North India included), migration is most often one of the spontaneous survival strategies, an adjustment mechanism adopted to subsist or increase income-earning opportunities. The state-sponsored policies like the land settlement schemes, that are responsible for large-scale migration, have been dealt with elsewhere in this paper. The focus here will be on reasons for migration at an individual level for women, as more and more women migrate independently rather than as dependants.

The diversity of patterns in female migration which vary from one country to another are characterized by a "rational choice" made by women among the various alternatives before them. Migration can be internal or international. Within Asia, Thailand, the Philippines and Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Korea and Taiwan all show very high levels and increasing rates of female migration (Nos. 242, 254, 260, 281, 289, 321). For rural households of impoverished areas in Thailand and the Philippines, "encouraging and sending" daughters and retaining sons (Nos. 19, 289, 295) is a very conscious strategy. In India, there is a north-south variation and migration is manifested in large mobile work-forces moving in response to seasonal demands (Nos. 126, 127, 128, 136, 161, 169, 195).⁴⁸ There is also a very marginal incidence of international migration (No. 89). The literature points to the following factors for women's migration.

1. Apart from poverty, a rise in the levels of female education or even a desire to be educated is related to migration. This is applicable to most of the South-East and East Asian countries, specifically Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia and the Republic of Korea and in South Asia, Sri Lanka.
2. In addition to rising education levels, the development strategy of industrialization, pursued in large parts of Asia, has precipitated migration at formerly unprecedented levels from rural areas of these countries to the metropolises. In both Thailand and the Philippines, the proportion of female migrants in Bangkok and Manila is higher than male migrants as a result.⁴⁹
3. The concentration of urban migrants in South-East and East Asia is in services followed by manufacturing.⁵⁰ However, in Korea and Malaysia, recent literature indicates that the production worker is fast replacing women workers in the

- service sector, as the largest occupation-group among female urban migrants (Note No. 51).
4. Unemployment levels are lower and LFPRs are higher among the migrants (No. 15, 19). This is probably due to the propensity of the migrants to accept any job available to them, in the absence of social support systems.
 5. Cash remittances from the female migrants are a very important source of income for families back home, allowing for investments in assets like land, house and bicycles in South-East Asian rural areas. Dollar remittances from the Filipinas especially, has helped ease the country's balance of payments.⁵¹
 6. Within the developed and prosperous Asian countries, another form of "labour hierarchy" is the relegation of low status and menial jobs to women from the less developed countries. The proportion of international migration among Filipino and Sri Lankan women is the highest among Asian women. They are concentrated in jobs like domestic maids, hospital cleaners, servers and hospitality girls. The Gulf countries, Japan, Hong Kong and Singapore are the major recruiters of these women. Recently, Malaysia has stepped in with domestic maids migrating there from Indonesia and the Philippines (Nos. 5, 15, 241, 248). These are the survival strategies adopted by the families through sending out their women.
 7. The adjustment problems and the social consequences without support systems for migrants, especially for international migrants, is a major issue requiring attention from policy-makers.⁵²
 8. In the Pacific Islands, educated and skilled women from Samoa, Tonga, Fiji and the Cook Islands migrate to New Zealand, Australia, Canada and America in search of jobs in the modern sector (No. 23).

FEMALE-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

The survey of literature on women in the economy indicates a growing awareness and importance of Female-Headed Households (FHHs). Though information at the macro-level has been woefully inadequate, micro-studies focusing on FHHs all indicate that they are a disadvantaged group reflected in the structure and low level of their asset-holding, their meagre command over skilled and unskilled labour power and their limited and declining access to resources. Consequently, FHHs are concentrated in the least profitable, low status and low paying occupations (Nos. 9, 10, 19, 41, 57, 71, 85, 147, 201, 203, 239, 242, 245).

According to a recent study, the proportion of FHHs in the rural areas of the Asia-Pacific region is approximately 18 to 22 per cent (FAPA: FAO: 1985: 82 cited in No. 19), and they represent a significant section of the rural households. Factors underlying this phenomenon are multifarious. They include an increase in male migration, and an erosion of traditional social systems and values resulting in divorce, desertions and breakdown of joint families (No. 19, 136). The studies on FHHs also highlight the following:

