

4.4 Participation in Economy

4.4.1 Greater gender equality can enhance economic productivity, improve development outcomes and make institutions and policies more representative. But the presence of gender disparity in any economy, both developing and developed, requires attention and corrective measures for achieving the overall development in terms of “society”. Women’s economic empowerment is central in realizing women’s rights and gender equality. Women’s economic empowerment includes women’s ability to participate equally in existing markets; their access to and control over productive resources, access to decent work, control over their own time, lives and bodies; and increased voice and meaningful participation in economic decision-making at all levels from the household to international institutions. The full participation and partnership of both women and men is required in productive and reproductive life, including shared responsibilities for the care and nurturing of children and maintenance of the household.

4.4.2 India is celebrating the progressive 75 years after independence under ‘Azaadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav’ and propagating the mission of ensuring women as “Empowered women- Empowered Nation”. Investing in women’s economic empowerment sets a direct path towards gender equality, poverty eradication and inclusive economic growth. Women make enormous contributions to the economy by way of doing businesses, on farms, as entrepreneurs, as employees or by doing unpaid care work at home.

4.4.3 But they also remain disproportionately affected by poverty, discrimination and exploitation. Gender discrimination means women often end up in insecure, low-wage jobs, and only a minority are able to secure senior positions. The lower job position of women curtails access to economic assets such as loans etc. All the other social barriers limits women in activities related to shaping of economic and social policies. Moreover, women perform the bulk of household work, they often have little time left to pursue economic opportunities.

Participation in Work Force

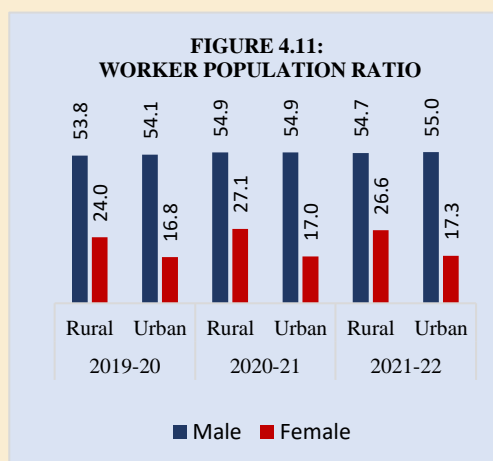
4.4.4 The decision of ability for women to participate in the labour force is the outcome of various economic and social factors that interact in a complex fashion both at the household level and at macrolevel. Based on global evidence, some of the most important drivers include educational attainment, fertility rates and the age of marriage, economic growth/cyclical effects and urbanization. In addition to these issues, social norms (framed by the male dominated community) which determine the role of women in the public domain continue to affect outcomes.

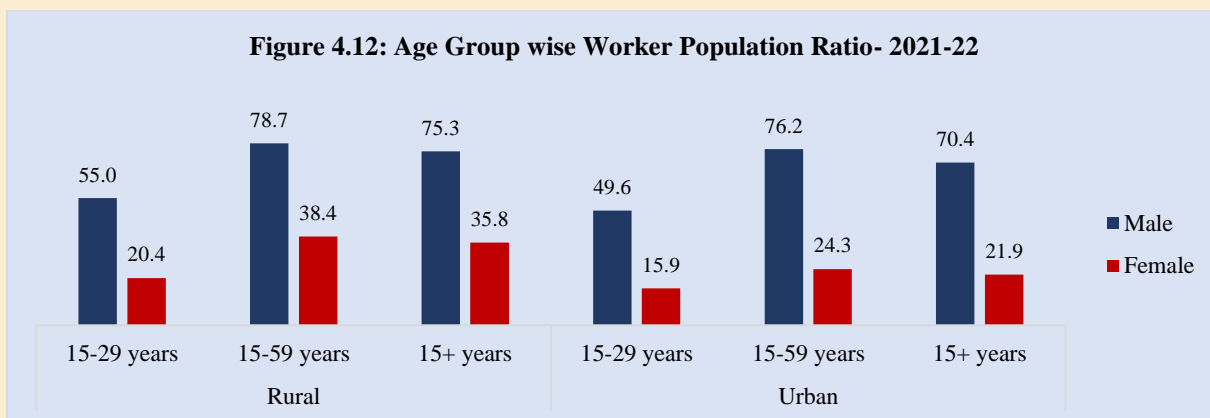
Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) is defined as the percentage of persons in the labour force in the population.

