

LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN CHILD BEARING AGES, SRI LANKA

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This study aims to identify the trends and problems related to enhanced labour force participation of women in childbearing ages in Sri Lanka. Given the prevailing economic and demographic structure of the country, increasing female labour force participation is of utmost importance. Issues related to supply as well as demand of female labour force participation were analyzed using an employee survey, case studies and in-depth interviews. Results imply that there is a conflict of interest between employees and employers on maternity and child care benefits that have an impact on employment with adverse effects on female labour force participation. Government intervention is likely to be important in solving child care issues related to female labour force participation in Sri Lanka, not only through regulating child care institutions but in providing tax relief and concessions to companies providing child care. This would on the hand reduce the Work Related Costs (WRC) of women, encouraging greater participation and on the other hand reducing child care provision costs of the firm, which in turn would reduce the burden on shareholders and hence encourage such a process.

Keywords: Labour Force, Female labour force participation, Child-bearing Ages, Demographic Transition, Maternity and Child-care benefits, Work related costs.