



## EPFO's Employer Rating Survey

**For Prelims:** EPFO's Employer Rating Survey, [Employees' Provident Fund Organisation \(EPFO\)](#), Women in the Workforce for Viksit Bharat, [Prevention of Sexual Harassment \(POSH\)](#), [Periodic Labour Force Survey \(PLFS\)](#), Gender Disparity.

**For Mains:** EPFO's Employer Rating Survey, Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes.

[Source: IE](#)

### Why in News?

Recently, the [Employees' Provident Fund Organisation \(EPFO\)](#) and the **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD)** have jointly launched the **Employer Rating Survey** to assess and encourage employers' support for increasing women's participation in the workforce.

### What is an Employees' Provident Fund Organisation?

- It is a government organization that manages provident fund and pension accounts for the workforce engaged in the **organised sector in India**.
- It implements the Employees' Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952.
  - The Employees' Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 provides for the institution of provident funds for employees in factories and other establishments.
- It is **administered by the Ministry of Labour & Employment**, Government of India.
- It is **one of the World's largest Social Security Organisations** in terms of clientele and the volume of financial transactions undertaken.

### What are the Key Aspects of the Employer Rating Survey?

- **About:**
  - The employer rating survey was launched at an event **"Women in the Workforce for Viksit Bharat"** by the EPFO (Ministry of Labour and Employment) and the MoWCD.
  - The survey's data and feedback from female employees aim to offer valuable insights for informed policymaking on women's workforce participation.
  - The primary objective of the **survey is to evaluate and rate employers** based on their commitment and support for women's participation in the workforce. This involves **assessing the measures and facilities provided by employers** to create an environment conducive to women's employment.
- **Rating Employers:**
  - The survey involves rating employers based on **their support for women's participation** in the workforce. It serves as a tool to **gauge the progress and efforts of**

**employers** in creating an inclusive work environment.

▪ **Questionnaire:**

- The survey has a detailed **questionnaire seeking organisation details**, including whether the company provides an **Internal Complaints Committee** for addressing **Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH)** formalities, crèche facilities for children, and **transportation facilities during late hours**.
  - The EPFO has distributed the questionnaire to its approximately 300 million customers nationwide, making it a comprehensive effort to gather data on a large scale.

▪ **Equal Pay for Equal Work:**

- The survey has also sought **answers on whether there is 'equal pay for equal work'** for male and female workers along with a query on the availability of flexible or remote working hours for women.

## Note

As per the EPFO's Annual Report for 2022-23, there are 29.88 crore members across 21.23 lakh establishments under the ambit of the retirement fund body.

## What is the State of Women's Labour Force Participation in India?

- Women's **Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)** has improved over the last few years but much of this increase has been seen in the **unpaid work category**.
  - LFPR is the percentage of the working-age population (aged 15 years and above) that is either employed or unemployed, but willing and looking for employment.
- As per the **Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS)**, the female participation rate rose to 27.8% in 2022-23 from 17.5% in 2017-18, but a **major chunk of this is of the women** reported as "helpers in household enterprises", who do **not receive any regular salary for their work**.
  - **LFPR for male** in India increased from 75.8% in 2017-18 to 78.5% in 2022-23 and corresponding increase in **LFPR for females** was from **23.3% to 37.0%**.

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## What are the Causes of Lower Women's 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 **prioritise women's roles as caregivers** and homemakers, discouraging their active participation in the labour 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 labour force participation rates.

## How can Higher Women Labor Participation Impact the Society at Large?

- **Economic Growth:**
  - Women's participation in the labour force is **directly linked to economic growth**. When a significant portion of the female population remains underutilised, it results in a **loss of potential productivity and economic output**.
  - Increased women's labour 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:**
  - Higher women's participation in the labour 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**.
    - Economic empowerment can enhance women's bargaining power and reduce their vulnerability to gender-based violence and abusive relationships.
- **Fertility and Population Growth:**
  - Studies have shown that as **women's labour 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.
- **Labor Market and Talent Pool:**
  - Increasing women's participation in the labour force can help address skill shortages and labour market imbalances, leading to a more efficient allocation of talent and resources.

## What are the Initiatives Taken to Safeguard the Employment of Women?

- **Labour Codes:**
  - [Code of Wages, 2019](#)
  - [Industrial Relations Code, 2020](#)
  - [Social Security Code, 2020](#)
  - [Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020](#)
- **Other Schemes:**
  - [Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme](#)
  - [One Stop Centre Scheme](#)
  - [SWADHAR Greh](#)
  - [NARI SHAKTI PURASKAR](#)

- [Mahila police Volunteers](#)
- [Mahila Shakti Kendras \(MSK\)](#)
- [NIRBHAYA Fund.](#)

## Way Forward

- Gender equality discussions should move beyond compartmentalising 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 negotiations within their cultural context**, focusing on increasing autonomy and flexible work options.
- Promoting and supporting higher women's labour force participation is not only a matter of gender equality but also a crucial driver of societal progress and development.

## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

### **Prelims**

**Q. Which of the following gives 'Global Gender Gap Index' ranking to the countries of the world? (2017)**

- (a) World Economic Forum
- (b) UN Human Rights Council
- (c) UN Women
- (d) World Health Organization

**Ans: (a)**

### **Mains**

**Q. "Empowering women is the key to control the population growth." Discuss. (2019)**

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/epfo-s-employer-rating-survey>