$$LFPR = \frac{\text{No. of Employed Persons} + \text{No. of Unemployed Persons}}{\text{Total Population}} * 100$$

4.4.5 The **Labour Force Participation Rate** indicates the percentage of all people of working age who are employed or are seeking work. The rate excludes individuals who are neither working nor looking for work like students, pensioners, housewives, etc. As per the Periodic Labour Force Survey, LFPR of the persons aged 15 years and above has been increasing from 2017-18 onwards for both male and female population. However, LFPR of female population is far behind than that of male population in the age group of 15 years and above (77.2 for males and 32.8 for females in 2021-22) and the disparity has remained almost the same over the years (**Table 4.1**). The gap in male and female LFPR is wider in urban areas as compared to rural areas. Such a low participation of women as compared to men in India’s labour force may be due to the social factors, educational qualifications and gender discrimination in terms of wages and opportunities at work place.

4.4.6 The **Worker Population Ratio (WPR)** is an indicator used to assess the country's employment situation. The ratio informs us about the proportion of a country's population that actively contributes to the production of goods and services. In 2021-2022, WPR was 54.7 in rural area and 55.0 in urban area for male population but 26.6 & 17.3 respectively for female population. In case of WPR also, disparity between women and men is still high (**Table 4.4**). For the population of age group 15 years and above (**Table 4.5**), WPR was 75.3 in rural area and 70.4 in urban area for male population whereas the ratio stood at 35.8 and 21.9 respectively for female population. It is visible from the data that the situation of women is much lower as compared to men (WPR of female population is less than half that of male in rural areas and in urban areas it is lesser than one-third that of male population). This indicates that the number of working women is far less in comparison to men which could be due to various socio-economic factors mentioned in the preceding paragraphs.





Source: Periodic Labour Force Survey, 2021-22, NSO, MoSPI

4.4.7 Women’s labour force participation and access to decent work are important and necessary elements of an inclusive and sustainable development process. Women continue to face many barriers to enter labour market and to access decent work and disproportionately face a range of multiple challenges relating to access to employment, choice of work, working conditions, employment security, wage parity, discrimination and balancing the competing burdens of work and family responsibilities. In addition, women are heavily represented in the informal economy where their exposure to the risk of exploitation is usually greatest and they have the least formal protection. This wide gap in male and female representation in workforce may be reduced by taking some steps to introduce better incentive mechanism, training, job reservations and safe workplace environment.

4.4.8 Average Wage Earning received per day by Casual Labourers in work other than Public works in different quarters during July 2021 to June 2022 at the national level is given in the table below. **Tables 4.7.1 to 4.7.4** provides this data state-wise. Average wage of women is lower than that of men and the disparity is more in urban than in rural areas. This disparity is found in all occupations (**Tables 4.8.1 to 4.8.4**)

Statement 4.3: Average Wage Earning received per day by Casual Labourers in work other than Public works

Quarter	Rural		Urban	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Jul.-Sep 2021	381	261	450	317
Oct.-Dec. 2021	387	261	466	322
Jan.-Mar. 2022	392	258	473	325
Apr.-Jun. 2022	393	265	483	333

Source: Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), July 2021- June 2022, National Statistical Office, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

4.4.9 Now, if we consider Percentage distribution of Workers according to broad employment status, in rural area major proportion of males (58.6%) and females (67.8%) were self-employed and least were engaged in regular wage/salaried

employment. Though a higher proportion of women than men are self-employed, 42.7% of rural women were helper in household enterprise as compared to just 11% for males. In urban areas, 50.3% of female workers were in regular wage/salary employment (Tables 4.9 and 4.10). Percentage distribution of workers in usual status (ps+ss) by broad industry division in 2020-21 is as below (Table 4.11 may be referred to for time series data):

Statement 4.4: Percentage distribution of workers in usual status (ps+ss) by broad industry division

Broad Industry Division	2021-22			
	Rural		Urban	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Agriculture	51.0	75.9	5.4	11.1
Mining & Quarrying	0.4	0.1	0.4	0.1
Manufacturing	7.9	7.9	21.5	24.3
Electricity, Water, etc.	0.5	0.1	1.4	0.5
Construction	16.6	5.3	12.9	3.9
Trade, Hotel & restaurants	10.6	3.7	25.2	14.8
Transport, Storage & Communications	5.6	0.3	12.5	4.6
Other Services	7.5	6.8	20.7	40.7

