

# W20-MAHE Women Vice Chancellors' and Leaders' Conclave

A working paper on

**Women in Higher Education for  
Enabling Leadership (WHEEL)**

**With a Charter of Recommendations**

Neeta Inamdar • Swathi Shivanand • Anushree K N  
Shilpa Kalyan • Aniruddha Inamdar



## W20-MAHE Women Vice Chancellors' and Leaders' Conclave

It is with great satisfaction and immense joy that we present this Charter of Recommendations to W20. This Charter is a collective effort of a group of academicians from Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) women leaders from across India. It was presented at the W20-MAHE Women Vice Chancellors' and Leaders' Conclave - *Women in Higher Education for Enabling Leadership (WHEEL)* organized on 26-27 May 2023 at the MAHE campus, Bengaluru in the presence of over 50 women leaders from various parts of India. The Charter reiterates a shift from women's development to women-led development, the vision shared by W20. The recommendations are presented here in five themes – higher education, labour force participation, skill development, care work and leadership. These are important areas of intervention to mainstream progressive gender perspectives into development policies and practices. MAHE is a knowledge partner with W20, the official G20 engagement group focused on gender equity and takes pride in being a part of this initiative.

The Conclave was inaugurated on 26 May by prominent leaders such as the Chair of W20, Dr Sandhya Purecha; the Vice Chancellor of Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Prof Dr Shalini Bharat; the Chief Coordinator of W20, Ms Dharitri Patnaik; former IPS and W20 Delegate, Ms Bharati Ghosh; the Vice Chancellor of MAHE Lt Gen Dr M D Venkatesh; and the Pro Vice Chancellor of MAHE Prof Madhu Veeraraghavan.

Dr Sandhya Purecha set the context to the conclave by sharing her thoughts on *Engaging with Women Leaders through W20* while Ms. Bharathi Ghosh shared a *Grassroots Perspective on Empowering Women through Policy Interventions*. Ms Dharitri Patnaik addressed the delegates and shared insights into *Digital Transformation and the Role of Educational Institutions*. Prof Dr Madhu Veeraraghavan, Pro Vice Chancellor, MAHE-Bengaluru presented a comprehensive overview of MAHE's commitment to *Gender Justice and Higher Education*.

Prof Dr Shalini Bharat delivered keynote address and highlighted the importance of higher education and skill development to enhance labour force participation of women that could lead to women-led development.

The second day of the Conclave had five Focused Panel Discussions moderated by the professors of MAHE. The panellists collectively deliberated on the draft recommendations regarding women's higher education, skill development, labour force participation, care work and leadership. The recommendations emerging out of these discussions were further discussed in the concluding session.

We thank W20 and MAHE for giving us this incredible opportunity to connect, convene and collaborate with an eclectic group of women vice chancellors, academicians, women leaders, entrepreneurs, policy makers, and scholars and present this final Charter of Recommendations. We are indebted to all our colleagues who joined hands in making this possible.

**Prof Dr Neeta Inamdar**  
Convener of the Conclave

**Dr Shilpa Kalyan**  
Co-convener

## Contributors



### **Prof Neeta Inamdar**

Professor and Head  
Manipal Centre for European Studies  
Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE)  
Manipal



### **Dr Swathi Shivanand**

Assistant Professor  
Department of Humanities  
Liberal Arts and Social Sciences  
Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE)  
Bengaluru Campus



### **Dr Anushree K N**

Assistant Professor  
Department of Humanities  
Liberal Arts and Social Sciences  
Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE)  
Bengaluru Campus



### **Dr Shilpa Kalyan**

Associate Professor and Head  
Department of Humanities  
Liberal Arts and Social Sciences  
Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE)  
Bengaluru Campus



### **Mr Aniruddha Inamdar**

Research Fellow  
Centre for Health Diplomacy  
Department of Global Health Governance  
Prasanna School of Public Health  
Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE)  
Bengaluru Campus



*Design and Layout*

### **Mr Arvind N**

Manipal Universal Press  
Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE)  
Manipal

## *Executive Summary*

*Just as we embark on a new journey with a shift from women's development to women-led development, we encounter a reality, a sub-optimal contribution of women to GDP across G20 countries. As we uncover the reasons behind this, our focus is directed to challenges in access and completion of higher education, impediments to labour force participation, lack of skill development, burden of care work, and the glass ceiling when it comes to ascension of women to leadership roles.*

*An effort is made in this paper to present the relevant data (wherever available), followed by analyses and key recommendations for each of the sections: higher education, labour force participation, skill development, care work, and leadership. Finally, a Charter of Recommendations is provided at the end which was an outcome of the Conclave. This Conclave was designed to bring together women vice chancellors and leaders who discussed, deliberated, and developed recommendations based on the working paper and their own experiences, observations and vision.*

*We wish some of these recommendations make it to the W20 communique and impact the lives of women across borders in all G20 countries, and beyond. A part of recommendations which are India specific can also bring in remarkable change in the world around us if policy makers find value in them and drive. We, as a team who worked on the paper, remain hopeful as we place it before the readers.*



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1.

*A Paradigm Shift from  
Women's Development to  
Women-led Development*

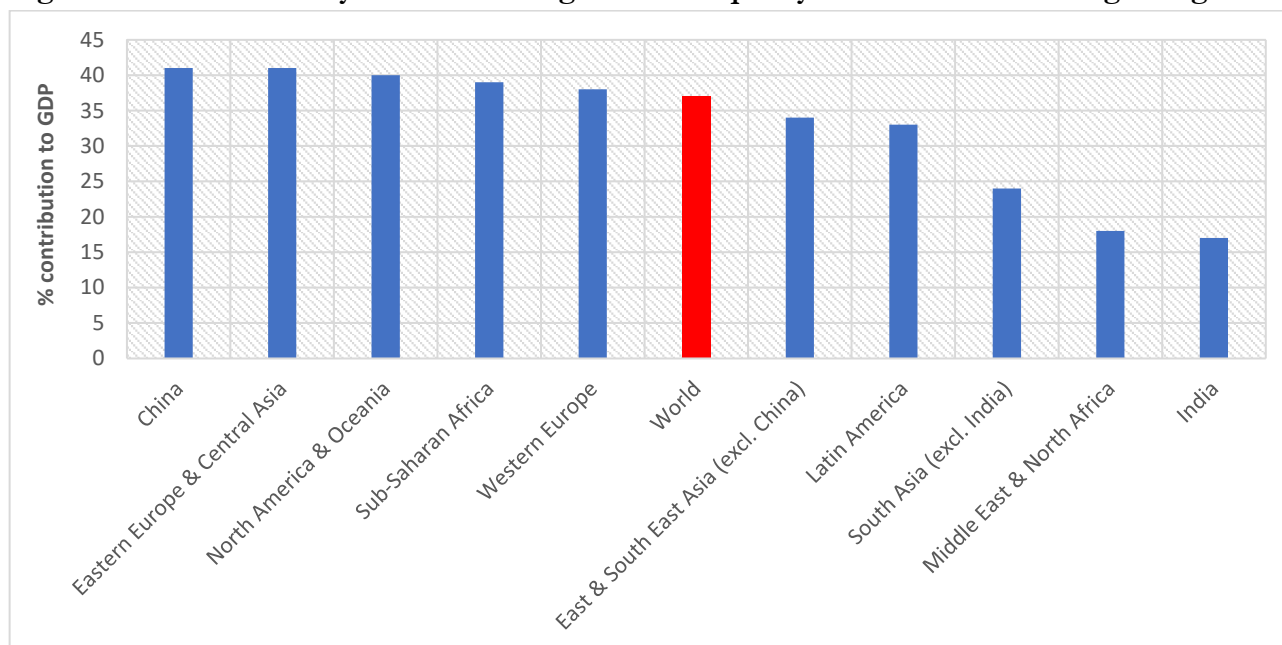
The contemporary developmental logic is leading us through a transformative movement from women’s development to women-led development. Though it appears to be propelled by economic rationale, it is designed to unleash the potential of women in all spheres of life thus empowering them and strengthening their position within the society.

Though it comes across as a promising proposition, one needs to assess the situation at present and subsequently plan for a better future for women and for all. The data on women’s contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) can be one of the parameters, even if it has its own limitations of computation. Table 1.1 shows sub-optimal contribution of women to the GDPs of their respective countries and regions. The global average at 37 per cent also fails to impress though there are some at the higher 41 per cent and some like India, countries in the Middle East and in Northern Africa with less than 20 per cent contribution by women to their GDPs.

**Table 1.1: Percentage of contribution of women to GDP in 2015, by region**

Region	Per cent share of Women to GDP
China	41
Eastern Europe & Central Asia	41
North America & Oceania	40
Sub-Saharan Africa	39
Western Europe	38
World	37
East & South East Asia (excl. China)	34
Latin America	33
South Asia (excl. India)	24
Middle East & North Africa	18
India	17

**Figure 1.1: Power of Parity: How advancing women's equality can add \$12 trillion to global growth**



Source: Woetzel et al., 2015

It is also evident from the above data that there is a positive co-relation between the contribution of women to GDP and the growth or economic prosperity of countries and regions. Therefore, there is a clear argument for improving the performance of countries on this index of increasing the contribution of women to GDP. Once we are aware that the contribution so far has been sub-par and that improving it would mean growth and development for all, the next step is to recognize the reasons for this situation and then address the challenges hindering the progress.

Prima facie, there is evidence that most often women are caught up in care work and therefore, find participation in labour market as a second or rather remote option. For centuries now, women have been relegated to domestic care-giving responsibilities socially and culturally. This, along with restricted access to higher education and skill development, have compounded already existing obstacles in bringing women's contribution to center-stage.

Under the current circumstances, engendering healthy gender-power relations have been recognized as a key developmental and policy imperative by most governments in the world, given its inherent ability to boost the GDP. Hence, discussions on gender equality and women empowerment have made way for critical discourse analysis of frameworks and policies to promote 'women-led development' (Mzima, 2020).

Observing the advantages of women-centric approaches and practices, leaders and policymakers have been working towards creating the necessary roadmaps for development by focusing on women-led development. Borquist and Bruin (2019) connected women-led social entrepreneurship with typology of the value systems adopted by them and found four values of what can be deemed as critical to women-led empowerment:

1. 'Benevolence' in achieving poverty alleviation, healing in the face of trauma and injustice, and through creation of sustainable livelihoods
2. 'Universalism' in promoting social justice through empowerment of the disadvantaged
3. 'Self-direction' to start and lead organizations that recognizes manifestation of the 'creativity value' to the enterprise
4. 'Security' to one's family, oneself and dependents to live and facilitate satisfactory lives

Invariably, both women's development as well as women-led development focus on the economic successes effectuated by women-led/owned enterprises and organizations, including social entrepreneurship or green-economy based ventures. The recent Fortune 500 list (2023) revealed that over 10 percent of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) leading these companies are women, a promising start considering that this is the highest for this list in 68 years. However, this trend needs to sustain in other sectors as well.

Studies have found that representation of women in senior leadership positions is dismally low despite the knowledge that gender-diverse boards tend to have a wider range of problem-solving abilities. The diversity in decision-making boards also contributes to better monitoring of organizational behaviour and fostering closer scrutiny of the handling of conflicts of interest (OECD, 2012; Eastman, Rallis and Mazzucchelli, 2016). Recent studies also uphold the positive impact of gender-diverse boards on organizations' performance (Kersley et al., 2019; Sandberg, 2019).

Tanti et al (2021) recognized the importance of women's participation in what they termed as 'smart economy' by adopting mobile Information and Communication Technology (ICTs) in Indonesia and Malaysia. This factor fostered the growth of women-led/owned Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), especially in the food and fashion industries (Talib, 2018). These examples showcase the availability of opportunities as well as anticipated challenges which impact investments in women-led/owned enterprises.

Addressing a number of issues faced by women entrepreneurs, Underhill-Sem et al. (2014) reflected on the relative successes of efforts of women-led new initiatives aimed to transform the marketplaces to support women-led enterprises and women sellers. Investigating the challenges of these schemes, they observed that "the primary focus of recently developed projects for marketplaces is technical and infrastructural, which is insufficient for addressing gendered political and economic causes of poor market management and oppressive conditions for women vendors" (ibid, 2014). Such studies clearly spotlight the need for gender-sensitive policies to provide unbiased infrastructural support to the movements of empowerment initiatives by women.

In every discourse on the topic of women-led development, it is important to distinguish between studies narrating ground realities contributing to a deeper analysis of the socio-political movements towards gender equality versus those that contain buzzword-reports on short-term successes of women's development initiatives.

Therefore, in this paper, we present arguments for women-led development in five sections; higher education, labour force participation, skill development, care work, and women in leadership. In each of these sections, an effort is made to present the existing situation with data and then offer key recommendations.



2.

*Women and Higher Education*

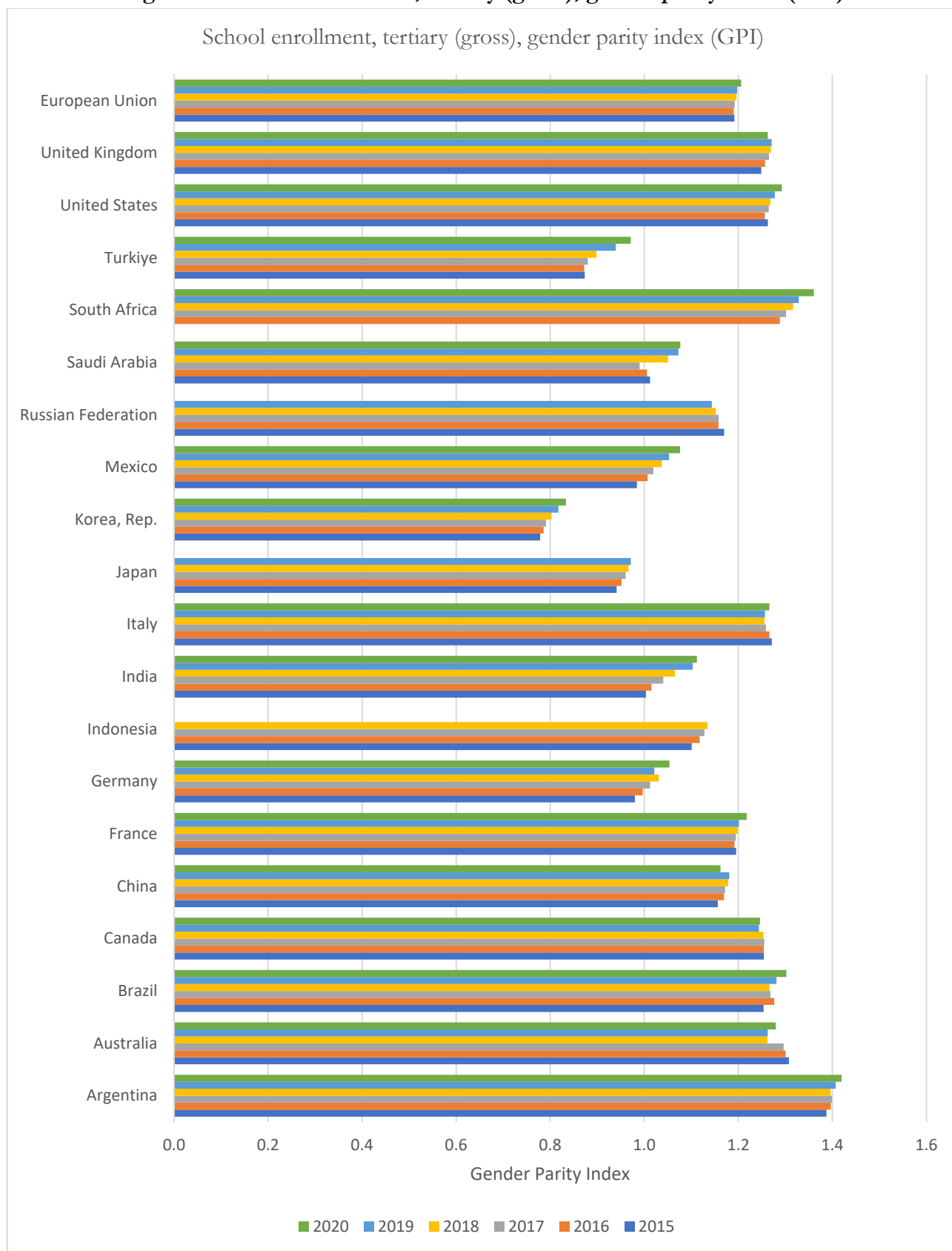
Investment in human capital has been identified as a key determinant of a nation's development, labour turnover, and income distribution (Becker, 1993). According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2019), the level of education that is attained by a person has a significant impact on their earnings. As education has the potential to increase employment prospects, wages, and quality of life, examining women's participation in higher education is a matter of utmost importance.

A study by Psacharopoulos and Patrinos (2004) while examining the return on investment in education, found that women receive greater returns than men. Despite such evidence, the participation of women in higher education has been a challenge for both developed and developing countries due to various socio-economic and cultural factors. It is important for the governments to create an ecosystem to promote participation of women in higher education considering positive returns on education investment for women, increased availability of skilled work-force and improved contribution to GDP and welfare.

## **2.1 Access to Higher Education among Women in G20 Countries**

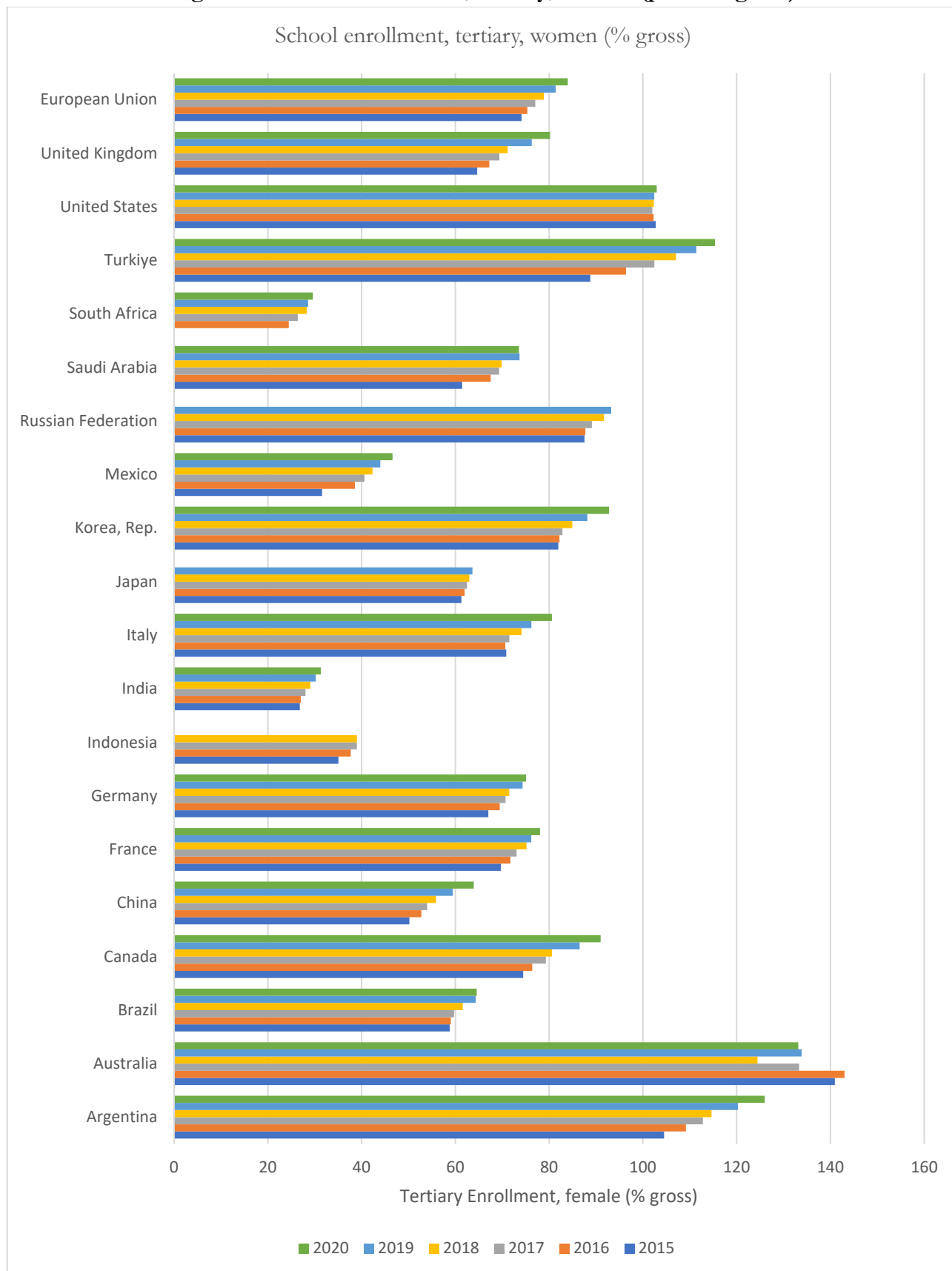
With G20 being a platform for both developed and developing countries to deliberate on the problems that need collective action, there is a need to examine the status of education among women of the 19+1 economies. Though Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) has been an important parameter to assess the access to higher education among different countries, Gender Parity Index (GPI) provides insights about women's participation in this developmental process. GPI is the ratio of women to men enrolled in tertiary level education and is therefore, a vital indicator (The World Bank, n.d.). As parity is said to be achieved when the score is between 0.97 and 1.03 (UNESCO, n.d.), figure 2.1 shows that between 2015 and 2020, apart from Korea Republic, all the other countries and the EU had higher women participation rate in higher education than men as their scores are greater than 1.03. Whereas Japan and Turkiye with a score of 0.97 had achieved parity in higher education enrollment.

**Figure 2.1: School enrollment, tertiary (gross), gender parity index (GPI)**



Source: The World Bank (2022a)

**Figure 2.2: School enrollment, tertiary, women (per cent gross)**



Source: The World Bank (2022b)



Despite gender disparity being in favour of women in terms of the enrollment in higher education, among most of the G20 countries, it remains a challenge when we observe the GER of women in higher education of some of the countries (Figure 2.2). The United States, Turkiye, Australia and Argentina are the only countries to have an enrollment rate of more than 100 which suggests that women of official eligible age are accessing tertiary education.

