

## **Gender Equality, Equity and Women Empowerment in India:**

*"I should treat daughters and sons on a footing of perfect equality. Both are God's gifts. They have an equal right to live and are equally necessary to keep the World going"*

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**Indian Association of Parliamentarians  
on Population and Development**

# **Gender Equality, Equity and Women Empowerment in India: *Status, Challenges and Opportunities***

*“I should treat daughters and sons on a footing of perfect equality. Both are God’s gifts. They have an equal right to live and are equally necessary to keep the World going”*

Mahatma Gandhi (Young India 1929/1938)



Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development  
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## Acknowledgement

The idea of undertaking a study on “Gender Equality, Equity and Women Empowerment: Status and Challenges” emerged from the UN resolve towards Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030), wherein Goal-5 shows deep concern for gender equality and women empowerment.

On the initiation of Prof. P. J. Kurien, a Proposal was drafted for investigating key gender issues confronting our society and the concern of our Parliamentarians in this regard. The proposal was presented in one of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings chaired by Prof. P.J. Kurien. The chairperson and the members of the committee welcomed the proposal and it was finally approved in December 2020. The study was to be completed in four months. The Executive Secretary, IAPPD, Sh. Manmohan Sharma, took the responsibility of coordinating the study and helping in providing infrastructural support.

Several problems were confronted during the process of research of which huge data, small budget, short time-line, COVID situations are a few to name, which prolonged the study.

I express my deep gratitude to all my TAC colleagues for their consistent academic and moral support during this period. Their timely comments on the document and in the on-line meetings have given shape to the report as it is being submitted now. Thanks to Dr. Jai Narain, Dr. Deepak Gupta, Ms. Suneeta Mukherjee, Ms. Geeta Narain, Dr. J.S. Yadav, Shri R.N. Singh, Prof. R.P. Tyagi for enriching the debates in the meetings. Special thanks are to Prof. P.P. Talwar, for monitoring and guiding the Project to its finale, and to Dr. Abhay Kumar for his untiring efforts despite his extremely busy schedule.

The study would not have been completed without the excellent and everready support by the members of the IAPPD team and Ms. Soniya Singh, Ms. Richa Bhutani and Mr. Sudhir Kumar Shukla (Ph.D. scholars).

We hope this study would provide useful information in sensitization of the elected representatives on the issues of Gender Equality, Equity and Women Empowerment in India. We also hope that this study will help institutions with evidence to support further policies and programmes for Women–Welfare in the country.

Prof. Sudesh Nangia

## Message

Being Chairperson of the IAPPD and as a social and political activist and an academician by profession, I have been taking keen interest in the studies being conducted by the IAPPD from time to time under the technical advice of the eminent experts in their fields.



With commitment of Government of India to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations, I floated an idea of conducting a study related to Women Equality and Empowerment (SDG-5) in India, a topic of crucial relevance and need of the hour.

I am quite happy to note that the study of this kind which was undertaken by Prof. (Mrs.) Sudesh Nangia and her team has finally been complete in the form of this Report, notwithstanding all odds which the team had to encounter due to the spread of Covid-19, frequent lockdowns and difficulty in approaching offices and libraries for data collection. I am further satisfied to note that none of these adverse challenges disheartened any member of the team in pursuing their task.

I have noted with concern some of the findings from the study. In spite of the best efforts by Government of India to even-out the status of women in society, some of the gaps continue to haunt us, for instance, unbalanced sex-ratio, uneven sex-ratio at birth, low participation of women in economically productive activities, lack of physical, social and economic security of women etc.

I appreciate the efforts made and energy put in by our Technical Advisor Prof. (Mrs.) Sudesh Nangia, Former Chairperson, Centre for the Study of Regional Department (CSRD), School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and her team for undertaking this study.

I hope my colleagues (Parliamentarians) and other readers will be benefitted by the outcome of this study.

We intend to share this study with the concerned ministries of Government of India for appropriate action at their end.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P.J. Kurien', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Prof. P.J. Kurien  
Chairman, IAPPD

## **About Shri Sat Paul Mittal, MP**

### ***Founder Chairman IAPPD***

Shri Sat Paul Mittal, started his political career when he was a student. He was actively involved in addressing problems concerning the youth. In 1958, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru picked him as Deputy Leader of the Indian Youth Delegation to the former Soviet Union where he met top Soviet leaders including the then Prime Minister Nikita Khrushchev.



An excellent orator and a keen debater, Shri Mittal gained prominence in Punjab's legislative circles in 1961 when he was elected to the Legislative Council. He became Deputy Minister for Home in Punjab. He was elected twice to the Rajya Sabha for a term of six years each in 1976 and 1982. Further, President of India nominated him as a member of the Rajya Sabha in appreciation of his contribution to the public causes especially his dedication to the cause of the downtrodden and towards population issues globally.

Throughout his political career, Shri Mittal was part of several industry associations and policymaking bodies and served as Member of Parliament; Chairman, Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD) and Centre for Parliamentarians on Population and Development (CPPD); Founder, Secretary General and Vice Chairman, Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD); Secretary General Emeritus, Global Committee of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (GCPPD); Co-Chairman, Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival; Chairman, Parliamentarians Action for Removal of Apartheid (PARA-India); President, Nehru Sidhant Kender Trust (NSKT); Vice President, Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee (PPCC); Member, All India Congress Committee (AICC); Member, Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and Member, Advisory Panel of Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) for South and South-East Asia.

As Chairman of IAPPD, he took upon himself the daunting task of tackling the problems of population facing the country and made it a peoples' movement. He single-handedly established the Centre of Parliamentarians on Population and Development involving all Parliamentarians irrespective of their political affiliation. Unique in Asia, the Centre catered to

ideological orientation courses, seminars and data information on population, development and related subjects.

Shri Sat Paul Mittal's perseverance and zeal in promoting new ideas on population control, world peace and development were recognized worldwide when the United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Javier Perez De Cuellar, decorated him with the prestigious United Nations Peace Medal in 1987.

He organized several National and International conferences which involved spiritual and parliamentary leaders as he believed that they could influence communities. He spoke passionately at the historic Global Survival Conference at Oxford in 1988 and in Moscow in 1990 and made valuable suggestions for human survival and sustainable development.

He was equally concerned about apartheid in South Africa. He organized a conference of parliamentarians from several countries in Delhi where a joint declaration was made condemning apartheid. It was presented to the Indian Prime Minister. Shri Rajiv Gandhi, the then Prime Minister appreciated his Shri Mittal's efforts.

At a prayer meeting held in Shri Mittal's memory on January 24<sup>th</sup> 1992, the then Prime Minister, Shri. P.V. Narasimha Rao described Shri Mittal as a man of very strong will power who was passionately involved in activities related to population and development and had observed that Shri Mittal's presence at any meeting would ensure that a balanced result would emerge out of the discussions.

Posterity will gratefully remember the significant contribution made by him in giving direction to the parliamentary movement in promoting basic awareness and understanding of population and human survival issues in the world.

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## List of Abbreviations

AB-HWCs	Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Scheme
AGP	Awareness Generation Programme
ASHA	Accredited Social Health Activist
BPRD	Bureau of Police Research and Development
CBSE	Central Board of Secondary Education
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
HWCs	Health and Wellness Centres
IAPPD	Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Service
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IGMSY	Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana
IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
IMY	Indira Mahila Yojana
JSY	Janani Suraksha Yojana
LEB	Life Expectancy at Birth
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MGNERGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act

## Executive Summary

The understanding among the States across the world that growth and development is possible only with the inclusion of all historically marginalised section of the society has brought gender issues into forefront. Gender is a social construct and the gender roles and norms not only define and identify the individual but also determine their status in the society. The patriarchal nature of the society has historically undermined the role of women, confining her within the private domain and levying the task of care-giving on her. Due to gender norms, she acquired secondary position in the society and causing her subjugation, discrimination and deprivations from various agencies of women that are crucial not only for her own development and growth but also for the mankind in general.

