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**GENDER INEQUALITIES IN EDUCATION IN INDIA: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES**

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**ABSTRACT**

*In economic literature, education is considered as an important instrument to reduce poverty, generate employment and speed up the process of economic growth and development of a country. Education is said to have a strong correlation with social and economic development of country. It reduces poverty and social injustice and brings about equality by providing resources and opportunities to underprivileged section of the society for upward social mobilization and social inclusion. In India, even after six decades of Independence, the dream of universal schooling to all has remained elusive. The problem seems even worse in higher education. There are large disparities in education among all socio economic groups and across gender and region. Not only the expansion of literacy and education is too slow, halting and even geographically limited, its provision itself remains highly differentiated in both quantitative and qualitative terms. There are huge disparities in access to both schooling and higher education across regions, economic and social groups, as well as by gender. These disparities have significant implications on economic well-being, social inclusion of the masses and over all development of the economy. The present paper examines the issues and challenges related to gender inequalities in Indian education system.*

**KEYWORDS**

Disparities, Discrimination, Education, Gender.

**INTRODUCTION**

In economic literature, education is considered as an important instrument to reduce poverty, generate employment and speed up the process of economic growth and development of a country. Education is said to have a strong correlation with social and economic development of country. It reduces poverty and social injustice and brings about equality by providing resources and opportunities to underprivileged section of the society for upward social mobilization and social inclusion.

Inclusive Growth has remained on the development agenda of India especially since 11th Five Year Plan for the simple reason that illiteracy and other factors of socio-economic deprivations have resulted in the perpetuation of disparities in social and economic development of the people. Inclusive growth requires equitable opportunities for economic participants during the process of economic growth with benefits received by every section of the society particularly by weaker section. Deprivation of education among others is a factor which results in exclusion of certain population groups and regions from participation in the growth process. Indian planners felt the need of reducing all types of disparities to the minimum possible level in the shortest possible time frame.

But, even after six decades of Independence, the dream of universal schooling to all has remained elusive. The problem seems even worse in higher education. There are large disparities in education among all socio-economic groups and across gender and region. Not only the expansion of literacy and education is too slow, halting and even geographically limited, its provision itself remains highly differentiated in both quantitative and qualitative terms. There are huge disparities in access to both schooling and higher education across regions, economic and social groups, as well as by gender. These disparities have significant implications on economic well-being, social inclusion of the masses and over all development of the economy.

**GENDER INEQUALITY**

Gender is determined socially; it is the societal meaning assigned to male and female. Each society emphasizes particular roles that each sex should play, although there is wide latitude in acceptable behaviors for each gender (Hesse-Biber and Carger 2000).

According to World Health Organization (2002), gender is used to describe those characteristics of women and men, which are socially constructed, while sex refers to those which are biologically determined. People are born female or male but learn to be girls and boys who grow into women and men. This learned behaviour makes up gender identity and determines gender roles.

Borgotta and Montgomery (200) define gender as the division of people into two categories, "men" and "women." Through interaction with caretakers, socialization in childhood, peer pressure in adolescence, and gendered work and family roles women and men are socially constructed to be different in behavior, attitudes, and emotions. The gendered social order is based on and maintains these differences.

On the other hand, inequality generally referred to as absence of equality; being unequal in amount, size, value or rank; lack of evenness, regularity or uniformity; lack of due proportion or uneven distribution of resources. (World Book 2002)

Gender inequality is therefore a situation of uneven distribution of income, lack of access to productive inputs, such as credit and education, lack of command over property or control over earned income as well as gender biases in labour market and social exclusion between men and women. (Ijaiya & Balogun, 2004.) It also connotes a situation where women do not have the same rights and enlightenments as men to human, social, economic and cultural development and where women do not have equal voice in civil and political life. (Evans 2001)

**GENDER INEQUALITIES IN EDUCATION IN INDIA**

In India, the literacy rate has continuously been increasing. According to Census 2011, the literacy rate in India was about 74 percent as compared to about 65 percent in 2001 and 52 percent in 1991. The female literacy rate was 65 against the male literacy rate of 82. Though the male-female gap in literacy improved from 21.6 per cent in 2001 to around 17 per cent in 2011, it still remains large.