1. A strong relationship between FHHs and poverty is indicated by FHHs being disproportionately represented among destitutes (Bangladesh), "distressed" groups for welfare-oriented programmes such as feeding or food distribution schemes and among home-based piece-rate workers (India)⁵³ (No. 9).
2. In South Asia, the vulnerability of FHHs to seasonal stress and lack of work opportunities makes their role as sole economic providers very difficult. It is further heightened by the prevailing norms of behaviour for women (North India, Bangladesh and Pakistan) like seclusion, which they desperately try to maintain to avoid social isolation. In Bangladesh, the increasing number of destitutes among FHHs has been linked to mechanization of paddy processing (Nos. 35, 40). In such a situation of poverty and continuous struggles, the notion of women's "autonomy", control over income and decision-making within the FHHs seems ironical.
3. A general point which emerges from all the studies is that there is no uni-variate definition likely to be adequate for the multifaceted phenomenon of FHH. It calls for a different approach which includes parameters like self-perception of the women, formal ownership of land and assets in addition to economic management by the women within the households (No. 19).

In regard to FHHs, China emerges as an exception. There have been several critiques of the "new household responsibility system", which primarily focuses on the deliberate relegation of women to the agricultural sphere, and the overburdening of women and other negative implications this system entails. However, on closer analysis, the available literature also indicates dynamic entrepreneurship by women. Women in China are *de facto* managers of land and have increased their incomes with control over land. In addition, they are the primary decision-makers, and as such present a contrast to the struggling women from FHHs in the South Asian region.

ALTERNATIVE EFFORTS BY WOMEN

An analysis of the efforts made by women in the Asia-Pacific region to devise economic alternatives within the existing structures will now be made. Most of these alternatives have been small, scattered and marginal to the mainstream of the planning-process, programmes and projects. Yet, they represent the collective strength of poor rural and urban women in Asia, coping with the day-to-day struggles of their lives.

The most common method adopted by women to address their problems is the forming of organizations, whether spontaneous or sponsored by government or non-governmental agencies. Recent literature indicates the following:

1. Organizations are being formed to help women gain access to factors of production like credit, land and other assets, and skills and resources like fuel and fodder.

2. Co-operatives, unions or just informal groups of women are functioning to initiate projects, create/save income, generate funds/employment, upgrade existing skills/introduce new skills and organize social support services.
3. The support services include day-care centres, health and family planning services, nutrition programmes and veterinarians to attend to livestock.
4. The organizations serve as forums for raising both individual and group consciousness of women, about their economic roles and capabilities and their problems related to work and ways to address/resolve them. Some women (especially the literates) are also developing administrative and managerial skills, while running the organizations.
5. These organizations also go a very long way in fulfilling women's most basic and felt needs through establishing fair price grocery shops, group-saving schemes and interest-free emergency loans (Bangladesh, Indonesia and India).
6. Women are breaking through their "defined social roles" and gaining access to public space like markets (Republic of Korea). In South Asia (Pakistan) women are learning to interact with the market through intermediaries (men).
7. There is a growing incidence of middle-class women emerging as "initiators" of non-governmental organizations. They help poor women's groups in identifying, formulating and executing projects. They often act as intermediaries to help these women's groups with their resources and skills like arranging "markets" and dealing with government agencies in getting welfare schemes. Although this is an encouraging trend, it remains successful as long as the middle-class women are genuinely sensitive and conscious of problems confronting the poor women, and are careful not to allow hierarchies to develop.

There have been several critiques about these organizations. Some of the points raised are as follows:

1. The efforts have been on an "ad hoc" basis, in many cases resulting in failure.
2. Introduction of "income-generation" projects as a solution to women's economic problems have only reinforced seclusion and invisibility, especially in the home-based work.
3. Problems inherent in the "project approach" to development have been marginal to larger socio-economic processes at work. They therefore throw up problems with which the women are unable to deal.

In the face of limited options before the poor rural women of South Asia, where there are genuine pressures of either seasonal or no work, women are constantly struggling and diversifying their occupations for survival. This struggle has been further intensified by the erosion of social patronage, common property resources, etc. (No. 82). In such a situation, the successful organizations have addressed the women's basic needs and problems to a large extent. Recent studies have documented this extensively, when focusing on the survival strategies of the poor women.

The critique outlined above, though valid, does not suggest any other alternative to improve poor women's living conditions. This is one lacuna which needs to be addressed meaningfully. A significant feature that emerges is that most of the successful organizations are the ones which have strengthened women's existing self-employment activities and markets, in addition to providing credit and other supportive activities (Nos. 90, 92, 93). In Bangladesh, women's rural credit groups have been the moving force for changes and improvements in their lives, and have helped out women during calamities like floods (Nos. 36, 38, 39, 43, 50, 52, 61). In Pakistan, many lessons can be learned from both the successful and unsuccessful projects. In a society where seclusion has considerably reduced women's options for work, the intervention of income-generating projects has gone a long way in changing women's lives. In one interesting instance (No. 235), women also gained control over their income because money from "income-generation" was perceived to belong to the women, while wages from women's agricultural work was meant for the household. In South Korea, women from rural areas gained access to the cattle markets directly for the first time, braving ridicule from the men (No. 307). Several such examples have been outlined in the recent literature (Nos. 122, 134, 137, 162, 196, 221, 246, 282).