Gender issues especially issues of women have been addressed in various international conventions and covenants including International Conference on Population and Development, 1994, Millennium Development Goals in the year 2000 (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. In India, women issues have been at centre stage since the time of independence as is reflected in the inclusion in the Constitution of India and the various five-year planning programs adopted by the State. A dedicated Ministry to address the women issues, legislations to protect her from domestic violence, legislations to protect them from gender-based violence at work, special interventions for women in various policy initiatives and schemes for various agencies that are crucial for empowering them are some of the measures taken by different governments in India. Due to government initiatives, there has been improvement in the overall well-being of women and their lives. More and more women are completing higher education, gaining meaningful employment, have property rights, participating in the affairs of the states directly and indirectly.

By acknowledging important role of gender equality and women's empowerment in the matrix of development and rapid growth of India, the Indian Association of Parliamentarians for Population and Development (IAPPD) supported this study to look at the status of this dimension in the context of India. It is expected that this study will look at the status and the trend in this parameter to ultimately identify important issues which need to be addressed for achieving gender equality to harness its contributions in accelerating country's growth and

development. Once the issues are identified, next step will be to sensitize the Parliamentarians so that they get involved in this effort of bringing about gender equality through important policymaking and ensuring their implementation which ultimately contributes to the development of the country

The key objectives of this study are:

- i) to analyse status of and the trends in gender equality and women's empowerment, particularly in areas of demographic, health, education, economic and political participation and crime and violence against women;
- ii) to critically examine legal, policy and programmatic framework for gender equity in India to strengthen their implementation;
- iii) to understand the Parliamentarians' concerns on the issues related to gender equality, equity, and women empowerment; and
- iv) to suggest policy recommendations for strengthening the policies and programmes to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment in India.

This study is based on secondary data. The information has been collected and collated from a variety of sources including annual reports of various ministries, NSSO report, census data reports, parliamentary questions, journals and articles.

The report is divided into five chapters. The first introductory chapter emphasizes on the relevance and importance of the study and defines its scope through the objectives, study approach and methodology of the study, and expected outcomes.

The second chapter of this report reflects on the gender equality in India by discussing various parameters of social development. It discusses the male-female differentials in demographic, health, education, economic and political participation and crime and violence against women, largely based on quantitative data, info-graphics and geospatial maps. The analysis is done with a focus on SDG-5 targets and relevant indicators for India.

In the third chapter, women specific legal framework, policies and programmes are critically examined. The emphasis is on understanding the achievements made in gender equality by the consecutive governments,



the gaps between the formulation and implementation of these programs and so forth.

Chapter four titled “Parliamentarians’ Concerns: Awareness on Gender Issues” discusses various gender related issues addressed by the Parliamentarians in India which is reflected through the parliamentary questions. All questions pertaining to gender equity, equality, and women empowerment asked by the parliamentarians during 17<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha (2014-2019) have been analysed to understand the capacity and concerns of the parliamentarians. Out of the total 2375 questions raised in the Parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha combined) for Ministry of Women and Child Development, a total of 1161 questions were on gender related issues. The questions revolved around broad thematic areas like gender violence, gender parity index, commissions on women, violence against women at work place, destitute women, schemes and policies, women empowerment and so forth. Questions were mostly national level. The findings of the chapter also suggested that more questions on women issues were raised by male parliamentarians than female members of the Parliament.

Final chapter five summarizes the discussion and suggests policy recommendations which can help in attaining SDG-5 by 2030. The report recommends that in order to attain the SDG-5 it is essential that the policy-makers must take measures in the following arenas:

- educating and developing an understanding among the policy-makers and the stakeholders that gender is a cross cutting phenomenon;
- enhancing the participation of women in social, economic and public activities;
- enhancing and strengthening the capacity-building of Members of Parliament and local representatives on the issues of women;
- enhancing and strengthening the capacity-building of political parties; and
- strengthening partnership between the state and the civil society.

# Chapter I

## Introduction

### 1.1 Rationale

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), officially known as “Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” is a set of 17 Goals with 169 targets between them, covering a broad range of development issues. They have been at the initiative of the United Nations, set and adopted by deliberative process of 193 member States and Civil Societies in the UN Sustainable Development Summit (held during September 25-27, 2015).

Recognising importance of the female involvement and participation in overall development of the society, United Nations in its efforts to identify important contributory (to development) parameters listed Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (GEWE) as one of the key parameter in its mapping of Programme of Action (PoA) in International Conference on Population and Development, 1994 (PoA-ICPD), Millennium Development Goals in the year 2000 (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. Goal-5 of the 17 SDGs speaks of bringing gender equality and women empowerment by ending all forms of discrimination and eliminating all forms of violence and harmful practices against women and girls. It also talks about recognizing contributions of women’s unpaid care and domestic work, emphasizes equal opportunities for them and pleading need for their effective participation in decision-making in various sphere of life.

The present study tends to focus on Goal-5 of the Sustainable Development Goals that aims to achieve gender equality and empower women and girls. This goal has nine targets and 14 indicators to measure the extent of achievement of gender equality by 2030. NITI Aayog has laid down 21 targets for this purpose (Annexure-1.). In the process of focussing on Goal-5, the study shall also focus on the relevant targets of Goal 3 on ‘Good health and wellbeing’ (viz; to Ensure Healthy Lives and Promote well-being for all at all Ages); and Goal-4 on quality education (i.e. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning

opportunities for all) that concern gender equality, equity and women empowerment.

Gender equality, elimination of all kinds of gender disparity and achieving equal status for women vis-a-vis men, has been the major concern of Government of India as is reflected in its policies and programmes from time to time, and as is evident from the approach to this goal right from the first Five Year Plan.

Over the years, the planning strategy for women and children in the country has evolved from Welfare, Development to Empowerment. As example, the approach in the first Five Year Plan (1951-56) was to provide 'adequate services to promote the welfare of women, so that they could play a legitimate role in family and community. Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85) approach was a shift from welfare to development. The plan laid special emphasis on three core sectors – health, education and employment. In the Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) and thereafter, the empowerment of women became the primary objective. The National Policy for the Empowerment of Women approved during this period led to adoption of a sector-specific 3-fold strategy for social and economic empowerment and gender equality.

## **1.2 Aims and Objectives**

The key objectives of this study are:

- i) to analyse status of and the trends in gender equality and women's empowerment, particularly considering indicators of demography, health and education; economic and political participation and crime and violence against women;
- ii) to critically examine legal, policy and programmatic framework for gender equity in India to strengthen their implementation;
- iii) to understand the Parliamentarians' concerns on the issues related to gender equity, equality, and women empowerment; and
- iv) to suggest policy recommendations for strengthening the policies and programmes to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment in India.

