

Women Empowerment In Indian Higher Education

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Abstract: The knowledge economy of twenty first century is women friendly and as a result higher educational institutions has improved women enrolment in higher studies and work force as well. There are several policies, schemes and scholarships offered to women higher education. Yet, women are still underrepresented. There may be numerous reasons of this gross under-representation, such context specific barriers to be found and addressed. There is a necessity to eliminate the gender gap and investigate women's applied strategies to attain awareness and achieve gender mainstreaming.

Index Terms: Women Enrolment, Gender mainstreaming, Women Empowerment, Women policies

1 INTRODUCTION

In the last few decades, the higher education contributed economy growth of the country and tremendous growth was witnessed. As per All India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE) 2018-19, the women enrolment in higher education is increased with 48.6 % of the total enrolment 37.4 million. This is the evidence that there is a growing awareness on women education, which is a part of human resource development, which reduces gender gap and aiming equal participation. The opportunities in work-force and women's well being are improved. However, there is a need of improvement in social environment where the women gains equal opportunities in all levels of hierarchy, especially at managerial and leadership level. The paper records women participation in higher education and identifies the barriers on capacity building at higher levels.

2 WOMEN ENROLMENT

From the inception of AISHE report, it is evident that there is a constant growth of women participation in higher education. The dropouts from school education are due to various factors including lack of interest, financial issues, engaged in domestic works, travelling distance, early marriage, family unwillingness and engaged in lower skill job either in organized or unorganized sector. Still the country is able to manage and improving the higher education enrolment. The present female enrolment is 18.2 million, which comprise of 26.4 Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER). There are 16 exclusive women universities, where the distribution across 13 states: 3 at Rajasthan, 2 at Tamil Nadu and 1 each in other 11 states.

The number of colleges exclusive for women counts approximate 3691 which is 10.82 % of total colleges. The women participation is more in M.Phil, Post Graduate (PG) and Certificate courses as per Fig. 1. Though there is good number of representation in Ph.D level, the completion of Ph.D gets reduced; only 41.77 % of female enrolled candidates are awarded with degree. The select programme level distribution of PG and undergraduate (UG) are given in Fig 2 and 3 respectively. The Table 1 & 2 gives actual number of enrollment in PG and UG respectively. The lower enrollment of female candidate in UG engineering program is the major pull down factor and creates the gender gap. The top 6 states of higher enrolment which shares 54.24 % of total enrolment are shown in Fig. 4. The same states contribute higher in female enrolment. The Table 3 describes the state-wise female enrolment in various degree levels. The female student enrolment is lower in case of professional courses compared to

academic courses as per Fig.5. However, the trend of female enrolment is constantly increasing from the year 2014-15 in all category of institutions.

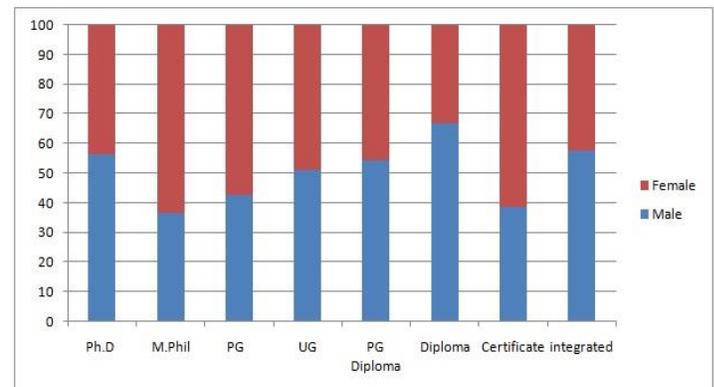


Fig. 1. Degree level % distribution (Fig 8 of AISHE 2019)

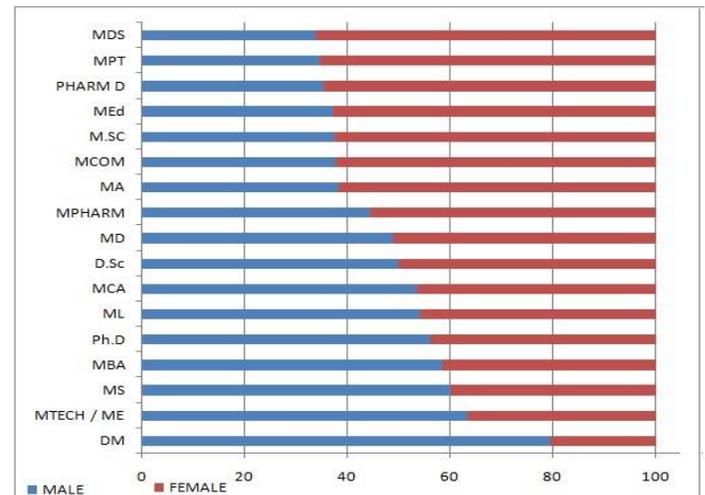


Fig. 2. Gender ratio in select PG Programs (AISHE 2019)

