

# Inter-Industry Mobility within the Household

## A Comparative Study of India and Japan

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IN India where most of the gainfully employed population work in household enterprises as own account workers or as unpaid household labour (they constituted 65.8 per cent of the gainfully employed in India in 1953-54, 69.0 per cent in the rural sector and 43.8 per cent in the urban, according to the National Sample Survey<sup>1</sup>), a study of the relation between the household industry and the industries of the gainfully employed population in the household should be of importance. Such a study has been made in the National Sample Survey (NSS) Report Number 14, on basis of the NSS 4th round (April-September 1952) data.

In this note India has been compared with Japan, a moderately developed country in Asia. The proportions of gainfully employed population in different sectors of economy (industry) and the industrial immobility within the household are the items of comparison.

The distribution of gainfully employed population in different sectors of economy (industry) by sex for the two countries, India and Japan, is shown in Table 1: the data for India relate to NSS 4th round (1952) and those for Japan to a 10 per cent sample tabulation of the 1950 Census. Of the total gainfully employed population in India, 76 per cent are in agriculture, forestry and fishing industries, whereas in Japan the proportion is only 48 per cent. Industries other than "agriculture" are therefore being benefitted by the major portion of the man-power of Japan. A comparison by sex reveals a more striking feature: two out of five male workers in Japan but 3 out of 4 in India are in agriculture. The sex-differential in the distribution of persons in industries for Japan is quite well marked; but it is not so for India. When ranked in descending orders of proportion, the relative position of the industries, however, remain fairly the same for both the countries.

<sup>1</sup> National Sample Survey Report Number 14, "Some Characteristics of the Economically Active Population". Government of India, 1958-59, (NSS Draft Number 14, October 1956).

**Table 1 : Percentage Distribution of Gainfully Employed Persons  
In Industry : India and Japan**

Household Industry	Country	Percentage		Total
		Male	Female	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1. Agriculture, forestry & fishing	India	78.0	61.6	75.8
	Japan	40.2	61.4	48.4
2. Mining	India	0.4	0.2	0.3
	Japan	2.3	0.5	1.6
3. Manufacturing	India	9.3	9.1	9.2
	Japan	18.5	11.8	15.9
4. Trade & Commerce	India	5.0	1.5	3.9
	Japan	11.9	11.7	11.8
5. Transport & Construction	India	3.7	0.9	2.8
	Japan	13.3	2.0	9.0
6. Services	India	6.6	5.4	6.2
	Japan	13.6	12.4	13.1
7. Others	India	—	1.3	1.8
	Japan	0.2	0.2	0.2
8. All Industries	India	100	100	100
	Japan	100	100	100

Source : (1) India—NSS No 14, *op.cit.*, p 24.

(2) Japan—Ten per cent sample tabulation of the 1950 Census.

**Table 2 : Percentage Distribution of Households and Index of Inertia  
In Household Industry : India and Japan**

Household Industry	Percentage of Households		Index of Inertia	
	India	Japan	India	Japan
	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1. Agriculture	61.9	34.9	82.5	85.3
2. Forestry, fishing & livestock	2.6	3.7	55.1	41.3
Sub-total (all agricultural industries)	64.5	38.6	81.2	82.5
3. Mining	0.3	2.4	55.1	46.1
4. Construction	2.1	5.2	56.3	24.0
5. Manufacturing	5.6	18.0	69.3	47.0
6. Trade & Commerce	5.2	14.2	54.0	54.8
7. Transport and Communication	3.2	6.7	27.3	19.7
8. Services	12.5	14.6	46.0	31.6
Sub-total (all non-agricultural industries)	28.9	61.1	51.6	40.5
9. Not specified	6.6	0.3	—	—
10. All industries	100	100	66.2	68.0

Source : (1) India—NSS No 14, *op.cit.*, p 24.

(2) Japan—Ten per cent sample tabulation of the 1950 Census.

