Women in Blue Collar Jobs

Why in the News?

A recent study finds that Women hold just one in five blue-collar jobs.

> *The term blue-collar worker refers to individuals who engage in hard manual labor, typically in the agriculture, manufacturing, construction, mining, or maintenance sectors of the economy.*

- **Covered Industries -** Across 14 industries, including automobile, BFSI, e-commerce, travel & hospitality, FMCG, and manufacturing.
- **Covered Cities** - Bengaluru, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Chandigarh, Delhi-NCR, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai and Pune.
- **Recent Findings -** While 73% of the surveyed employers said they hired women for blue-collar roles in 2024, female participation ***remained stagnant at 20%*** across India.
- Industries such as retail (32%), healthcare and pharmaceuticals (32%), construction and real estate (30%), and travel and hospitality (28%) showed ***increased female*** representation.
- However, telecommunications, BFSI, and IT/ITeS lagged, with female participation ***below 10%.***
- **Upcoming Demand -** During the survey, 78% of employers revealed plans to hire more women in blue-collar roles in 2025, an encouraging 5% increase in hiring intent compared to 2024.
- Industries like retail (94%), healthcare and pharma (93%), and e-commerce (93%) showed the strongest demand.
- **The Reality Gap -** As per the survey, while more women are seeking blue-collar jobs primarily for financial independence (70%), workplace realities remain harsh.
- It identified 3 major challenges that continue to push women to the margins.
    - Rigid work schedules,
    - Wage inequality, and
    - Lack of upskilling opportunities.
- More than half of the surveyed women cited a *lack of flexible shifts* as a barrier.
- Several blue-collar jobs often demanded strict shift timings, making it difficult for women to balance work and personal responsibilities.
- Around 42% of women reported being *underpaid compared to their male counterparts*, with fewer opportunities for promotions.
- In industries like automobile, FMCG, and travel & hospitality, more than half of the women surveyed felt their wages did not reflect their work.
- Every second woman surveyed preferred upskilling, but access to relevant training

remained a challenge.
- Without structured learning pathways, career progression remains limited.

India’s blue-collar sector is expected to see more than 2 million job seekers in 2025.

Reference

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