

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN UTTAR PRADESH

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the participation of women in higher education in Uttar Pradesh state on the basis of AISHE Report 2020-21. It employs two indicators, namely, Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of Females and Gender Parity Index (GPI) to measure the absolute and relative participation of women in the higher education, from 2011 to 2019. On the basis of AISHE Report it is found that participation of women in Higher education in Uttar Pradesh increases.

Key Words:- Professional, Adjustment, Motivation, Learning, Attitude and Behavior.

Introduction

Higher Education is generally defined as education beyond secondary school, i.e. education provided by colleges, universities and professional institutes. It is well-known that higher education is a key to achieving economic and socio-cultural progress and human development in any country. It is also necessary that access to higher education should be available to every citizen of the country, regardless, of gender or caste. The six pillars of human development: equity, sustainability, productivity, empowerment, cooperation and security cannot be achieved in a system where only a part of the population has access to quality higher education. Hence, equal access and opportunity to all is the basic requirement for building sustainable societies.

The Ministry of Education recently released the AISHE (All India Survey on Higher Education) 2019-20 report, according to which women in India now hold a 49% share in total enrolment in higher education. However, it is important to go beyond the headline numbers and analyse the performance at the micro-level. Women in India are not a homogenous category and their education journey is shaped by socio-religious context. The socio-cultural milieu of Indian society exerts influences on all aspects of a woman's life. Against all odds, women in India achieve a high echelon on the educational front. Women from all sections of society have entered the realm of higher education with full gusto. At all the national-level, there has been an upsurge of 18% in female enrolment in higher education from 2015 to 2019.

Among all the categories of women, the achievements of Muslim women is highly commendable. They have broken the shackles of exclusion and 40% more women have enrolled in higher education in 2019-20 as compared to 2015-16. Similarly, the SC-ST women, for whom schools had barred their doors for many centuries, have also recorded

high improvement. ST women increased their enrollment by 38% and OBC women by 30%.

However, we need to take this news with a pinch of salt. Is increasing enrolment enough? Can we just sit back and toast to the fact that we are very close to bridging the gender gap in higher education? The answer to these questions is an unequivocal no. As much as there is a reason to celebrate the overall increase in women participation in higher education, the averages hide a plethora of gaps. The news coverage has ignored the misses. The share of Muslim and ST women in higher education, despite improvements, is still abysmally low at 2.7% and 2.8%, respectively. SC women still hold only a 7.3% share. Women in the PWD category occupy only 0.1% of the total higher education seats.

Another issue towards which attention needs to be drawn is the persistent low share of women in institutions of national importance. In these institutions, the share of women is 25% while men occupy the rest. In the 2015 to 2019 period, women's share has increased by mere 3 percentage points. It has been pointed out by various reports that the participation of women in the STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) in India has been low. The government has taken various measures to address the low enrolments of women in technical. One such measure is the supernumerary seat scheme in the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) wherein 20% of seats are reserved for female candidates.

Women's Higher Education in Uttar Pradesh

Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka states have more female enrolment in higher education, according to All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2018- 19, an official survey which covers all the institutions in the country engaged in imparting the higher education. The survey also said the ratio of male students is higher than female in almost every

level, except M.Phil., Post Graduate and Certificate. It also said the relatively higher share of male enrolment than female enrolment of students is also seen across the levels in the most of the States.

Uttar Pradesh, with its highest student enrolment in India, has 49.30% male and 50% female students according to the survey. In Karnataka, percentage of females enrolled is 50.04%.

Higher education directorate report says 62.95% students were women, 37% men in 27 state universities and 7,391 degree colleges of Uttar Pradesh in the 2020-21 session.

