

# Gender Equity and Diversity in Academic Institutions

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**Abstract-** In India, gender equality in educational institutions has drastically changed from the past. In the realm of education today, there is a great deal of equality between men and women. However, this equality is restricted to elementary and secondary school because gender disparity persists in higher education even in this day of technology and progress. The percentage of women in higher education relative to men remains extremely low, according to the GER data. There are numerous causes for this; thus, it is necessary to look at the history of gender inequality in order to comprehend the scope of inequality and even gender inequality.

All of humanity is one. It has male and female organs that cannot be removed. But, unfortunately, due to historical factors, today almost every sphere of life is strongly dominated by men. As a result, women's voices, their vision, and their dreams and aspirations are being ignored. In short, there is a gender bias in Favor of universal men, and women have been cast aside. Women have always been half of the population. But the chariot of the world moves on only one wheel—from the perspective of men, we need the perspective of both woman and man.

Indian society is male-dominated. According to Indian tradition, men always manage the economy, and women always manage the household. A good house is built with the proper use of money. In Indian society, a woman is called 'Grihalakshmi.' Because it is possible to build a better society only when its foundation is good. From home to family, from family to family, from family to caste, from caste to group, and from group to society. Today the times have changed, new contexts have emerged, the entire social picture is changing, the roots of democracy are getting stronger, and equality, which was only a theoretical concept, is becoming a social fact today. The present time suggests looking at and testing our knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours from the perspective of equality. On the basis of this perspective of equality, the present study has tried to explain the real scenario of gender equality and diversity in educational institutions.

**Key Words:** - History of gender equity, academic institutions, access, higher education, social

## I. INTRODUCTION

Both men and women are an integral part of society. In this context, man being a social animal as well as a life form, man and woman as two wheels are equally important for the establishment and development of society, but in the patriarchal social system created by man, the status of woman is given a lower position than that of man.

Along with the declining status of the woman in the society, the questions and consequences related to her personality, her autonomy, and her authority are visible to us even in the present times. Higher education in India is one of the largest systems in terms of enrollments and institutions, although access to higher education has increased tremendously in the post-independence period. The gross enrollment ratio for female students is still very low compared to male students. Women's participation is essential to reduce gender inequality in higher education. "Gender equality refers to equal treatment regardless of gender."

Today the world is moving towards modernity. Along with the development of science and technology, social, cultural, political, and economic changes are also taking place. And that includes education. Education is widely used in today's world. Hence, its importance was greater. Education has become an important part of everyone's life. The concept of equality between men and women has developed through education. India is also included in this. Since independence, India has seen a lot of changes in the political and social spheres. Education is an important part of life. Education makes a person a good human being. Education provides knowledge, good conduct, and the efficiency of technology for the times to come. Education is an attempt to pass on knowledge from one generation to another. With this idea, education works as an institution.

Social factors, including gender, caste, and parents' wealth, occupation, and religion, are the causes of this discrepancy. For years, all of these factors have been posing challenges to India's educational and developmental progress. Therefore, if we examine it, India places significant importance on development policies and programs. Children between the ages of 6 and 14 are entitled to free and mandatory elementary education. However, doing so does not turn a developing nation into a developed one in terms of education. In order to achieve this, it is also essential to gradually lessen inequality and to encourage primary school graduates to continue secondary and higher education. In addition, the Constitution's objective is to explicitly list every barrier impeding the objectives of universal education. India's literacy rate has continuously fallen behind its peers', despite the country's long history of freedom. In order to compete with the economies of developed nations, the Indian economy must also implement the required reforms in light of the growing global rivalry in education.

## II.LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Dr. Kalpana Shah. (Kalpana shah, 2012) in this book "changing role and status of women" historical observation of women's and constitution and legal status of women, economic participation rights, opportunities and status for women, educational development, role and status of women,
2. Uttam B. Bhoite (Bhoite, 2009), in his article. "Higher Education in India: A System on the Verge of Chaos", points out that two historical developments, namely, accelerated globalisation and the ICT (Information and Communication Technology) Revolution, have caused all pervasive and unprecedented global-level impact. No sphere of human life is left untouched by them.
3. Amartya Sen, (Sen, 2001) In his essay, "Many Faces of Gender Inequality", highlights seven types of inequality or aspects of inequality that exist between men and women around the world including both the developed and developing societies. These are: (1) Mortality inequality (2) Natality inequality (3) Basic facility inequality (4) Special Opportunity Inequality (5) Professional inequality (6) Ownership inequality and (7) Household-inequality.
4. R. Suresha and B.C. Mylarappa (Suresha and Mylarappa, 2012) in his study, 'Socio-economic

status of Rural Scheduled Caste Female Students in Higher Education'. The objectives of the study were 1. To analyze the socio-economic background of the rural scheduled caste female students in higher education with special reference to demographic and status characteristics such as age, marital status, caste, education, parental education, occupation and income. 2. To study the whole environment of the students in terms type of their house, facilities available in them and material possessions including paraphernalia and gadgets etc.