Table1 shows the state wise literacy rates of male and female and gender gap in literacy. Meghalaya (3.4) has the least literacy gap followed by Kerala (4) and Mizoram (4.3). On the other hand, this gap is alarmingly high in states like Rajasthan (27.8), Jharkhand (22.3), and Chhattisgarh (20.9)

TABLE 1 : LITERACY RATES IN INDIA (Census 2011)				
State	Literacy Rate (percent)	Male Literacy Rate (percent)	Female Literacy Rate (percent)	Gap
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	86.3	90.1	81.8	8.3
Andhra Pradesh	67.7	75.6	59.7	15.9
Arunachal Pradesh	67.0	73.7	59.6	14.1
Assam	73.2	78.8	67.3	11.5
Bihar	63.8	73.5	53.3	20.2
Chandigarh	86.4	90.5	81.4	9.1
Chattisgarh	71.0	81.5	60.6	20.9
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	77.7	86.5	65.9	20.6
Daman & Diu	87.1	91.5	79.6	11.9
Delhi	86.3	91.0	80.9	10.1
Goa	87.4	92.8	81.8	11
Gujarat	79.3	87.2	70.7	16.5
Haryana	76.6	85.4	66.8	18.6
Himachal Pradesh	83.8	90.8	76.6	14.2
Jammu and Kashmir	68.7	78.3	58.0	20.3
Jharkhand	67.6	78.5	56.2	22.3
Karnataka	75.6	82.8	68.1	14.7
Kerala	93.9	96.0	92.0	4
Lakshadweep	92.3	96.1	88.2	7.9
Madhya Pradesh	70.6	80.5	60.0	20.5
Maharashtra	82.9	89.8	75.5	14.3
Manipur	79.8	86.5	73.2	13.3
Meghalaya	75.5	77.2	73.8	3.4
Mizoram	91.6	93.7	89.4	4.3
Nagaland	80.1	83.3	76.7	6.6
Orissa	73.5	82.4	64.4	18
Puducherry	86.5	92.1	81.2	10.9
Punjab	76.7	81.5	71.3	10.2
Rajasthan	67.1	80.5	52.7	27.8
Sikkim	82.2	87.3	76.4	10.9
Tamil Nadu	80.3	86.8	73.9	12.9
Tripura	87.8	92.2	83.1	9.1
Uttar Pradesh	69.7	79.2	59.3	19.9
Uttarakhand	79.6	88.3	70.7	17.6
West Bengal	77.1	82.7	71.2	11.5
<b>INDIA</b>	<b>74.04</b>	<b>82.14</b>	<b>65.46</b>	<b>16.68</b>

Source: Census 2011

Table 2 shows the literacy rates by sex for rural and urban areas. It is clear from the table that the female literacy rate is below male literacy rate for all the years be it urban or rural. The gap, however, is less wide in urban areas as compared to rural areas. This may be attributed to several factors like liberal attitude towards female education, better standard of living, higher aspiration level of young women etc. One disturbing fact evident from Table 2 is that over the period of time this gap in literacy didn't show a declining trend. In 1951, this gap was 18.30 and reached to alarmingly as high as 26.62 points in 1981. Though, in later years, this gap is declined but the progress is far from satisfactory. In 2011, this gap was 16.68 points. It means we were able to reduce this gap only by 1.62 points in a period of more than 60 years.



<b>TABLE 2: LITERACY RATES BY SEX FOR RURAL AND URBAN AREAS IN INDIA</b> (1951, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001, 2003 to 2007 and 2011)				
<b>Year</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Gender Gap</b>
<b>1951</b>				
Rural	19.02*	4.87*	12.10*	14.15
Urban	45.06*	22.33*	34.59*	22.73
<b>Total</b>	<b>27.16</b>	<b>8.86</b>	<b>18.33</b>	<b>18.30</b>
<b>1961</b>				
Rural	34.3	10.1	22.5	24.20
Urban	66	40.5	54.4	25.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>40.4</b>	<b>15.35</b>	<b>28.3</b>	<b>25.05</b>
<b>1971</b>				
Rural	48.6	15.5	27.9	33.10
Urban	69.8	48.8	60.2	21.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>45.96</b>	<b>21.97</b>	<b>34.45</b>	<b>23.99</b>
<b>1981</b>				
Rural	49.6	21.7	36	27.90
Urban	76.7	56.3	67.2	20.40
<b>Total</b>	<b>56.38</b>	<b>29.76</b>	<b>43.57</b>	<b>26.62</b>
<b>1991</b>				
Rural	57.87	30.62	44.69	27.25
Urban	81.09	64.05	73.1	17.04
<b>Total</b>	<b>64.13</b>	<b>39.29</b>	<b>52.21</b>	<b>24.84</b>
<b>2001</b>				
Rural	70.7	46.13	58.74	24.57
Urban	86.27	72.86	79.92	13.41
<b>Total</b>	<b>75.26</b>	<b>53.67</b>	<b>64.84</b>	<b>21.59</b>
<b>2011#</b>				
Rural	79	59	69	20
Urban	90	80	85	10
<b>Total</b>	-	-	-	-

Note: Note : \* : For 1951, the population male, female and persons refers to effective literacy rates and the break up of Rural, Urban and male-female components are crude literacy rates.

