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author(s).**HIGHER EDUCATION FOR
ELIMINATING GENDER
DISCRIMINATION: BREAKING NEW
GROUNDS**

Dr Sonia Rajoria

Abstract: Women are believed to be self-effacing, humble and patient, and are immediately sometimes seen as very weak or distressed if they find it to take their own decision or stand. Generally, Indian society has focused on that she has only reproductive roles in the society, taking care of their families and other relationships, which are not completely by taken legal rights being taken firstly, should be considerate. Hence, women especially all over in society are treated differently irrespective of men. Moreover, women have to be considered in different phases of equality when shaping the future in the society in India. Yet there is still Gender discrimination in India but it is not only found in biological but also it is determined socially and only Higher Education can change the appropriate and perpetuate efforts to bring positive social changes. Refusal of equity and equality, and those opportunities which are partially disabled which enhance the structure of the society are the origin of gender is gender discrimination. This paper highlights or gathered data from secondary sources to bring out the positive changes through higher education to present the elimination of gender discrimination in India, causes of gender discrimination, as well as addressing the inclusive policies with special reference to higher education in India.

Keywords: Higher Education, Gender Discrimination, Women Empowerment and Inclusive Policies

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1.1 Introduction

“You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women”- Pandit Nehru.

From the Vedic period, women had very little access to education in India and gradually the situation became worse. However, in the British period, there was a revitalization of interest in women's education in India. During that period many socio-religious movements were initiated by reformists like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar who emphasized women's education in India. Besides these Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, Baba Saheb Ambedkar and Periyar were some prominent leaders who did a very grateful work on women's education. Women's education received a boost after the country got Independence and the government has taken many steps forward to provide education to all Indian women. As a result, we found that women's literacy rate has grown over the last three decades and the growth of female literacy has increased higher than that of male literacy rate. But in 1971 only 21.97% of Indian women were literate, by the end of 2011 65.46% of females were literate. The growth of the female literacy rate is 14.87% as compared to 11.72% of the male literacy rate. Over the period of our past century, there have been very glad to know that the positive development of women in India has increased evidence in all spheres, minimizing gender gaps in primary, and secondary school and also in higher education, the presence of women in labour forces across in international and lowest fertility rates. The present paper has the light on the two studies references which have similarity are: first, One of the Research Paper had published by the University of Gothenburg; the title of the paper is 'Female Education and Gender Inequality', written by Tina Nikkhoo and Emelie Jönsson according to them they had given the findings of this study is, that from the education it has been proven that education plays such an important role in form of growth, especially in developing countries, they have believed that it is very difficult to continue by doing research in the educational field in the world and also trying to resolve those problems which produce barriers only on the rights to equal education. In Second study reference was published under the Academic Research International Vol. 5(2) March 2014, its title is 'Gender Discrimination and Inequalities in Higher Education: A Case Study of rural areas of Pakistan' written by Madiha Salik and Zhu Zhiyong, according to them they have given the findings in this study is that there is need to provide educational facilities to the female population of the deprived areas of the country, also there is need to create the awareness among the family, as well as introduce the free and compulsory education from higher secondary education to higher education with the provision of strong incentives.

Moreover, some of the women's organizations have generally raised issues related to sexual and reproductive health and rights, violence against women, and disparity of power in gender relations, and also make these highlighted issues of debate, dialogues in national and global scenarios. Women have been considered for many decades to reshape the future of society in India. It is the whole process of confronting to establishing their social norms and agendas to enhance and strive for social change. As everybody knows Women are the assets of India also they have participated in most of every sector and are full of pride at every ceremony in the Nation. Women are in generally in front and take over the difficult work on their shoulders whether, they are at home, workplace or else, therefore this is the main foundation that others will get inspiration from them. But, still, on most sides, there is another reality of Indian society where people systematically discriminate and neglect women in India, there they just have limited access to education, health, property rights and legal rights like domestic violence etc. the fright of sexual violence has been a very powerful aspect in restricting women's behavior and the sense of liberty. It is the struggle against violence is the struggle against the unequal distribution of power both physical and economic among the sexes.

Women becoming empowered is still a far-away dream in India. India is a fast-developing country but still, the position of women in India has been discriminated.

