

WOMEN EDUCATION IN INDIA AS REFLECTED THROUGH GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Women render the most vital service to the society by playing different roles. But it is quite unfortunate that after the first decade of 21st century women are suffering with gender discriminations in society. So it is the need of the hour to bring them in the lime light to receive the cosmic rays of education. To this end their full as well as effective participation and equal enrolment with boys are the preconditions. So this paper puts focus on girls' participation in higher education in India. For this reason data were collected from different secondary sources. The analysis revealed that condition of girls' enrolment is quite miserable in higher level of education. Gender parity is not achieved till now by India in Higher education. Though disparity is reducing here, but it is present in majority of the states. Some of these states are very developed in higher education. On the other hand some states of India's North-East and UTs providing more opportunities to women in higher education though these are not well developed in higher education. There is also disparity in different levels of higher education. This disparity is not uniformly distributed across the levels. In some level female are in advantageous position. But in majority of the levels they are lagging behind. The disparity is also observed in the distribution of women enrollment among the various faculties. Here general education is more favorable to women than that of vocational and technical education. Gender disparity is also found in different teaching and hierarchical post in higher education. So the paper ends with suitable suggestions to foster gender equity as well as equality in education.

Keywords: *Gender Discrimination, Girls' Enrolment, Gender Equity.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a human right and gender equality in education is essential for global development. As a result the international community made education in general and girls' education in particular priority issues in the Dakar Framework for Action and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). India as the largest democracy in the world provided constitutional safeguard to all categories of women in India. Social planners and law makers are very much concerned with the rights of women. Different commissions and committees in independent India tried hard to bring social equality. Lots of schemes, projects and plans are taken so far to achieve the desired goal of gender parity. But it is regrettable that in the year of 2017, i.e., after 70 years of India's independence, gender discrimination is prime concern in front of the knowledge society. But several studies and survey establish that much progress has been made in promotion of girls' and women's education. Actually this is a result of new experiments, increased resources and other improvements. In spite of that there are still gender disparities and under-representation of women in management and decision-

making positions in different social sphere. This paper, therefore, examined the gender discrimination in enrolment in higher education which can lead to their empowerment. The paper also provides some suggestions for gender parity in Indian higher education.

2. OBJECTIVES

The following objectives have been considered for the study:

- To analyse the gender discrimination in enrolment and participation at higher education in India.
- To provide some suggestions for gender equality.

3. METHODOLOGY OR DATA SOURCE

The paper is solely based on secondary information collected from different sources like books, journal articles, reports of various government organization and commission, articles published in national and local news papers, websites etc.

4. GENDER DISPARITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

As per the report of World Bank, Indian higher education system significantly developed system in the world. But according to the report of All India Survey on Higher Education, University Grants Commission, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, Rashtriya Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan and other apex bodies establish that women are still lagging behind men in higher education in India. It is quite disappointing fact, especially when India is approaching towards well developed educational hub in the world. Though there is gradual development in women participation in higher education in India after independence, but discrimination still exists in enrolment. It is shown in Table 1 and Fig 2.

Year	Male	Female	Total	% of
1950-51	157	17	174	10
1955-56	252	43	295	14.60
1960-61	468	89	557	16.00
1965-66	849	218	1067	20.40
1970-71	1563	391	1954	20.00
1975-76	2131	595	2426	24.50
1980-81	2003	749	2752	27.20
1985-86	2512	1059	3571	29.60
1990-91	2986	1439	4425	32.50
1995-96	4235	2191	6426	34.10
2000-01	4988	3012	8001	37.60
2005-06	6562	4466	11028	40.50
2012-13	14169	11575		44.96

Table- 1. Year wise Male-Female enrollment in Higher education

The data of the above table is presented below in Figure-1 for better understanding. Here dark colour represents the enrolment of male and light colour represents enrolment of female.

