

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-1950
ANSWERED ON-06/08/2025

Women's enrolment in higher education and technical institutes

1950 **Shri A. D. Singh:**

Will the Minister of *Education* be pleased to state:

- (a) the current status of women's enrolment in higher education and technical institutes across the country;
- (b) whether Government has identified regions or communities with low female enrolment in these sectors;
- (c) the specific schemes or initiatives launched to promote higher education among women, particularly in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields;
- (d) whether any financial incentives, scholarships or reservation policies are in place to support women students; and
- (e) the measures being taken to improve infrastructure, safety and hostel facilities for women in higher and technical education institutions?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(DR. SUKANTA MAJUMDAR)

(a): As per All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE), 2022-23 (Provisional), female enrolment in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) is 2.18 crore out of which 18.24 lakh women are enrolled in technical courses.

(b): Female enrolment in all HEIs in the country has increased to 2.18 crore in 2022-23 (Provisional) from 1.82 crore in 2018-19 and increase in technical courses during the same period is from 16 lakh to 18.28 lakh.

The Gender Parity Index (GPI) has been continuously more than 1 since 2017-18, which indicates more female participation than male in Higher Education. The GPI for almost all States/UTs is more than 1 in 2022-23 (provisional).

(c) & (d): 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.

All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) offers various scholarships like

- i. AICTE Pragati Scholarship Scheme for Women (Degree & Diploma);
- ii. AICTE PG scholarship Scheme, AICTE Doctoral Fellowship (ADF) ;
- iii. AICTE Saksham Scholarship Scheme (Degree & Diploma) ;
- iv. AICTE Swanath Scholarship Scheme (Degree & Diploma);
- v. AICTE Doctoral Fellowship (ADF)

The following Educational Scholarship schemes are also implemented by AICTE from Academic Year 2024-25:

- i. AICTE Sarswati Scholarship Scheme for Girl Students (BBA, BCA & BMS Degree);
- ii. AICTE Yashasvi (Young Achievers' Scholarship and Holistic Academic Skills Venture Initiative) Scheme 2024 ;
- iii. AICTE Post-Doctoral Fellowship (PDF)

University Grants Commission (UGC) is implementing scholarship scheme “National Scholarship for Post Graduate Studies (NSPG)” to provide scholarship to students pursuing Post Graduate Programs. In this scheme there are total 10,000 slots. Out of these 10,000/- slots, 50% slots are earmarked for science (STEM) subjects and while preparing merit, 30% slots are earmarked for women.

UGC is 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.

With a view to improving female enrolment in the B.Tech Programmes in IITs, IIT Council in its 51st meeting decided to increase female enrolment from 8% in 2016 to 14% in 2018-19, 17% in 2019-20 and 20% in 2020-21 by creating supernumerary seats. Accordingly, the female enrolment in IITs for B. Tech. Programmes was achieved as 15.34% in 2018, 18% in 2019, 19.9% in 2020, 19.72% in 2021, 20.06% in 2022, 19.7% in 2023 and 19.75% in 2024.

Further, with a view to address the gender gap by providing additional support and opportunities for women to excel in their academic pursuits, the Government has approved the proposal to provide one additional year (6 years in total) PhD HTRA (Half-time Teaching/ Research Assistantship) for female PhD research scholars of IITs on justifiable reasons, in exceptional circumstances, on case-to-case basis, subject to certain provisions.

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) is implementing a holistic scheme ‘Women in Science and Engineering-KIRAN (WISE-KIRAN)’ to encourage women’s participation in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) fields. Under this scheme, the WISE Fellowship for Ph.D. (WISE-PhD) programme supports women to pursue research in basic and applied sciences. Further, the WISE-Post Doctoral Fellowship (WISE-PDF) and WISE-Societal Challenges with Opportunities (WISE-SCOPE) programmes encourage women to pursue Post-Doctoral research in STEM fields. The DST is also implementing the ‘WIDUSHI’ programme, which enables senior women scientists under two categories viz. retired (Category-A) and not in regular employment (Category-B) to continue their scientific careers. Another programme ‘WISE Internship in IPR (WISE-IPR)’ provides one-year on-the-job training in the field of Intellectual Property Rights. Further, the Vigyan Jyoti programme encourages meritorious girls of Class IX-XII by mentoring them through various year-round activities to pursue higher education and careers in STEM, especially in the areas where the participation of women is low.

DST is also implementing the ‘Gender Advancement for Transforming Institutions (GATI)’ programme under WISE-KIRAN aims to transform institutions for a more gender-sensitive approach and inclusiveness to increase the representation of women in research and development roles in Indian institutions with the ultimate goal of improving gender equality in STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, Medicine).

DST further supports students pursuing Bachelor and Master's programs in Academic Institutions/Universities through INSPIRE-Scholarship for Higher Education (SHE). SHE aims to enhance participation of youth in basic science research by providing summer internship with leading researchers.

BioCARE Fellowship programme of Department of Biotechnology (DBT) aims to enhance participation of women scientists in India towards research in Biotechnology and allied area. This endeavor of DBT is giving a strong foothold to women scientists into the scientific profession, to help them re-enter into the mainstream and to provide a launch pad for further forays into the field of science and technology.

(e): As per AISHE 2022-23 (Provisional), 19 Universities and 4674 Colleges are exclusively for Women and 28699 Girls hostel in all HEIs across India.

AICTE is regularly monitoring the security grievance of girl students in AICTE approved institutions. It is mandatory to all AICTE approved institutions to have Women harassment cell, Anti ragging cell, Internal Complaints Committee ICC, Structure of Anti Ragging Committee, Grievance Redressal Mechanism, Establishment of 24x7 women helpline number and security system in the campus for providing safety to students and female faculty and non-teaching faculty, Establishment of platform or hiring counsellors for seeking help and guidance w.r.t. psychological counselling related to Mental Health for Students, faculty and non-teaching faculty.

UGC has undertaken various initiatives to ensure strict compliance with the mandates related to the constitution and functioning of Internal Complaints Committees (ICCs) in all Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs). The key initiatives are as follows:

- i UGC has notified UGC (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal of Sexual Harassment of Women Employees and Students in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2015, which, being statutory in nature, are binding on Universities and Colleges.
- ii SAKSHAM Portal has been launched where women can also lodge complaints of sexual harassment. Additionally, institutions are requested to submit an annual return on cases of sexual harassment and complete the online Gender Audit compliance through the SAKSHAM Portal.
- iii Annual Advisory is issued to all HEIs regarding Constitution of ICCs and Special Women's Cells, display of banners and posters, display of names and contact details of ICC members, installation of billboards highlighting penal consequences and women's helpline numbers.
- iv UGC has provided a toll-free number (1800-111-656) for registering grievances related to women and sexual harassment.
- v Guidelines for Basic Facilities and Amenities has been issued in light of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the guidelines titled "Basic Facilities and Amenities for a Safe, Secure Environment for Women and Women Cells (for sensitization, policy implementation, monitoring, and grievance redressal) in HEIs" emphasize that providing a safe, secure, and violence-free environment—particularly for women students—is the utmost responsibility of institutions.
