

Status of women in higher education in nagaland

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Abstract: Women constitute almost half of the total population and play a substantial part not only in upbringing a child but also in the overall development of a country. For the progress of any nation, the higher education of women is important as it is through higher education that women can be empowered and significantly contribute to the alleviation of poverty, reducing inequality thereby, bridging the gender gaps, leading to a more balanced socio-economic disparity between genders and various social groups. The participation of women in higher education is indispensable for the growth of any country or nation. Depriving them of education would mean depriving half of the population of the right to education, adversely affecting the nation's economy and hindering its progress and development. Today, women are excelling in every field, and even in higher education, women have made a progressive development both in terms of enrollment and participation. The present study aims to find out the status of women in higher education in Nagaland with regard to the number of teachers, students enrollment, Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR), academic performance, Gender Parity Index (GPI), and Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER).

Keywords: Higher education, Status, Enrollment, Women, Pupil- Teacher Ratio (PTR), Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER)

1. Introduction

Man and women are two rational beings and form the core basis of human civilization whereby, denial of education to any of the group will result in the dysfunction of society. Education is undoubtedly the most effective instrument that can be used to bring about social, political, cultural, and economic transformation. 'Education has the power to turn humans into human resources' (Siddiqui, 2019). It inculcates in the individual the necessary skills and enhances their potential and abilities which are crucial in the advanced modern world. As

Nelson Mandela also remarked, “Education is the most powerful tool which you can use to change the world”.

Higher education refers to the education that is provided post- secondary education. It is confined not only to general education (such as arts, science, and commerce) but goes beyond general education and encompasses all other professional and technical fields of education such as music, art, theology, business, medicine, law, agriculture, etc. Colleges and universities are the principal centers of higher learning (Deka, 2000) and work as important institutions for the dissemination of knowledge.

Education is the most effective and powerful tool to unlock the doors to development and modernization and this is particularly true with respect to higher education (Powar & Panda, 1995). Higher education stands at the apex of the education pyramid and plays a crucial role in the development of a nation. For a progressive and developing nation, there is a need for better manpower and human resources. Today, the world is moving at a rapid pace and to keep up with the pace of the advanced nations, there is a need for more professionals and technicians who are trained and imbued with sophisticated and high-end knowledge and information. It is in higher educational institutions that higher advanced learning takes place and a wide range of human workforce specialized in a wide range of professions are developed. Today, the doctors, teachers, engineers, physicians, technicians, and other professionals we have are indeed the product of higher education. Higher education equips the individual with advanced skills and knowledge that are required to excel in their specialized fields and prepares them for their role in various professions which in turn results in the economic upliftment of the nation and improvement in the national income. The World Bank studies have shown that investing in human capital in higher education has economic returns (Taheri, 2022). Investment in higher education is an investment in an economy. There is a close connection between higher education and economic productivity. Higher education plays a substantial role not only in the overall development of the individual but also in the modernization and transformation of society and is rightly regarded as the ‘engine of development in the new world economy’ (Castell, 1994, extracted from Khan, 2016).

1.1. Women in higher education

Women constitute almost half of the world's population and play a substantial role not only in the upbringing of a child but also in the overall development of a country. The role of women is crucial when it comes to national development. Women are often considered caregivers and homemakers, and the child spends most of their time under the guidance of their mothers, highlighting the need and importance of women's education for future generations. Stressing the importance of women's education, the University Education Commission (1948-49) has rightly observed, "There cannot be an educated people without educated women. If general education had to be limited to men or women, that opportunity should be given to women, for then, it would most surely be passed on to the next generation." Education is the best instrument and indeed a powerful tool for empowering women. By obtaining education, women will not only improve their socio-economic status but also bring about a positive change in the family as well as society. A woman who is educated and knowledgeable will be able to pass on her knowledge to her children and bring them up to be desirable and responsible citizens who will contribute towards the upward mobility of society and to national development.

For the progress of any nation, women's higher education is indispensable as it is through higher education that women can be empowered and significantly contribute to the alleviation of poverty, reducing inequality thereby, bridging the gender gaps, leading to a more balanced socio-economic disparity between genders and various social groups. Women today have made a significant stride in higher education. Their involvement and participation in higher education have been remarkable. Since independence, several recommendations have been made by various commissions stressing the need and importance of women's education. Moreover, the increase in the number of educational institutions across the states has widened the opportunity for women of every section to have access to higher education. Women's participation in higher education has seen a substantial increase over the past few decades and the table below gives a clear picture of women's involvement in higher education in India.