Source: Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), July 2021- June 2022, National Statistical Office, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

4.4.10 It is evident from the table above that agriculture is the major source of employment in rural areas wherein three-fourth of the total female workers and half of the male workers are engaged. In Construction, Trade, Hotel & Restaurants proportion of male workers was more than that of female workers. In Urban areas, greater proportion of female workers (65%) were engaged in other services and manufacturing and major proportion of male workers were engaged in manufacturing, trade, hotel & restaurant and other services. It can also be seen that in agricultural sector and other services, more women were engaged as compared to men whereas in construction, Trade, Hotel & Restaurants, Transport, Storage & Communications, more men were engaged than women. Surprisingly, a greater proportion of urban females are engaged in manufacturing than the urban males.

4.4.11 While no single number captures all the nuances in the health of the labour market, the unemployment rate is considered one of the most important economic indicators. The unemployment rate is a useful measure of the underutilization of the labour supply. It is by definition those persons who want to work but are not doing so, even though they are available for employment and actively seeking work, thus reflecting the inability of an economy to generate suitable employment.

Unemployment Rate (UR) is defined as the percentage of persons unemployed among the persons in the labour force.

$$UR = \frac{\text{No. of Unemployed Persons}}{\text{No. of Employed Persons} + \text{No. of Unemployed Persons}} * 100$$

4.4.12 Table 4.13 shows that in rural area female unemployment rate has been lower than that of male over the years while in urban area, the scenario is other way round. One key reason behind such data may be that lower number of females seek work in rural areas and there are more opportunities for work in agricultural and other informal sector in rural areas. Further such opportunity may not be available for women in urban area. It needs to be highlighted that unemployment rate is the maximum for urban females in the 15-29 years' age group followed by urban males in that age group (**Table 4.14**). When we look in to the state wise unemployment rate for the year 2021-22(**Table 4.15**), in Rural India, Unemployment Rate is the lowest in Jharkhand (1.2) followed by Sikkim & Madhya Pradesh (1.3 each) and Meghalaya & Chhattisgarh (1.5 each). In Urban India, the lowest Unemployment Rate can be seen in Gujarat (2.8) followed by Sikkim (3.0), Tripura (4.3) and West Bengal (4.4). In all the States in urban areas, unemployment rate of female is more than that of male except Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal whereas in rural areas, female unemployment rate is less than that of male in most states/UTs.

Time Disposition

4.4.13 LFPR and WPR of women is far below that of men. These rates do not cover the invisible work of women like unpaid household work and care giving work. This, although unpaid and hence is not part of national accounting, is equally important for sustenance of the economy. It is measured through time use surveys which capture disposition of time on various activities, be it paid or unpaid. Importance of time use statistics is highlighted by the SDG target 5.4: **Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the**

household and the family as nationally appropriate. To measure the invisible work of women, “Time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location” is included as one of the indicators in the SDGs.

4.4.14 Time Use Survey was conducted by MoSPI in 2019. It includes information on the time spent in unpaid caregiving activities, volunteer work, unpaid domestic service producing activities of the household members. It also provides information on time spent on learning, socializing, leisure activities, self-care activities, etc., by the household members. As per this survey 81% of females engaged themselves in unpaid domestic services for household members devoting 5 hours per day (**Table 4.16 and 4.17**). This percentage is still higher at 92 for the age group 15-59 years. Even in the ages of 60 years and above, 78% of women rendered this service. Against these, only 29% of the males in the age group 15-59 years involved themselves in unpaid domestic services for household members. Proportion of women engaged in unpaid care giving services is also twice (33%) that of men (16%) in this age group. Interestingly, a higher proportion of older (60+) men engaged themselves in unpaid domestic services (35%) compared to those in the 15-59 years age group (29%) (**Table 4.18**). It is very clear that a large proportion of women in the working age group have to engage themselves in unpaid services for household members spending more than six hours in a day. This, in a way limits their access to paid work. This is also evidenced by the fact that average time spent in a day on unpaid domestic services is the maximum for women not in labour force.

