

How Public Trustfulness on Labour Force Statistics can be Improved (Case study in Iran)

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Abstract:

labour force statistics and most notably unemployment rate, is one of the critical index for tracking the labour force trend and its circumstances in the market under the ILO¹ standards and definitions. Although in many countries, the LFS has been implemented under the international definitions and classifications, a significant public users have not been persuaded by the labour force statistics is publishing by NSOs² and Iran is not an exception. Based on a majority of public users' reflections in Iran, unemployment and employment rates are not enough consistent with their real understanding and ordinary life, especially when they talk about the one hour working threshold for whom are counted as employees. This kind of classification has not been sensible so far to match with their perceptions and what they feel in daily life and their understanding from social medias. Therefore, they, mostly are ordinary people and not direct users and decision makers, have not enough reliance and trustfulness on the LFS statistics and the debate is continuing. From public users' standpoint, the main differences might be due the wrong or vague definitions, misclassifications, misinterpretations or statistical illiteracy. In this study, however, different controversial aspects of LFS statistics will be illustrated and an analysis on these controversial statistics be presented. Labour force statistics is a hypercube tables which should be analysis and reported simultaneously instead of just limited indexes like unemployment and employment rates. Regarding to LFS³ on quarterly base, all indexes are produced and reported down by age group, gender, demographic divisions, working hours, categories and descriptions and work force flow. Noticeably, the way of reporting and analysing to the public remarkably effect on public's trustfulness and acceptance. Finally, the practical suggestions on labour force statistics and the accurate interpretations and reporting will be expanded to improve the public's statistical literacy and trustfulness in a very effective way. This paper can be beneficial for other statistical offices that are dealing with public approval.

Keywords: Labour Force Survey (LFS), public users, statistical literacy, misinterpretation, misclassification, inconsistent users' perceptions, suspended populations, ILO definitions and classifications.

¹ International Labour Organization (ILO)

² National Statistical Offices(NSOs)

³ Labour force survey (LFS)