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Pushed to the Margin: Women Workers in Indian Coal Mining Industry

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Abstract

Introduction: Women and Mining

Today coal mining, like any other mining activity is a male dominated industry. Today just 6% of total workforce of Coal India Limited (CIL), the public sector company doing 90% of the total coal mining in the country, is women. According to an ILO study, ratio of women in the workforce in mining sector in selected 15 countries is below 15%, varying from about 1% to 25% and has changed a little during last 15 years or so (ILO, 2002: 15). Women comprise only 8-14 per cent of the Australian mining Industry (Macdonald 2006: 307). The reasons are cited to be the very tough nature of mining job which is considered to hard and arduous for women. This is not a true picture of an industry which employed large number of women world over for long time. In India, for example, women comprised, almost one third of the total workforce in the coal mining industry during the first quarter of the 20th century (Lahiri-Dutt and Macintyre, 2006). Their number started to decline after the protective laws restricted women from working underground and during the nights. The masculine image of the mining pits, however, had been constructed long ago, even when the women miners were present there in large number and good proportion (ibid). Women work in the mines has remained obscure, and

¹ This paper is based on my PhD research at the Centre for Studies of Science Policy (CSSP), Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. I am grateful to Dr. Sardindu Bhaduri, my supervisor at CSSP for the guidance and encouragement. I would also like to thank Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt for her continuous and motivating encouragement and support.

hidden, forgotten and devalued” (ibid: 3). The very militant nature of mining working class movements in many countries has also contributed in the constriction of the masculine image of the mining industry. The roles of women workers, which has been very crucial and important in many cases (see Barnes 2006, for example, on the women’s committed and militant role in the working class movement in Jharia coalfields in India) have also not help breaking the masculine image of the mining industry.

Coming to the reasons of women workers displacement from the mining work, besides the protective laws, the technological development in the mining industry has also been crucial in displacement of women from the mining work. Studies show the negative impact of technological on the women miners’ employment in Indian (Lahiri-Dutt 1999, 2001) and Japanese (Yutaka 1994) coal mining industry. This paper tries to have a look at the linkages between technology, institutions (laws and policies) and gender at the workplace in the mining industry. The observation and analysis of the primary field data, I present here, are collected for my PhD research. The fieldwork was conducted in the Bhurkunda coal mines in Jharkhand in March-April, 2007. Bhurkunda project is about a century old and has both open cast and under ground projects as well as allied activities like railway siding and coal handling plant. I talked to executives of the project, women and men workers, other women staff in the offices and working as security guards, and trade union leaders and executives and officers in the CCL headquarters. The paper is organized as following: the next section outlines a brief history of coal mining in the country; section three discusses some of the theoretical issues about gender, technology and institutions; section four outlines the technological development and status of women workers in the coal mining industry briefly; section

five analyses the data and field observations; and last section presents a summary of arguments and conclude the discussion.

Coal Mining in India

Coal mining is the very first modern industry of the country. In India coal is being mined since 1774, when coal was struck in the Raniganj coalfields (Prasad, 1992). However, the development of coal mining industry was very slow in beginning. The introduction of steam locomotives in 1853 gave a fillip to coal production. In 1954 the Eastern Indian Railway lines, running through the coal bearing regions of the Damodar basin were laid down, and gave impetuous to the coal mining industry.

Within a short span, production rose to an annual average of 1 million ton (mt) and India could produce 6.12 million tons. per year by 1900 and 18 million tons per year by 1920. The production got a sudden boost from the First World War but went through a slump in the early thirties (Min. of Coal's website). The production reached a level of 29 million tons by 1942 and 30 million tons by 1946.

After independence, at the beginning of the First Plan, annual production went up to 33 million tons. Setting up of the National Coal Development Corporation (NCDC), a Government of India undertaking in 1956 with the collieries owned by the railways as its nucleus was the first major step towards planned development of Indian Coal Industry. Along with the Singareni Collieries Company Ltd. (SCCL), which was already in operation since 1945 and which became a Government company under the control of Government of Andhra Pradesh in 1956, India thus had two Government coal companies in the fifties. SCCL is now a joint undertaking of Government of Andhra Pradesh and Government of India sharing its equity in 51:49 ratios.