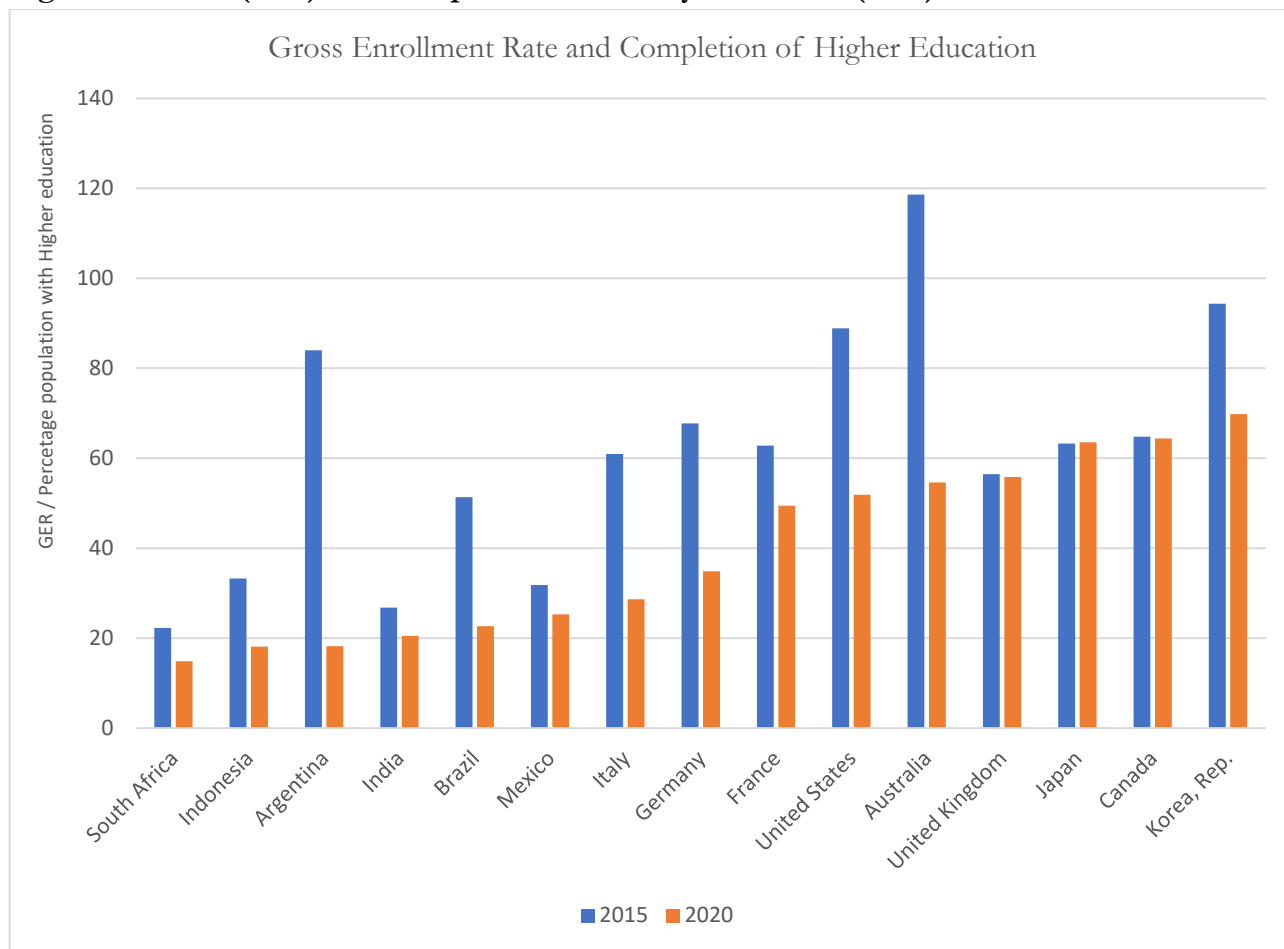
South Africa, Mexico, India, and Indonesia which are incidentally the global south countries within G20, have a grim figure of enrollment at less than 50 per cent despite having a GPI greater than 1.03. This suggests that while women participation in higher education among the global south countries of the G20 is significantly less compared to global north, lesser numbers of men are accessing higher education. Thus, an exchange of experience and expertise must take place among the G20 countries to formulate and implement policies that amplify the enrollment of both women and men in higher education and bridge the gap within the group leading to collective benefit.

Another important aspect to bring to discussion here is whether GER as an indicator is enough to gauge the status of higher education and therefore, human capital within an economy. The table below compares GER in 15 of the G20 countries in 2015 with percentage of population with tertiary education in 2020 in the age group of 25-34.

**Table 2.1: Comparison of GER to Percentage of population with tertiary education**

Country Name	Gross Enrollment Rate, tertiary education (2015)	Percentage of population with tertiary education (2020)
South Africa	22.26	14.85
Indonesia	33.25	18.11
Argentina	84.00	18.21
India	26.77	20.50
Brazil	51.32	22.67
Mexico	31.82	25.29
Italy	60.94	28.63
Germany	67.75	34.88
France	62.79	49.45
United States	88.89	51.86
Australia	118.61	54.61
United Kingdom	56.46	55.83
Japan	63.25	63.55
Canada	64.79	64.39
Korea, Rep.	94.34	69.81

**Figure 2.3: GER (2015) and Completion of Tertiary Education (2020)**



Source: OECD (2023)

In the table and graph above, an effort is made to compare the GER of 2015 with completion of tertiary education data of 2020 (in the age group of 25-34) assuming those enrolling in 2015 could be completing their higher education in 3-5 years. Though this does not help us in calculating the drop out rates among those enrolled, it helps us to conclude that GER does not necessarily reflect on the quality of human capital within an economy.

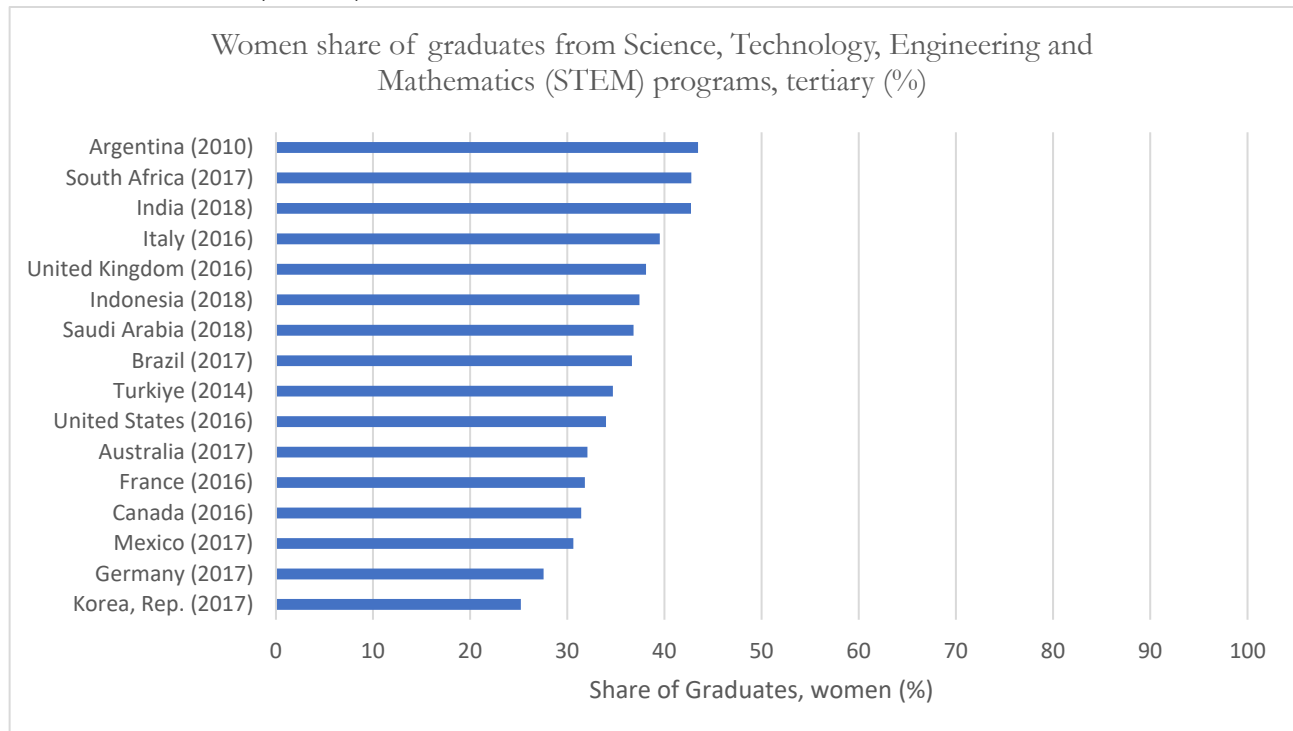
A closer look at the data reveals that differences are larger in some countries than in others hinting at possible drop outs in some countries as more pronounced than in others. Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Italy, Indonesia and the US show lower completion rates compared to GER though GER per se is higher among some of them. These figures specifically for women are not available. If available, they would have provided us information about the dropout rates for which policy suggestions could have been made.

It is important to note that though GER is widely different across G20 countries, GPI provides more hopes with women having an upper hand over their men counterparts in access to higher education. This, along with research that shows return of investment for women is better than that for men, makes one wonder why is women’s labour market participation lesser compared to that of men.

For this, we delve deeper to see if it is to do with choice of disciplines in higher education and whether enrollment into specific fields offer better chances for employability.

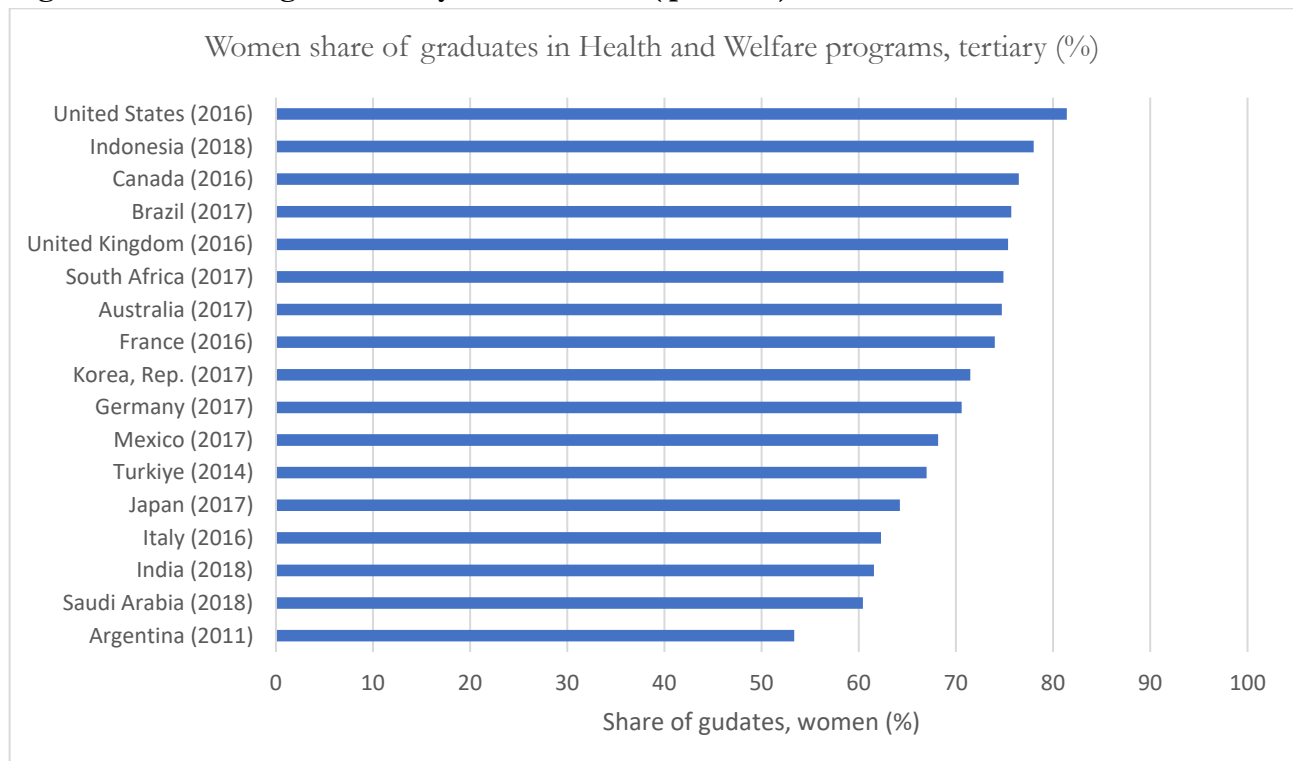
## 2.2. Women and Choice of Study Fields

**Figure 2.4: Share of graduates by field, women (per cent), Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)**



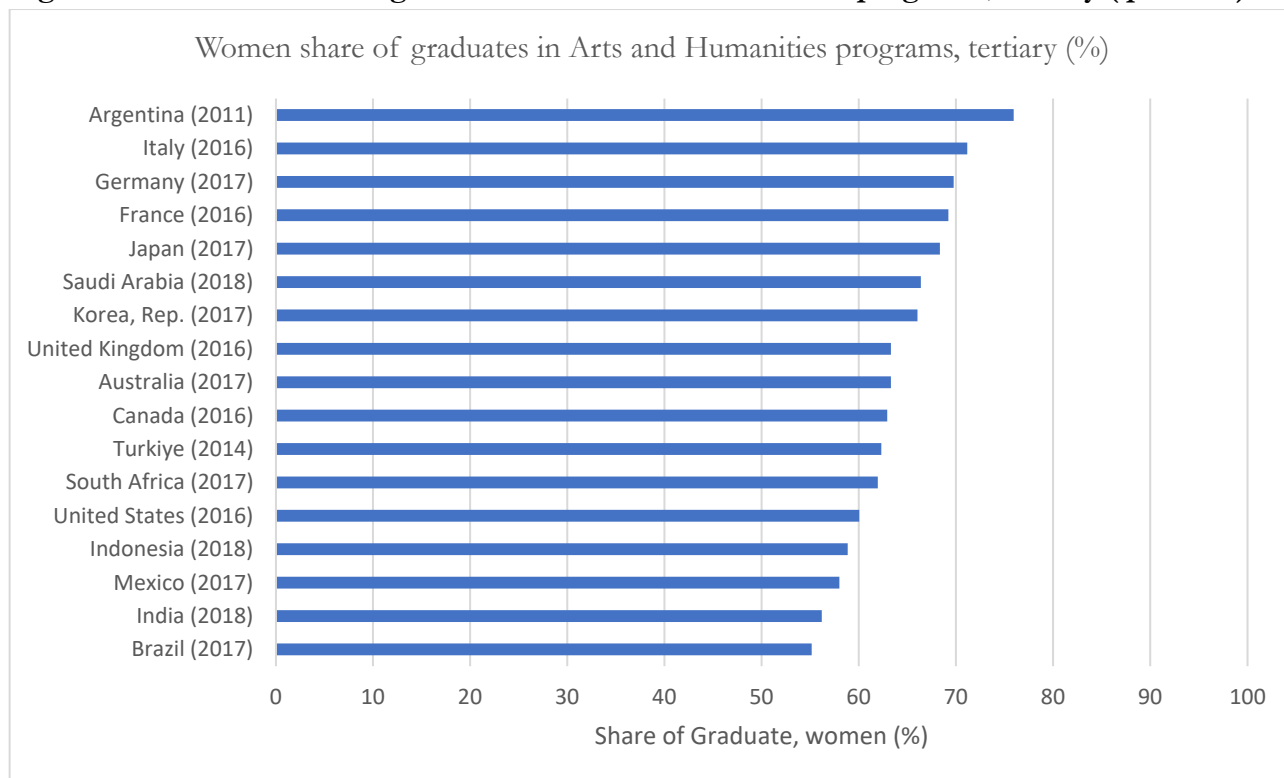
Source: The World Bank (2020)

**Figure 2.5: Share of graduates by field, Women ( per cent), Health and Welfare**



Source: The World Bank (2020)

**Figure 2.6: Women share of graduates in Arts and Humanities programs, tertiary ( per cent)**



*Source:* The World Bank (2020)

Women have been consistently more represented in Education, Health and Welfare based degree programs while being underrepresented in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) (Pal et al., 2022). Differences can be recognized when we compare the latest data available on share of women graduates in the fields of STEM, Health and Welfare, and Arts and Humanities among G20 member-countries (Figures 2.4, 2.5, and 2.6).

The latest available data of G20 countries (except China and Russia) portrays a grim situation regarding the share of women graduates in STEM courses with no country having more than 45 per cent of women enrolled in such courses (Figure 2.4). Due to the discrepancy in the years of which the data is available, comparing different countries on this parameter would be difficult. However, it is interesting to observe that Argentina leads the figures with 43 per cent which they attained in 2010, when compared to other countries in recent years.

The graduates share in Health and Welfare field is better than the STEM with at least all the countries having more than 50 per cent women with the USA leading the pack with 81 per cent (Figure 2.5). In the field of Arts and Humanities, the number of graduates is slightly less than that of Health and Welfare but are significantly higher than STEM programs. Thus, we see that one of the vital collective actions needed is in the promotion of women in STEM programs where any prejudice against their participation and completion must be deliberated upon and addressed in the G20 forum.

The above section highlights the need to increase efforts in the direction of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 - Quality Education, and SDG 5 – Gender Equality that the G20 countries have collectively committed to meet by 2030. While the projection to bridge the gender gap is estimated to

take almost 132 years (Pal et al., 2022), there is need for systemic changes to accelerate the process of achieving parity.

## 2.3 Key Recommendations

- **Data collection and transparency:** The promotion of evidence-based policy making can only be ensured when robust data is available in all countries. The G20 must make procuring consistent data and making it transparent a priority. Data regarding women's access to higher education, dropout rates, skill development will equip policy makers with better understanding of the phenomena.

In particular, collecting, maintaining, analyzing and publishing gender disaggregated data relating to women enrollment as well as completion rates is essential. Currently, no data is available that tracks the successful completion of studies by women students. Making this data available will enable institutions to track learning curves of students until they graduate.

- **Harmonization of Higher Education:** Considering inequalities in access to, completion and quality (perceived and real) of higher education, it is important to facilitate exchange of best practices and eventually harmonize higher education systems at the G20 level. This would mean development of Higher Education Qualification Frameworks at the G20 level leading to multiple advantages of recognition of qualifications across borders and mobility of people and services as needed. Recognition of competencies can increase the opportunities to work and hence a harmonized qualification framework can improve women's confidence in pursuing education and working internationally.
- **Promotion of International Mobility for Women in Higher Education:** Provision for special international mobility for/during higher education for women among the G20 countries can increase the participation of women in higher education, exposure to diverse multi-cultural environments and quality education.
- **Gender Responsive Pedagogy:** Advocating gender responsive pedagogy in curricula across disciplines ensures teaching-learning processes that pay specific attention to the needs of women students. This will ensure reduction in gender inequalities in classrooms.
- **Intersectional approach:** Current measures and practices in place take 'women' as the only category of analysis which excludes women within minority categories, physically challenged women and other socio-economic or socio-cultural groups of women. The different experiences of women and their intersectional identities must be taken into consideration while making necessary interventions.

### Specific Recommendations

- The G20 must make efforts to increase the share of women graduates in STEM by 10 per cent in the next 5 years. This target has to be achieved particularly in Global South countries where the share of women graduates is considerably low as compared to the Global North.

- The G20 must promote international mobility of women researchers, scholars and students by introducing at least 50 new mobility schemes which facilitate mobility of women scholars among G20 countries.
- Ensure increased harmonization of Higher Education Qualification Framework among G20 countries in the next two years. Such initiatives are already undertaken and in place such as the one signed between Australia and India in 2023 (Press Information Bureau, 2023). Recognition of competencies can increase the opportunities to work and hence a harmonized qualification framework can improve women's confidence in pursuing education and working internationally.
- Introduce 100 new research programs across various fields led by women researchers in the next 5 years.
- Establish a Network of Universities in G20 countries to address challenges of disparities within the G20
- Facilitate early entry of women into the world of work by universities through their industry counterparts. Make placements of women students as a measure to assess the success of universities in national and international ranking and accreditation schemes.



3.

*Women and Labour Force Participation*

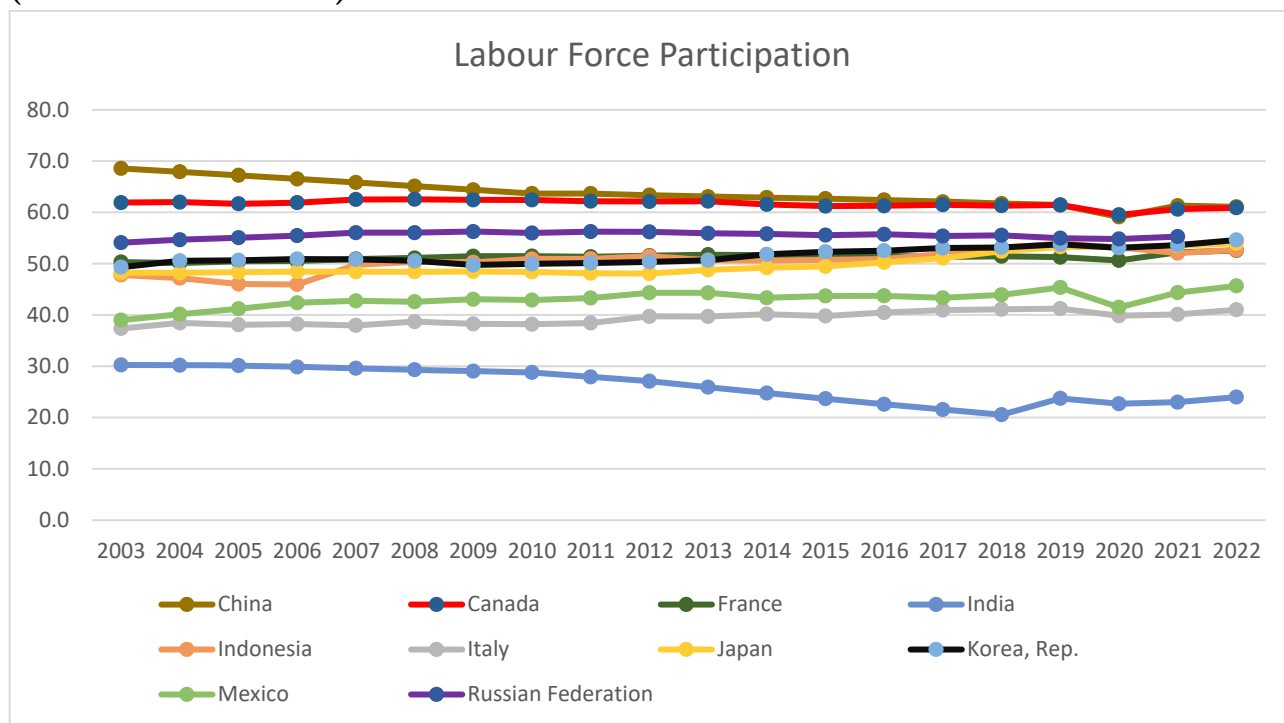
The G20 has declared its commitment to reducing the gender gap in labour force participation rate since at least the year 2014. If at the Brisbane Summit in 2014, the group committed to reducing the gap by 25 per cent by the year 2025, at Riyadh in 2020 it also committed to improving the quality of women’s employment. While taking stock of its goal in 2019, a joint report by OECD and ILO stated that most G20 countries were on track to meet the Brisbane goal (OECD & International Labour Organization, 2019). Between the years 2015 and 2022 the overall female labour force participation (FLFPR)<sup>1</sup> had increased among all G20 countries, except in China, Russia, Canada, and South Africa (Figures 3.1 and 3.2).

