

**Abstract for “Impact of Discriminatory Social-Systems on Labour-market Outcomes in India: Re-Examining Empirical Evidence on Inequality and Exclusion”**

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Labour-market outcomes are conventionally determined by characteristics of labour, elasticity of demand and supply, degree of organization in labour-markets, network-effects and the like. The presence and prevalence of discriminatory social-systems, however, skews market-dynamics, not just in terms of wage-gaps but equally as much, in terms of differential treatment by employers, varying service-conditions and discriminatory work-contracts.

While Patriarchal mind-sets and chauvinistic attitudes cause exclusion of women from certain jobs, gender-biased wage-gaps and work-place discrimination; Social-endorsement of Caste-prejudices leads to a de-facto inter-job immobility for unskilled/semi-skilled lower caste workers, often forcing them to resort to parallel market-entry channels like informal sub-contracts and/or rural-to-urban migration. Overlapping ‘gender’ and ‘caste’ identities, then, imply a much greater exclusion and discrimination, the plight of Dalit-women workers in north-India, being a case in point.

This paper attempts to re-examine existing data on labour-market outcomes from a ‘gender-caste’ perspective, seeking to establish, if discriminatory social-systems ‘systematically’ cause greater welfare-losses (economic-inequality and social-exclusion) among the victim-groups. While preliminary estimates indicate a strong correlation between the two, causation is difficult to establish on pure statistical grounds. Alternative sociological explanations and a critical appraisal of the role of state in the context, follow.