

Granular Estimation of the Female Workforce in the Tourism Industry of India

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Abstract

Travel and Tourism contribute more than 5% of India's GDP and generates direct employment for at least 1.7 crore people. Combining direct and indirect employment (such as transport logistics, handicrafts production, local artisans etc.), the tourism industry influences 4 to 7 crore jobs in India. The industry is women workforce friendly and has potential to generate tens of lakhs of additional job opportunities for women. The government of India is therefore driving numerous initiatives and drafting policies for the tourism industry to grow faster and thereby generate more employment opportunities for women. A key challenge in drafting these policies and monitoring their impact is the lack of women workforce data at granular level. In this paper, we leverage quantitative techniques from Linear Algebra to estimate women workforce in tourism related industries at granular level using the macro-level data published by government agencies. Our quantitative techniques are general and may in future be used to estimate women workforce at even more granular level such as women workforce in specific tourism related industries in specific districts.

Keywords: Tourism, Female Workforce, Linear Algebra, Quantitative Techniques, Hadamard Product, Tourist Footfall

1. Introduction

The travel and tourism industry of India contributes 5% of the country's GDP as per the Ministry of Tourism's report (MoT 2025). The industry employs about 4.8 crore people in 2025, and this number is expected to increase to 6.4 Crore by 2035 as per the projections by World Trade & Tourism Council (WTTC 2025). Tourism is a female workforce friendly industry where women account for 40% of the directly employed workforce as per (WTTC 2024; and WB 2025A). therefore,, the tourism industry is therefore quite important as (i) it generates large scale employment opportunities; (ii) it is growing at a fast pace; and (iii) it has potential to generate lakhs of additional employment opportunities for women.

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The government of India is already taking numerous initiatives to increase employment opportunities for its vast working age population, as evident in its Budget (MoF 2025) for FY25-26. In line with the Sustainable Development Goals SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 8 (Decent Work & Economic Growth), the government is further trying to increase its Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFPR) from a low base of 35-40% currently to about 60-65%, like East Asian nations such as Vietnam, Korea and Japan.

Given that tourism has potential to generate large employment opportunities for women, and that the government aspires to enhance women workforce participation in the economy, there is keen interest in designing *effective government policies* to promote jobs in tourism and specially jobs for women in tourism.

A key challenge in designing such sensible government policies and understanding their actual impact on ground is the limited availability of data on women employment at a granular level. While the government collects (through surveys) and publicly shares plenty of data on employment – such as Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) report (NSSO 2024) published by Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation (MoSPI), the data is available only at macro-level from female employment context. As an example, it is not difficult to get the total number of employees in (say) hotels and accommodations industry at India level, but finding the number of women employees in a state (say Uttarakhand) in hotels and accommodations industry in a specific year (say) 2023 is not trivial. In cases where the data is indeed available at granular level, the source of data are surveys which are carried out at 5, 6 or 10 year-intervals leading to policy makers relying on older data for decision making during intervening years.

As the government machinery gets more efficient and locally empowered, the need for recent women workforce data at micro-geography (such as district) level will be even bigger as this will help the local governments, bureaucrats and municipalities to draft more focused, and hence more effective, policies and incentives. To this end, we believe there is a need for scalable quantitative techniques to estimate granular data on women workforce in tourism. In this paper, we focus on such mathematical estimation techniques from the field of linear algebra to get granular data on women workforce in tourism industry and its related sub-industries in India. We further provide a simple yet mathematically robust model for estimating this data for recent years using the available data from the last available surveys.