## **1.3 Study Approach**

This study is based on secondary data. The information has been collected and collated from a variety of sources. The detailed study approach together with data sources are presented in study matrix below:

Objectives	Key Areas of Enquiry	Main Sources of Data/Information	Data Collection Methods	Analytical Method
1) To analyse current status of gender equality in educational opportunities, healthcare, economic and political participation in India and its States.	Gender differences in educational attainment, healthcare, economic and political participation in relation to SDG-5	Census of India, Annual Reports of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, NSSO, National Family Health Surveys (NFHS), Annual Reports of Ministry of Women and Child Development, NITI Aayog and UN Agencies	Desk Review	Quantitative with geo-spatial data representation
2) To critically examine legal, policy and programmatic framework for gender equity in India.	Legal provisions, current policies and programmes for Gender Equity in India	Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Women and Child Development, NITI Ayog, UN Agencies	Desk Review	Qualitative Analysis
3) To understand the Parliamentarians' concerns on the issues related to gender equality, equity and women empowerment.	Parliamentarians' awareness of gender inequality, equity and women empowerment as reflected in their questions raised in the Parliament	Questions asked during Zero Hour in Parliament, retrieved from Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha website	Desk Review	Quantitative and Qualitative
4) Suggest policy recommendations for strengthening the policies and programmes to achieve SDG 5 in India.	Policy Gaps and recommendations	All of the above		

*Note: A brief description on data and methods is presented in **Annexure 1.2**.*

## 1.4 Structure of the Report

This report has five chapters. Besides the current first introductory chapter which emphasizes the relevance and importance of the study and defines its scope through the objectives and the study approach, the second

chapter focuses on gender equality. This chapter discusses the male-female differentials in demographic, health, education, economic and political participation and crime and violence against women largely based on quantitative data, infographics and geospatial maps. The analysis has a focus on SDG-5 targets and relevant indicators for India. Chapter three is on gender equity. In this chapter, some of the significant women specific legal framework, policies and programmes are critically examined. The emphasis is on understanding the gaps. Chapter four discusses the findings of an analysis of questions asked by Parliamentarians during zero hour in both Lok Sabha (Lower House) and Rajya Sabha (Upper House) of Indian Parliament. All questions pertaining to gender equity, equality, and women empowerment asked by the Parliamentarians during period 2014-2019 have been analysed to understand the concerns of the Parliamentarians. Final chapter five ensues the discussion and forwards policy recommendations which may promote attaining SDG-5 by 2030.

## **1.5 Expected Outcomes**

- i) The study would provide a statistical profile of various indicators selected to measure the gender equality;
- ii) It shall provide a brief overview of the policies and programmes undertaken by the government to ensure gender equality ,equity and women empowerment.
- iii) It shall provide an insight into the gender issues of concern among the political leaders; their awareness of various dimensions of gender equality, equity and women empowerment, and their concerns with regard to these issues at the national, regional and their own constituency level.
- iv) The inferences drawn from this exercise shall provide an informative study-material for the Parliamentarians/political leaders at various levels, and others involved in gender programming
- v) The study shall provide a good advocacy material for Parliamentarians.
- vi) IAPPD, being an advocacy-oriented organization of Parliamentarians, could prepare several modules based on this study to provide information kits for updates and sensitization of the elected representatives.

## Chapter 2

### Gender Equality in India

#### 2. Introduction

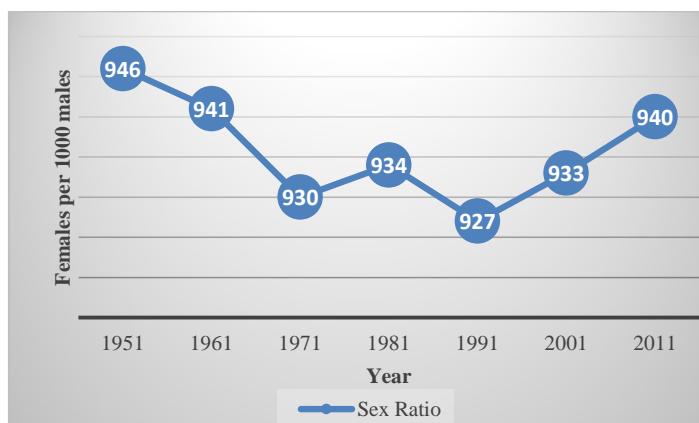
In this chapter, with the help of temporal and spatial statistics, the status of gender equality in India and its States and Union territories has been presented. The gaps in gender equality in demographic parameters, health, education, employment, administration, political participation etc. have been listed and highlighted. The domestic and public violence against women has also been the area of concern in this discussion. Attempt here is to sensitize the reader about the challenges that persist in India and to draw the attention of the policy-makers to accelerate their efforts towards gender equality.

#### 2.1 Status of Gender Equality in Demographic Parameters

Within demographic parameters, gender gaps are discussed in terms of general sex-ratio, child sex-ratio and sex-ratio at birth:

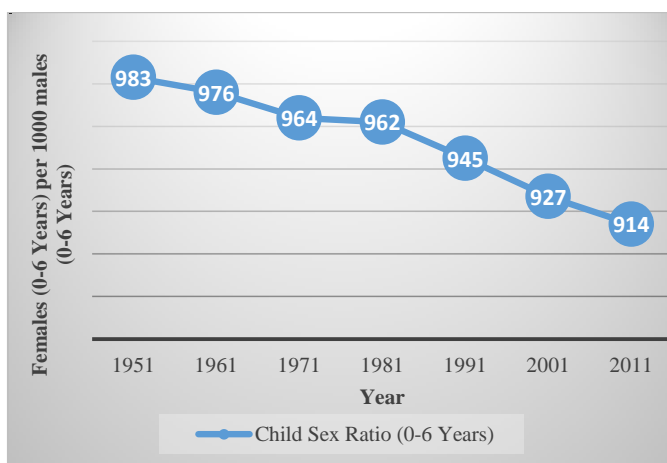
**2.1.1. Sex-Ratio and Child Sex-Ratio:** Sex-ratio is a simple yet very revealing outcome indicator of how a society treats its women. In most of the developed nations, we find that sex-ratio remains almost equal or even in favour of females. But strong son preferences have been driving the situation of sex-ratio in India more in favour of men. As per Census 2011, India has around 59 crores of women against 62 crores of men. Sex-ratio which is defined as the number of females per 1000 males has been unfavourable to females in India.

**Figure 2.1: Overall Sex Ratio in India: 1951-2011**



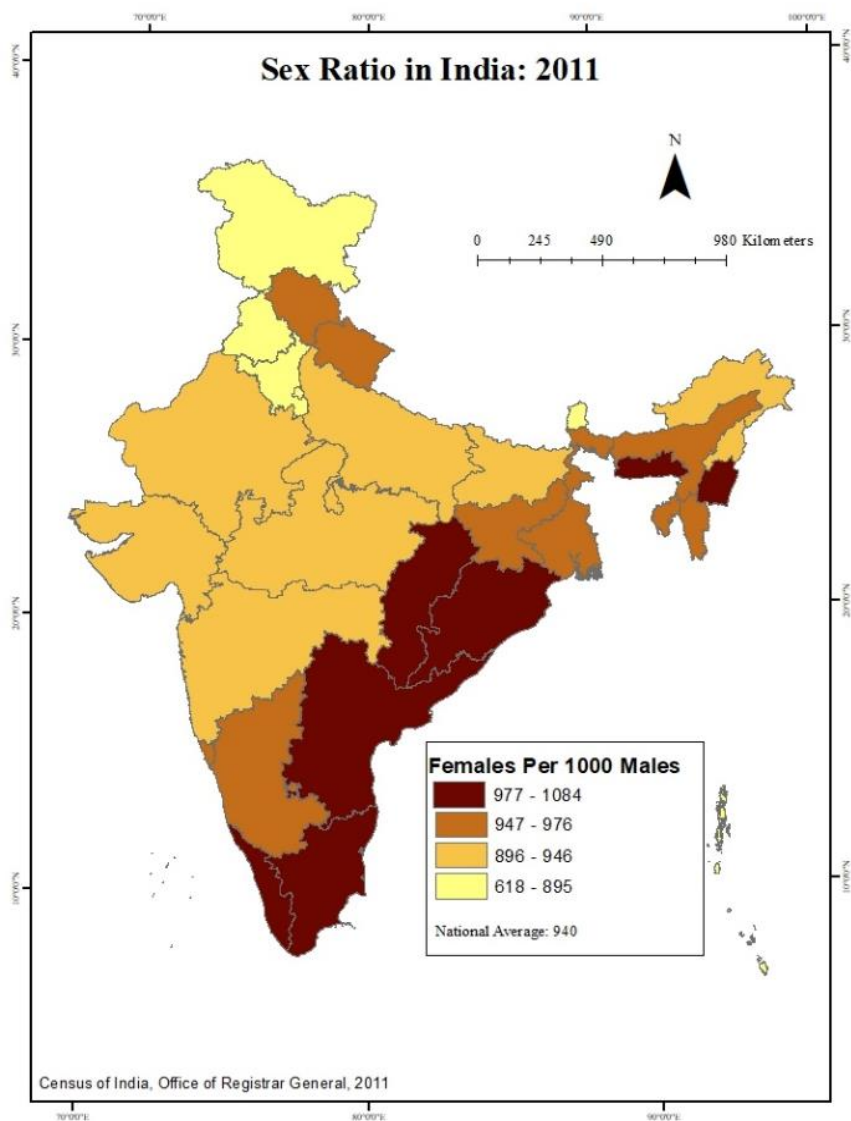
Source- Census of India 2011, Office of Registrar General, Primary Census Abstract, Total Population: 2011