The COVID-19 pandemic however was a major obstacle, with women from across different countries and classes being far more seriously affected by employment losses than men (International Labour Organisation & OECD, 2021). A sharp decline in FLFPR was observed in 2020 during COVID-19. In the post-COVID recovery phase, the FLFPR among G20 countries has been:

1. Marginally increasing in Argentina, France, India, Saudi Arabia, Australia, UK, Japan, Korea, Mexico, and European Union
2. Decreasing in China, Russia, Indonesia, Germany, Canada, Italy, US, South Africa, Brazil, and Turkey (Figure 3.1)

By 2022, Australia (62.1 per cent) had the highest FLFPR while India (24 per cent) had the lowest FLFPR among G20 countries.

**Figure 3.1: Women labour force participation rate, (per cent of total population ages 15+) (modelled ILO estimate)**

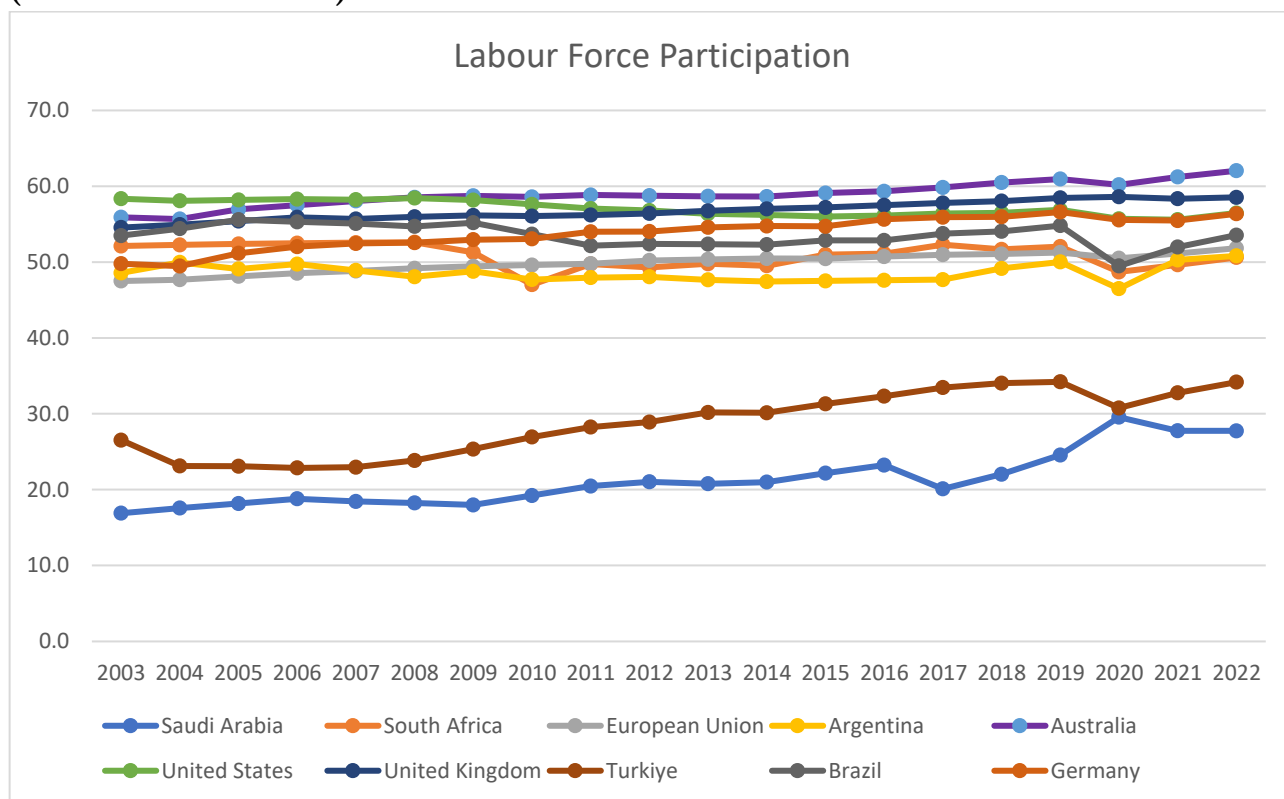


Source: Compiled from ILO database

<sup>1</sup> The labour force participation rate is a measure of the proportion of a country’s working age population that engages actively in the labour market, either employed or unemployed but available to engage in production of goods and services (International Labour Organization, 2002).



**Figure 3.2: Women labour force participation rate, ( per cent of total population ages 15+) (modelled ILO estimate)**



Source: Compiled from ILO database.

### 3.1 Women labour force participation seen through educational attainment levels

What does disaggregating female labour force participation through the levels of education reveal?<sup>2</sup> Table 3.1 presents female labour force participation by basic<sup>3</sup> and intermediate levels<sup>4</sup> of education. Between 2018 and 2022, varying trends in FLFPR with basic and intermediate levels of education are visible among G20 countries:

1. A sharp decline in the female labour force participation with basic education is observed in Italy, South Africa, Turkey, Brazil, Australia.
2. An increasing trend in the female labour force participation with basic education is observed in Saudi Arabia, India, Russia, and Germany.
3. An increasing trend in the female labour force participation with intermediate education is observed in India and Saudi Arabia and a sharp decreasing trend in South Africa, Indonesia, Brazil, Canada, and Turkey.

<sup>2</sup> This indicator is defined as the total number of females in the labour force with specific level of education measured against the working age population with the same level of education.

<sup>3</sup> The ratio of the labour force with basic education to the working-age population with basic education. Basic education comprises primary education or lower secondary education according to the International Standard Classification of Education 2011 (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012)

<sup>4</sup> The ratio of the labour force with intermediate education to the working-age population with intermediate education. Intermediate education comprises upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education according to the International Standard Classification of Education 2011 (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012).

**Table 3.1: Labour force participation by education level, women (per cent of women working-age population with basic and intermediate levels of education)**

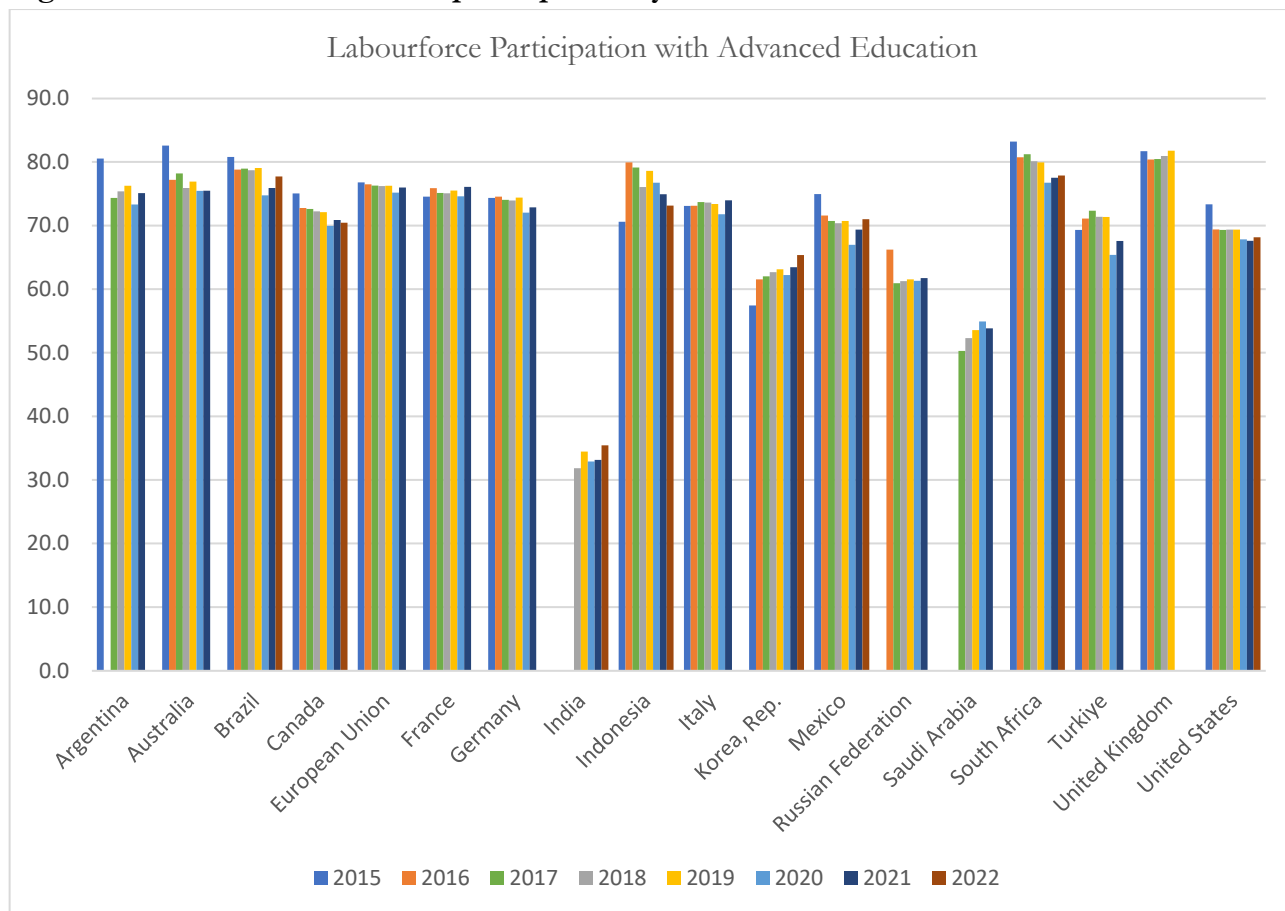
Country Name	2018		2019		2020		2021	
	Basic	Intermediate	Basic	Intermediate	Basic	Intermediate	Basic	Intermediate
Argentina	33.8	55.8	34.4	55.8	31.3	51.2	33.3	55.4
Australia	36.2	65.8	36.0	67.1	33.0	66.9	31.4	66.1
Brazil	36.9	66.1	36.3	66.8	30.6	59.6	32.4	63.0
Canada	35.9	55.1	36.5	54.8	34.1	52.1	35.1	52.4
European Union	26.7	58.2	26.7	57.8	25.9	56.1	25.8	56.4
France	23.4	56.7	22.3	55.4	21.3	53.4	22.6	55.8
Germany	30.8	60.9	31.5	61.1	32.1	59.5	32.3	59.3
India	16.7	14.1	19.7	15.7	22.0	16.4	23.0	17.6
Indonesia	47.6	54.2	48.0	55.1	47.8	53.5	47.2	51.6
Italy	23.2	55.4	22.9	55.1	21.3	53.0	21.0	53.7
Korea, Rep.	41.2	53.6	42.0	53.5	41.8	52.3	40.7	52.6
Mexico	38.7	49.3	40.2	50.1	35.8	45.3	38.4	48.7
Russian Federation	14.3	61.5	14.4	60.2	14.7	59.5	15.8	59.6
Saudi Arabia	15.5	14.2	18.6	17.0	19.6	23.5	24.2	30.6
South Africa	44.1	62.3	44.4	62.3	40.9	57.3	41.7	59.9
Turkiye	29.4	38.1	29.1	37.6	25.0	32.9	26.5	34.8
United Kingdom	51.6	69.3	51.8	69.7	..	..	..	..
United States	29.9	49.9	30.1	50.1	28.9	48.2	29.8	48.2

Source: Compiled from ILO database

Labour participation of women with advanced levels of education<sup>5</sup> indicates that it has marginally declined between 2018 and 2021 in eleven out of twenty countries while participation rates have marginally increased in six countries (Figure 3.3).

<sup>5</sup> The ratio of the labour force with advanced education to the working-age population with advanced education. Advanced education comprises short-cycle tertiary education, a bachelor's degree or equivalent education level, a master's degree or equivalent education level, or doctoral degree or equivalent education level according to the International Standard Classification of Education 2011 (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012).

**Figure 3.3: Female Labour force participation by advanced education level**



Source: Compiled from ILO database

Country-specific studies to understand the enabling factors for women accessing higher education and its impact on employability are essential. With basic and intermediate levels of education, the extent to which women can rise up the ladder remain limited and they are likely to remain in low-paid jobs. Given that concerns around quality of work continues to persist with most G20 countries reporting a significant gender gap in earnings, underrepresentation of women in positions of power and an unequal share of unpaid care work being borne by women, access to higher levels of education is crucial.

A wide variety of experiences are witnessed within the G20 regarding enabling access to education at different stages. Such collective knowledge should be marshalled towards increasing women’s access to education for it can have cascading effects on their employability potential and capacity.

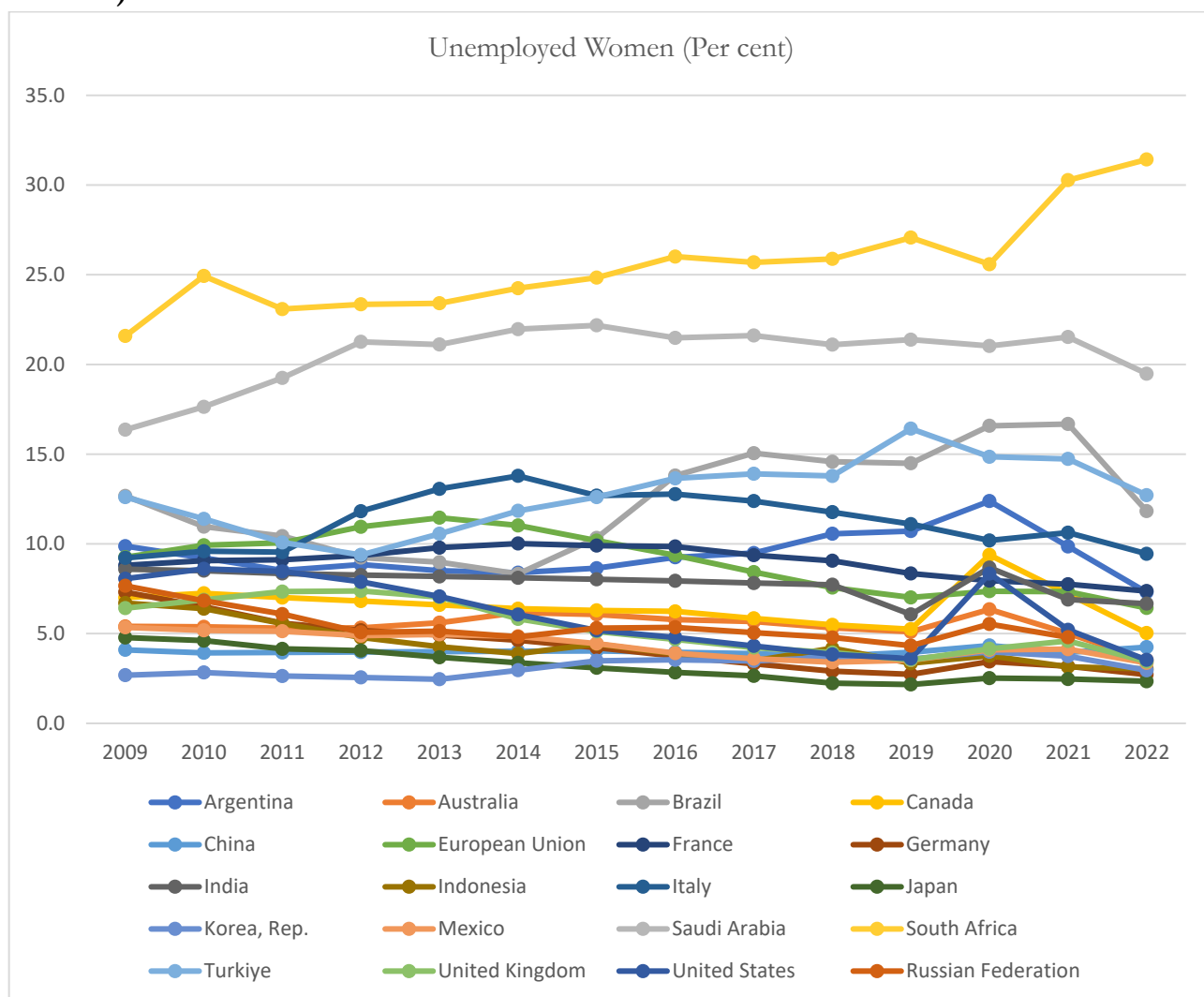
Given that FLFPR includes both employed and unemployed women (but willing to work), understanding unemployment rates for women across G20 countries is crucial as it helps clarify the labour market and its inclusiveness. Between 2015 and 2022 following trends were observed regarding women unemployment:

1. Women unemployment rates sharply increased in South Africa and Brazil. It marginally increased in China and Turkey.
2. During the same period the unemployment rate sharply declined in Italy, European Union, Australia, France, UK, US, Germany, and India (Figure 3.4).

However, the disaggregated picture of women unemployment by education presented in Tables 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 and Figures 3.4 and 3.5 suggests the following trends:

1. During 2019- to 2021, percentage of women with basic and intermediate level of education who were unemployed increased in South Africa, Brazil, US, Germany, Mexico, Korea while unemployment rates have declined in India, Australia, Indonesia, Argentina.
2. Highest percentage of women unemployed with basic and intermediate education was seen in South Africa.
3. Indonesia had the least percentage of women unemployed with basic education and Germany had the least percentage of women unemployed with intermediate education.
4. Percentage of women unemployed with advanced education was highest in Saudi Arabia followed by India, South Africa, and Turkey respectively. Germany had the lowest percentage of women unemployed with advance education.

**Figure 3.4: Women Unemployed, (per cent of total population ages 15+) (modelled ILO estimate)**



Source: Compiled from ILO database

**Table 3.2: Unemployed by gender and intermediate education level, (per cent of female/male unemployed with basic levels of education)**

Country Name	Female			Male		
	2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021
Argentina	13.9	17.1	13.5	11.5	13.7	8.8
Australia	12.7	13.0	8.4	13.6	15.8	8.4
Brazil	18.1	21.6	22.3	12.6	14.3	12.9
Canada	11.5	18.4	15.9	11.7	15.7	13.5
France	15.3	14.1	14.1	15.5	13.9	14.7
Germany	6.4	7.9	6.7	9.0	10.1	8.5
India	3.7	4.0	2.9	5.2	7.0	5.4
Indonesia	1.9	2.2	1.4	2.7	3.3	2.8
Italy	16.4	15.0	16.1	12.3	11.5	11.8
Korea, Rep.	2.7	3.5	3.5	4.3	4.5	4.2
Mexico	3.1	4.0	3.6	3.3	4.4	3.7
Russian Federation	11.1	13.6	12.2	10.7	11.9	10.7
Saudi Arabia	4.6	6.9	9.1	0.9	2.1	2.9
Turkiye	13.6	11.7	11.4	12.9	12.9	10.8
United States	6.9	14.0	9.8	4.6	10.5	7.2
South Africa	32.7	29.9	34.5	29.0	27.1	31.4
European Union	16.7	16.9	17.6	13.4	13.6	13.6

Source: Compiled from ILO database

**Table 3.3: Unemployed by gender and intermediate education level, (per cent of female/male unemployed with intermediate levels of education)**

Country Name	Female			Male		
	2019	2020	2021	2019`	2020	2021
Argentina	13.4	15.3	12.7	9.5	10.4	9.1
Australia	5.7	7.3	4.5	5.2	7.6	4.6
Brazil	16.8	19.3	19.1	10.8	13.1	11.7
Canada	6.7	12.9	9.7	7.5	12.8	10.0
France	9.9	9.3	9.0	8.6	8.5	8.0
Germany	2.4	2.8	2.7	3.1	3.6	3.5
India	12.8	12.0	8.8	9.9	11.6	9.7
Indonesia	6.6	7.4	6.4	6.0	7.2	6.9
Italy	11.1	10.3	11.0	8.2	7.6	7.8
Korea, Rep.	3.1	3.6	3.5	4.0	4.2	3.6
Mexico	4.2	4.8	5.2	4.0	5.6	5.1
Russian Federation	3.9	4.9	4.3	4.1	5.0	4.0
Saudi Arabia	23.7	23.2	15.9	3.8	5.5	5.1
Turkiye	24.3	21.8	20.7	12.3	12.6	10.9
United States	4.8	11.1	7.1	4.9	10.0	7.1
South Africa	31.0	30.5	36.4	25.3	25.1	29.9
European Union	11.0	11.2	11.1	7.8	8.3	8.0

