This chapter deals with the working women of Patna. It also presents the historical background of Patna so as to have the knowledge of overall conditions of the universe which is going to be studied.

The city of Patna has a glorious past. It is one of the oldest cities of India. It is situated on the bank of Ganges river. It is considered that major part of the existing town of Patna stands on the ruins of an ancient city which was known by various names such as Azimabad, Bankipur, Pataligram, Patalipurta, Patna and Puspapura but primarily it was called ‘Patalipurta’. Though the origin of patalipurta is being connected by ‘Patali tree’, but the species of the tree is not found in the city. There may be an unusual presence of a single tree in the town which inspired people to call it as Pataligram.\(^1\)

There is historical evidence of the name of Puspapura in the Yugpuran and Kusumpura in the Tattavarsutra of Umasvati. The name of the city was first realized by Ajatshatru in 600 B.C., who established a military force with a view to contain the growing might of the Lichchavis. The city enjoyed glory right from the time of Chandragupta Maurya who made it his capital in the 4th century B.C. Patna was the capital of the whole of India. It received Greek Ambassador, Megasthenes at the court of Chandragupta Maurya. Kautilya, the statesman and founder of political economy compiled his treaties, Arthshashtra in about 300B.C.\(^2\) at Patna. Aryabhatta propounded his scientific theories of algebra here in 5th Century A.D. Ashoka sent here an ambassador to the king of Singhal through his daughter and son, Sangeeta and Mahendra. Respectively the fostering of art and science under Samudragupta along with

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\(^2\)Kumar, N: Bihar District Gazetteer, Patna. Gazetteer Branch Revenue Department, Patna, 1970,p.31
his conquests is remarkable. His regime is regarded as golden period in the history of India and hence it was the shining period of Patna. At the time of Harshavardhan and later when it was not the capital, its importance was due to being centre of trade. The glory was renewed in 1641 A.D. when Shershah constructed a fort on the bank of Ganges in Patna city. After the end of the Suri dynasty, Patna was besieged by the Mughal army and Akbar himself supervised the siege. Akbar made Patna as his head quarter of administration.

Prince Azimurashah, the grandson of Aurangzeb and the new subedar of Bihar renamed Patna as Azimabad in the year 1794 as he was the great patron of art and culture. As far as the condition of Patna under Mughal rule is concerned, Abdul Latiff visited Bihar in 1608 and declared Patna as the best city of the Bihar.

The East India Company set up a trading agency at Patna in 1765. The Dutch established a factory and its site is now marked by the Patna college main building and a palace in Patna city. Patna also played a significant role in resisting the growing of colonial power of these English rulers. When the English became dominant after success in the battle of Plassey in 1757 they tried to monopolise its trade. This led to renewed conflict with Mir Qasim, the Nawab of Bengal, who was supported by the Nawab of Awadh and Mughal emperor Shah Alam.

Bihar was again invaded by Ali Guhar, son of emperor Alangir in March 1759 but the attempt was foiled by Lord Clive. The second invasion was made by Ali Guhar in 1759-60 and the third in 1761. This time, the Britishers recognized him as emperor in the English factory at Gulzarbagh. Soon after this, Mir Qasim quarrelled with felsis, the chief of the English factory at Patna. In this encounter with British force, he was defeated and fled away in the territory of Awadh. Again, he forged an alliance with the Nawab Wazir of Awadh and Emperor Shah Alam second. In 1764, the allies suffered defeat in the battle of Patna and Buxar at the hands of the British forces and since then up to the Indian freedom of 1947, Patna was under the regime of the British rulers. During the 17th and 18th century, Patna was hub of many industries.

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In the year 1857, the Indian army posted at Danapur revolted against British power. In 1912, Patna was made the capital of Bihar and Orissa. In 1916 Lord Hardinge opened the new high court at Patna and in 1917 the constitution of Patna University was drawn up. The independence movement in Bihar was conducted from the Sadaquat Ashram at Digha. Since 1919 culminating in the quit India revolution of 1942 when there was an open revolt against the British power. Several students in course of their attempt to hoist the national flag on the Secretariat faced the bullets of the police and become martyrs.  

