

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-1798
ANSWERED ON-07/08/2024

HIGHER EDUCATION FOR WOMEN

1798 SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN:

Will the Minister of Education be pleased to state:

- (a) the percentage of females enrolled in higher education institutes; and
- (b) the steps being taken to increase this number?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(DR. SUKANTA MAJUMDAR)

(a) As per the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2021-22, the total Student Enrolment in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) is 4.33 Crore, out of which Female Student Enrolment is 2.07 Crore which is nearly 48% of total enrolment.

The Female enrolment has increased to 2.07 Crore in 2021-22 from 1.57 Crore in 2014-15 i.e. (an increase of 32%). Further, Female Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of the country has increased significantly to 28.5 in 2021-22 from 22.9 in 2014-15. Notably, Female GER continues to be more than male GER for fifth consecutive year since 2017-18.

(b) Education being in the Concurrent List, enhancing the quality of education is the responsibility of both the Central and State Governments. Various schemes/ projects/ programmes run by the Ministry have been aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. NEP 2020 aims to ensure that no child loses opportunity to learn and excel because of the circumstances of birth or background. This policy aims at bridging the social category gaps in access, participation, and learning outcomes, including providing greater access to women. The Central Government has taken various measures to promote higher education among the students across the nation including women, such as fee reductions, establishment of more institutes, scholarships, priority access to national level scholarships to aid students with poor financial backgrounds to pursue their education, etc., which have resulted in increased female enrolment and higher female GER, as brought out in part (a).

University Grants Commission (UGC) is implementing scholarship scheme "National Scholarship for Post Graduate Studies (NSPG)" to provide scholarship to students pursuing Post Graduate Programs. UGC is also providing fellowships to pursue Ph.D. in all disciplines including STEM education, under UGC NET-Junior Research Fellowship and Savitribai Jyoti Rao Phule Single Girl Child Fellowship.

Similarly, All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) also offers various scholarships like AICTE Pragati Scholarship Scheme for Women (Degree & Diploma), AICTE PG scholarship Scheme, AICTE Doctoral Fellowship (ADF), AICTE Saksham Scholarship Scheme (Degree & Diploma) and AICTE Swanath Scholarship Scheme (Degree & Diploma). AICTE has also launched the AICTE Post-Doctoral Fellowship (PDF) scheme in June 2024 from the academic year 2024-25 for girls and boys of AICTE approved Institutions.

With a view to improve female enrolment in the Undergraduate Programmes in Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and National Institutes of Technology (NITs), supernumerary seats were created which increased the female enrolment from less than 10% to more than 20%. Women constitute 43% of enrolment in STEM education, one of the highest in the world.

Further, Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and National Institutes of Technology (NITs) also provide 100% tuition fee waiver for SC/ST/PwD undergraduate students. Besides, the most economically backward students (whose family income is less than Rs.1.00 lakh per annum) gets full remission of the fee and the other economically backward students with family income between Rs.1.00 lakh to Rs.5.00 lakh get 2/3rd fee remission.

Apart from this, UGC is implementing the scheme of “Development of Women’s Studies in Indian Universities and Colleges”. This scheme provides funds for setting up Women Studies Centers (WSCs) in universities and colleges, focusing on teaching, research, curriculum development, training and outreach activities. The objectives of the scheme are to provide financial support in advancing Women’s Studies through teaching, research and practical work.

Synergising the School Education and Higher Education, the IIT-Madras has undertaken “Vidya Shakti” scheme which aims at enhancing conceptual and foundational learning skills of children from rural areas to enhance enrolment (including women) in STEM branches in Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs).

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) offers fellowships to promote research in basic and applied sciences among women through programs under Women in Science and Engineering- KIRAN (WISE-KIRAN) and SERB- Promoting Opportunities for Women in Exploratory Research (SERB-POWER) Fellowship scheme to identify and reward outstanding women researchers and innovators working in various Science & Technology program in Indian academic institutions and R&D laboratories.

The Department of Biotechnology (DBT) has been supporting several programs to promote science education & research and offers various scholarship for the higher education and provides opportunities to female researchers for participation in schemes of the Department such as DBT- Junior Research Fellowship Program and DBT- Research Associateship Program in which female candidates are given an age relaxation of 05 years. The Biotechnology Career Advancement and Re- orientation Programme (BioCARE) is a special programme of the DBT with a vision to promote and support women in science.
