

## WOMEN LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN INDIA: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

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### Abstract

This paper attempts to look at the causes behind the recent sharp decline in female labour force participation in India and to present the solutions needed to improve the women labour force participation. Woman labour force is one of the important factors for the countries' development. The number of women in the workforce has seen a continuous drop in the past few years. Women are leaving paid jobs at all levels of education, age and income. The findings demonstrate that various variables such as Nonappearance of Support Services, The impact of increased attendance in education, Provincial attributes, Sectoral segregation, Sexual Harassment at the Workplace, Gender Pay Gap, Family attributes, Non-appearance of Gender Parity, Absence of Gender Parity, Absence of Effective Information Dissemination were answerable for the ongoing sharp plunge in the labour force participation among working ladies.

**Keywords:** Women Labour Force Participation, Economic Development, Social Standards and Strict Conservatism.

### Introduction

There has been a hugedecline in the female labour force participation rates in India in the course of the most recent couple of years. The latest periodic labour survey of 2017-2018 shows that the women labour participation rate tumbled from 35% in 1990 to 23% in 2018. The inaptness of this obstinate miracle is this: India has developed at an unrivalled rate in the previous two decades with development rate outperforming 9 percent for each annum between 2004-05 and 2007-08 and averaging around 7 percent for every annum between the timeframes 2012-13 and 2016-17. Simultaneously, there has been a noticeable improvement in the human development indicators , with sizeable decrease in fertility rates, illiteracy and gender education gap. All of this must ordinarily have led higher female work power participation for ordinarily, over the long haul, fall in female fertility rates, rising

income levels and improvement in education outcomes have been related with rising portion of women in the work power. But, the general female cooperation rate in India has been industriously low in correlation with different nations in the world. In 1994, India positioned 68th out of 83 nations with accessible information in terms of the rate of female participation. Starting at 2012, it positioned 84th out of 87 nations. The ongoing sharp decrease in women participation in labour market should accordingly be seen in a more drawn out run setting of low and stale female cooperation rates. In this manner, it is without a doubt perplexing, for policy makers and academicians the same, that against this fortunate foundation, female work power interest in India is constantly declining and has endured at about 23 percent in 2017-18 (Labour Bureau Employment and Unemployment Survey). This unsafe marvel has set the Indian development experience separated from that of other developing countries. It can't be disregarded that less women in labour power implies under-usage of HR that keeps down efficiency and economic development. This paper features the multifaceted idea of female labour force participation in India and presents discoveries on the key patterns and factors that drive ladies' commitment in the labour market and access to business.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To identify the factors responsible for the sharp decline in women labour force participation in India
2. To make suggestions to improve the women participation in labour force.

### **Research Methodology**

For this study, the researcher has collected data from various secondary data sources like Journals, Articles, Newspapers, Books, NSSO Report 2017-2018.

### **Women LabourForce Participation Rate and Economic Development**

One of the significant pointers of Economic development and advancement is the participation rates in the labour force. Despite the fact that the proficient utilization of factors of production happens in the base of economic development, the distribution of labour factor which is a major of these elements is up close with the sex disparity issue. Investment rates in the work power, which have crucial preventive measures for an economy, are dispersed crosswise over women over the globe. The women Participation ratio in labour is among the most significant financial pointers of nations. This proportion, which is found by the proportion of the jobless in the dynamic populace to the employed in India has been constantly low in examination with different nations in the world. Woman labour force is one of the significant variables for the nations' improvement. Then again, if women work, they

