India’s Female Labour Force Participation

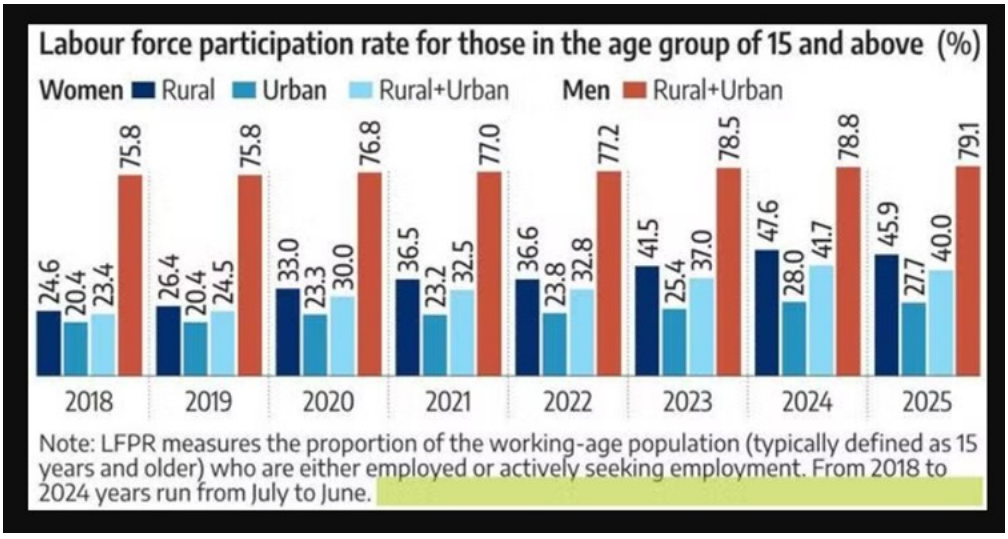
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Why in News?

Women’s workforce participation has increased, but the quality of employment remains skewed, with many engaged in unpaid or low-value roles rather than secure, productive jobs.

Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)

- It is a key economic indicator that measures the ***percentage of the working-age population*** (15 years and above in India’s PLFS (Periodic Labour Force Survey) that is either employed or unemployed.
- It is a key economic indicator of how much of the population is engaged in the labour market.
- **Overall LFPR -** 60.1%.
- **Male LFPR –** Still far higher, leaving a 60% gap in women’s presence in the job market.
- **Female LFPR –** Rose to 40% in 2025, driven mainly by rural areas.

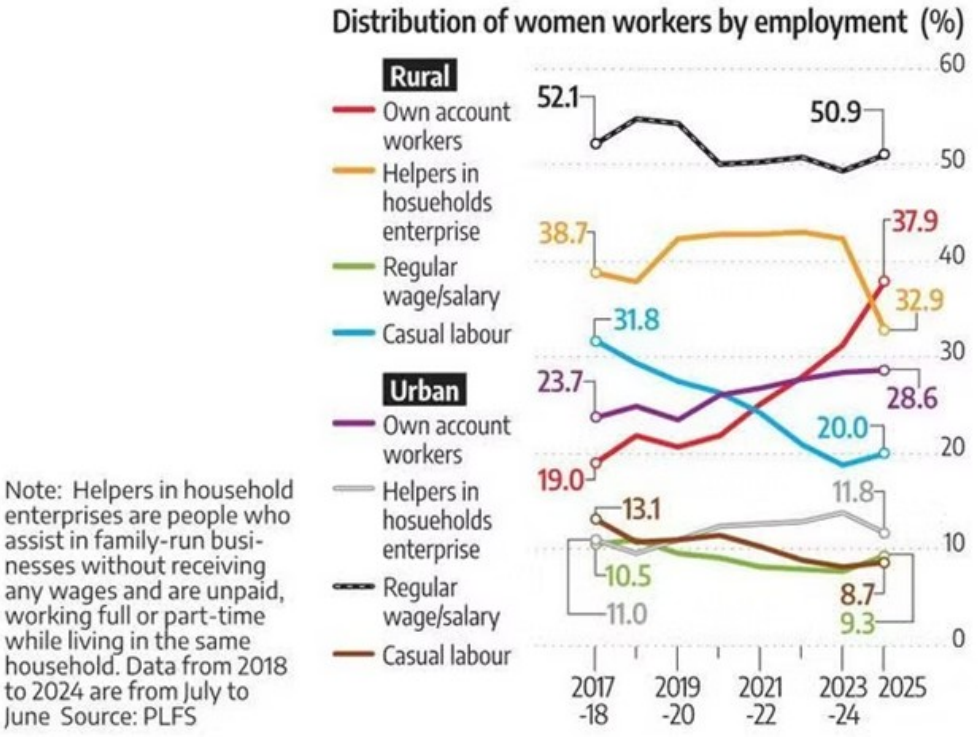


Reasons for Skewed Participation

- **Nature of Work –** Much of the rise reflects informal or distress-driven

work, not quality employment.

- **Unpaid Helper Roles –** Women concentrated in family-based agriculture or enterprises.
- **Self-Employment Dominance –** Limited access to regular salaried jobs, especially in rural areas.
- **Urban Exclusion –** Urban women face higher barriers to paid work despite education gains.
- **Domestic Burden –** Share of women in unpaid domestic duties remains high at **37.4%**.



Solutions

- **Policy Interventions –** Strengthen schemes like *Mahila Shakti Kendras*, expand crèches under *National Creche Scheme*.
- **Skill Development –** Focused training in digital economy, green jobs, and entrepreneurship.
- **Infrastructure –** Safe transport, workplace childcare, flexible work arrangements.
- **Legal Measures –** Enforce equal pay, expand maternity/paternity leave, incentivize women's hiring in formal sector.
- **Social Change –** Awareness campaigns to reduce unpaid domestic burden and redistribute household work.

Reference

[Business Standard | Datanomics]