1.2 What is Gender Discrimination?

Gender Discrimination is meant especially only for women because women are the only sufferers from all sides of spheres of gender discrimination. Yet there is still Gender discrimination in India but it is not only found in biology also it is determined by society and only the discrimination can change the appropriate and perpetuate efforts. It is defined by the International Labour Organization (2003a), as 'based on such differences like caste, colour, creed, sex, race, religion, economically, socially and politically which have nullified the opportunity from every aspect also its worst treatment on the occupation or in employment' is discriminatory. Therefore, rejection of equality, rights and opportunities and enhancement in any field of structure are the origin of gender known as Gender Discrimination. Even in some fields where women are yet to be needed to fight for their women receive very lesser remuneration in India. Nearly, two-thirds of the women are illiterates and they have acquired only one per cent of the total world's assets. In India, only one-fourth of the 7 families are headed by women. As India is a male-dominated society also disparity in every walk of every field for women is customized habitually is known as gender discrimination.

From birth to death in her entire life are surviving a lot of gender discrimination against society. Here are some of the reasons below:

- Abort the female foeticide with the help of some medically proven machines.
- After the birth of a new female child, they press the face with a pillow or break the female baby's neck.
- Some mothers who have just recently delivered a newborn female child are being left in some unknown place or either thrown in some dustbin.
- Giving inadequate quantity of food.
- No permission to go to school.
- Did not give proper health care facilities at the time of illness.
- Only follow rigid myths for the girl child.
- Child Marriage.
- Molestation, Sexual Harassment and Rape.
- Due to the lure of money send girl child into the profession of prostitution.
- Dowry.
- Divorce and Destitution with some silliness or either without any cause.

1.3 Causes of Gender Discrimination: Several causes of gender discrimination in Indian society

Indian society is mainly recognized by a patriarchal system due to which the status of women or talk about women empowers. due to all such common causes of gender discrimination are mainly started by family or the societal background

Here few points are highlighted which are recognized as causal factors of gender discrimination.

- Educational backwardness
- Religion, Caste, Race
- Culture/ Customs and beliefs
- Family background and situation

- Low income / Unemployment
- Society/ Social attitude

1.4 What is Gender Sensitivity and how it works to eliminate gender discrimination?

Gender Sensitivity is a concept of developing or eradicating the hurdles which come in our personal life also related to our economic set of development created by sexism. It helps to Engender to pay respect for an individual regardless of gender. Gender sensitivity is not only a role of reproductive role or ditching women against men. Opposing this, only higher education can sensitize the gender benefits among both sexes. It facilitates them to resolve the assumptions that are related to gender are valid and stereotyped generalizations. Gender Sensitivity not only focuses an intellectual perspective but also promulgates open-mindedness and sensitivity. It gives the widest possible options of life for both of the genders.

1.5 Gender Discrimination and the Nature of the Society

From birth to death in her entire life are surviving a lot of gender discrimination against society. Here are some of the reasons below:

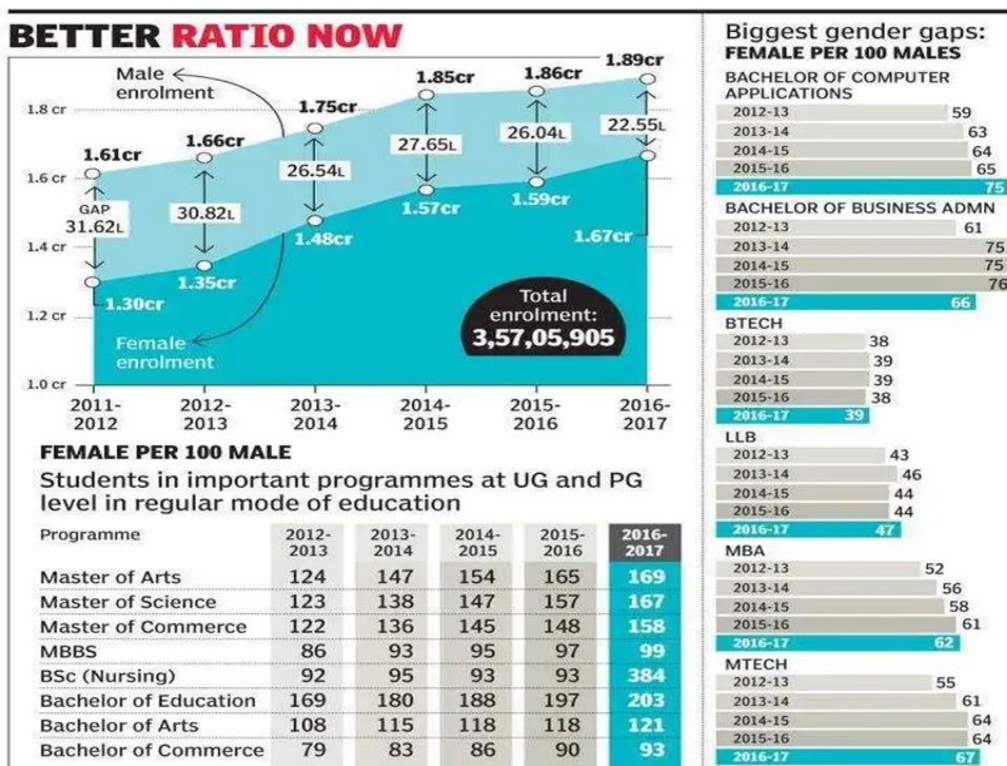
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1.6 Higher Education and Gender Discrimination