Table No. 1. *Number of teachers and students in higher education in India*

Year	Enrollment of Women Students				Number of Women Teachers				
	Male (000's)	Wome n (000's)	Total (000's)	% of women enrollment to total enrollment	Male (000's)	Wome n (000's)	Total (000's)	% of women teachers to total no. of teachers	
2017-18	19205	17438	36642	47.59	745	540	1285	42.01	
2018-19	19210	18190	37399	48.64	819	597	1416	42.15	
2019-20	19644	18893	38536	49.03	864	639	1503	42.5	
2020-21	21238	20143	41381	48.68	886	665	1551	42.87	
2021-22	22576	20692	43268	47.82	904	694	1598	43.45	

Source: *All India Survey on Higher Education 2021-22 (AISHE)*

The table above shows an increasing trend in the participation of women in higher education in India. However, the number of female enrollment and number of teachers is found to be lower than that of the male students and teachers. The lower female enrollment and fewer female teachers indicate gender disparity in the higher education sector. The underlying issues contributing to gender disparity often include societal norms, cultural barriers, economic barriers, inequality in access to education, etc, which significantly hinder the participation of women in the higher education sector, thereby obstructing the growth and development of women in particular and the nation at large. There is a need to address these issues to eliminate various barriers, promote gender equality, and improve access to education for every section of society. Addressing these issues will contribute to increasing the participation of women in higher education.

1.2. Women in higher Education in Nagaland

The inception of higher education in Nagaland started on 8th of September 1959. Prior to attainment of statehood in 1963, there were only 2 colleges in the state, however, after the attainment of statehood, many new colleges were established and at present (2024-25) there are a total of 77 colleges with 76 co-ed institutions and only 1 (one) girls college in the state.

Besides, there are 5 Universities and 1 Institute of National Importance catering to higher education in the state.

The beginning of higher education in Nagaland was a significant milestone for women education in the state. With the increase in the number of higher educational institutions over the years, people gradually became more aware of the need and importance of women's education. Consequently, today, women in Nagaland have made remarkable progress not only in terms of academic achievement but also in attainment of high status across various domain of the society. The representation of women in various fields such as education, health, business, politics, etc, is a clear indication of the progress of women's education and a reflection of the paradigm shift in attitudinal change of people in the state towards women's education.

The importance of women higher education cannot be undermined as it is crucial for development and ensuring access to quality education which will not only boost the state's economy but also help in fostering gender equality. Nagaland is going through a period of transition which has brought about numerous changes in the society and it is at this juncture that providing quality higher education is essential to realize the goals of higher education so as to bring about progressive and effective changes in the society. Thus, there needs to be a paradigm shift in the attitude of people towards women education and also prioritize it, so as to make education equitable and accessible to all for the upward mobility of the state's economy.

1.3. Review of Related Literature

Today, women are increasingly represented in higher education which reflects a significant progress towards gender equality. The increase in the involvement of women in higher education is a clear indicator of the rise in gender equality. The following studies demonstrate the status of women in higher education with regard to their enrollment and positions held by them.

Ghara, (2016) conducted a study on the Status of Indian women in higher education where the women enrollment in higher education has increased gradually since independence. It was also found that the percentage of women enrollment in 1950-51 was 10%, which increased to 45.9% in the year 2015-16, which indicates a substantial improvement of women

in higher education. However, it was found that the rate of increase and the enrollment of women was found to be comparatively low that that of the men.

Frances, (2018) carried out a study on the status of women in American Higher Education, where it was found that women participation have increased significantly in higher education America with the number of enrollment increased by several hundred thousand more women than men enrolled in colleges and earning more bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees by women. It was also found that the there was a significant increase in the number of women faculty, that by 2016, it was almost as that of the men faculty.

Changmai, (2019) conducted a study on Women in Higher Education in Assam with Special Reference to Dibrugarh University, with the objective to study the trend of girls' enrollment in Higher. The study shows that the female enrollment during the academic year 2017-18 was found to be higher than that of the male students. However, with regard to number of teachers, it was found that the number of male teachers was found to be much higher than that of the female teacher.

Chetry, (2020) conducted a study on the headquarters of R.H.A.C on women' access to higher education with the objective to study women's participation in higher education and to compare the gender- based enrollment in accessing higher education. The study shows that the participation of female in higher education was found to be slightly lesser than that of the male counterpart and the rate of their access to higher education though increasing, was found to be slightly lower compared to male.

