



### WOMEN WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION AND ECONOMY

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#### Abstract:

*This conference paper persistently attempts to explain the participation of women's workforce to the economy and provide structural suggestions. In this regards the present paper tries to examines the relationship between women's workforce participation and economics. However, there have been applied to bring out major findings. The participation of women in the workforce has a meaningful impact on the economy. As women progressively join the labor market, they contribute to boosted productivity, reduced poverty, and improved overall well-being. Women's economic empowerment leads to better health and education outcomes, creating a positive consequences effect on their families and communities. However, women still face significant challenges in the workforce, including unequal pay, limited access to education and training, and societal norms that can limit their career advancement. Addressing these challenges through supportive policies and initiatives is crucial for promoting women's economic empowerment and unlocking their full potential in the workforce. By doing so, we can create a more representative and Balanced economy that benefits everyone. The findings study further with a range of policy recommendations as promote a mere supportive atmosphere for women's workforce economic participation in India's economy.*

**Key words:** *women, workforce, women's participation, women empowerment , employability, female employment*

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#### Introduction:

This is somewhat fantastical to elaborate on women's work participation since almost women work inside or outside against or without payment for production of self consumption and also for reproduction . The traditional research based view point however despite this and determines to define 'work' in such a manner so as to Eliminate majority of those opera that are generally Achieved by women. Logically level of institutional female Labour supply (or Female Labour Force Participation Rate – FLFPR) is quite decline in developing nations including India, Fluctuating near

half of the corresponding male figures. Since the experimental work of Mimcer (1962), the economic analysis of female's work participation rate interested significant attention. There is also rural-urban divide in terms of female's labor participation rate. Various rounds of national sample survey organization (NSSO) data suggest that rural female's work participation rate is quit high in compare to their urban counterparts. High participation of rural female in work suggests that that they are mostly involved in non-salaried jobs, casual jobs. Prevent nature of such regional and geographical variations is in contrast with



above mentioned considerations of equity and efficiency. Women's workforce participation has a significant impact in shaping the economy. As women contribute to the labor market, they not only enhance their own economic independence but also drive economic growth, innovation, and diversity. Increased participation of women in the workforce can lead to a more skilled and productive workforce, eventually pays off the economy as a whole. Women's workforce participation is a crucial driver of economic growth and development. This study is guided by the Human Capital Framework, which Asserts that investments in education and skills enhance productivity and economic outcomes. Our conceptual framework investigate the correlation between women's workforce participation, enabling factors (education, skills, social support), and economic outcomes (GDP growth, poverty reduction). By Reviewing these progressive, this research expects to contribute to a deeper knowledge of how women's workforce participation can be optimized to promote economic development.

### Review Literature:

The standard of living and women's participation in workforce probably are precisely Associated. Women's participation in workforce enhance the life of standard not for the participating women themselves only but for their families or the households also. This causes to the development in the standard of life in the society comprehensively. The works of Doan and Popkin (1989), Michaelopoulos et al (1992), Oppong (1983), Wong and Levine (1992) have focused on the participation of married women in workforce in the developing nations s. That the single women also come forward to participate in the labourforce is not considered in these studies. The study of Greenhalgh (1988), Salaff (1981), and Wolf(1991) are worth mentioning as they have taken into account the contribution and the role

of single women in the workforce. Seth (2001) examined women development in India. She observed that after years of development efforts, women share in employment has remained low. Most of the women are mainly marginal workers and are concentrated in rural areas and in the private sector. Similarly, the social situation of women is not well. Women infant mortality rates are even now higher than the males. Their improvement in nutrition, health and education is less from the boys. Social development is the foundation to enhance the status of women and giving her more shares of the development efforts. Women have to realize their strength and they should make efforts to increase their economic and political empowerment.

Meyer (2005) examined the effects of economic globalization on occupational sex segregation and occupational inequality. A theory of global economic restructuring and its impact on the quality of women's work suggested that national integration into the world economy significantly expanded opportunities for women in the workplace but did not remove barriers to women's advancement or ameliorate the predominance of low-paying, menial jobs held by women. Two measures of gender occupational differentiation were employed as dependent variables in cross-sectional OLS regression analyses of fifty-six countries using data from 1970–1990. Results indicated that global economic forces reduced occupational sex segregation and inequality. However, these effects were determined by a country's world system position and region. The analysis illustrated that global economic restructuring was a gendered process that transforms and built upon existing gender inequalities. Therefore, the inclusion of global structural characteristics into comparative research on occupational sex differentiation is essential. Bhatia and Dhindsa (2009) analysed that the work

participation circumstances manipulating in case of women workers due to changing living standards and growth of materialisms. More and more women are joining the work force and opt for either jobs or self employment. Women are Working because of gross economic necessity, to raise standard of living, to make use of their qualification, to pass their idle time or to earn their livelihood. Their study took into consideration three aspects of working women: their social features, working characteristics and how work affects their livelihood and decision making authority. Creators found that placement of women in society is the true index of its cultural and spiritual attainments. With the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century the women's movement in India had rapidly spread to every corner making definite efforts in the fields of education and health. Education can be used for authorizing women. Now the literacy rate has also increased among women and the participation of women in commercial activities, particularly outside the home has also improved. Women can become role model to their children but she can do so only if she has her own place and essence in the family and society.

### Objective:

#### 1. Economic growth:-

Women's workforce participation can be a impactful force of economic growth. When more women access the workforce, it enhances the aggregate of obtainbel workers, possibly pioneering g to higher productivity, innovation, and economic output.

#### 2. Gender Equality:

Increasing women's workforce participation is a primary step towards achieving gender equality. It can help to decreases the gender gap in pay and employment etc.