**Figure 2.2: Child Sex Ratio in India: 1951-2011**



Source- Census of India 2011, Office of Registrar General, Primary Census Abstract, Total Population: 2011

**Map 2.1: Sex Ratio in India: 2011**





**Map 2.2: Child Sex Ratio in India: 2011**

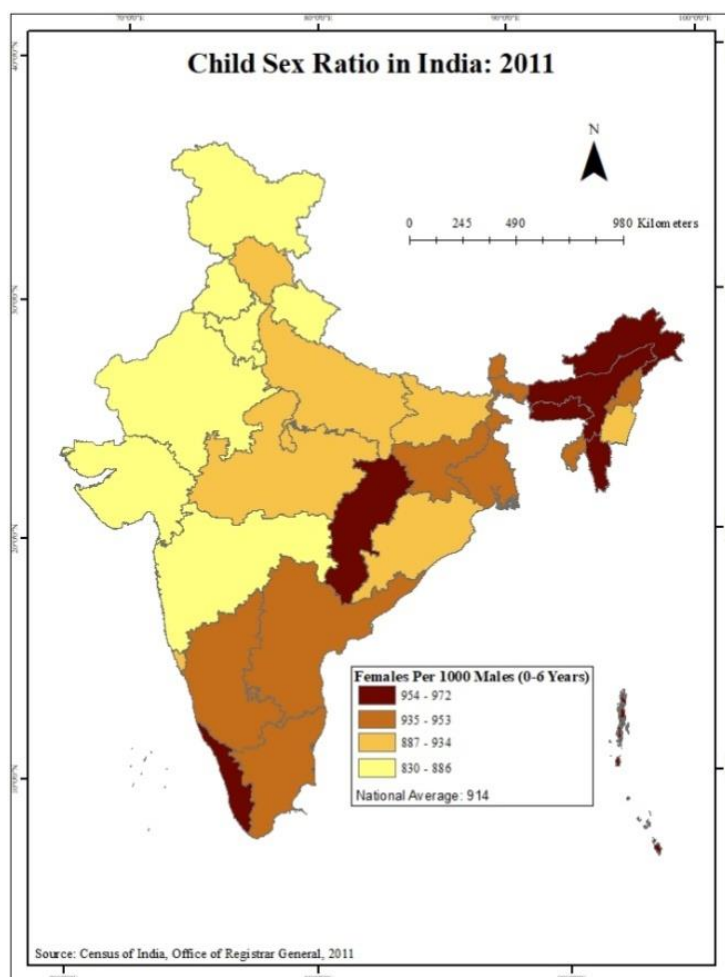


Figure 2.1 presents the sex ratio in India from 1951 to 2011. A look at the Figure 2.1 shows that the highest sex-ratio in India existed in 1951 (946) while the lowest is observed in 1991 (927). Since 1991, there has been a steady increase in the sex-ratio which is a positive development. The state level sex-ratio in Map 2.1 indicates more favourable situation in east and south India than in north and western regions.

Unlike overall sex-ratio in India, the child sex-ratio which is defined as number of girl children of age 0-6 years over 1000 male child population of same age group shows a constant decline during the past seven decades (Figure 2.2). Child sex-ratio in India has slipped down from 983 in 1951 to 914 in 2011. In contrast to overall sex ratio, where some states showed a higher proportion of females than males, child sex ratio has shown a decline in all the states during the given period (Map 2.2). This trend and pattern of child sex-ratio is therefore even more disturbing as it reflects the current situation of how our society treats our nascent daughters.

**2.1.2 Sex Ratio at Birth:** Sex-ratio at birth is another important demographic indicator to understand the gender inequality. If everything remains normal, the 'expected' sex-ratio at birth is around 105 males per 100 females globally. However, some Asian countries including India is an aberration to this global norm. Evidence from several countries suggest that highly skewed sex-ratio at birth have been largely the result of gender discrimination and selective abortions.<sup>1</sup> Sample Registration System estimates reveal that sex-ratio at birth (SRB) in India during 2014-2016 was 898 and it increased marginally to 899 in 2016-2018 (Table 2.1). There are five states where SRB is lower than 872. These states belong to northern region of India. While mostly states which belong to southern region of India have better SRB than northern states. The SRB in southern India is between 900-927 females per 1000 males. There are only five states where SRB is more than 928 which include Himachal Pradesh, Odisha, West Bengal, Kerala and Chhattisgarh.

**Table 2.1: Sex Ratio at Birth in Major States of India: 2016-2018.**

Level of Sex-Ratio at Birth (2016-2018)	State or Union Territory	Number of States and Union Territory
>= 928 females per 1000 males	Himachal Pradesh, Odisha, West Bengal, Kerala, Chhattisgarh	05
900-927 females per	Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Andhra	08

<sup>1</sup><https://ourworldindata.org/gender-ratio#biology-or-discrimination-which-countries-have-skewed-sex-ratios-at-birth>

Level of Sex-Ratio at Birth (2016-2018)	State or Union Territory	Number of States and Union Territory
1000 males	Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir,	
872-899 females per 1000 males	Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Bihar, <b>India</b>	05
<= 871 females per 1000 males	Uttarakhand, Haryana, Delhi, Gujarat, Rajasthan	05

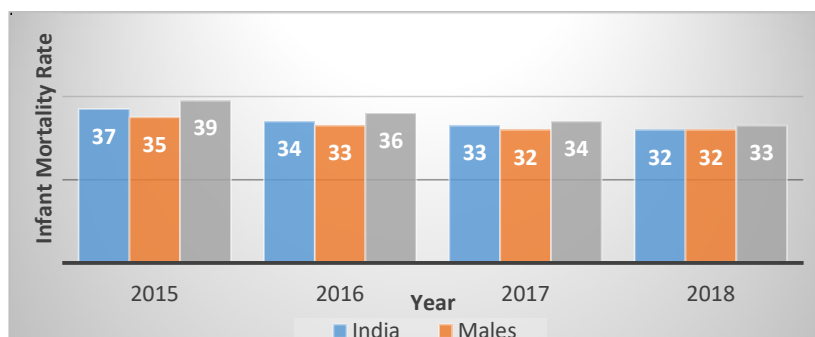
*Source: Sample Registration System, Fertility Indicators, Statistical Report: 2016-2018, Registrar General of India, New Delhi, 2016-2018, Page No. 56.*

## 2.2 Status of Gender Equality in Health Parameters

Among health parameters, we have used only three selected indicators namely infant mortality rate (IMR), maternal mortality rate (MMR) and life expectancy at birth (LEB) to understand the status of gender equality. These are important and key outcome indicators to understand the status of women in our society.