India became free in 1947 and Patna remained as the capital of Bihar. Since then, it is the administrative and political headquarter of Bihar. In 1974, Patna launched a crusade against corruption in public life under the leadership of Jay Prakash Narayan and directed the youth of Bihar. The revolution known as the “Total Revolution” spread all over India and shook even the power of congress at the centre.

It may be said that since 600 B.C., when Ajatshatru made Patna his capital, it remained the capital of Bihar with the exception of some interruptions. It has not only remained the political and administrative headquarter but also the glorious centre of education, learning, art and culture, trade and industry, inspiration point of social, political and religious movement.

Physical situation

According to Francis Buchanan Patna is situated south of river Ganges at latitude 25/37N and longitude 85/15E. But he failed to settle the boundaries of Patna, as it was not built in a Systematic way. But the area of the ancient city as given by Megasthenes is 80 stadia in length and 15 stadia in breadth, which works out to about 9 miles and 13/2 miles respectively. This was roughly the area of modern Patna town before the development of the new capital area for the purpose of administration.

5 Kumar, N.: Bihar District Gazetteers, Patna. op.cit.,p.3.

Megasthenes writes about a 600ft. wide ditch around the city but we do not find a precisely identified ditch at present. However, the indications are that the depression which runs parallel to the railway line on the northern side might have represented it. This depression is giving way to new constructions from the western side. Another depression seems to be running along Gardiner road through Mandiri mohallah to Bansghat. This depression might have represented the old bed of river Sone, here by facing the south-western boundary of the ancient city. This seems to agree largely with Patanjali’s description of the city as spread along the Sone. The expression ‘musonam’ of Patanjali could also have been represented by the possibility of Ganges flowing miles away from its present course. 

Physical shape of Patna changed later on because the English didn’t want to live in the old town. They wanted to maintain distance from the local population. They decided to develop the area midway between the western ramparts of the old town and Dimapur along the riverbank. The race course known as the lawn or Gandhi maidan had been established by Metcalf, the then commissioner of Patna. The Englishman later decided to settle down around this area and administrative house to be here. Until the end of the century, it was the nucleus around which the city was developed. The year 1860 considerably affected physical growth of the city. The most important event which influenced the development of the city was the establishment of the railways. For the first time, railways divided the city into two parts—i.e. north and south in 1860.

Today, Patna has its tri-region, i.e. (i) Eastern Patna: it is the centre of grains, spices and cottage products, (ii) central Patna: the chief centre of shopping and business, educational institutions and residential areas, (iii) Western Patna: the administrative centres such as the old and new secretariat buildings, Patna high court and Raj Bhawan are situated here. It contains government quarters and many new developing colonies. According to the 2001 census, the area covering the municipal corporation of Patna has expanded. It includes the Patliputra colony, Digha-Mainpura, Sabazpura, Khalilpura and Badalpura apart from the original areas covered by Patna municipal corporation earlier.

Nandi, R.N.: Patliputra in History and Legend, in, Qeyamuddin Ahmad(ed.) Patna through the Ages, Patna, Janaki Prakashan, 1988 p.2
Now the Patna municipal corporation has an area of 107.08 km. It includes 6.99 km area of Patliputra colony and 0.64 km area of Digha-Mainpura out growth.\(^8\)

**Climate and Rain-fall**

Patna town has an extreme type of climate. It is very hot in summer and cold in winter. The summer starts in April every year. The month of May and June are the hottest months of the year. During this period, we find hot westerly winds. It develops into heat waves of high temperature. Low humidity makes the summer very oppressive. The easterly wind appears mostly in the end of June, which brings rain and slight relief from summer. The rainy season lasts up to September. The mercury begins to fall from October end but December and January are the really cold months.

Generally the maximum temperature of Patna varies from 43°C to 44°C. The average rainfall is to heaviest generally in the month of August in which the number of rainy days varies from 10-14 and the actual rainfall from 235mm to 356mm. The months of October and November are quite pleasant, as it is neither too much cold nor too much hot.\(^9\)

**River**

Patna is surrounded by three rivers, namely, the Ganges, sone and Punpun. The Ganges runs all along the northern boundary of the town. It separates Patna from the north plain. We also find that the Gandak joins Ganges just opposite Patna. River Ganges is so wide that Patna has sometimes been delinked to a part of the Ganges which is of course navigable throughout the year.

