

2. A Study on Women in Higher Education in Assam

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Abstract:

Women are nearly the half of the total population size of a society. The economic empowerment of women is predominantly depending on educational achievement of women in a society. This is not only true that education is an entry point of various opportunities but also educational achievement of women helps her to making self-confident in all spheres of activities of a society, including full participation on the basis of equality in the decision-making process to access power of social and economic aspects of society. It improves quality of life such that, attaining education one becomes more aware about socio-economic obstacles. In Assam, it has reordered that gender gaps between male and female have reduced in primary and secondary level of education, but the aforementioned disparities still exist in higher education. A great number of girls especially from the rural areas drop out before reaching any higher education. Therefore, there is need to develop a flexible, accessible and equitable education system in which women along with the men counterpart can easily fulfill their aspiration and to create a responsible develop society with overcoming their social obligations. This presented paper is an attempt to study on present status of women in higher education in Assam and find out key factors which will be focus to bring out educational inequality among men and women and their solutions.

Keywords:

Women, Education, Society, Women status, Higher education, Development

2.1 Introduction:

Education is the Backbone of a nation and woman education is the foundation of the system of education. Education is key factor in the development of any aspects and material success of a country. It makes the people self-conscious, self-reliance, self-dependence, logical etc. The whole education system has been classified in to three categories namely primary, secondary and Higher education.

Higher Education provides opportunities to the people to reflect on the critical social, cultural, moral, economic and spiritual issues facing humanity. It provides knowledgeable and skillful persons for national development. Higher education of a country has taken a significant role for human development of a country. It has very important for socio-economic development of a country like India.

Men and women are both integral part of the society. A society cannot develop without improvement of societal status of women. For improving societal status of women, it needs better education for them, which ensures to women provision of better employment opportunities, income generation activities including participation in the decision-making process on the basis of equality. For this great purpose, higher education department of country can take a significant role for making empowered women. In the very beginning of history of education, different commission gave importance on woman education and tries to eliminate the differences between male and female in education. But still there is a huge gap between men and women in all sections of education in Assam as well as in India.

Assam is a backward state with poor educational infrastructure compare to India. In case of higher education, Assam has limited number of educational institutions. According to the All-India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) Report 2019-20, AISHE portal registered number of higher educational institution is 676, out of which universities are 26, degree colleges are 558 and state-alone institutions (not affiliated universities) are 92. As per AISHE survey report 2019-20, Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of Assam in higher education is 17.3% of which male and female are 17.4% and 17.2% as compare 27.1% of India of which male and female are 26.9% and 27.3% respectively. As per population census 2011 it rose to 73.18% of which male & female were stands at 78.81% and 67.27% as compare to India's 74.04% of which male & female were 82.14% and female 65.46% respectively. Thus, status of higher education in Assam is lagging behind compare to India in all respect especially in quantity as well in gender gap.

Hence this presented paper is an attempt to study the present educational status of women in higher education in Assam and find out key factors which will be focused to bring out inequality in higher education among men and women and their solutions.

2.2 Review of Literature:

Some important review of present study of the "History of Education in India" written by Jatin Baruah, senior Prof. Navaday College of education, Teacher training Ghy. Social discrimination, Economic dependence, lack of communication, lack of hostel accommodation, has married life, Dearth of the lady teachers, lack of vocational education girls, Apathy of the Govt. etc. Development and planning of Modern Education written by J.C. Agarwal stated in his book, the census of slow progress of woman is as follows. Economical backwardness of the rural community, lack of proper social attitudes in the rural areas for the education of girls, lack of educational facilities in rural areas, lack of woman teachers, lack of proper supervision & guidance due to inadequate woman personal in the inspectorate, lack of adequate incentives, lack of suitable curriculum, co-educational institutions etc. History of Indian Education written by B.C. Raj maintained some obstacles, social evils and out-dated conventions. Morley (2006) found that women face gender bias and discrimination treatment at their workplaces as per personal narratives and experiences conveyed by many women academics. In Indian studies, Tilak (2015) observed that during the post-independence period, there was a significant improvement in women's participation in higher education in India. Ghara (2016) found that the women participation in higher education was increasing in almost all states in India since 1970-71 till 2015-16. The rate of increase was slow in almost all the states of India.

According to him, female enrolment in higher education is dependent on women teachers. Thus, establishment of higher educational institutes for women especially in rural areas were still in dearth and women enrolment was still low as compared men enrolment.