Nationalization

However, still most of the coal mining remained in the private hands and prior to 1970-71, coal was extracted in a haphazard, unscientific and wasteful manner by the private mine owners. According to then estimates the coking coal reserve was likely to be exhausted in about 50 years. The government became quite concerned about the conservation of coal. Also the private suppliers were not able to keep pace with the increasing demands of coking coal by the iron and steel industry. The demand of non-coking was also increasing as the demand of energy was increasing in various sectors of the industry. Fulfillment of the growing demand required huge investment and mechanization. The government was also concerned about the very poor working conditions of the mine workers in the privately owned mines (Kumarmangalam, 1973: 46-48). Not just the working conditions in the collieries, the over all exploitation of the coal mining workers – men and women – was rampant and had taken various forms such as “non-payment of statutory wages, non-payment of provident fund dues, non-payment of VDA, employing forced labour” (ibid: 53).

On account of the above mentioned reasons the Central Government took a decision to nationalize the private coalmines. The nationalization was done in two phases, the first with the coking coalmines in 1971-72 and then with the non-coking coalmines in 1973. This was followed by the nationalization of all these mines on 1.5.1973 with the enactment of the Coal Mines (Nationalization) Act, 1973, which now is the piece of Central legislation determining the eligibility of coal mining in India (Dept. of Coal's website).

Eventually almost the entire coal industry was entrusted to the Coal India Limited (CIL), a public sector enterprise of the Government of India, formed in 1975. Now about 85% of the coal mining is done by CIL, which operations are done through its following eight subsidiaries. Rest of the coal mining is done by Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL), another public sector company owned jointly by the central government and Andhra Pradesh government, and some private and public sector companies for their captive use. In Meghalaya coal mining is done by private companies.

After nationalization, coal mining grew at a much higher rate. Coal production in the country increased from 56.9 million tons in 1971-72 to 299 million tons. in 1995-96 to the present level of 336.87 million tones.

Gender, Technology and Institutions: Some Theoretical Insights

Gender and Institutions

As the way we understand gender, it is different from sex. Sex refers to the biological differences between men and women or male and female. These biological differences, mainly genital ones, are considered natural and given.² Gender, on the other hand, is taken to refer to the “full ensemble of norms, values, customs, and practices, by which the biological differences, between male and female of the human species, is transformed and exaggerated into a very much wider social difference” (Kabeer, 1999: 4-5). Kabeer (*ibid*) describes it clearly that different societies, differ in specific social interpretation that they give to biological difference. Yet there is universality in gender differences across the societies. The biological differences are used to justify the social

² The idea that biological differences are natural and given is challenged sometimes by showing that a large number of new born babies do not have very clear sexual distinctions in their bodies (intersex infants) and also we have a lot of people whose sex is considered somewhere in between male and female, like eunuchs.

differences. Such biological determinism is not limited just to the informal customs and cultural values but finds its way into the formal policy making as well. She cites example of a Ghanaian national education policy as quoted in Yates (1994: 104) which asserts that by their very biological make up, women are comparatively more delicate than men, physically. It continues to read "...there are, therefore, some trades which do not suit women. If our women by their vocational skills will develop muscles and look masculine, sooner or later they will look physically like their husbands" (quoted in Kabeer, *ibid*: 6). The biological differences here become an excuse and the very basis of justifying social differences and having a particular division of labour.³

Kabeer (*ibid*) further elaborates that the gender relations in a society are an aspect of broader social relations, "and like all social relations, are constituted through the rules, norms and practices, by which the resources are allocated, tasks and responsibilities are assigned, values are given and power is assigned. In other words, gender relations do not operate in a social vacuum but *are products of the ways in which institutions are organized and reconstituted over time*" (emphasis in original) (Kabeer, *ibid*: 12).

Institutions are defined as the "humanly devised constraints that structure political, economic and social interactions" (North, 1991: 97). Murmann (2003) uses the term to denote "actions, rules, social structures and practices that persist over time and are features of social aggregates that are larger than a single organization" (19). Institutions thus determine the organizations' actions and are "rules of the game" (North, 1990: 4), while the organizations are said to be the players. The institutions could be both

³ The gender discrimination and gender blindness in social and economic policy making and their gendered impact have been studied by other scholars as well. Cagatay (1998), 'Engendering Macroeconomics and Macroeconomic Policies'; Beneria (1995), 'Towards a Greater Integration of Gender in Economics'; Razavi (1997), 'Fitting Gender into Development Institutions' are a few examples of such studies.

formal and informal (North, 1991: 97). While, formal institutions include constitution, and various laws; the informal institutions largely reflect the sanctions, taboos, customs, traditions, and codes of conduct prevailing in a society. Both formal and informal institutions have a bearing on human behavior and economic performances. North (1990: 6) suggests that institutions change incrementally rather than in a discontinuous manner. However, he also argues that the “formal rules may change overnight as a result of political or judicial decisions,” but the “informal constraints embodied in costumes, traditions, and codes of conduct are much more impervious to deliberate policies” (*ibid*).