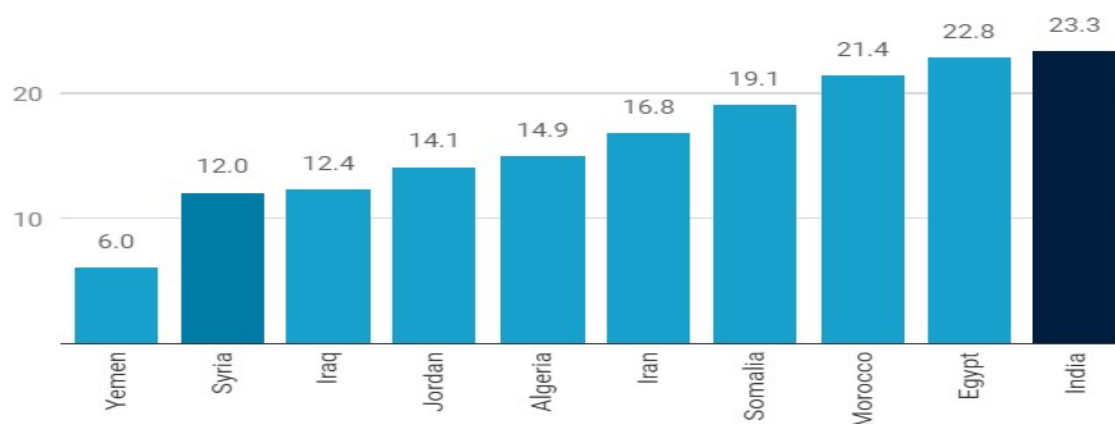
feel themselves financially free. In this way, the lady who feels monetarily free both trusts herself better in monetary life and furthermore may raise plainly thinking people by being a superior mother in public activity. Also, the women who accomplished her monetary opportunity may change the predetermination of nations with her self-assurance and her rare thoughts. Consequently, women employment is a point to lay load on for the monetary advancement of India and different nations. Ladies that raise the generations ought not to be denied of the rights men have inside the general public. Since the premise of the full scale improvement of the nations depends on being involved in production activities actively without separating woman or man. If not, as mentioning an affluent life becomes impossible, the country might even become obliged to get poor and vanish. Consequently, expanding women work participation is as significant as the man work for the advancement and improvement of economy. It is normal that women participation in labour power and winning an economy will make a significant commitment to the addition, improvement and speeding up of development for any nation. In this unique situation, it is important to play it safe to take part in the work power of female.

### Women's Labour Force Participation in India

Only nine nations around the globe, including Syria and Iraq, presently have a less extent of working ladies than India. What's more, if Bihar were a nation, it would have the least portion of working ladies in the world. Among urban ladies who do work, residential cleaning work is the second most basic calling after textiles related jobs, the periodic labour force survey (PLFS) information distributed by the NSSO shows.

### Only nine countries have a lower labour female participation rate than India

Ten countries with the lowest female labour force participation rate (%)

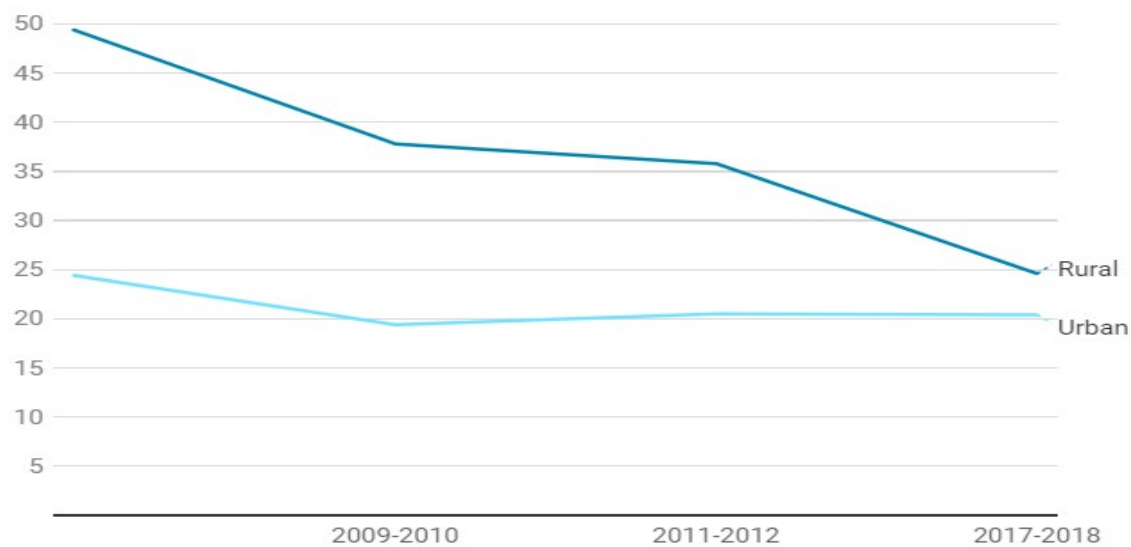


Source: World Bank World Development Indicators, 2018.

