

Gender Gap in Labour force Participation and its Impact on Women Improvement

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ABSTRACT

As we approach the middle of 2023, the global economy has resisted slipping into recession, yet the risks to future growth and broad-based prosperity remain many and expected volatility high. Risks include those inherent in ongoing geopolitical conflicts, open questions about the future of trade and global supply chains, large-scale climate events, as well as the disruptive impact of emerging technologies. Many of these risks are expected to have a disproportionately negative effect on women, especially for women in vulnerable situations. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) predicts modest global growth in the near term at 2.8% in 2023, improving marginally in 2024. Yet, further down the line, the World Bank projects falling long-term global economic prospects in the absence of deep structural transformation. Unlocking all talent in the workforce, in innovation and leadership will be critical in brightening the current prospects. This research paper discusses the gender gap in India for women participation and its impact on women.

Keywords: Gender Gap, vulnerable, prospects, structural transformation, workforce

Introduction

The world remains far from achieving the goal of decent work and social justice for all. Nowhere is this shortfall more evident than in the challenges that women face to secure work and earn a living in less developed regions of the world. This topic might seem like an area where novel insights are hard to come by. Indeed, gender inequality has proven to be a stubborn and damaging reality of the global labour market and it has been a key focus of analysis. Nonetheless, new data just published by the ILO show that gender imbalances in access to employment and working conditions are greater than previously thought, particularly in the developing world, and that the pace of progress is disappointingly slow. Beyond unemployment: the jobs gap Estimates of global unemployment are low by historical standards. The global unemployment rate stood at 5.8 per cent in 2022, below the average rates in the two decades before the pandemic, and it is projected to remain at that level in 2023. Moreover, the picture does not

change much when disaggregating unemployment rates by gender or country income group. Estimates range from 4.3 per cent for men in high-income countries to 6.2 per cent. This brief was prepared by Roger Gomis, Paloma Carrillo, Steven K cent for women in lower-middle income countries, a fairly modest gap. Although the unemployment rate is a highly valuable labour market measure, it is also a very restrictive indicator. For this reason, we cannot conclude from unemployment estimates that women and men face the same difficulties in finding jobs. To be considered unemployed, it is not enough to be jobless and have an interest in working. An unemployed person must have been recently seeking work and available to take up a job at very short notice, typically a week. These criteria are less likely to be met by women, for instance due to their disproportionate involvement in unpaid care work. These activities can leave little time for job search and one week is often too short to arrange alternative

care. The ILO has developed a new indicator, the jobs gap, that captures all persons who would like to work but do not have a job. Relaxing the restrictions on search and availability inherent in unemployment statistics results in much higher estimates of labour underutilization. In 2022, the global jobs gap stood at around 473 million people, more than double the unemployment headcount of 205 million. This equates to a jobs gap rate of 12.3 per cent, which represents the share of those who would like to work that are jobless. This new indicator paints a picture of a pervasive lack of employment opportunities around the world, much larger than what the global unemployment rate of 5.8 per cent suggests. Recently, the Tamil Nadu government has launched the Kalaingar Magalir Urimai Thogai Thittam, a women's basic income scheme, recognizing Women's Unpaid Labor. The scheme will provide Rs 1,000 per month to women in eligible households. In Marriages, the wife bears and rears children and minds the home, and therefore bears the brunt of unpaid care and domestic work, hindering their Participation in Labor Force.

Research Methodology

Objectives of Research

The main objectives of the study are:

1. To study **Gender Gap in Labour force Participation of Women in India**
2. To study the impact of women participation

Research Methodology

Methodology of Study In this paper the data is collected secondary in nature. The data related to this above paper is collected from journals, Books, magazines, research papers, publications from ministry of finance, government of India and through internet. In this paper exploratory research is used to present and understand the research topic.

Results and Discussion

Causes of Lower Women Participation in the Labour Force

Patriarchal Social Norms:

- Deep-rooted patriarchal norms and **traditional gender roles often limit women's access to education** and employment opportunities.

- Societal expectations may prioritize **women's roles as caregivers and homemakers**, discouraging their active participation in the labor force.

Gender Wage Gap:

Women in India often face wage disparities compared to men for similar work.

- According to **World Inequality Report, 2022**, men in India **capture 82%** of labour income, while women **earn just 18%**.
- This wage gap can **discourage women from seeking formal employment** opportunities.

Unpaid Care Work:

- The burden of unpaid care and domestic work **falls disproportionately on women**, limiting their time and energy for paid employment.
- Married women in India spend over **7 hours per day on unpaid care** and domestic work, while men spend less than 3 hours.
- This trend is consistent **across income levels and caste groups**, leading to a significant **Gender Disparity** in domestic responsibilities.
- This unequal distribution of household responsibilities can be a significant barrier to women's participation in the labor force.

Social and Cultural Stigma:

In some communities, there may be stigma or resistance associated with women working outside the home, leading to lower labor force participation rates.

Statistics Regarding Unpaid Care of Women: Female Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR):

- Despite a surge in the enrolment rate for girls in Class 10, India's Female LFPR has declined from 30% to 24% over the past two decades.
- The burden of domestic work is a **key factor contributing to lower female LFPR**, even among educated women.
- India's female LFPR (24%) is the **lowest among BRICS** countries and select South Asian countries.
- China, with the highest female population, boasts the highest female LFPR at 61%.

Impact on Women's Employment:

- Women not in the labor force spend the most time on unpaid domestic/care work, averaging 457 minutes (7.5 hours) per day.
- Employed women follow closely, spending 348 minutes (5.8 hours) per day on such chores, impacting their ability to engage in paid work.

