

STATUS OF WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN ASSAM

Abstract

Women's empowerment is inextricably linked to education. In reality, higher education for women plays a critical role in empowering women, as. According to Pandit Jawaharlal, if a woman is educated, she educates her family. Education is a fundamental human right, and it is required, regardless of gender. The current study is qualitative and relies on secondary sources. The study tries to get insight on status of women in higher education institutions in Sivasagar District of Assam. From the data the study reveals that women's enrolment and pass percentage are greater, while women's employment in the teaching and non-teaching sectors is lower.

Keywords: Women Empowerment, Higher Education.

Authors

Ritu Sarkar

Assistant Professor
Department of Education
Assam Don Bosco University
ritu.sarkar@dbuniversity.ac.in

Parishmita Kakati

Scholar
Department of Education
Assam Don Bosco University
Assam

I. INTRODUCTION

According to Swami Vivekananda when women are educated they can bring necessary reforms. Women in India have faced a variety of issues, including illiteracy. Even with the triumph of the Liberalization, Globalization, and Privatization model, there has been a paucity of women engagement in public life.

In today's world, women must attain the same level of authority as males and gets same opportunities in terms of cerebral opportunities. It's time to let go of the notion that males are the exclusive possessors of power. In a male-dominated nation like India, women still face several challenges. Women have historically kept in low position in society. They've been restricted to the hearth and the confines of their own house. In India, the traditional male-oriented culture has yet to acclimatize to the new wave of women's independence.

Higher education has contributed to the country's economic progress in recent decades, and great growth has been observed. According to the All India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE) 2018-19, women's enrolment in higher education has climbed to 48.6% of overall enrolment of 37.4 million. This shows that there is a rising awareness of women's education as a component of human resource development, with the goal of closing the gender gap and achieving equitable participation. Workplace possibilities and women's well-being have both increased. However, there is a need for societal change to ensure that women have equal opportunity at all levels of the hierarchy, particularly at the management and leadership levels. (Krishnamoorthy, A., & Srimathi, H,2020).

With changing time things are changing, and the Indian women has shed their age-old shackles of serfdom and male dominance and begun to climb the social advancement ladder with pride and dignity. However, Indian women are slowly gaining strength in areas such as education, politics, the labour force, and even more influence inside their own houses. The value of civilization of any nation may be determined by the status of women in society.

Literacy alone cannot help women in self-dependence but higher education helps women to become more capable. It is only higher education that makes them aware of their rights and duties and use their rights as per need. Higher Education is one of the most important means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence. It brings a reduction in inequalities and helps in improving their status within the family. Higher educational achievements of women can have ripple effects within the family and across generations. But there are many hindrances also in the path of women empowerment and in higher education (Panchal, M., 2017). Empowerment for women means she become independent and also to take decision about every aspect of life herself and ensuring equal participation in developmental processes. In this way women develop ability for critical thinking and enhancing self-esteem and self confidence in them selves.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Hazarika, D. (2011), in the study "Women Empowerment in India: A Brief Discussion" mentioned about the earlier period when women were getting equal status in the society. But in the Vedic and epic ages, the situation changed and they faced many problems. Sometimes they treated as slave and their position became worse that time. From early

twenty century the movement for women empowerment changed many things. Nowadays they are getting again equal status but not in all the sectors.

Suguna, M. (2011), in the study “Education and Women Empowerment in India” suggested about the importance of education in women’s life. Development of women can be achieved through education only. We cannot ignore the important of education in one’s life. We should give them education to make them empowered and self-depended. Only education is the main way through which we can educate them. The education will bring the equality and improve the structure of our society. Education can help in the growth of women in rural areas.

Ghosh (2016), conducted a study titled as “Rural Women Empowerment: A Case Study on Scheduled Caste Population of Haora District, West Bengal, India.” The research followed descriptive and survey method which was employed on 360 randomly selected samples from rural Scheduled caste women. It has founded that SC women are less empowered and male members control the destiny of women. Women can gain power only when men start respecting the feelings of women and accept their contribution what they are devoting to the family matters.

Hussein (2016) conducted a study through the random sample method. The study reveals that the women participation in university management is below the thirty percent (30%) of gender representation in Kenyan constitution.