Duarah & Balari, (2020) conducted an Analytical study on Higher Education and Women Involvement in Assam with the objectives to study the status of women involvement in higher education and the Gross Enrollment ratio (GER). The result shows that the enrollment of women in courses like M. Phil, Postgraduate, Undergraduate, and certificate courses was found to be much higher than the male enrollment but in courses like Ph.D, P.G. Diploma, Diploma, and integrated programs, women enrollment was found to be lower than the male. However, the total female enrollment was found to be much higher as compared to the male enrollment. The study also found that the Gross Enrollment Ratio of males was higher than that of females with 17.4 and 17.2 respectively.

Dey, (2021) carried out a study on the Existing Status of Female Enrollment in Higher Education in India and West Bengal as a Special Reference with the aim to compare the female enrollment status in various levels of higher education between India and West Bengal. The study found that women enrollment grew from 44.58% to 48.63% in India and 42.81% to 49.42% in West Bengal during the period 2011-12 to 2018-19, clearly indicating that the growth rate of female enrollment in West Bengal to be higher than that of all India average.

The above studies conducted both in India and abroad illustrate a clear picture of the level of women participation in higher education. It also shows that the number of women in higher education has increased tremendously after India got independence which is a clear indication of the progress of women in higher education sector over the years. Besides, some studies also demonstrate higher enrollment of women in higher education while other shows lower enrollment. However, no studies have been done so far on the status of women in higher education in Nagaland. Therefore, the present study is an attempt on the part of the investigators to find out the status of women in higher education and also bring out the PTR, GER and GPI in higher education in Nagaland.

1.4. Significance of the Study

Women today are represented in almost every domain, and their progress in higher education is apparent in both enrollment and the number of female educators. This advancement can be attributed to shifts in gender roles and changing societal attitudes towards women's education. Additionally, the increasing demand for highly qualified and skilled workers contributes to the higher participation of women in higher education. Women play a crucial role in the nation's economy, comprising 48% of the world's population and significantly contributing to national development and upward mobility. Their participation in higher education is essential and serves as a key indicator of a nation's progress and development. Women education is undeniably one of the most crucial instruments for empowerment and its significance cannot be undermined. In Nagaland, women have made significant stride in various fields including higher education. The status of women often reflects the overall status of the society, making it essential to understand their educational standing to assess the state's progress.

Thus, this study aims to evaluate the status of women in higher education in Nagaland, focusing on key metrics such as the number of teachers, student enrollment, Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR), academic performance, Gender Parity Index (GPI), and Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER). By examining these components, the study seeks to provide valuable insights into the state of women's education in Nagaland and its implications for broader societal progress.

1.5. Objectives of the Study

The study comprises of the following objectives:

1. To find out the status of women in higher education in Nagaland with regard to the number of teachers, student's enrollment and students' academic performance
2. To assess the pupil-teacher ratio in higher education in Nagaland
3. To examine the Gross Enrollment Ratio in Higher Education in Nagaland
4. To evaluate the Gender Parity Index (GPI) in Higher Education in Nagaland

1.6. Research Question

1. What is the overall number of teachers and number of students in the higher education institutions in Nagaland?
2. What is the ratio of female teachers as compared to male teachers in the higher education institutions in Nagaland?
3. What is the number of female students as compare to male students in the higher education institutions in Nagaland?
4. What is the academic performance of female students as compared to that of male students in the higher education institutions in Nagaland?
5. What is the pupil-teacher ratio in higher education institutions in Nagaland?
6. What is the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) for higher education in Nagaland?
7. What is the Gender Parity Index (GPI) in higher education in Nagaland?

1.7. Scope of the Study

The present study will encompass data of both distance as well as regular mode of education in higher education in Nagaland.

2. Methodology and Procedure for data collection

The present study is descriptive in nature and the data for the study is completely based on secondary sources obtained from government official reports, books, journals.

3. Analysis and Interpretation of the data

The data collected has been analyzed under the following tables:

3.1. Analysis of data on the status of women in higher education in Nagaland with regard to number of teacher, student's enrollment and student's academic performance.

a) Number of Teachers

The increase in the number of educational institutions and enrollment of students in higher education demands more teachers. Today, a large number of women are involved in the higher education sector and the trend of women's participation in higher education is presented in the following table.

Table No. 2. *Number of female teachers in comparison to male teachers in Higher education institutions in Nagaland*

Year	Male	Percentage	Female	Percentage	Total
2017-18	1006	44.38	1261	55.62	2267
2018-19	1067	44.85	1312	55.15	2379
2019-20	1058	43.70	1363	56.30	2421
2020-21	1059	43.53	1374	56.47	2433
2021-22	1087	42.81	1452	57.19	2539

Source: *All India Survey on Higher Education 2021-22 (AISHE)*

The table above shows the number of female and male teachers in higher education in Nagaland for the years 2017-18 to 2021-22. It is evident from the table that female teachers have consistently outnumbered their male counterparts for all the give years. This trend

indicates the level of engagement of women's participation in higher education and demonstrates a strong, positive attitude toward higher education.

b) Students' Enrollment

The enrollment of students has also increased rapidly over the years. The given table no. 3 represents the enrollment trend of students at various levels during the given five years.