The latest report of the UP Higher Education Directorate sent to the state government said 27 state universities and 7,391 degree colleges of UP in 2020- 21 session have a total of 50,21,277 students enrolled in them, out of which 62.95% are women. The count of men 18,60,220 (37%), they added. Four years ago, in the academic session 2017-18, there were a total of 55,74,638 registered students in UP's higher educational institutions and the number included 27,77,137 women amounting to 49.81% as compared to 27,97,501 (50.18%) men, officials said.

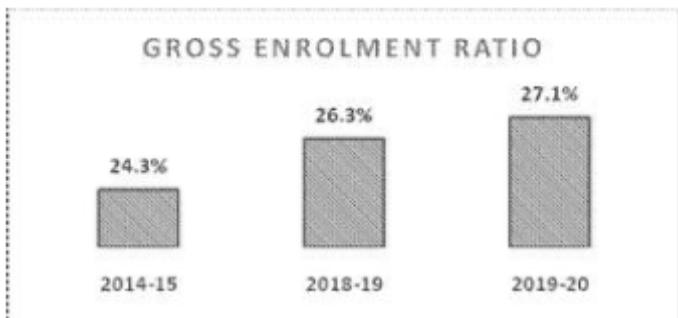
The Gross Enrolment Ratio of females stands at 27.3%, which is better in comparison to that of males at 26.9%. The survey also found a very high and sharp increase of female participation at M.A., M.Sc. and M.Com. courses during the last five years.

Key features of All India Survey on Higher Education Report 2019-20

1. Total Enrolment in Higher Education stands at 3.85 crore in 2019-20 as compared to 3.74 crore in 2018-19, registering a growth of 11.36 lakh (3.04%). Total enrolment was 3.42 crore in 2014-15. Uttar Pradesh has highest student enrolment in India, it has 49.1% male and 50.9% female students followed by Tamil Nadu and

Maharashtra.

2. Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), the percentage of students belonging to the eligible age group enrolled in Higher Education, in 2019-20 is 27.1% against 26.3% in 2018-19 and 24.3% in 2014-2015.

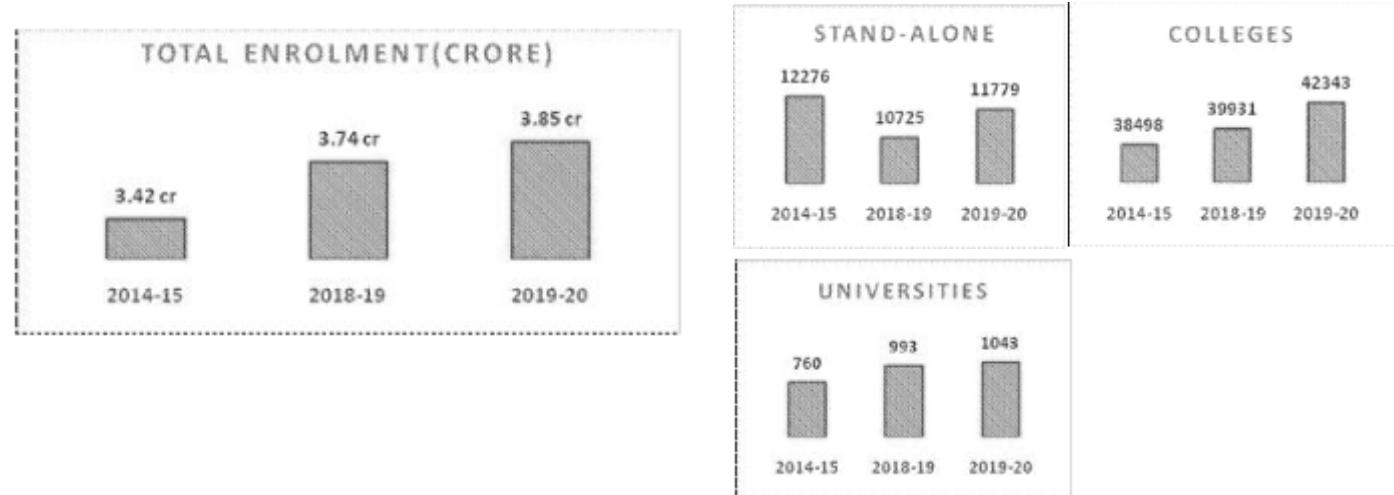


3. Gender Parity Index (GPI) in Higher Education in 2019-20 is 1.01 against 1.00 in 2018-19 indicating an improvement in the relative access to higher education for females of eligible age group compared to males.

