

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO.192
ANSWERED ON 05.08.2024

Promotion of Higher Education among Women in Rural Areas

†*192 MS IQRA CHOUDHARY:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) the measures taken/being taken by the Government to promote higher education among women in rural areas;
- (b) the details of dropout rate i.e non-enrolment in higher education after school education among women in rural areas, State-wise;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to set up new institutions and universities to provide higher education to the women of rural India;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the measures taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to educate women in the educationally backward areas of Kairana Parliamentary Constituency in Uttar Pradesh?

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION
(SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.192 FOR ANSWER ON 05.08.2024 ASKED BY MS IQRA CHOUDHARY, HON'BLE MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT REGARDING PROMOTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AMONG WOMEN IN RURAL AREAS

(a) to (e): 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. It has taken into account the concerns of the Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) which inter-alia includes geographical identities such as students from villages, small towns, and aspirational districts and other categories. This policy aims at bridging the social category gaps in access, participation, and learning outcomes.

The Ministry has launched the third phase of Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) as Pradhan Mantri Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA) in June 2023 with an outlay of Rs. 12926.10 crore for the period 2023-24 to 2025-26 to cater to needs of educationally unserved/ underserved areas. It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme aimed at funding specific State government universities and colleges, including in the rural areas, so as to improve their quality by ensuring their conformity to prescribed norms and standards. Under PM-USHA, priority is given to Focus Districts. The focus districts are identified by the concerned States/ UTs based on various criteria including low Gross Enrolment Ratio, Gender Parity, population proportion and enrolment proportion for females, transgenders, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes, Aspirational/ Border Area/ Left Wing Extremism prone district, etc.

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 to Rs.5.00 lakh get 2/3rd fee remission.

The Government is implementing different scholarship schemes for providing financial assistance in higher education to promote science education & research among women. The details of these scholarship schemes may be accessed at https://www.education.gov.in/parl_ques.

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).

As per All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE), 2021-22, the total number of HEIs i.e. University/University level Institutions, College and Standalone Institutions, registered under AISHE has increased to 58,643 in 2021-22 from 51,534 in 2014-15. Total student enrolment in higher education has increased to 4.33 crore in 2021-22 from 3.42 crore in 2014-15.

Female enrolment in Higher Education increased to 2.07 crore in 2021-22 from 1.57 crore in 2014-15 i.e. 32% increase. Female GER increased to 28.5 in 2021-22 from 27.9 in 2020-21 and 22.9 in 2014-15. 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.
