

11

PN - APR 17 1970

Women, Work Force Participation
and Underutilization

by

Imelda Z. Feranil
Population Institute
University of the Philippine System

S u m m a r y

This study focuses on participation and labor underutilization especially of women workers. Basically, it attempts to provide some answers to the following questions: What is the extent of participation of women in the work force? Who are the underutilized women workers? What forms of female labor underutilization exist?

The data set for the study comes from a Special Work Force Survey of 500 sample households from selected Philippine provinces which used new enumeration techniques that ascertained usual activities done daily, on week-ends, last week and last month as well as detailed sorter questions (e.g. extending direct help to household workers, doing some gainful activity even during leisure time, etc.) to determine work force participation.

Findings:

1. Females show great propensity to be labor force members. This finding is very different from what is apparent from standard labor force surveys. Results show that over 85% of males and 76% of females are actually work force participants. Higher levels of economic activity were noted generally among:
a) male and female rural residents; b) males compared to females. Nevertheless, married females especially rural heads or wives of heads showed even greater propensity to participate in the labor force compared to males in the younger ages.
2. Accompanying high participation rates were the noted high unemployment rates. These were highest especially for females (12.8% and 5.8% for urban and rural females respectively). Urban women stood out, especially the young (ages 10-29), the unmarried or the untrained among them, in addition to the more educated (those with some high school education or higher).

3. Focusing mainly on work hours, over 50% of males in both areas worked 40 hours or more while less than 50% of females worked for 40 hours or more.
4. Visible underemployment was rather high for both sexes with over one-fourth of the work force being composed of those working less than 40 hours and wanting more work. Females, however, were more severely affected, especially those in their thirties or forties, those married especially urban heads of households. Levels were even higher for rural females.
5. In contrast, invisible underemployment affected males especially those in their prime age or who were heads of household. It was however, also relatively high for urban females, especially those in their twenties and thirties, household members other than female heads and spouses, and the never married.
6. Going to educational and training background of those desiring more work, findings closely resembled what was observed above with respect to the unemployed: the case of the educated underemployed, affecting however, more extensively rural residents.
7. Underutilization affected people coming from different socio-economic groups. Many unemployed urban women, visibly underemployed rural women and invisibly underemployed rural residents came from very disadvantaged households.
8. When cash earnings were considered, very few people earned more than ₱50 per week with males generally earning more than females. Urban males received more than rural males while rural females were the least paid. As expected, those desiring more work for both sexes came from unpaid or lowly paid workers.

Recommendations on Measurement:

This study argues for improvement in the methodology of work force measurement since existing standard procedures tend to miss out participants like women. The UPPI survey calls for development of an enumeration technique usable for wider coverage in the Philippine setting. It points direction on how participation may be measured especially in a setting like the Philippines. The measurement of underutilization also needs to be improved. The data demands are rather substantial. Unemployment and underemployment are measured in the study mainly by the desire for work, the

latter using workhours as an additional criterion. Clearly, more questions need to be asked in work force surveys. What preferences do workers have with respect to time, status or earnings? What steps have they taken to look for work?

The recommended indicators are shown in the accompanying table.

Policy Implications and Recommendations:

1. There is need for support of policies and programs aimed reducing the potential supply work force entrants as the Philippines is anticipated to face about .5M new workers every year for the remainder of the 20th century.
2. Potential new entrants to the labor force will need to be trained while those already working will need programs aimed at skills upliftment. Issues to be addressed include distribution and type of training.
3. There is an apparent need for support of programs aimed at restructuring Philippine education. There should be careful screening on who should have a certain level or type of education and what specific field one should be in. Recommended policy directions include accreditation of schools to improve standards of higher education and selective admission. Access to education should not be biased toward those with the ability to pay but should be supported by schemes such as grants and loans extended to deserving students.
4. Desire for employment is a problem characteristic of both males and females, and policies to counter these need not be sex-specific.
5. One of the basic needs at present is an adequate resource and labor information system.
6. Entrepreneurship and cooperative undertakings are some of the options available to workers especially in societies where jobs are scarce.
7. A better spread of economic opportunities through dispersal of industries away from the metropolitan area and creation of alternative growth centers would also aid in reduction of educated unemployment and underemployment which have been noted as prevalent even in rural areas.

Items of Data	Recommended Socio-Economic Classification	Indicators
Number of work force members	A. <u>The economically active population</u> Sex, region, locale, age, relationship to head, marital status, highest levels of education, and training	Work force participation rate for various groups (under column 2) ← ⁷ Percentage distribution of work force by main activity
Number or unemployed Type of work sought Preference for time, income	B. <u>Employment Status</u> a. Sex, region, locale, age, relationship to head, marital status, highest levels of education, and training. b. Classifications for type of occupation sought, preferred time, preferred income from work.	Unemployment rate, by category (under column 2) Average age of unemployed, by category (under column 2)
1. Number of workhours rendered by workers	b. Classifications for type of occupation sought, preferred time, preferred income from work.	Percentage distribution of workers by hours of work Average workhours by sex
2. Less than full time workers desiring more work	C. <u>Underutilization</u>	Visible underutilization rate by category (under column 2)
3. Full time workers desiring more work	a. Sex and locale (and other characteristics if possible)	Invisible underutilization rate by category (under column 2)
4. Household backgrounds of workers desiring more work	b. Household characteristics c. Classification for type of occupation sought, preferred time, preferred income from work.	Percentage of work force underutilized by hours, by category (under column 2)

Items of Data	Recommended Socio-Economic Classification	Indicators
5. Average earnings	a. Sex and locale (and other characteristics if possible)	Percentage distribution of workers by earnings
6. Guideline on minimum desirable income	b. Earnings data	Percentage distribution of work force underutilized by hours by category (under column 2)
	c. Income data	Percentage distribution of work force not desiring more work by category (under column 2)
	D. <u>The Inactive</u>	
Numbers not in work force by category of inactivity	Sex and locale	Percentage of population in different categories of inactivity

The format is also derived from the U.N. publication, Towards a System of Social and Demographic Statistics.