India's female Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) – the portion of working-age ladies who report either being utilized, or being accessible for work – has tumbled to a memorable low of 23.3% in 2017-18, implying that more than three out of four ladies beyond 15 years old in India are neither working nor looking for work. (The age of 15 is the cut-off utilized for worldwide examinations by the International Labour Organization.) This would infer that they are in all probability running the house and dealing with children.

## India's falling female labour force participation

Female labour force participation rate (%)



Source: NSSO, 2018.

India's low LFPR was at that point a matter of worry in 2011-12, and set India twelfth from the base comprehensively. The further fall from that point forward comes fundamentally from rustic zones – female LFPR slammed by seven percentage, while male LFPR remained generally the equivalent. While a portion of the fall in ladies' workforce participation is clarified by higher paces of advanced education enrolment, demonstrating that increasingly young ladies are in advanced education as opposed to working or searching for occupations, the information additionally indicates a fall in working rates for more aged women. While the LFPR for ladies matured 15-29 fell by 8% points between 2011-12 and 2017-18 to 16.4%, the LFPR for ladies fell by at least 7% points for each age section between 30-50 too. The decrease was most elevated among ladies matured 35-39 years (LFPR for this age section fell 9 rate focuses to 33.5%). Among ladies in the prime working ages of 30-50, more than two of every three ladies are not in the workforce, with most

of them announcing that they are "taking care of domestic obligations as it were". Among men, caste and religion have no genuine effect to workforce cooperation rates. However, among ladies, Muslim ladies have the most reduced LFPR while among Hindu ladies, forward caste ladies have the least LFPR, suggesting that social standards and strict conservatism may assume a job in ladies being "permitted" to work. Among Indian states, Bihar has far the lowest rates of female workforce participation, while the southern and eastern states improve. Among those in the workforce, rustic ladies work overwhelmingly in agriculture, which could offer a piece of information to understanding the falling paces of provincial workforce support. All things considered, non-ranch jobs are uncommon, particularly for ladies

## **Reasons for Huge Decline in Women Labour Force**

### **1. Nonappearance of Support Services**

There are not many open strategies handling the social and familial obstructions keeping ladies from joining the work power. Likewise, there are not many open wellbeing and working environment security activities, and not many policies that make alternative plans for household obligations and care work. Not exclusively are these services insufficiently accessible as independent plans, they are meagrely present as strategy parts of activities implied for capacity building and livelihood generation. A glaring oversight is the nonappearance of childcare facilities in skilling activities – a solid impediment for young moms' keen on undertaking skill-training.

### **2. The Impact of Increased Attendance in Education**

The extent of young women matured 15-24 attending education has expanded drastically lately, ascending from just 16.1 percent of the populace in 1994 to 31.9 percent in 2010 and to 36.7 percent in 2012. This has related with a decrease in the general youth female work power investment rate, which tumbled from 35.8 percent in 1994 to 22.2 percent in 2010 and 20.2 percent in 2012.

### **3. Family attributes**

When taking a gander at family attributes, ladies having a place with Muslim families, to families of type "other" or independently employed in non-agribusiness, to family units in the top class, and those having a place with bigger families additionally have a lower probability of taking an interest in the work. Moreover, having a place with a planned clan or rank and having a place with a family unit where the head is a female and the family unit develops some land expands the likelihood of ladies' cooperation in the work advertise.

Having an offspring of less than five years of age or living in a family unit with numerous individuals negatively affects this likelihood.

