

An Assessment of Parity in Higher Education in Bundelkhand Region of Uttar Pradesh

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Abstract

The attainment of knowledge in itself brings the empowerment. As India like many more countries is staunchly looking for the agenda of women empowerment so its efforts are seen in the field of higher education too. As we all know that higher education has the ability to justify the empowerment by not only providing knowledge but converting human into human resource. So if women participation in higher education is equal to its male counterpart then we can assure that the efforts for women empowerment by the government are being fruitful. Here an attempt was made to see that in Bundelkhand Region of Uttar Pradesh which is one of the backward regions in Uttar Pradesh state is reaching Gender Parity in Higher Education.

Keywords: *Women Empowerment, Higher Education, Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), Gender Parity Index (GPI)*

Introduction

Women Empowerment has always been one of the biggest agenda for the nations around the globe. With the population of women being almost equal to that of their male counterparts the participation of women in labour force is always questioned. The reason lies in the orthodox ideologies of making women limited to home care, child nurturing and being a sophisticated better half. Even the agenda of Gender equality has outreached every country to improve the status of women which is a must.

The situation in early times in India was different. The Indian women in ancient period enjoyed dignified position and independence in the society. She was free to take education, could choose her life partner and did not face any type of pressure of early marriage too (Kashyap). But as time passed on the ideologies changed and made women more vulnerable to societal atrocities where her position kept on depleting and finally was restricted to house hold chores and limited access not only in the society but also restraining her in decision making. That spread out the discrimination in the society on the basis of gender and making the condition of women more pathetic in this male dominated society. These negative notches created an agitation in the society where at different times in different capacities we have seen the revolution in the name of either end of 'Sati Pratha' or 'Restraining Child Marriage' and also allowing them the 'Right to Education'.

As stated earlier the need of the hour is not only to equalize the status of women but convert her into a human resource. And this is the true essence of women empowerment which can only be attained through her participation in education and educating people about the equal status of women.

Objective of the Study

This study aims to find that after staunch measures adopted by the government since Independence to increase female participation in education at all levels, has the participation rate of Women in Higher Education equal to that of Males in the Bundelkhand Region of Uttar Pradesh.

Methodology

Type of Study: The present study is descriptive in nature that deals with the enrollment of women in higher education in Bundelkhand Region of Uttar Pradesh.

Data Collection: This study has utilized secondary data collected from AISHE website for considering Enrolment Rate of Women in Higher Education.

Time Duration: The study is limited to 5 years duration i.e. from 2013 to 2017.

Area of the Study: The Bundelkhand Region is the northeastern region that lies in Central India that is crowned for its history of *Chandela Dynasty* and the valour of *Rani Jhansi* who rose against the British in the first revolt which is beautifully depicted in Subhadra Kumari Chauhan's poetry that runs as:

*'Bundele Har Bolo Ke Muh Humne Sune Kahani Thi;
Khub Ladi Mardani Vo To Jhansi Wale Rani Thi'.*

The present Bundelkhand Region is divided amongst two States with Six districts falling under Madhya Pradesh which are Datia, Chattarpur, Tikamgarh, Sagar, Panna, and Damoh and seven districts falling in the jurisdictions of Uttar Pradesh which are Jhansi, Jalaun, Hamirpur, Banda, Chitrakoot, Mahoba and Lalitpur. The present study is limited to the seven district of Bundelkhand Region of Uttar Pradesh.



Source: Diagram taken from Journal of Water and Climate Change paper entitled, 'Spatio-temporal rainfall trends in the twentieth century for Bundelkhand Region, India published in 2017.

Tools Used: In this study to show the parity amongst males and females in higher education initially the Gross Enrolment Ratio is measured, then through this, the Gender Parity Index is seen. The formula used to calculate the GER for both males and females is:

$$GER = \frac{\text{No. of students enrolled in Higher Education}}{\text{Age Specific Population}} \times 100$$

Here the for calculating the GER the age specific population has been taken from Census 2011 and has been normalized and projected for the specific years.

Then the Gender Parity Index is calculated as follows:

$$GPI_{HE} = \frac{\text{Gross Enrolment Rate of Females}}{\text{Gross Enrolment Rate of Males}}$$

Higher Education in India

The Indian Education System stands as the third largest system in the world. The growth in our education system is notable that has brought it next to United States and China (Manas, 2014). And in the coming future India will be amongst the top country which will head the world in terms of the Higher Education. As we all know that knowledge spreading and inculcation can lead to empowerment and so has been the policy implication adopted by the Indian government to empower the nation through the availability of higher education.

The decision of the government to promote private participation in higher education has very fast increased the rate of establishment of higher education institutions in India (Sheikh, 2017). So with this we have assured our Higher education system to be one of the fastest growing Education systems of the world.

