

DIMENSIONS OF GENDER (IN) EQUALITY IN INDIA- A COMPARATIVE STUDY AMONG STATES OF INDIA

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Abstract

This study takes up "Dimensions of Gender Equality in India." While examining the dimensions the researcher compares the gender development index reports of states in India. Gender equality—a driver for economic growth, matters in its own right, and as a prerequisite for the health and development of families and economies. The term gender equality has been on the carpet for the past two decades. The millennium development goals set gender equality and women empowerment at 3rd place. Earlier women empowerment had been assessed in terms of access to resources and later on moved to control over resources. The resources include physical resources, fiscal resources, financial resources and intellectual resources. The term empowerment has been pronounced with the term empowerment after the millennium year. The post 2015 framework presents a unique opportunity to build on the achievement of the millennium development goal, while also addressing that lag behind. The sustainable development goal also sets gender equality at fifth place. The reason is that gender inequality persists everywhere and stagnates the progress of a country. The unequal treatment or perceptions of the individuals on the basis of gender have been witnessed not only in developing countries like India, but also in developed countries as well. Gender-related inequality in human well-being is one of the most crucial issues in many states in India. The female disadvantage in survival is the important dimension that has drawn the attention of policy makers. In India the situation is not even among the states; Kerala has lesser discrimination while Odisha has higher discrimination. The sex ratio is also high in Kerala which shows positive symptoms of women empowerment. Maharashtra introduced property rights for women. Its per capita income is high compared to Kerala but GDI is low. Female education growth in Kerala promotes gender equality. Has education alone disappear inequalities is the million-dollar question? Per capita income is not so high in Kerala as compared to other southern states.

The study examines gender equality on the basis of Gender Development Index, which measures gender gap in human development by accounting disparities between men and women in three dimensions of human development, a long and healthy life, knowledge and a decent standard of living. The global gender gap report places India at 135 out of 146 countries. India has moved from 140 to 135 from last year. Though India is moving towards one of the developed nations in the world, gender inequality is pulling its growth. Which factor is hindering the SDGs 5 the goal gender equality in India? The issue of gender inequality had been in the lime light in all academic conferences, seminars and symposiums. Why gender inequality prevails in higher degree in some states of India? What are the

policy measures have to be pinned up? What are the measures to be added in those states? Any other indicators to be included along with HDI indicators? These are the research questions to be addressed. This paper is an attempt made by the researchers to address these issues.

Keywords : Gender Equality, Gender inequality, GDI, HDI, Women Empowerment Discrimination, Gender gap, MDGs, SDGs, Gender dimensions

Introduction and statement of the problem

Gender equality is emphasized for Economic Development of a country. The gender gap is measured according to the achievements obtained by the women on par with their men counterparts. Gender Development Index is one of the parameters of evaluating the gender gap. The GDI measures the gender gap in human development achievements by accounting for disparities between women and men in 3 basic dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, knowledge, and a decent standard of living. The ratio is calculated as female HDI to male HDI. The Global Gender Gap Report 2022 places India at 135 out of 146 countries. In comparison to the year before, where we ranked 140 of 156, India has slightly improved its position. Gender Inequality Index (GII) is a composite Metric of Gender inequality using three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and the Labour market. A low GII Value indicates low inequality between women and men and vice-versa. While gender equality is captured as a stand-alone goal (SDG 5), Gender must be integrated across all the SDGs and gender considerations must be included in all sustainable development work and climate action. SDG 5 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls to reach their full potential. Workplace gender equality will be achieved when people are able to access and enjoy equal rewards, resources and opportunities regardless of gender. Gender related inequality in human well-being is one of the most crucial issues in many societies. This is especially so in India where the inequality manifests itself in several dimensions.