CONCLUSION

This overview of women's participation in the economy for a vast geographical area, while attempting to be comprehensive, has been necessarily selective. At times, it has meant a simplified presentation of complex issues. As a result, there are gaps. The one that comes to mind is the "survival strategies" of poor women in Asia. This has not been dealt with separately as it is a running theme through the issues covered for women in the South Asian and parts of the South-East Asian economy. In addition to the gaps indicated earlier, the future areas of research suggested are as follows:

1. Historical and contemporary factors leading to a Gender Division of Labour (GDL) in agriculture is an important subject for research. Although fragmentary research exists in the case of paddy cultivation, the gap is conspicuous in the plantation economy. Considering the widespread prevalence of plantations (tea, coffee, rubber, tobacco, jute, indigo, sugar and cotton) right from the colonial period in Asia, the literature is sparse on the issue affecting women workers. Historical studies on the evolution of GDL in the plantation where cheap family labour was employed would provide gainful insights into the GDL in the present situation. The study of rubber tappers in Malaysia on the alteration of GDL is significant. Although casual observation points to the presence of female rubber tappers in Thailand, there are no studies. Much more research is needed in this area.
2. Macro-level data on incidence of women farmers in Asia and the Pacific, their age structure and distribution is woefully inadequate.
3. The focus on women in fisheries is limited to a few studies in India (Nos. 99, 163, 169, 175), Malaysia and the Pacific (Nos. 20, 24, 258). The incidence of women

- workers in fisheries, the nature and characteristics of their job in this sector needs to be probed deeper.
4. Very little is known of women in the traditional industries of the manufacturing sector in Asia. Apart from highlighting cases of displacement of women within these industries, the available literature throws little light on the present situation of women workers still employed in the traditional industries.
 5. A significant lacuna exists in the structure of employment, methods of skill, acquisition and pattern of occupational mobility among the women workers employed in the manufacturing sector of South-East Asia.
 6. An important area which needs to be analysed is the movement of wages for women workers independently, as well as relative to men workers, across and within the different sectors.
 7. The available literature has also missed out very crucial questions while documenting alternative efforts by women's groups to address women's economic problems. They are: How do the groups deal with the hierarchies which develop within them on class, caste or racial bias? In their struggle for survival, how do the groups deal with women competing with each other to undercut wages so that they can earn more? How can solidarity be engendered in a society where there are deep social biases (caste) and "women's notions of self-interest" are stronger than those of "group interest"? What are the other alternatives that women can explore from which they can benefit?

If one were to characterize women's economic participation, very briefly, just two terms would eloquently sum it up. Firstly, Gender Division of Labour (GDL) and secondly, "limited options" in a labour surplus economy. Surveying the literature across a whole continent on women's economic participation, with all its rich, varied and complex nuances, these two features operate at different levels, in every sector of the economy, at times even regardless of other characteristics. This is also reflected in the striking uniformity with which the different socio-economic processes have affected women across Asia and the Pacific.

The most profound and lasting impact of the GDL was felt in the evaluation of women's work. Notions of skill and the physical strength required to carry out a given task are invariably linked to the gender who performs them - men or women. Consequently, an arbitrariness of evaluation across gender, with different monetary values attached for the same kind of work, with higher rates for men in a labour surplus economy was apparent. Where labour was scarce, and mechanization has not made its inroads, GDL was altered to favour women, like in the case of the rubber tappers of Malaysia. Although GDL has been observed to be one of the more stubborn and complex aspects of women's work, encompassing deep ideological bias about women's roles and capabilities, much more work needs to be done on this aspect at the empirical level. The Malaysian case study demonstrates that a careful analysis is needed to study the conditions in different contexts that could lead to changes in GDL. This kind of analysis is also needed, where GDL has been observed to remain rigid, so that appropriate policies can be framed.