The sone is another river near Patna. It joins Ganges at the western side of the town. It has been embanked to protect Patna town from devastating flood. The river receives no tributaries and in dry season it remains a wide stretch of drifting sand with

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landlocked posts and narrow serpentine streams of water. The bed of Sone constitutes an important source of sand for house building.

The river punpun flows from south and runs into north eastern direction. It crosses Patna Gaya railway line near punpun railway station and joins Ganges near Fatuwah. It also submerges south Patna in the rainy season and creates a lot of problems to its inhabitants.  

**Communication: Road Transport**

As per accounts of the report of Buchanan, in the beginning of the 19th century, there were very bad roads. But later, there has been a lot of development in the means of communication. The present roads may be classified as public work department roads, district board roads and municipal roads. At present, the Patna municipal corporation area has 677 km metalled roads and 150 km kuchcha roads.

It has been found that majority of the roads are in good condition, which are maintained by Public Work Department. Since the Government of Nitish Kumar has taken the rein of Bihar the infrastructure of road has been done nice. Roads have been widened and road side electricity has been provided which puts Patna in the new shape and has become one of the well towns of India in terms of road. There are some private buses which run in the town.

Tumtum was used mainly in goods transport for long routes such as from Patna junction to city Chowk. At present cheapest modes of transport are BSRTC buses, private mini buses and three-wheelers respectively. The most common and dearer transport is rickshaw. There are two bus depots in the town owned by Bihar State Rajya Transport Corporation. They are Bankipur and Malsalami. The route covered by these two depots in Patna-Danapur, Patna-Phulwarisharif, and Bankipur-Danapur etc.  

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10 Ibid. p.4

11 Patna District Gazetteer, 1924, op.cit. p. 129
Political conditions

Historically, Patna was the seat of power in India during ancient days, which witnessed many ups and downs till the capital of the country was finally shifted to Delhi during the Mughal period. In modern era, the representative government was partially introduced in India under the Government of India Act, 1919, which gave birth to central legislature. The Act of 1919 was, however replaced by Government of India Act, 1935, and the central council Legislature continued but Bihar and Orissa council was abolished which separated Orissa from Bihar and a bi-cameral legislature for Bihar was introduced consisting of a legislative assembly and legislative council.

The first general election was held in the year 1952 in the entire country for the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies including Bihar. During the first general election of 1952, the district of Patna was divided into three assembly constituencies namely Patliputra, Patna central, and Patna East. The Patna central parliamentary constituency was further divided in to two Assembly constituencies namely, Patna city, West Naubatpur and Patna East. In the year 1957, the second general election took place, this time the Assembly constituencies were reorganized and a separate assembly constituency was carved out of bifurcating Naubatpur from Patna West cum Naubatpur.

The three assembly constituencies were reorganized and at present there are three assembly constituencies in Patna town, namely, Patna-East, Patna Central and Patna –West. In the year 2008 delimitation has been made in which name of assemblies of Patna town has been charted. Now they are – Kumhrar, Bankipur and Digha constituency assembly for Bihar Vidhan Sabha. Parliamentary constituency of Patna has been divided into two parts-Patna Sahib and Patliputra. During these years the seats in Patna have been won by different political parties like Congress (I), CPI, Bhartiya Lok Dal, Janta Dal etc. The voters of Patna Parliamentary constituency is found to be highly sensitive and always guided by the national political conditions. As per election result of 2015 BJP is holding all the three assembly seats of Patna.

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\(^{13}\)Dainik Jagran, 4Nov. 2015 p. 23.
Population

It is surprising to note that there is no systematic account of growth of population of the town at Patna. Megasthenes, who was the Greek envoy at the court of Chandragupta Maurya estimated the population of the city at 4,00,000. The population of the city from time to time has increased and decreased. Its population as per 2011 census is 1,683,275. Figure includes the area of Patna Municipal Corporation, Patliputra housing colony, Digha-Mainpura, Sabajpura, Khalipura and Badalpura outgrowth. The town extends over an area of 108.34 sq. Km. Its population of 1,683,275 is spread over 57 municipal wards.

