

Changes in structure of labour participation and wage dynamics in Bihar

Abhay Kumar¹, RKP Singh², KM Singh¹, Pankaj Kumar¹ and BP Bhatt¹

¹ICAR-Research Complex for Eastern Region, Patna; ²International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics, India

Introduction

- Small and fragmented holdings and lack of non-farm employment opportunities in rural area leading to unemployment and under-employment in Bihar
- Rural labour force fast growing but under-invested agriculture has limited capacity to absorb it
- Poor continues to migrate to urban areas to augment family income
- Wages in rural non-agricultural economy increasing faster than that in farm economy.

Objectives

To examine the changes in structure of labour participation and wage dynamics in rural Bihar.

Study area

Survey year: 2010-11 to 2013-14

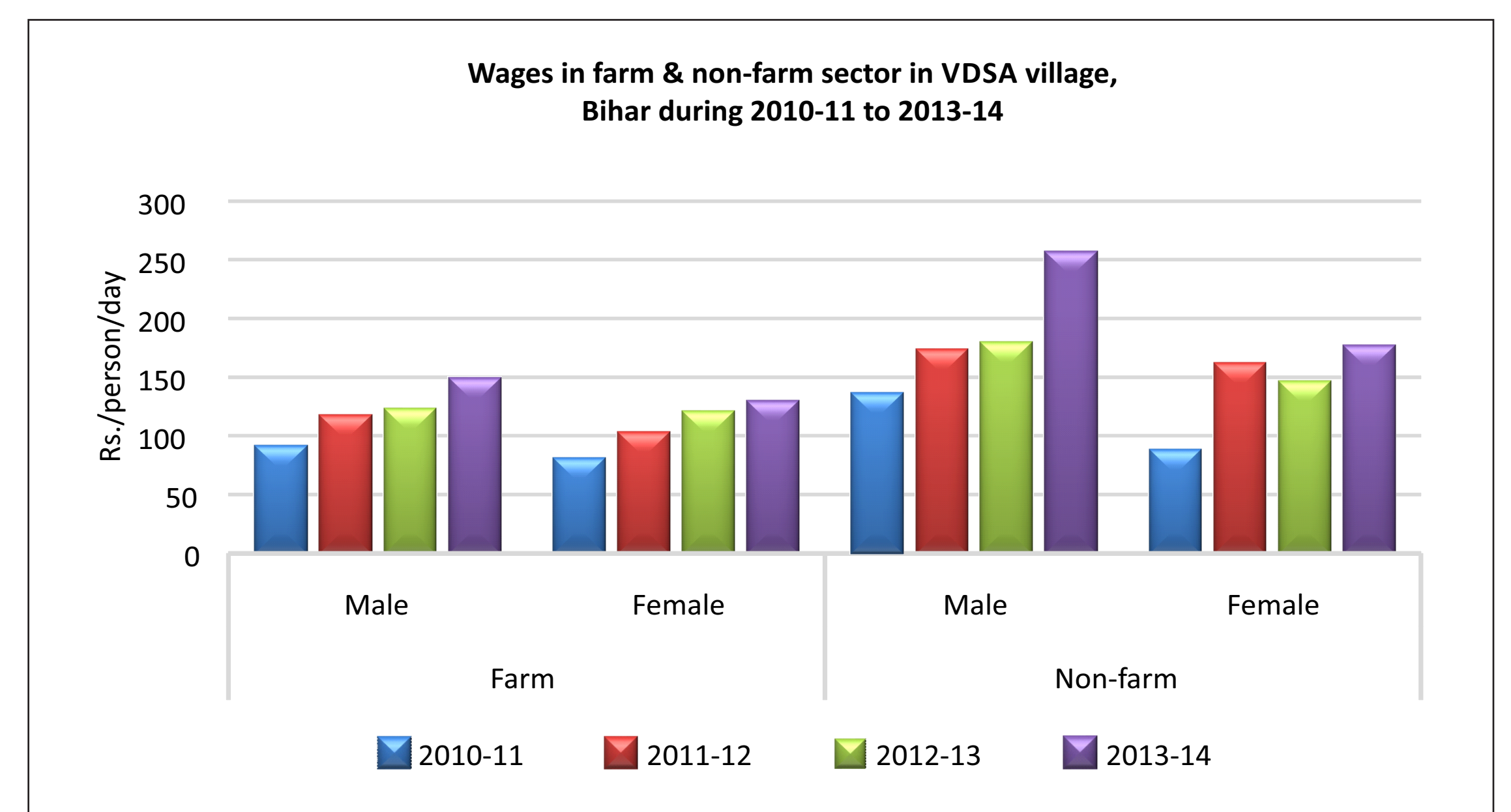
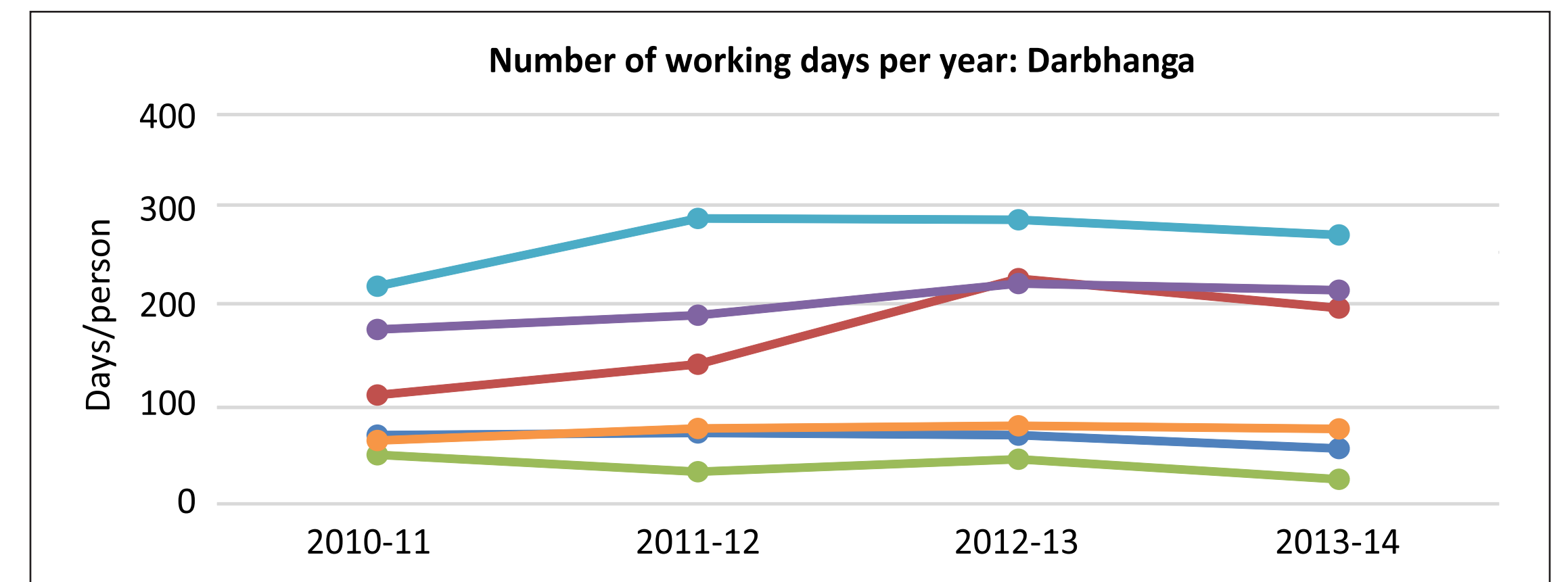
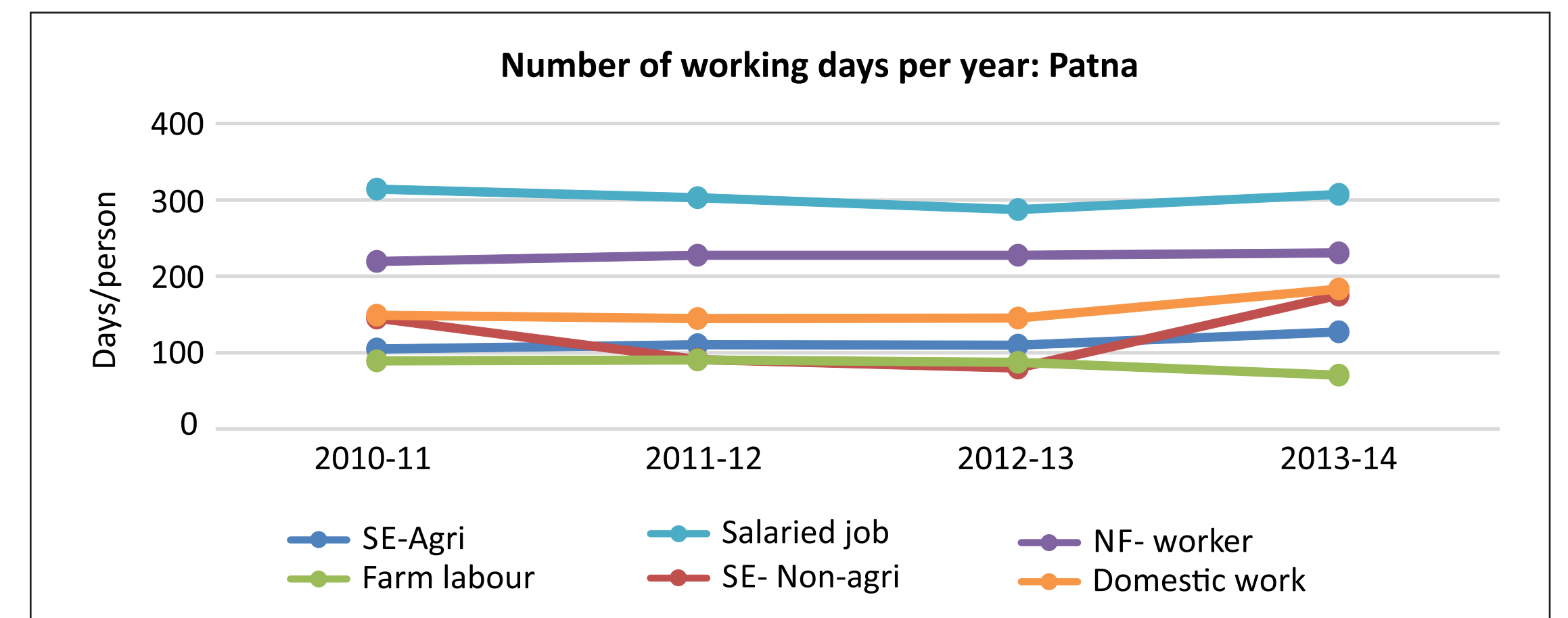
Districts: Patna and Darbhanga