Due to limitations of data in both the Pacific and West Asia, there were constraints in the analysis of women workers from these regions. A major drawback of this study has been the conspicuous absence of discussion on wages. But again, access to relevant data limited the discussion on this aspect. Only very few studies among recent publications have dealt with wages. Notable among them is Jose, A.V., (No. 11) who mainly focuses on women's wages in the industrialized economies and Sri Lanka. The trends indicate a marked divergence in movement of real wages of women workers *vis-a-vis* male workers within the different sectors across the countries. In Sri Lanka, the wages disparities between men and women are minimal. This is one issue which needs to be researched thoroughly.

In relation to the overview, a "sidelining" of women (popularly conceptualized as "marginalization") was observed in the agricultural sector but an "integration" rather than capitalization of women's labour was noted in other sectors of the economy, in South-East and East Asia especially. Another significant observation was that along with the decline and increase noticed in different sectors, all countries have demonstrated an increase in the percentage share of women during the last two decades. This holds true even for India and Bangladesh, which are otherwise marked by a very low occupation-wise share of female employment. In South-East and East Asia, more than 45 per cent of the total employment under the service sector are being performed by women, irrespective of the levels of economic development. There is a positive tendency towards equitable sharing of employment opportunities (despite the limitations of gender-typing, etc.) in these regions across the gender groups.⁵⁴

But for women workers in the countries of South Asia, such a near equitable sharing seems a long way off. Till then, there is a serious need to alter priorities, to revalue the world of work and workers in a way that incorporates women's interests as well.

NOTES

1. Due to the large volume of references involved, the usual convention of author's name and year of publication will be substituted by the serial number corresponding to the abstract of the work in the accompanying annotated bibliography.
2. The vast literature on the "invisibility" of women's work or reference thereto are as follows: Nos. 12, 14, 23, 49, 76, 88, 117, 132, 138, 178, 200, 206, 231, 234, 239, 255, 271, 279 and 318.
3. In order to come to a region-wise classification of countries taking into consideration their economic structure and prevailing social conditions, we have adopted the classification (with some minor changes and additions) of UN-ESCAP study (No. 16) which divides the countries of the Asia-Pacific region into five groups.
 - a) **The Pacific Island Economies:** Fiji, Papua New Guinea.
 - b) **The Large Agriculture-based Economies:** Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka. (Sri Lanka has been added to this category unlike the UN-ESCAP study which includes it with the NICs because of doubts about its NIC status.)
 - c) **The Newly Industrializing Countries (NICs):** Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand.
 - d) **The (Newly) Industrialized Countries:** Republic of Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and Japan. In the UN-ESCAP study Japan is treated separately as an industrialized country to make it distinct from the "newly" industrialized economies of Asia. As the broad characteristics of female labour force participation are similar, they have been kept together. Australia is conspicuous by its absence because (i) we have provided examples of women workers from other developed countries of Asia and (ii) we did not want to clutter the study with another example.