# : In Percentage.

Source: Department of Secondary & Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India. & Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation, Govt. of India. (ON296)

**GENDER INEQUALITIES BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION**

**Primary Education:** This section we will analyze the gender inequalities present in primary level of education.

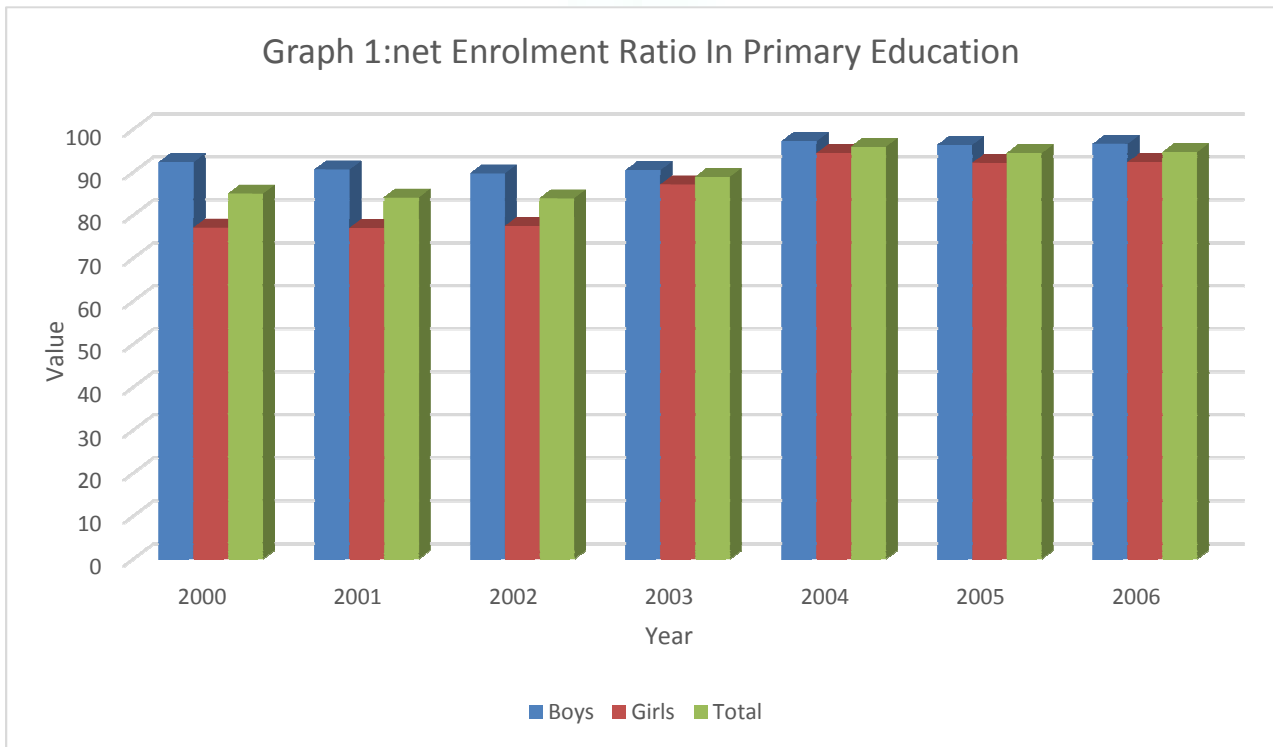
<b>TABLE 3: GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO/DROPOUT RATES IN SCHOOL EDUCATION IN INDIA</b> (2001-2002 to 2007-2008)			
<b>Classes</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>2001-2002</b>			
<b>Gross Enrolment Ratio</b>			
I-V	105.29	86.91	96.3
VI-VIII	67.77	52.09	60.2
<b>Dropout Rates</b>			
I-V	38.36	39.88	39.03
I-VIII	52.91	56.92	54.65
I-X	64.16	68.59	66.04
<b>2002-2003</b>			
<b>Gross Enrolment Ratio</b>			
I-V	97.53	93.07	95.39
VI-VIII	65.34	56.22	60.99
<b>Dropout Rates</b>			
I-V	35.85	33.72	34.89
I-VIII	52.28	53.45	52.79
I-X	60.72	64.97	62.58
<b>2003-2004</b>			
<b>Gross Enrolment Ratio</b>			
I-V	100.6	95.6	98.2
VI-VIII	66.8	57.6	62.4
<b>Dropout Rates</b>			
I-V	33.74	28.57	31.47
I-VIII	51.85	52.92	52.32
<b>2004-2005</b>			
<b>Gross Enrolment Ratio</b>			
I-V	110.7	104.7	107.8
VI-VIII	74.3	65.13	69.63
<b>Dropout Rates</b>			
I-V	31.81	25.42	29
I-VIII	50.49	51.28	50.84
I-X	60.41	63.88	61.92
<b>2005-2006</b>			
<b>Gross Enrolment Ratio</b>			
I-V	112.8	105.8	109.4
VI-VIII	75.2	66.4	71
<b>Dropout Rates</b>			
I-V	28.71	21.77	25.67
I-VIII	48.67	48.98	48.8
<b>2006-2007</b>			
<b>Gross Enrolment Ratio</b>			
I-V	114.4	107.8	111.2
VI-VIII	77.4	69.5	73.6
<b>Dropout Rates</b>			
I-V	24.41	26.56	25.43
I-VIII	46.58	45.33	46.03
<b>2007-2008</b>			
<b>Gross Enrolment Ratio</b>			
I-V	115.9	113.2	114.6
VI-VIII	80.6	74.1	77.5
<b>Dropout Rates</b>			
I-V	26.19	24.82	25.55
I-VIII	44.29	41.43	43.03
<b>Source:</b> Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India. & Planning Commission, Govt. of India			