#### **4. Provincial attributes**

Concerning territorial attributes, ladies living in districts with a lower sex proportion and a higher index of occupational segregation have lower anticipated probabilities of participation in market work, true to form. This demonstrates view of ladies' status in the public arena and discrimination as far as restricted access for ladies to various kinds of occupations matter in provincial India as far as the probability of ladies to be financially active. Provincial ladies in the West and North of India have higher rate of participation than ladies in the South of India.

#### **5. Sectoral segregation**

A conceivable clarification for absence of accessible openings for work for ladies is that men advantage excessively from expanded interest for exceptionally skilled workers. This is likely in India as men stay more talented and more taught all things considered than ladies. Likewise, occupational and sectoral segregation by sexual orientation may have kept ladies to scan for market work, particular sectors and occupations in accordance with winning social standards. In the event that the divisions and occupations where ladies are bound to work have not enrolled a lot of business development, this could restrain business open doors for ladies, representing a boundary to their interest.

#### **6. Sexual Harassment at the Workplace**

In the wake of a fervent social media movement calling out sexual abuse faced by women, it can be argued that the current systems in place to tackle sexual harassment in the workplace still want an impact. In a study undertaken to understand the economic trade-off of street harassment for women (Borkar 2017), it was noted that women studying at Delhi University chose colleges of lesser quality in favour of ensuring travel safety. It has also been observed that reports of sexual harassment are higher in employment sectors with higher gender diversity, for example, the education sector and entertainment industry (Bhandare 2017).

#### **7. Gender Pay Gap**

The Gender Pay Gap was 34 percent in India, that is, ladies get 34 percent less contrasted with men for performing a similar job with same capabilities, says the report, which based its estimates on employment unemployment survey (EUS) 2011-12, done by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO), International Labour Organization (ILO)

studies, and furthermore expands on the main disparity report propelled by Oxfam in 2018. Dissecting the sexual orientation pay gap in the organised sector crosswise over various occupations and diverse undertaking type, it says that ladies experts even in the most elevated positions of work (administrators, senior authorities, and chiefs) are additionally paid less contrasted with their male partners. Notwithstanding, these women comprise only one percent of the all out female work power and the gap is most reduced as they know about their privileges. The compensation difference is lesser for more skilled workers and more for semi-skilled or unskilled workers. Crosswise over big business type, wage contrast is less for government/public sector and public or private limited organization. Huge compensation gaps as far as normal day by day wages exist in male and female wage rates of casual and regular workers in rural and urban areas and the gap is narrower for regular workers in urban areas. On the other hand, for casual workers, wage gap is narrower in rural areas.

### **8. Absence of Effective Information Dissemination**

Lion's share of working age youth is uninformed of the ability improvement projects keep running by the Indian government (Mishra et al., 2018). Most women oriented or ability building plans have assembly as a program part but then little is thought about their efficacy. An analysis (Ravallion et al., 2013) that tries to clarify low take-up of MNREGA in Bihar, in spite of the nonappearance of alternative employment opportunities presumes that mobilisation efforts, anyway insightful in their plan, can regularly battle to move their objectives past "groupthink": where the program or plan is seen as successful as a network yet not at an individual level. As pointed out in Section 4, communication guidelines going with significant schemes are currently void of direction on effective behaviour change communication.

### **9. Absence of Gender Parity**

The Hindu (2017) reported that there was a glaring absence of gender parity in textbooks for children in India. About ten NCERT textbooks for classes 2-5 on subjects including Hindi, Mathematics, English, and Environmental studies were examined. In all of these books' men are shown to be participating in outdoor activities while women are confined indoors shown to be expert only at domestic chores. While men are shown to be the head of the family, women are portrayed to be primary caregivers of their children. Moreover, there was a significant 'emasculatation' of jobs with all jobs including those of milk-seller, farmer and shop keeper performed by men. Thus, education does not challenge the traditional elements that shape the marriage dynamics in terms of decisions regarding labour force participation, marriage customs and domestic work. It fails to subvert the long-

standing gender beliefs amidst strong cultural and traditional institutions, which drill these stereotypes from the beginning of an individual's life.