- e) **The West Asian Economies:** The oil-rich Gulf States of Bahrain, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Qatar with a highly developed service sector plus other countries in the region. One drawback is the "geographical" classification of the West Asian Economies; but the lack of data left no other choice.
4. Out of these sets of factors, the socio-cultural factors have a very heavy bearing on female LFPRs. To illustrate, in Pakistan, low visible female employment can be explained in terms of feminine seclusion, (*pardah*), under Islam, while in Thailand the high level of female participation reflects the country's distinctive cultural tradition of relative sexual equality (No. 13).
 5. For example, a positive relationship has been observed between poverty and female labour force participation rates (Nos. 37, 51, 57, 160, 238, 239, 240).
 6. The interactions of gender-specific factors like this with class and caste (and tribes or other ethnic groups) which alter the female LFPRs within a specific context is a complex, but a fascinating exercise. In India, Nagaraj (No. 160) has attempted this. In parts of South Asia, norms of seclusion have been observed to weaken in the face of poverty, forcing women to take up work outside the household. Higher education is another factor which alters such norms. For a detailed discussion in Pakistan see Shah, (No. 239) for Bangladesh, (No. 51).
 7. Many studies in India have noted a rise in the non-agriculture employment mainly as a result of "spill-over" from the agriculture sector where employment opportunities are declining (A. Vaidyanathan, 1986 in No. 117).
 8. Due to the lack of comparable data over time in the Pacific and West Asian economies, we are unable to deal with them.
 9. An excellent example is Bangladesh, where women carry out primarily most of the post-harvesting work in paddy cultivation within the precincts of their homesteads. As a striking contrast to the rest of Asia, where women predominate in the tasks of weeding, transplanting and harvesting in paddy cultivation, Bangladeshi women are conspicuously absent. Many authors include this fact with the "invisibility" of women's work, and the under enumeration of women as "workers" in Bangladesh (Nos. 35, 40, 48 and 67).
 10. Technology change can be a technical innovation which affects directly the way a task is carried out and/or a set of innovations which directly or indirectly affect production techniques and form a set of interlinked innovations embedded in and/or which may catalyse larger processes of socio-economic change (Whitehead, 1985 in No. 117).
 11. This process of pauperization/casualisation of labour has been dealt with extensively in literature on the Green Revolution of the 1970s and the mid-1980s. Eviction of tenants, non-viability of small farms and lack of access of marginal farmers to capital associated with high-yielding varieties (HYV) are some of the reasons cited for this process.
 12. In Indonesia, the shift is from the "open" *bawon* system (in which anyone could participate and where wages were paid in kind in proportion to the rice harvested) to the "closed" system, where payments are in cash and male labourers are employed in preference to female. Under the new *ceblakan* system, only those who provide free labour to the landowner for operations like transplanting and weeding (female operations predominantly), are allowed to harvest. It implies a net reduction in the harvest share for women who now perform more labour to earn the same share. In yet another arrangement, *tebasan*, landowners sell crops to an outside middleman who brings his contract labourers (men) to harvest the fields. In the Philippines, a similar process has been observed in the spread of the *sagod* system where the hiring and payment made to workers for weeding and harvesting are linked together. This restricts the access to the share of harvest (No. 5; Hart, 1986 in No. 19; No. 213, 285).
 13. In Indonesia the *ani-ani* and in the Philippines the *kayog*, both single blade knives, were used to cut the indigenous variety rice stalks. They were replaced with the sickle which was better suited for high-yielding short-straw varieties. Women (especially the older and very young women) were displaced by men (Nos. 5, 19, 212, 219, 291). However, in Indonesia, women later learnt to use the sickle and made a comeback, but many had to seek non-farm activities.
 14. Out of all post-harvest activities, *dheki* (hand-pounding rice) work provided more than 50 per cent of the income for women, as the daily wage for this work is higher than average for other post-harvest activities. Women were hired for *dheki* work combined with other post-harvest activities, ensuring them two meals per day, payment in both kind and cash ($\frac{1}{2}$ a seer of rice plus some money). The

- implications for women agricultural workers due to the loss of this major homestead activity in the *purdah* society of Bangladesh has been observed to be negative (No. 40).
15. In Iloilo province, according to Res (No. 292), women's participation in both family and hired labour declined from 18 per cent in 1978 to 13 per cent in 1980. In the same period, men increased their labour-use on account of double-cropping and more opportunities in male-related labour like land preparation and fertilizer application. Men also replaced women's labour in harvesting, thus compensating for decreases in male labour use in other operations.
 16. The decline in male workers from 1967 to 1982 was 44 per cent. During the same period, the female work-force percentage had increased to 57 per cent. The decline in male workers in the rubber estates is linked to the decline in the demand for rubber in the commodity market, especially during the 1975-82 period. The prolonged international recession, high stock levels of rubber in the producing countries and a decline in the global demand for automobiles and tyres had an adverse impact on rubber prices (No. 5).
 17. In China, this relationship (land reform and male beneficiaries) is not a very straightforward one, and women have been direct beneficiaries of land reform. However, patrilineal and patrilocal practices have imposed several hurdles to their exercising real control, despite their formal rights to land (Nos. 19, 72). Within India, Chasin (No. 106) discusses the impact of land reform in Kerala, South India, on women. "Benefits" differed across different class/caste categories. This is a state in India where women had customary land rights through matrilineal descent.
 18. The reasons for initiating settlement schemes vary across and within the countries. It may be due to construction of big dams (proposed project in India) and hydroelectric projects (Batang Ai, Malaysia). It may be to encourage cash crop cultivation (Papua New Guinea), "settling" tribal communities into permanent agriculture (Thailand), encouraging paddy cultivation (Sri Lanka) or just for redressing population imbalance within the country (Malaysia, Indonesia). The proposed project in India is the Narmada Valley Project (NVP) and the Sardar Sarovar Project (SSP). For an excellent critique outlining different aspects including the possibility of rehabilitation of a phenomenal number (estimated 83, 372 by 1991) of people in two states of India (Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat) see, *Cry the Beloved Narmada* by Baba Amte, 1989, Maharogi Sewa Samiti, Anandwan, Maharashtra, India, p. 44. (The rehabilitation policy of the government states that every major son will be treated as a separate family for land rights!)
 19. The only exception is when young men migrate, and the women inherit the title when the husband dies. But it can also be inherited by any other male child willing to stay in the settlement schemes (Heyzer in No. 5).
 20. Mostly published by agricultural universities, development journals and planning department journals. There is a whole series of literature brought out by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Philippines on extension services for women farmers in the Philippines (Nos. 273, 276, 278, 279, 280, 282, 286, 292, 293). In fact, in India, a researcher from an agricultural university has taken pains to analyse the reading habits of 336 farm women (No. 100).
 21. See *Women Farmers and Rural Change in Asia: Towards Equal Access and Participation*, Heyzer, N., (ed.), Asian and Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1987.
 22. In the Philippines, the women co-operators who participated in the integrated pest management technology said their participation was highly influenced by their husbands (No. 278).
 23. We should be careful not to jump to conclusions about women farmers' control over decision-making in the female-headed households. In Kerala, this author's field experience in a coconut plantation and rice-growing area indicated that women took their sons (some even in their late teens) into confidence, at times even leaving the responsibilities to them. How this was translated into control over income was difficult to judge.
 24. These include tax remissions, cheap credit, guaranteed inputs, a controlled labour force and easy terms for profit repatriation (Nos. 13, 185). Added to all this is guaranteed skills (which is labelled "unskilled" after it enters the labour market) advertised by the governments. To illustrate, the investment brochure published by the Malaysian government runs like this, "The manual dexterity of the oriental female is famous the world over. Her hands are small and she works fast with extreme care. Who, therefore, should be better qualified by nature and inheritance to contribute to the efficiency of bench-assembly production lines than the Oriental girl?" (Lim, 1988:20, No. 13).
 25. There seems to be a virtual competition among the South-East and South Asian countries in advertising their docile labour force. Two examples are:

- (a) "... cheap, docile, highly trainable, non-unionized labour", as advertised by the Malaysian Government in its early fervour to industrialize through attracting foreign investment (quoted in Lim, No. 13).
- (b) "The light bodied Bangladeshis who are recognized as very intelligent people (sic) can be turned into most productive and at the same time the least demanding labour force ..." (Hossain et al, 1990:40, No. 51).
26. In Singapore, the government intervenes by subjecting all migrant workers to semi-annual pregnancy tests, with failures resulting in the loss of work permits (No. 185).
27. For textile factory workers, tuberculosis and pneumonia are common occupational health hazards and for electronics workers, skin irritations, dizzy spells and weak eyesight have been reported. For a vivid first person account, see No. 274, a Philippine case study.
28. This is graphically described by Melle, a "quality controller" in an electronics firm in Manila: "Everytime I scored more production points, the supervisor would raise my quota and that of the operators. The burden was more pronounced on the part of the operators since my job was just an adjunct of their work. When they failed to reach their quota, they were given disciplinary action. first offence, warning; second offence, three days' suspension; third offence, one week suspension; and fourth offence, dismissal." The "offence" referred to is the failure to meet allotted production quota (No. 274).
29. The "status" attached to the work in FTZs is also largely due to the preference shown for "educated" women (with at least a secondary school certificate) and the system of entrance examinations for selecting workers by the electronics companies noted in the Philippines and Malaysia (Nos. 274 and Grossman, in *South-East Asia Chronicle* No. 69, 1979, pp. 2-17).
30. Interestingly, so far (up till 1990) India is still not considered as attractive, despite the generous terms offered in the FTZs. According to Sen (No. 185), this is because Indian labour, though cheap, is not docile enough as evidenced by the strike in Santa Cruz FTZ in Bombay in 1985. Furthermore, Indian labour legislation does not bar trade unions as in other countries (pp. 3, 5). As this paper was being written, a publication called *Indian Women in a Changing Industrial Scenario* was published. Edited by Banerjee, it has a whole range of articles on women industrial workers in India (p. 322). Unfortunately, this author could not get hold of a copy.
31. Safa, H.I., "Runway Shops and Female Employment: The Search for Cheap Labour" in *Signs*, Winter, 1981, pp. 418-433.
32. To illustrate what is meant by "passive" and "active" resistance: mass hysteria among the women workers of Malaysian electronics companies which brought work to a standstill for 2 to 3 days is just one example of "passive" resistance. In the Philippines, against all odds, women have formed and joined unions and struck work in the face of dismissal. One worker was even killed in a demonstration. See *Tales of Filipino Working Women*, for many such examples (No. 274).
33. According to Malaysian Law, workers have to establish such a group while they are forming a union (No. 263).
34. The Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) which gives an advantage to imports from LDCs, is periodically subjected to various conditionalities in deference to labour and industrial lobbies in the home countries (No. 51).
35. For Sri Lanka, the annual bulletin of CENWOR in Tamil titled "Penna Elechi" ("Women's Awakening"), No. 2 of 1988 and 1989 have been useful sources for analysis. My thanks to Christopher Das, who translated this material from Tamil to English for me.
36. According to Dore, "... jobs in smaller establishments may be better than no work at all, but their benefit to women workers must be compared with the losses due to the exclusion from employment in large high wage firms" (in No. 8: p. 24).
37. Ironically in Thailand, a country known for its lack of social and institutional barriers and high female LFPRs (as compared to Bangladesh), Heyzer (No. 5) notes and questions the fact that very seldom have women attained the status of independent producers in garment workshops for export market (p. 55).
38. As the working conditions and other characteristics are similar for home workers linked to the export and domestic market, they will be dealt with together. Certain trends and issues are common and unless stated specifically, they should be understood as applicable to both.
39. Mies estimates about 150,000 to 200,000 women workers engaged in lace-making in India. Pineda-Ofreneo reports in certain areas of Philippines about 40 per cent of the total production was done

