



# Female Labour Force Participation in Surat City : A Systematic Literature Review

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## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

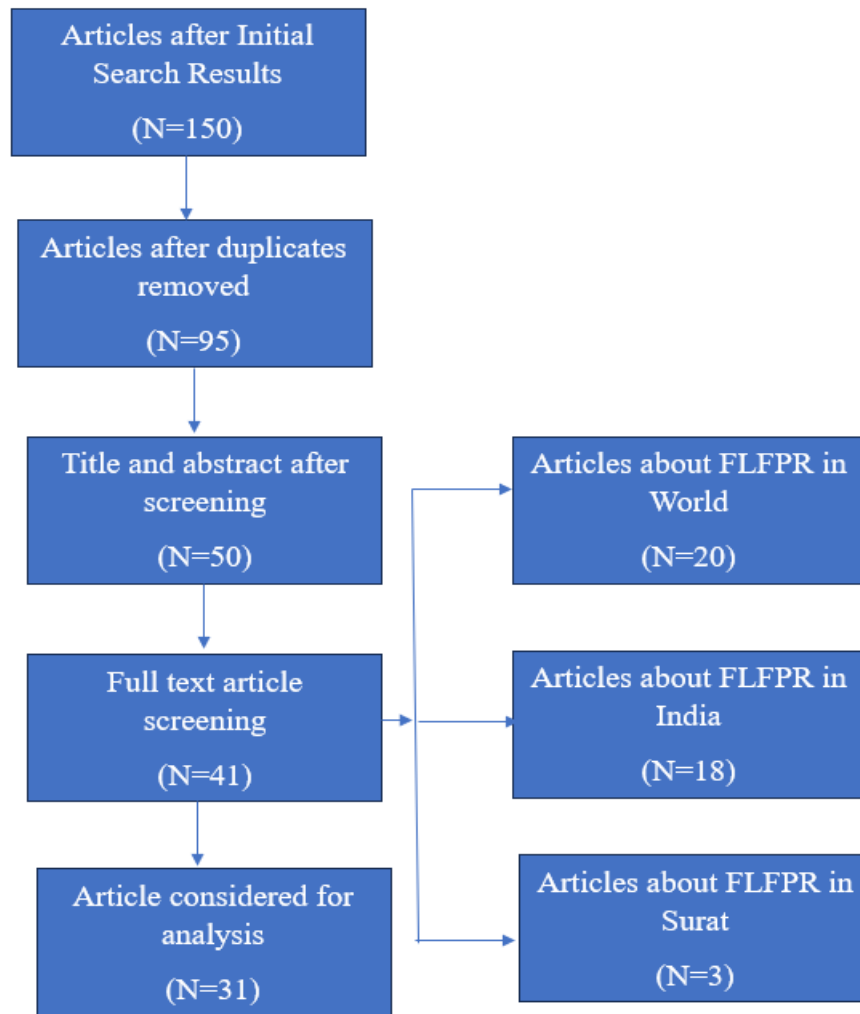
Women empowerment being one of the major components of future journey of India, their economic contribution can help to unleash the human capital potential of the country. Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFPR) indicate the proportion of female in working age who are economically active. If women become a part of labour force, then that can contribute in increasing household income which can further lead to lower down poverty of the country. Socially FLFP can help them to achieve financial independence which can further improve their social positioning to narrow down gender gap. For any country who wishes to progress socio-economically can focus upon understanding and there by improving their FLFPR. This study aims at presenting Systematic Literature Review (SLR) for the FLFPR in India. 31 research papers are reviewed in order to understand FLFPR in India, its determinants and literature gap. This SLR demonstrates the need of domestic studies in different parts of the county.