The female disadvantage in survival is one such important dimension that has drawn the attentions of several researchers and policy makers. Millennium development goal 3 to promote gender and equality and empower women the main target is to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education. Gender Inequality refers to unequal treatment or perceptions of individuals on the basis of gender. Gender refers to socially constructed identities of men and women such as norms, roles and relationships between groups of women and men. Gender stereo types are the baseless belief that men and women are expected to function in the society based on the sex. Women and girls represent half of the world's population and therefore also half of its potential. But today gender inequality persists everywhere and stagnates social progress. As of 2014, 143 countries have guaranteed equality between men and women in their constitutions but 52 have yet to take this step. In some countries, girls are deprived of access to health care or proper nutrition, leading to a higher mortality rate. Gender equality and women's rights are key to addressing the unfinished business of the millennium. Development Goal's (MDGs) and accelerating global development beyond 2015. Gender equality matters in its own right, and as a prerequisite for the health and development of families and societies and a driver of economic growth. The post 2015 framework present a unique opportunity to build on the achievement of the millennium Development Goal, (MDGs), while also addressing the dimensions that lag behind. The new framework will need to confront the discriminatory social norms and practices that underlie gender inequality, such as early marriage or tolerance of violence against women.

In its Human Development Report 1995 the UNDP came up with two new and potentially very important indicators: the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM). The GEM is intended by the UNDP to reflect gender 'inequalities in key areas of political and economic participation and decision-making' (UNDP, 1995, rear cover). It is generally consistent with the UNDP's valid concerns about gender issues, especially in developing countries. The purpose of this article is to examine some conceptual and measurement aspects of the GEM. Like many critiques of the HDI which have appeared in the literature, it first looks at the composition and construction of the new indicator. It then points to a number of problems with the GEM, arguing, inter alia, that some issues relating to empowerment across nations are overlooked. It then analyses the determinants of the GEM. Such an exercise has potentially important implications for pro-empowerment policies.

Gender equality is a central issue of the global agenda. Initially included as one of the main goals of the Millennium Development Summit in 2000 and now championed as a fundamental human right in the 2016 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), gender equality has a direct beneficial effect on the economic status of women, a reason in itself to achieve gender parity. Additionally, gender equality is believed to empower women and contribute to overall economic growth and development (World Bank, 2012). To track progress towards the goal of gender equality, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) developed the Gender Inequality Index (GII) in 2010. The GII measures gender inequalities through five indicators across three important aspects of human development: reproductive health, empowerment and economic status. To better depict differences in the distribution of achievements between women and men, the GII is built on the same framework as the Human Development Index. Thus, the GII measures the human development costs of gender inequality. The GII informs action at local, national and international levels. Disaggregation of the GII into its sub-components allows public, private and non-profit bodies to take concrete steps and channel resources to improve the situation of women. For each sub-component of the GII, examples are given that illustrate to power of social innovation to reduce gender inequalities through three mechanisms: (1) resources, (2) attitudes, and (3) power. These mechanisms are sometimes formed through the bottom-up approaches of individual entrepreneurs. Other times, changes to long-standing gender biases rely on the coordinated actions of international donor agencies and local NGOs or national initiatives that fundamentally change institutional structures. In short, we observe that a litany of approaches is required from both practitioners and policy-makers to achieve the 2030 SDG goal of gender equality.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

development index and Gender

According to IMF Survey (2017), India's position on Gender Budgeting has improved but is still far from being satisfactory. Gender budgeting is the tool for ensuring that the benefits of development reach women as much as men. It indicates how countries are reducing the gender gap through various collateral schemes at different levels. India is at a stronger position in terms of gender budgeting where government is consciously putting efforts both at national and state level. It also highlighted the collective efforts of the state and national governments to bridge the gender gap and achieve equality. The report also presented changes across 80 countries, where economies managed to prosper and grow only when they had access to their complete talent pool including women.

International Labor Organization (ILO) (2015), reported that although Indian economy continued to grow at an average of 7%; but female participation in the countries' labor force declined from 35% to 25% in the last decades but it has not resulted in increase in participation of women in workforce. According to McKinsey (2015) report on the Power of Parity, if women played an identical role in labor marketsto that of men, US\$28 trillion could be added to the global annual GDP by 2025
women their success growth

Gender inequality in the workplace has a strong negative impact on women and development, and also significantly affects the economies and countries growth. India, with its over 600 million women waiting to be included in work force and given equal opportunity can contribute a lot in making it world's largest economy (Sharma,2011). In India, after reservation ensured through Companies act 2013 in year 2017 140 women held 12.4% of the seats and just 3.2 of board chairs. World Economic Forum (WEF) found that access to economic participation and opportunity for women has moved from 56% to 60% in ten years from its first report in 2006 to 2016 even the rapid strides in closing the gender gap with men in areas like

Objective

The objective of the paper is to identify the states which have highest GDI and the states which have lowest GDI in India

Methodology

This study is based on secondary data. The data have been collected from Human Development Reports.