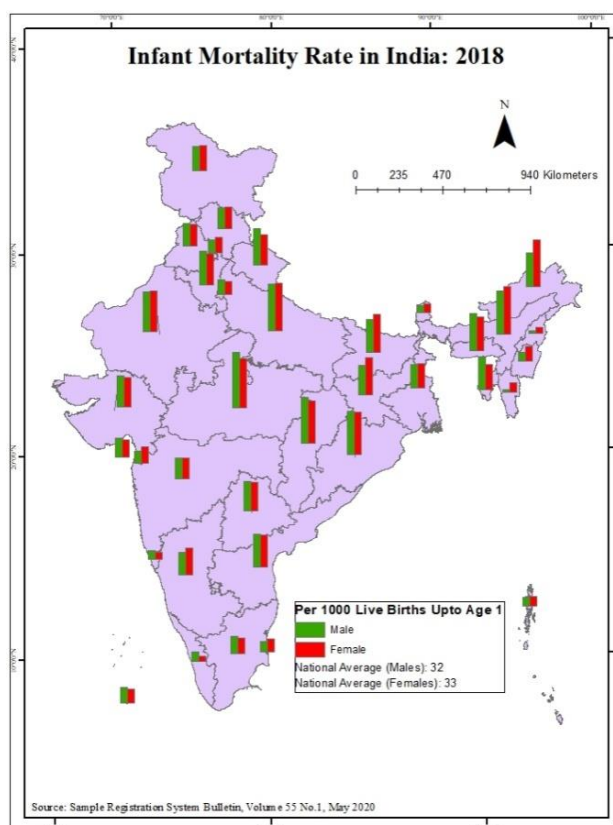
**2.2.1 Infant Mortality Rate (IMR):** The infant mortality rate is the number of infant deaths (less than one year of age) for every 1,000 live births. This indicator not only provides us the key information about maternal and infant health, but also about the overall health of a society. Good news is that IMR has improved significantly in the recent past but it is yet to fall to an acceptable level in India. As per SRS, the IMR has decreased from 37 in 2015 to 32 in 2018. The decrease in IMR is more striking in case of females than males. For males, the decline in the IMR is from 35 in 2015 to 32 in 2018 whereas for females, it declined from 39 to 33 during the same period (Figure 2.3). IMR trend suggests narrowing of gaps in the gender equality. However, as stated earlier, it needs to be brought down to less than 10 infant deaths (per 1000 live births) for both male and female to achieve the global and national targets.

**Figure 2.3: Infant Mortality Rate in India: 2015-2018.**



Source-Sample Registration Bulletin, Volume 50 No.2, Dec 2016; Sample Registration Bulletin, Volume 51 No.1, Sep 2017; Sample Registration Bulletin, Volume 52 No.1, May 2019; Sample Registration Bulletin, Volume 53 No.1, May 2020.

**Map 2.3: Infant Mortality Rate in India: 2018.**



According to Map 2.3, among States/UTs, there are around 18 States/UTs where female IMR (per 1000 live births) is more than male IMR in 2018. Madhya Pradesh reveals the highest female IMR at around 46 in 2018 while for males it was 51. Lowest female IMR is recorded in Kerala which is around 5 and for males it is 9. Highest difference between male and female IMR is observed in Arunachal Pradesh where male IMR is 31 while female IMR is 43. There are many states/UTs where IMR for females is higher than males like Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Karnataka. But, for states/UTs like Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Goa, and Gujarat IMR for male is higher than female.

**2.2.2 Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR):** Maternal mortality is defined by the WHO as "the death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, irrespective of the duration and site of the pregnancy, from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management but not from accidental or incidental causes". A mother dying for one of the noblest causes of giving life to her offspring, is probably the worst form of human casualty which humanity should not accept. This also reflects badly on the gender situation of any country or state. In developed nations, MMR remains lower than 10 (i.e. maternal deaths per one lakh live births). According to the latest statistics from SRS, MMR in India is 113 during 2016-18 (Table 2.2). Though, this is still a very high figure against the target of bringing it down to less than 30, India's progress in MMR has been steady but its pace needs to be accelerated.

**Table 2.2: Trend of Maternal Mortality Ratio in India: 2007-2018.**

Year	MMR
2007-2009	212
2010-2012	178
2011-2013	167
2014-2016	130
2015-2017	122
2016-2018	113

*Source: SRS Bulletin on Maternal Mortality in India, Office of the Registrar General, July 2020, Page No.3; November 2019, Page No.3; May 2018, Page No.3, 2011-2013, Page No.1; December 2013, Page No.3; June 2011, Page No.3.*

There are wide state-level differentials in MMR in India. States such as Assam (215), Bihar (149), Chhattisgarh (159), Madhya Pradesh (173), Odisha (150) etc. have a very high level of MMR. On the other hand,

southern states such as Kerala (46), Tamil Nadu (60), Telangana (63), Andhra Pradesh (65) etc. have managed to bring the MMR down (Table 2.3).

**Table 2.3: Maternal Mortality Ratio in Major States of India: 2014-2018.**

States	2014-2016	2015-2017	2016-2018
Andhra Pradesh	74	74	65
Assam	237	229	215
Bihar	165	165	149
Chhattisgarh	173	141	159
Gujarat	91	87	75
Haryana	101	98	91
Jharkhand	165	76	71
Karnataka	108	97	92
Kerala	46	42	43
Madhya Pradesh	173	188	173
Maharashtra	61	55	46
Odisha	180	168	150
Punjab	122	122	129
Rajasthan	199	186	164
Tamil Nadu	66	63	60
Telangana	81	76	63
Uttar Pradesh	201	216	197
Uttarakhand	201	89	99
West Bengal	101	94	98
INDIA	130	122	113

Source: SRS Bulletin on Maternal Mortality in India, Office of the Registrar General, July 2020, Page No.3; November 2019, Page No.3; May 2018, Page No.3.

**2.2.3 Life Expectancy at Birth:** Women generally live longer than males – on an average by six to eight years. This difference is partly due to an inherent biological advantage for the female partly reflects behavioural differences between men and women<sup>2</sup>. Table 2.4 provides data on Life Expectancy at Birth by Gender from 1991 to 2036. As per SRS report, the LEB is increasing constantly from 1991 to 2015 and is also expected to

<sup>2</sup>[https://www.who.int/gho/women\\_and\\_health/mortality/life\\_expectancy\\_text/en/#:~:text=Women%20generally%20live%20longer%20than,differences%20between%20men%20and%20women.](https://www.who.int/gho/women_and_health/mortality/life_expectancy_text/en/#:~:text=Women%20generally%20live%20longer%20than,differences%20between%20men%20and%20women.)

increase till 2036. The expectation of life at birth in the given table is constantly higher for females than males. For instance, in 1991, for males it was 59.7 years while for females it was 60.9 years. In 2015, it was 70 years for females and 66.9 years for males. The projected figures also reveal the same pattern in the coming years i.e. the expectation of life of birth for females would be higher than that of Males. The estimates for 2036 project that expectation of life at birth for females would be around 74.7 years and 71.2 years for males. So, looking at this indicator, it appears that the male-female differentials would continue as expected.

**Table 2.4: Life Expectancy at Birth in India: 1991-2036.**

Year	Female	Male
1991-95	60.9	59.7
1995-99	62.3	60.8
1999-03	64.6	62.3
2003-07	66.5	63.7
2007-11	68.2	64.9
2011-15	70.0	66.9
2016-20*	71.5	68.4
2021-25*	72.7	69.4
2026-30*	73.7	70.4
2031-36*	74.7	71.2

*Source: Sample Registration System, Office of the Registrar General, India  
 Report of the Technical Group on Population Projection, November, 2019,  
 MoHFW*

**2.2.4 Mean Age at Marriage:** In India, legal age of marriage has been fixed at 18 years for female and 21 years for male. Early marriage prevents women from attaining their rightful education, accessing employment, and training opportunities, developing social relationships with peers, and participating in civic life<sup>3</sup>. It also has lots of health implications for both mother and the child. According to Sample Registration System, women's mean age at marriage at all India in 2018 was 22.3 years. Among the major states of India, the lowest mean age at marriage for women was estimated for West Bengal (20.9 Years) and the highest was for Punjab (23.8 years) (Table A.2.8).