1.1. Literature Survey and Background

India has set an ambitious goal of becoming a USD 30 trillion economy by 2047. The world bank estimates (WB 2025B) that achieving this

ambitious target will require India to maintain an average GDP growth rate of 7-8% over the next twenty-two years. This, in turn, would require a significant boost in labour force participation, which in turn depends on inclusive economic development with a strong emphasis on increasing female employment or Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFPR). (Deshpande 2025) identified an increase in female LFPR from 2017-18 to 2022-23 in the rural areas. However, the increase in FLFPR is attributed to an increased participation in self-employment, a combination of paid work and disguised unemployment, with no material increase in job availability. As per the author, a boost in female friendly industries and services, equality in wages and an overall improvement in working conditions will encourage women to participate in the economy. The observations in (Deshpande 2025) are in similar vein to the decade old observations in (Kapsos 2014) where the authors emphasized the criticality of identifying and developing industries and services that can drive growth in female workforce participation.

Tourism is identified by (Fernandez 2023; and Nagar 2023) as one such industry that can play a critical role in raising employment opportunities for women. The central government of India recognizes the potential of the tourism sector in enhancing the overall employment opportunities and has allocated a sum of Rs 2541.06 Crore in the Union Budget 2025-26 (PIB 2025) to improve infrastructure, skill development and travel facilities to give a boost to tourism. To promote growth in this sector, the government has proposed various schemes and measures (such as PRASHAD for spiritual tourism, Heal in India for medical tourism, Gyan Bharat Mission for Knowledge of India related tourism and many other measures such as e-visa etc.) in the budget 2025-26.

1.2. Motivation for this paper

The importance of reliable data in designing government policies and incentives for generating tourism related employment as well as for monitoring the efficacy of such policies and incentives can hardly be overstated. It is therefore no surprise that the Government of India has gathered through its vast machinery and surveys a lot of macro-level data on tourism and tourism related employment. As a strong indicator of government digital infra boost and transparency, the government has made this macro-level data easily accessible to the public. The key challenge instead is now a lack of any established mathematical framework for leveraging this data to estimate granular level women-in-tourism data for more detailed analysis and research. Another challenge is that a few truly powerful data sets, such as those published through the Tourism Satellite Account or TSA (which captures the impact of tourism on a country's economy using UNWTO's recommended methodological framework-2008) are being captured and made available after an interval of six or more years. During the intervening

period, the agencies and researchers must rely on older data sets. The above two challenges can be rephrased as:

- a) The granular data on female employment in the tourism industry of India is not readily available. It is further non-trivial to estimate numbers at higher granularity such as state level numbers or sub-industry level numbers from the available numbers at the country level.
- b) The availability of several key data sets depends on physical surveys carried out at 5, 6 or even 10-year periodicity. This leaves the policy makers at the mercy of older data to design policies during the intervening years.

The main motivation of writing this paper is to develop a mathematical framework that resolves the above two problems and can be generalized to accommodate more complexities like district level data. In the rest of this paper, we provide a quantitative model to estimate women workforce in tourism at a granular level (that is, state level as well as (state, industry) level) using the macro data available publicly. Further, we extend the model to estimate the women workforce in tourism at granular level for recent years using data available from the last available surveys.

2. Tourism Landscape in India and the TSA Data

In this section, we provide a brief overview of the aspects of tourism landscape in India that are relevant for this paper.

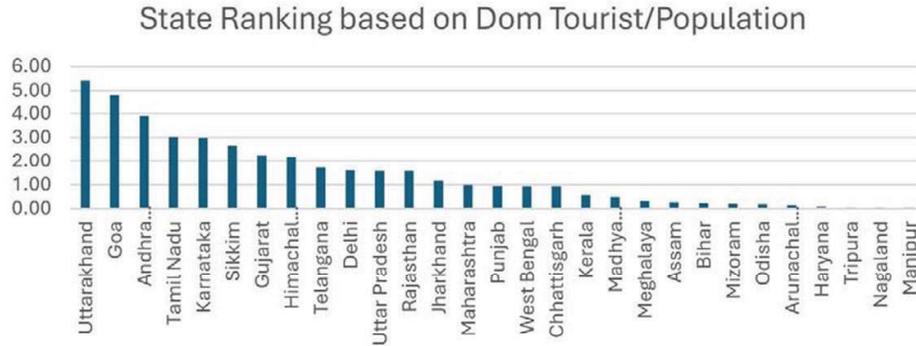
2.1. Domestic Tourism vs International Tourism

