



Original Article

A Study of Labour Work Force Participation in Mumbai

Sindhu M. R.

Economics, Chikitsak Samuha's Patkar-Varde College, S. V. Road, Goregaon (West), Mumbai

Manuscript ID:

IBMIIRJ -2025-020306

Submitted: 02 Feb 2025

Revised: 25 Feb 2025

Accepted: 25 Mar 2025

Published: 31 Mar 2025

ISSN: 3065-7857

Volume-2

Issue-3

Pp. 29-31

March 2025

Correspondence Address:

Sindhu M. R.

Economics, Chikitsak Samuha's

Patkar-Varde College, S. V. Road,

Goregaon (West), Mumbai

Email: sindhuravi21@gmail.com



Quick Response Code:



Web: <https://ibrj.us>



DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.15421911

DOI Link:

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15421911>



Creative Commons

Abstract

Mumbai the financial capital of India, has a large and diverse labour market. Understanding about the unemployment rate in Mumbai, trends, patterns, gender wise work participation rate is very important and useful for the policy makers to plan effective strategies for economic development, decisions on education, providing infrastructural facilities and social services. It also helpful for the business men, and researchers. Large work force in a country shows increased productivity and output. For analysing the employment and unemployment the labour force participation rate is a useful metric because it measures the number of people who are actively looking for a job as well and the persons who are currently employed /self-employed. It also insights about the demographic trends such as gender, working age population and basic education levels of citizens. Measuring the Labour force participation rate identify the problems of social exclusion of women, youth and marginal workers and non- workers. It also contributes to the comparisons between other regions, states, or countries. Using secondary data source like Census Mumbai 2011, Mumbai HDR 2009, the present paper aims to capture the female literacy rate in Mumbai and it analyses the gender wise work participation rate in Mumbai. The results shows that the unemployment rate for male shows a decreasing trend whereas unemployment rate for female shows an increasing trend.

Keywords: Work Participation, Female Literacy, Unemployment, Working Population, Marginal Workers, Literacy Gap

Introduction

The percentage of total workers to total population is known as the labour force participation rate. It is similarly calculated for both main and marginal workers in total population. There has been no change in defining the workers according to Census 2001 and 2011. According to the 2011 Census report, population is classified in to main workers, marginal workers, and non-workers, which was adopted for 2001 also. Marginal workers are those worked up to 3 months only. The main factors for such a classification are nature of one's activity and extent of labour participation in economically productive works. The important factors that affect the distribution of population under the categories of main workers, marginal workers, and non-workers are the level of economic development of different regions/district, within the territories, availability, and access of opportunities, apart from this willingness to work especially among women, initiative and entrepreneurship by men and women, etc. Women empowerment is an affirmative action which can be effectively used to achieve gender equality. It is one of the Millennium Development Goals by UNDP. Female literacy rate is one of the components of economic development of a country. Literacy rate of Mumbai District in 2001 was 86.4 %. According to 2011 Census, the literacy rate of Mumbai District is 89.2% (excluding 0-6 age group). Literacy gap between male- and female has been reduced. According to 2011 Census it is 5 points, as it was 8.8 points in 2001 Census. Mumbai showing progressive trend in female literacy; In 2001 it was 688 women per thousand literate men which is increased to 779 in 2011. By analysing LFPR and gender literacy status we can understand the unemployment situation in Mumbai District.

Objectives:

1. To analyse the gender work participation rate in Mumbai District
2. To understand the progress of female literacy in Mumbai District

Methodology and Data Base Used For the Study

Creative Commons (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

This is an open access journal, and articles are distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International Public License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/), which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work noncommercially, as long as appropriate credit is given and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.

How to cite this article:

R., S. M. (2025). A Study of Labour Work Force Participation in Mumbai. *Insight Bulletin: A Multidisciplinary Interlink International Research Journal*, 2(3), 29–31. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15421911>

Methodology and the data base for this study is secondary data collected from various Census Report released by Government of India and PRESS NOTE Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) – Annual Report [July,23 – June 24], NSSO (2010) Employment and Unemployment Situation in India 2007-08, Maharashtra Arth sankalp Niyampustika, Vol.1, the Economic Survey of Maharashtra.

Objective 1: To analyse the gender work participation rate in Mumbai District

The Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) is calculated by dividing the labour force (unemployed and employed persons) by the total working-age population multiplied by 100. Those expresses the total portion of work -eligible citizens that are active participants in the labour force.

$$\text{Labor Force Participation Rate} = \frac{\text{Labor Force}}{\text{Working-Age Population}} * 100$$

Census of India defined the term ‘work’ as the labour force work participation in any economically justified productive activities with or without wage, profit, or compensation. From 1981 Census onwards, the workers are divided into two categories as ‘main worker’ (those who worked for 6 months or more) and ‘marginal workers’ (those who had not worked for 6 months or more) One year is the reference period to determine a person as worker or non-worker and population under the age group of 0-4 years is treated as non-workers (includes students, housewives, retired persons, beggars, prostitutes, aged persons etc.).The trend in work participation shows that the female participation has increased.

Work Participation Rate in Mumbai, 1981-2001

Census Years	Total Work Participation (in numbers)			Work Participation Rate (In %)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1981	2579978	322221	2902199	55.45 (0.59)	8.97 (0.41)	35.21 (0.51)
1991	3007332	492010	3499342	55.08 (0.76)	11.02 (0.52)	35.25 (0.65)
2001	3764550	699698	4464248	56.87 (2.59)	13.06 (01.32)	37.27 (2.02)

*Figure in bracket shows per centage of Marginal Workers to total population.