Law is one of the most important formal institutions defining (or redefining) gender relations, and many feminist scholars have studied law as institution having bearing on women’s lives. Gupta (2001) in her book *Women, Law and Public Opinion* presents a survey of feminist studies on women and law. Though, liberal feminists are of the view that law reforms can change the position of women and end women oppression. This concept of liberal feminist jurisprudence has been questioned. It is claimed that “law reflects male understanding and not women experience.” (Gupta *ibid*: 46) Marxist feminist Zillah Eisenstein saw law as a discourse. It occupies space between the ‘real’ and the ‘ideal’ and articulates the ‘idea’ of equality without necessarily creating equality in real terms (quoted in Gupta *ibid*: 47).

The institutions, thus, are extremely important in shaping the gender relations in society. Some feminist scholars have even argued that these institutions themselves are ‘gendered’, meaning “gender is present in the processes, practices, images and ideologies and distributions of power in various sectors of social life” (Acker, 1992: 567).

Shared Mental Models and Institutions

The concept of mental model developed in the cognitive science is useful to understand the changes in and impacts of the institutions. The mental models are the internal representations that individual cognitive system create to interpret the environment” (Denzau and North, 1994:2). Johnson-Laird defines mental models as the symbolic (subjective) representation of the environment, constructed through diverse experience, observations, and cognitively mediated learning (Bhaduri and Chandra, 2008).

Mantzavinos et al (2004) further explain the concept. They explain that the mind is a complex structure that interprets and classifies the signals received by the senses. The mind classifies the data received from both physical and socio-cultural linguistic environment. The mental models are formed as a pragmatic response to a problem situation in order to interpret and explain its environment. “Mental models gradually evolve during our cognitive development to organize our perceptions and keep track of our memories” (Mantzavinos et al, 2004: 76). The mental models are revised, refined or rejected altogether depending on whether it matches with the feedback received from the environment. “Learning is a complex modification of the mental models according to the feedback received from the environment” (ibid: 76). Humans are uniquely capable of using the learning formed in order to solve a particular problem, for solving a wide variety of problems.

However, if the environmental feedbacks confirm the same mental models again and again it becomes stabilized. These relatively crystallized mental models are known as “belief” (ibid: 76).

In a society individuals communicate with other individuals in order to solve the problems. This communication results in formation of shared mental models (ibid: 76) a framework for the common interpretations of the environment and a collective solution to the problems. Denzau and North (1994) mention that ideologies are also kind of shared mental models. Individuals with common cultural backgrounds learning experience are likely to share reasonably convergent mental models, ideologies and institutions (ibid).

Now the question is how the institutions interact with the shared metal models of a population. Denzau and North (ibid) suggest that mental models are internal representations while “the institutions are external (to the mind) individuals create to structure and order the environment (ibid: 2). Mantzavinos et al, 2004, however, also opine that from an internal point of view institutions are nothing more than shared mental models (77).

Gender values as shared mental models

We have discussed gender values and attitudes as informal institutions as these values are shared across the sections of the society (and across the societies themselves) as firm crystallized mental models. Men as main bread winners, son preference,

secondary status of women in the family and society, are some of the values which are shared across the societies by individuals and are part of our mental models (“beliefs”).

These beliefs are in conformity with the (informal) gender institutions which society has created. So we have no problems while we observe discriminations with women in society on the on the basis of sex⁴ and accept them as normal. These gender values, however, are undergoing changes. Women are now being accepted in public domain, their number and ratio in paid jobs are increasing, and societies’ over all attitudes towards women can easily be observed to be changing. This change in attitude, however, is not a smooth process and in meets a lot of resistance at every level. The shared mental models which have become our belief and the fact that discrimination against women is beneficial to men are perhaps the most important sources of the resistance. The changes and enforcement in formal institutions (laws and policies), our exposure to other cultures and societies, political commitments and compulsions (e.g. to international forums and laws) provide the basis for the changing informal gender institutions but our shared mental models do not change at the same speed. And we observe the resistance. Perhaps this is the reason while same factor which is instrumental in changing our shared mental model and informal institutions also reinforces the existing shared mental models and informal institutions.

