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GENDER GAP ANALYSIS IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

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Abstract

Education is a powerful instrument of socioeconomic development of any nation. According to MHRD (2017) India's higher education system is the third largest in the world, after China and the United States. Education in India is not new it dates back to its early civilization in 6th century BC at Nalanda and Takshashila which are example for higher learning centre. An African proverb goes: "If you educate a man you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a family (nation)." Education is a vital tool for bringing about gender parity and simultaneously catalysing national development. A UNICEF panel succinctly sums up: "That women might have the chance of a healthier and happier life should be reason enough for promoting girls' education. However, there are also important benefits for society as a whole. An educated woman has the skills, information and self-confidence that she needs to be a better parent, worker and citizen."

Since 2006, every year the World Economic Forum brings out the Global Gender Gap Report to track gender disparities and analyse gaps in four areas - health, education, economics and politics. India ranked 108th among 144 countries on the Global Gender Gap Index 2017. Though India's rank is low compared to its counterparts one of the glaring feature according to All India survey on Higher education 2017 shows narrowing of gender gap where more and more women are pursuing higher education along various course. With this background this paper examines Higher Education in India and narrowing gender gap based on existing literature and various statistics.

Key words: Higher Education, Gender gap, women education and courses

INTRODUCTION

Education is a powerful instrument of socioeconomic development of any nation. The word Education has been derived from the Latin word 'Educe' which means 'to educate', 'to bring up' or 'to rise'. The concept is related closely to modification that occurs through the personal experience of the person who is conscious about the purpose of learning and the development. In the broad sense of the term, education is the process of development and growth of a person from infancy to maturity. Education is one of the basic needs for human development and this helps us to escape from poverty; it is necessary for national development and a prosperous society.

Higher Education

Education in India dates back to its early civilization time where teaching and learning process revolved around the Gurukul system. Modern concept of university style of education centres were established around 6th century BC at Nalanda and Takshashila. India's higher education system is the third largest in the world, after China and the United States. The main governing body at the tertiary level is the University Grants Commission (UGC) (India), which enforces its standards, advises the government, and helps to coordinate between the Centre and the State. In India, education system is reformed according to changing time, adding nearly 20,000 colleges and more than 8 million students in a decade from 2016-17. India has 47 Central Universities, 367 State Universities, 130 Deemed Universities, 282 Private Universities, 71 five Institutions established and functioning under the State Act, and 33 Institutes of National

Importance. Other institutions include 33,000 colleges as Government Degree Colleges and Private Degree Colleges, including 1800 exclusive women's colleges, functioning under these universities. Distance learning and open education is also a feature of the Indian higher education system, and is looked after by the Distance Education Council. India Gandhi National Open University is the largest university in the world by number of students, having approximately 3.5 million students across the globe.

Need for Higher Education to Women

The primary benefit of educating a woman helps reduce the gender inequality in the family and society. Studies have shown that women are much more creative than men, yet at the same time innovative and organized. Women by nature are economical and as a result of which do not cause undue wastage of resources and unnecessary expenses. A nation's cultural, social and economic development is highly dependent on higher education of women. As a result of which, one can say that spending money on educating women will not go a waste. In fact, it will provide for and improve the economy and development of nations. For example, if the nation is aiming at abolishing poverty, they must be at the helm and be involved in policy making and implementation. Because of their basic quality to be economical, they will not only drive the country towards economical self-sufficiency but also development.

Gender Gap

Since 2006, every year the World Economic Forum brings out the Global Gender Gap Report to track gender disparities and analyses gaps in four areas – health, education, economics and politics. Global Gender Gap Index 2017 Iceland is most gender-equal country with score of 0.878. It is followed by Norway (2 rank), Finland. Rwanda (4) and Sweden (5), Nicaragua (6) and Slovenia (7), Ireland (8), New Zealand (9) and the Philippines (10) Overall 68% of global gender gap has been closed, but it is slight deterioration is seen compared to 2016 when gap closed was 68.3%. India ranked 108th among 144 countries on the Global Gender Gap Index 2017 – clearly not a position to be proud India's cumulative score was 0.669 down from 0.683 in 2016. India has successfully closed 67% of its gender gap, less than many of its international peers. India's neighbours like Bangladesh ranked 47th, ranked at 100th India was ranked low at 108th position out of 144 countries in Global Gender Gap Index 2017 released as part of World Economic Forum's (WEF) Globe.

