

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2179
ANSWERED ON 19.03.2025

GENDER GAP IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND ENERGY SECTORS

2179 SHRI SUJEET KUMAR:

Will the Minister of SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that women are under-represented in areas like science and technology sector, particularly in high-skill areas such as AI, robotics, and biotechnology;
- (b) whether Government has taken any steps to build skill centres for women in the fields of science, technology and energy sectors to address the gender gap, if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the manner in which Government is planning to increase women labour force participation rate in technology and energy sector?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

(SHRI JAYANT CHAUDHARY)

(a): As per the latest All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE 2021-22) estimates, the share of female candidates in overall enrolment is 42.6 percent in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics) at UG, PG, MPhil and PhD levels. .

(b): Under the Government of India's Skill India Mission (SIM), the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) delivers skill, re-skill and up-skill training through an extensive network of skill development centres under various schemes, viz. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Jan Sikhshan Sansthan (JSS), National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) and Craftsman Training Scheme (CTS) through Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), to all the sections of the society across the country. The SIM aims at enabling youth of India to get future ready, equipped with industry relevant skills.

The schemes of MSDE for skill development are demand driven and the training centres (TCs) are set up/ engaged on need basis to impart the training across the country. For instance, there are 19 National Skill Training Institutes (NSTIs) and more than 300 ITIs for women in the country. To encourage participation of women in the Skill development Programmes, special provisions have been made in the Common Cost Norms (CCN), in terms of reimbursement of boarding & lodging and conveyance costs.

(c) As per the latest Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS 2023-24) estimates, female labour force participation rate has increased from 23.3 per cent in 2017-18 to 41.7 per cent in 2023-24. Also, around 39.6 percent of total women with education level of post-graduate and above are working in 2023-24, compared to 34.5 percent in 2017-18.

To encourage female labour force participation, Government is implementing women centric schemes such as Mission Shakti, Namo Drone Didi, Lakhpati Didi, etc. for improving the employability of women. A number of provisions have been incorporated in the labour laws for equal opportunity and congenial work environment for women workers, such as paid maternity leave, child care leave, creche facility, equal wages etc.

Department of Science and Technology (DST) implements 'Women in Science and Engineering-KIRAN (WISE-KIRAN)' initiative to strengthen women's participation in STEM fields. This initiative includes multiple programs that provide opportunities for women in STEM at different career stages. In addition, the DST implements the Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research (INSPIRE) Scheme to enhance rates of attachment of talented youths to undertake higher education in science intensive programmes by providing Scholarships/Fellowships for various age-group of women.

Department of Biotechnology implements 'Biotechnology Career Advancement and Re-orientation (BioCARE)' scheme with an aim of enhancing the participation of women scientists in Biotechnology and allied research areas in India.

With a view to improve female enrolment in the UG 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%.