2.3 Importance of the Study:

The government of Assam has introduced various measures to increase enrolment of women in higher education. But all these measures have no yield proper result due to various short comings related to their implementation. So, a depth study is urgently needed for upliftment of women in higher education for the study area. The proposed study would attempt to obtain the present status of women in higher education in Assam. It also investigates various measures for improving higher educational status of women and find out of their short comings to make their solutions. So, this study would be beneficial for future research workers and policy makers for upliftment of women in higher education.

2.4 Objectives of the Study:

1. To examine the status of women in higher education compare to men in Assam.
2. To examine the participation of women in higher education in Assam compare to India.

2.5 Methodology of Study:

The descriptive research methodology has been used for the study. To evaluate the overall position of the status of women in higher education in Assam, secondary information has been collected from various published sources like books, journals, newspapers, government and semi-government publications, like All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) Report and websites of various agencies related to higher education etc. from year to year. The collected information would be processed in the completion of the paper.

2.6 Data Analysis:

Assam is a backward state of India on account of social, economic and cultural aspects. To know the higher educational status of women in all respect of Assam, it should be studied on sex wise enrolment in higher educational institutions, gross enrolment ratio in higher education, gender parity index and sex wise employment in various educational institutions. Hence, all necessary data have been collected from various secondary sources relating to women in higher education to make the study meaningful. The main features of the study have presented and analyzed in the following sections.

2.6.1 Sex-Wise Enrolment (Age 18-23) In Higher Educational Institutions in Assam:

The Table 2.1 shows sex wise enrolment in higher education in Assam in various courses like PhD, M. Phil, PG, UG, Certificate and Integrated courses, year to year from 2013-14 to 2019-20 as per AISHE report.

Table 2.1 Sex-wise enrolment in higher educational institution in Assam

Courses	2013-14		2015-16		2017-18		2019-20	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Ph. d	2097	1356	2318	1556	2633	1704	3214	2413
M. Phil	53	114	65	149	129	224	245	371
Post Graduate	27797	31404	36783	42770	39907	48393	27523	39800
Under Graduate	241685	232178	241045	223576	278600	277744	269915	278078
PG Diploma	1469	1397	1670	1287	1735	1627	1683	1530
Diploma	19545	14457	7078	4530	10223	7709	11139	8078
Certificate	937	1199	1715	1939	1082	1353	743	1176
Integrated	1443	1896	2182	2292	2630	2651	2446	2247
Total	295,026	284,001	292,856	278,099	336,939	341,405	316,908	333,693

Source: AISHE Report from 2013-14 to 2019-20.

Table 2.2: Sex-wise enrolment summary in higher educational institution in Assam

	2013-14	2015-16	2017-18	2019-20
Male	295,026	292,856	336,939	316,908
Female	284,001	278,099	341,405	333,693

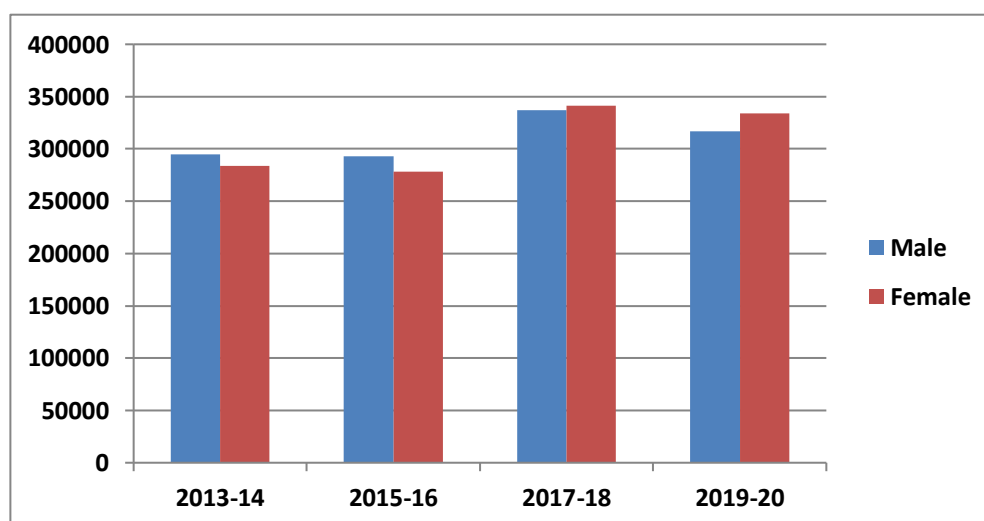


Figure 2.1: Sex-wise enrolment summary in higher educational institution in Assam

In 2013-14, out of total 579,027 enrolments, male and female were 295,026 and 284,001 respectively. It declined to 570,955 in 2015-16, where male and female was 292,856 and 278,099, further it rose to 678,344 in 2017-18 where male and female were 336,939 and 341,405 respectively. Finally, total enrolment in higher education in Assam reached to 650,601, where male and female was 316,908 and 333,693 respectively.