Education for example reinforces our beliefs about the gender as the educational institutions may act and text books might be prepared in a way which is in conformity

⁴ Similar discriminations are prevalent in the society on the basis of caste, class, age etc as well and our mental models are structured in such a way to accept them as ‘normal’.

with our shared mental models and informal institutions. At the same time the exposure to other culture and histories, the democratic and humanistic values, the emphasis on equality in the formal institutions, which are taught to students during the course of education may and do help in challenging the existing informal institutions and shared mental models.

Gender and Technological Change

Technological change is considered necessary and desired for economic growth and development. It is almost synonymous to the modernization and progress. The process and the nature of technological change has been a matter of intense examination in social sciences. The theory of “technological determinism” suggests that technological change follows a logic of its own, largely guided by scientific developments in related fields, with only an one-way impact running from technology to society and economy. That is to say that technology is autonomous and technological change is pre-determined, having “necessary and ‘determinate’ impacts upon work, upon economic life and upon society as a whole: technological change thus produces social and organizational change” (Williams and Edge, 1996)⁵.

The critiques of technological determinism argue that the technological changes are outcome of social contexts and factors and thus technology is shaped socially (Williams and Edge 1996, Chandeler 1995, and MacKenzie and Wajcman, 2002). This theory, largely known as “social shaping of technology”, emphasizes on the importance

⁵ See also Chandeler, 1995, and MacKenzie and Wajcman, [1985] 2002: 3-4) for detailed discussion and critique.

of social, economic and political forces in shaping the technology and the path of technological change.

Gender is one of the important social factors shaping technology as well as being influenced by the technological change. However, as Wajcman (2000: 451) suggests, it has not been the central focus of the social shaping theory. “Despite the emphasis on the way innovations are socially shaped, it has been largely incumbent on feminists to demonstrate that ‘social’ is also a matter of gender relations” (*ibid*: 451). During the last 20 years or so, feminist authors, particularly from West, have written on the issue quite extensively and as Wajcman (*ibid*: 451) puts it, the science and technology studies have become “from gender-blind to gender aware”.⁶

Feminists started looking into the gender and technology issue by questioning the gender blindness of Marxist labour process debate about production in the 1970’s. The Marxist labour process emphasizes on how class conflict shapes technologies at the workplace. Gender has subsequently been shown as an important factor shaping the organization of workplace. It was argued that “relations of production are constructed as much out of gender divisions as out of class divisions” (Wajcman 2000: 449). However, the most important question asked was: “is technology itself shaped by gender, and is gender shaped by technology?” (MacKenzie and Wajcman, 2002: 25) Cockburn ([1985] 2002a:127) answers the first part of this question, by saying that “industrial, commercial, military technologies are masculine in very historical and material sense” and also “it is overwhelmingly male who design technological processes and productive machinery” (Cockburn, [1985] 2002b: 190).

⁶ But as we have noted before, it still has not become the central theme of the science and technology study. For an example, looking at contributions in the journal ‘Social Studies of Science’, during the decade of 1990s, Wajcman (2000: 448) finds there were only 6.6% such papers focusing on gender.

In initial discussions in the 1970's, socialist feminists had a kind of consensus in “demonstrating how technology and capitalist industrialization was displacing women from production” (Rowbothom 1995). Boserup's study (1970: 106-118) documented how technology and capitalist industrialization was displacing women from production. She cites example from many developing countries including India to show how women have lost their jobs with increasing mechanization. In a more recent study, Chakravarty (2004) also shows that with the market expansion and technological improvement the percentage of women in the workforce of the textile industry has declined. Moreover, this decline is more prominent in technologically advanced firms compared to technologically backwards ones (4912). However she also argues the decline is more due to women's lack of education and technical training than a direct fallout of any discrimination against them by the employers⁷. Boserup (1970) also argued that women employment can be a supply side problem, which arises because of women and/or the male members of their families preferring home based industry jobs rather than working in a factory.