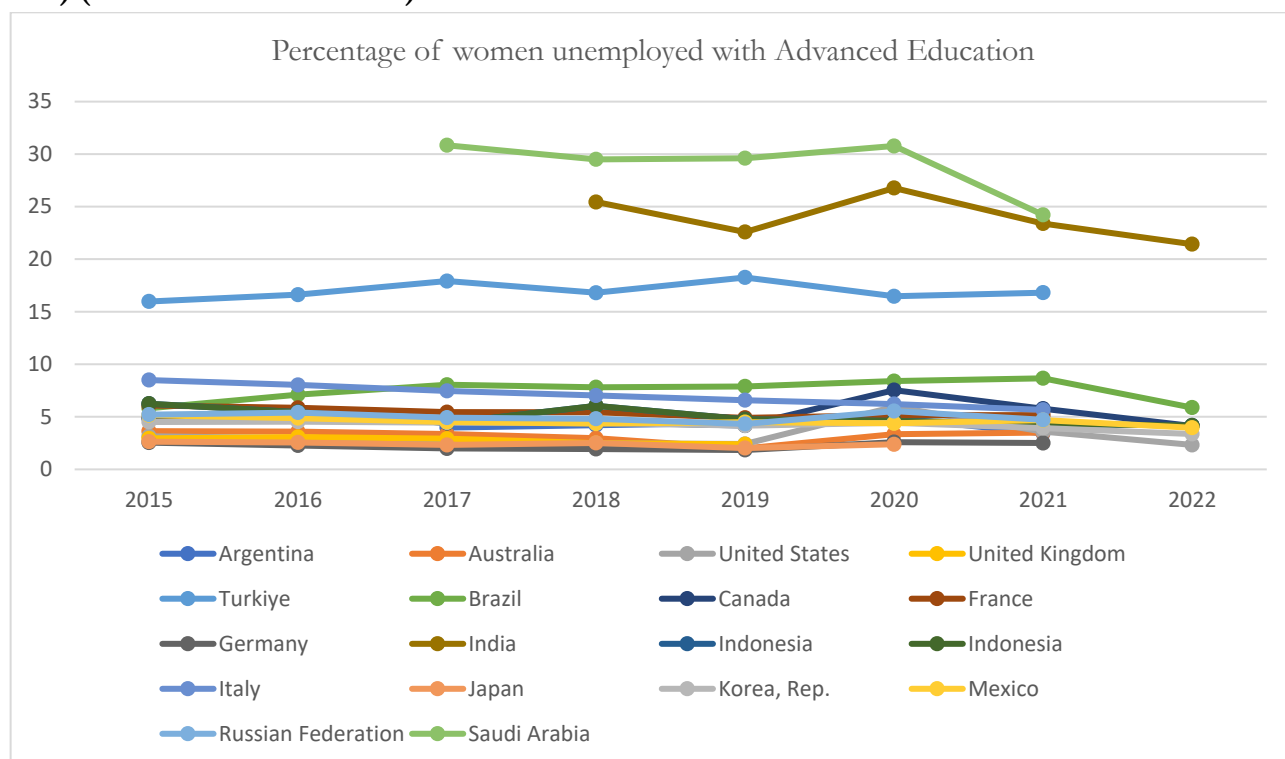
Source: Compiled from ILO database

Table 3.4: Unemployed by gender and intermediate education level, (per cent of female/male unemployed with advanced levels of education)

Country Name	Female			Male		
	2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021
Argentina	4.4	4.9	3.4	3.2	4.5	3.4
Australia	2.0	3.3	3.5	2.4	5.0	3.6
Brazil	7.9	8.4	8.7	5.4	6.3	6.3
Canada	4.2	7.5	5.8	4.7	7.4	6.1
France	4.9	5.2	5.2	5.3	5.3	5.5
Germany	1.8	2.6	2.5	1.8	2.5	2.4
India	22.6	26.8	23.4	13.6	15.3	13.5
Indonesia	4.8	4.6	4.3	4.0	4.6	4.5
Italy	6.6	6.2	5.7	4.6	4.3	4.3
Korea, Rep.	4.2	4.4	3.9	3.7	3.6	3.4
Mexico	4.5	4.4	4.7	4.3	5.0	4.8
Russian Federation	4.3	5.5	4.7	4.6	5.6	4.6
Saudi Arabia	29.6	30.8	24.2	3.1	4.1	2.8
Turkiye	18.3	16.5	16.8	10.2	10.0	9.3
United States	2.4	6.0	3.6	2.4	5.2	3.6
South Africa	14.4	14.6	17.2	11.6	12.3	14.9
European Union	6.4	6.7	6.2	4.7	5.2	4.9

Source: Compiled from ILO database

Figure 3.5: Women unemployed with Advanced Education, ( per cent of total population ages 15+) (modelled ILO estimate)



Source: Compiled from ILO database

If the goal is to increasing female labour force participation rate or retaining women in active labour market, differentiated strategies may be required to address women with varying levels of education. However, much of the discourse on employment has moved towards increasing employability; within this vocational education has gained much traction, which we will discuss in the subsequent chapter on skill development.

### 3.2 Female labour force participation rates in global south countries of the G20

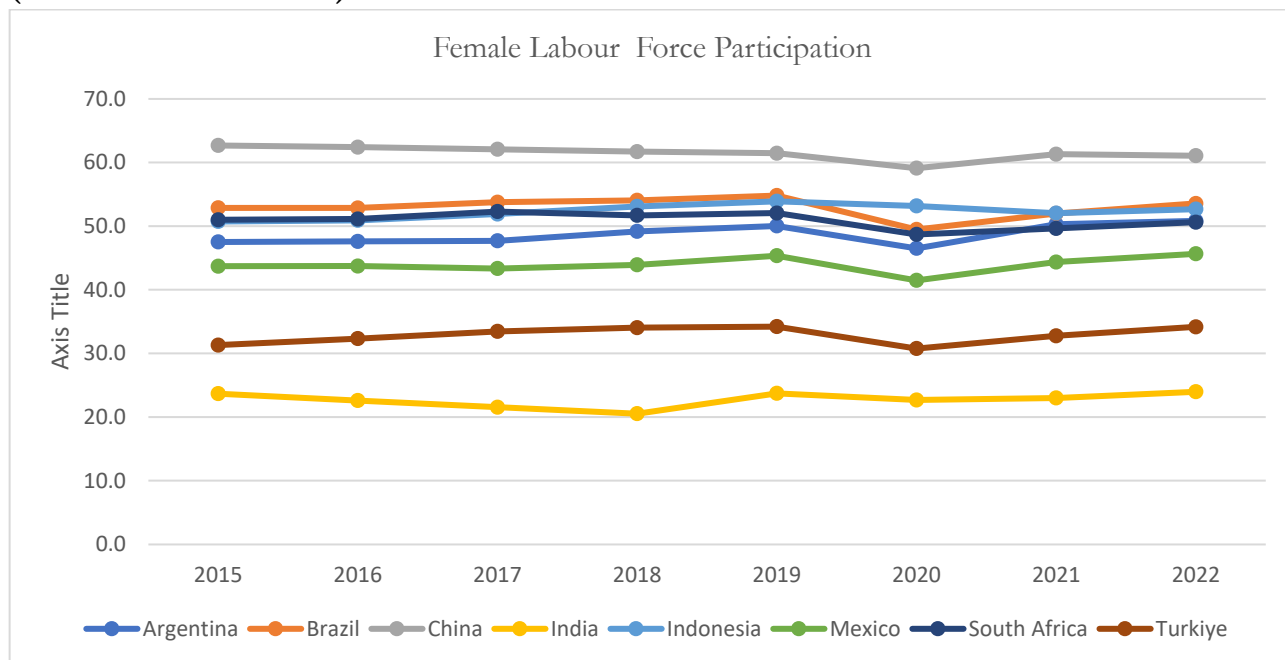
Between 2015 and 2019 the female labour force participation rate (FLFPR) among global south countries in G20 countries has

1. marginally increased in Argentina, Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, and Turkey.
2. decreased in China
3. declined during 2015-2018 and marginally increased in 2019 in India

A sharp decline in FLFPR in 2020 was observed among all the eight countries which may be attributed to COVID-19. Post COVID-19 recovery a marginal increase in FLFPR was observed across all the global south countries (Figure 3.6).

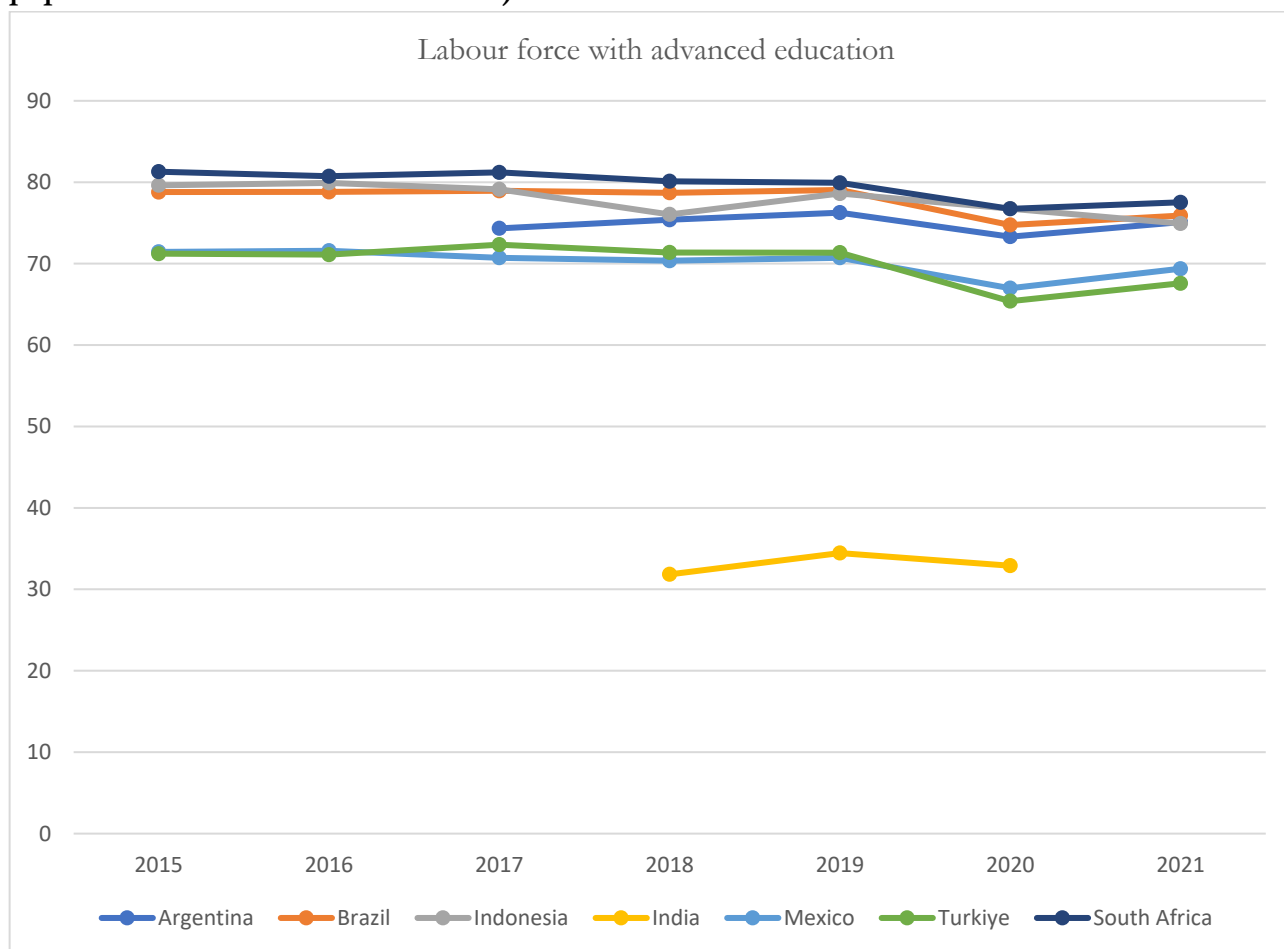
An increasing trend in female labour force participation with advanced education is observed except in India. However, this trend must also be dealt more carefully as around 30 per cent of the women with advanced education in six countries (Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Indonesia, and Turkey) and around 70 per cent of the women with advanced education in India are out of labour force (Figure 3.6). Hence, the magnitude of increased FLFPR is not linear with general increase in women’s enrollment in education and in particular increase in women’s enrollment in higher education among global south countries of G20. This is because women’s participation in the job market also depends on the existing social norms, fertility rates, economic shocks, access to childcare and other supportive services (Verick S, 2014).

**Figure 3.6: Female labour force participation rate, (per cent of total population ages 15+) (modelled ILO estimate)**



Source: Compiled from ILO database.

**Figure 3.7: Labour force with advanced education, female (per cent of female working-age population with advanced education)**



Source: Compiled from ILO database

### 3.2.1 Participation of women in labour force across different economic sectors

In the earlier section we have discussed the magnitude of unemployment among women labour force by education level among all the G20 countries. Those results suggest need for different levels interventions by respective countries to make sure that women are employed in various jobs. In this connection it becomes important to with the level of education in which sector women is getting employed and contributing to contribution to economic output. Therefore, the current women's employment in different sector among global south countries of G20.

Table 3.5 presents percentage of women employed in agriculture and allied activities. The recent available estimates suggest that India has the highest percentage of women employed in agriculture while Argentina has the least among global south countries of G20. However, it is worth noting that there is a declining trend in employment of women in agriculture across all the countries.

The data also suggests that there is a marginal decline in percentage of women employed in industrial sector in most countries expect India and China, even as a steady increase is seen in the service sector in all the countries. However, it is worth noting that less than 30 per cent of women are employed in service sector in India while Argentina at 90 per cent has the highest proportion of women employed in this sector.



**Table 3.5: Employment of women by sector (per cent of women employment) in global south countries of G20 (modelled ILO estimate)**

Country Name	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Agriculture and Allied Activities</b>					
Argentina	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
Brazil	5.0	4.7	4.3	4.1	4.0
China	25.0	24.2	23.6	22.8	22.0
Indonesia	32.6	30.1	28.8	27.5	26.4
India	57.9	57.2	56.3	55.5	54.7
Mexico	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.6	3.6
Turkiye	31.0	28.6	28.2	26.0	25.0
South Africa	4.2	3.9	3.8	3.9	3.8
<b>Industry</b>					
Argentina	8.7	8.9	9.2	9.1	9.2
Brazil	11.7	10.8	10.7	10.8	10.6
China	25.9	25.2	24.3	24.2	23.1
Indonesia	15.8	16.0	16.7	17.0	16.7
India	18.0	17.7	17.5	17.3	17.4
Mexico	16.9	17.2	17.6	17.8	17.1
Turkiye	16.3	16.0	15.7	16.1	15.9
South Africa	11.7	11.9	12.2	11.6	12.0
<b>Service</b>					
Argentina	91.3	91.1	90.8	90.8	90.8
Brazil	83.3	84.5	85.1	85.1	85.4
China	49.1	50.6	52.1	53.0	54.9
Indonesia	51.6	53.9	54.5	55.5	57.0
India	24.1	25.1	26.1	27.2	28.0
Mexico	79.4	79.2	78.6	78.6	79.3
Turkiye	52.8	55.4	56.1	57.9	59.1
South Africa	84.0	84.2	84.0	84.5	84.2

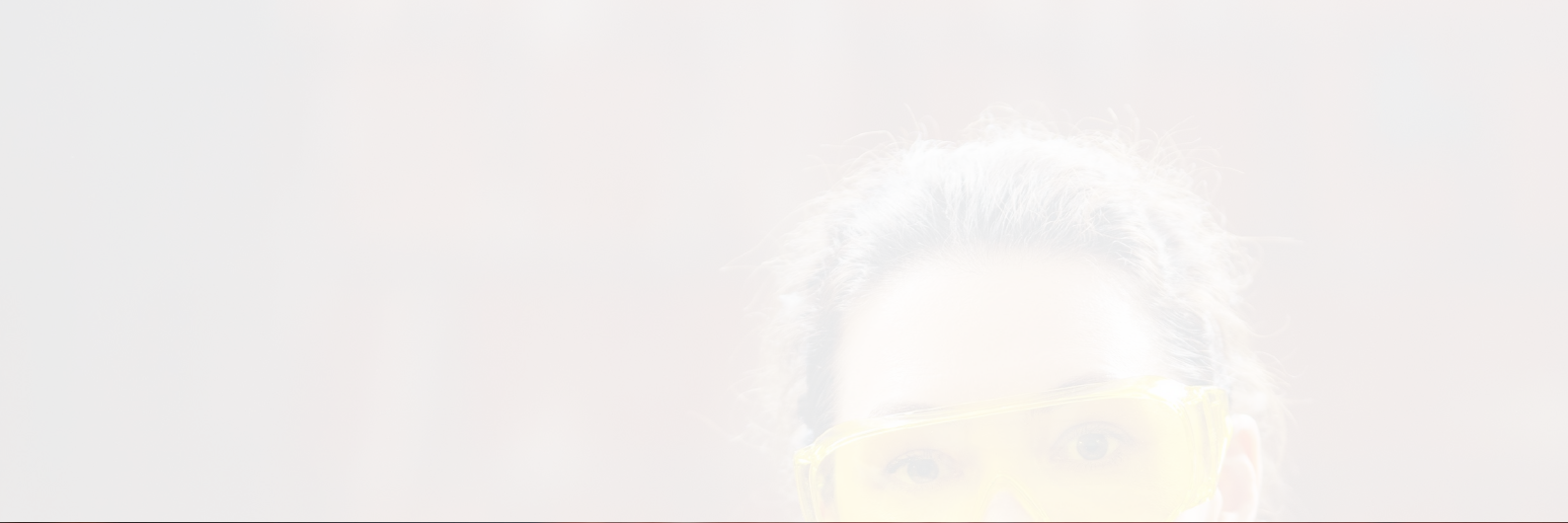
Source: Compiled from ILO database

### 3.3 Key Recommendations

- **Country specific studies:** G20 countries must make continued efforts in understanding the enabling and disabling factors which impact women's participation at work force. Such studies must be carried out frequently (encourage both quantitative and qualitative studies) at disaggregated levels, for instance between rural and urban areas. Evidence from such analysis will help in promoting evidence-based policy measures for increasing women's participation at work force.
- **Harmonization of Surveys and data collection:** To conduct both country-specific and cross-country studies, availability of data in terms of frequency and comparability of data between countries is essential. Hence, G20 must make efforts to create such large-scale data bases.
- **Reducing regional disparities in access to different services:** G20 countries must make efforts to reduce regional disparities in terms of access to safe mode of transport, better quality health, water and sanitation facilities, access to better quality education, financial credit, and affordable care services.
- **Increased allocation for gender budgeting:** Reducing regional disparities can be undertaken through increasing the share of budget allocation for women.
- **Increasing women's labour market security and working conditions:** G20 countries must make continued efforts in providing smooth transition of women from informal to formal economy. Further, efforts must be made to ensure that larger proportion of women are employed by providing job opportunities through affirmative action. In this connection it is essential for the G20 countries to also address gender discrimination in hiring and payment of wages. Efforts must be made to encourage women with different levels of education to take up entrepreneurship/ own enterprise activities.

#### Specific Recommendations

- Among the G20 countries, India, Turkey and Saudi Arabia must make efforts to improve women's labour force participation by 30 per cent in the next 5 years while other countries among the G20 must aim to improve women's labour force participation by 20 per cent in the next 5 years.
- Among the G20 countries, India, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and South Africa must make efforts to reduce rate of unemployment of women with higher education at least by 15 per cent in the next 5 years.
- G20 must also explore the possibilities of increasing employment opportunities in STEM areas in the next 5 years.
- The G20 must improve working conditions including preventing and addressing work-related violence and harassment.
- Global South countries of G20 especially India, China and Turkey must ensure that majority of the women employed in informal sector especially in agriculture transition smoothly to other sectors and/or ensure better wage and working conditions in the current sector.
- Ensure increased harmonization of labour force survey among G20 countries in the next two years.



4.

*Women and Skill Development*

The G20 has identified skills development as an objective since at least 2009. In a strategy training document, the group lists three broad reasons for the importance of skill training programs in the contemporary period:

1. With working-age population growth rates declining across the world, economic growth will become heavily dependent on workforce productivity and increasing labour force participation rates, especially among women and older workers.
2. In some regions, with more young people joining the workforce, it becomes essential for skill training programs so that they do not remain stuck in low-paying jobs.
3. Migration of workers from one country to another may create skill gaps in source countries even if they fill the gap in destination countries (International Labour Organisation & OECD, 2021).

International organisations such as the UNESCO have emphasised the need for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)<sup>6</sup> to be restructured so that they respond to multiple transitions taking place globally in ways that are *successful* and *just* (UNESCO, 2022):

1. **Demographic transition:** Ageing population in some countries and higher proportion of youth joining the workforce in other countries.
2. **Technological transitions:** Digitisation and Automation will create and destroy jobs at a large scale in ways that could be unpredictable.
3. **Green and sustainable economic transition:** Some economies are moving towards zero emissions and green energy and infrastructure.
4. **Socio-political transitions:** Large-scale migration of peoples for reasons of poverty, authoritarian regimes, climate change are likely to keep increasing
5. **Informal Employment:** Employment across the world has become increasingly informalized, with gig economy further threatening formal employment.
6. **Economic recovery:** The world maybe recovering from disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic but this is uneven across countries and classes of workers; this will cause long term impacts on learning and employment.

#### 4.1. Gender differences in youth un/employment in G20 countries

It is important to understand the larger context of youth employment to locate the need for relevant TVET programs. Across the globe, high levels of youth unemployment is a cause of serious concern and youth lacking the skills required to find meaningful employment has been identified as a key cause. Within G20 countries, there exists varying levels of gender gap in youth un/employment.

1. India has the highest gender gap in Youth Labour Force Participation (YLFP) followed by Indonesia, and Turkey.

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<sup>6</sup> TVET has been defined as “comprising education, training and skills development relating to a wide range of occupational fields, production, services and livelihoods. As part of lifelong learning, TVET programs can take place at secondary, post-secondary and tertiary levels and includes work-based learning and continuing training and professional development which may lead to qualifications. TVET also includes a wide range of skills development opportunities attuned to national and local contexts. Learning to learn, the development of literacy and numeracy skills, transversal skills and citizenship skills are integral components of TVET” (UNESCO, 2016)

2. Between 2015 and 2022, female youth labour force participation (FYLFP) has sharply increased in Japan, Australia, France, Germany and Brazil while it has declined in India, China, and UK.
3. The year 2022 estimates on FYLFP suggest that Australia has the highest FYLFP while India has the least.
4. Between 2015 and 2022 female youth unemployment (FYU) has increased in global south especially in India, Argentina, Brazil, South Africa, and Turkey. A decline in FYU is observed in the rest of the G20 countries.
5. 2022 estimates on FYU suggest that South Africa has the highest per cent of young women who are unemployed followed by Saudi Arabia, Turkey, India and Italy. Japan and Germany had the least FYU.