Thus, we have a rising trend of enrolment in higher education in Assam both for male and female from 2013-14 to 2019-20. Initially women enrolment was lower than men but in 2019-20, women enrolment became higher than men.

2.6.2 Sex-Wise Gross Enrolment Ratios in Higher Education (GER) In Assam:

The educational status of the women depends upon gross enrolment ration (GER) of women compare to men. Table 2.3 shows GER of women compare to men in higher education in Assam as well as India, as per AISHE report from 2013-14 to 2019-20.

Table 2.3 Sex wise Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education in Assam:

Year	Assam			India		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2013-14	16.5	15.2	15.8	23.9	22.1	23.0
2015-16	16.2	14.7	15.4	25.4	23.5	24.5
2017-18	18.6	17.8	18.2	26.3	25.4	25.8
2019-20	17.4	17.2	17.3	26.9	27.3	27.1

Source: AISHE Report from 2013-14 to 2019-20.

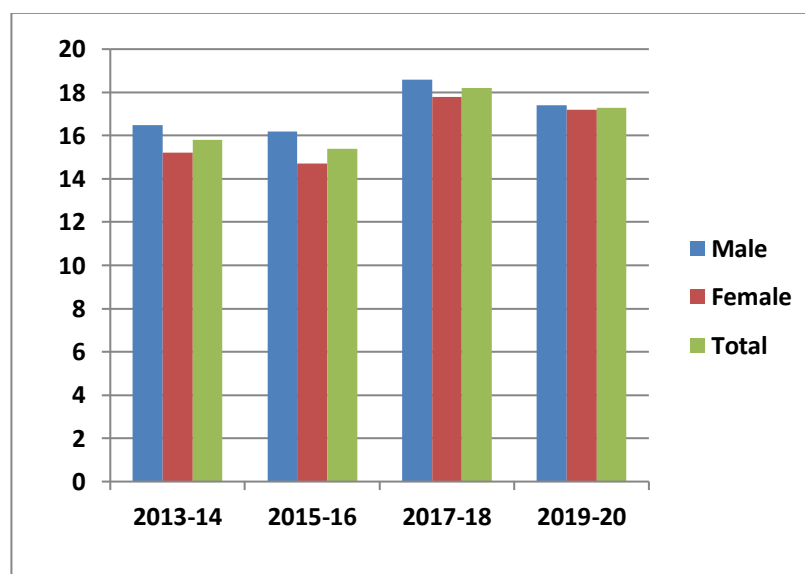


Figure 2.2: GER of Assam

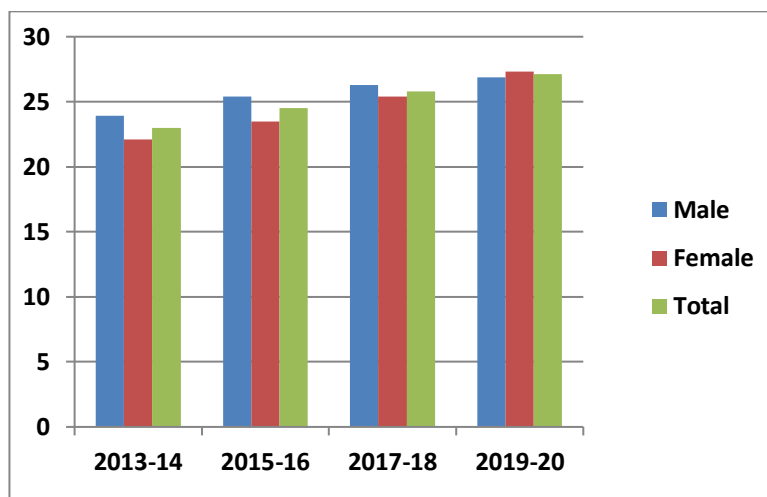


Figure 2.3: GER of India

In 2013-14, total GER of Assam in higher education was 15.8, where male and female was 16.5 and 15.2 compare to 23.0 of India, where male and female was 23.9 and 22.1 respectively. It declined to 15.4 in 2015-16, where male and female was 16.2 and 14.7 compare to 24.5 of India where male and female was 25.4 and 23.5, further GER of Assam rose to 18.2 in 2017-18 where male and female was 18.6 and 17.8 respectively. Finally, GER in higher education in Assam reached to 17.3, where male and female was 17.4 and 17.2 respectively as compare to 27.1 of India, where male and female was 26.9 and 27.3 respectively. Thus, we have a rising trend of gross enrolment ratio in higher education in Assam as well as India both for male and female from 2013-14 to 2019-20. But GER of women is lower than men in Assam. On the other hand, GER of India is higher than Assam in respect to total as well as male and female.

2.6.3 Gender Parity Index (GPI) in higher education (GER) in Assam:

The Gender Parity Index (GPI) means how much women participate in education against one man. This is one of the indicators to know status of women in higher education. The table 2.4 shows Gender Parity Index (GPI) of Assam in higher education compare to India, as per AISHE report from 2013-14 to 2019-20.