The total gross enrolment ratio was 96.3 at primary level and 60.2 at upper primary level in 2001-02. The gross enrolment ratio of boys was 105.29 at primary level and 67.77 at upper primary level. As against this, the gross enrolment ratio of girls was 86.91 at primary level and 52.09 at upper primary level for the same period. Since then, these ratios show an increasing trend. In 2007-08, the total gross enrolment ratio was 114.6 at primary level and 77.5 at upper primary level. For boys this ratio was 115.9 at primary level and 80.6 at upper primary level. The same ratio for girls was 113.2 at primary level and 74.1 at upper primary level. (Look at the table 3)

The combined dropout ratio for boys and girls was 39.03 in 2001-02 at primary level. For boys and girls it was 38.36 and 39.88. At upper primary level the same ratios were 54.65, 52.91 and 56.92 respectively in 2001-02. In 2007-08. These ratios reduced to 25.55, 26.19 and 24.82 at primary level. At upper primary level, the dropout ratios were 43.03 for both boys and girls, 44.29 for boys and 41.43 for girls. From the above analysis, we can safely conclude that girls are at parity with boys in enrolment at primary and upper primary level of education. In fact, the dropout rates for girls were lower than boys in 2007-08. This is a welcome development. But higher dropout rates for boys and girls still a matter of concern and we should make a check on it.

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
2000	92.3	77.1	85
2001	90.6	77	84.1
2002	89.7	77.5	83.9
2003	90.5	87.1	88.9
2004	97.2	94.4	95.9
2005	96.3	92.2	94.4
2006	96.6	92.3	94.6
2007	97.3	93.6	95.5
2008			96.9

Source: United Nations Statistics Division



Source: Table 4

Table 4 and graph 1 shows the net enrolment ratios of boy and girl children. The graph clearly shows that NER for girls is low in comparison with boys, and even with national average. This is due to various social and cultural reasons and participation of the girl child in household work, including care for siblings, lack of lady teachers, and lack of suitable physical and social infrastructure. Further economic constraints lead to preferential access of boys to education.

The gender parity ratio, measured by the ratio of the number of girls in education to the number of boys in education has been consistently increasing albeit at a very slow pace. It was 0.84 in 2000 which increased to 0.97 in 2004.