**Table 4.1: Gender differences in Youth Labour force Participation Rate (in per cent)**

Country Name	2015		2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021		2022	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
<b>Argentina</b>	30.8	46.3	31.0	46.3	31.1	46.4	32.6	45.9	32.2	45.5	27.8	38.1	31.6	42.1	31.6	41.8
<b>Australia</b>	66.7	67.8	66.4	67.2	66.4	67.4	67.6	68.1	68.0	68.2	66.5	65.9	69.0	68.1	71.8	70.0
<b>Brazil</b>	47.0	62.6	48.1	62.0	49.4	62.4	49.5	62.5	50.8	63.0	44.3	57.9	48.7	60.8	50.4	63.0
<b>China</b>	50.0	55.4	49.2	54.7	48.3	54.0	47.5	53.2	46.8	52.5	43.6	49.5	45.4	50.8	45.3	50.9
<b>Canada</b>	64.6	63.9	64.2	63.3	64.2	63.7	63.5	63.2	65.3	63.9	61.8	61.7	64.1	63.6	65.4	63.5
<b>France</b>	34.1	40.2	34.4	39.6	33.7	40.0	34.1	40.8	34.1	39.4	33.2	37.9	37.9	41.5	38.4	42.3
<b>Germany</b>	47.3	50.2	47.6	50.7	48.6	51.0	48.1	52.2	48.8	53.9	50.1	53.4	49.4	54.8	50.9	55.8
<b>India</b>	13.6	45.6	12.4	44.3	11.2	43.0	10.2	41.7	12.2	42.6	11.2	40.8	11.7	41.5	12.3	42.3
<b>Indonesia</b>	37.0	55.2	36.9	55.1	37.8	54.7	38.2	56.5	40.0	55.8	38.9	54.9	37.9	51.3	38.2	52.3
<b>Italy</b>	21.7	30.4	22.8	30.2	22.2	29.9	21.9	29.9	22.1	29.8	18.8	28.4	20.2	29.3	21.5	30.4
<b>Japan</b>	43.1	42.7	45.0	44.6	45.3	43.9	48.2	46.6	50.3	47.9	49.2	48.0	49.7	47.9	50.0	48.5
<b>Korea, Rep.</b>	31.9	24.7	32.1	24.8	31.6	24.8	31.8	23.2	30.8	24.6	29.4	23.3	31.6	23.8	33.4	24.9
<b>Mexico</b>	31.6	57.9	31.2	57.2	30.7	56.7	30.9	56.6	32.4	57.4	28.7	51.2	32.4	56.0	32.3	56.6
<b>Russian Federation</b>	33.8	41.9	33.3	41.9	31.4	39.2	30.6	37.5	29.6	36.5	28.7	35.4	28.4	34.6	..	..
<b>South Africa</b>	27.1	34.1	27.4	34.5	28.2	34.6	26.2	32.9	27.0	32.4	23.6	28.6	24.6	28.3	26.4	33.0
<b>United Kingdom</b>	57.2	59.8	57.6	59.0	56.9	58.0	55.7	58.4	55.8	57.4	54.5	54.8	52.0	50.5	52.3	50.9
<b>United States</b>	48.9	51.1	48.9	51.4	49.3	51.5	49.6	50.8	50.1	51.5	48.4	49.6	49.6	51.4	49.8	51.2
<b>Turkiye</b>	29.4	53.6	30.2	54.0	30.9	55.0	31.0	56.0	32.4	55.6	27.4	50.0	29.7	53.0	30.8	54.0
<b>European Union</b>	36.0	41.6	36.1	41.4	36.4	41.6	36.3	41.8	36.5	42.0	34.9	40.4	36.0	41.5	36.7	42.3
<b>Saudi Arabia</b>	8.5	26.0	8.7	28.2	6.9	26.2	8.0	28.7	9.7	29.1	12.9	33.5	10.8	30.9	10.6	30.5

Source: Compiled from ILO database

**Table 4.2: Gender differences in Youth Unemployment Rate (in per cent)**

Country Name	2015		2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021		2022	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
<b>Argentina</b>	23.6	18.0	25.6	19.4	26.9	20.2	27.9	21.1	28.5	24.0	35.0	27.2	26.7	21.0	21.6	16.4
<b>Australia</b>	11.9	14.2	11.4	13.8	11.5	13.6	10.7	12.8	10.6	12.9	13.1	15.3	9.8	12.6	7.4	9.2
<b>Brazil</b>	23.6	16.4	31.1	23.4	33.2	25.1	32.3	24.7	32.0	23.4	35.6	26.7	33.8	24.4	25.0	18.5
<b>Canada</b>	11.3	15.0	11.3	14.8	9.9	13.2	9.6	12.5	9.6	12.3	19.3	20.8	12.4	14.6	8.7	11.3
<b>China</b>	9.6	11.6	9.5	11.5	9.4	11.3	8.7	10.5	9.6	11.6	11.4	13.7	11.2	13.4	11.6	14.3
<b>European Union</b>	24.1	24.1	22.4	22.4	20.0	20.1	18.1	18.2	17.0	16.9	19.3	18.5	19.3	18.3	16.2	15.5
<b>France</b>	23.4	25.7	24.0	24.9	21.2	22.9	19.9	21.5	18.1	20.7	20.0	20.3	18.8	18.9	17.3	18.1
<b>Germany</b>	6.5	7.9	6.1	7.8	5.8	7.6	5.1	7.1	4.8	6.6	6.7	7.5	6.4	7.3	5.0	6.4
<b>India</b>	22.5	23.6	23.6	24.6	24.6	25.5	25.8	26.5	22.9	22.9	29.6	31.2	23.3	24.0	23.1	23.2
<b>Indonesia</b>	17.3	17.2	16.1	16.0	14.4	14.7	16.5	16.3	13.3	13.8	14.4	15.1	12.7	14.6	12.4	13.4
<b>Italy</b>	42.6	38.8	39.6	36.5	37.3	33.0	34.8	30.4	31.2	27.8	31.8	27.9	32.9	27.7	25.6	22.9
<b>Japan</b>	5.1	5.9	4.5	5.7	4.4	4.8	3.2	4.1	3.7	4.1	4.2	5.0	4.1	5.1	3.6	4.8
<b>Korea, Rep.</b>	9.9	9.9	10.1	10.3	9.5	10.1	9.9	10.3	9.5	10.2	9.6	10.7	7.4	8.9	6.6	7.2
<b>Mexico</b>	9.9	7.8	8.7	7.1	8.0	6.3	7.5	6.5	8.0	6.8	8.7	7.8	8.5	7.5	7.0	6.0
<b>Russian Federation</b>	17.3	15.6	17.5	16.0	17.1	15.9	17.9	16.3	15.6	14.8	18.1	16.0	17.3	15.2		..
<b>Saudi Arabia</b>	57.0	20.2	46.8	17.9	61.0	24.0	58.2	22.1	51.0	16.8	43.0	22.0	48.4	19.3	46.9	16.0
<b>South Africa</b>	46.8	38.3	49.8	39.5	47.7	38.9	48.7	39.9	51.7	43.9	48.4	39.6	54.9	45.6	55.5	48.5
<b>Turkiye</b>	21.8	16.2	23.2	17.0	25.1	17.4	24.6	17.3	29.8	22.0	29.4	22.2	28.3	19.2	25.0	15.7
<b>United Kingdom</b>	12.8	16.0	11.0	14.6	10.5	13.4	10.2	12.1	9.1	12.8	11.6	15.2	11.2	14.3	8.3	11.6
<b>United States</b>	10.4	12.7	9.3	11.4	8.1	10.3	7.7	9.5	7.3	9.4	14.8	14.9	8.9	10.5	7.1	8.6

*Source:* Compiled from ILO database

Addressing youth unemployment and the attendant gender gaps is of utmost importance. The transition from school to work is a crucial period because if young people are not ‘integrated’ into the labour market at an early age, they are at high risk of being stuck at lower wages and employment insecurity (International Labour Office, 2011). It is in this context that it becomes important to have relevant TVET programs to ensure transition into decent work for young men and women. This has not taken place in many countries of the G20, as evident in the nature of skill required for most jobs in a country’s economy. Nearly 78 per cent of jobs in India require basic or less than basic skills, while about 91 percent of jobs in South Korea require intermediate and advanced levels of skill. A skilled workforce increases the resilience and adaptability of economies to new technological developments and turn it to their economic advantage. This in turn requires an ‘education and training system that creates a broad base of adequately educated individuals able to continue learning throughout their careers’ (ibid, 2011).

Figure 4.1: Skills Composition of Jobs in Select G20 Countries (2018)

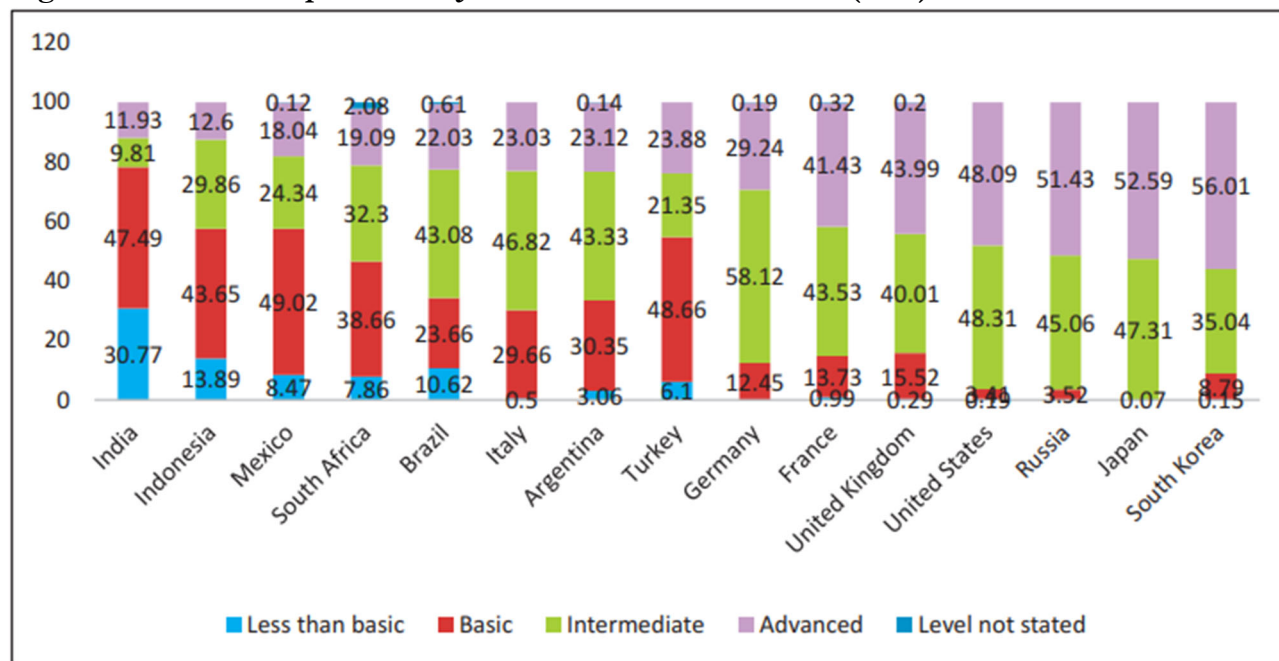


Image Source: Kukreja, 2020

## 4.2 Issues with TVET education

The following issues have been identified as concerns that need to be mitigated:

- **Access and completion:** Many students who manage to enrol in education or training programs do not complete their studies and miss out on obtaining formal qualifications, which can dramatically reduce the return on the educational investments in terms of lifetime earning potential.
- **Quality:** TVET systems in many countries face challenges related to quality assurance, resulting in perceptions of the vocational track being a second-best option compared to general secondary or tertiary education.
- **Relevance:** TVET programs can last anywhere from six months to three years and can provide young people, especially women, with the skills to compete for better paying jobs. Problems have however arisen regarding the curriculum and delivery of these programs and if they adequately respond to labour market needs.
- **Efficiency:** Challenges related to governance, financing, and quality assurance also impact the efficiency of skills development programs. The unnecessarily high costs can limit opportunities for disadvantaged youth and adults to access these programs.

## 4.3 TVET programs seen through the lens of gender

A study of gender parity in participation in TVET programs revealed that only 31 of 133 countries had managed to achieve parity while the rest, regardless of their national level of development, had considerable levels of disparity (International Labour Organization, 2020). Preferences for TVET programs also vary by gender. Women students are over-represented in courses on food and nutrition, cosmetology and sewing and in courses with a trade and services profile while men dominate courses in engineering, manufacturing and construction.

Multiple hindrances exist in women's reception of and access to TVET programs. Some of them include:

1. **Lack of basic education/illiteracy:** In rural areas, particularly in low-income countries, women have to undertake education and training in contexts where formal learning is devalued for them or has to be undertaken alongside care-giving responsibilities which are considered primary responsibilities for women. In such contexts, the inability to access even basic education or literacy programs—a prerequisite to access TVET programs—hinders any possibility for skill development.
2. **Gender bias in labour markets:** With women being employed within family enterprises or informally employed, their pathways to mobility are limited. This limits their chances or interest in accessing TVET programs. Further, the limited job opportunities mean that women are often found to be 'over-educated' than men.
3. **Lack of incentives:** Social, cultural and infrastructural constraints often mean that even women who have managed to acquire skills for work are unable to find employment. The proportion of women who are 'neither employed nor in education or training' (NEET) is far higher for women than men, particularly in low-income countries. Given this situation, women are likely to not have any incentives to undertake TVET programs.

#### 4.4 Shift from a broad-based conception of vocational education to skill development

An accepted doctrine in the discourse on enabling women's greater access to the labour market is that skills training, must be introduced to increase employability potential. However, academic scholarship on skills training has the following critiques to offer:

1. **Inability to meet the aspirations of young people:** Critical scholarly literature on skills development have increasingly pointed out that the narrow conceptualization of vocational education as training individuals in skills for the job market—and hence employer-oriented—is likely a key factor in the modest success of national skill development policies and programs. For instance, a two-year study of skill training centres in Bangalore, India found that graduates of training programs quit within weeks of employment because it rarely matches their expectations or aspirations (Upadhyaya and RoyChowdhury, 2022).
2. **Focus on short term needs of the employer:** In analysing the emphasis on skill development, Allais (2012) notes that “while policy makers may believe they are creating a ‘demand-led’ system, it is focused on employers’ short-term labour market needs, rather than long-term educational needs of young people or even, perhaps, the long-term needs of the economy.” She also points to forms of vocational education in countries such as Germany, France, and Netherlands, where vocational education is more comprehensively structured to provide “an individual a systematic combination of formal knowledge, skills, and experience-based competence, not linked to a specific workplace” and which allows for “cultivated and qualified labour” and enabling dignity in work.
3. **Emphasis on skills rather than education:** Some scholars have suggested that improving vocational education requires a focus on *education*, i.e. building strong institutions, curricula and lecturers (Gamble, 2004). This is necessary because employers tend to recruit individuals with higher education qualifications rather than basic or intermediate qualifications when they find that the latter lack “broad problem-solving skills and capacity for communication” (ibid, 2004).



Given these critical analyses of notions underlying, and policies of, skill development, the G20 countries need to revisit how vocational education can be reconceptualized broadly to enable dignity in work, or decent work. This is especially relevant when it comes to addressing gender gaps in labour force participation: women with intermediate and advanced levels of education are likely to drop out of active participation in the labour market, particularly if familial incomes increase, rather than engage in humiliating jobs or jobs without any upward mobility.

#### 4.5 A holistic approach to skills development

Even though skill development programs have moved in this direction of meeting short-term needs, the G20 among other international institutions have been calling for a holistic approach to skills development through the adoption of a life-cycle/continuous learning approach where skills are built, maintained and improved. The International Labour Conference in 2009 called for:

1. Seamless pathway of learning from pre-primary to higher education, offering guidance and counselling as young men and women make their way into the labour market;
2. Offering continuous learning to workers to upgrade their competencies;
3. Developing core skills such as literacy, numeracy, communication skills, teamwork, problem-solving skills and learning abilities; an awareness of their rights as workers; and an understanding of entrepreneurship
4. Developing higher order skills that can create opportunities for high quality or wage jobs
5. Focussing on portability of skills (International Labour Office, 2011).

Together, this would create the conditions of employability of individuals. Creating policies that enable this evolution of skill development from childhood to mature worker stage or an emphasis being placed on basic education<sup>7</sup>, initial training<sup>8</sup> and lifelong learning<sup>9</sup>, constitutes the life-cycle approach.

This holistic approach cannot however be limited to a focus on skills development. The ILO states, 'For the potential of education and training to be fully realized, complementary policies are needed to help families balance work and family life, to help keep older workers in productive employment, and to help young people capitalize on their training. To be effective, then, a skills strategy cannot be developed in isolation but must be embedded in the wider economic and social policy environments' (International Labour Office, 2011).

#### 4.6 Key Recommendations:

- **Making universal access to quality basic education an urgent priority:** Since TVET programs can be accessed only by those with adequate levels of learning competencies, the G20 should focus on addressing gaps in access and delivery of quality education at basic and intermediate levels in all its member countries.

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<sup>7</sup> "Basic education gives each individual a basis for the development of their potential, laying the foundation for employability" (p. 4, International Labour Office, 2011)

<sup>8</sup> "Initial training provides the core work skills, general knowledge, and industry-based and professional competencies that facilitate the transition from education into the world of work" (p.4, International Labour Office, 2011)

<sup>9</sup> "Lifelong learning maintains individuals' skills and competencies as work, technology and skill requirements change" (p.4, International Labour Office, 2011).

- **Framing skill development policies considering women's diverse contexts:** Women's access to TVET programs are informed by the gendered roles they have to perform socially as well as by gendered segregation of labour markets. Framing policies and programs that help overcome these structural constraints should be a priority.
- **Reduction in gendered segregation of occupation should be a goal:** Skill development policies need to be framed in such a way that they ensure women's participation in occupations traditionally occupied by men.
- **Creating targeted programs:** Programs that are designed keeping specific target groups in mind—their constraints and needs—will ensure the program's success. Incorporating the kinds of flexibilities in training, fees, facilities that candidates need should be made essential.
- **Focus on social justice:** Specific attention should be paid to those from disadvantaged groups such as people with disabilities, migrants, or women from rural areas.
- **Collection of comparable data:** Global statistics on skills development are unavailable due to differences in TVET systems across countries. Harmonisation of data will be necessary as also collecting data on the basis of not only gender but other impinging socio-educational-economic contexts such as age, class, education, caste, race.
- **Equal participation of women in the design and delivery of training programs:** Participation of women in design and delivery could potentially lead to more gender-sensitive learning environments.
- **Climate change and the green economy:** Effects of climate change are borne disproportionately by women, particularly in rural areas. TVET programs should be formulated in ways that can make women climate-resilient as well as open up opportunities for employment in this emerging green sector.
- **Need for country-specific programs:** Women's participation in labour force varies across different sectors for countries of the G20. For instance, a large number of women in India are employed in agriculture while in Argentina women are largely employed in the services sector. TVET programs need to take into consideration and design programs that will offer higher income and decent work opportunities for both the sectors women are currently employed in as well as where they will likely transition towards in the future.
- **Developing robust labour market information and employment systems:** Generating information on present and future skill needs and transmitting them to educational and training institutions requires investment in information and dissemination systems. The G20 countries should be able to collate experiences to establish such systems in its member countries.

### Specific recommendations

- G20 member countries should explicitly consider gender equality in TVET curricula and undertake gender sensitivity trainings for teachers to remove gender stereotypes;
- Increase women's enrollment in technology intensive areas which have been traditionally male dominated;

- Create opportunities for men in social and care work;
- Ensure flexible hours for all types of formal and informal skills development such that it can allow women to undertake household or childcare duties, or seasonal agricultural work;
- Providing safe and women-friendly transport to schools or training providers near underserved areas;
- Expanding skill training infrastructure and facilities;
- Shorter, modular training courses could be framed so that time spent away from work or home is reduced for women;
- Programs that offer basic and foundational skills courses for women with inadequate formal education should be offered;
- Training programs should also aim at promoting the return to work for women either after childbirth or unpaid care responsibilities;
- Closing the digital gender divide should also be a focus of skill development programs.



5.

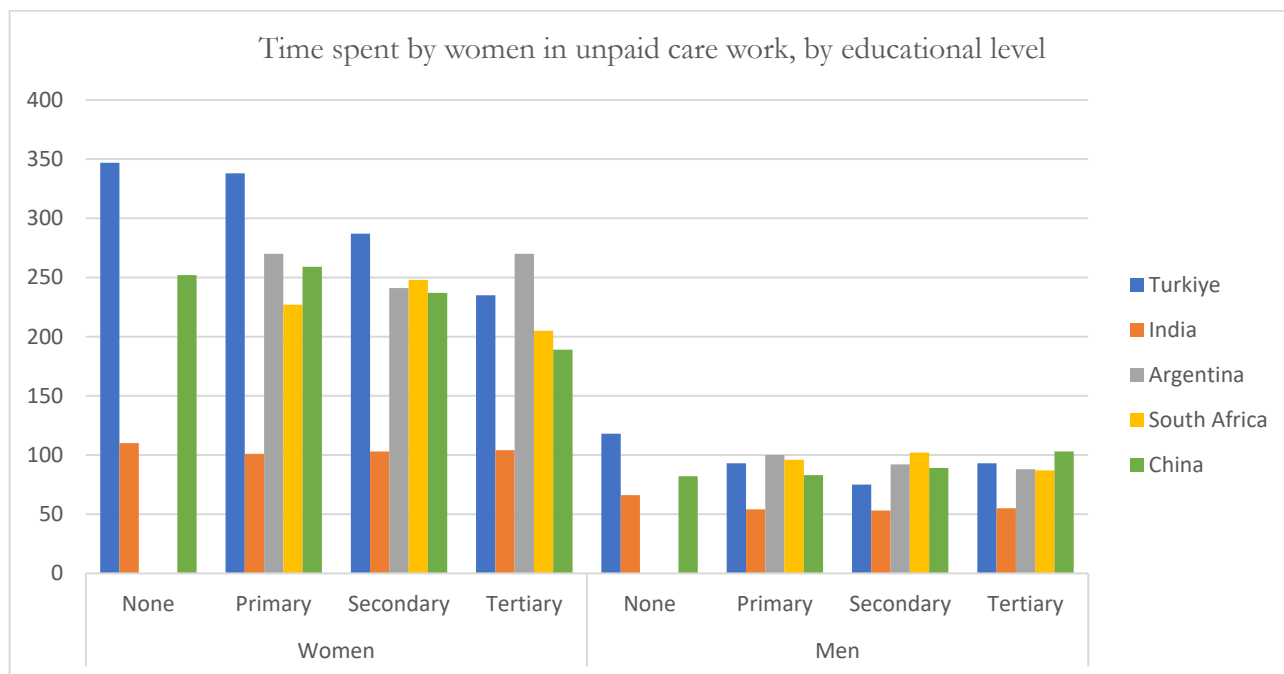
*Women and Care Work*

Globally, nearly 1.4 billion women, i.e. about 67 per cent of 2.1 billion persons, are outside the labour force (Addati et al., 2018). Women are less likely to be employed than men and more likely to be at the bottom of the professional ladder and earn about 80 per cent of what men make. Although women do want to engage in paid work and men want them to work, women are still unable to find jobs. According to one representative study by the ILO conducted globally, about 70 percent of women said they would prefer to be in paid work (Beghini et al., 2019). The ability to find viable forms of employment for women is also determined by its intersections with factors such as ethnicity, disability, migration among others.