Analysis and Discussion

The table given below shows the GDI of different states of India. Human Development Report 2019 reflects the ranking of states in GDI. From the ranking analysis one can understand the dimensions of gender equalities among states.

Table-1; GDI of states over the years

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State	GDI 2001	GDI 2006	GDI 2011	GDI 2016	Rank in 2001	Rank in 2016
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	0.820	0.828	0.821	0.824	11	20
Andhra Pradesh	0.804	0.833	0.854	0.859	17	12
Arunachal Pradesh	0.801	0.830	0.856	0.863	18	10
Assam	0.754	0.773	0.804	0.805	28	27
Bihar	0.512	0.599	0.691	0.715	36	36
Chandigarh	0.802	0.832	0.830	0.814	13	24
Chhattisgarh	0.770	0.801	0.850	0.868	24	8
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0.791	0.790	0.850	0.810	22	26
Daman & Diu	0.735	0.761	0.764	0.734	31	34
Goa	0.879	0.883	0.875	0.876	6	6
Gujarat	0.793	0.806	0.820	0.814	19	23
Haryana	0.789	0.798	0.807	0.795	21	29
Himachal Pradesh	0.866	0.881	0.896	0.914	5	3
Jammu & Kashmir	0.750	0.774	0.788	0.791	29	30
Jharkhand	0.702	0.737	0.794	0.813	34	25
Karnataka	0.812	0.833	0.849	0.852	14	14
Kerala	0.876	0.873	0.868	0.847	2	15
Lakshadweep	0.801	0.804	0.815	0.754	20	33
Madhya Pradesh	0.742	0.784	0.818	0.841	30	17
Maharashtra	0.817	0.841	0.856	0.861	11	11
Manipur	0.866	0.875	0.898	0.893	7	5
Meghalaya	0.859	0.881	0.884	0.893	3	4
Mizoram	0.874	0.877	0.888	0.873	1	7
Nagaland	0.898	0.920	0.931	0.938	4	1
NCT of Delhi	0.759	0.787	0.790	0.797	27	28
Odisha	0.720	0.772	0.802	0.821	33	22
Puducherry	0.851	0.853	0.849	0.834	9	18
Punjab	0.808	0.799	0.792	0.767	16	32
Rajasthan	0.724	0.768	0.806	0.831	32	19
Sikkim	0.851	0.876	0.910	0.916	8	2
Tamil Nadu	0.826	0.851	0.867	0.868	10	9
Tripura	0.820	0.834	0.852	0.852	15	13
Uttar Pradesh	0.617	0.660	0.709	0.724	35	35
Uttarakhand	0.761	0.803	0.835	0.841	26	16
West Bengal	0.777	0.786	0.800	0.785	23	31
India	0.764	0.793	0.821	0.824	-	-

Source; Human Development Report 2019

The GDI reflects the inequalities in human development by sex. For India, the estimated value of GDI was 0. Table 1 present the input values in computing the state level GDI for India. The contribution of education and income to the change in HDI was found largest in 18 and 16 states / Union territories respectively. Similarly, The GDI in India has increased from 0.764 in 2001 to 0.824 in 2016.

Table-2; Top five states in GDI for the year 2001

s.no	States	GDI
1	MIZORAM	0.874
2	KERELA	0.876
3	MEGHALAYA	0.859
4	NAGALAND	0.898
5	HIMACHALPRADESH	0.866

Source; Human Development Report-2019

It is observed from the table that the states which appraise women rights and women empowerment occupy the top five position in GDI for the year 2001. These states have a very high GDI

Table-3; Top five states in GDI for the year 2006

s.no	States	GDI
1	NAGALAND	0.920
2	GOA	0.883
3	HIMACHALPRADESH	0.881
4	MEGHALAYA	0.881
5	MIZORAM	0.877

Source; Human Development Report-2019

It is noted from the table that the states like MIZORAM, MEGHALAYA, NAGALAND and HIMACHALPRADESH are keeping their position in top five for the year 2006. But Kerela slips from the top position. The GDP of Kerela is low and thereby it is not in the top position. GOA occupied the second position. It is also noted that the value of GDI has been increased compared to 2001 in all states.