Table No. 3. *Enrollment of female students in higher education in comparison to male students at various levels*

Year	2017-18			2018-19			2019-20		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Ph.D	222	201	423	235	257	492	270	307	577
M.Phil	11	23	34	6	12	18	10	28	38
Post-Graduate	3538	2564	6102	2886	3412	6298	2063	3503	5566
Under-Graduate	17197	17467	34664	17248	18485	35913	16982	19252	36234
PG Diploma	39	79	118	86	150	236	65	168	233
Diploma	1041	1061	2101	1262	1100	2362	842	1027	1869
Integrated Certificate	55	45	100	69	59	128	17	21	38
Total	22118	21440	43557	21807	23475	45462	20255	24306	44561

Source: *All India Survey on Higher Education 2021-22 (AISHE)*

Year	2020-21			2021-22		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Ph.D	279	314	593	290	330	620
M.Phil	23	30	53	12	6	18
Post- Graduate	2843	4252	7095	3276	5178	8454
Under- Graduate	17600	19228	36828	18770	20444	39214
PG Diploma	42	71	113	40	89	129
Diploma	859	1210	2069	859	1343	2202

Integrated	98	88	197	310	276	586
Certificate	6	0	6	0	0	0
Total	21750	25193	46954	23557	27666	51223

Source: All India Survey on Higher Education 2021-22 (AISHE)

The given Table No.3 illustrates the trend in the number of female students relative to male students in higher education in Nagaland from the academic year 2017-18 to 2021-22 and It is clear that, in all the given years shown except for the year 2017-18, female students have consistently surpassed male students in numbers. This trend signifies that women exhibit a positive inclination toward higher education.

c. Academic Performance

The number of women teachers and women students in higher education is found to be higher than that of male teachers and male students. Today, women are excelling in almost every field and even in higher education, it is interesting to note that the performance of female students in academics is higher than that of their male counterpart which is depicted in the table below.

Table No. 4. Academic performance of female students in comparison to male students in higher education in Nagaland

Year	Male	Percentage	Female	Percentage	Total
2017-18	3643	45.70	4328	54.30	7971
2018-19	4087	46.19	4761	53.81	8848
2019-20	4485	44.54	5584	55.46	10069
2020-21	4374	44.11	5542	55.89	9916
2021-22	6322	45.93	7442	54.07	13764

Source: All India Survey on Higher Education 2021-22 (AISHE)

The table no. 4 clearly indicates that in each of the years provided, female students have consistently performed better than that of their male counterparts, demonstrating a higher level of academic achievement among female students.

3.2. Analysis of data on pupil-teacher ratio in higher education in Nagaland

The Pupil- Teacher Ratio (PTR) is the average number of pupils per teacher at a specified level of education. The PTR is calculated by dividing the number of teacher by the total number of students enrolled at a particular level of education.

Table No. 5. *Pupil-Teacher Ratio in Higher Education during the given years*

Year	Pupil- Teacher Ratio
2017-18	19
2018-19	19
2019-20	18
2020-21	19
2021-22	20

Source: *All India Survey on Higher Education 2021-22 (AISHE)*

The above table no. 5 shows that in all the given years, the pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) is between 18 and 20, which reflects a balanced class size and an educational setting conducive to effective teaching and learning.

3.3. Analysis of data on Gross Enrollment Ratio in Higher Education in Nagaland

The Gross Enrollment Ratio is a scale in education sector used to assess the enrollment rate of students in a particular level of education. The GER is calculated by dividing the number of students enrolled at a specific level of education by the total population of the age group officially designated for that level of education, regardless of the students' actual ages and multiplying by 100. .

Table No. 6. *Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Higher Education in Nagaland*

Year	Male	Female	Total
2017-18	15.9	16.6	16.2
2018-19	15.7	18.1	16.8
2019-20	14.4	18.7	16.4
2020-21	15.4	19.3	17.3
2021-22	16.5	21.2	18.8

Source: *All India Survey on Higher Education 2021-22 (AISHE)*

As per table no. 6, the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) of male and female in higher education shows that that women have a higher level of participation and enrollment in higher education compared to men.