We find maximum crowding in the central zone, where there are 40% of the total population. There has been a highly increasing trend of population of the western zone. There has been an increase in the activities of the government and people desire to settle in comparatively clean and less crowded area. The comparison with other big cities shows that overall gross density of population of Patna is lower. This may be due to the fact that in Patna most of the buildings do not have more than two stories. We also find large part of fallow and agricultural land within the heart of the town. The functional category of the town is service cum trade and commerce cum industry. The link of Patna with north Bihar through Mahatma Gandhi Setu has added new dimension in the overcrowding of Patna.

The following table shows the growth of population of proper Patna town from 1981 to 2011 with the decennial variation over the years.

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Table 4.1

Population of Patna Town 1981-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Decennial variation (%)</th>
<th>Density</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>813963</td>
<td>+71.25</td>
<td>9350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>956418</td>
<td>+17.56</td>
<td>11132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>1,432,709</td>
<td>+51.66</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1,683,275</td>
<td>+17.50</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources:


Table 4.1 Presents the growth of population of Patna Town from 1981 to 2001 with the decennial variation and density of population over the years. We find that the year of 1981 has the population of 8,139,63 which has the decennial variation of 71.25. The year of 1991 has the population of 9,564,18 with the decennial variation of 17.56 from 1981. The year 2001 has population of 1,432,709 with decennial variation of +51.66 while the year of 2011 has the population of 1,683,275 with the decennial variation of +17.53.

We find that the year of 1981 has the highest (+71.25) decennial variation and the lowest (+17.53) in the year 2011. The density of population per square fit in 1981 was 9350 which came up to 11,132 per square km. in 1991. In the year 2001 and 2011 density has found addition in density per square km.
Table 4:2
Variation in Sex Ratio in Patna Town 1981-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of females per 1000 males</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>882</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources:

The above table presents the picture of sex ration of Patna Town in the last three decades. We find a rising trend in the sex ratio right from 1981. We find that it was 812 female per thousand males in 1981. It got the growth of 12 females by 1991 and became 824. But in between 1991 to 2001 there is marginal growth of 2 only which became 826 in the year 2001. We find significant growth in female sex ratio in 2011 which became 882 females per thousand males. It is exceed of 56 females in 2011.

We may conclude that during thirty years female population has grown. This is why there is growth of 70 females per thousand males. In all the three decades 2001-2011 got maximum growth of 56 females.

**Education**

Since the dawn of 19th century, there has been an increment in the state activity in the field of education.
Being the capital it has been the centre of learning, students from all over the state come to Patna to get education. There are more than 92 primary schools. At the level of primary education there is a mushroom growth of institutions in the present time especially in private sector. At the level of junior, secondary and middle, there are about 167 institutions. At the secondary/matriculation level, it is about 48 in the number. In middle, secondary level also some more institutions have been opened.

There are about 11 colleges where Arts, science and commerce education are given up to post graduate. There are two Law colleges, four medical colleges, two Polytechnic and one Engineering college. Apart from that, there are also some institutions of fame from various types of education. They are: College of physical education, Blind school, Institution of public Administration, Bihar Research society, K.P. Jaiswal Research Institute, A.N. Sinha Institute of social studies, Bihar Rashtra Bhasha Parishad, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Bhartiya Nritya Kala Mandir, Chanakya Law University, Chandragupta Management Institute, Bihar Central University etc.

In addition, there are some renowned libraries situated in Patna town. They are Smt. Radhika Sinha Institute and Sachchidanand Sinha library, Legislature library, Patna High Court library and Central Archives. Apart from these renowned libraries, there are about 22 small libraries in Patna town.  

Following table presents the growth of literacy during the span of thirty years of Patna Municipal Corporation area.

15 Ibid. p. 12
Table 4:3

Literacy Rate of Patna Municipal Corporation Area by Sex 1981-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male(%)</th>
<th>Female(%)</th>
<th>Total(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>66.88</td>
<td>46.00</td>
<td>57.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>72.13(+5.025)</td>
<td>59.7(+3.7)</td>
<td>66.52(+9.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>76.70(+4.57)</td>
<td>65.17(+5.47)</td>
<td>71.45(+4.93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>87.46(+10.6)</td>
<td>80.5(+15.33)</td>
<td>84.5(+13.05)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources -

2. Census of India 1991 series 1, vol.1.part ii(B) i, primary census abstract. New Delhi, Ministry of Home affairs,1991p.244

Table 4.3 deals with the literacy rate of male and female of Patna municipal corporation area 1981-2011. We find that from 1981 to 1991 there is growth in total literacy rate by 9.02% while form 1991 to 2001 it is only 4.93% and from 2001 to 2011 it has got the growth of 13.05%. We may conclude that there is 27.00% of literacy growth in three decades. It is maximum (13.05%) in 2001 and minimum (4.93%) in 1991 as per as male literacy rate is related we find 20.83% of literacy growth during the span of thirty years. It is maximum (10.76%) in 2011 and minimum (4.57%) in the year 2001.