However, some positive impacts of technologies have also been highlighted. By the late 1980's and early 1990's the absolute positions, whether optimistic or pessimistic, about the impact of technologies on women employment patterns came to be questioned. Rowbothom (1995) cites examples of both negative and positive (and also mixed) impacts of technologies shown in various studies. For example, typewriters helped in secretarial work as becoming women domain, which also saw a loss of status for secretaries; or the increasing size of aircrafts contributed to organization of women flight attendants.

⁷ They seem to prefer women at least in export garment factories because of reasons like women are “more efficient and sincere and they don't tend to involve in unionism” (Chakravarty 2004: 4912)

Workers views/perception about women workers in mining

Though most of the workers blame the management policies for declining number of women, their own views/perceptions about the women workers in mining are not very conducive for the women workers. Most of the workers, however, say that they don't have / would not have any problems in working with workers of opposite sex (Table 19).

Table 18

Are you/would you be comfortable in working with opposite sex?

Type of mines / activities	Yes		No		Can't say
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Opencast	20	4	6	2	
Underground	20	1	3	1	2
Railway siding	4	6	1		
CHP	1			2	
Total	45	11	10	5	2
Women engaged in non-mining activities		16		4	

A majority of the workers (more than half of men workers and two thirds of female workers as well as three-fourth of the women engaged in non-mining activities) also said that there is no problems in men and women working together in the mines (Table 19).

Table 19

Should men and women work together in mines?

Type of mines / activities	Yes		No		Can't say	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Opencast	12	5	11	1		

Underground	19		3	1	3	1
Railway siding	5	6				
CHP	1			2		
Total	37	11	14	4	3	1
Women engaged in non-mining activities		15		4		1

The problem, however, arises when asked straight about the legal restrictions on women working in underground mines and women working in nights. Most of the men workers and all of the women workers are aware of the fact that the law prohibits women from working in underground mines (Table 20).

Table 20

Awareness about the law banning women in UG mines

Type of mine	Yes		No
	Male	Female	Male
Opencast	20	6	5
Underground	24	2	1
Railway siding	5	6	
CHP	1	2	
Total	50	16	6
Women engaged in non-mining activities		20	

Most of the men and women workers are in favour of the continuation of this law (Table 21). 50 out of 60 selected men workers and 14 out of selected women workers as well as 16 out of 20 women working in non-mining activities are in favour of continuation of the ban. There is, however, a tiny minority of workers who thinks that this ban could be lifted. Three men workers, 2 women workers and 4 workers in non-mining activities think that this ban can be lifted. The women workers who said that the ban should be lifted also said that women must be sent in the underground mines in group and in good numbers and not just one or two women can go inside the mine.

Table 21**Should the ban continue or be lifted**

Type of mine	Continue		Be lifted		Can't say
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Opencast	25	6	1		
Underground	19	2	2		3
Railway siding	5	4		2	
CHP	1	2			
Total	50	14	3	2	3
Women engaged in non-mining activities		16		4	

Mostly the security concerns are given as the reasons for continuation of the ban. Some other reasons like, physically hard work, safety (due to work) risks, and moral issues have also been cited by few (Table 23).

Table 22**Why the law should continue?**

Reasons	Opencast		Underground	Railway siding		CHP	Women engaged in non-mining activities
	Male	Female	Male	Male	Female	Female	
Security of women/exploitation	7	1	7			1	4
Physically hard job	3		1				
Safety risks	4		3	1	2		1
They are less in no	1				1		
Affects work negatively	1		2				
They can't			1				

work there							
Moral issues			1				

Workers have almost similar views about the ban on employment of women above the surface during the night. 36 out of 60 men workers and 8 out of 16 women workers as well as three fourth of women engaged in non-mining activities are in favour of continuation of this ban (Table 23).

Table 23

Should women be allowed to work in night shifts in OC mines?

Type of mine	Yes		No		Can't say	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Opencast	1		19	4		
Underground	7		12	1	3	
Railway siding		3	5	1		1
CHP	1			2		
Total	9	3	36	8	3	1
Women engaged in non-mining activities		3		16		

More men and women workers, including the women in non-mining activities, compared to the number of workers thinking that the ban on women from working in UG mines should be lifted, think that women should be allowed to work in night shifts. 9 men workers, 3 women workers and 3 women working in non-mining activities think that women should be allowed to work in night shifts. Few workers, however, also mentioned that this should be done with proper security measures and by sending women in groups. Those who are opposed to the women working in night are concerned about their security both at work and while commuting to the workplace from home. This point

about the difficulty and lack of security while commuting in during the nights was also made by one senior officer in Barka Seyal Area Office.