Source: Census of India, 1981 to 2001.

The fact we can see in the above able is that the proportion of marginal workers to total population showing a significant increase in the Census 2001 compared to the years 1981 and 1991 for both male and female workers in Mumbai. The factors which lead to the increase in female work participation rate could be due to the creation of large number of employment opportunities in the service sector, like banking, telecommunication, infrastructure, trade and commerce activities which are more women-friendly now.

Labour Force Participation Rates by Gender, - Mumbai 1981– 2011

Census Year	Work Participation Rates	
	Males (%)	Females (%)
1981	57.90	9.90
1991	56.70	12.00
2001	59.20	13.70
2011	60.60	18.80

Source: Census of India, 1981-2011

The work participation rate for males has increased to 60.6 percent in 2011 Census from 57.9 percent in 1981.Female work participation rate showing an increasing trend from 9.90 percent to 18.80 percent. If we compare to the 1981 Census, the female work participation rate is doubled.

From these figures, we can understand that both male and female work participation rate and employment rate is improved in Mumbai. In early 1990's it was less.

Objective 2: To understand the progress of female literacy in Mumbai District

Female literacy refers to the percentage of girls/women among those aged 15 and above, who can read and write. It is easy for a literate woman to take care of the health, nutrition, financial needs, and education of their household members. She can spread the value of education and financial independency and its importance to her family members and to the society.

The female literacy rate can be calculated using the total number of literate women in a specific age group (15 years and above) divided by the total number of women (total women population) in that age group, (15 years and above) multiplied by 100. Following formula can be used for measuring literacy rate.

Female literacy rate = (Number of female literates / Total number of female population) x 100

According to Census Report the literacy rate of Mumbai District in 2001 was 86.4 percent. According to census 2011, the literacy rate in Mumbai was 91% for males and 86% for females. The literacy rates in Mumbai were higher across genders when compared to other districts of Maharashtra. Literacy rates in Mumbai and its suburban areas are higher than the average of Maharashtra at 82.3%. Comparative analysis of the literacy rates gives a better understanding regarding the literacy rate in Maharashtra State. It shows the progressive growth in female literacy in Mumbai. As per 2001 Census Report, there were 688 women per thousand literate which has been increased to 779 as per Census Report 2011.

Progress of Female Literacy In Mumbai 1991 – 2011

Census year	Number of Literates			Percentage of literates		Literacy rate Gap between male female
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	
1991	1402399.00	940313.00	2342712.00	88.90	76.90	12.00
2001	1535176.00	1055437.00	2590613.00	90.20	81.40	8.80
2011	1410680.00	1098342.00	2509022.00	91.50	86.50	5.00

Source: Census of India, 1991- 2011

Above data is collected from Census of India 1991-2011. It is clear from the data that literacy rate of male has been increased to 91% as per 2011 Census whereas it was 88% in 1991 Census. It shows a remarkable achievement in the female literacy rate in Mumbai district. Women literacy rate shows a progress from 76% to 86% in 2011 Census. Literacy gap is a powerful indicator of understanding the educational attainment, women empowerment in an economy. Data from various Census Report showing that the literacy gap between male and female in Mumbai district showing a decreasing trend which is appreciable. According to 2011 Census Report, the literacy gap between male and female in Mumbai reduced to 5.00 point whereas it was 8.8 and 12.00 point in 2001 and 1991 respectively.

Conclusion

From the study we can understand that the female participation in the total labour force is remains lower than male participation. Because mostly women are engaged in the unpaid work, such as house chores, services to family members, taking care of the whole family etc; and if she is in paid work, they are over represented in the unorganised sector / informal sector. Women also face differences and inequality in wage distribution vis-à-vis their male counterparts. The LFPR is lowest for urban female when compared to urban male. During the year 2011-12, the unemployment rate for women in rural area was 2.9% and 2.1% for men. whereas it was 6.6% for women & 3.2% for men in urban area. As per the 4th Employment -Unemployment Survey, the unemployment rate (aged 15 years and above) for females is 4.9% as compared to 2.9% for males in Mumbai. But it is appreciable that Mumbai is showing a progress in female literacy.

Acknowledgement

I am Sindhu M. R, thankful to Dr. Balaji Suryawanshi, HOD, Department of Economics, Patkar-Varde College, Goregoan, Mumbai for the support and invaluable insights, throughout my entire research process.

Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

References:

1. Census of India, 1981 Provisional Population Totals: State of Maharashtra
2. Census of India, 1991 Provisional Population Totals: State of Maharashtra
3. Census of India, 2001 Provisional Population Totals: State of Maharashtra
4. Census of India, 2011 Provisional Population Totals: State of Maharashtra
5. Government of India (2001) – Census of India 2001 General Population Tables, Office of the Registrar General, Min. of Home Affairs, Govt. of India.
6. Annual Report of Ministry 2000 - 2001
7. NSSO (2010) Employment and Unemployment Situation in India 2007-08, NSS 64th round (July 2007 – June 2008), New Delhi: Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation, Government of India
8. Jindal A, Pandey N, Female Literacy: A Success Story of Maharashtra, Variorum, Multidisciplinary E-Research Journal Vol.-02, Issue-I, August 2011.
9. Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), JULY 2020 - JUNE 2021
10. PRESS NOTE Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) – Annual Report [July, 2023 – June, 2024]
11. Maharashtra Arth Sankalp Niyampustika, Vol.1, Para No.139 the Economic Survey of Maharashtra