In India, the literacy rate of women is much lower than that of men because families or society do not allow or are not interested in their female (sister or daughter) go outside they are very reserved by nature therefore their males receive more preference to go to school regularly.

According to the theme there is a big co-relation between higher education and gender discrimination after getting the several causes of gender discrimination in Indian society there is still as same as the last scenarios that have been thinking over there on the matter of gender discrimination. Therefore, in this paper data from secondary sources like different books, the internet, research articles or papers. To know the findings of gaps among higher education and gender discrimination here, after perceived some facts and figures related to the study from 'The Times of India article published on 8 January 2018, has reported that according HRD Survey on

Gender Gaps has narrowed the higher education in India’, they explained very brief that gender gaps in India’s Institutes has reducing the gender gaps in last five years also compare with male in 8 streams in 2016-2017. While in M.A 160 females are enrolled for every 100 men, whereas in B.A in Nursing 384 females are enrolled for every 100 men. We can also the status of Postgraduate Disciplines in Science and Commerce, where females have received a very smart outnumbered by men around 167 and 158 for every 100 men. But, in Undergraduate, technical and professional courses like management, law and bachelor’s in technical, their admitted numbers are tilt irrespective of males and the gap is still remarkable.



Sources: HRD Survey on Gender Gaps in Higher Education published on 8 Jan. 2018

According to the HRD Ministry, the All-India Survey on Higher Education was released recently and said the gender gap in higher education decreased by 9 Lac in 2012-2013. The survey which depicted the Gender Parity Index increased to 0.94 in 2016-2017 from 0.86 in 2010-2011 also there female enrollment participation is increasing in some of the disciplines like M.A, M.Sc and M.Com. The total enrollment in 2016-2017 in the academic session 3, 57, 05,905 is the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) of about 25.2. GER is the annually counted number of students who are enrolled in higher educational bodies out of a total population among the age group of 18 to 23 years. Women are increasingly surpassed by male students in B.A and in Education. In the same year of 2016-2017 in MBBS 99 female students were enrolled per 100 male students, also upward from 2012-13 from the number of 86 and in B.Com also upward to 93 from 79 in 2016-2017 year.

In the Programmes of M.Sc the level of Mathematics, Physics and Zoology the number of enrolled female students are about 60% whereas in chemistry it is 56.3%. In the Postgraduate level, female

students are 62.1% enrolled in mathematics over total students of 1, 43,762. Under social sciences like Political Sciences, 52.2% of female students are enrolled in the same year.

Yet according to the survey, the Gross Enrollment Ratio of females is good and higher but there is still a very major gap in some of the disciplines like B.tech, M.tech, Law and M.B.A Courses/ Programmes. In the same year under B.tech only 39% of women over 100 male students are enrolled, and just 38% of female students in 2012-2013 have only a 1% improvement. Even excluding PG and M.Phil level programmes, the gap is still remarkable also in diploma courses over 70% of male students have been enrolled. Now the HRD has a strong vision to achieve a Gross Enrollment Ratio of 30% by 2020.

1.7 Gender Discrimination and Its Impact on Health Growth

In India several cases of women who have still to search out better health services whatever they require in according to their sphere. The ratio of suicide in male over female adults in India has been about is 2:1. From 1987 to 2007, the suicide rate increased from 7.9% to 10.3% per 100,000, it was found higher in sides of southern and eastern states in India. In 2012 year, some states like Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and West Bengal had the very highest percentage of female adults suicides.