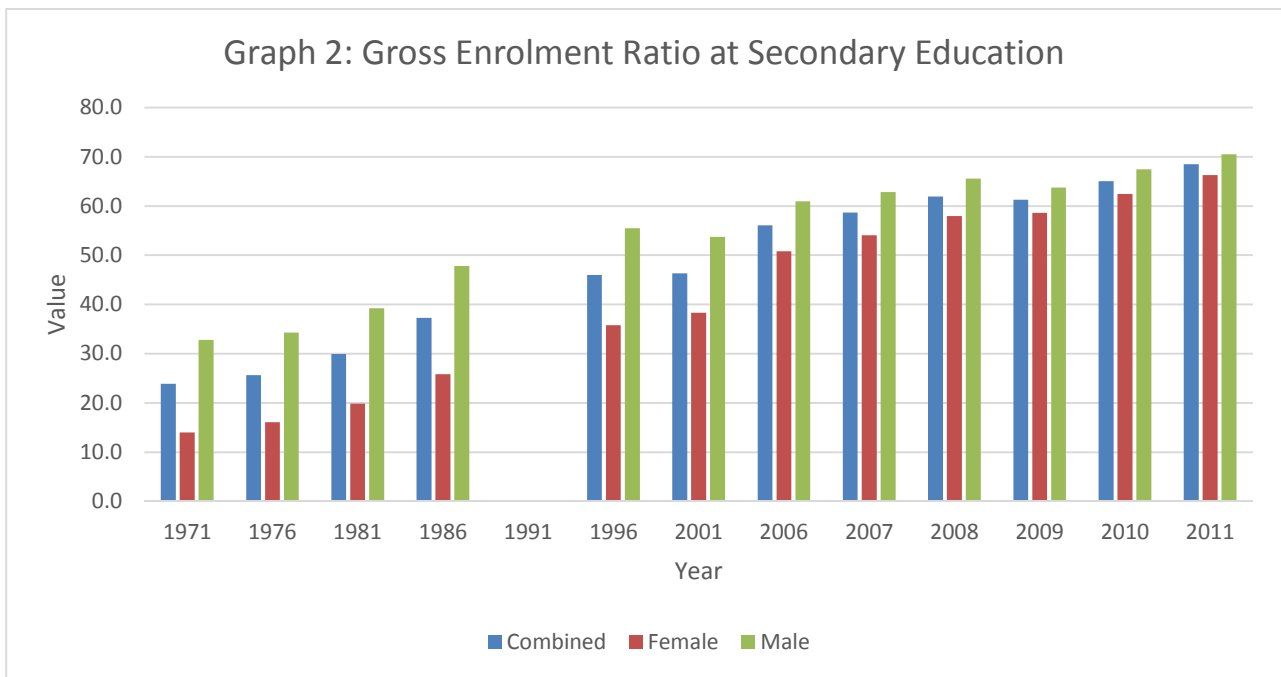
**Secondary Education:** Table 5 and Graph 2 show the GER ratios and GPI at secondary level of education. The combined GER in 1971 was 23.86 in 1971 which increased to 68.51 in 2011. For women, the GER was as low as 14.0 in 1971 and sharply increased to 68.23 in 2011. As against this, the GER for male was 32.79 in 1971 and increased to 70.52 in 2011. The GPI for the corresponding period shows an increasing trend. It was 0.43 in 1971 and over the period of time it increased to 0.94.

	Combined	Female	Male	(GPI)
1971	23.85831	14.00923	32.79124	0.42722
1976	25.61829	16.11273	34.31645	0.46953
1981	29.93461	19.83104	39.2224	0.5056
1986	37.26948	25.86525	47.79034	0.54122
1991	..	..	..	..
1996	46.01932	35.81367	55.47372	0.6456
2001	46.32763	38.34231	53.72055	0.71374
2006	56.10067‡	50.81457‡	60.9429‡	0.83381‡
2007	58.65514	54.04058	62.86846	0.85958
2008	61.93096	57.93251	65.57123	0.88351
2009	61.29878	58.59064	63.75861	0.91894
2010	65.07206	62.42801	67.46943	0.92528
2011	68.50978	66.28902	70.52081	0.93999

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, data extracted on 29 Jan 2015 15:39 UTC (GMT) from UIS/ISU

Legend:

‡: UIS Estimation

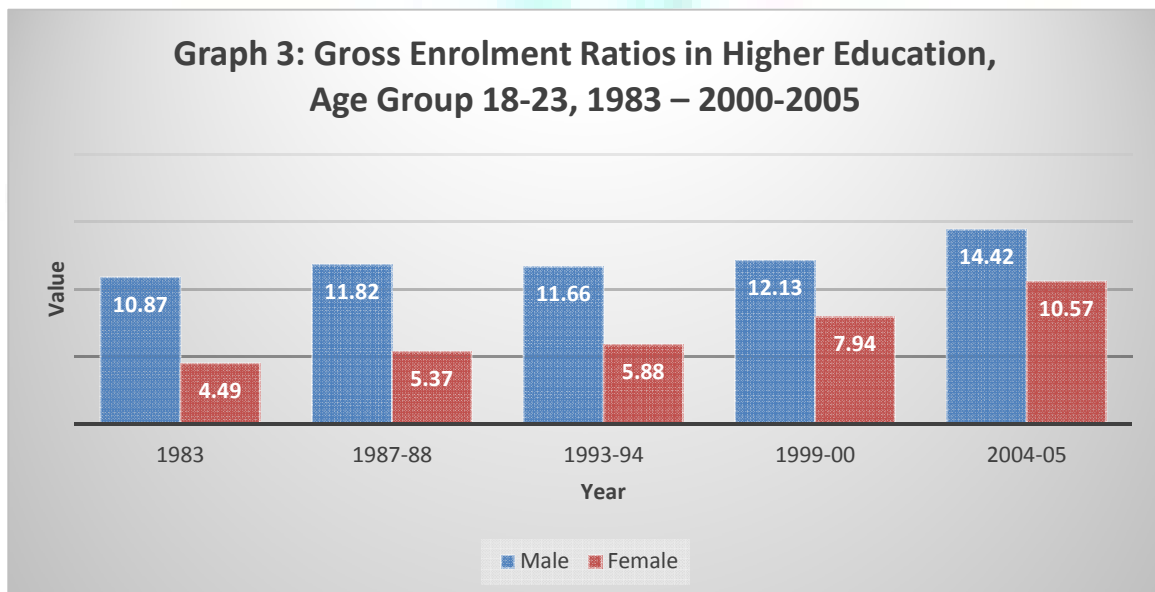


Source: Table 5

**Higher Education:** Table 6 shows Gross Enrolment Ratios in Higher Education for selected years.

	Year	Total	Rural	Urban
Male	1883	10.87	6.19	22.36
	1987-88	11.82	7.35	24.22
	1993-94	11.66	7.22	23.05
	1999-00	12.13	7.53	21.98
	2004-05	14.42	9.28	24.77
Female	1883	4.49	1.84	12.35
	1987-88	5.37	2.34	15.23
	1993-94	5.88	2.01	16.89
	1999-00	7.94	3.61	18.71
	2004-05	10.57	5.67	22.56
Total	1883	7.67	3.95	17.68
	1987-88	8.57	4.77	19.96
	1993-94	8.85	4.66	20.17
	1999-00	10.08	5.58	20.44
	2004-05	12.59	7.51	23.79

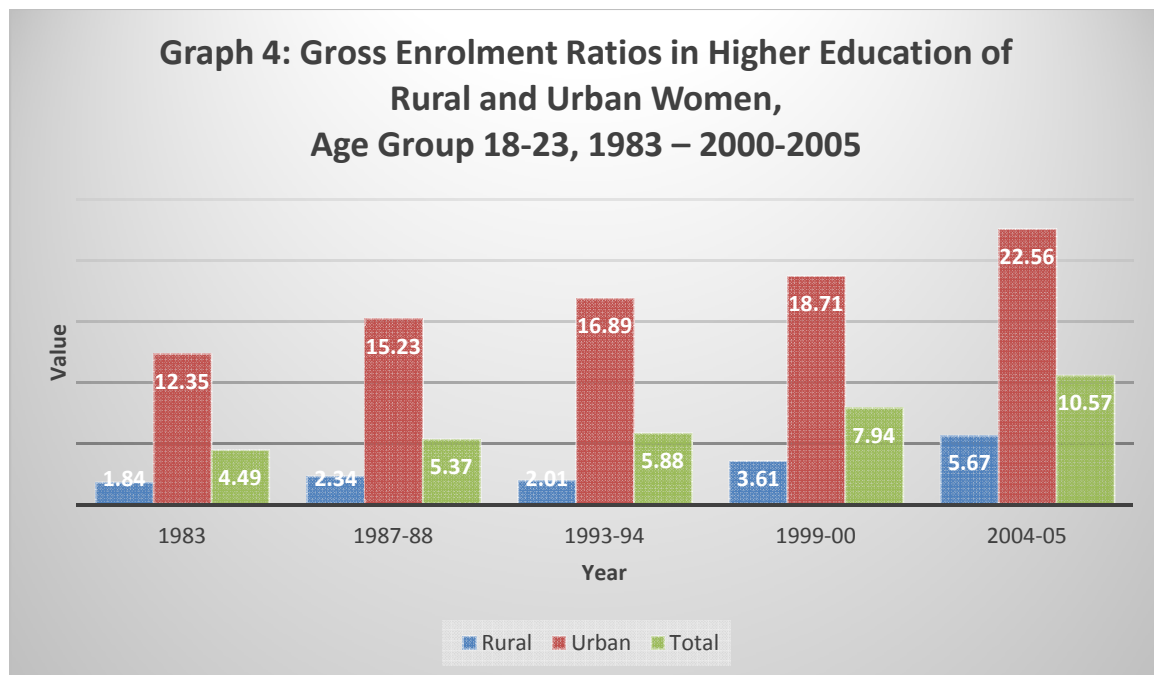
Source: Gender Differentials in Access to Higher Education' in HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA Issues Related to Expansion, Inclusiveness, Quality and Finance, UGC



Source: Table 6

It can be seen from table 6 and graph 3 that the GER for women has progressively increased over the year. It was 4.49 in 1983 and increased to 10.57 in 2004-05 which is more than double of 1983 figure. The corresponding figure for men were 10.87 in 1983 and 14.42 in 2004-05. The GER of women has increased at a faster rate but it still remains extremely low. In fact, the GER of women in 2004-05 is slightly lower than what it was for men in 1983.

If we closely look at the table, we will find that the rural women was at a disadvantageous position vis a vis urban women. The GER for urban women in 1983 was 1.84 which increased to 5.67 in 2004-05. The corresponding figures for urban women was 12.35 in 1983 and 22.56 in 2004-05. This clearly shows the inequalities faced by rural women. They are double deprived- because they are women, they face the gender inequalities, because they are rural women, they face the rural urban inequalities.