## III.OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

1. Identify the nature and extent of social inequality.
2. Impact of social inequality on higher education.
3. Suggestions for gender equality.
4. How to bring gender equality to the educational sphere.

## IV.RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is based on secondary sources as articles, books, journals and research papers.

## THE HISTORY OF WOMEN'S EDUCATION AND GENDER EQUALITY:

Women's living conditions were deplorable prior to the introduction of female education in India. The condition of women was more satisfactory in ancient times; at that time Vedic education was given on an equal basis without discrimination of men and women for a long time in India. There were also women who composed some of the suktas of the Rigveda. It existed from 500 BC to 1200 AD. At that time, women were responsible for the upbringing of children. Work outside the home is prohibited. But, along with social change, the concept of integrating women and education in modern society came into play. In one of its forms, education gave women the right to receive education on an equal basis with men.

## GENDER INEQUALITY AND STEREOTYPES: -

Discrimination against girls and gender inequality in Indian society are linked to religious ethos and traditional gender stereotypes: In ancient India, the roles of men and women were not equal. This was

the reason why girls lacked self-esteem and were treated unequally in every sphere of life. When the girl was born, she was considered the misfortune of the family.

In Indian society, there are different perceptions about the privileges and work patterns of boys and girls, which have been going on for centuries. Boys were often encouraged to develop masculine traits, such as aggression, dominance, independence, a sense of adventure, and goal attainment. In contrast, girls were encouraged to develop feminine characteristics such as modesty, nurturing, dependency, and aimlessness. Thus, boys and girls have different perceptions of actions and are expected to behave appropriately. It has a direct impact on the process of socialization that extends directly from childhood to adolescence and into adulthood. Therefore, preconceived notions of gender are the biggest reason why children, especially girls, are discriminated against in society.

In middle-class Indian families, this gap is vicious in the form of distribution of household responsibilities among children, distribution of economic resources, and future plans. Domestic work is for women and men. There are very few families in which boys are asked to help in household chores. In a middle-class family, boys are asked to do the work of fetching goods from the market and bringing medicines. And boys who are interested in cooking, embroidery, baking, etc. are made fun of. The girls feel that there is no need for them both in the father's house and in in-laws' house. They are mistreated for dowry or just because they are mothers of girls. They are neglected in matters of nutrition and diet. They are being suppressed.

The Fifth All India Survey on Education conducted by the National Council of Educational Research in 1989 reported that the benefits of widespread dissemination of education in Indian society had not yet reached girls. However, in the last 50 years, teaching facilities have been developed at every level. Despite the best efforts of the government, only a limited number of girls are able to access school education, especially secondary or upper primary education. Theoretically, girls have a right to equal education, but this is far from the truth.

More importance for education is given to boys and not girls. According to government data, about 80

percent of children in the age group of 5-8 years are enrolled in school, and the remaining 20 percent never attended school due to poor socio-economic conditions. The average enrollment of SC/ST children is very low, while girls have to attend school as well as take up household responsibilities, so they do not get time to do their school homework and are generally absent. Girls are given preference for domestic work, while boys are given preference for education. Girls are rewarded for doing more housework or caring for younger siblings, while boys are rewarded for good grades.

Every aspect of an individual is impacted by social inequality. However, it has a big effect on the education sector and, within it, on obtaining higher education and high-quality education. As factors influencing obtaining a higher education, the current study has covered regional inequality, parental income, gender, educational inequality, religion, caste and group, educational policies, epidemics, etc.

#### V.CHANGING OUTCOME

In Indian society, the birth of a girl child is considered unfortunate, but there is a definite change in the mindset of educated families and other sections. Some social scientists believe that this change is the result of the awakening of educated urban middle-class women. They don't want their children to suffer. It has also come to light that in recent years, educated women in Delhi and Mumbai have developed adverse views on fetal screening tests. The contribution of UNICEF and UNIFEM, some of the agencies of the United Nations, in this regard will always be remembered.