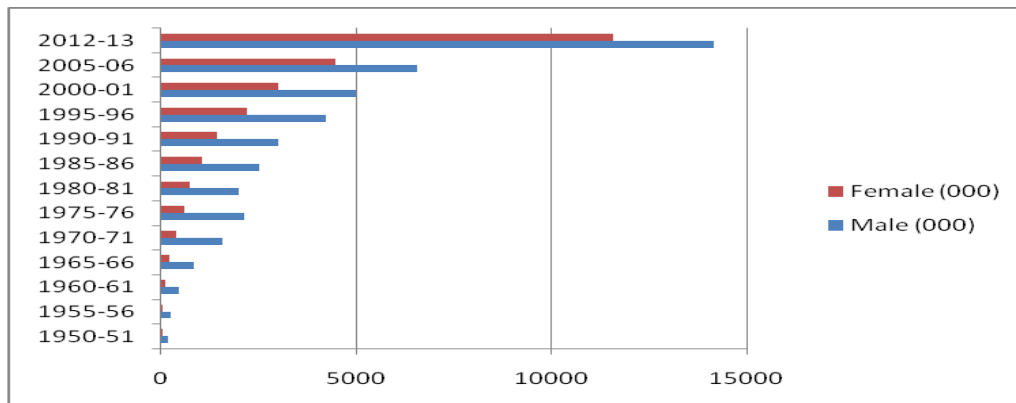


Fig.-1: Year Wise Male-Female Enrolment

Fig 1 reveals that gender disparity is not a new phenomenon in Indian education system. It was existed in the very beginning of India's independence. It was a distress situation for women as their representation was only 10 percent of total enrolment. Year by year there is increase in participation for both male and female. It was the impact of government policies and changing attitude of people in higher education though there is continuing gender gap reflecting gender discrimination.

4.1 Variations in Women Enrolment among the States and UTs:

Here gender disparity among the states and Union Territories of India is analysed and presented through the Table-2. Here the focus is to identify the states where disparity is in severe condition and also to identify the states having preferential women opportunity in higher education.

States and UTs	Enrolment		States and UTs	Enrolment	
	Total	% of		Total	% of
Lakshadweep	496	71.17	Jharkhand	461961	48.25
Goa	33225	60.06	Odisha	726837	47.95
Kerala	670850	59.19	Mizoram	21432	47.93
Nagaland	29606	56.23	Arunachal Pradesh	31015	47.71
A & N Islands	5110	53.76	Karnataka	1544644	47.7
Chandigarh	66582	53.64	Haryana	833032	46.06
Himachal	180112	53.46	Maharashtra	2860239	45.51
Meghalaya	55628	53.41	Telangana	1189647	45.45
Puducherry	59360	51.73	West Bengal	1590097	44.7
Punjab	680816	51.56	Andhra Pradesh	1114860	44.51
Tamil Nadu	240140	51.32	Madhya Pradesh	1503985	43.32
Manipur	104173	51.07	Sikkim	15519	43.17

Assam	428747	49.91	Dadra & Nagar	4076	42.62
Uttrakhand	386342	49.44	Tripura	53612	42.57
Uttar Pradesh	439690	49.42	Gujarat	1225493	42.52
Jammu and	260411	49.4	Bihar	1312822	42.06
Chhatisgarh	365222	48.99	Rajasthan	1624039	39
Delhi	344658	48.54	Daman & Diu	2481	32.25
Total	-----	-----	-----	2658543	46.93

Table- 2: State -Wise Male & Female Student Enrolment in Higher Education

Table-2 gives a diversified picture among the states and UTs. Here Lakshadweep placed itself in 1st rank in percentage of women enrolment among the total enrolment in higher education in this UT. 71.17% of its total enrolment is from women. So it is remarkable record for this small UT. It is followed by Goa and Kerala who are in 2nd and 3rd position in comparative percentage of women enrolment in India. Some other states like Himachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Punjab and Tamil Nadu have also higher female enrolment. So some states of India's North-East are well advanced in women education, so far enrolment is concerned. At the same time in some other well developed states like West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan women are lagging far behind in enrolment than men. In overall interpretation it can be told that less than the half of the total states and UTs in India are able to give equalization of educational opportunities to women, especially in higher education.