Now generalizing the same situation in the Bundelkhand Region of U.P. we can see that here also there are 2 medical colleges, 20 Industrial Training Institutes, 2 Universities, 20 Master Degree Colleges and about 96 degree colleges (Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Uttar Pradesh). Thus seeing only the government oriented institution we can see that in the region the availability of Higher Education Institutions though as per population is less but still is identifiable.

Women in Higher Education

In the Modern India the status of women has only started to improve after Independence. The strategic based planned development deeply considered the requirement and importance of women's participation in higher education. Also the *Report of the Committee on the Education of Women, 1959* emphasised the same due to which the changes were brought in the first two five year plans to provide opportunities to women too in higher education system. This did not end the disparity as the mentality of the people was still obnoxious. Later the *National Education Policy, 1986* also brought remarkable measures for empowering women by removal of these inequalities and after that there is no stone left unturned by the government through its schemes, policy measures, reservations to increase the education of women (Chanana, 2000). The '*Right to Education*' or '*Education for All*', '*Beti Bacho Beti Padoo*' etc. Initiatives of the government should not be ignored here. Thus

conglomerating the governmental efforts and self motivation among people we can see that the participation of women in Higher Education is rising in India.

Gender Parity in Higher Education

The empowerment of women in higher education can be seen through enrolment of women in higher education. Though the rate of enrolment in this tertiary level education is less than that of the other two levels i.e. primary and secondary but still to check that whether the women participation is equal to that of males can be matched to the enrolment rate of both the gender.

Table 1: Gross Enrolment Ratio in Higher Education in Bundelkhand Region of UP

District	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
	GER Female	GER Male								
Jhansi	19.6	19.39	23.24	23.87	23.51	24.27	25.59	24.66	23.35	23.64
Jalaun	32.22	29.17	36.3	36.27	31.66	29.94	30.4	31.17	26.07	27.29
Hamirpur	24.55	17.51	30.38	22.11	34.69	22.88	33.11	22.65	29.76	16.79
Lalitpur	8.18	6.91	12.81	10.91	17.67	12.74	15.71	14.65	14.05	11.98
Banda	7.13	5.03	8.5	6.42	7.62	6.36	8.54	8.07	10.45	7.41
Mahoba	44.61	39.57	54.74	52.4	51.92	46.47	47.88	46.89	45.72	44.47
Chitrakoot	16.74	14.2	19.93	15.96	17.52	14.67	16.41	15.39	17.16	14.61

Source: Author's own calculation based on enrolments taken from AISHE data for each district and population projection for the age group falling in tertiary level education.

The Table 1 shown above shows the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) Gender wise from 2013-2017 for all the seven districts of Bundelkhand Region of Uttar Pradesh. The data reveals that from 2013 to 2017 Mahoba district holds the highest enrolments amongst all district followed by Jalaun (2013-2015) and Hamirpur (2016-2017). It is also seen that for all the districts and in all the study period (2013-17) the female GER has been higher than the males GER which proves that the mindset of people have changed and the women participation in higher education has increased.

After considering the enrolments the Gender Parity Index was build for Higher Education for all the districts of Bundelkhand Region of Uttar Pradesh.

Table 2: District wise GPI in Higher Education					
District	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Jhansi	1.01	0.97	0.97	1.04	0.99
Jalaun	1.1	1	1.06	0.98	0.96
Hamirpur	1.4	1.37	1.52	1.46	1.77
Lalitpur	1.18	1.17	1.39	1.07	1.17
Banda	1.42	1.32	1.2	1.06	1.41
Mahoba	1.13	1.04	1.12	1.02	1.03
Chitrakoot	1.18	1.25	1.19	1.07	1.17

Source: Author's Own Calculation.

The above Table 2 reveals the Gender Parity Index for Higher Education in Bundelkhand Region of U.P. For the year 2013 it is seen that Banda (1.42) has the highest GPI value and Jhansi (1.01) has the least value. For the year 2014, Hamirpur (1.37) topped the list whereas again Jhansi showed the GPI value 0.97 which was the least. For the Years 2015-17 again Hamirpur recorded the highest GPI value and the least value were recorded for Jhansi (2015) and Jalaun (2016 and 2017). For the overall study period the data reveals that except Jhansi and Jalaun rest all the districts showed the parity rate in favour of females as compared to males.

Thus the study reveals that in higher education the women participation is showing an inclination in favour of her as compared to her male counterparts.

Conclusion

'Educating a woman leads to educating a family' is no less than creating human resource in the country. Women is now being considered as a centrifugal part of a nation's development and so connecting the dots for converting her into a human resource, higher education is a perquisite. Thus the true women empowerment is highly correlated to higher education. Appreciating the efforts of the government the participation of women in higher education is showing a good rise. The Bundelkhand Region of UP is also showing a female favoured enrolment and parity rate in higher education. Thus realizing the positive impact of this, the nation as well as Bundelkhand Region of UP will achieve a high economic growth rate due to more participation of females in the labour force.

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