Science has proved that both men and women are equal in terms of talent and mental abilities. In many areas, girls have outperformed boys and made a name for themselves in areas that were earlier considered male-dominated. Today, girls are preferred because they continue to maintain emotional closeness to their parents. Efforts have been made to reduce inequality on the basis of gender. This improvement has been possible only as a result of the participation of girls in education. Similarly, the enrollment of girls in schools has also increased. Similarly, the enrollment of girls in schools has also increased. More enrollment of girls in higher education is a sign of improving girls'

education. The health situation is improving. Therefore, it can be said that the attitude towards beautiful girls is changing in India. The socialization of girls is influenced by traditional beliefs, social norms and values, and family and marital institutions. In addition, traditional ideologies and practices have to be reformed. A change in mindset is essential for a change in society. Equal development and legal policies have to be adopted to remove inequality and discrimination on the basis of gender with girls.

#### GENDER IMBALANCE IN EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: -

The Education Commission of India (1964-66) dealt in detail with the education of children and the problems associated with it. According to the Commission's suggestion, "Women's education should be included in the main program, and efforts should be made to eliminate all problems that hinder women's education." There should be no discrimination between men and women.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that education is a fundamental right of every human being, the opportunity for which should be equally accessible to all without any discrimination.

With all these efforts, three aspects related to women's education have emerged.

1. Revise the content of schools so that there is no bias on the basis of gender and at the same time promote the idea of equality of the sexes in schools.
2. To inculcate the spirit of gender equality in teachers and
3. To promote the number of women in every field and to encourage study and research on programs related to their problems.

The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) has also recognized that in a democratic state where every citizen has equal civic rights and social responsibilities, there is a difference in the education of girls and boys, which is not desirable. Despite such progressive values towards women's education, there have been various levels of recommendation to differentiate between the education of men and women. Female education increased by 6.1 percent

in the decade 1971-81; in 1971 18.7 percent of women were educated, while in 1981 the percentage of educated women increased to 24.8 percent.

#### THE CONTRIBUTION OF CLASSMATES, INSTRUCTORS, CURRICULA, AND TEXTS TO ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY: -

Educating a woman is more important than educating a man, because educating a man educates only one person, while educating a woman educates the whole family. The government is giving importance to the education of girls. It acknowledges that if public elementary education is to be truly realized, the enrolment of girls will increase and their dropout rate will have to be reduced. In order to achieve this objective, various methods will have to be adopted during the transition period, such as formal and informal programs, short programs, night schools, etc. It is necessary to make the school environment pleasant and safe, to make the teacher's work joyful, and to keep the girls and boys in school.

Gender equality in education would mean providing equal educational arrangements and opportunities to boys and girls, rising above stereotypes so that their educational achievements are not affected by gender discrimination. It is necessary to bring gender sensitivity into education. The first condition for the success of girls' education is to establish modern and homo-sexist values in society by completely demolishing the orthodox ideas, scales, values, and standards towards women and women's education so that instead of stopping girls from getting education, people hold hands and lead them to school. women's education. To destroy the negative mindset of wasting money and watering the flower of someone else's garden and to create the mentality of seeing every expenditure as an appropriation and development of the human resources of the society.

Under the teaching process, the girl child in the school and classroom should be given the same treatment as the boy. For this, there should be a uniform curriculum, teaching methods, and educational and learning material that are free from any kind of prejudice and gender stereotypes. To create awareness in the society about the importance of girl child education. So that 9 out of every 10 children start going to school like in Kerala. The

main regulator of teacher change. They are role models for children in school. The students follow him. The teacher has to act as a worker for gender sensitization in the school. They themselves have to be mentally prepared for this so that they can create an atmosphere of equality in the school. During the teaching work in the school, they have to inculcate an understanding of gender sensitivity in work behaviour. Various activities will have to be organized to connect the girls with the mainstream of education. In the classroom, they should give equal importance to the children, appreciate the work done by the girl child, and motivate them for better work.

The behaviour of peers, the organization of the school, the environment, and discipline should be cooperative towards the girl child. Female teachers should also be encouraged.

Creating curriculum and textbooks free from gender bias the quality of a nation depends on the quality of its citizens, and the quality of citizens depends to a large extent on their education. Formal institutions of education, through their planned and structured curriculum, not only make children literate but also help them adapt and adapt to the changes around them. A curriculum is a collection of all the efforts made by the school to achieve the desired results in school and out-of-school situations; it develops the child intellectually, physically, emotionally, spiritually, socially, and morally.