Table 1. Enrolment in select PG (AISHE, 2019)

Programme-Wise Enrolment	Male	Female	TOTAL
D.Sc	40	40	80
DM	341	88	429
ML	436	372	808
MPT	1896	3582	5478
MS	7182	4779	11961
MDS	4796	9438	14234
MPHARM	13716	17080	30796
PHARM D	9952	18145	28097
MD	22130	23101	45231
MEd	17754	30071	47825
MTECH / ME	111867	64799	176666
MCA	78680	68395	147075
Ph.D	93381	73239	166620
MBA	343500	245333	588833
MCOM	170011	280248	450259
M.SC	25991	437306	463297
MA	578198	934616	1512814

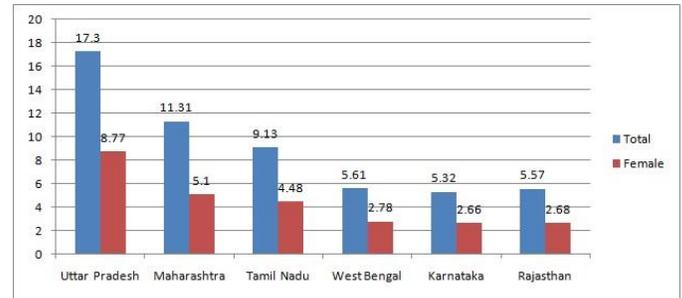


Fig 4. Total & Female Enrollment in Top 6 States (AISHE 2019)

Table 3. State-wise, Female Enrolment (AISHE 2019)

States / UT	UG	PG	Ph.D	M.Phil	PG Diploma	Diploma	Certificate	Integrated	Total
Uttar Pradesh	2791519	336882	7404	431	16930	95328	19016	12337	3279847
Maharashtra	1496019	242682	3873	1165	8570	139431	7692	6470	1905902
Tamil Nadu	1287997	274576	12121	9144	5383	62897	15892	9516	1677326
West Bengal	874504	94793	4570	803	2437	55408	3628	4756	1040899
Rajasthan	843108	106455	5145	160	3756	25025	5983	12315	1001947
Karnataka	789369	118327	5230	316	3055	73333	1795	3652	995077
Madhya Pradesh	703775	121265	1710	379	21793	45751	847	6086	901606
Andhra Pradesh	625754	98539	1927	182	1030	64378	636	3578	796024
Bihar	604600	58697	1123		778	18990	1439	896	686523
Telangana	565609	104787	1238	123	2187	48142	1078	2067	725231
Kerala	505771	88754	4183	685	967	29567	4851	2864	637642
Gujarat	497400	83554	2328	414	3377	40902	9742	7389	645106
Delhi	405107	93497	4493	2684	3831	1441	1839	1882	514774
Odisha	371004	42541	1670	638	1194	33942	5894	3945	460828
Haryana	368952	69046	1991	287	1507	22284	1577	5960	471604
Punjab	359648	69660	4713	367	3760	38109	986	5603	482846
Jharkhand	299576	47852	795	110	1525	9279	1280	1326	361743
Assam	296037	38720	1970	272	1564	10910	1034	2172	352679
Chattisgarh	215794	37757	509	151	15114	33005	365	1444	304139
Uttarakhand	174137	39584	1759	9	1105	8585	70	1923	227172
Jammu & Kashmir	152874	36407	1291	174	719	4354	116	2894	198829
Himachal Pradesh	127077	15978	794	179	717	8193	1050	419	154407
Manipur	48928	4296	487	10	93	1788	96		55698
Meghalaya	38949	5817	678	46	85	1853		42	47470
Chandigarh	32954	13291	508	43	857	1477	222	1091	50443
Tripura	29821	5691	79		125	1992	112	427	38247
Puducherry	28067	10261	292	54	71	1239	6	458	40448
Goa	22303	3873	129		84	845		479	27713
Nagaland	18485	3412	257	12	150	1100	59		23475
Arunachal Pradesh	17966	4287	280	77	61	595	84	94	23444
Sikkim	12039	6515	188	42	34	1070	10	185	20083
Mizoram	11475	2096	368	112	255	1465	171	44	15986
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	4885	966	23		42	350		142	6408
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	2691	223						14	2928
Daman & Diu	1143	85							1228
Lakshadweep	392	26							418
Total	14625729	2281192	74126	19069	103156	882828	87570	102470	18176140