Review of Literature: Following literatures has been reviewed to bring link between higher education and women

- UGC (2003) "Higher Education in India: Issues, Concerns and New Directions" has reported the higher education status in India. Stressed upon new challenges of management and regulation being faced by these institutions both at the institutions in the public sector and private sector.
- Devesh Kapu and Pratap Bhanu Mehta (2004) "Indian Higher Education Reform: From Half-Baked Socialism to Half-Baked Capitalism" they explained the political economy of Indian higher (tertiary) education. As a result, the education system remains suspended between over-regulation by the state on the one hand, and a discretionary privatization that is unable to mobilize private capital in productive ways.
- Sanat Kaul (2006) "Higher Education in India: Seizing the opportunity" reviewed the prevailing policy environment in this context to evaluate its efficacy in ensuring that India remains ahead of the curve in the knowledge sector which has been growing exponentially in recent years.
- Ministry of HRD (2011) "All India Survey on Higher Education Pilot Report" discussed about higher education sector particularly in terms of courses,

management and geographical coverage, it has become necessary to develop a sound database on higher education. Existing data base on higher education is inadequate and out-of-date.

- Veda Parkas et.al (2011) their report on "Higher Education in the 12th Five-Year Plan (2012-17)" has analysed based on National Sample Survey (NSS) with the existing enrolment figures, progress and difficulties faced by higher education. It acknowledges the challenge of rising numbers, social inequalities and the real issue of quality of teaching-learning in Indian higher education.
- D. Dhanuraj and Rahall V. Kumar(Jan 2015) "Understanding the Status of Higher Education in India" examines the higher education scenario in India and attempts to point out why very few serious investors invest in higher educational sector.
- Aorta Shankar (Jan 2016) "Role of Private Sector in Higher Education" she explained the private providers of education dilute the quality of education due to a lack of regulatory oversight and restrict access due to charging high fees from students. On the other hand, some consider private involvement to be necessary to enhance investment and quality, as a result of increased competition, in higher education.
- Younis Ahmad Sheikh (2017) "Higher Education in India: Challenges and Opportunities" highlights the challenges and to point out the opportunities in higher education system in India.
- Neena Aneja "Women in Higher Education Management in India" discuss role of women in higher education and reason for lower enrolment ratio.
- Rajrupa mitra(2015)"Gender gap in higher education and the challenges ahead: an Analytical study of Indian states" review the nature and extent of gender disparity in India's higher education system and to assess the performance of the different states and union territories with regard to enrolment rates and gender parity scores.
- Shanjendu Nath(2014) present picture of higher education in India and women participation.

Objective

- To study current status of India
- To analyze gender gap in higher education

Methodology Data source: This paper is descriptive and analytical in nature. The paper based on secondary sources, collected from books, journals. Reports of different government organization like Ministry of Higher Education and UGC with regard to India level data.

Table - 1 : Higher education system in India & enrolment

INDIA	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Number of universities	642	667	723	760	799
Number of colleges	34,853	35,525	36,634	38,498	39,071
Enrolment in university	12,47,453	13,08,571	13,67,535	14,73,255	15,18,813
Number of lecturer	8,52,894	8,77,556	9,12,178	9,85,085	10,09,196

Source: Higher Education Statistic at Glance (2011-16)

Table 1 shows that Higher education system in India status from 2011-2016 on various dimensions. Firstly number of university has been risen from 642, 667, 723, 760, and 799 respectively from 2011-12 to 2015-16. It show that number of the university

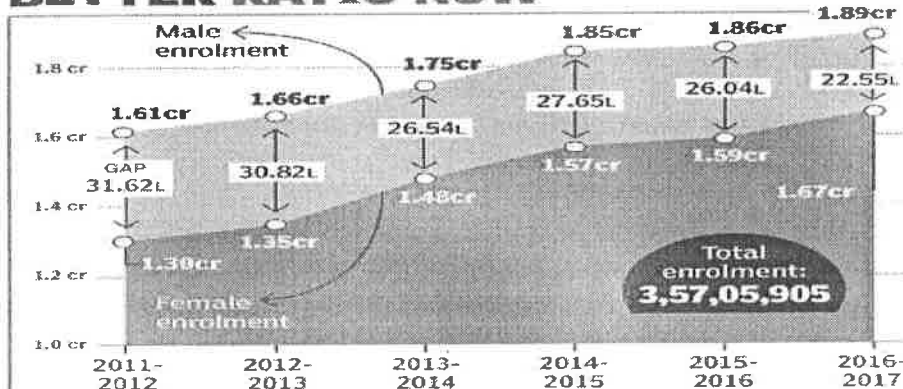
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are increasing every year symbolizes growth of higher education. since 2011-2016 number of the college also increasing, in 2011-12 34,853, 2012-13 35,525 2013-14 36,634, 2014-15 38,498, 2015-16 39,071 colleges, yearly number of colleges also increasing. Enrolment in university also has increased from 2011-2016. In 2011-12 it was 12, 47,453 and in 2016-15, 18,813 university were enrolled. Number of lecturer also rose since 2011-16. In 2011 there were 8, 52,894 lectures, in 2016 10, 09,196 lectures.