Table 2.4: Gender Parity Index in higher education in Assam and India

Academic year	Assam	India
2013-14	0.92	0.92
2015-16	0.90	0.92
2017-18	0.96	0.97
2019-20	0.99	1.01

Source: AISHE Report from 2013-14 to 2019-20.

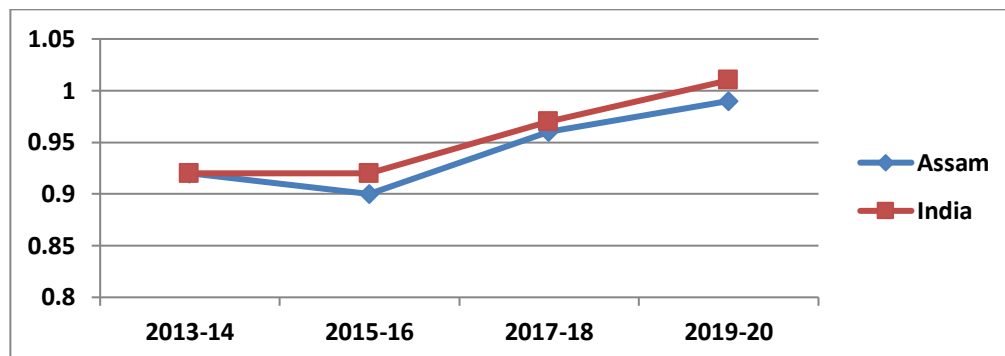


Figure 2.4: Gender Parity Index in higher education in Assam and India

In 2013-14, GPI of Assam in higher education was 0.92 which was equal with India. It declined to 0.90 in 2015-16 compare to 0.92 of India, further GPI of Assam rose to 0.96 in 2017-18 compare to 0.97 of India. Finally, GPI in higher education in Assam reached to 0.99 as compare to 1.01 of India.

Thus, we have a rising trend of gender parity index of Assam in higher education in Assam as well as India from 2013-14 to 2019-20. But GPI of Assam in higher education is lower than India. It means participation of women in higher education compare to men in Assam is lower than India.

2.6.4 Sex Wise Employment in Higher Educational Institutions in Assam:

The table 2.5 and 2.6 shows sex wise employment in higher educational institutions in Assam in universities and colleges as teaching and non-teaching staff in various post positions as per AISHE report from 2013-14 to 2019-20.

Table 2.5: Sex wise employment of teaching staff in higher education in Assam:

Category of Post	2013-14		2015-16		2017-18		2019-20	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Professor	1195	390	1309	335	1150	316	1257	365
Associate Professor	3019	1658	3136	1719	2497	1361	2489	1416
Assistant Professor	6995	4190	7655	4780	7255	5058	8618	6371
Demonstrator	411	219	1019	369	318	207	415	375
Temporary Teacher	904	844	1196	1327	702	815	781	958
Total	12,524	7,301	14,315	8,530	11,922	7,757	13,560	9,485

Source: AISHE Report from 2013-14 to 2019-20.

Table 2.6: Sex wise employment of non-teaching staff in higher education in Assam:

Category of Post	2013-14		2015-16		2017-18		2019-20	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Grade-A	634	186	694	209	1781	2238	1938	2260
Grade-B	898	244	993	360	1564	839	1638	757
Grade-C	4495	1291	4385	1202	4839	1528	5303	1706
Grade-D	5655	965	6145	952	6182	1073	6135	1179
Total	11,682	2,686	12,217	2,723	14,366	5,678	15,014	5,902

Source: AISHE Report from 2013-14 to 2019-20.