The domestic tourism in India is vastly larger (in terms of tourist footfall) compared to the tourism entailing international tourists visiting India. Specifically, the number of domestic tourist footfall at about 250 Crore in 2023 dwarfs the annual international tourist footfall in India at about 2 Crores in the same year. Visits by International tourists therefore account for just about 1% of all tourist visits in India. Consequently, the potential of domestic tourism to generate direct employment is an order of magnitude larger and, hence, we focus primarily on domestic tourism in this paper.

2.2. State Ranking in terms of Domestic Tourism

Among states, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Adhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat and Maharashtra are the top recipients of domestic tourist footfall with each of the six states receiving more than 10 Crore domestic tourist visits every year (See Appendix 1). In addition to the total annual domestic tourist footfall, it is worth considering the ratio of total annual domestic tourist footfall in a state to its total population. This ratio is a better indicator of the share of population in the state that is employed in Tourism. Focusing

on this ratio (that is, the ratio of annual domestic tourist footfall to the total population), the top states are Uttarakhand, Goa, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Sikkim, Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh, as shown in the below bar graph.



Each of these eight states get twice as many annual domestic tourist footfalls as their entire population. Tourism (including business tourism) therefore plays a more important role in employment generation in the states such as Uttarakhand and Goa compared to the importance of tourism in (say) Bihar, which gets relatively few domestic tourists compared to its total population.

To summarize the above two subsections, we note that (1) domestic tourism plays a far more important role in employment generation compared to international inbound tourism; and (2) the importance of tourism in employment generation at the state level is a function of both the total annual domestic tourist footfall as well as the ratio of annual domestic tourist footfall to the total population of the state.

2.3. Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) Data and Tourism Dependent Industries

The Tourism Satellite Account or TSA data (NCAER 2016) is one of the most authoritative data for developing a granular understanding of tourism industry in India. The TSA data is compiled by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) and is based on the UNWTO’s methodical framework 2008. The TSA data quantifies the influence of tourism on employment by evaluating it through the lens of industries that are significantly dependent on tourism (including business, leisure, spiritual or medical tourism). Representative data from TSA for the year 2015-16 is shown in Table 1 below, where the total employment, the Tourism Industry Ratio (TIR) and the resulting Employment Number attributable to tourism (or Tourism Employment) are provided for the top 11 industries. The TIR for a given industry can be understood as the percentage of jobs in the industry

that are dependent on tourism, and therefore, the tourism employment for the industry can be estimated by multiplying the total employment in that industry and the respective TIR.

Table 1: Industry-wise Tourism Employment for India in 2015-16

Source: Table III.9 of TSA Data in (NCAER 2016)

Industry	Total Employment	TIR	Tourism Employment
Road Passenger Transport Services	1,20,26,200	52.44%	63,06,539
Food & Beverage Services/ Restaurants	76,13,217	54.21%	41,27,124
Health And Medical Related Services	55,53,700	29.58%	16,42,784
Cultural And Religious services	14,58,142	20.10%	2,93,086
Sports and Recreation services	12,05,136	5.72%	68,933
Travel Agencies and Reservation services	12,02,194	51.25%	6,16,124
Railway Passenger Transport Services	10,96,015	69.80%	7,65,018
Accommodation Services and Hotels	10,12,571	71.36%	7,22,570
Water Passenger Transport Services	1,41,043	3.80%	5,359
Transport Equipment Rental Services	1,28,281	38.00%	48,746
Air Passenger Transport Services	77,027	81.10%	62,468
Total			1,46,58,758