Gender gap narrowing in higher education: HRD survey: Gender gap in India's institutes of higher studies has reduced by nine lakh in the last five years with girl students outnumbering men in eight disciplines in 2016-17 academic sessions, according to a survey of the HRD ministry. While in master's of arts, there are 160 women for every 100 men, in bachelor's of science (nursing) has 384 women for every 100 men. Even in the postgraduate classes of science and commerce, women have handsomely outnumbered men with 167 and 158 respectively per 100 males. However, in undergraduate men and technical and professional courses like B Tech, law or management, the enrolment is skewed in favour of males and the gap is significant.

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FEMALE PER 100 MALE

Students in important programmes at UG and PG level in regular mode of education

Programme	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Master of Arts	124	147	154	165	169
Master of Science	123	138	147	157	167
Master of Commerce	122	136	145	148	158
MBBS	86	93	95	97	99
BSc (Nursing)	92	95	93	93	384
Bachelor of Education	169	180	188	197	203
Bachelor of Arts	108	115	118	118	121
Bachelor of Commerce	79	83	86	90	93

Biggest gender gaps: FEMALE PER 100 MALES

Programme	Year	Female per 100 Males
BACHELOR OF COMPUTER APPLICATIONS	2012-13	59
	2013-14	63
	2014-15	64
	2015-16	65
	2016-17	75
BACHELOR OF BUSINESS ADMN	2012-13	61
	2013-14	75
	2014-15	75
	2015-16	76
	2016-17	88
BTECH	2012-13	38
	2013-14	39
	2014-15	39
	2015-16	38
	2016-17	39
LLB	2012-13	43
	2013-14	46
	2014-15	44
	2015-16	44
	2016-17	47
MBA	2012-13	52
	2013-14	56
	2014-15	58
	2015-16	61
	2016-17	63
MTECH	2012-13	55
	2013-14	61
	2014-15	64
	2015-16	64
	2016-17	67

The All India Survey on Higher Education, released by the HRD ministry says the gender gap in higher educational institutions decreased by over nine lakh from 2011-12 to 2016-17 (31.5 lakh to 21.5 lakh). The survey shows the Gender Parity Index increased to 0.94 in 2016-17 from 0.86 in 2010-11 with women participation in certain disciplines very high and increasingly sharply in courses like MA, MSc, and MCom. The enrolment by the end of 2016-17 academic year stands at 3,57,05,905 with a Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 25.2. GER is counted from the number of students enrolled in higher education institutions out of the total population in the age group of 18 to 23 years. Women continue to outnumber men in bachelor's of arts and education. In MBBS there are 99 women per 100 male students, up from 86 in 2012-13, and in B Com up to 93 from 79 in the same period. At MSc level, mathematics, physics and zoology are subjects where the number of women is over 60% while in chemistry it is 56.3%. At postgraduate level, the

highest number of enrolment has been for mathematics with a total of 1,43,762 students of which 62.1% are women. In social sciences and especially in courses like political science, 52.2% students are women. However, as per the survey, even though the GER of female is higher, there is still significant gap in B Tech, M Tech, law and MBA programmes. In BTech, there are only 39 women per 100 men, hardly any improvement from 38 women in 2012-13. Barring MPhil and PG levels, the gap is also significant in diploma level courses with 70% male enrolment. India aims to attain a GER of 30% by 2020.

Conclusion

Education is a powerful instrument of socioeconomic development of any nation. According to MHRD (2017) India's higher education system is the third largest in the world, after China and the United States. Over the years in India there was glaring difference in enrolment ratio of women. But the All India Higher education survey report of 2017 reveals narrowing of this gap. Is the gap narrowing with more girls studying or more boys opting out. The data will never be full for a detail review.

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