

Can Compensating Wage Differentials, Economically Empower Women? Empirical Evidence from South Asia

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ABSTRACT

The path towards gender equality, poverty eradication and inclusive economic growth can be built by women empowerment. This study addresses the problem of inadequate female labour force participation in South Asia. As such, following a mixed methodological approach, both the qualitative and quantitative analysis were triangulated to achieve the objective of the study. The findings of the quantitative analysis suggested that compensating wage differentials can economically empower women in South Asia. The follow-up qualitative analysis involved an in-depth inquiry on empirical evidence of wage differential compensation sensitivity through a case study in Sri Lanka. Therein, motherhood and child age, co-habitation of grandparents, male supremacy in traditionally patriarchal families, intergenerational education and learning, voluntary child labour, human trafficking for women labour exploitation and growth needs & domestic financial requirements were explored as the determinants of women's wage differential compensation sensitivity.

Keywords: Female labour force participation, South Asia, Sri Lanka, women