<sup>3</sup><https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5651255/p.1>

The NFHS-5 data (Table A.2.9) reveals that there is a still large percentage of Women of age 20-24 years who married before the age 18. In 15 States, the percentage of such women is well above twenty. In the States of Bihar, West Bengal and Tripura, it is well above 40. The figures reveal that in India 23.3 per cent of women in this age group married before the age of 18 years.

## 2.3 Status of Gender Equality in Education

The status of gender equality in education has been analysed with indicators of literacy rate, gross enrolment rate and drop-out rates at different stages in school education as below:

**2.3.1 Literacy Rate:** Literacy and education are important parameters of empowerment and they help immensely in development and growth in life. Unfortunately, in developing countries, the universal literacy is not yet achieved. As fallout, females often trail behind in literacy and educational attainment. As per Census of India 2011, a person aged seven and above, who can both read and write with understanding in any language, is treated as literate. Literacy Rate of India has increased steadily since independence. In 1951, the total literacy rate was around 18%. For male, it was 27.16% while for female; it was only 8.86% (Table 2.5). In 2011, the total literacy rate of India figures 73%. Nearly 81 per cent males and 65 per cent females are reported literate in 2011. The male-female literacy gap therefore was 16 per cent in 2011. Women thus lag behind men in terms of literacy in India. This gap however has been declining consistently since 1981 (Table 2.5).

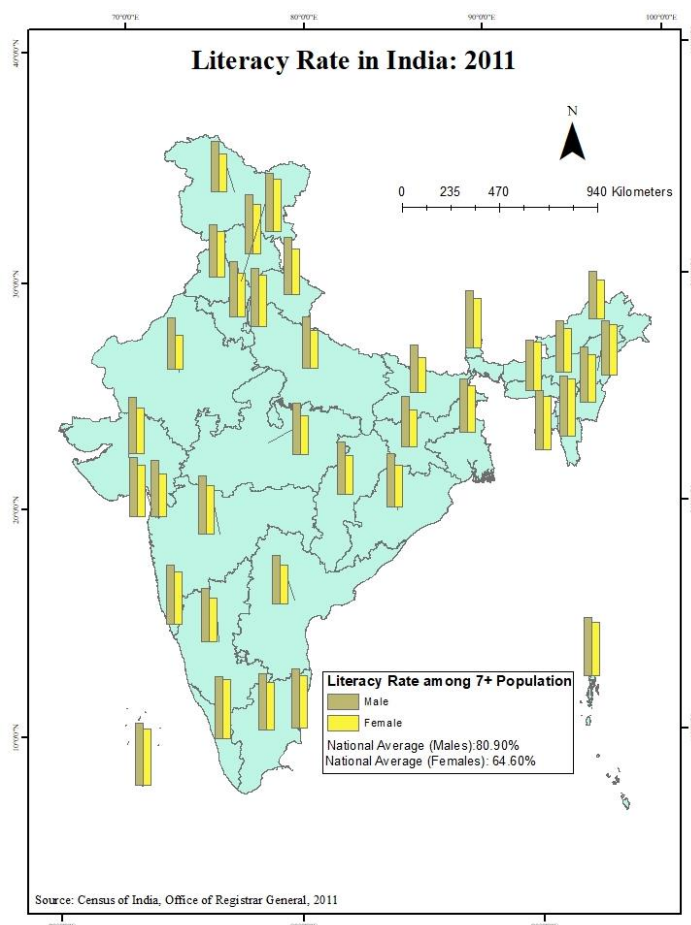
**Table 2.5: Trend of Literacy Rate in India: 1951-2011**

Census Year	Total	Male	Female	Male-Female gap in literacy rate
1951	18.3	27.2	8.9	18.3
1961	28.3	40.4	15.4	25.1
1971	34.5	46.0	22.0	24.0
1981	43.6	56.4	29.8	26.6
1991	52.2	64.1	39.3	24.8
2001	64.8	75.3	53.7	21.6
2011	74.0	82.1	65.5	16.7

Source- Census of India 2011, Office of Registrar General, Social and Cultural Table, C-Series, C-8: 2011; 2001, C-Series, C-8: 2001; 1991, -Series, C-8: 1991; 2011, Page No. 102.



**Map 2.4**



Map 2.4 presents the distribution of States and UTs by percentage of literacy in the country in 2011. The state with the highest literacy rate in India is Kerala, with 94% literates; while the lowest percentage of literates is in Bihar (63.8%). Highest female literacy rate is also in Kerala (92%) and the lowest in Rajasthan with only 52.7 per cent of female literates. The highest gender gap in literacy rate is in Rajasthan (27.8 %) followed by Jharkhand (22.3 %), and Chhattisgarh (20.9 %). The lowest gender gap in literacy figures in Meghalaya (3.4 %) followed by Kerala (4 %) and Mizoram (4.3 %). The literacy rate does suggest that there are wide gaps in India in many of its States and there is a need of concerted efforts to bridge this gap by 2030.

**2.3.2 Gross Enrolment Ratio:** The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), describes "Gross Enrolment Ratio" as the total enrolment within a country "in a specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population in the official age-group corresponding to this level of education"<sup>4</sup>. Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is an important indicator to determine the number of students enrolled in school at several different grade levels (primary, upper primary, secondary, senior secondary and higher education). Usually, GER declines as one moves up in the educational level.

**Table 2.6: Gross Enrolment Ratio at Different Stages of School Education: 2014-2018.**

	Primary (6-10 years)			Upper Primary (11-13 Years)			Higher Secondary (14-17 Years)		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
2014-15	101.4	98.9	100.1	95.3	87.7	91.2	65.8	64.9	65.3
2015-16	100.7	97.9	99.2	97.6	88.7	92.8	68.7	67.6	68.1
2016-17	96.4	94.0	95.1	95.2	86.9	90.7	NA	NA	NA
2017-18	95.4	93.1	94.2	95.9	86.6	90.9	NA	NA	NA

Source- Educational Statistics at a Glance 2018, MHRD

School Education in India 2015-16: Flash Statistics, U-DISE

\*NA- Data Not Available

Table 2.6 presents the GER for boys and girls for primary, upper primary and higher secondary level of school education during 2014-15 to 2017-18. GER statistics show that girl students have better GER in comparison to boys at all levels of school education. GER for girls at primary level was 95.4 in comparison to 93.1 for boys during 2017-18. Similarly, at upper primary, it was 95.9 for girls against 86.6 for boys. From Table 2.6, it is also observed that GER has declined marginally at primary level for both males and females. Education is a first step towards women empowerment and better performance of Girls in GER is a promising trend in this direction.

**2.3.3 Drop-Out Rates:** While significant progress has been made in raising enrolment rate in school education, it has been observed that due to drop-out of students at successive levels, children are not able to complete their school education. As reported in Table 2.6, at primary level, while the enrolment was cent per cent, at higher secondary level, it fell down to less

<sup>4</sup>Official UN definition for GER.

than 70 per cent. Most of this decline is due to drop-out of students because of various reasons.

Table 2.7 shows that the dropout rate for both boys and girls are higher at secondary and senior secondary level. Comparatively drop-out rate for boys at primary and secondary level is higher for boys than girls, (Ideally, this figure should be zero till senior secondary). But the fact that girls drop-out rate is lower than boys indicates a promising situation in terms of gender equality. However, within this national average, there are vast state level differentials.

**Table 2.7: Average Annual Drop-out Rate in School Education, 2014-2015.**

Level	Boys	Girls	Total
Primary	4.4	3.9	4.1
Upper Primary	3.5	4.6	4.0
Secondary	17.2	16.9	17.0
Senior Secondary	0.25	NA	NA

Source- Educational Statistics at Glance, 2018 by MHRD

\*NA- Data Not Available

## 2.4 Status of Gender Equality in Economic Participation

Numerous studies across regions suggest that lack of women participation in economic activities affects national economic growth. UN estimates indicate that in Asian region alone, about \$47 billion of yearly output is lost every year due to lack of female participation in labour markets (ESCAP, 2007). In another study, it was estimated that if female labour force participation in India was like that in the USA, India's GDP would increase by 4.2 per cent a year and its growth would be 1.08 per cent higher (ESCAP, 2007).