4.4.15 The activities covered in the survey also include learning. It covers formal and non-formal education, private studies, courses taken in relation to hobbies, sports, yoga etc and travel time related to learning. In the 6-14 years of age group, while an almost equal proportion of males and females participated in learning activities but in the age group of 15-29 years, there is a drastic decline in the percentage of persons participating in learning activities, irrespective of location/ sex and the decline is more for females in rural areas. There is hardly any difference between males and females in the average time spent on learning activities for both the age groups in rural and urban areas. However, in 15-29 age group, average time spent by urban female participants is 429 minutes per day as against 448 by male participants. (**Table 4.19**)

Method of deriving time spent per participant and per person:

1. Average time spent per participant in an activity (say, activity A)

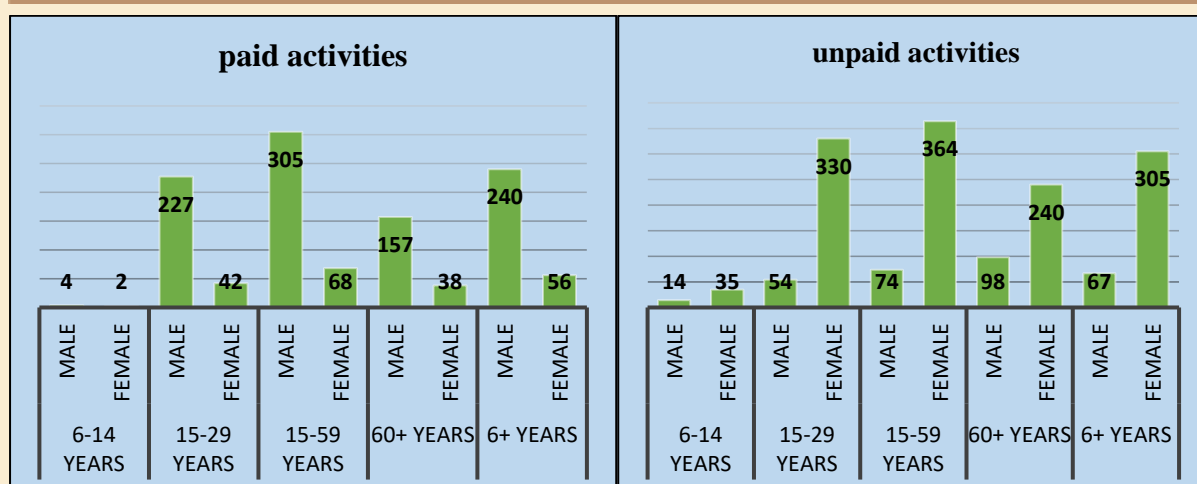
$$\frac{\text{total time spent by the participants in activity 'A'}}{\text{total number of persons participating in activity 'A'}}$$

2. Average time spent per person in an activity (say, activity 'A')

$$\frac{\text{total time spent by the participants in activity 'A'}}{\text{total number of persons}}$$

4.4.16 Activities covered have been grouped into paid, unpaid and residual other activities. At All-India level, male population of age 6 years and above spent 67 minutes in unpaid activities, 240 minutes in paid activities and 1133 minutes in residual other activities (self-development/ self-care/ self-maintenance etc.) while female population spent 305 minutes in unpaid activities, 56 minutes in paid activities and 1079 minutes in residual other activities. These numbers are self-explanatory that women spent more time in unpaid activities than men and men devote more time on self-care and self-development than women. Though men spend more time on paid activity than women, if we look at any activity irrespective of paid or unpaid, then more time is spent by women than men. Also, women spending 1/4th of the time spent by men in paid activities indicate the low participation of women in the employment sector. (**Table 4.20**)

Figure 4.13: Average time (in minutes) spent in a day per person in paid/unpaid activities



Source: Time Use Survey, 2019, MoSPI

4.4.17 Percentage share of average time spent on these activities out of the total time in a day per person shows that percent share of time spent on residual other activities

was more for males (79.1%) than females (74.1%) in rural areas, the difference being more prominent in the 15-29 years age group. It was almost the same in urban areas.

4.4.18 When the unpaid activities are further disaggregated as those in SNA production and non-SNA production, it is seen that activities among the total paid and unpaid activities on which a major part of time is spent by females fall under Non-SNA production. At all-India level, in SNA production unpaid activities, men spent 29 minutes while women spent 24 minutes. In Non-SNA production unpaid activities, men spent 38 minutes while women spent 281 minutes of a single day. (**Table 4.21**).