

## Periodic Labour Force Survey (2017-2018)

### Why in News?

The employment survey, called the Periodic Labour Force Survey (2017-2018) that had been released recently, has causes for concern.

### What is Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS)?

- PLFS is an initiative aimed at generating estimates of various labour force indicators.
- The National Sample Survey Office (**NSSO**) under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation conducts the survey.
- **Quarterly survey** (For urban areas only) – Captures only the current weekly status (CWS) data.
- **Annual survey** (For both rural and urban areas) – Measures both the usual status and CWS.

### What are the dimensions used?

- NSSO's definition of 'employment' includes in itself '**self-employment**' as well as '**wage employment**'.
- Within the category of 'self-employed', the survey also counts those engaged in 'unpaid family labour'.
- Both the **locational and gender** dimensions are considered.

### What does the survey point out?

- As per the survey, the biggest issues are,
  1. Shrinking share of the labour force
  2. Rising unemployment
- The **rise in overall unemployment** has both locational and gender dimensions, with the highest rise witnessed among the urban women.
- When the location dimension is ignored, there is a severe unemployment among men that was higher than among women.
- However, given the **sharp decline in women's labour force participation rate (LFPR)**, they have been losing out heavily due to,
  1. Exclusion of women from the labour force and
  2. Inability to access employment when included in the labour force.

## What is the educated unemployment rate?

- Defined as unemployment among those with at least a secondary school certificate, it is at 11.4% (Previous survey's figure is at 4.9%).
- This issue of educated unemployment, linked with **growth and transformative development**, has never been as acute as at present.
- The unemployment rates go up as levels of education go up.
- Educated persons have aspirations for specific jobs and hence likely to go through a longer waiting period than their less-educated counterparts.

## Who bears the highest burden?

- The burden is the highest among **urban women** at 19.8% followed by rural women, rural men and urban men.
- **Educated unemployment rate** - Higher for educated women, when compared to educated men, in both 2012 and 2018 periods (despite a low labour force participation rate).

## What is the youth unemployment rate?

- **Youth unemployment rate** (unemployment among those in the 15-29 years age category) has reached a high 17.8%.
- **Women stand more disadvantaged** than the men even here, especially urban women, whose unemployment rate of 27.2% is more than double the 2012 figure.
- The rate for urban men at 18.7%, is particularly high as well.

## What is the conclusion?

- The trend of '**jobless growth**' that was till recently confined largely to **the organised sector** has now spread to other sectors of the economy, making it more generalised.
- This calls for a thorough **re-examination of the missing linkages** between growth and employment.
- The **decline in women's labour force participation** means that India is among the countries with the lowest participation of women in the labour force.
- The country's inability to absorb the educated into gainful employment is an **economic loss and a demoralising experience** for both the unemployed and those who are enrolling for higher education.



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