Feminist studies over the decades have pointed out that women’s employment choices are dictated by the extent of care work<sup>10</sup> they have to undertake within the reproductive sphere. In a hegemonic economic model where “men as breadwinners” prevail, women’s participation in paid labour force is of secondary importance over their obligation to perform care work for the family. Across the world, 606 million working-age women (or 21.7 per cent) perform unpaid care work on a full-time basis, compared to 41 million men (or 1.5 per cent) (Beghini et al., 2019). One study shows that nearly 42 per cent of women of working age state that their reason for being outside the work force was unpaid care work. For men, the principal reasons for not to be in the work force was because they were studying, sick or disabled (Addati et al., 2018). Thus, there is a ‘labour force participation penalty’ for women with care responsibilities (ibid, 2018).

Even though proportion of unpaid care work declines with increase in levels of education for both genders, at each level of education women spend double the amount of time per day in unpaid care work compared men with similar education background.

**Figure 5.1: Time spent by women in unpaid care work according to educational levels in select countries**



Source: Addati et al., 2018

<sup>10</sup> “Unpaid care work is non-remunerated work carried out to sustain the well-being, health and maintenance of other individuals in a household or the community, and it includes both direct and indirect care (i.e. routine housework)” (Addati et al., 2018)

Women with children less than 5 years old further experience a ‘motherhood employment’ penalty with mothers less likely to be employed than women without children. Women may earn lesser than men but mothers earn even lesser than women without children—this is called the ‘motherhood pay gap’. This however works differently for men with fathers earning more than men without children (Beghini et al., 2019). Globally, mothers of children in the age group of 0-5 years have the lowest participation rates in managerial and leadership positions, with only 25 percent of managers being women with children less than 5 years old. For women then, motherhood then brings in penalties in terms of employment, wages and leadership that can persist throughout their lives.

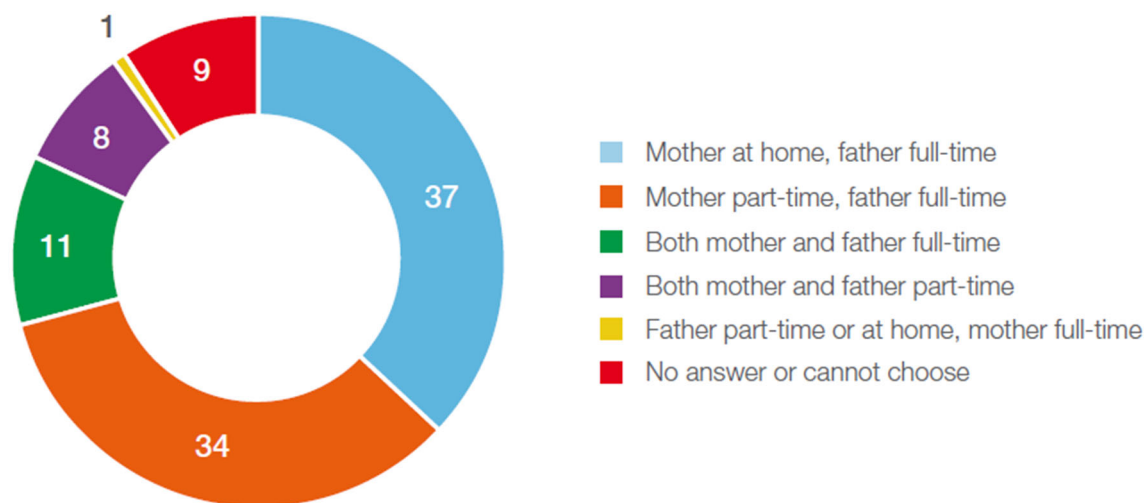
The nature of employment for women across the G20 countries show that there exist some persistent trends, largely due to unpaid care responsibilities. Women are

1. More likely to be involved in temporary work, i.e. on contract-basis
2. Less likely to be self-employed
3. More likely to be out of labour force if they have young children
4. More likely to be in part-time work even if they would like to work full-time
5. Spending more time on unpaid work than men<sup>11</sup>

### 5.1 Women’s employment is determined by familial and social attitudes

Attitudes towards women’s work-family balance play a crucial role in women’s participation in both developed and developing countries. In a survey conducted between 2011-2014 by the International Social Survey Program, information on attitudes towards care responsibilities and how families should balance work and family responsibilities in high- and middle-income countries were captured. The results of the survey point out that 37 per cent of the respondents stated that mothers/ women should be at home and fathers/ male member should be working full time. Around 34 per cent of the respondents perceived that women could take up part-time job while male members continued to be the breadwinners. Only 11 per cent perceived that both the members of the family can work (Figure 5.2).

**Figure 5.2: Preferred work–family arrangement (percentages), 2011–14**



Note: Age group: 15 and older. 41 countries.

ImageSource: Addati et al., 2018

<sup>11</sup> International Labour Organisation & OECD. (2021). Women at Work in G20 countries: Policy action since 2020. Paper prepared for the 2nd Meeting of the G20 Employment Working Group under Italy’s Presidency 2021.

## 5.2 Estimating the scale of unpaid care work

The scale of unpaid care work can be estimated in two ways i.e., volume of working hours and number of unpaid carers. The volume of unpaid care working hours can broadly be categorized into three types:

- housework (domestic services for own final use within the household, indirect care);
- caregiving services to household members (direct care);
- volunteer work (community care services and help to other households, both direct and indirect care).

A recent available estimate highlights gender variations across countries regarding time spent by women in unpaid care work. Below are some instances of these variations:

**Table 5.1: Total amount of time spent on care-giving activities by women in select countries of the G20**

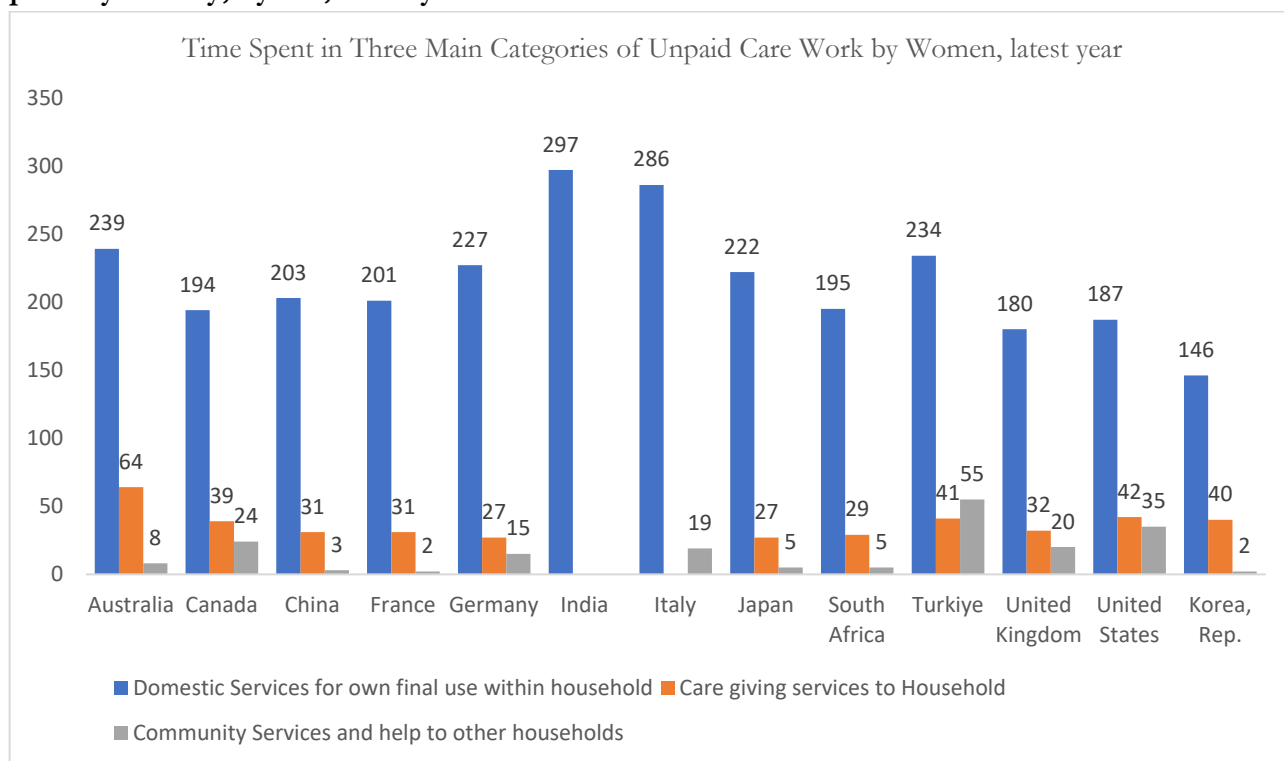
Sl. No	Country	Time spent on unpaid care work per day
1	Turkiye	330 minutes
2	Australia	311 minutes
3	Italy	305 minutes
4	India	297 minutes
5	Canada	257 minutes
6	United Kingdom	232 minutes
7	South Africa	229 minutes
8	China	168 minutes

*Source:* Addati et al., 2018

Figures 5.3 and 5.4 show the time spent on different kinds of care-giving activities for women and men. A major proportion of time spent by women in unpaid care work is for Domestic services for own final use within the household followed by Caregiving services to household members and Community services and help to other households.

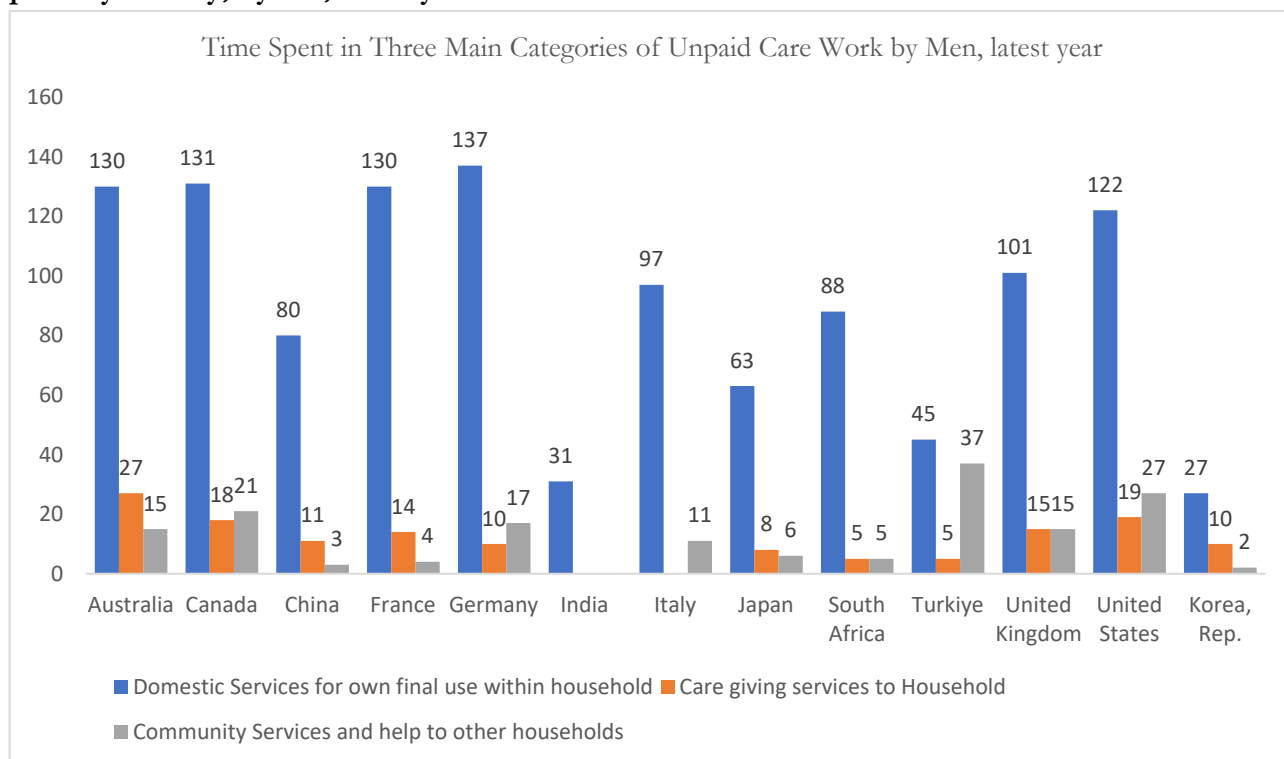
Similarly, gender differences between men and women in terms of time spent on unpaid care work is observed across countries. For instance, typically Indian men almost spend 9 times less time in unpaid care activities compared to women. In South Africa, it extends to 98 minutes per day in, 94 minutes per day in China, 93 minutes per day Argentina and 87 in Turkey. This gender division of unpaid care work determines the quantity and quality of women's paid employment. This gender gap in unpaid care among men and women is closing at such a slow rate that it is estimated that it would take until the year 2228 for there to be gender parity.

**Figure 5.3: Time spent in the three main categories of unpaid care work by women, based on primary activity, by sex, latest year.**



Source: Addati et al., 2018

**Figure 5.4: Time spent in the three main categories of unpaid care work by men, based on primary activity, by sex, latest year.**

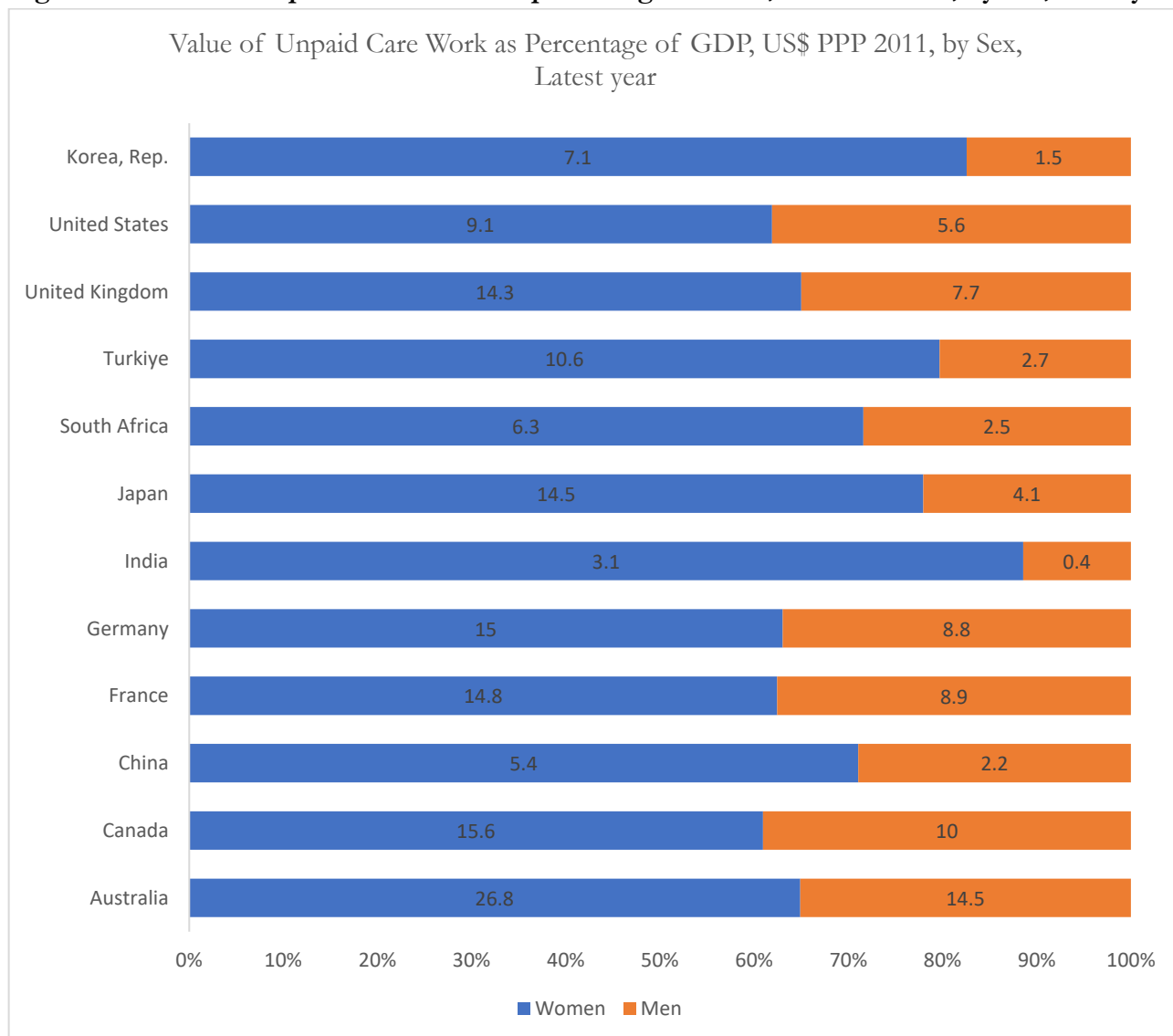


Source: Addati et al., 2018



What is the opportunity cost of such unpaid care work? According to one ILO estimate, about 63.5 per cent of the global working age population in unpaid care work (both male and female) accounts to 9 per cent of the global GDP if such work were accounted in national income calculations. This represents a total of 11 trillion US\$ purchasing power parity (PPP) 2011. The value of women’s unpaid care work represents 6.6 per cent of global GDP, or US\$8 trillion. Figure 5.5 illustrates the value of unpaid care work by gender.

**Figure 5.5: Value of unpaid care work as a percentage of GDP, US\$ PPP 2011, by sex, latest year**



Source: Addati et al., 2018

Variations in the value of unpaid care within and between genders are observed across countries. For instance, of the value of unpaid care work was highest in Australia (43.1 per cent of GDP) followed Canada (25.6 per cent of GDP), Germany (23.8 per cent of GDP), France (23.7 per cent of GDP), UK (22- per cent of GDP). The value of unpaid care work in India accounts only for 3.5 per cent of GDP. These estimates suggest that in several countries the value of unpaid care work exceeds the respective values of manufacturing, commerce, transportation, and other key market sectors. Due to low minimum

wages the value of unpaid care work represents a lower share of GDP in middle- and low-income countries.

### **5.3 Precarity of women's employment**

Given these realities, feminist scholarship has challenged the traditional division between economic and non-economic work and brought attention to how the latter forms of (unpaid) work have been continually undervalued. They have also pointed out how mainstream discourses of women empowerment have often focused on bringing women into paid labour force without foregrounding the need for supporting public infrastructure that can offer these care services. As a result, even for women who work full-time, a 'second shift' awaits them at home where the work of reproducing the labour force is undertaken (Power, 2020). It has been estimated that when combining paid and unpaid work, women's working days are longer (7 hours and 28 minutes) than men's (six hours and 44 minutes) (Beghini et al., 2019).

These trends regarding the nature of women's employment have been present even before the COVID-19 pandemic swept through the world. But the pandemic has exacerbated these long-standing gender gaps and worsened the consequences of poor quality of women's employment. Their temporary/part-time/short-duration nature of work has meant that women are less likely to have a financial safety net, due to greater job insecurity and lower average pay rates for women. Women are twice as likely as men to being unable to afford necessities for more than a month if they lost their jobs. These consequences are far more severe for women of colour (Power, 2020)

### **5.4 Calls for transformative care policies**

Increasingly calls for transformative care policies are being voiced from various quarters. An ILO report bluntly states that "No substantive progress can be made in achieving gender equality in the labour force until inequalities in unpaid care work are tackled through the effective recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid care work between women and men, as well as between families and the State" (Addati et al., 2018). This triple R framework (recognition, reduction and redistribution) has been further broadened to include

1. Represent, i.e. promoting the representation of carers as well their capacity to participate in relevant policy making;
2. Reward, i.e. appropriate reward for care work to mitigate 'care drain'.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Care drain is defined as "where women leave their families and possibly also migrate to provide low-paid care work to others, therefore moving their own unpaid care responsibilities onto other family members, such as grandparents or older children" (Power, 2020)

Figure 5.6: The 5R framework



Image source: UNESCO, 2019

## 5.5 Key recommendations

Given these mainstream policy responses that have been gender-blind and hence perpetuating existing gender inequalities, it becomes imperative for G20 countries to undertake measure to mitigate the long-standing gender disparities in care work, if it were to meet the Brisbane goal by 2025. These include:

- **Provision of basic infrastructure:** In many low-income countries, provision of water, sanitation and energy constitutes a major part of women's care-giving responsibilities. Ensuring such basic infrastructure will reduce the pressure on women's time.
- **Collection of time use data:** The absence of reliable data collected frequently through time-use surveys hinders the formulation of policies and schemes that can reduce the burden of care work. The G20 should work towards creating mandatory data collection systems that will enable the creation of care-work related policies.