Table-4; Top five states in GDI for the year 2011

s.no	States	GDI
1	NAGALAND	0.931
2	SIKKIM	0.910
3	MANIPUR	0.898
4	HIMACHALPRADESH	0.896
5	MIZORAM	0.888

Source; Human Development Report-2019

Table 4 reflects the same states like NAGALAND, MANIPUR and HIMACHALPRADESH are keeping their position in top five but MEGHALAYA slips from the list and SIKKIM is moving forward and occupied the second position. There is slight improvement in the values of GDI in all states.

Table-5; Top five states in GDI for the year 2016

s.no	States	GDI
1	NAGALAND	0.938
2	SIKKIM	0.916
3	HIMACHALPRAS ESH	0.914
4	MEGHALAYA	0.893
5	MANIPUR	0.893

Source; Human Development Report-2019

From the above table it can be seen that the states like NAGALAND, HIMACHALPRADESH, SIKKIM, MANIPUR are in the top five and MEGHALAYA back to the top position. The gender inequalities have been decreasing in these states.

Table-6; Bottom five states in GDI for the year 2001

s.no	States	GDI
1	BIHAR	0.512
2	U.P	0.617
3	JHARKHAND	0.702
4	ODISHA	0.720
5	RAJESTHAN	0.724

Source; Human Development Report-2019

Table 6 showcases the bottom five states in GDI. The states which have low HDI also has low GDI. Less developed states have less HDI and GDI

Table-7; Bottom five states in GDI for the year 2006

s.no	States	GDI
1	BIHAR	0.715
2	U.P	0.617
3	JHARKHAND	0.702
4	DAMAN & DIU	0.720
5	ODISHA	0.724

Source; Human Development Report-2019

It is known from the table that four states like BIHAR,U.P,JHARKHAND and ODISHA are in the same bottom five list. RAJESTHAN moved forward.

Table-8; Bottom five states in GDI for the year 2011

s.no	States	GDI
1	BIHAR	0.691
2	U.P	0.709
3	DAMAN&DIU	0.764
4	JAMMU&KASHMIR	0.788
5	NCT of DELHI	0.790

Source; Human Development Report-2019

Table -8;shows that ODISHA moved forward and JAMMU & KASHMIR entered into the bottom five list.BIHAR is in last position in all through the years.

Table-9: Bottom five states in GDI for the year 2016

s.no	States	GDI
1	BIHAR	0.715
2	U.P	0.724
3	DAM,AN&DIU	0.734
4	LAKSHADEEP	0.754
5	PUNJAB	0.767

Source; HumanDevelopment Report-2019

It is seen from the table that PUNJAB is in the bottom five llist though it is one of the developed states in India. There is no correlation between HDI &GDI. Though the HDI of Punjab is high, the GDI of the same state is low which shows high gender inequalities.

Policy & programs to reduce gender inequality by Govt.of India

1. BetiBachaoBetiPadhao (BBBP) ensures the protection, survival and education of the girl child.
2. Mahila Shakti Kendra (MSK) aims to empower rural women with opportunities for skill development and employment.
3. Working Women Hostel (WWH) ensures the safety and security for working women.
4. Scheme for Adolescent Girls aims to empower girls in the age group 11-18 and to improve their social status through nutrition, life skills, home skills and vocational training

5. Mahila Police Volunteers (MPV) envisages engagement of Mahila Police Volunteers in States/UTs who act as a link between police and community and facilitates women in distress.
6. RashtriyaMahilaKosh (RMK) is an apex micro-finance organization that provides micro-credit at concessional terms to poor women for various livelihood and income generating activities.

Specific suggestions by the researchers

- The awareness camp on gender equality should be arranged for parents. This can reduce generation gap and cultural gap between parents and children
- Women rights are not implemented properly in majority of the states. The legal rights should be reached to all women irrespective of regions
- Parents should come forward to reduce inequalities in their families. This can lead to gender equality in the economy as well.

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