INDEX OF INERTIA

In NSS Report Number 14, an Index of Inertia was formulated which was a measure of the degree of association between the household industry and individual industry. This Index is the percentage ratio of persons having the same industry as the household industry to the total number of employed persons having that particular industry as their household industry, leaving out of count, from both the numerator and the denominator, the principal earners of the households whose industry determined the household industry.

By definition, for India, the household industry is the principal industry of the principal earner of the household, and for Japan it is the industry of the head of the household. Comparability will suffer little for this difference in definition because of the fact that the head of the household is usually the principal earner of the household.

Indices for different household industries are shown in Table 2. Excepting for agriculture, where the maximum immobility is observed for India as well as for Japan, the immobility indices for all other industries in India are higher than those for Japan. The overall indices are, however, very low, being 66 per cent for India and 68 per cent for Japan.

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMMOBILITY

In India, specially in the rural sector, people generally take up gainful activity at an early age mainly due to economic reasons, and also because of lack of schooling facilities: these young persons take up some such work as cattle grazing and other types of agricultural occupations for which very little skill is required, or in some cases they work as helpers at the same time as apprentices in the household enterprise. Once a young person has taken up gainful work at a tender age, when he has not learnt the techniques of any work, he continues to work for the household enterprise, and after that the possibility of his changing the industry becomes remote.

Table 3 shows the sex ratio (number of males per 100 females) of the gainfully employed population engaged in different industries. For India the sex ratio is the lowest in the agriculture industry (183) and the manufacturing industry

(217) comes next; transport industry appears at the other end of the scale with the highest sex ratio (3571). For Japan also the lower sex ratio is in the agriculture industry (104), followed by trade and commerce (160); transport industry again returns the maximum sex ratio. The ranking of the industries by the relative order of magnitude of the Indices of Inertia give almost similar patterns for both the countries. That means, for both India and Japan, the majority of the female workers are engaged in the household industry.

The percentage of economically active population to the total population in four age groups are shown

in Table 4 by sex. For Japanese males the proportion of the economically active in the age group 15-19 is 51 per cent, and 94 per cent in the age group 20-61. The proportions of economically active Japanese females in these two age groups are very close. A considerably high proportion of Japanese females, as compared to the India, in the age group 15-19 are economically active and this may also be one of the causes of higher immobility of female workers in Japan; it is also known that the proportion of total population is higher in Japan than in India in those age groups where participation in economic activities is at a peak.

**Table 3 : Sex Ratio (Number of Males per 100 Females) of Gainfully Employed Population in Different Industries: India and Japan**

Industry	All-India rural	All-India urban	Calcutta	All-India	Japan
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1. Agriculture	181	222	937	183	104
2. Forestry, Fishing and Livestock	348	271		338	
3. Mining	485	500	577	510	787
4. Manufacturing	153	495	217	248	
5. Construction	324	769	420	1659	
6. Trade and Commerce	413	1786	373	699	160
7. Transport	1961	4762	1548	3571	813
8. Services	208	334	334	257	172
9. All industries	193	415	1442	212	158

Source : (1) NSS No 14.

(2) NSS No 17, "Report on Sample Survey of Employment in Calcutta" p 38

(3) U N Demographic Year Book 1955, p 538.

**Table 4 : Percentage of Economically Active Population by Age Group And by Sex : India and Japan**

Age group (years)	Country	Male	Female	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1. 0-14	India	12.5	7.1	9.9
	Japan	—	—	—
2. 15-19	India	75.6	39.3	57.0
	Japan	51.0	47.7	49.6
3. 20-64	India	95.2	48.0	72.2
	Japan	94.0	52.9	72.9
4. 65 and above	India	53.2	12.3	31.6
	Japan	56.1	24.0	37.5
5. All ages	India	58.5	29.7	44.4
	Japan	54.5	33.8	43.7

Source : (1) NSS No 14, op cit p 59.

(2) Year Book of Labour Statistics, Vol xxii, 1951-52, ILO, p 8.