- **Redistributing unpaid care work through public and private sector infrastructure:** The G20 should work towards creating infrastructure such as publicly-financed or subsidised day care services and elderly care services. Private sector can also subsidise child-care for employees.
- **Inclusive maternal, paternal and parental leaves as a way forward:** Changes in the traditional role of women as care-givers has to be accompanied by changes in traditional role of men, requiring their participation in care-giving duties. This is possible only when paternal or parental leaves are available for men to avail of as well. This reduces the different kinds of motherhood penalties women are forced to bear.
- **Family leave policies should be collectively financed:** Since a key reason for the absence of paid parental leave is because it is borne entirely by the employer, the G20 member countries should be able to work out financing mechanisms where the financial burden is borne also by social protection schemes.
- **Flexible working hours:** Given that women undertake low-paying jobs because of their care-giving responsibilities, introduction of flexible hours could lead to increase in productivity and workforce participation for women
- **Transitioning to a paid care economy:** Sectors such as health and social services where women are predominant need more attention from policy makers to ensure decent work and wages. More public investment in sectors such as health, education and care services are needed to meet future challenges of care work.

### Specific recommendations

- Social protection transfers and benefits for care-givers and those in need of care will go a long way in mitigating employment and wage precarity for women
- Gender mainstreaming in the policy response in a post-COVID-19 world, in particular including voices of women in future epidemic responses is essential.
- Tax benefits for expenses on childcare and elderly care services for both men and women. Extending such tangible financial benefits to men reduces the burden of care work on women. This, in turn, helps women's contribution to the workforce.



6.

*Women and leadership*  
*Gender Gap in global Leadership*

Women in leadership are engines of growth and development for all. If the focus must shift from women’s empowerment to women-led empowerment, it is important to have women as drivers of this change. This is possible only through minimising gender gaps in leadership. The Global Gender Gap Report-2022 suggests that women’s share of senior and leadership roles has seen a steady global increase over the past five years (2017-2022) (Pal et al., 2022). In 2022, global gender parity for this category reached 42.7 per cent, the highest gender parity scores yet. Overall, the global share of women in leadership roles is 31 per cent, although shares vary by industry. In 2022, only select industries had levels near gender parity in leadership (Figure 6.1), such as Non-Governmental and Membership Organizations (47 per cent), Education (46 per cent), and Personal Services and well-being (45 per cent). At the other end of the range are Energy (20 per cent), Manufacturing (19 per cent), and Infrastructure (16 per cent).

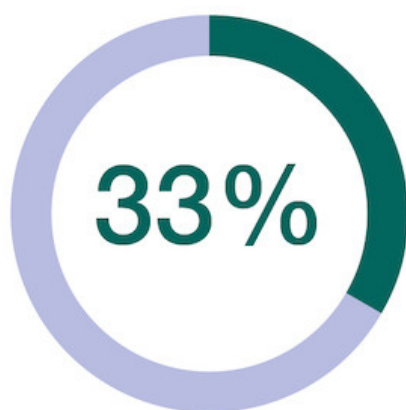
**Figure 6.1: Global Gender Gap Report 2022 – Women in Leadership**

Global Gender Gap Report 2022



## Women in leadership

In 2022, the global share of women in senior leadership across public and private sectors is

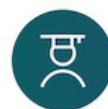


In the private sector alone, women represent 31% of leaders globally.

The industries with the highest percentage of female leadership are:



Non-governmental and Membership Organizations  
47%



Education  
46%



Personal Services and Wellbeing  
45%



Healthcare and Care services  
42%

The industries with the lowest percentage of female leadership are



Supply Chain and Transportation  
21%



Energy  
20%



Manufacturing  
19%



Infrastructure  
16%

*Image Source:* Pal et al., 2022

There is a significant variation across industries in the rates at which women are hired for leadership roles. On an average, more women were hired into leadership roles in industries where women were already highly represented. Similarly, more men were hired into leadership positions in industries that were already over-represented by men. Among the industries that hired the highest share of women into leadership positions in 2021 were Non-governmental and Membership Organizations (54 per cent), Education (49 per cent), Government and Public Sector (46 per cent), Personal Services and Wellbeing (46 per cent), Healthcare and Care Services (46 per cent), and Media and Communications (46 per cent). The first five are industries in which women's representation is generally higher than men’s overall.

In contrast, six industries hired significantly lower number of women than men into leadership positions in 2021: Technology (30 per cent), Agriculture (28 per cent), Energy (25 per cent), Supply Chain and Transportation (25 per cent), Manufacturing (22 per cent) and Infrastructure (21 per cent). These are also the industries with the lowest share of women representation in the overall makeup of the industry. The data in Figures 6.1 and 6.2 indicate that women’s empowerment in specific sectors directly correlates to

empowerment led by women. In other words, sectors which have a lesser gender gap in leadership also hire more women for leadership positions.

**Figure 6.2: Women in leadership roles, by industry (per cent), 2022**

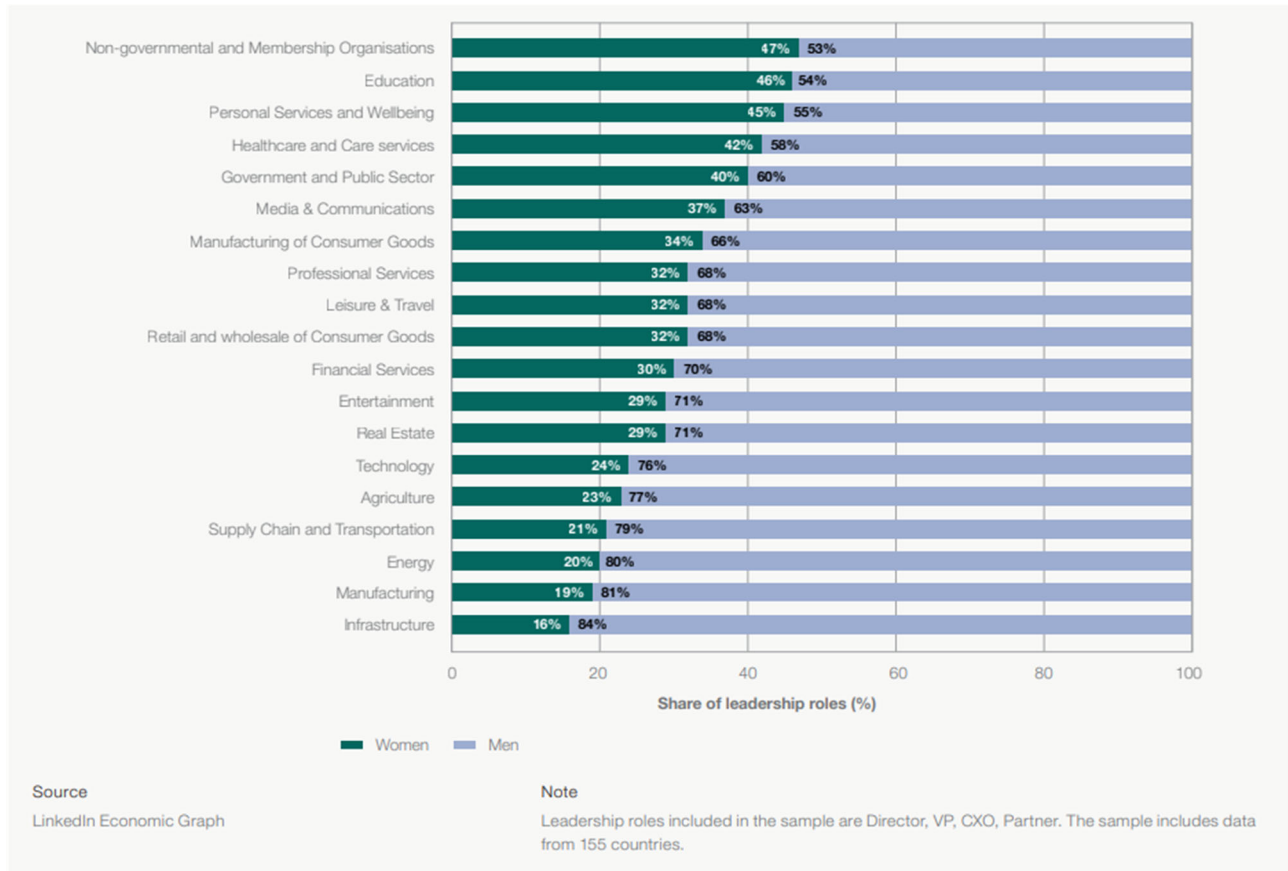
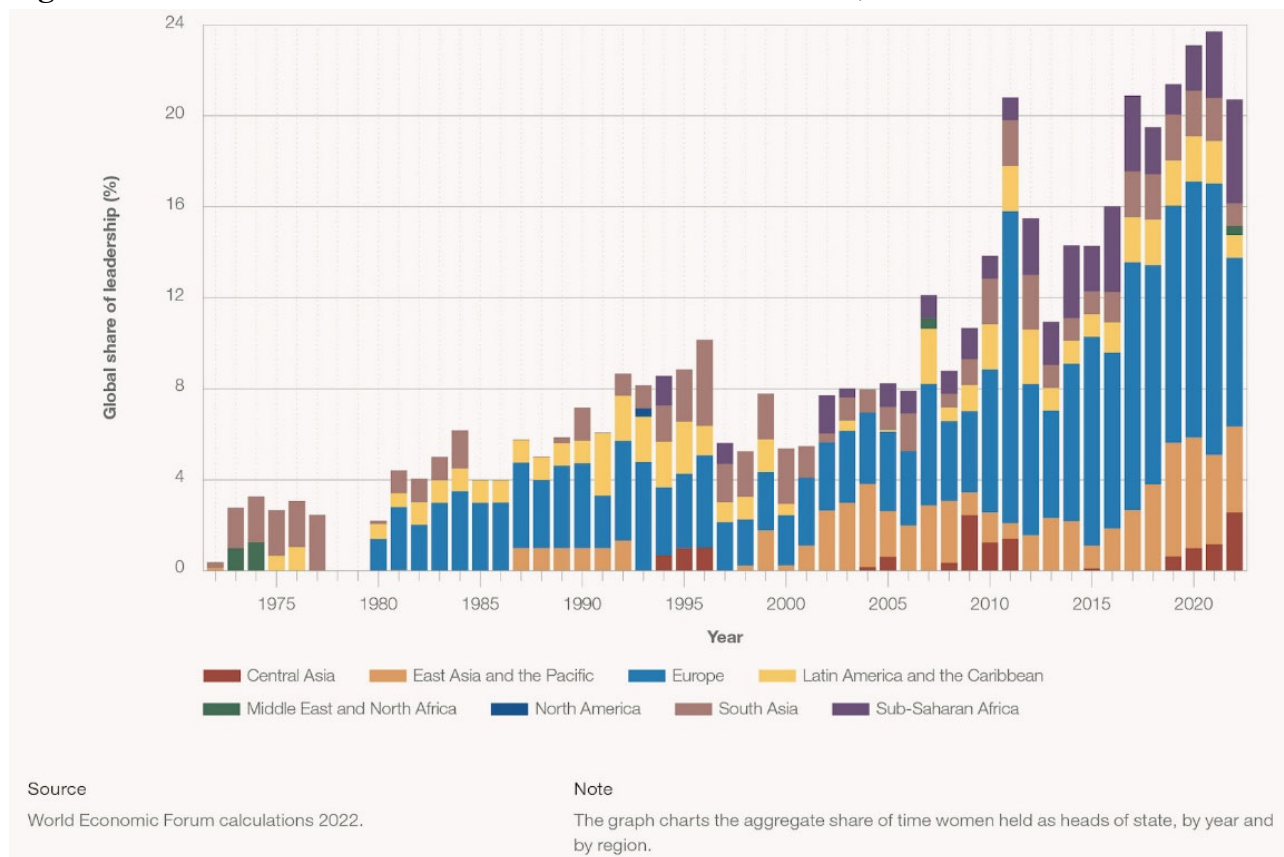


Image Source: Pal et al., 2022

### 6.1 Women Political Leadership – Global Trend

On the political representation front, more women in political leadership tend to create a powerful role model effect and their decisions represent broader parts of the populations they serve. Data from the Global Gender Gap Index (Figure 6.3) shows the progression of women in leadership in public offices. Of all women heads of state globally, the longest-serving one has presided over Germany for 16.1 years. The global average share of women in ministerial positions nearly doubled between 2006 and 2022, increasing from 9.9 per cent to 16.1 per cent. Similarly, the global average share of women in Legislative bodies rose from 14.9 per cent to 22.9 per cent. Yet it falls far short of the ideal expectation of a 50 per cent representation.

**Figure 6.3: Women’s Share of Time in Power as Heads of State, 1972-2022**



*Image Source:* Pal et al., 2022

The United Nations recognises women’s leadership in political life as essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. However, data indicates that women are globally underrepresented at all decision-making levels and that gender parity in political life is a long way off. The data compiled by UN Women indicate that as of January 2023, there are 31 countries where 34 women serve as Heads of State and/or Government. Further, women represent 22.8 per cent of Cabinet members heading Ministries, leading a policy area. There are only 13 countries in which women hold 50 per cent or more of the positions of Cabinet Ministers leading policy areas. The five most held portfolios by women Cabinet Ministers are Women and gender equality, followed by Family and children affairs, social inclusion and development, social protection and social security, and indigenous and minority affairs. It is estimated that, given the pace, it will take another 130 years to achieve gender equality in the highest positions of power.

Women in political leadership play a crucial role in initiating discussions on matters that affect women and in the political decision-making process of gender-related policies. For instance, research on panchayats in India discovered that the number of drinking water projects in areas with women-led councils was 62 per cent higher than in those with men-led councils (Chattopadhyay, R. and Duflo, 2004). In Norway, a direct causal relationship between the presence of women in municipal councils and childcare coverage was found (Bratton and Ray, 2002).

Further, the inclusion of voices of women from minority and marginalised communities has a related impact. Visible change with a significant impact on the development of women warrants a significant and proportional gender ratio in political leadership.



## 6.2 Women Leadership in G20 Countries

Across G20 countries, one-third of managerial positions across private and public sectors are occupied by women. The average percentage of women on company boards in G20 Countries reached 18 per cent in 2019, up from 15 per cent in 2016. Though most G20 countries have progressed towards greater representation of women in managerial positions, more robust and sustained efforts are needed to promote the same.

The EMPOWER (Empowerment and Progression of Women's Economic Representation) alliance which was launched at the 2019 G20 Summit in Osaka and convened for the first time under the Saudi Arabian Presidency of the G20 in 2020, placed greater emphasis on advancing global efforts to strengthen women's participation in private sector leadership through concrete and practical actions.

**Table 6.1: The proportion of women in senior and middle management positions**

Country	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Change over Time
Russian Federation	38.6	39.5	39.1	38.4	38.1	38.7	40.4	39.3	39.8	42.0	9 per cent
United States	38.8	38.6	39.1	38.8	38.8	39.4	39.7	40.5	40.5	40.9	5 per cent
Brazil		36.6	36.5	37.0	37.4	38.0	38.2	38.4	38.7	38.6	6 per cent
Singapore	34.7	34.1	34.0	33.4	33.7	33.6	35.5	34.0	36.5	37.1	7 per cent
Australia	29.8	31.7	31.1	31.7	32.6	33.3	32.7	35.3	35.3	35.5	19 per cent
Mexico				34.9	35.3	34.8	35.2	36.4	35.6	35.5	2 per cent
Canada		35.6	35.8	35.5	34.6	34.7	35.1	34.8	34.6	35.1	-1 per cent
United Kingdom	36.0	32.1	32.4	32.3	32.9	32.4	33.8	34.4	34.2	34.9	-3 per cent
France	38.5	39.1	39.2	35.6	32.0	31.0	31.2	32.6	34.4	34.2	-11 per cent
Spain	27.1	28.1	28.8	29.3	29.4	30.4	30.3	30.9	31.9	33.7	24 per cent
South Africa	32.1	33.7	34.8	33.1	34.3	33.9	35.7	35.2	33.9	33.3	4 per cent
Rwanda								36.3	33.2		-8 per cent
Argentina	32.1	30.2	32.3	36.5	38.6			32.6	33.2	33.1	3 per cent
Switzerland		28.7	28.7	28.4	28.6	30.4	30.8	28.8	30.5	32.5	13 per cent
Germany	27.5	27.9	27.1	27.5	27.8	28.1	28.1	28.2	28.6	28.6	4 per cent
Italy	21.2	21.6	22.2	22.0	21.9	21.8	22.0	22.3	23.2	23.3	10 per cent
Indonesia	19.4										N/A
Turkey	18.8	13.0	14.3	16.6	15.5	14.4	16.7	17.3	16.3	17.5	-7 per cent
United Arab Emirates								12.2	15.8		29 per cent
Japan										14.5	N/A
India	12.3		13.0						13.7		12 per cent
<b>Average (unweighted)</b>	<b>29.1</b>	<b>31.4</b>	<b>30.5</b>	<b>31.9</b>	<b>32.0</b>	<b>31.6</b>	<b>32.4</b>	<b>31.6</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>32.4</b>	<b>N/A</b>

Source: International Labour Office, 2020

### 6.3 Breaking the Glass-ceiling

The data presented indicate the need to strengthen efforts to boost opportunities for women in leadership. Several barriers hinder women from reaching the first level of managerial positions, resulting in women remaining at entry-level positions far longer than men (Huang et al., 2019). Despite odds, women who make it to the top-tier positions do face *glass ceilings*. The data presented indicate under-representation of women in leadership positions in technology, manufacturing, and infrastructure sectors. It is imperative to track women's progress in these sectors where they are either less represented or underrepresented. Further, a positive trend emerging from the data is a significant representation for women in leadership positions in Non-Governmental Organisations, Education, Government, and Public Sectors. These key sectors can contribute to driving progressive policies toward closing gender gaps. The burden of minimising the gender gap in other sectors lies with education and government.

Social, legal, and institutional barriers pose continuous hurdles; care-work responsibilities on the domestic front, balancing work-life, and gender stereotypes around women in workplace, particularly at the leadership level, add to the barriers. Lack of women role models and opportunities to network hinder growth prospects. Women's leadership can make a significant difference in breaking the glass ceiling for the women who work in their organisations through strategic decisions and influencing policy change. Women's Leadership contributes to tackling inequalities in the gender pay gap and gender differences in social and financial security. Addressing gender inequalities in leadership can help in addressing gender inequalities elsewhere. Having a strong female voice, a woman role model is much needed to create an inclusive environment and one conducive to women's progression. Building organizations that work for women must start with a comprehensive and systemic transformation.

### 6.4 Key recommendations

- **Gender diverse boardrooms:** The G20 must prioritise gender diverse boardrooms in public and private sectors. The under-representation of women in leadership severely limits their voices and their perspectives in important decisions. Further, research has shown that gender diverse boardrooms have the potential to ensure improved corporate governance. Further, there must be stringent mechanism in place to ensure disclosure of their boards.
- **Gender quotas:** The G20 must make gender quotas mandatory to ensure gender balance. This would allow that a defined proportion of positions at all levels are allotted to women. The quota's scope can include mid-level and senior-level leadership positions. Wherever there is a possibility of one top leadership, there can be a roster system to ensure women get equal opportunity to step into the topmost -leadership position. This has worked in countries like Germany and France in reducing the gender gap in leadership significantly.
- **Gender audits:** The audit must be done for individual departments and the organisation to ensure fair and just practices. The audit scale must include an assessment of the gender gap in recruitment, promotion, and pay parity vis-a-vis the policy.
- **Setting diversity targets:** To increase gender diversity in leadership positions, the G20 must promote setting clear diversity targets backed by accountability i.e metrics in organisations. Rankings and Metrics at the National and Global levels should give adequate weighting to the gender ratio at all levels of the organisation - entry level, middle-management and top-management level.

- **Representation of women in governments:** Efforts should be undertaken to increase the mandatory quota for women in parliament, assembly, and local governments. Further gender parity in key portfolios like Finance, Education, and External Affairs must be mandated.
- **Promoting networking opportunities for women to foster support and mentoring:** The absence of role-models and unpaid care work hinders women's mobility in employment. Enabling platforms where women, particularly younger women, can seek support and mentoring is essential. Successful women can act as role models, providing valuable insights into overcoming prejudice. Professional networks of
- **Training and upskilling programs for women:** Mandatory training and upskilling of women workforce sponsored and incentivised by managements. This helps in developing second-line leadership at all levels.

### Specific Recommendations

- The G20 must aim at attaining 50 per cent gender parity in leadership roles in sectors that already have achieved 30 per cent parity and attain 30 per cent parity in sectors that have lower parity in the next 10 years. Particular attention and interventions have to be made in Global South countries where the gender parity in leadership roles is significantly low as compared to countries in the Global South.
- The G20 must ensure that the top 500 listed companies in the respective countries have gender diverse boards by 2026.
- Increase women CEOs in private companies by 20 per cent in the next 5 years as the gender gaps continue to remain highly pronounced at the level of the CEOs.
- Ensure that at least 30 per cent of higher education institutions in the G20 countries are run by women rectors in the next 3 years. This is achievable as women are significantly employed in the education sector across G20 countries.
- The G20 must invest in creating 100 new start-ups in the next 3 years that are led by women entrepreneurs. Schemes providing financial support for women run start-ups must be introduced in key priority sectors especially in the Global South countries.
- Ensure that at least 15 per cent of points are allotted towards gender diversity and equality targets in all metrics and evaluations carried out externally in the next 2 years.



7.

*The Draft Charter of  
Recommendations*

The key objective of the Women Vice Chancellors' and Leaders' Conclave was to present a Charter of Recommendations with the collective efforts of authors/contributors of this working paper, and women vice chancellors and leaders from across sections of the society participating in the Conclave. The Draft Charter of Recommendation was deliberated through focused panel discussion during the Conclave on 26-27 May, 2023 at Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), campus in Bangalore.

All recommendations emerging out of the discussions were compiled and put together along with recommendations of the authors/contributors of the paper in this section 7. The recommendations presented at the end of the chapters were those of the contributors of the paper based on data presented in respective chapters. These were presented in two sections as key recommendations and specific recommendations. Recommendations presented in this chapter 7 include recommendations provided by the contributors along with those shared by the participants of the Conclave based on their experiences, observations, and visions. They are presented in two sections; key recommendations and India-specific recommendations. India-specific recommendations are largely the outcomes of discussions that had experts from within India who had a thorough understanding of respective domains and panels in which they were participating.