### **10. Non-appearance of Gender Parity**

The Hindu (2019) detailed that there was a glaring nonattendance of sexual orientation equality in course books for children in India. Around ten NCERT reading material for classes 2-5 on subjects including Hindi, Mathematics, English, and Environmental studies were analyzed. In these books' men are demonstrated to take an interest in outdoor activities while ladies are kept inside demonstrated to be master just at residential errands. While men are demonstrated to be the leader of the family, ladies are depicted to be essential guardians of their kids. Moreover, there was a significant 'emasculatation' of jobs with all jobs including those of milk-seller, farmer and shopkeeper performed by men. Thus, education does not challenge the traditional elements that shape the marriage dynamics in terms of decisions regarding labour force participation, marriage customs and domestic work. It neglects to subvert the long-standing sexual orientation convictions in the midst of solid social and conventional organizations, which drill these generalizations from the earliest starting point of a person's life.

### **Suggestions**

Thinking about these bits of knowledge, strategy creators in India and all through the locale should adopt a far reaching strategy to improving labour market results for ladies through improving access to and significance of education and training programs, abilities improvement, access to kid care, maternity protection, and arrangement of sheltered and available vehicle, alongside the advancement of an model of growth that creates job opportunities. Further than more labour force participation rates, policy-makers should be more alarmed about whether women are able to access qualitative jobs or start up a business, and take advantage of new labour market opportunities as a country grows. A policy structure encourages and enable women's participation should be constructed with active consciousness of the "gender-specific" constraints that face most women. At last, the objective isn't simply to build female work power participation, however to give chances to respectable work that will, thus, add to the economical strengthening of women.

1. We can use tax and other financial incentives to improve FLWP are as per the following:

- By presenting concessions in income tax of women to boost pay and wages earned by ladies.



- By presenting tax incentives for endeavours that have internal complaint mechanisms, gender friendly transport services, crèche services, and alternative care arrangements and so on.
  - By introducing tax incentives for enterprises that have a gender diverse employee base to encourage equal opportunities for hiring.
2. Encouraging greater participation of women in public administration.
  3. Reform protective legislation for women because they need jobs more than protection.
  4. Implementing employment generation programmes that reduce wage gaps, enforce quotas, and provide jobs.
  5. One way to enable higher hiring of women is by having more women in leadership roles.
  6. By eliminating the gender pay gap.
  7. Generating more accommodation for working women in semi-urban areas, opening skilling centres near manufacturing groups.

## Conclusion

This paper has endeavoured to reveal insight into the causes behind the ongoing sharp decrease in female labour force participation in India, ridiculously coinciding with a period of rapid economic growth, and to recognize variables supporting the long haul stagnation in female participation. It is discovered that not just has there been a fall in the female labour force participation, however the size of the total female labour force has additionally contracted lately. Countless factors, for example, expanding enrolment of women in advanced education, Sexual Harassment at the working environment, Sectoral segregation, Household and Regional qualities have been analyzed as potential factors that may conceivably clarify the conundrum of falling FLPR in India. There is a pressing need to defeat the latency of low female labour force participation rate in the nation. Except if this is done, India is probably not going to ascend the stepping stool of sex equity. The participation of ladies in the workforce not just improves the personal satisfaction for ladies yet in addition has constructive overflow impacts as far as improved advancement results for the whole family. Further, more prominent female labour force participation rates have specific helpful effect on child care because greater proportion of women's income is spent on child goods (Thomas, 1990 and Kingdon, 1998). According to Duflo (2012), ladies not working outside their homes may energize a general view that ladies don't should be strong and healthy thus, result in weakening in future investment for women health. Besides, rising female labour force participation could do wonders for the economy and have any kind of effect of some

rate focuses in the GDP. An examination by IMF (2015), found that India could grow its GDP by 27 percent if the number of women labourers increments to a similar level as men. All through this paper, we have essentially endeavoured to look at the patterns and trends of female workforce participation crosswise over India. Simultaneously we have attempted to distinguish the different determinants of women's work in India.

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