For this study, a simple indicator of female's workforce participation is selected to show the female-male gap in economic activities.

**2.4.1 Work Participation Rate** - Work Participation Rate (WPR) is the percentage of total workers to the total population. Table 2.8 shows that in India in 2011, out of the total population, 39.8 per cent were workers. While the WPR for male was 53.3 per cent, it was less than half for females (25.5 %). The WPR is not only significantly low for females, but also remains stagnant during 2001-2011 Census period. Digging deeper, it can

be noticed that while males are largely in the main-worker categories, females have a significantly higher proportion in the marginal-workers category. Census defines main and marginal workers with a criterion of 180 days. If one works for more than 180 days in a year, he/she is considered as Main worker and if it is less than 180 days, the incumbent is treated as marginal worker. These statistics reveal that females in India have very low participation in economic activities; they also appear to be participating more in marginal activities which is a matter of great concern for the policy makers. Low participation of women in the economy is a loss to the national income.

**Table 2.8: Work Participation Rate in India: 1981-2011.**

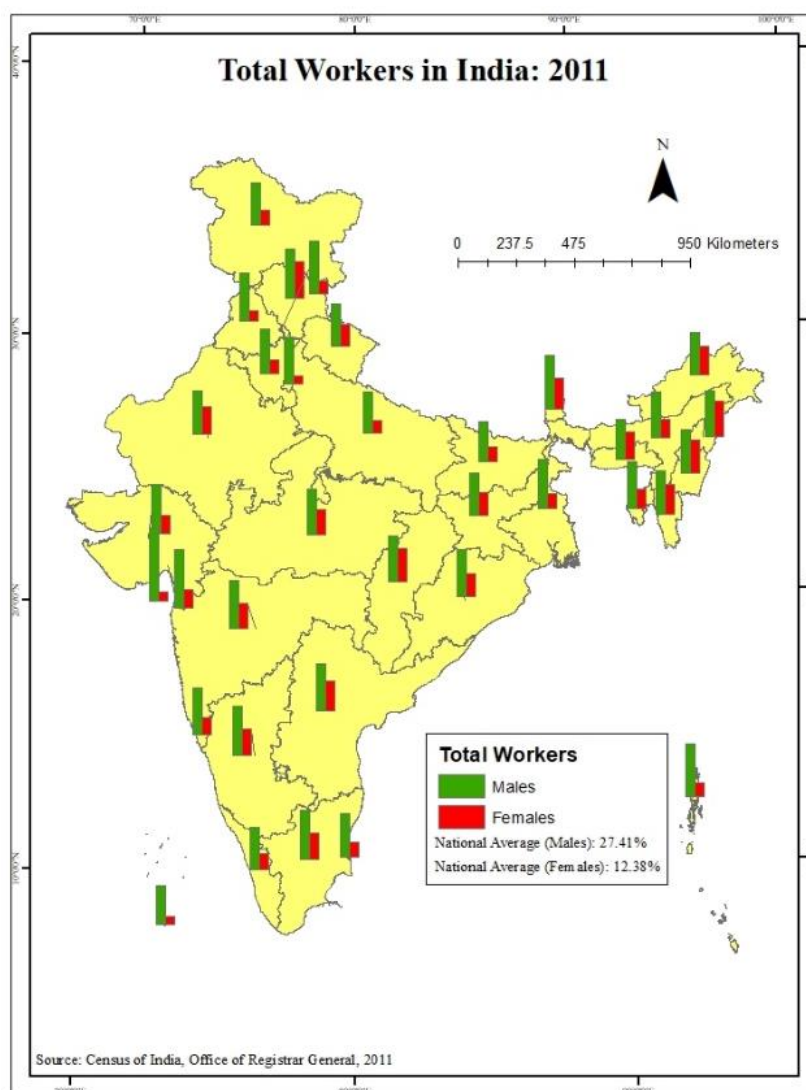
Year	Total Worker			Main Worker			Marginal Worker		
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
1981	36.7	52.6	19.7	32.5	50.1	13.6	3.2	1.0	5.6
1991	37.5	51.6	22.3	33.8	50.5	15.8	3.3	0.6	6.3
2001	39.1	51.7	25.6	30.4	45.0	14.6	8.8	6.7	11.0
2011	39.8	53.3	25.5	29.9	43.8	15.2	9.9	9.4	10.3

Source- Census of India 2011, Office of Registrar General, General Economic Tables, B-Series, B-1 Total Population: 2011; B-Series, B-1 Total Population: 2001; B-Series, B-1 Total Population: 1991;

MOSPI, NSS Report on Employment and Unemployment Situation in India and Informal Sector 2011-12

Census also provides statistics for broad economic activities in which workers are engaged. As per Census of India 2011, out of the total female workers, majority of them are engaged as Agricultural Labourers (55.2%) and Cultivators (24%). Remaining female workers are engaged in household industries and other work. Agricultural activities are largely seasonal and casual and have low productivity in terms of value addition. On the other hand, industrial and service industries which offer regular work and have better productivity still have lower women participation. As a result, it is expected that most of the working women are also vulnerable and poor.

**Map 2.5: Percentage of Total Workers in India: 2011**



The status discussed at the national level is by and large also true for all states and Union Territories (Map 2.5). Almost every state has considerably larger number of male workers than female workers where female workers are engaged in marginal work of low productivity as agriculture labourers and small cultivators.

## 2.5 Status of Gender Equality in Political Participation

Political participation of women is the most crucial factor for their empowerment. Studies show that higher numbers of women in parliament generally contribute to stronger attention to women's issues. Women's political participation is therefore a fundamental prerequisite for gender equality and genuine democracy. It facilitates women's direct engagement in public decision-making and is a means of ensuring better accountability to women<sup>5</sup>.

There is a Women's Reservation Bill pending in the Parliament of India since 2008 which proposes to ensure one-third reservation for women in the lower house of Parliament and in all state legislative assemblies. But it has yet to see the light of the day to become a law. It is to be noted here that this struggle is only for one-third. Ideally, it should be for one-half. But the resistance is such that even one-third representation is also not getting materialized.

In India, the participation of Women in Political life, especially at the higher level has been quite low. The total number of Women in Parliament is 106 out of 784 Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha combined seats, making it to 13.5 per cent of the total representation. In the 17<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha, the percentage of Women' Parliamentarians is 15.2, while in Rajya Sabha, it is 10.2 per cent in 2020.

Further from 1<sup>st</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha, the percentage of Women' Parliamentarians has increased from 4.4 of per cent to 15.02 per cent while in Rajya Sabha the percentage of Women Parliamentarians has gone up from 6.94 per cent in 1952 to 10.20 per cent in 2020. The following Tables 2.9 and 2.10 and graphs depict the time-series variations in the representation rate of women in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha in successive terms/years.

The following tables (2.9 & 2.10) and graphs depict the time-series variations in the representatives of women in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha in successive terms/years.

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<sup>5</sup><https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/focus-areas/governance/political-participation-of-women>

**Table 2.9: Women MPs in Lok Sabha from 1952-2024 in India.**

Lok Sabha Election	Year	Total MPs	Women MPs	Percentage of Women MPs in Lok Sabha
1st	1952-1957	543	24	4.41
2nd	1957-1962	537	24	4.46
3rd	1962-1967	540	37	6.85
4th	1967-1970	553	33	5.96
5th	1971-1977	553	28	5.06
6th	1977-1979	557	21	3.77
7th	1980-1984	566	32	5.65
8th	1984-1989	567	45	3.77
9th	1989-1991	534	28	5.65
10th	1991-1996	555	42	7.93
11th	1996-1997	551	41	7.44
12th	1998-1999	546	44	8.05
13th	1999-2004	568	52	9.15
14th	2004-2009	586	52	8.87
15th	2009-2014	560	64	11.42
16th	2014-2019	573	68	11.86
17th	2019-2024	539	81	15.02

Source: Lok Sabha Secretariat, 2022.

