



Fresh employment opportunities have opened up for women

 sanskritiias.com/current-affairs/fresh-employment-opportunities-have-opened-up-for-women



(Mains GS 1 & 2 : Role of women and women’s organisations, population and associated issues, poverty and developmental issues, urbanisation, their problems and remedies & Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources)

Context:

A large proportion of women engaged in providing health and personal care which have always been an integral part of the economy and have been on the front lines during the pandemic.

Targeted strategies:

- The large-scale adoption of digital and smartphone technologies and the increased need for personal care for the sick, elderly and children have opened up employment opportunities, especially for women.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has further augmented the need for health and personal care, thus opening up more employment opportunities.
- Thus India needs to take concerted efforts and targeted strategies along with a change in attitudes, for women to take advantage of these new labour market opportunities.
- Access to higher education, skill training and digital technology are the three great enablers in helping India reap the potential of its female labour force.

Increase FLFP:

- The participation of women in the workforce in India has remained low as in 2019, 21% of women were either working or looking for work, compared to 32% in 2005.
- India's female labour force participation (FLFP) rate is the lowest among the BRICS countries and is also lower than some of its neighbours in South Asia such as Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.
- Increasing FLFP in India is crucial not just to achieve economic growth but also to promote inclusive growth and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Significant part:

- India's population is among the youngest in the world and in 2020, the median age in India was about 29; thus, women and girls form a significant part of India's demographic dividend.
- However, their inability to stay employed or, at times, take up employment due to economic and social factors at both the household and macro level has been a challenge for the labour market and economy.
- Countries like China, Singapore, Taiwan and South Korean are examples of how the demographic dividend can be reaped to achieve fast-paced economic growth.

Employment potential:

- According to United Nations Women estimates, women make up a significant proportion of all healthcare workers and more than 80% of nurses and midwives.
- Women also form a significant proportion of the workforce in the education sector in India, especially in primary education and early childhood care.
- The care service sector, which includes health, education, and other personal care services, is more labour-intensive than sectors such as manufacturing, construction or other service sectors where the employment potential gets affected due to factors such as the introduction of tools, technology and increased mechanisation.

Greater investment:

- Greater investment in better health and care facilities improve the well-being of India's people and hence their economic productivity.
- Global evidence documented by the International Labour Organization (ILO) also suggests that it will lead to more employment opportunities for women.
- The ILO Report on Care work and Care Jobs for the Future of Decent Work: Key findings in Asia and the Pacific (2018) indicated that increasing investment in the care economy has the potential to generate a total of 69 million jobs in India by 2030.

- Investments to set up child care services through collaborative models in office complexes and with industry associations in industrial corridors are important.
- Such initiatives can significantly support women in managing their care responsibilities, enabling them to devote sufficient time to paid employment.

Gig economy and women:

- The gig economy comprises platforms that offer innovative solutions in different sectors such as transport, retail, personal and home care and India has emerged as one of the largest countries for gig and platform work.
- Digital platforms in India have thrived as a result of the increasing use of smartphones, the low cost of Internet and other initiatives under the Digital India campaign.
- The gig economy has demonstrated resilience even during the pandemic, with platform workers playing an indispensable role in urban India.
- Studies indicate that women appreciate the income-generating potential of the gig economy and the ILO Global Survey (2021) noted that working from home or job flexibility are particularly important for women.

Towards encouragement:

- Women and girls' access to higher education (beyond secondary education) and skill training is critical to improve their employment outcomes.
- Women and their families need to be motivated to take up higher education through incentives such as scholarships as well as transport and hostel facilities.
- Enabling women to acquire both physical assets (through credit facilities, revolving funds, etc.) and employable skills is crucial for them to take up employment opportunities in new and emerging sectors.
- Skill training of women in job roles aligned to the gig, platform and care sectors as well as other emerging sectors such as those covered under the Production-Linked Incentive Scheme needs to be encouraged.
- Online skill training can also be beneficial to women who face constraints in physical mobility due to social norms, domestic responsibilities or concerns over safety.
- India needs training programmes with well-defined outcomes for women's digital access and to mentor them to take up employment opportunities in emerging sectors.
- Under cooperative federalism, for India to reap the potential of its FLFP, constant dialogue and engagement with the States on action strategies will be required.

Conclusion:

- Governments, skill training partners, private firms, corporates and industry associations as well as civil society organisations all need to come together to create enabling measures for women.
- Thus, policies supporting the expansion of care services along with gig and platform sectors can serve as an effective strategy to strengthen aggregate demand, while simultaneously improving long-term economic growth, gender equality and societal well-being.

IAS / PCS
Online Video Course

सामान्य अध्ययन
+
वैकल्पिक विषय
(इतिहास एवं भूगोल)



15% Discount for Next 500 Students

IAS / PCS
Pendrive Course

सामान्य अध्ययन
+
वैकल्पिक विषय
(इतिहास एवं भूगोल)



15% Discount for Next 500 Students