Source: Table 6

### CAUSES OF GENDER INEQUALITY

Problem of gender inequality and discrimination begins with access to schooling. This problem of inequality becomes worse as we move up to the higher level of education. There are number of social and cultural barriers which prevent women from accessing to education. Among these barriers include long distances to school, poor sanitation facilities and poverty.

*Patriarchal Mindset:* Male dominance or patriarchal mindset results in violation of basic rights of women including the rights to education.

*Economic Backwardness of Rural Community:* Over 70% of the world's very poor live in rural areas, and the population of the developing world is still more rural than urban, according to the UN's International Fund for Agricultural Development. The rural disadvantage is particularly strong in some communities. Apart from patriarchal mindset and male dominance, there are acute deficiency of proper educational facilities in rural and backward areas.

*Undervaluation of female labour:* The deeply embedded undervaluation of female labour, identified primarily with the reproductive or household sphere, underlies the belief in many communities that educating females bring low returns, as skills required in the reproductive sphere require domestic socialization and not many years of schooling. The gender division of labour continues to reward women less in the workplace. This has resulted in relatively lower female education and work participation reflecting the ideological bias against considering women as household bread-winners. Low valuation of female labour in the market place and association of female labour with fulfilling domestic responsibilities including child rearing has led to a deepseated cultural association of women with the institutions of marriage and family. (Walikhanna 2012)

*Sexual harassment and violence:* It is one of the major factor which prevents parents from sending their daughters to school. The problem becomes more critical when the schools and universities are far away from home.

*Reinforcement of gender roles:* Ideologies that shape female and male identities in Indian society are mutually reinforcing across institutions, such as the family, workplace, schools and community (Kabeer and Subrahmanian, 1999). Women are considered weak, dependent and shy. They are expected to confine to to home and do household works. They are not supposed to get higher education and go outside home. This thinking prevent in our society is a major barrier preventing women from their right to education.

### GOVERNMENT SCHEMES FOR EDUCATION OF WOMEN

In this section, we will briefly discuss some policies and schemes of government of India for education of women.

#### 1. SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN (SSA)

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is a government of India's flagship programme for achievement of Universalisation of Elementary Education in a time bound manner, as mandated by 86th amendment to the Constitution of India making free and compulsory education to all children of 6-14 years age group, a fundamental right. SSA is being implemented in partnership with State governments to cover the entire country and address the needs of 192 million children in 1.1 million habitats.

The SSA programme is an endeavour to provide an opportunity for improving human capabilities of all children, through the provision of community-owned quality education in a mission mode. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan had been set with specific targets. These are:

- All children in school, Education Guarantee Centre, Alternate School or 'Back-to-School' camp by 2003.
- All children complete five years of primary schooling by 2007.
- Children complete eight years of elementary schooling by 2010.
- Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life.
- Bridge all gender and social category gaps at the primary stage by 2007 and at the elementary education level by 2010.
- Universal retention by 2010.

To achieve these objectives, strategies have been framed that include active involvement of local community groups and institutional capacity building for setting up of block level resource centres. These centres impart district elementary education plans.

The framework of SSA includes appointment of teachers, their training, motivating parents and students, provision of incentives, like, scholarships, uniforms, textbooks, etc. The programme also aims to open new schools in areas having inadequate schooling facilities and strengthen existing school infrastructure through the construction of additional class rooms, provision of toilets, drinking water facilities and so on.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. EDUCATION GUARANTEE SCHEME AND ALTERNATIVE AND INNOVATIVE EDUCATION

EGS and AIE are an important component of SSA to bring out-of school children in the fold of Elementary Education. The scheme envisages that child-wise planning is undertaken for each out-of-school children.

The EGS & AIE cover children in the age group of 6-14 years, however, for children with disabilities, it cover children upto the age of 18 years complying with the provisions of Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection or Rights and full Participation) Act, 1995 of India. EGS & AIE is based on the assumption that the planning for universalization of elementary education (UEE) for all children in the 6-14 years age group should be done in a holistic manner. The EGS & AIE clearly states that every district should initially target enrolment of all children in the 6-8 years age group in formal schools only (with some motivational camps or bridge courses, if necessary). For elder children (9-11 years age) also, the effort should be towards mainstreaming (admitting children to formal schools) through appropriate interventions like bridge courses, residential camps etc. Thus, the thrust is on ensuring enrolment and retention of children in formal schools as far as possible. Of course, it is recognized that children in the 12-14 years age group (who have never been enrolled or have dropped out early) and certain difficult groups like street children, children who migrate, bonded child labour etc cannot be admitted into formal schools and would require alternative interventions for some time. Such an approach envisages that child-wise planning is undertaken for each 'out of school' child and the possibility of enrolment/mainstreaming of 'out of school' children into formal schools is explored first before deciding on the alternative approaches that are necessary. This would require that the non-formal and formal systems converge totally at all levels. The EGS & AIE accord a priority to setting up of EGS centres (primary level) in un-served habitations where no school exists within a radius of 1 km. and at least 15 children in the age group of 6-14 who are not going to schools are available. The funds for EGS & AIE are shared on a 75:25 basis between the central and state governments for all state run schools. (Sarkar 2012)