Panchani, M. (2017), mentioned in her study that Higher education reduces inequities and aids in the improvement of a person's standing within their family. Women's higher educational achievements can have a cascading impact across families and beyond generations. Women's empowerment is intimately linked to their degree of education, with the higher the level of education, the stronger the empowerment of women. Women are now participating not just in regular courses, but also in a variety of male-dominated fields. However, women are held back by a lack of educational and training opportunities, as well as the kind of jobs available to them. As a result, technological subjects should be included in higher education to aid women's advancement in research and employment. In the future, it will be important to broaden the scope and open up new industries to meet the demands of women. Universities and colleges must provide additional courses in addition to degree programmes. It is necessary to identify talents and jobs that are suited for women for this goal. Furthermore, efficient execution of government laws and various government of India programmes relating to women's empowerment and higher education should be ensured.

Halakerimath & Danappagoudra (2018), mentioned in their study Educating women at a higher level improves their social involvement and prestige, as well as providing knowledge of sound decision-making skills and resource management. Education also raised awareness of the possibilities for personal growth and a good existence in the community. Women's cognitive power grows as a result of education, as does their confidence. Education also contributes to a stress-free and happy society.

Mital, & Dutta (2019), in their study “Important Aspects of Women Empowerment in Assam and India” mentioned about the important aspects of women empowerment in Assam and India. The paper recognizing women’s contribution to women knowledge and helping

women fight their own fears, feelings of inadequacy, inferiority and women becoming economically independent and self-reliant.

Krishnamoorthy A, Srimathi H (2020), in their study “Women Empowerment in Indian Higher Education” mentioned about several policies, schemes and scholarships offered to women higher education. Yet women are still underrepresented.

Bora, P (2020), in the study “Challenges to Higher Education in Empowering Rural Women of North-East with Special References to Assam” mentioned the rate of women education in the rural areas of Assam is very poor. According to the census report 2001, Assam ranked 25th in literacy with 71.28% where female literacy was 54.61%. So, in case of literacy, Assam ranked 11th India and ranked 10th in case of male illiteracy and 12th in case of women illiteracy. Women empowerment can be strengthened through higher education.

Anita and Ravindran (2020), examined in their study the link between women's enrolment in higher education and literacy levels, as well as their participation in governance and the workforce in India and they mentioned in their study that in the last two decades, the Gross Enrolment Ratio [GER] of Indian women has steadily increased. In the 2018-2019 school year, women's GER outperformed males in the 18-to-23 age range (All India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE Reports, 2019). Women make up only 48.20 percent of the Indian population in 2019. Despite their growing literacy rate and GER of women in higher education, India displays a negative tendency when it comes to women joining the workforce. In the Indian parliament, women make up just 14.36% of elected lawmakers in the lower chamber (Lok Sabha) in 2020. These figures raise the question of whether initiatives to empower women are achieving the desired benefits in terms of gender parity in the workforce and government.

Banerjee, Alok & George (2020), in their study discovers the determinants of women empowerment assessed in terms of home decision-making in a developing economy viewpoint of rural women in India,. Women's empowerment simply refers to providing possibilities for women to become socially and financially self-sufficient. Women's empowerment, as a result of investments in their education and health, boosts economic growth. Rural India is home to over 70% of the Indian population. If women in these places are educated and empowered, they may either directly or indirectly contribute to economic growth by enhancing the health and education of future generations. An employed woman with her own income source, a higher educational level, knowledge of legal rights, a higher educational level of the woman's mother, property in her own name, more freedom of movement during her school days, high self-esteem, and belonging to a relatively affluent background, according to this study, increases domestic making power and thus empowerment of women. For emerging economies, certain policy options are given.

Baruah, S (2021), in the study “Status of women and education: A special reference in Assam context” mentioned about the terms of enjoyment of rights and obligation within a society. The women status in a particular society it always compares with the men in various field like education, health, employment, political participation etc. It also mentioned because of gender discrimination women has less participation in the field of education where as it is believed women in north-eastern state gets a better position but in reality, it is low. Assam

government gave some incentives like -Pragyan Bhartiya scheme to boost self-confidence and improve the position of women in education field.

III. METHODOLOGY

1. Objectives of the Study

- To find out the status of enrolment of women in higher education institutions.
- To find out the ratio of female and male non-teaching employees.
- To find out the ratio of female and male teaching faculty.
- To find out the pass percentage of male and female students.