Now we are discussed on the Mental Health concerns are also the part of social exclusion of gender discrimination in higher education in India. Some of the studies have found where depicts the picture of the gender disparity it negative attitude and impact have steeper the women's empowerment risk factors like depression, suicidal behavior, common mental behaviors and anxiety. These are some mental health related aspects can be studied in various scenarios for female such as in the educational institutions, at home and in workplace have seen in various contributions of the mental illness in India. In 2001 one of the study which is published by the U.Vindhya et al., in the Economic and Political Weekly, where adult females have tend too much suffering from depression ,somatoform with dissociative disorders while compared to men in this study. Therefore, several studies have been indicated the negative aspects of mental health disorders where we can see these higher occurrence of the common mental health disorders found in rural as well as in peri-urban communities in India.

1.8 Supporting work on Gender Sensitization from different Agencies

Several social organizations and institutions are addressing the issue of gender sensitization in India. Without the participation of both sexes cannot develop or eradicate gender discrimination from the family, society, the nation or the universe. This can be only done by the integrity of the social organizations, educational institutions or Universities to deliver the best social activities, skills, and knowledge. A moment ago, the Indian Express published an article dated 16 January 2018 that DUSU has established a gender sensitization cell to tackle gender discrimination. This cell aims are to deliver legal aid and facilitation services to students who undergo discrimination and harassment. Also, the Times of India published an article dated 13, August 2018, it was organized a workshop on gender sensitivity at Moti Lal Nehru National Institute of India (Allahabad), in this workshop Dr. Anju Gupta, Director of NCWEB of Delhi University is the keynote speaker of the event there she shared that, women must be aware from their surroundings and speak out in any kind of harassment when she came across. She also said that we should enlighten the knowledge of men and adults by only giving higher education to them. On 19, July 2018 the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) has been addressing gender equality through higher education. 'Gender Sensitization' in higher education finds a mention in the 'Draft National Policy for Women - 2016' and it also forms an

important recommendation of ‘Saksham’ – Measures for ensuring the Safety of Women and Programmes for Gender Sensitization on Campuses’ report released by the University Grants Commission (UGC) in 2013.

1.9 Inclusive Policies and Plan by the Government of India

The central government is running the inclusive policies of about 147 schemes for women in the country which cater to the different needs of women in the society.

Also by the Government of India has running the very much skills and legal litigation for women's empowerment through schemes like the Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP) run by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Rajiv Gandhi Scheme For Empowerment Of Adolescent Girls (Rgseag) – ‘SABLA’, Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, National Mission for Empowerment of Women, Rashtriya Mahila Kosh – (National Credit Fund for Women), Gender Budgeting and Economic Empowerment of Women. Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY) – Conditional Maternity Benefit (CMB) scheme is a Conditional Cash Transfer scheme for pregnant and lactating women to contribute to a better enabling environment by providing cash incentives for improved health and nutrition to pregnant and nursing mothers are the main Government Policies for the Women of India or the legal laws under the Constitution of India like Domestic Violence Act 2005, Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, Hindu Succession Act, 1956, Minimum Wage Act, 1948, Eve Teasing Sections 294 and 509 under the Indian Penal Code (IPC), The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986, etc. or punishment against the criminal activity under the Indian Penal Code Act 1860 are the main laws and sections under IPC in India which will secure the Women of India.

These are the listed as below the different sets of Government Programmes and Schemes to Empower Women:

- Working Women Hostel
- One Stop Centre Scheme
- Sukanya Samriddhi Yojna
- Women Helpline Scheme
- Support to training and employment programme (step) for women empowerment
- List 100 additional one-stop centre (oscs)/ sakhicentres.
- Interest repayment on bank loans of women self-help groups (shgs) set up under DeenDayalAntyodyaYojana.
- DurgashaktiVahini/ ChatraParivahanSurakshaYojana for safety of girls.
- Indira Gandhi SahyogYojna (IGMSY) (2010)
- National Mission for Empowerment of Women (nmew) (2011)
- Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme (2012)
- BetiBachaobetipadhao (2015)
- Mahila e-haat (2016)
- Kudumbashree Programme for Women Empowerment (2018-2019)

2.1 Suggestions

To address the issue of gender discrimination and women's empowerment the following are some suggestions:

3.1 For Girls

Empowerment

To spread the knowledge of legal rights and its policies to empower the girls. This would be supported by the educational institutions/ Universities or Colleges as well as society will be admitted and provide equal positions, although they will be a better way to assist them and the use of her potential and as well as the elimination of dependency.

Self-confidence (through curricular activities)

Enhancing the morality of the girls is the primary source of the key to alleviating the inferiority complex that resides in them. Only extra-curricular activities or recreational activities in schools/colleges/ universities or educational universities bring up an environment free from gender inequality.