Table 2.7: Sex-wise employment summery in higher educational institution in Assam:

Year	2013-14	2015-16	2017-18	2019-20
Male	24,206	26,532	26,288	28,574
Female	9,987	11,216	13,433	15,386

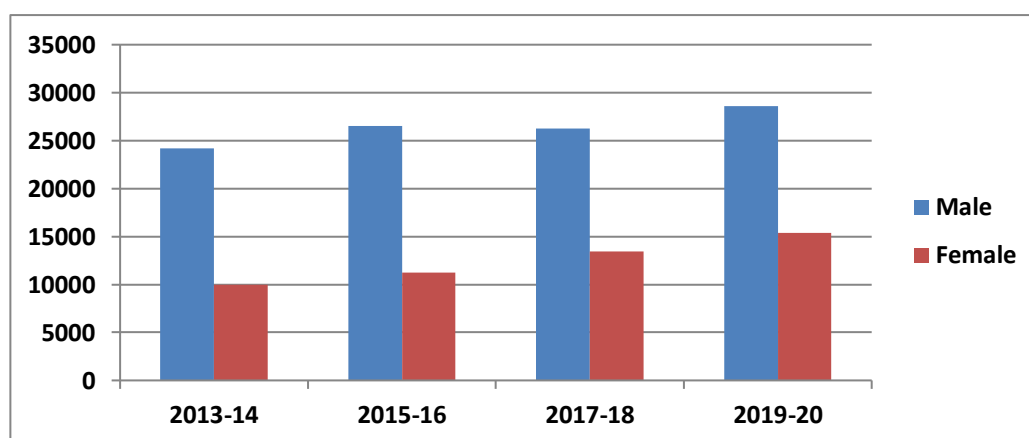


Figure 2.5: Sex-wise employment summery in higher educational institution in Assam

Total employment including both teaching and non-teaching staff in higher educational institution was 34,193 in 2013-14 in which male and female was 24,204 and 9,987 respectively. It increased to 37,748 in 2015-16 where male and female was 26,532 and 11,216, further it rose to 39,721 in 2017-18, where male and female were 26,288 and 13,433 respectively. Finally, total employment in higher education in Assam reached to 43,960, where male and female were 28,574 and 15,386 respectively.

Thus, we have a rising trend of employment in Assam in higher educational institutions in Assam. But employment of women including both teaching and non-teaching staff in higher educational institutions is lower than men,

2.7 Main Findings of the Study:

Following are the main findings of the study:

- The women enrolment in higher education in Assam was lower than men before 2017-18, but after that it became more than men which is satisfactory.
- Participation of women in PhD courses in Assam is unsatisfactory.
- The GER of women in Assam in higher education is lower than men. At same time GER of Assam is lower than India in respect of both men and women which are unsatisfactory.
- The Gender Parity Index of Assam in higher education is lower than India which is unsatisfactory.
- Employment of women in teaching staff in higher educational institutions is lower than men in all respect is unsatisfactory.
- Employment of women in non-teaching staff in higher educational institutions is also so much lower than men is unsatisfactory.

2.8 Suggestions:

- Positive attitude of parents should be made towards education of girl child, not only elementary level but also higher education level for Assam.
- Technical and vocational education should be available for women in higher education.
- Number of higher educational institution need to extent up to all villages of the community.
- Efforts should be made to solve the drop out problem of women in higher education.
- Government and community should work for development of women in higher education.
- Coaching facilities should be made for the women of the community will get better chance to be specialized their capacity in employment in higher educational institutions.
- The women community of Assam should give more opportunity in PhD research in higher education.
- Government should take a necessary step to create an environment where all men and women will learn together to remove educational inequality among men and women in higher education.

2.9 Conclusions:

In this study it has found that gross enrolment ratio in higher education in Assam is lower than all India level for the lack of infrastructural facilities in higher education. At the same time GER as well as parity index of women in higher education in Assam is lower compare to men for the lack of positive attitude of parents towards women education. For increasing GER of women in higher education, the mindset of the parents should be concentrating that man and women cannot be differentiated in the reconstruction our society. A nation can only be developed if its women are given ample opportunities. For this great purpose, government along with voluntary organizations should take up concrete steps, to uplift the women in higher education with better employment opportunities.

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