**Key words :** Female Labour Force Participation(FLFP), Labour, Economy, India

## 1. Female Labour Force Participation in Surat

Surat is situated on the western bank of India and it is located on the bank of river Tapi. Surat has well flourished diamond and textile industries. With \$59.8 Billions economy, Surat is the 9<sup>th</sup> richest city of India. In addition to diamond and textile, Surat's economy is driven by various other industries such as petrochemicals, shipbuilding, automobile, port etc. In addition to industrial development, Surat has number of higher education institutes which produce thousands of degree holders every year. Though male constitutes 57% and female constitutes 43% of Surat's population, as mentioned by Kumar (2014) in Surat there are 40.4% total workers to the population of which 63.2% are male and 10.1% are female. This substantially low FLFP provided inclination to probe further to understand labour market behaviour of highly educated women of Surat city. This study aimed at understanding literature of FLFP in Surat city with special reference to highly educated women.

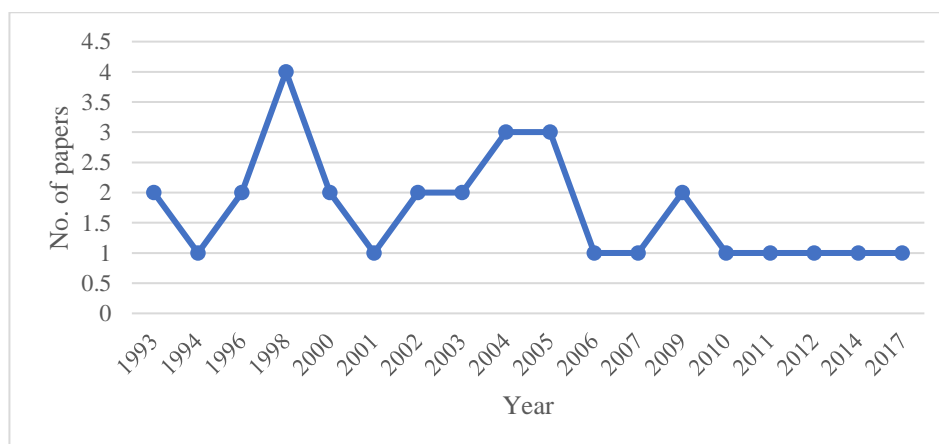
The present research adopted a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology. Compared to the traditional narrative literature review method, which lacks a structured approach (Tranfield et al., 2003), SLR studies ensure comprehensive literature analysis systematically and scientifically in each phase. The SLR methodology starts with determining relevant articles through search criteria, extracting the required data through inclusion and exclusion criteria, analysing the articles with scientific themes, and synthesizing the results to have a holistic understanding of current and future directions in the investigated domain (Kitchenham et al., 2009). Thus, an SLR was carried out by the authors to identify articles related to FLFP in India and with special reference to Surat city. The Google Scholar, SCOPUS and Web of Science (WoS) databases were effectively utilized to retrieve the article of the given topic. A combination of keywords suggested by Booth et al. (2016) was used to identify the literature. The initial article search was undertaken through search stings "Female AND Labour Force", "Female AND Labour force participation", "Female Labour force participation AND India". The initial keyword search led to 150 articles. Later, duplicate articles were removed, and a review was carried out on the remaining articles to retain only those articles deemed to be related to Female Labour Force Participation in India. To reduce the errors and bias in screening the papers, an SLR flow chart is developed as a summary of the inclusion/exclusion criteria, as shown in Figure-1 (Popay et al., 2006).



**Fig.1 Articles screening process**

## 2. Metadata statistical analysis

Year-wise publication trend of research papers on the said topic is depicted in Figure 2. The number of research papers published in 1998 was highest at four which goes down to one paper in 2001. After 2001, the number of publications again started increasing and reach to three in the year 2005. From 2005 the number of papers again start falling and reaches one in 2006. With the minor hike in 2009, the number of research papers published remained constant at one till 2017.



**Fig. 2 Trend analysis of publication based on years**

### 3. Key word analysis

In this part co-occurrence analysis is applied to identify frequently used keywords in the studies of FLFPR in India. Therefore, keyword burst analysis was utilized to identify the most prominent keywords and search trends which are shown in Figure 2.3.