- under sub-contractual arrangements. Rao et al. (No. 174) estimates 100,000 women garment workers in the city of Delhi (official estimate 25,000 women). In Dhaka, Bangladesh (No. 51), of the 200,000 employed in the garment sector, 90 per cent are by women. A large chunk among them are home-workers.
- a) Mies, M., "Capitalist Development and Subsistence Reproduction: Rural Women in India", *BCAS*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1980.
 - b) Ofreneo, P.R., "Philippine Domestic Outwork: Sub-contracting for Export-Oriented Industries", *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, date unknown, pp. 281-93.
40. China seems to be edging out the Philippines for both garments and handicrafts in the international market. TNCs are winding up and moving to China as labour is cheaper, though more organized and skilled. Taiwan which has a mechanized handicrafts sector, with bamboo cutting machines (10 strips within a short time as opposed to Filipino women who labour for hours with a small knife) has marginalized the basket-weavers of the Philippines (Nos. 275, 283).
 41. In India, where the pauperization process has necessitated that people diversify their income-earning opportunities in order to survive, the impact of mechanization in tobacco factories has been double-edged with both positive and negative outcomes. While a section of the women lost employment due to mechanization, more women at the village-level were getting home-based employment for a few days, even if at less wages. As it was off-season, these wages were extremely crucial for the survival of the household (No. 117).
 42. Iran presents an exception in terms of valuing young girls. During the carpet boom, young girls were viewed as assets (and not as liabilities as previously); furthermore, their marriage age was postponed (No. 310). Contrast this with India, home-based Muslim coir-workers from Kerala. Here, the mothers called the young girls a "burden" to be fed, clothed and married off with a dowry (No. 162). The contrast is both striking and significant because both are from similar religious backgrounds.
 43. Taking three traditional occupations in South Asia, *beedi*, handloom-weaving (India) and handicrafts (Pakistan), all produced for the domestic market, all predominantly from Muslim communities (except in handicraft and *beedi* sectors where 33 per cent and a minority, not specified, were Hindus) with varying restrictions on their access to the market, with regard to control over income, different patterns were identified. In the handloom weaving sector (No. 78), women had no access to market and no control over their income. In the handicraft sector, (No. 236), the control over income depended very much on access to the market and in the case of *beedi* makers (No. 103), with restrictions on mobility, women enjoyed a better status and had control and decision-making over incomes earned.
 44. Administrative and managerial workers are the "cream" of the skilled labour force. The relative share of this category for both male and female workers rarely exceeds 3 to 4 per cent of the labour force, even in the economically advanced countries of Europe (ILO Statistics, Jose, A.V., No. 11).
 45. The similarities between self-employed workers and home-based workers are "invisibility", outside the ambit of labour legislations with no protection and provisions. They are also victims of market vagaries and their returns can be very low. In addition, the type of work can also be similar. For example, weaving or embroidering, tailoring and handicraft.
 46. References for the vast literature on income-generation, self-employment, informal sector across the Asian-Pacific region (except women in livestock which is referred separately) are as follows: Nos. 39, 43, 47, 50, 51, 63, 70, 71, 74, 78, 90, 92, 93, 94, 135, 137, 152, 162, 166, 195, 196, 205, 208, 229, 230, 235, 239, 243, 246, 265, 277, 307, 310.
 47. This has much to do with the rolling capital which the women handle themselves, the absence of fixed income margins by which they can "hoodwink" their husbands (hiding secret savings) and control their earnings, at times even in the face of violence (author's discussion with vendors in Kerala, India). Also see Risseu, C., (No. 247).
 48. Apart from the literature annotated in the bibliography, this section is based on findings of an excellent edited volume, *Women in the Cities of Asia: Migration and Urban Adaptation*, Fawcett, J. T., Khoo S. E., Smith, P. C., (eds.), Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, U.S.A., 1984, p. 406. Selected articles have been annotated in this volume. For these and other literature on migration, see Nos. 12, 15, 18, 19, 71, 125, 127, 128, 136, 161, 169, 195, 242, 254, 260, 265, 281, 289, 321.