These recommendations are provided section-wise for the ease of reference in five sections – higher education, labour force participation, skill development, care work and leadership.

### 7.1 Women and Higher Education - Key Recommendations

- **Data collection and transparency:** The promotion of evidence-based policy making can only be ensured when robust data is available in all countries. The G20 must make procuring regular data and keeping it transparent a priority. Data regarding women's access to higher education, dropout rates, skill development, and care work will equip policy makers with a better understanding of the phenomena. It is best to take holistic, comprehensive and intersectional approach to data collection. Identification of critical data gaps must be the beginning point of this process.

In particular, collecting, analyzing and publishing gender disaggregated data relating to women's enrollment as well as completion rates is essential. Currently, no data is available that tracks the successful completion of studies by women students. Making this data available will enable institutions to track learning curves of students until they graduate. This data should be collected in an annual cycle and maintained.

Inclusion of qualitative data alongside the quantitative data will provide better insights into the concerned phenomena and therefore it is recommended that equal emphasis be placed on qualitative inquiry.

- **Financing of higher education:** Loans to women students should be made available need-based, and at reduced interest rates, without denial and not tied to streams or institutions.
- **Research on higher education:** Increased investment in higher education research concerning women's participation in knowledge generation especially on research on research. There should also be increased access to research grants among women scholars.

Introduce 100 new research programs across various fields led by women researchers in the next 5 years.

**Harmonization of Higher Education:** Considering inequalities in access to and completion and quality (perceived and real) of higher education, it is important to facilitate exchange of best practices and eventually harmonize higher education systems at the G20 level. This would mean development of Higher Education Qualification Frameworks at the G20 level leading to multiple advantages of recognition of qualifications across borders and mobility of people and services as needed

Such initiatives are already undertaken and in place such as the one signed between Australia and India in 2023 (Press Information Bureau, 2023). Recognition of competencies can increase the opportunities to work and hence a harmonized qualification framework can improve women's confidence in pursuing education and working internationally.

- **Establishment of a Network of Universities of G20 countries:** This would help to address challenges of disparities within the G20. This Network could then lead harmonization efforts for higher education that could result in multiple benefits.
- **Promotion of International Mobility for Women in Higher Education:** Provision for special international mobility for/during higher education for women among the G20 countries can increase the participation of women in higher education, provide exposure to diverse multicultural environments and quality education.

The G20 must promote international mobility of women researchers, scholars and students by introducing at least 20 new mobility schemes which facilitate mobility of women scholars among G20 countries.

- **Increasing share of women in STEM education:** The G20 should make efforts to increase the share of women graduates in STEM by 10 per cent in the next 5 years. This target has to be achieved particularly in Global South countries where the share of women graduates in STEM is considerably low as compared to the Global North.

New schemes to encourage women in STEM education like scholarships and entry concessions should be provided with adequate hand-holding.

- **School-University Connect Programs:** Universities should connect with schools in the vicinity and share scientific accomplishments to encourage young girls to take up university studies. They should also offer career guidance programs for both students and parents.
- **Decompartmentalization of tertiary and vocational education:** Universities should prioritise offering **vocational education** along with university education. Skills enhancement should be focused alongside university studies to enhance employability of students.
- **Early entry of women into the world of work:** Facilitate early entry of women into the world of work by universities through partnership with their industry counterparts. Make placements of women students as a measure to assess the success of universities in national and international ranking and accreditation schemes.
- **Safety of women students on campus:** Safety of women students in universities should be prioritized.
- **Gender-Responsive Pedagogy:** Advocating gender-responsive pedagogy in curricula across disciplines ensures teaching-learning processes that pay specific attention to the needs of women students. This will ensure reduction in gender inequalities in classrooms.

- **Intersectional approach:** Current measures and practices in place take ‘women’ as the only category of analysis excludes women within minority categories, physically challenged women and other socio-economic or socio-cultural groups of women. The different experiences of women and their intersectional identities must be taken into consideration while making necessary interventions.
- **Mentorship programs for women in higher education:** Mentorship programs for women in higher education should be set up with role models helping them chart out career growth path.

### India-Specific Recommendations

- **Increase the minimum marriageable age of women from 18 to 21:** Increasing the minimum legal age of marriage from 18 to 21 would encourage higher education enrollment among women.
- **Women participation as a parameter in ranking and accreditation:** The National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) should keep aside at least 10 per cent points (weightage) to women participation (as students and staff) while assessing and ranking universities. The same should be applicable to accreditation process as well.
- **Collateral-free education loans at reduced interest for women students:** Education loans for women opting for university education should be charged one per cent lesser and be made collateral free. This one per cent interest can be paid for by the state.

### 7.2 Women and Labour Force Participation - Key Recommendations

- **Country specific studies:** Synthesis of existing studies on within and between country variations in female labour force participation and country specific reasons for such variations among G20 countries must be undertaken on an immediate basis. Further, G20 countries must encourage newer quantitative and qualitative studies to understand the enabling and disabling factors which impact women’s participation in the work force. Evidence from such analysis must be considered for implementing newer programs or to modify the existing welfare programs which aim at increasing women’s participation at work force.
- **Best Practices Models:** Best practices/ approaches used by any G20 country to enhance labour force participation must be used as a case in other G20 countries. Such models can be tweaked according to the regional suitability to improve women’s participation in the work force. Using such practices G20 countries must reduce the gender gap in labour force participation by 5 per cent in the next 5 years.
- **Harmonization of Surveys and data collection:** To conduct both country-specific and cross-country studies, availability of data in terms of frequency and comparability of data between countries is essential. Hence, G20 must make efforts to create such large-scale data bases.
- **Reducing regional disparities in access to different services:** G20 countries must make efforts to reduce regional disparities in terms of access to safe mode of transport, better quality health, water and sanitation facilities, access to better quality education, financial credit, and affordable care services.
- **Increased allocation for gender budgeting:** Reducing regional disparities can be undertaken through increasing the share of budget allocation for women.

- **Increasing women's labour market security and working conditions:** G20 countries must make continued efforts in providing smooth transition of women from informal to formal economy. In this context, Global South countries of G20 especially India, China and Turkey must ensure that majority of the women employed in informal sector to transition smoothly to other sectors and/or ensure better wage and working conditions in the current sector. Further, efforts must be made to ensure that larger proportion of women are employed by providing job opportunities through affirmative action. Therefore, efforts must be made by the G20 countries, to reduce rate of unemployment of women with higher education at least by 5 per cent in the next 5 years. One way of reducing such levels of unemployment is through increasing employment opportunities in STEM areas. Further, it is also essential for the G20 countries to also address gender discrimination in hiring and payment of wages. Efforts must be made to encourage women with different levels of education to take up entrepreneurship/ own enterprise activities.

### India-Specific Recommendations

- **Social and Media Campaign:** Women achievers stories in their own region must be used for motivating other women in that region to enter labour force. Extensive social camping and media campaign to be undertaken to spread awareness on the advantages of women working in paid work force.
- **Digital Platform:** Creating a digital platform for all women entrepreneurs as it would facilitate as a database as well as provide networking facilities for women who aspire to be entrepreneurs. This digital platform could also aid aspiring entrepreneurs in training and development and acquiring the right entrepreneurial skills. The design and validation through this platform could create an ecosystem to have access to formal credit to facilitate women's entrepreneurial journey.
- **Region specific interventions:** knowing the reasons for low female labour force participation, region specific strategies /interventions must be undertaken at multi levels to improve labour force participation.

### 7.3 Women and Skill Development - Key Recommendations

- **Making universal access to quality basic education an urgent priority:** Since Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) programs can be accessed only by those with adequate levels of learning competencies, the G20 should focus on addressing gaps in access and delivery of quality education at basic and intermediate levels in all its member countries.
- **Identifying the Local Skill Requirement needs:** Women's participation in labour force varies across different sectors for countries of the G20. For instance, a large number of women in India are employed in agriculture while in Argentina women are largely employed in the services sector. Women should be trained in accordance with the skill sets required in their respective residing area as it could increase their participation and employment rate after the skill training program.
- **Redefine Skills and Database:** Global statistics on skills development are unavailable due to differences in TVET systems across countries. It is unfortunate that a skill such as embroidery, weaving and other household skills and practices are not recognized as knowledge or even skill.



It is important to redefine the inclusion criteria of skills and develop a robust strategy for collection of their data.

- **Developing robust labour market information and employment systems:** Generating information on present and future skill needs and transmitting them to educational and training institutions requires investment in information gathering and dissemination systems. The G20 countries should be able to collate experiences to establish such systems in their member countries.
- **Micro Lesson Plans for Skill Development:** The skill development trainers could use the micro lesson method of training as it is popular and engaging. Short videos on certain concepts can be made digitally available to the students which they can access flexibly.
- **Community-led Funds for Skill development:** A community-led fund mechanism for skill development training could be more effective in attracting and involving women to participate in the training centres.
- **Skill Development focus on Entrepreneurship:** There is a need for the promoting women to take up skill development and venture into entrepreneurship activities as it provides a sense of ownership, independence, and catalyse the process of women-led development.
- **Bridging Skill development and Employment opportunities through Networking:** The objectives of the skill training centres must also include a networking element where they train women in the process of building networks with people and companies in their field of choice. The training centre must also develop tie-ups with the companies that would need the skilled human resource and provide employment opportunities to its students.
- **Closing the digital gender divide:** Reducing the digital gender divide must a prime focus of the governments across the world to ensure the development of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills required among women.
- **Climate change and the green economy:** Effects of climate change are borne disproportionately by women, particularly in rural areas. TVET programs should be formulated in ways that can make women climate-resilient and open opportunities for employment in this emerging green sector.

### India-Specific Recommendations

- **Market Relevant Curriculum:** There is a dearth of relevant skill development curriculum in India as National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) revises its curriculum once in three years while the market evolves almost every six months. A continuous monitoring and revision of curriculum is necessary to have a job-oriented skill development course.
- **'Mall' set-up of Skill development Training:** It is important to look at education and skill development as not a full-time engagement but has evolved into a Mall set-up where people are provided with options to learn according to the need and the requirement of the individual and the market.
- **Scholarships to Children for Woman's Skill Development:** Training programs should aim at promoting the return to work for women either after childbirth or unpaid care responsibilities. It has been observed that women are more enthusiastic to educate their children. The Government of India could use this as an incentivizing tool by providing scholarships to children of young mothers in accordance with the level of skill qualification they attain in

training centres. This would increase the participation of women with children to participate in skill development programs.

- **Career Counselling with Family Members:** An important step for increasing the participation of women in skill development training is through providing them a catalogue of courses and providing them with relevant information on improved employment opportunities. This has to be done in the presence of family members as it can also address their hesitancy to send women for skill development training.

## 7.4 Women and Care Work

Addressing the disproportionate burden of care work undertaken by women requires interventions at different scales, ranging from envisioning public policies and infrastructure at the level of the country to promoting gender-just attitudes at the level of the individual and the household. The emerging sector of paid care economy, primarily dominated by women, also requires attention. Our recommendations reflect the multiples scales and sectors where interventions need to be imagined and crafted.

### Key recommendations

- **Provision of basic infrastructure:** In the absence of primary infrastructure around water, sanitation and energy, the burden of procurement for domestic use often falls on women. The G20 must prioritise financial and infrastructure interventions through aid, grants and technology transfers in countries where such infrastructure is lacking significantly.
- **Targeted interventions at policy and implementation levels:** Public policies around care work in G20 countries should be targeted towards specific demographics i.e., elderly, children, and the disabled. Creating new infrastructure as well as improving existing infrastructure must be undertaken keeping in mind these specific populations.
- **Encouraging decentralisation of policies, programs and infrastructure regarding unpaid care work:** Since care needs of communities differ across regions, a uniform policy will not be effective. Instead, promoting decentralization of care work programs and policies must be undertaken such that they can be crafted to meet the specific needs of communities, particularly from the marginalised.
- **Expansion of universal care infrastructure:** Even as decentralisation is essential, there should also simultaneously be an expansion of care infrastructure across countries such that access is universal. The onus of the expansion should be on the employers (both in the formal and informal sector) as well as the state. This expansion must take into consideration the location of care infrastructure so that there are no barriers to accessing these care services.
- **Provision of social protection transfers and benefits:** Such welfare provisions both for care-givers and those in need of care will have the effect of valuing women's work and enable them to take up paid work.
- **Tax benefits for expenses on care services:** Extending tangible financial benefits such as Tax benefits for expenses on childcare and elderly care services for both men and women can reduce the burden of care work on women. This, in turn, helps women's contribution to the workforce.
- **Inclusive maternal, paternal and parental leaves as a way forward:** Changes in the traditional role of women as care-givers has to be accompanied by changes in traditional role of men, requiring their participation in care-giving duties. This is possible only when paternal or parental leaves are available

for men to avail of as well. This reduces the different kinds of motherhood penalties women are forced to bear.

- **Family leave policies should be collectively financed:** Since a key reason for the absence of paid parental leave is because it is borne entirely by the employer, the G20 member countries should be able to work out financing mechanisms where the financial burden is borne also by social protection schemes.
- **Flexible working hours:** Given that women undertake low-paying jobs because of their care-giving responsibilities, introduction of flexible hours for both men and women could lead to increase in productivity and workforce participation for women. It could allow men to undertake more care work responsibilities.
- **Dissemination of gender-just ideas:** Gender sensitive pedagogy and curriculum in classrooms to dismantle gendered ideas of work is essential. Similarly, awareness and dissemination programs should be conducted at the level of communities as well.
- **Promoting ownership of care work:** Programs within educational institutions which promote ownership of care work among younger generations must be documented and shared as best practices that can be adopted by other G20 countries.
- **Collection of time use data:** The absence of reliable data collected frequently through time-use surveys hinders the formulation of policies and schemes that can reduce the burden of care work. The G20 should work towards creating mandatory data collection systems that will enable the creation of care-work related policies.
- **Research on absence of care work policies and infrastructure:** Specific research must be undertaken on the cost of not having gender-just care policies. This can help make evidence-based arguments for progressive care policies.
- **Evolving indicators other than GDP to measure impact of the implementation of care work policies:** Some indicators could be around psychological and social well-being, improvement in self-worth. Research around these aspects could help better evaluate the need for care work policies.
- **Public investment in care work sectors:** Sectors such as health and social services where women are predominant need more attention from policy makers to ensure decent work and wages. More public investment in sectors such as health, education and care services are needed to meet future challenges of care work.
- **Regulating wage and working conditions:** With an increasing demand for paid care services, attention must be paid to salary standardization of care workers. Further, paying attention to working conditions of care workers especially focusing on their mental health, has become essential.
- **Laws and regulations for private sector entities engaged in providing care services:** Governments need to ensure that protection mechanisms are in place for workers employed by private sector entities to prevent the former's exploitation. Similarly, incentives could be extended to private entities to offer quality care services that respect the recipient's dignity.

### India-specific recommendations

Given that a large number of India's workforce is employed in the informal sector, the Indian state bears a significant responsibility to provide universal care infrastructure for children, elderly and disabled.

- **Migrant-friendly care services:** A large number of India's workforce are seasonal or long-term migrants. Care infrastructure such as child-care, after-school care, elderly care needs to be reimagined to meet the needs of migrants, particularly women, at both source and destination.
- **Research to evaluating resistance to providing care services by private sector:** Progressive maternal policies and laws such as mandatory creches are already in place. But they are hardly ever implemented. Research on why private sector entities do not provide these services can help understand at what level intervention is necessary to actualise the intent of the law.
- **Decentralisation regarding decisions on care infrastructure:** The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Indian Constitution introduced local governance at the level of the panchayat in villages and ward level in cities. Decisions on what kind of care infrastructure and services are needed, where they are located, and how to make them universally accessible needs to be undertaken at this level of the government. Such decision-making needs to be undertaken by women, particularly from communities in need.
- **Regulating wage and working conditions of domestic workers:** Apart from agriculture and construction, a large number of women are employed as domestic workers. Such work needs to be recognised as care work and national policies need to encourage and foster domestic workers' organising and mobilising as well as regulating their wage and working conditions to prevent exploitation
- **Recognising ASHA and Anganwadi workers as state employees and providing decent salaries:** Both these sets of workers, largely women, offer frontline care services and are essential to the fight against hunger and malnutrition. Yet, they are paid less than living wages. The Indian state must undertake measures to recognise them as government employees and increase their wages.

## 7.5 Women in Leadership - Key Recommendations

- **Gender-diverse boardrooms:** The G20 must prioritise gender-diverse boardrooms in public and private sectors. The under-representation of women in leadership severely limits their voices and their perspectives in important decisions. Further, research has shown that gender-diverse boardrooms have the potential to ensure improved corporate governance. Further, there must be stringent mechanisms in place to ensure disclosure of their boards' diversity.

The G20 must ensure that the top 500 listed companies in the respective countries have gender-diverse boards by 2026. Further, G20 should target increasing women CEOs in private companies by 20 per cent in the next 5 years as the gender gaps continue to remain highly pronounced at the level of the CEOs.

- **Gender quotas:** The G20 must make gender quotas mandatory to ensure gender balance. This would allow a defined proportion of positions at all levels to be allotted to women. The quota's scope can include mid-level and senior-level leadership positions. Wherever there is a possibility of one top leadership, there can be a roster system to ensure women get equal opportunity to step into the topmost leadership position. This has worked in countries like Germany and France in reducing the gender gap in leadership significantly.

Strategic plan must be rolled out to ensure that at least 30 per cent of higher education institutions in the G20 countries are run by women rectors in the next 3 years. This is achievable as women are significantly employed in the education sector across G20 countries.

- **Gender audits:** The audit must be done for individual departments and the organisation to ensure fair and just practices. The audit scale must include an assessment of the gender gap in recruitment, promotion, and pay parity vis-a-vis the policy.

Ensure that at least 15 per cent of points are allotted towards gender diversity and equality targets in all metrics and evaluations carried out externally in the next 2 years.

W20 must hold discussions, at regular intervals, with the leadership and decision-making bodies of organizations and have them commit to the strategic implementation of gender parity in the organizations.

- **Setting diversity targets:** To increase gender diversity in leadership positions, the G20 must promote setting clear diversity targets backed by accountability, i.e. metrics in organisations. Rankings and Metrics at the National and Global levels should give adequate weightage to the gender ratio at all levels of the organisation – entry-level, middle-management and top-management levels.

The G20 must aim at attaining 50 per cent gender parity in leadership roles in sectors that already have achieved 30 per cent parity and attain 30 per cent parity in sectors that have lower parity in the next 10 years. Particular attention and interventions must be made in Global South countries where the gender parity in leadership roles is significantly low as compared to countries in the Global North.

- **Representation of women in governments:** Efforts should be undertaken to increase the mandatory quota for women in parliament, assembly, and local governments. Further gender parity in key portfolios like Finance, Education, and External Affairs must be mandated.
- **Promoting networking opportunities for women to foster support and mentoring:** The absence of role models and unpaid care work hinders women’s mobility in employment. Enabling platforms where women, particularly younger women, can seek support and mentoring is essential. Professional networks of successful women can act as role models, providing valuable insights into overcoming prejudice.

The G20 must invest in creating 100 new start-ups in the next 3 years that are led by women entrepreneurs. Schemes providing financial support for women-run start-ups must be introduced in key priority sectors, especially in the Global South countries.

- **Training and upskilling programs for women:** Mandatory training and upskilling of women workforce sponsored and incentivised by managements. This helps in developing second-line leadership at all levels.

Women helming top leadership positions should empower women leaders in the mid-level and mid-senior levels to be ready to move up the ladder. A clear succession plan through strategically planned training programs will have the second line of women leadership.

- **Integrate gender budgeting:** Organizational leaders must be encouraged to publicly pledge their commitment to the W20 priorities and gender budgeting. This commitment should be cascaded throughout the organization to ensure alignment and implementation. Integration of gender budgeting in organizational financial planning and resource allocation must be advocated. Organisations must allocate specific funds for gender-focused initiatives and monitor their effectiveness.

- **Gender Gap Analysis:** Gender Gap Analysis must be carried out to understand the problem areas. An appropriate measurable action plan must be rolled out to minimize the gap. Measurable and quantifiable targets should be clearly set and reviewed periodically. Such a process should be executed as a Sustainable campaigning process and should best be taken up by academic institutions and non-governmental organizations.

### India-Specific Recommendation

- **Legislative Interventions:** Legislative interventions are key to boosting women in Political Leadership. In the Inter-Parliamentary Union, in 2019, India ranked 148th in the world, with only 62 women Members of Parliaments in the Lower House, based on the 2014 elections. In the 17th Lok Sabha, the number saw a significant increase to 78, which still is a mere 14.31 per cent of the total strength of the present Lok Sabha. Legislation to mandate 33 per cent reservation for women at all levels of government bodies needs to be taken up on priority. Reservation in Panchayati Raj System must be moved from 33 per cent to 50 per cent within the next 2 years to strengthen women's participation in the decision-making process through community leadership at the grassroots level.
- **The Women's Reservation Bill:** The Women's Reservation Bill proposes to reserve 33 per cent of seats in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies for women. The Rajya Sabha passed the Women's Reservation Bill on 9 March 2010. However, the Lok Sabha never voted on the Bill. The Bill lapsed since it was still pending in Lok Sabha. The long-delayed Women's Reservation Bill must be reintroduced in parliament on high priority.
- **Women Leadership in Corporate Sector:** The Companies Act, of 2013, makes it mandatory to appoint at least one-woman director as a board member in both Private and Public Sector companies. This has reduced the appointments to a mere maximum of one woman on Board in many companies. Instead, it is strongly recommended to have a stipulated percentage – 33 per cent of the Board to have Women's representation in the next 2 years and eventually move to 50 per cent in the next five years.
- **Rankings and Accreditation:** National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) by the Ministry of Education must include Gender audit as a key metric while Ranking Institutions. Consistency in and percentage of Women holding Leadership positions in mid and senior leadership levels should be given a significant weightage. National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) under Criteria VI – Governance, Leadership, and Management must have key parameters to assess institutions' policy and implementation related to Women in senior leadership positions and the career progression of women in leadership positions.



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