In case of female literacy rate there is 34.5% of growth in three decades it is maximum (15.33%) in 2011and minimum (5.47%) in 2001.
There is gap in literacy rate between male and female. It is 20.88% in 1981, 12.43% in 1991, 11.53% in 2001 and 6.96% in 2011.

It may be concluded that there is more increment in female literacy rate in Patna Town. It jumped from 46.00% in 1981 to 80.5% in 2011. This has resulted in bridging the gap between male and female literacy rate. The gap in 1981 was 20.38% which narrowed down to 6.96% in 2011. It is a marking point that female has marched long in achieving the education leaving behind the male in Patna Town.

Economic condition

Being the seat of government for long time, from the Mughal period and later, Patna is inherited by rich mobility, which had a flair for pomp and splendour. Their patronage attracted a number of artisans. This has led to the establishment of a number of cottage industries. Though in due course, some have been destroyed and some ruined, but still some are providing employment to a number of families. Most of them are located in Patna city.

So far as the small, medium and large industries are concerned, there is a growing trend in all the three industrial types and the numbers have gone up over the years. Apart from Patna city, the numbers have increased in the patliputra industrial complex and Kankarbagh industrial belt. ¹⁶

The town of Patna has mixed economy. Table 4.4 explain the types of workers in various work. Following table presents the scenario of the same as follows.

¹⁶ Ibid. P. 47
Table 4:4

Distribution of Main Workers as Cultivators, Agricultural Labourers, Household Industry Workers and other workers in Patna Urban Agglomeration Area by Sex

1981-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Main workers</th>
<th>Cultivators</th>
<th>Agriculture labours</th>
<th>Household industry workers</th>
<th>Other workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>90.13</td>
<td>9.87</td>
<td>96.53</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>78.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>92.43</td>
<td>7.57</td>
<td>95.84</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>84.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>90.25</td>
<td>9.75</td>
<td>86.83</td>
<td>13.17</td>
<td>78.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>85.52</td>
<td>14.47</td>
<td>80.94</td>
<td>19.05</td>
<td>81.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source-
2. Census of India, series 1, vol. 1part 2,B 1;primary census abstract. New Delhi, Ministry of Home Affairs,1991 pp.245-250

Table 4.4 deals with the distribution of participation of main workers as cultivators, agricultural labourers, household industry workers, and other workers in Patna urban agglomeration area by sex from 1981-2011. We find that in between 1981-2011 there is decrease in the growth of main workers of 4.61% in case of male while in case of female there is increase of 4.61%. In case of cultivators there is decrease of about 15.59% in case of male while in case of female there is increase of the same percentage. It shows that females are taking more part as cultivators as males are
shifting in service or in their own business. In such cases women have taken command of cultivating of their own family.

In case of agricultural labours there is increase in case of male of 2.98% and in case of female there is decrease of the same percentage during the period of 1981-2001. It shows that women are gradually taking less interest as agricultural labourers and are shifting either in service or in self-employment. In case of household industry there is decrease of 9.97% in case of male and increase of the same percentage in case of female. It brings into notice that males are not interested in household industry and thus they are shifting in other jobs. But at the same time women are taking interest in household industry. This is why their percentage is swelling. It is obvious as females find convenient to work in household industry which does not require much physical work, higher education and skill.

In case of other workers we find downward trend in case of male. This is why there is decrease of about 7.18% from 1981 to 2001 but in case of female we find a rising trend. It is rise of the same percentage in between 1981 to 2001.

On the whole we may conclude that women’s participation is enhancing in all types of workers except agricultural labourers. It brings into notice that women are breaking the boundaries of four walls of house and coming out for taking part as cultivators, household workers and other industrial workers but they are not interested in agricultural labourers work.