Women Labor Participation Impact the Society**Economic Growth:**

- Women's participation in the labor force is **directly linked to economic growth**. When a significant portion of the female population remains **underutilized, it results in a loss of potential productivity** and economic output.
- Increased women's labor force participation can contribute to higher GDP (Gross Domestic Product) and overall economic prosperity.

Poverty Reduction:

When women have access to income-generating opportunities, **it can lift households out of poverty**, leading to better living standards and improved well-being for families.

Human Capital Development:

Educated and economically active women can positively influence the education and health outcomes of their children, leading to intergenerational benefits.

Gender Equality and Empowerment:**List of Major Women Empowerment schemes in India**

The important women empowerment schemes in India are listed below:

Women Empowerment scheme	Launch Year	Objectives
Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme	2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To prevent gender-biased sex selective elimination ● To ensure survival & protection of the girl child ● To ensure education and participation of the girl child
One-Stop both Centre Scheme	2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To provide support and assistance to women affected by violence, in private and public spaces. ● To Facilitate/Assist in filing First Information Report (FIR/NCR) ● To provide psycho-social support and counselling to women/girl
Women Helpline Scheme	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To provide toll-free 24-hours telecom service to women affected by ● To facilitate crisis and non-crisis intervention through referral to the violence. appropriate agencies such as police/Hospitals/Ambulance services/ District Legal Service Authority (DLSA)/Protection Officer (PO)/ OSC.

- Higher women's participation in the labor force can **challenge traditional gender roles and norms**, promoting gender equality.
- Economic empowerment enables women to have greater control over their lives, decision-making power, and autonomy.

Fertility and Population Growth:

- Studies have shown that as women's labor force participation increases, fertility rates tend to decline.
- This phenomenon, known as the "fertility transition," is associated with improved access to education, healthcare, and family planning, leading to more sustainable population growth.

Reduced Gender-Based Violence:

Economic empowerment can enhance women's bargaining power and reduce their **vulnerability to gender-based violence** and abusive relationships.

Labor Market and Talent Pool:

Increasing women's participation in the labor force can help **address skill shortages and labor market imbalances**, leading to a more efficient allocation of talent and resources.

List of Major Women Empowerment schemes in India

The important women empowerment schemes in India are listed below:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To provide information about the appropriate support services, government schemes, and programs available to the woman affected by violence, in her particular situation within the local area in which she resides or is employed.
UJJAWALA	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To prevent the trafficking of women and children for commercial sexual exploitation. ● To facilitate the rescue of victims from the place of their exploitation and place them in safe custody. ● To provide rehabilitation services with both immediate and long-term to the victims by providing basic amenities/needs such as shelter, food, clothing, medical treatment including counseling, legal aid and guidance, and vocational training.
Working Women	1972-73	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To promote the availability of safe and conveniently located accommodation for working women. ● To provide accommodation to children of working women, up to the age of 18 years for girls and up to the age of 5 years for boys.
SWADHAR Greh	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To cater to the primary need for shelter, food, clothing, medical treatment, and care of women in distress. ● To provide women with legal aid and guidance.
Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP)	1986-87	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To provide skills that give employability to women. ● To benefit women in the age group of 16 and above in the country.
Nari Shakti Puraskar	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To strengthen the place of women in society. ● To facilitate institutions that work towards the progress and development of women in society.
Mahila Shakti	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To create an environment for women where they have access to healthcare, quality, education, guidance, employment, etc. ● To facilitate these opportunities at the block and district level in the country.
NIRBHAYA	2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To facilitate safety and security for women at various levels. ● To ensure strict privacy and confidentiality of women's identity and information. ● Provision for real-time intervention as far as possible
Mahila E-Haat	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To facilitate entrepreneurship opportunities online for women. ● To educate women on various aspects of online selling and helping them establish their venture.
Mahila Police Volunteers	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An MPV will serve as a public-police interface in order to fight crime against women. ● The broad mandate of MPVs is to report incidences of violence against women such as domestic violence, child marriage, dowry harassment and violence faced by women in public spaces.

The government of India has taken the safety and empowerment of women and children into serious consideration. The growing injustice towards women had to be minimised, and these schemes are the solutions to the major problems related to women in India.

Women Empowerment in India – Recent News

1. Speaking on the 25th Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Union Minister for Women and Child Development Smriti Irani said at the United Nations that India recognises the centrality of gender equality and women's empowerment in all aspects of developmental agenda. The minister for Women and Child Development Smriti Irani highlighted that more than 200 million women have been brought into the formal banking system through the Government's Financial Inclusion Initiative. Innovative use of digital technologies has provided equal opportunity for women to access insurance, loans, and social assistance.
2. Microsoft on Wednesday announced recently it has collaborated with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) to impart digital skills to more than one lakh underserved women in India. This initiative is an extension of Microsoft's partnership with NSDC to provide digital skills to over 1 lakh youth in the country. The programme will curate a series of live training sessions and digital skilling drives to help create opportunities for young girls and women, particularly first-time job seekers and those whose jobs may have been impacted by COVID-19, to join the future workforce
3. Women's empowerment in India has received more attention in recent years, and one NGO is working to help disadvantaged Indian women achieve financial independence with one specific method: an all-women cab company. The Azad Foundation's Women on Wheels program

empowers impoverished women in India by providing them with a stable source of income and a safe environment where women can travel without fear of being harassed.

Conclusion:

Gender equality discussions should move beyond compartmentalizing women's lives into work and life and recognize the comprehensive valuation of all kinds of work, both formal and informal, that women do. Policy solutions must be derived from women's own negotiations within their cultural context, focusing on increasing autonomy and flexible work options. Promoting and supporting higher women's labor force participation is not only a matter of gender equality but also a crucial driver of societal progress and development. By unlocking the full potential of women in the workforce, societies can reap the benefits of economic growth, poverty reduction, improved human capital, and more inclusive and equitable communities.

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