A few key observations in Table 1 are in order. In terms of total employment, the top three industries are Road Passenger Transport Services, Food & Beverage Serving Services and Restaurants, and Health and Medical Related Services with total employment at about 1.2 Crore, 76 Lakh and 55 Lakh, respectively. With TIRs of 52.44%, 54.21% and 29.58%, the number of jobs in these three industries attributable to Tourism (including business and medical tourism) are estimated at 63 Lakh, 41 lakh and 16 Lakh, respectively. Beyond these three industries, there are four other industries namely Railway Passenger Transport Services, Accommodation Services and Hotels, Travel Agencies and other Reservations and Air Passenger Transport Services with TIRs of 69.80%, 71.36%, 51.25% and 81.10%, that have relatively high dependence (more than half the jobs) on Tourism. Due to these high TIRs, industries such as Accommodation Services and Hotels generate more tourism employment at 7.2 Lakh than some larger industries such as Religious and Cultural Services with lower TIR at 20.10%.

The TSA data, while undeniably useful, has two limitations. First, the data is available at limited granularity. For instance, it is not possible to get the size of total tourism dependent women workforce in a specific state, or the size of women workforce in a specific tourism-centric industry in a particular state. Second, the TSA data requires extensive surveys and

is therefore aggregated at sporadic intervals. It has been published thrice so far, namely, in 2002-2003, 2008-2009 and 2015-2016. The recent TSA data, if any, is not yet in public domain. Therefore, many researchers and policy makers must rely on old data during the intervening years as other datasets such as PLFS in (NSSO 2025) are not sufficiently granular. In a fast-growing economy such as India, the delays of several years in getting data can limit the efficacy of research and analysis. In the next section, we propose a framework to estimate granular data for women workforce using mathematical techniques. The techniques are general and can be used for other similar situations and at even higher granularities. In Section 4, we extend the model to estimate women workforce at the same granularity each year using available data from last published old data.

3. Quantitative Techniques to Estimate Female workforce at (state, industry) level

In this section, we propose quantitative techniques to get granular data and insights on female employment across various tourism friendly industries in different states of India. The data so obtained shall be particularly useful while drawing up state policies on tourism. Further, the model can be generalized to any level of granularity.

For this model, we include 28 states along with two union territories of Delhi and Jammu & Kashmir (J&K). We include Delhi and J&K in the list as these are reasonably large tourist destinations. We further focus on the top 11 industries with strong dependence on tourism for employment generation. The techniques are, of course, general and can be easily extended to any larger list of industries.

Our techniques can be summarized as the following equation:

$$W_{30 \times 11} = E_{30 \times 11} \odot T_{30 \times 11} \odot G_{30 \times 11}$$

with the following notation

$W_{30 \times 11} = [w_{ij}]_{30 \times 11}$, w_{ij} is the women employment in state i and industry j ,

$E_{30 \times 11} = [e_{ij}]_{30 \times 11}$, e_{ij} is the number of employees in state i and industry j ,

$T_{30 \times 11} = [t_{ij}]$, t_{ij} , is the percentage of workers employed in tourism in state i and industry j ,

$G_{30 \times 11} = [g_{ij}^{est}]_{30 \times 11}$, g_{ij}^{est} is the estimated gender ratio in the workforce of state i and industry j , and

⊙ stands for Hadamard Product or entry-wise product of matrices.

The key elements of the above model are provided in the next two subsections (3.1 and 3.2), while the detailed calculations are relegated (for brevity of submission) to Appendices 2, 3, 4 and 5.

3.1. Imputation of Gender Ratio Data

While the state wise data on the number of employees in the eleven industries is available in TSA data (NCAER 2016), the data on the gender ratio in the workforce of various states is not readily available.

To estimate this data, we first define

$$G_{30 \times 11} = [g_{ij}^{est}]_{30 \times 11} = [g_s^1 \ g_s^2 \ \dots \ g_s^{11}]_{30 \times 11}$$

where

g_s^j is the estimated gender ratio for industry j across all states.