#### 3. Poverty Reduction:

When women are engaged, they can earn wealths that can help lift their families out of poverty.

Moreover, women's economic empowerment can also have a ripple effect on their children's education and well-being, further reducing poverty.

### Current Trends in Women Workforce Participation:

Women's workforce participation in India has displayed Through out the years.

- **Labour force participation Rate (LFPR):** Women's workforce participation in India has shown a significant increase over the years. Here are some current trends
- **Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR):** The LFPR for women aged 15 and above has increased to 37% in 2022-23, up from 23.3% in 2017-18. This indicates more women are actively seeking employment opportunities.
- **Worker Population Ratio (WPR):** The WPR for women aged 15 and above has also increased to 35.9% in 2022-23, up from 22% in 2017-18. This shows a rise in the number of women employed.
- **Employment Sectors:** Women are predominantly employed in:
- **Agriculture:** 9.8% of urban female workers were employed in agriculture in the January-March 2024 quarter.
- **Secondary Sector:** 26.7% of urban female workers were engaged in the secondary sector, including mining, manufacturing, and electricity.
- **Informal Sector:** A significant portion of women work in the informal sector, with 27.5% being own-account workers and 12.6% being unpaid family helpers.
- **Challenges:** Despite the increase in women's workforce participation, there are still challenges such as:



- **Occupational Segregation:** Women are often confined to low-paying, hazardous, and informal jobs.
- **Lack of Safe Public Spaces:** Limited access to safe public spaces and transport hinders women's economic participation.
- **Unpaid Care Work:** Women bear a disproportionate burden of unpaid care work, limiting their ability to participate in the workforce.
- **Government Initiatives:** The government has launched several initiatives to promote women's workforce participation, including:
  - **Aatmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana:** Incentivizes employers to create new employment opportunities.
  - **Prime Minister Street Vendor's AtmaNirbharNidhi:** Provides collateral-free working capital loans to street vendors.
  - **Production Linked Incentive Scheme:** Aims to create 60 lakh new jobs in various sectors.
  - **Skill India and Stand-Up India:** Promotes entrepreneurship and vocational training for women.

### (PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN WORKFORCE):

Years	LFPR (in %)	WPR (in %)
2017-18	23.3	22.0
2018-19	24.5	23.3
2019-20	30.0	28.7
2020-21	32.5	31.4
2021-22	32.8	31.7
2022-23	37.0	35.9

- The table above highlights that the women participation in labour force and the workforce has substantially expanded over the several years.
- **Within the first grouping LFPR (in %) = Labour Force Participation Rate:** The percentage of the working-age population (typically age 15 and above) i.e either working or actively looking.
- Within the second grouping WPR (in %) = Worker Population Ratio: The percentage of the working-age population i.e actually employed.
- Therefore, Both LFPR and WPR have been increasing over the years, examing more people are entering the labor force and more are gainfully employed.

### Short Case Studies:

#### Microfinance:

Access to microfinance can enable women to start small businesses, leading to increased income and workforce participation. For example, an IGC project in India found that access to microfinance loans significantly increased female labor force participation, driven by self-employment.

#### Garment Factories:

Research has shown that female managers in garment factories can improve productivity and reduce worker absenteeism.

#### Education and Skills Training:

Investing in women's education and skills training can equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to enter the formal labor market. This can lead to higher-paying jobs and greater economic opportunities.

**Recommendation:**

Enhancing educational opportunities and training, providing affordable childcare, ensuring maternity protection, promoting flexible work arrangements, and addressing gender-based discrimination.

**Detailed Recommendations:****Education and Skills Development:**

Invest in educational and training programs that are relevant to the current job market requires and cater to women's specific skills development requirements.

**Childcare Support:**

Provide affordable and accessible childcare services to alleviate the burden on women's time and enable them to participate more fully in the workforce.

**Maternity Protection:**

Implement robust maternity protection policies, including paid maternity leave, to ensure that women can return to work without financial strain and continue their career progression.

**Flexible Work Arrangements:**

Encourage and implement flexible work arrangements, such as remote work, flexible hours, and job sharing, to accommodate women's diverse needs and family responsibilities.

**Address Gender Discrimination:**

Actively combat gender-based discrimination in hiring, promotion, and compensation practices to ensure equal opportunities for women in the workplace.

**Policy and Legal Framework:**

Develop and implement gender-responsive policies and legal frameworks that address the specific challenges and barriers faced by women in the workforce.

**Data Collection and Analysis:**

Collect and analyze data on women's employment rates, earnings, and participation in different sectors to identify areas for improvement and inform policy decisions.

**Promote Gender Equality in Education:**

Encourage gender equality in education at all levels, including STEM fields, to broaden women's career choices and increase their representation in high-paying occupations.

**Support for Women Entrepreneurs:**

Provide support and resources for women entrepreneurs, including access to finance, mentorship, and networking opportunities, to promote their business growth and economic empowerment.

**Raise Awareness:**

Conduct awareness campaigns to challenge gender stereotypes and promote gender equality in the workplace and in society.

**Conclusion:**

There is a need to take gradual process to supplement female labour force participation in India with the aim of to realise the abundant social and economic benefits that accrue from greater presence of women in the workforce. It can help India move from women-centric development to women-led development. Increasing women's workforce participation in India is an essential I for financial advancement and overall community development. While there's been a positive trend in recent years, India's female labor force participation rate (LFPR) remains below global averages, highlighting persistent barriers. Addressing these obstacles and creating an enabling environment for women to participate totally in the economy is essential for discovering India's full economic potential and achieving a more equitable and future sustainability.

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