

FEMALE LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN  
SOUTH ASIA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF  
BANGLADESH, INDIA, PAKISTAN AND  
SRI LANKA



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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this research was to study the trend observed of some of the determinants namely literacy rates/educational levels, fertility rates, dependency, urbanization and income inequality on female labour force participation of Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka for a period of 1990 to 2011 by analyzing data from World Development Indicators. The selected variables are also tested empirically by employing Fixed and Random effects model and find that improved educational levels, dependency rate, urban growth and income inequality raise the female labour force participation whereas fertility rate decelerate it in general. As a contribution to the existing literature this study also analyses the impact of aforementioned variables on female employment at different sectoral level i.e. agriculture, industry and services. The results find that tertiary level of education significantly contributes female employment in agriculture and industry whereas employment in services is driven by secondary education. Age dependency contributes to employment along all sectors. Fertility contributes significantly only in agriculture sector. Income inequality increases women participation in agriculture and industry. We propose certain policy implications based on the findings.