4.2 Level of Education and Gender Disparity

Here gender disparity in different levels of higher education is examined. Here main purpose is to identify the level with huge gender disparity. This is presented in Table-4 and Figure-3. Here the distribution pattern of enrollment among various levels is also analysed.

Level	Gender	Enrolment	% of enrolment	Gender	Gap in %
Ph.D	Male	55232	58.38	15855	16.67
	Female	39377	41.62		
M.Phil	Male	13169	43.63	-3842	-12.73
	Female	17011	56.37		
Post graduate	Male	1588728	51.04	64503	2.08
	Female	1524224	48.96		
Graduate	Male	10817183	53.86	1550562	7.72
	Female	9266621	46.14		
PG Diploma	Male	139727	73.76	90030	47.53
	Female	49697	26.24		
Diploma	Male	1420894	71.94	866704	43.88
	Female	554190	28.06		
Certificate	Male	76968	45.99	-13429	-8.02
	Female	90397	54.01		
Integrated	Male	57047	62.8	23250	25.59
	Female	33797	37.20		
Total	Male	14168948	55.04	2593634	10.07
	Female	11575314	44.96		

Table- 3: Level -Wise Male & Female Student Enrolment in Higher Education

From Table 3 we can get a picture on women participation and gender gap in different level of learning. As shown here gender gap in Ph.D, PG, Graduate, PG Diploma, Diploma and Integrated course are positive in figure. That means here male students are in advantageous position than female. In PG and Graduate level gap is minimum (i.e. 2.08 % and 7.72% respectively). In Ph.D and Integrated level it tends to be high (16.67% and 25.95% respectively). But in PG Diploma and Diploma level huge gap between the enrolments of male and female has been found. In Pg Diploma level it is 47.53% and 43.88% in Diploma level. So these two levels need utmost attention from the policy maker, planner and administrator. On the contrary in M.Phil and Certificate course women participates more than male. .it is signified by the negative figure of gender gap in these levels (-12.73% and -8.02% respectively). So this level of higher education is more preferable to female than male. Whereas in other level there is an urgent needs of preferential boost to women. The overall gap in percentage is 10.07 which make it clear that female is till now backward in Higher education. The following figure can represent the gender discriminations very clearly and lucidly.