We then estimate the vector $g_{s30 \times 1}^i$ using the following data imputation technique:

$$g_{s30 \times 1}^i = g_i [1_{30 \times 1} + (\bar{g}_{s30 \times 1} - \mu(\bar{g}_s) \odot 1_{30 \times 1}) \frac{g_i}{\mu(\bar{g}_s)}]$$

where

g_i : Country level gender ratio in labor force for industry i

$\bar{g}_s = [g_{s_j}]_{30 \times 1}$, (with g_{s_j} defined below)

$\mu(\bar{g}_s)$: Mean of \bar{g}_s .

$1_{30 \times 1}$: Unit vector of size 30×1 ,

and

$g_{s_j} = \frac{FLFPR_{s_j}}{FLFPR_{s_j} + MLFPR_{s_j}}$, is the estimated female labor ratio in the state s_j ,

$FLFPR_{s_j}$ is the female labour force participation rate in the state s_j and

$MLFPR_{s_j}$ is the male labour force participation rate in the state s_j .

The data on *FLFPR* and *MLFPR* is Usual Status (ps+ss), 15 years and above, provided in PLFS datasets such as (NSSO 2025). The detailed numbers are given in Appendix 4.

3.2. State Level Data on Female Employment due to Tourism

We use our proposed model to obtain the state wise female employment in the tourism sector of India using the equation:

$$W_{30 \times 11} \mathbf{1}_{11 \times 1} = SFE_{30 \times 1}.$$

Here,

$\mathbf{1}_{11 \times 1}$: Unit vector of size 11x1.

$SFE_{30 \times 1}$: State wise female employment in the tourism sector.

This equation gives the following output:

Table 2: State wise female employment in the tourism sector.

State	<i>SFE</i>
Andhra Pradesh	1,11,692
Arunachal Pradesh	1,771
Assam	43,869
Bihar	1,11,300
Chhattisgarh	33,810
Delhi	36,218
Goa	12,975
Gujarat	95,800
Haryana	36,514
Himachal Pradesh	22,535
Jammu and Kashmir	23,249
Jharkhand	48,247
Karnataka	1,05,289
Kerala	1,03,043
Madhya Pradesh	79,967
Maharashtra	1,74,378
Manipur	6,370
Meghalaya	3,410
Mizoram	2,907
Nagaland	3,952
Odisha	85,575
Punjab	48,533
Rajasthan	1,10,893
Sikkim	2,302
Tamil Nadu	1,75,934
Telangana	67,519
Tripura	3,543
Uttar Pradesh	1,84,838
Uttarakhand	33,320
West Bengal	1,74,566
Total	19,44,321

The above numbers, however, need calibration (since they can vary from the actual numbers due to our imputation). In particular, the total females employed in the eleven tourism centric industries across all states (given in Appendix 6) comes out to be 17,31,518. To calibrate the employment numbers in our model and bring the total female employment to 17,31,518, we normalize the state wise female employment in the above table by multiplying the employment numbers with the ratio $17,31,518/19,44,321=0.89055$. The new numbers for state wise female employment are given below:

Table 3: Calibrated State wise female employment in the tourism sector.

State	SFE
Andhra Pradesh	99,467
Arunachal Pradesh	1,576
Assam	39,068
Bihar	99,119
Chhattisgarh	30,110
Delhi	32,254
Goa	11,555
Gujarat	85,314
Haryana	32,518
Himachal Pradesh	20,069
Jammu and Kashmir	20,704
Jharkhand	42,966
Karnataka	93,765
Kerala	91,765
Madhya Pradesh	71,215
Maharashtra	1,55,293
Manipur	5,673
Meghalaya	3,037
Mizoram	2,589
Nagaland	3,520
Odisha	76,209
Punjab	43,221
Rajasthan	98,756
Sikkim	2,050
Tamil Nadu	1,56,678
Telangana	60,129
Tripura	3,155
Uttar Pradesh	1,64,607
Uttarakhand	29,673
West Bengal	1,55,460
Total	17,31,518

