

A Comparative Study of Gender Inequality in Higher Education in India Since Independence

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Abstract:

This study explores the evolution of higher education in India post-Independence, with a particular focus on gender disparities and access issues. Despite India's progress in literacy rates and the expansion of the education sector, challenges such as high dropout rates, stagnant, education quality, and educated unemployment persist. The study identifies the uneven participation of female students, especially from marginalized communities, as a critical issue.

The research evaluates the impact of education policies on increasing female enrolment and access to higher education, examining data from states like Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, and Punjab. Using sources such as the Government of India's budgeted education expenditures and RBI statistics, it assesses educational service utilization across social strata, focusing on the period between 2014 and 2022.

Key findings include a decline in primary education enrolment, particularly in rural areas, and persistent disparities in education despite an increase in education expenditure from 3.84% to 4.64% of GDP between 2013-14 and 2020-21. The study highlights the need for targeted policies to address gender inequality and ensure equitable access to education for disadvantaged populations.