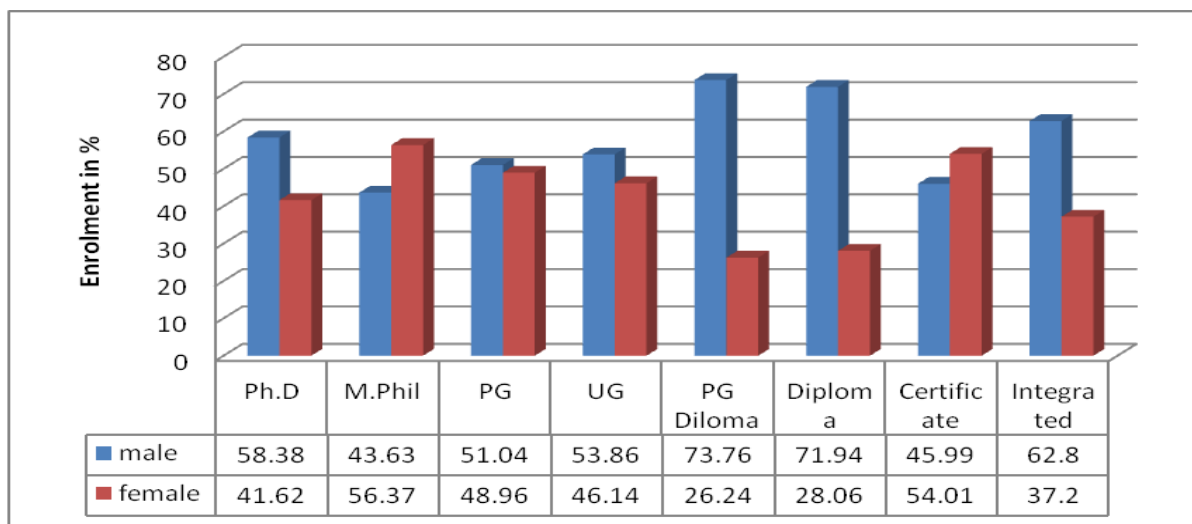


Figure 2: Level-wise Male-Female Enrolment

In the above figure it is found that only in M. Phil and Certificate course women are higher in enrolment than men. But in rest of the levels of higher education men are far ahead than women in enrolment. In highest degree, Ph.D. men are higher than women by 17 % (Approx). In PG and UG level too women are lagging behind men. Gender gap became highest in PG Diploma level with 47.52% (73.76% - 26.24%). Same reflection is followed in Diploma level. So in overall impression women are still to get their equal opportunities.

4.3 Women in Different Faculty:

Here distribution of women enrolment in various faculties will be discussed. The prime intention is to identify the Faculty wise preference of women in Higher education. This is presented through Table- 5 and Figure- 4.

Faculty	Women enrolment	Percentage (%)
Arts	5202612	41.70
Science	2320894	18.60
Commerce/Management	1962384	15.73
Education	765028	6.13
Engineering/Technology	1232006	9.88
Medicine	637701	5.11
Agriculture	55414	0.44
Veterinary science	9980	0.08
Law	148024	1.19
Other	141626	1.14
Total	12475669	100

Table 4 : Faculty-Wise women Enrolment.

The above tabulated data are presented through the pie- chart in the following figure for better understanding of trends in women enrolment among the faculties.

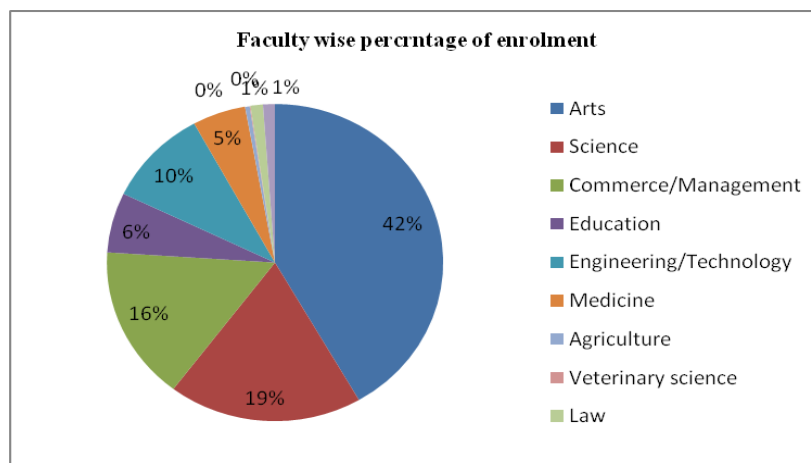


Figure 3: Faculty-wise Women Enrolment.

From the Table 4 and as represented in Figure 3 we get a clear idea about distribution of women in various faculties of Higher education in India. Here most of the women opted for Arts faculty. It shares almost half of the total enrolment (41.70%). Next preferred faculty is Science (18.60%). But here enrolment is less than half of Arts faculty. Commerce and Management Faculty is in 3rd position (15.73%) in enrolment. Next is Engineering faculty, followed by Education and Medicine. Agriculture, Veterinary, Law and other are very small in figure signifying that these are not easily accessible for women. Here another important fact is also established. Lion's shares of women think themselves fit for General education. Very low percent of women opted for Vocational education like Engineering/technology,

Medicine, Agriculture, Veterinary, Law and other. So these faculties are not easily accessible till now.

4.4 Gender Disparity in Teaching Profession

For obtaining gender parity in higher education, gender parity in teaching profession is also an important factor. Here gender parity through various posts in teaching is analysed and presented in Table-5.