**Fig. 3 Co-occurrence of keyword**

From figure 3, it can be noticed that the keywords “Labour”, “female”, “force”, “participation”, and “force” are the keywords taking a major position. Moreover, keywords such as “marriage”, “demographic”, “development”, “wage”, “social”, and “economic” signify fields of Female Labour Force Participation in India.

### 4. Highlights of Literature Review

Many studies have been done to understand FLFP across the globe, in India and specific to Surat city. Eckstein & Lifshitz (2011) used dynamic model to understand FLFP and found that education level leads about 33% increase in female employment and narrow wage gap leads to 20% increase in female labour supply. About 40% of female labour supply remains unexplained due to household characteristics, which can be examined empirically. Author also found that decline in fertility and increase in divorce rate account for very small share of the increase in female employment rate. Elhorst, (2009) identified demand and supply of labour in the market and wage setting factors as major determinants of the regional unemployment based on data from US, Canada and Europe.

Many researchers have worked to understand FLFP pattern in India. Borkar, (2016) identified social norms, level of education, gender discriminatory practices and policy measures as factors causing low FLFP in India. A UNDP report by Menon, Tomy, & Kumar (2019) explored about effectiveness of government policies to improve FLFP. Researchers observed that different policy-based approaches to improve FLFP such as educational scholarships, reservations, creation of self-help groups, capacity building through skill training programme has operational deficiencies such as low budgetary allocation to support service such as travel, lodging and maternity benefits etc. In addition to that deep rooted social norms have constrained effective implementation of these policies. As explained by Chaudhary & Verick, (2014) major barriers for women to enter the labour market are lack of skill, limited mobility and safety issues, access to employment, choice of work, working conditions, employment security, wage parity, discrimination and balancing professional and personal duties. Researchers also recognised under representation of females working in the unorganized sectors who are prone to work exploitation. Sudarshan & Bhattacharya, (2009) identified major factors that contributes positively to the FLFP in Delhi as higher education, reduction in time spent in domestic work and safety in public transport. As explained by Gandhi & Unni, (2001) high level of wage discrimination between men and women in urban labour market is one of the leading reasons of low FLFP in urban centres India. Author also emphasized upon encouraging women’s education beyond the middle schooling level since each extra year of schooling raises women’s wages by about 10%. Kumar & Kao, (2021) tried to understand FLFP through causal mechanism and found that husband’s education and number of children are important mediator for FLFP in India.

Studies conducted in Surat helps to understand local labour market and trend of FLFP in the city. Desai, (2020) conducted a study to understand condition of female workers in unorganized sector of Surat city. As author examined more than 60% of Surat’s population is migrant and a very large proportion of it is earning their livelihood from unorganized sector and very large proportion of women workers are engaged in home-based work. Though women working in unorganized sectors of Surat city face multiple issues such as exploitation, oppression, and sexploitation, they experience liberation from social constrictions in terms of individuality. Though numerous studies are done to understand factors affecting FLFP at global and national level, need of local studies are realized to understand domestic labour market. In case of Surat city, no study is found which emphasize upon labour market behaviour of highly educated women of Surat city. Consequently, this study is

focusing upon examining factors affecting participation or non participation of highly educated women to labour force in Surat city.

### 5. Research Gap and direction for future research

Based on the results of the present literature review and bibliometric analysis need for improvement in understating FLFPR in India has been realized. Various studies on FLFPR in India has discussed issues and factors behind low FLFPR in India, need of domestic studies has been highlighted in various studies. Since, different regions of the country constitutes unique amalgamation of demography, social norms, infrastructure etc. it signifies importance of examining FLFPR in various part of the country. Surat being economic hub of the state Gujarat, it is interesting to know the status of FLFP status and factors affecting FLFP in Surat city.

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