2. Delimitations: The limitations of the present study are as follows

- The scope of the study is confined to Sivasagar district only.
- Only higher education institution of Sivasagar district only.

3. Source of Data: The present used the secondary data for the present study obtained from college office and IQAC cell.

4. Population: The present study, consist of all the higher education institution teachers and students as the population. The table 1 shows the total population.

Table 1: Total population

Sl. No.	Name of the Institutions	Total number of Staff	Total number of Students
1	Patsaku College, Sivasagar	29	556
2	Sivasagar Commerce College, Sivasagar	67	1900
3	Sivasagar College, Sivasagar	72	2600
4	Nazira College, Sivasagar	34	1571
5	Bir Lachit Borphukan College, Sivasagar	42	2213
6	Gargaon College, Sivasagar	75	2689
7	Dikhowmukh College, Sivasagar	29	709
	Total	348	12,238

5. Sample: Five higher education institution of Sivasagar district were selected by using random sampling techniques.

Sl. No.	Name of the Institution	Non-Teaching Staff	Teaching Staff	Year Wise Total No of Students in 5 Years
1	Gargaon College, Sivasagar	20	65	2020-21=550 2019-20=320 2018-19=605 2017-18=663 2016-17=551
2	Nazira College, Sivasagar	10	24	2020-21=334 2019-20=347 2018-19=269 2017-18=282 2016-17=339
3	Bir Lachit Borphukan College, Sivasagar	13	29	2020-21=540 2019-20=455 2018-19=554 2017-18=340 2016-17=324
4	Patsaku College, Sivasagar	12	17	2020-21=121 2019-20=81 2018-19=104 2017-18=152 2016-17=98
5	Dikhowmukh College, Sivasagar	8	21	2020-21=179 2019-20=120 2018-19=97 2017-18=126 2016-17=187

IV. FINDINGS

Objective 1: To find out the status of enrolment of women in higher education institutions.

- Last five years enrollment:** In order to find out the enrollment status of women the present study considered 5 years enrollment of boys and girls in 5 higher education institutions of Sivasagar district. It has been found that Gargaon College is having a total enrollment of 2689 students in the last 5 years which comes out to be 35% from the overall enrollment among the 5 higher education institutions followed by Bir Lachit Barphukan College where total enrollment was 2213 students in the last 5 years which came out to be 29%. Nazira college where total enrollment was found to be 1571 students in the last 5 years which came out to be 20%. Dikhowmukh College comprised of 709 students which came out to be 9%. Lastly Patsaku College, showed total enrollment of 556 students which came out to be 7% and
- 2020-2021 session enrollments:** Gargaon College showed 42% boys' and 58% of girl's enrolment. Followed by Bir lachit Borphukan college which comprise 36% boys and 64% girls. Nazira College showed 32% boys and girl 68% respectively. Patsaku college has

46% boys and 54% girls. Dikhowmukh college enrollment showed 50% each for boys' and girls' enrollment.

3. **2019-2020 session enrollments:** Gargaon College shows 40% boys' and 60% of girl's enrolment. Bir lachit Borphukan college showed 50% boys' and 50% girls enrollment. Nazira College showed 31% boys' and 69% of girls' enrollment. For Patsaku college boys' enrolment was 72% and 28% of girl's enrolment. Dikhowmukh college showed 47% boys' enrolment and 53% of girl's enrollment respectively .
4. **2018-2019 session enrollments:** It has been found that Gargaon College 49% boys' and 51% of girl's enrollment. In Nazira College showed 46% boys' and 54% of girl's enrollment. Bir lachit Borphukan college has 40 % boys' and 60% of girl's enrollment. Patsaku college showed 57% boy's enrollment and 43% of girl's enrolment. Dikhowmukh college showed 40 % boys' enrolment and 60% of girls' enrollment in the year of 2018-19.
5. **2017-18 session enrollments:** Gargaon College showed 43 % boys' enrolment and 57% girls' enrollment. Nazira College showed 47 % boys' enrolment and 53% of girl's enrollment. Bir lachit Borphukan college showed 34% boy's enrollment and 66 % of girl's enrolment in the year 2017-18. Whereas Patsaku college has 58 % boys' enrolment and 42% girls' enrolment in the year 2017-18 and Dikhowmukh college showed 49% boy's enrollment and 51% of girls' enrollment 51% in the year 2017-18.
6. **2016-17 session enrollements:** Gargaon College showed 42 % boys' enrolment and 58% of girls' enrollment. For Nazira College it was found out that there were 34 % boys' enrolment and 66% of girl's enrollment in the year 2016-17. Bir lachit Borphukan college showed 32% boys' enrolment and 69 % of girl's enrolment in the year 2016-17 session. Patsaku college showed 30% boy's enrollment and 70% of girl's enrolment in the year 2016-17. And in 2016-17 session, Dikhowmukh college has 67% boy's enrollment and 33% of girls' enrollment.