Post	Gender	Number	Gap	Post	Gender	Number	Gap
VC	Male	353	333	Lecturer(sr. scale)	Male	10929	4227
	Female	20			Female	6702	
Director	Male	3190	2540	Lecturer	Male	135593	47724
	Female	650			Female	87869	
Pro-VC	Male	64	52	Tutor	Male	15152	-9838
	Female	12			Female	24990	
Principal	Male	24054	13040	Demonstrator	Male	6044	2927
	Female	11014			Female	3117	
Professor	Male	53731	36806	Part-time Teacher	Male	13315	2802
	Female	16925			Female	10513	
Associate professor	Male	87127	43717	Ad-hoc teacher	Male	6736	-767
	Female	43410			Female	7503	
Reader	Male	7544	3390	Temporary teacher	Male	6783	-200
	Female	4154			Female	6983	
Lecturer (sl.grade)	Male	19242	6747	Contractual teacher	Male	13250	2390
	Female	12478			Female	10860	
Assistant professor	Male	243519	70958	Visiting teacher	Male	8873	3209
	Female	172561			Female	5664	
Total	Male	-----	-----	-----	-----	655916	230306
	Female	-----			-----	425610	

Table 5: Post-wise Male & Female teacher in Higher education.

In the Table- 5 it is found that in all posts female teacher are lagging behind men. Only Tutor, Ad-hoc and Temporary category female teacher are more than male teacher. That signifies one negative picture about women profile. Here it is expressed that female are opted or forced to choose lower profile in teaching profession and male are getting preference in higher profile. It is again established by the sharing proportion of VC category. Out of 373 VCs only 20 VCs (0.05 percent) are female. The condition is same for the post of Director, Pro-VC, Principal, Professor and other comparatively high profile posts. In total there is a wide gender gap of 230306 teacher (female are only 39.35 percent of total teacher in higher education). But women enrolment is higher than men in comparatively less important or low profile posts like tutor, Ad-hoc teacher and temporary teacher. So women are allowed to achieve gender equality only in those areas, where male are not keenly interested to get their enrolment.

5. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

From the analysis of above tables and figures it is found that

1. Gender parity is not achieved till now by India in Higher education. Though disparity is reducing here.
2. Gender disparity is present in majority of the states. Some of these states are very developed in higher education. On the other hand some states of India's North-East and UTs providing more opportunities to women in higher education though these are not well developed in higher education.
3. There is also disparity in different levels of higher education. Though this disparity is not uniformly distributed across the levels. In some level female are in advantageous position. But in majority of the levels they are lagging behind.
4. The disparity is also observed in the distribution of women enrollment among the various faculties. Here general education is more favourable to women than that of vocational and technical education.
5. Gender disparity is found in various posts of teacher in higher education. Actually Gender disparity in higher education is one of the contributing factors for poor representation of female teacher. On the other hand it is also a cause for poor enrolment of female. Here we are getting the presence of a vicious circle. That means lower female enrolment leads to lower female representation in teaching profession of higher educating which in turn acts as one of the important factor behind lower enrolment.

6. SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSION

In mid of the 2nd decade of 21st century when nation is trying to establish gender equality in all social spheres, women are not getting equal opportunities in higher education. Several factors like large families, engagement in household chores, child labour, conservative attitude, son preference for future security of parents, poverty, lack of awareness, poor social and cultural belief, early marriages, and lack of parental encouragement for girls' education are causing poor enrolment of girls in education, especially in higher education. Hence different measures are very essential. These are development of more girls colleges, providing sound environment in educational institutions, intensive sensitization and mobilization, mass awareness program, providing more scholarship to the girls, empowering women's self help groups, strict legislative action to eradicate hindrances, providing guidance to the girls and their parents, extending the non-formal mode of education to the remote areas and effective use of mass media in awareness generation. Here utmost priority must be given to include community and society in time of implementation of all policies and programs for women. Because all efforts will not get any ground if society and parents are not aware of the benefits of these. So mass propaganda and need based initiatives must be initiated simultaneously to improve women participation in education which will lead to the creation of knowledge society.

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