



Female Labour Force Work Participation Trend in India

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ABSTRACT

The participation of women in the workforce, the quality of work allotted to them and their contribution to the GDP are indicators of the extent of their being mainstreamed into the economy and development process. In India empowerment process of women also leads to female population to enter the job market and also created greater contribution to economic growth. The labour force participation of females has shown an increasing trend, particularly in the liberalization era. The low participation of women is largely attributable to socio-economic factors. Women's economic participation is hindered by low skills, capacities as well as lack of ownership and control over assets. One of the major concerns is the gender gap in educational level of the labour force.

Keywords : Demography, Economic Development, Female Labour force, Work Participation

INTRODUCTION:

The World population has grown significantly during the last three decades. In the growth process of any economy, demographic transition is inevitable. Experience worldwide suggests that demographic transition typically takes place from largely rural agrarian society to a predominantly urban industrial society. The improved infrastructure and healthcare facilities, social security tends to lower the mortality rate. The improved lifestyle and intense competition in the labour market, also means that individuals tend to refrain from increasing the size of family. As a result, the birth rate starts dwindling. The demographic transition, thus, typically occurs from the regime of high fertility and high mortality rates to low fertility and low mortality rates. After demographic transition leads to rise in younger age group and working age group, including female labour force that we call it as demographic dividend. "It is important to realize however that we can only reap this demographic dividend if we invest on human resource development and skill formation in a massive way and create productive employment for our relatively young working". The demographic dividend is defined as a rise in the rate of economic growth due to a rising share of working age people in a population. This phenomenon occurs with a falling birth rate and the consequent shift in the age structure of the population towards the adult working ages. About 1 million Indians are entering the workforce every month and that is expected to continue for another two decades. The Asian Development Bank predicts India, along with Pakistan, the Philippines and Malaysia, will reap a demographic dividend for at least two more decades, while most major economies grapple with ageing populations. The flood of new labour means India's ratio of elderly people. India has a young workforce and population. In the next ten years, with both younger people and women entering the workforce, India expects to add an additional 110 million people to its labour force. About 60% of India's 1.2 billion people are in the working age group. Only 10 per cent of the 300 million children in India between the age of 6 and 16 will pass school and go beyond. Only 5 per cent of India's labour force in the age group 19-24 years is estimated to have acquired formal training. Despite this, our economy

is clocking a 7-8% growth. In India empowerment process of women also leads to female population to enter the job market and also created greater contribution to economic growth.

FEMALE LABOUR FORCE & THEIR WORK PARTICIPATION TREND:

The participation of women in the workforce, the quality of work allotted to them and their contribution to the GDP are indicators of the extent of their being mainstreamed into the economy. In the table No 1 shows the percent of population in the labour force, it is observed that female labour force has been declined in all India level 40% (1983) to 32%(2007/08) and as well as in rural and urban India respectively because of socio-economic factors influence the low participation of female labour force.

Table No 1 : percent of population in the labour force (in % ages 15-59)*

	1983	1993/94	1999/00	2004/05	2007/08
All India	68.3	71.2	62.8	62.5	58.7
Females	40	46.5	38.9	38.6	32*
Males	90.5	90.2	85.6	85.5	84.6
Rural India	70.5	75.5	66.3	65.9	61.7
Females	45.1	53.1	45.2	44.7	37.6
Males	91.1	92	87	86.9	85.6
Urban India	61.8	54.3	54.3	55	52.2
Females	23	23	23	24.3	19.7
Males	88.6	82.4	82.4	82.7	82.5

Source: NSSO

Note: 1. Labourforce refers to the 15-59 age group that reports that they are working or looking for work according to the 'weekly status' definition of employment

2. Surprising drop to 32% may considered an outlier.

Table No 2 shows the female labour force in India. The avail-

able Female labour forces in rural 26.5 % and 14.6% in urban area, male labour force 55.6% rural and 55.9% urban respectively. This shows low participation of female labour force compared to male population. But female work participation is 26.1% in rural and 13.8% in urban area.