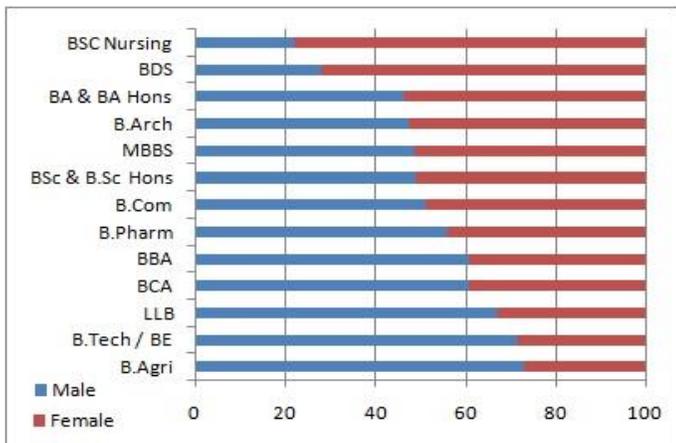


Fig 3. Gender distribution in select UG % (AISHE 2019)

Table 2. Enrolment in select UG (AISHE 2019)

Programme-Wise Enrolment	Male	Female	TOTAL
BA & BA Hons	5125314	5863769	10989083
BSc & B.Sc Hons	2587085	2676177	5263262
B.Com	2064092	1966233	4030325
B.Tech / BE	2700819	1070130	3770949
BBA	315956	204228	520184
BCA	310649	200819	511468
LLB	245231	119326	364557
MBBS	129809	137388	267197
BSC Nursing	56267	200136	256403
B.Pharm	137849	108509	246358
BDS	26464	68336	94800
B.Arch	37501	41630	79131
B.Agri	95772	35406	131178

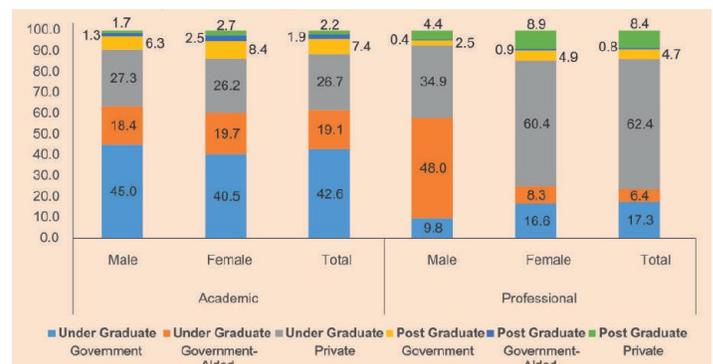


Fig 5. Academic & Professional Enrolment (Fig 39 of AISHE 2019)

3 WOMEN FACULTY & ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

The total teaching faculty in all institutions comprise of 14,16,299, where the women teachers percentage is 42.2. The faculty gender ratio in different type of institutions is listed in Table 4. The female ratio in non-teaching category is even more less. In state-wise gender distribution, Bihar and Jharkhand has

less women faculty members. The percentage of women faculty in different type of institutions is listed in Fig. 6

Table 4. Faculty designation (AISHE, 2019)

Type of Institution	Professor		Associate Professor		Assistant Professor		Tutor	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Central University	2721	700	1380	475	4320	1857	51	12
Central Open University	38	22	37	29	33	35		
Institute of National Importance	3000	501	2617	546	4878	1359	52	56
State public university	9148	2980	4546	2065	17106	11241	591	544
State open university	76	6	46	13	178	134	1	3
State private university	4702	1416	4165	2273	22129	16641	1164	1445
Institute under State Legislature Act	180	53	91	29	216	114	103	95
Deemed University- Government	1268	296	805	202	932	373	72	36
Deemed University- Government Aided	308	208	125	111	588	644	32	40
Deemed University- Private	5320	2278	5091	3051	15064	11825	1245	1870
Central University- Constituent colleges	1302	613	2799	3241	9483	10309	448	780
State Public University- Affiliated colleges	58993	22327	73224	43196	412084	320558	13638	24623