3.4. Analysis of data on Gender Parity Index (GPI) in Higher Education in Nagaland

The Gender Parity Index (GPI) is a useful measure for balance in educational context and is calculated by dividing the female gross enrollment ratio by the male gross enrollment ratio for the given level of education. A GPI of 1 indicates parity between the two genders, whereby, a GPI between 0-1 indicates a disparity in favour of male and a GPI above 1 indicates a disparity in favour of female.

Table No. 7. *Gender Parity Index (GPI) in Higher Education in Nagaland*

Year	Gender Parity Index
2017-18	1.05
2018-19	1.16
2019-20	1.3
2020-21	1.26
2021-22	1.28

Source: *All India Survey on Higher Education 2021-22 (AISHE)*

The above Table No. 7 shows that in all of the given years, the Gender Parity Index (GPI) was found to be above 1, ranging between 1.05 and 1.28 which indicates that the female students have a higher representation and performance in higher education when compared to their male counterpart.

4. Findings and discussion

The findings and discussions of the study are presented as follows:

1. The study found that the female teachers has consistently outnumbered the male teachers from the academic year 2017-18 to 2021-22 which demonstrates a growing dominance of female teacher and this trend indicates a significant gender disparity in the teaching workforce. The increase in the participation of women in higher education may be probably due to cultural perception as the society associates

teaching with nurturing and care giving which could influence career choices of women. The growing trend of female women pursuing higher educational degrees may also be a contributing factor to female participation in higher education. Besides, other factors such as flexible working conditions, supportive working environment may also be contributing factor for higher female participation.

2. The findings shows that except for the academic year 2017-18, the female student have consistently surpassed the male students and their enrollment rate has also increased significantly over the given years and this trend indicates a growing trend of women involvement in higher education and a shift in the educational demography. The increasing enrollment of female students in higher education may be due to shift in gender roles, better career opportunities, availability of financial aid in the form of scholarships and incentives, supportive program such as counselling, mentorship contributing towards female enrollment and retention in higher education in Nagaland. Moreover, it is also found that the percentage of women students' enrollment in Nagaland is higher than that of women in India highlighting the efforts of the state to promote women's education.
3. The results from the study highlights that in each of the years provided (2017- 2021), female students have consistently performed better in academics than that of their male counterparts, demonstrating a higher level of academic achievement among female students.
4. The study also demonstrates the Pupil teacher Ratio in Nagaland, whereby, the PTR was found to be between 18 and 20 in all the given years reflecting a balanced class size and an educational setting conducive to effective teaching and learning.
5. The study also illustrates on the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) of male and female in higher education in Nagaland, where the female GER has consistently surpassed the male GER during the given period. This trend indicates a positive development of women's access and participation in higher education. The reason for higher female GER may be probable due to shift in the attitude of people towards women education, equal access to opportunities and financial assistance through scholarship. Besides, the demand for more skilled and qualified worker may also be attributed to higher enrollment of women in higher education.
6. The findings further shows that the Gender Parity Index (GPI) in higher education in Nagaland was found to be above 1 in all the given years which indicates a higher

proportion of female students compare to male students. The consistently high GPI in higher education in Nagaland shows a positive shift towards gender parity. It also indicates a higher favorable environment and supportive condition for female student in higher education in Nagaland.

5. Conclusion

Women's participation in higher education is indispensable and crucial for the development of any country as it leads to increased productivity and contributes toward income generation. The status of women in higher education has seen unprecedented growth marked by enrollment, academic achievement, and participation in various fields across disciplines in higher education in Nagaland. Even in relation to the GPI, it was found that the GPI was found to be above 1 which clearly illustrates a picture of higher participation of women in higher education institutions in the state. The increasing trend of women participation and involvement in higher education indicates a sign of progress in the society. This remarkable and significant change and progress reflects on the shift towards gender equity in higher education. Swami Vivekananda remarked, "It is impossible to think about the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is impossible for a bird to fly on only one wing." (Oza & Japee, 2020). Women constitute almost half of the total population and denying them education will hinder the growth and progress of the society and the nation as well. Education is the best instrument for bringing about change and development and if a country is to prosper and go in alignment with the pace of other developing countries, equal opportunities for access to education should also be provided to women as well. The high representation of women in higher education in Nagaland, both in terms of enrollment and the number of female educators, reflects significant progress in women's education in the state. However, beyond higher education, women should also be encouraged to participate in fields such as administration, healthcare, business and entrepreneurship, law, politics, STEM and other related areas. Furthermore, the state government should take up initiatives to help women explore various career paths, providing greater opportunities for women empowerment.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is **no conflict of interest** regarding the publication of this article.

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