Table 2: Participation of female labour force-2009-10

Indicators	Rural			Urban			Total Persons
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Labour force Participation Rate	55.6	26.5	41.4	55.9	14.6	36.2	40.0
Work participation Rate	54.7	26.1	40.8	54.3	13.8	35.0	39.2
Proportion Unemployed	0.9	0.4	0.7	1.6	0.8	1.2	0.8
Unemployed rate	1.6	1.6	1.6	2.8	5.7	3.4	2.0

Source: National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO), 2009-10.

The per 1000 distribution of usually employed by status of employment of women. According 61st NSSO survey shows that women are large number in self employed in both rural and urban, less number in rural for regular wage, 326 (rural) and 167 (Urban) for casual labour. During 2009-10 of 66th round of NSSO survey shows the increasing trend in self employment, regular wage and casual labour. But it is low for available labour force.

INFLUENCING FACTORS ON FEMALE LABOUR FORCE:

Taking into consideration the wage rate of the NSSO at two points of time, it can be observed that the percentage share of the wages of females to those of males has declined over the years in both the formal and informal sectors. Despite the increase in the absolute value of the wage rate for both male and female workers, the relative wage of women to that of men has declined during this period. The labour force participation of females has shown an increasing trend, particularly in the liberalization era, which is recognized by the ILO as one of 'feminization of labour'. Generally, the incidence of women's participation is observed to be high in the low-paid informal sectors and in backward regions. Despite the concerted efforts at various levels to equalize the wage rate for male and females, there are difference in the wage rate by gender, particularly in the backward regions and more so among the less educated and illiterate population. Several research studies have pointed out that on an average, women work longer hours than men but they are paid lower wages than men. The lower wages earned by females may place them in a disadvantage but also from acute poverty, unemployment

and economic independence. Consequently, they suffer not only from a wage disadvantage but also from acute poverty, unemployment and hunger, which, in turn, affect their empowerment and economic independence. The Employment and Unemployment Survey which showed that in the period 2004-05 to 2009-10 women's labour force participation declined from 33.3 per cent to 26.5 per cent in rural areas and from 17.8 per cent to 14.6 per cent in urban areas (NSSO 2011). According to the International Labour Organization's Global Employment Trends 2013 report, India is placed at 120th of 131 countries in women's labour force participation. (R.Lahoti & H.Swaminathan:2013)

The participation rate in the labour market among females is found to be much lower than that of males among all the social groups. The low participation of women is largely attributable to socio-economic factors. These factors include the economic status of the family, the number of siblings at home, location of the job, the type and timings of the job, type of family, migration status, marital status, caste and religion (-Sailabala Devi et al:2010). Women's economic participation is hindered by low skills, capacities as well as lack of ownership and control over assets. One of the major concerns is the gender gap in educational level of the labour force.

In the total population, age group 15 and above, just 47.8% of females were literate compared to 73.4% of males, and out of the total population in India, 61% is literate. Men dominate the numbers of those enrolled in higher educational degrees. Whereas in 2004-05, 60% of the female employed was illiterate and 3.7% were graduates, these shares for the male labour force were about 28% and nearly 8%, respectively. Further, gender disparities are reported in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), with girls accounting for just 7% of enrolment at the secondary level and their courses concentrated in traditional areas such as nursing and sewing. In general, the benefits of vocational training are not immediately apparent. Some 60% of graduates from ITIs are still unemployed three years later, also because they do not derive benefits in entry to higher technical education courses. This needs to be addressed and institutions that have been set up to enhance skills for employability need to be made more sensitive to gender issues.

CONCLUSION:

In India empowerment process of women also leads to female population to enter the job market and also created greater contribution to economic growth. The female labour participation rate is found to be much lower than that of males among all the social groups. In India women mainly work for regular wage and self employment. Empowerment processing strategy creates the women to entrepreneurship; self help groups are created greater hopes to women to self employ and Skill development programmes needs to be provided.

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