A GPI of 1 indicates parity between the sexes; a GPI that varies between 0 and 1 typically means a disparity in favour of males; whereas a GPI greater than 1 indicates a disparity in favour of females.

4. Female Enrolment:

- There has been an overall increase of over 18% in female enrolment in higher education from 2015-16 to 2019-20.
- However, the share of girl students is lowest in institutes of national importance while female participation in professional courses is lower in comparison to academic courses.
- 5. Pupil Teacher Ratio in Higher Education in 2019-20 is 26. In 2019-20: Universities: 1,043(2%); Colleges: 42,343(77%) and stand-alone institutions: 11,779(21%).



6. 3.38 crore Students enrolled in programmes at under-graduate and post- graduate level. Out of these, nearly 85% of the students (2.85 crore) were enrolled in the six major disciplines such as Humanities, Science, Commerce, Engineering & Technology, Medical Science and IT & Computer.

7. The number of students pursuing PhD in 2019-20 is 2.03 lakh against 1.17 lakh in 2014-15.

8. The Total Number of Teachers stands at 15,03,156 comprising of 57.5% male and 42.5% female.

Recent Trends

In recent times there has been a change in the aspirations of young persons. Both men and women are in a hurry to finish studies and start earning. Money making has become the most important value for them. For this reason, they prefer to take up courses which are linked to jobs and pursuing studies for academic purposes is no longer the aim. The revolution in values cuts across strata, i.e. young persons even from the upper and middle strata want to earn as early as possible. The daughters of city based professional parents have really undergone a sea change in their socialization. Parents are giving the best education to their daughters and expect them to be independent and follow careers. This revolution in values contrasts with those values which dominated prior to the nineties, i.e. education and its linkage to the job market early on in life Forum on Public Policy 11 was only for those men who needed jobs and was certainly not for women. In this changed situation, the priorities of women have also changed. They too want professional education and are, therefore, entering the so called masculine disciplines.

Recent Initiatives:

- o National Education Policy (NEP), 2020:
- It aims at increasing the GER in higher education to 50% by 2035.
- Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC):
- It aims at improving the research ecosystem of India's higher educational institutions by facilitating academic and research collaborations between Indian institutions and the best institutions in the world.
- [Rashtriya Ucchatar Shiksha Abhiyan \(RUSA\)](#)
- It aims at providing strategic funding to higher educational institutions throughout the country.

- Prime Minister's Research Fellowship (PMRF):
- It will attract the talent pool of the country to doctoral (Ph.D) programmes for carrying out research in cutting-edge science and technology domains, with focus on national priorities.

Conclusion-

The biggest challenge before the Government and NGO's is to create awareness and sensitization among people of all levels, especially in rural areas, about the special needs of women and girls. They need to be made aware that imparting education to women is a great service to society. This vital section of society has remained bound in the shackles and been deprived for far too long. There is a need for affirmative and real action in their favour which will ensure the women to right to food, shelter, health, education and employment. However, the recent changes and developments are kindling hopes for better and promising future.

Further, the policymakers also need to take cognizance of a lack of transmission of higher participation of women in education to high participation in the labour force. India is among the five worst-performing countries in the world in the domain of economic participation of women. There is a need for a socio-cultural change where society recognises the intrinsic and instrumental values of education in the lives of women. Measures such as "Gender inclusion Fund" and "Special Education Zones" (proposed in NEP-2020) for inclusion of socially and economically disadvantaged groups can be a gamechanger.

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