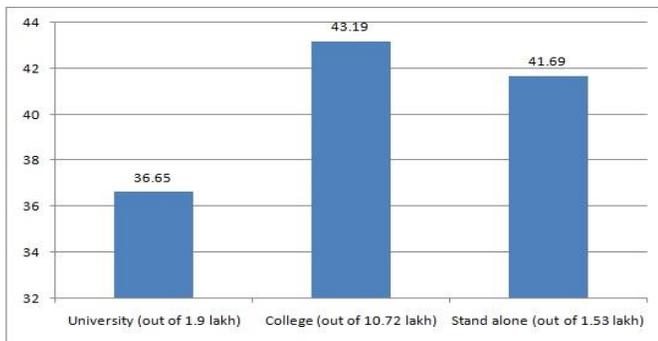


Fig. 6. Women Faculty % (AISHE 2019)

There is a regional disparity in women employment and the institutions are not made women friendly. The gap is more in leadership roles as head of institution, vice chancellor and Director level (Banker et al. 2017). There is a only one women Director in National Institute of Technology, Tiruchirapalli, considering all institutes of national importance. There is a need to develop motivation, training on management skills in women academicians and administrators towards leadership roles. The need of affirmative action and fixed quotas, mentoring will improve the situation (Morley, 2013).

4 WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

As per the World bank Economic survey, (2018), there are 39.4 % of girls drop out from schools and colleges out of 120 million girls population and 95 % are employed in unorganized sector with low wages or unpaid. This shows that despite of increase in women education, there is a gender disparity and inequality in workplace. The reasons are due to lack of job opportunity, child care and involvement in domestic household works. The technology disruption and gig economy expects different skill set as shown in Fig. 7 (WEF, 20118). The fourth industrial revolution (4IR) focuses on tech nological disruption beyond digitization and expected to result job loss in routine works by automation of textile / garment or other industries

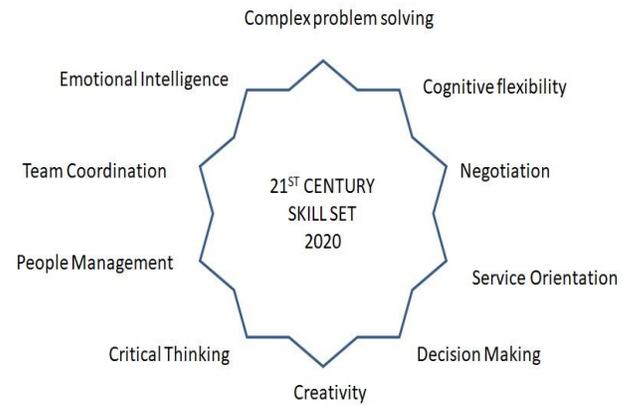


Fig.7. 21st century skill (WEF, 2018)

This has necessitated the of skilling, re-skilling and up-skilling cycle, where the education to repurposed and reoriented with employment. The higher education institutions must establish vocational and skill development centres with the following (Deloitte & GCNI, 2019)

- Evolve gender mainstreaming and break stereotypes including safety and security in employment, wage parity, work timings and balancing work-life
- On-demand skill training
- Provide strong based on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)
- Establish higher education institutions in rural area and disadvantaged groups
- Flexible courses in curriculum which will be designed at the higher semesters based on industry demand
- Inter-disciplinary curriculum by blending multi disciplines
- Practical training and Mandate industry internship
- Women reservation policies in both education and employment
- Simplification of approvals, financing, tax exemption and acceptance of women entrepreneurs
- Recognize prior learning of rural women and equip them with customized soft skill, technology training

The higher education institutions must ensure provision of mass women education, technology inputs for better access, remove the gender barrier, commitment to women empowering, provide research ambient and promote scholarships, incentives, mentoring, counseling and coaching to uplift women students. The environment must women friendly and safe. The gender analysis in higher education policies is absent and recorded only with enrollment details. The lack of capacity building and investment in women, social and organization culture setback women leadership in academics and policy recommendations and enables for mainstreaming and senior leadership are summarized in Fig. 8 (Morley et al, 2015).