In ancient India, there was a tradition of public education for both men and women. Unfortunately, the status of women's education has declined over time. Pre-independence female education was directly linked to women's roles such as housewife and mother. Education was concerned with training men for employment, as women could not be expected to work outside the home. So, the curriculum was also according to that social role. During this time, some topics emerged as feminism topics. Business, Home Science, etc. While subjects like physics, chemistry, and mathematics were considered to be related to men. The post-independence period is referred to as the time of emancipation of women from their homes. The religious pomp and social orthodoxy of the educated began to decline. Other achievements in gender equality education in the curriculum were achieved through the recommendations made by the Kothari

Commission. According to this commission, the masses have to be educated to reduce the traditional prejudice against girl education. There should be mixed primary schools as far as possible. Separate schools should be opened for girls at the upper primary level.

#### SUGGESTIONS TO FREE SYLLABUS AND TEXTBOOKS FROM GENDER BIAS:

At present, the work of reforming the curriculum and textbooks is done very seriously. NCERT has prepared 124-page document called National curriculum frame work 2005. According to the NCF (2005) document, "For equity, we must use textbooks as a primary tool, as it is also a valuable resource for a large number of school-going students and teachers for education"

According to NCERT, while writing and preparing new textbooks, it has to be kept in mind that children have to be made gender sensitive from an early age, and they have to be kept away from gender stereotypes. There is a whole feeling behind this that students can feel that women are less capable than men. There is no basis for this thinking.

On the basis of the issues that arise in the present context, it can be said that the proposed reform in the NCF (2005) is welcome, but there is still a need to remove gender stereotypes form textbooks and curriculums. Below are some of the suggestions.

1. Curriculum and textbooks need to be revised where women are portrayed as only good housewives. There is a need to include the achievements of women on par with man.
2. A gender committee on curriculum and textbooks comprising academicians, feminists, historians, government, etc., to ensure-quality in curriculum and ensure that textbooks are free from gender bias.
3. Instead of writing superficially about the place of the girl child, writers should write by realizing the real position of the girl child in the family.
4. The production of textbooks should not be treated as a simple activity but should be supervised and controlled by the state government.
5. The production of educational material should be in accordance with the spirit enshrined in the

constitution and the fundamental right and equality.

#### VI.SOME OF THE EFFORTS FOR GENDER EQUALITY

- Gender can try to make a difference by making small efforts to end or reduce inequality.
- Boys and girls should be treated equally.
- Equal nutrition and health services to boys and girls, women and men, and equal opportunities for education, livelihood, earning, and development.
- by changing one's own thoughts,
- Encourage conversations on gender bias and violence against women in their communities.
- Both men and women play an equal role in family decisions.
- Both are involved in community decisions.
- Creating a positive environment and involving influential people of the community in this sense.
- To develop in the minds of men and women the idea that men and women are equal in private and public life as spouses.
- Efforts should be made at the national and international levels for legal equality.
- At the national and international levels, efforts should be made to increase opportunities for men and women in the economic and political spheres.

#### VII.CONCLUSION

Before the independence of the country, there was a huge disparity in the number of boys and girls studying. During the British period, the education of girls in India was in dire straits. As a result of population growth, the number of illiterate women has steadily increased. There is significant gender disparity in literacy. There are many differences in the education of girls from one state to another in India. Practical progress in educating the girl child has been made by the end of the 20th century under the influence of various efforts and factors. The gap between the education of boys and girls is constantly decreasing. There are many factors that affect the enrollment and retention of girls. These factors can be classified under three areas: 1) Family social factors, 2) Lack of educational access and provision,

and 3) Content of education not meeting the needs of women.

It is the socio-cultural environment that is most responsible for the backwardness of girls in education in rural areas. As a result of the social and cultural changes in the urban area, the status of education of the girl child can be said to be better than in the rural area. The main reason for the educational backwardness of minorities is their religious and social customs. Men and women belonging to Scheduled Tribes do not take interest in formal education, as they are engaged in traditional work. Due to the male-centric family system, untouchability, and poverty, girls belonging to scheduled castes are not able to get admission in schools.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan aims at bridging the social, regional, and gender gaps with the active participation of the community in school management. The educational status of the girl child has improved during the Tenth Five-Year Plan, 2003-07, which needs to be sustained.

Gender inequality emerges in many forms, the most prominent of which is the trend of a steady decline in the proportion of women in the population over the past few decades. Social conservatism and violence at the domestic and community level are some of its other forms. In order to build and develop a democratic society, it is necessary to eliminate differences. Education among women has been considered necessary to establish gender equality among women. The girl child should be given equal opportunities for education. That is, parents, teachers, and society should not have any kind of gender discrimination attitude for that.

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