Total no. of households: 160

Agriculture- major employer for male & female workforce

- Work participation pattern not changed much in VDSA villages during last four years
- Farming activities mainly done by male workers, female has supportive role
- Salaried and contractual employment emerged as the second most important occupation for male workforce
- Large proportion of male workforce from villages in Patna district participate in construction and business activities in urban area
- Workers engaged in self-employment or wage employment in agriculture more in Darbhanga district due to lack opportunity.

Work participation rate in VDSA villages of Bihar (%)					
Occupation		2010	2011	2012	2013
SE- Agriculture	Male	37.46	35.81	35.90	35.58
	Female	3.59	4.36	4.32	4.59
SE-Non-agri	Male	4.89	7.42	8.33	8.01
	Female	0.98	1.01	1.33	1.31
Farm labour	Male	1.95	0.97	0.96	1.60
	Female	2.29	5.37	4.98	5.25
NF- worker	Male	26.06	24.52	23.72	25.96
	Female	0.98	0.34	0.33	0.33
Salaried/contractual job	Male	24.43	24.52	23.72	21.15
	Female	0.65	1.01	1.33	0.98
Domestic work	Male	5.21	6.77	7.37	7.69
	Female	91.50	87.92	87.71	87.54



Gender gap continues outside home

- Majority of workforce outside home contributed by male members
- Only 12% of rural female workforce engaged in economic activities
- Female members from marginal farm-size category or landless labour class working outside home
- More female workforce on other farms than their own farm.

Closing gender gap- Farm wages

- Wages increased during last four years for both male and female workforce
- Wages also increased in farm sector, but less than that in non-farm sector
- Wage rate in non-farm sector for female workforce stagnating
- Wage rate was much higher in Patna district than wage paid in Darbhanga district.

Conclusions

- Agriculture still major employer
- Female as wage-labour more than male in farm sector
- Non-farm sector emerging near urban centre
- Female workforce still engaged mainly in domestic work
- Gender gap in wage rate closing in farm sector, but widening in non-farm sector
- Development infrastructure and education facility- driving force for non-farm participation for both male and female workforce.