Decision Making (Through textbooks/other literature/ Co-Curricular activities / Classroom activities)

In the 21st century, we can mitigate such a deep-rooted problem of gender inequality thus we must give the chance to the girls to make self-decisions, raise their voices at least for their rights, and accept their ideas into co-curricular activities at universities/ colleges/ educational institutions level to promoting and build her power to making herself strong and independent.

Self-defence – (Through activities)

The self-defence activities are usually like NCC Cadets, Sports etc. is compulsory to opt from any of these to make yourself strong and strengthen also such kind of activities are an initial discipline like the other discipline is the main part in the Delhi Universities/ Private Universities or colleges. These activities can break the odds of societal atrocities and alleviate the issue of gender disparity.

Quality of Leadership: (Scholastic and Co-Scholastic activities)

Only leadership is not given by the god-gifted to the males. We must alleviate such odd societal atrocities through Higher Education, we will develop equality between both genders to mitigate the leadership which is not only in boys but also it can develop in girls irrespective of this we must remove their caste, creed or colour.

Creative Girls meet and the power of Motivation

Educational activities must include group discussions, conferences, seminars, debates and dialogues and some cultural festivals so that girls take initiative or participation in these activities. These activities can give the power of motivation through the panel of higher education, family or even in the society.

Women Entrepreneurship

Women entrepreneurs comprise 13.76 percent (14% about) in India, according to a survey by Forbes. About 58 percent of the female entrepreneurs were in the age range of 20-30 when they started. Nearly 73 percent of them report revenue of approximately Rs 10 lakhs in a financial year.

The report also found that between 2019 and 2022, 17% of investment deals in India were raised by startups with women leaders. (Feb 15, 2023 07:52 PM IST)

- The report highlighted that startups in India doubled down on operational efficiency instead of sacking staff or winding down operations in 2022. Last year, India saw the addition of nearly 1,300 fresh startups and the second-highest number of unicorns in the world.
- Compared to 2021, there was an 18 per cent spike in the number (1,400) of startups that received funding.
- President Droupadi Murmu, in October 2022, had inaugurated 'her START', a platform to encourage women entrepreneurs. The government of India has also introduced a monthly allowance of Rupees 20,000 for up to one year for women-led startups.

3.2 For Boys-

It is the duty or the responsibility of the family or the teachers to sensitize the boys that girls too have their rights same here they have their rights. Some areas we must focus on first, the right to equality and the right to justice second, the rigidity type of attitude and male-dominant society and last are to pay homage to every human being without any gender disparity (like caste, colour, and creed).

3.3 For Professionals-

Research on gender-aware literature

It is very important to prepare gender-aware literature for professionals, which must include theories related to gender, case studies, motivational stories, true stories etc. Also prepared some small booklets, magazines, articles, and posters must be propagation of knowledge related to the issue of gender.

Give Teachers Training on Gender Disparity

The focused areas of the training should be higher education and gender discrimination, equity and equality, gender stereotypes in the society and higher education system should be followed, its causes and effects, life skills, emotional development, mental and physical development, teacher attitude towards the students into the classroom, classroom environment.

3.4 For Universities/Colleges/ Educational Departments-

Make Gender fair policy and plan implementation in higher education

Higher Education has a main role in boosting the concept of gender aspect which will be very helpful to the Universities/Colleges/ Educational Institutions are become more responsive.

To Establish the Gender unit/Women's Cell

The establishment of the Gender Unit/ Women Cell followed by the guidelines of UGC or Government Body to implement the policy or plan on gender issues also support the female students, issues related to college ragging, harassment, eve-teasing and molestation matters are carefully handled within the University/Colleges/Educational Institutions.

4.1 Conclusion

Gender discrimination still exists in Indian society and it needs to focus on the field of women's higher education in India. The gender gap of the last 2011 census has indicated that 65% is a male literacy rate which is more over than the female literacy rate is about 56.99%. Women's education plays a very significant role in the overall development of the Indian country. Women's empowerment helps to develop and maintain the life of the human also improving the quality of life at residence and on the exterior side of the environment. Educated women can promote the life structure of their family also she gives the right direction or guidance to her children. Furthermore, educated women can help to reduce the infant mortality rate and the growth of the population in India. The role of higher education in the life of women is the only and the most important tool of social change or the position in society. Now the results of the present paper have shown the facts and figures of higher education for eliminating gender discrimination is still need to work or spread knowledge or awareness programmes and there is also a need to focus on the dream of the women empowerment agenda in the country should be accomplished by doing strong efforts.

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