The enrollment of girls in Gargaon college is more than that of boys in all the 5 years. For Nazira college girls enrollment is above 60 percentage than that of boys' enrollment in the past 5 years. In last 5 years, Patsaku college enrollment shows more than 50% enrollment of girls in most of the session but in the session 2017-18, 72% of boys took admission and only 28% of girls took admission.

In Dikhowmukh college showed a equal percentage of enrollment for boys and girls. Lastly for Bir Lachit Borphukan college the ratio of enrollment is 40: 60 in most of the years.

It has been found out that Gargaon College is offering three streams, that is Arts, Commerce and Science. Gargaon college is also one of the oldest and esteemed institute among the other higher education institutions in Sivasagar district. Students are taking admission in three streams, so Gargaon college five years enrollments tend to be the highest than that of the other four higher education institutions.

Objective 2: To find out the ratio of female and male non-teaching employees.

The study revealed that the in Gargaon college there are 18:2 male and female non-teaching staff. Nazira college indicated 4:6 male and female non-teaching. Patsaku College showed 9:3 non-teaching male and female employees. Dikhowmukh college the ratio of male and female non-teaching staff is 8:0 which means there is no female non-teaching staff. In Bir Lachit Borphukan college the ratio is 6:7 male and female non-teaching employees. As mentioned by one of the respondents when the researcher took unstructured interview that women's' face family related problem and they decide not to work and to look after the family becomes their priority. Some women are not comfortable with technology, in present all colleges officially work done by using technology, when they conducted interview for job, males are more qualified than female in terms of clerical skills.

Objective 3: To find out the ratio of female and male teaching employees.

The present study showed that the Gargaon college there are 21 male teaching employees which came out to be 60% and there 14 teaching female employees which came out to be 40%. In Nazira college there are 13 male teaching employees which came out to be 55% and there are 11 teaching female which came out to be 45. Patsaku College, there are 3 teaching employees which came out to be 17% and 14 teaching female employees which came out to be 82%. Dikhowmukh college showed 14 teaching males' employees which came out to be 66% and there are 7female teaching employees which came out to be 34%. Bir Lachit Borphukan college there are 14 teaching employees which came out to be 48% and there are 15 female teaching employees which came out to be 52%. From the above data only Patsaku college shows maximum female teaching employee than that of male. This may be because many of the female tends to settle down in school teaching job after clearing B.ed and TET.

Objective 4: To find out the pass percentage of male and female students.

Last five years pass percentage for all the colleges were taken into consideration. Gargaon college which has all the three stream that is science, humanities and commerce shows that the pass percentage of girls are more than that of boys in last five years. Also Nazira college shows that the pass percentage for girls is approximately 60% more than that of boys. Similar trend has been see for the rest of the three colleges that is Patsaku, Dikhomukh and Bir Lachit Borphukan where the pass percentage of girls is more than that of boys in last five years. The percentage of women to appear for final examination is more than that of males. The probable reason may be that boys are not interested in humanities/ social science subjects, they tend to drop out or join some other courses. Another possibility for higher rate of pass percentage of girls can be that they are more serious about their study and they are regular in their classes. Also, girls are motivated and rewarded scholarships for the performances.

V. CONCLUSION

From the results we concluded that although the enrolment and the pass percentage of women are higher but when we look into the employment in teaching and non-teaching sector for women is less which is a matter of concern, more opportunities needs to be generated for women in Higher Education. Educating women in higher level improve the social participation and improve the status of women and education provides knowledge of good decision-making skill and management of resources. Education also created awareness of opportunity to develop and to lead happy life in the community. Education improves thinking

capacity of women and develops confidence among them. Education also provides stress free and happy life in the society.

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