## 3. NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR EDUCATION OF GIRLS AT AN ELEMENTARY LEVEL (NPEGEL)

National Programme for Education of Girls at an Elementary Level was started in September 2003 as an integral component of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The NPEGEL scheme is meant for the educationally backward blocks (EBB) where both girls who are in 'in' and 'out' of school, are targeted. The out of school girls include never enrolled and drop out girls. In the case of girls in elementary school, the thrust is on girls with low attendance rates and girls with low levels of achievement. Ensuring a positive self-image and to eliminate gender bias in the classroom is also in the design of the scheme. To impact on the enrolment and retention scenario, the NPEGEL scheme is a holistic effort to tackle the impediments to girls' education at the micro level through flexible, decentralised processes and decision making. It is well known that children become vulnerable to leaving school when they are not able to cope with the pace of learning in the class or feel neglected by teachers/peers in class. The scheme stresses the responsibility of teachers to spot such girls and pay special attention to bring them out of their state of vulnerability and prevent them from dropping out. Recognising the need for support services to help girls with responsibilities with regard to fuel, fodder, water, sibling care and paid and unpaid work provisions have been made for incentives that are decided locally. Just as gender sensitive teaching learning materials, introduction of additional subjects like self defence, life skills, legal rights, gender etc. have been provided in the scheme, efforts to ensure a supportive and gender sensitive classroom environment through systematic sensitization and monitoring the classroom is also inbuilt in it.<sup>2</sup>

## 4. THE KASTURBA GANDHI BALIKA VIDYALAYA (KGBV)

The Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV scheme was launched by the Government of India in August, 2004 for setting up residential schools at upper primary level for girls belonging predominantly to the SC, ST, OBC and minorities in difficult areas. The scheme of the KGBV ran as a separate scheme but in harmony with the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), National Programme for

Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) and Mahila Samakhyia (MS) for the first two years, but has since 1st April, 2007 merged with the SSA programme as a separate component of that programme. The objective of KGBV is to ensure access and quality education to the girls of disadvantaged groups of society by setting up residential schools at upper primary level.

## 5. BETI BACHAO, BETI PADHAO (SAVE GIRL CHILD, EDUCATE GIRL CHILD)

Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao is a Government of India scheme that aims to generate awareness and improving the efficiency of delivery of welfare services meant for women. The scheme was initiated with an initial corpus of Rs 100 crore. Prime Minister Modi launched the programme on January 22, 2015 from Panipat, Haryana.

This scheme has the following objectives

- Prevent gender biased sex selective elimination
- Ensure survival & protection of the Girl Child
- Ensure education of the Girl Child

The Scheme has set the following targets

- Improve the SRB in 100 gender critical districts by 10 points in a year.
- Reduce Gender differentials in Under Five Child Mortality Rate from 8 points in 2011 to 4 points by 2017.
- Improve the Nutrition status of girls - by reducing number of underweight and anaemic girls under 5 years of age (from NFHS 3 levels).
- Ensure universalization of ICDS, girls' attendance and equal care monitored, using joint ICDS NRHM Mother Child Protection Cards.
- Increase the girl's enrolment in secondary education from 76% in 2013-14 to 79% by 2017.
- Provide girl's toilet in every school in 100 CSR districts by 2017.
- Promote a protective environment for Girl Children through implementation of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act 2012.
- Train Elected Representatives/ Grassroot functionaries as Community Champions to mobilize communities to improve CSR & promote Girl's education.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR BRIDGING GENDER INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION

- Various measures are suggested for bridging the gender inequality in education and promoting the women's education.
- Creating proper social attitude among people especially in rural and backward areas.
- Providing adequate educational facilities to women especially in rural and backward areas
- Removing economic backwardness and reducing level of poverty
- Providing suitable curriculum which suits the needs and requirements of boys and girls.
- Providing incentives meritorious students in the form of scholarships.
- Provision should be made for adequate number of women teachers.
- Providing suitable facilities for education of adult women by opening adult literacy classes, teaching simple skills like sewing, knitting, handicrafts etc.
- Eradicating social ills which hinder the development of women's education.
- Improving transport facilities for women students and making it safe for them.
- Checking sexual harassment within and outside institutions.

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