While the above numbers are of course aggregated to state level, the output provided in Appendix 5 are at the granularity of (state, industry) and can be aggregated in many ways as per the required analysis. Further, the

techniques used above are easily generalizable to even more granularity (say, district level) as well as to cases where more granular data gets available in future (say, gender ratios are independently known for each state and each industry). The data in Appendix 5, and consequently, in Table 3 are however again for the year 2015-2016, that is, the year for which base data from TSA is available. In the next section, we extend our model to estimate the same estimates to further years (say for 2023) to mitigate the second limitation of available tourism data (that is, that data such as TSA are often available at the interval of many years).

4. State wise female employment in the tourism sector in the year 2023

In this section, we extrapolate the results of the model built on TSA Data from the year 2015-16 to the latest available tourism data. We use India Tourism Data Compendium 2024 (GoI 2024) to extract the data on tourist footfall in various states in the year 2023. We take the ratio of the domestic tourist footfall in the year 2023 with the domestic tourist footfall in 2016 as we assume that female employment in any state is directly proportional to the domestic tourist footfall in that state. We multiply this ratio with the state wise female employment data in the tourism sector, obtained from the model in section 3 above. This application helps us get the corresponding female employment numbers for the year 2023 as follows:

$$Ratio_{30 \times 1} =$$

$$(Domestic\ Tourist\ footfall\ in\ 2023)_{30 \times 1} \odot \left(\frac{1}{Domestic\ tourist\ footfall\ in\ 2016} \right)_{30 \times 1}$$

and

$$(Female\ employment\ in\ 2023)_{30 \times 1} = (Female\ employment\ in\ 2016)_{30 \times 1} \odot Ratio_{30 \times 1}$$

The detailed calculations are provided in Appendix 7. The employment numbers so obtained are summarized at the state level in the table given below.

Table 4: Estimated state wise female in the year 2023

State	Female employment in the tourism sector 2023=Ratio*Female employment 2016
Andhra Pradesh	1,65,410
Arunachal Pradesh	4,254
Assam	57,633
Bihar	2,83,583
Chhattisgarh	47,386
Delhi	44,667
Goa	16,719
Gujarat	3,59,542
Haryana	8,861
Himachal Pradesh	17,776
Jammu and Kashmir	45,476
Jharkhand	46,037
Karnataka	2,05,302
Kerala	1,52,369
Madhya Pradesh	52,975
Maharashtra	2,15,061
Manipur	2,184
Meghalaya	5,014
Mizoram	8,047
Nagaland	6,050
Odisha	57,708
Punjab	39,876
Rajasthan	4,26,134
Sikkim	3,623
Tamil Nadu	1,30,338
Telangana	36,931
Tripura	3,116
Uttar Pradesh	3,72,065
Uttarakhand	56,555
West Bengal	3,04,132
Total	31,74,836

As per the above results, about 31.75 lakh females were directly employed in the tourism sector across the top 11 industries in 2023. The states with highest number of female employees in tourism were Rajasthan (4.26 Lakhs), Uttar Pradesh (3.72 Lakhs) and Gujarat (3.59 Lakhs). The primary reason for such high number of total female employment in 2023 in these three states (compared to 2015-2016) is that the domestic tourist footfall to these states have increased by 4.3 times, 2.26 times and 4.2 times respectively in the 7-8 years period from 2015-16 to 2023. Most importantly, the data estimation technique used in this section is again quite general and may be used for extracting the state wise female employment numbers for different years.

5. Concluding Remarks

Tourism is an important industry in terms of its employment generation potential for women in India. The government of India gathers and publishes swathes of macro data on employment in tourism. The data needs to be supplemented with mathematical techniques to estimate women employment at state or district granularity in specific tourism dependent industries. In this paper, we provided mathematical techniques from the field of Linear Algebra to this end.

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