So, are the women protected at the workplace in the mines? Less than half of men and women workers think that laws and policies are sufficient to provide protection to women workers at workplace. A majority of women working in non-mining activities (12 out of 20) think that they are protected at the workplace (Table 24).

Table 24

Whether present laws are adequate to provide protection to women at the work place

Type of mines / activity	Yes		No		Can't say/don't know	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Opencast	11		10	3	4	3
Underground	9	1	6		6	
Railway siding	5	5		1		
CHP	1	1				1
Total	26	7	16	4	10	4
Women engaged in non-mining activities		12		2		3

One fourth of women (4 out of 16) and men (16 out of 60) workers working in the mines and other mining related activities think that the laws are not sufficient for providing protection to women at the workplace. 10 men and 4 women workers and 3 women working in non-mining activities were not sure about this and said 'don't know/can't say' in reply to this question.

Here we can see a difference between opinion of the workers working in the mines and mining related activities and women workers engaged in non-mining activities. More than half (12 out of 20) of such women think that they are sufficiently protected at the workplace and only 2 of them said they were not protected at the workplace. In contrast, only one fourth of men and women workers working in mines and mining related activities felt that women are protected at the workplace.

We also asked would the respondents like women of their family to work in the mines. In spite of the odds mentioned by the workers above, more than one third of men and half of women workers as well as three-fourth of the women engaged in non-mining activities say that they would not mind women of their family working in the mines. Almost same fraction of the workers (one third of men and roughly half of women) working in mines and mining related activities also say that they would like the women of their families to work in the mines. 10 men workers (8 from opencast and 2 from underground) and 3 from the women engaged in non-mining activities say that they would like the women of their family to work only if they get job in the offices. One woman also said that it depends on his son (in case of her daughter in law getting a job).

Table 25

Would you like the women of your family to work in mines?

Type of mine/activity	Yes		No		Yes, but only surface work	Yes, but only office work	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Male	Female
Opencast	6	4	11	2	1	8	
Underground	13		8	1	1	2	
Railway siding	4	3	1	3			
CHP		1	1	1			

Total	23	8	21	7	2	10	
Women engaged in non-mining activities		12		4			3

Is it ok if the company starts giving priority to women in giving compensatory jobs and in the appointments on the compassion basis? As mentioned elsewhere these are the only ways to get recruited in the mining companies these companies are downsizing and VRS and GHS schemes are there for the workers to opt for early retirement. The table below gives the answers given by the workers.

Table 26

Is it ok if the company gives priority to women in giving compensatory/compassion jobs

Type of mine	Yes		No		Can't say	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Opencast	12	4	13	2	1	
Underground	16		4		4	2
Railway siding	3	6	2			
CHP			1	1		
Total	31	10	20	3	5	2
Women engaged in non-mining activities		14		3		3

As the table above shows most of the women workers (including women involved in non-mining activities) and half of the men workers think that it is okay if the company gives priority to the women workers in the recruitment on the basis of compassion or compensation. One third of men workers and 6 women workers (including 3 engaged in non-mining activities) are of opinion that it would not be good. The reasons why the workers are for or against any priority given to women workers are summarized in the table below.

Table 27

Reasons why it is okay or not okay to give priority to women

Reasons for okay	Opencast		Underground	Railway siding		CHP	Total	Women in non-mining activities
	Male	Female	Male	Male	Female			
Women are benefited	1	1	1		1		4	7
Mixed team would be good	1						1	
Only in opencast	2						2	
Good for all			1		1		2	
Women are sincere			1				1	
Equal rights for women			2				2	
Both shall work			2				2	
Women are advance now			1				1	
Increased efficiency			1				1	
Independent women								2
Reasons for not okay								
Women are not suitable for technological work	2			1		1	4	
Mining is too hard for women	3						3	
It would affect work negatively	1						1	
Men should work	4		1				5	
Women should be at home			1				1	
Security/safety concerns								1

As the table shows the reasons given by the workers in favour of priority to women workers, vary from benefits to women to the right of women to work and equal rights for women to the benefits for all to increased efficiency and women being sincere. On the other hand workers have given reasons like women not being suitable for technological works, mining being too hard for women, and men should work and women are better at home. One woman worker is concerned about their security as well.