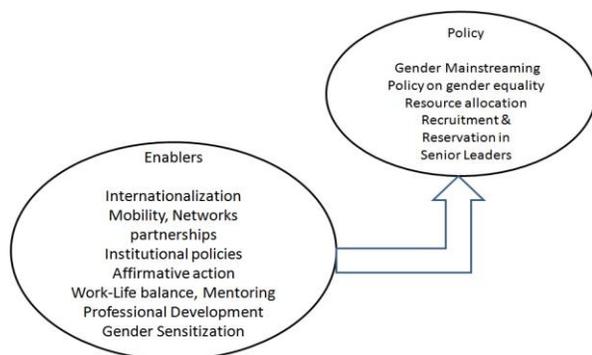


Fig.8. Enablers and Policies Recommendations (Morley et al. 2015)

5 POLICIES AND REPORTS FAVOUR TO WOMEN

In the pre-independent period, the Wood's Dispatch (1854), Hunter Commission (1882), Sadler University Commission (1917-19) and Sargent Report (1944) gave more emphasis on women education. In post-independent period, almost all reports discussed about women education and provision for the same. The digital gender atlas for advancing girl's education helped in identifying the vulnerable areas on socio-economic factors. The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) has specific training relating women's vocational training and services. The national policy for skill development and entrepreneurship (2015) dealt women entrepreneurship support system in existing business centres. Both Radhakrishnan (1948-49) & Kothari Commission (1964-66) highlighted the need of women education to educate the whole society and moulding future Indian children. "National Committee on Women's Education – Shrimati Durgabai Deshmukh Committee", (1958): The committee report recommended the priority to establish parity between education of boys and girls, need of separate girls institutions after middle school stage and different curriculum for girls. The same was reconstituted in year 1964 as council. "Hansa Mehta Committee", (1962): The committee examined the problems of curriculum for women at all stages of education. The major recommendations are no differentiation should be made in curricula for boys and girls at school level. The national policy on education (1986 – modified in 1992) emphasized the need of women education for social justice and beyond the social transformation.

"Gender and Education", Charu (2014) submitted the recommendations to National Commission for Women with the objective to recognize the role of education as a catalyst in gender sensitization and recommendations to initiate policy level changes, programmes and schemes for welfare of women and children in the field of education. The new education policy recommends women education as inclusive growth of country. There are several committees and schemes as mentioned above detailed specific to women in higher education. Some of the specific schemes to higher education:

- Women scientist programme in Department of Science & Technology & Department of Biotechnology (DBT)
- Women grievance redressal committee in all institutions
- Scholarships for single girl child in a family by UGC
- Kothari fellowships for women candidates
- Special emphasis on women higher education in all national education policies for inclusive growth
- (UGC, 2007) Guidelines for development of women's studies in Indian universities and colleges, during eleventh plan, (2007-2012)

- Establishment of internal compliance committee [ICC] in all institutions
- The scheme and guidelines for capacity building for women managers in higher education, XI plan, (UGC, 2012)
- A directive from Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) to institutes of national importance to increase women participation in admission by 14 %.
- Shaksham (UGC, 2013), which provide guidelines of women safety in campuses and gender sensitization
- Child care centre in institutions
- Extended times for submission of doctoral thesis

The general schemes for women empowerment:

- Domestic Violence Act, 2005
- Criminal Law Amendment Act, 2013
- The sexual harassment of women at workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal), Act 2013, Government of India
- Ministry of Women & Child Development, 2015 released the guidelines for gender champions in educational institutions, where the academic environment must treat girls with respect and dignity
- Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) includes gender-sensitive facilities in livelihood such as drinking water, health, children etc.,
- The maternity benefit act 1961, amendment on 2017 for extended leave provision
- Exclusive provisions in Factories Act 1948 for shift timings and hazardous occupation
- The equal remuneration act 1976 for wages parity

6 CONCLUSION

Women education brings cultural, socio-economic development not only self but also to the family and nation. The government and society transform towards women education. The study suggests to implement effective gender mainstreaming which includes gender impact assessment, budgeting and audit. The gender sensitive legislations and programmes can be conducted only when there is a adequate budget and provisions. The present challenges of women leadership and inclusive of rural women uplifting is possible only when there is a provision for equal accessible and assurance of conducive environment.

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