49. In Bangkok, the sex ratio of migrants dropped from 67.9 males per 100 females in 1975-80 to 49 in 1983 (No. 15). In the Philippines, during the period 1975-80, 60 per cent of the total migrants from rural to urban areas (half to Metro Manila) were women (Herrin and Engracus, 1982:4 in No. 19).
 50. In the service sector, domestic service, followed by prostitution are the most common occupations for migrants in the Philippines and Thailand (Nos. 15, 19).
 51. In 1984, an estimated US\$421.96 million was remitted by the migrant workers, half of which came from women migrants (No. 5, p. 51).
 52. The importance of social support and security for women migrants is a pertinent issue because of the vulnerable nature of the jobs they are engaged in, like domestic service and prostitution.
 53. A Project on FHHs in South Asia, concentrated on these groups to locate FHHs (No. 9). Parthasarthy's household survey in a district of Andhra Pradesh (South India) shows that a larger percentage of FHHs relative to male-headed households fall below the poverty line (90.6 as against 87.9 per cent) and are dependent on wage labour for a livelihood (47.7 as against 36 per cent) (No. 9:105).
 54. These observations are discussed at length in Jose, A.V., (No. 11).
5. In Thailand and the Philippines, family enterprises like restaurants and grocery stores managed by women are common (No. 15).
 6. In South Asia, the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia, paid domestic service is the most common employment for women. There is also a large-scale migration of women domestic maids to the Gulf region and affluent countries of South East Asia. Prostitution also seems to be on the rise in Asia, especially in Thailand and the Philippines, and women migrate as a survival strategy for the family. This has also been noted in India (No. 150).

The reasons for stereotyping of gender roles and jobs have been extensively discussed in the literature of the last two decades, and they include a whole range of issues from biased ideology inherent in the gender division of labour, to the policy and planning programmes pursued within the Asian countries. The exceptions to gender typing, as noted in some countries of Asia, indicate a strong correlation with women's education. The impressive strides by Singaporean women as administrators and managers (three per cent)¹⁶ is largely due to improved educational attainment of women, as well as the strong demand resulting from a rapidly expanding economy (Nos. 11, 304). As for Yemen Arab Republic, a disaggregated analysis indicates that women are predominantly school headmistresses (No. 318). There are no details available for the type of administrative and managerial posts in Bahrain and the South Pacific.

The relatively higher proportion of professional workers in the Philippines and Sri Lanka compared to faster growing economies of Asia are also due to the impressive achievements of these countries in improving the skill composition of the labour force through investments in educational facilities (No. 11).

In fact, the existing literature indicates a strong correlation between women's education and better opportunities for work. In the Gulf region, rights to equal education for women have eroded cultural barriers like "seclusion" and released women for employment. Although they account for only 10 per cent of the total number employed, the predominance of women traders as the second-most popular occupation among women in the Gulf region is significant (No. 314).

Women's participation in the diverse economies of Asia and the Pacific varies greatly, from work as women farmers and agricultural labourers in low-growth agricultural countries to factory labour in the newly-industrializing high-growth countries. This annotated bibliography focuses on selected books, journals and papers, and through the review of these materials, an analysis emerges of women's participation in the economies of the region.

Within each country, the literature reviewed reveals a dynamic interplay of economic, political, social and cultural factors which significantly affect women's participation. The specific factors which determine female Labour Force Participation Rates are drawn out, so that policy lessons can be learned from different country experiences.

Examining the trends and issues within the different sectors of agriculture, manufacturing, services and self-employment, the author notes two main characteristics of women's participation which cut across sectors and countries at all levels. Firstly, a gender division of labour operates which assigns different monetary values for the same kind of work, with higher rates given to men. Secondly, women are observed to have 'limited options' in engaging in the kind and level of productive work of which they are capable. Finally, the bibliography includes a review of efforts made by women workers to devise economic alternatives and to organize themselves within the existing structures of the economy.