**Table 2.10: Women MPs in Rajya Sabha from 1952-2020 in India.**

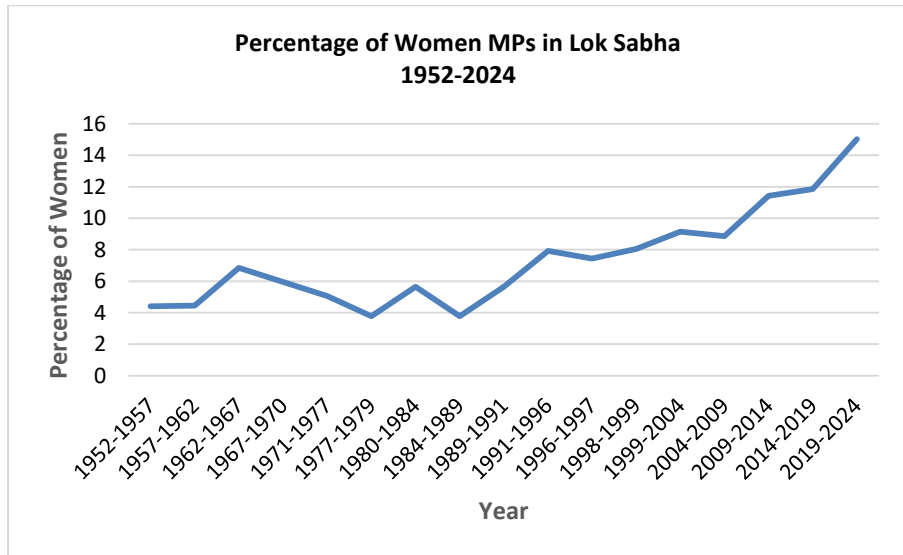
Year	Total MPs	Women MPs	Percentage of Women MPs in Rajya Sabha
1952	216	15	6.94
1954	219	17	7.76
1956	232	20	8.62
1958	232	22	9.48
1960	236	24	10.17
1962	236	18	7.63
1964	238	21	8.82
1966	238	23	9.66
1968	240	22	9.17
1970	240	14	5.83

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total MPs</b>	<b>Women MPs</b>	<b>Percentage of Women MPs in Rajya Sabha</b>
1972	243	18	7.41
1974	244	18	7.38
1976	244	24	9.84
1978	244	25	10.25
1980	244	29	11.89
1982	244	24	9.84
1984	244	24	9.84
1986	244	28	11.48
1988	245	25	10.20
1990	245	24	9.80
1992	245	17	6.94
1994	245	20	8.16
1996	245	19	7.76
1998	245	19	7.76
2000	245	22	8.98
2002	245	25	10.20
2004	245	28	11.43
2006	245	25	10.20
2008	245	24	9.80
2010	245	27	11.02
2012	245	26	10.61
2014	245	31	12.65
2016	245	27	11.02
2018	245	28	11.43
2020	245	25	10.20

*Source: Rajya Sabha Secretariat, 2022.*

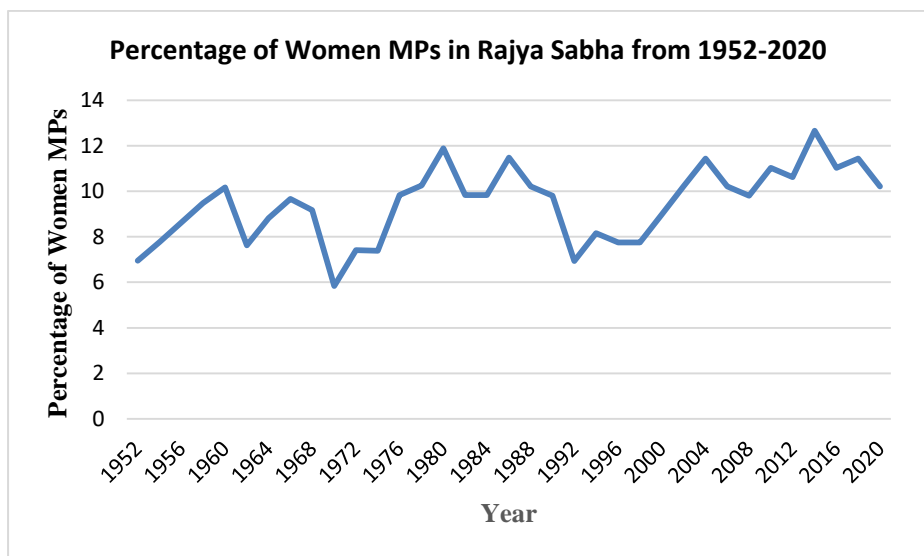


**Figure 2.4: Percentage of Women MPs in Lok Sabha from 1952-2024 in India**



Source: Lok Sabha Secretariat, 2022.

**Figure 2.5: Percentage of Women MPs in Rajya Sabha from 1952-2020 in India**



Source: Rajya Sabha Secretariat, 2022.

Thankfully, in the recent past, due to a constitutional amendment, Clause 3 of Article 243D of Constitution of India has ensured at least one-third seats reserved for women in local governance known in India as Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). As a result, 20 states so far have made provisions for 50 per cent reservation of women in PRIs.<sup>6</sup> As per statistics available by September 2020, out of the total 31,87,320 seats in PRIs in all states and UTs, there were 14,53,973 elected women representatives. This is 45.6 per cent representation which is a huge achievement<sup>7</sup>. (Table A2.12)

But the challenge of gender equality does not get addressed merely with quantitative equality. Rather, their quality and informed participation in decision-making still confronts many challenges. It is also a bare reality that many elected women are nominated and dominated by their husbands, fathers, and fathers-in law to take advantage of the quota, (which made it difficult for the men to contest the election). In some cases, election materials – banners, posters, etc. are made in the name of the man rather than the woman who is the official candidate, and that the man tends to assume the role of the *Pradhan* or *Sarpanch*, attending and even chairing the meeting in place of the elected women representative. The phenomenon of proxy or surrogate representation was, and is thus, prevalent in many places<sup>8</sup>.

## 2.6 Crime and Violence against Women

In 2013, Government of India invited UN Special Rapporteur to assess the situation on violence against women and probe its causes and consequences. Ms. Rashida Manjoo, the special rapporteur, in her report mentioned that ‘violence against women in India is systematic and occurs in the public and private spheres. It is underpinned by the persistence of patriarchal social norms and inter and intra-gender hierarchies. Women are discriminated against and subordinated not only based on sex, but on other grounds, such as caste, class, ability, sexual orientation, tradition, and other realities. Like their financial dependence, lack of ownership of property etc. Is it not shocking that, as per census 2011, only 10.99 per cent of the households in India are female headed households, with a maximum in Kerala (22.51%) and minimum in Rajasthan (7.05 per cent). Among the smaller States/Union Territories, the

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<sup>6</sup><https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1658145#:~:text=As%20per%20the%20information%20available,have%20made%20provisions%20of%2050>

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.id.*

<sup>8</sup>[https://niti.gov.in/planningcommission.gov.in/docs/reports/sereport/ser/ser\\_pri1102.pdf](https://niti.gov.in/planningcommission.gov.in/docs/reports/sereport/ser/ser_pri1102.pdf) p.38

maximum female headed households are reported from Lakshadweep Islands (40.40%) and minimum (5.04%) from Dadra and Nagar Haveli (Table A 2.9). The cumulative effect of all these factors exposes many a woman to a continuum of violence throughout their life cycle,\*\* and is commonly referred to as existing “from the womb to the tomb”<sup>9</sup>.

Situation on violence against women, however, seems to be improving steadily but slowly. National Crimes Records Bureau (NCRB) is the nodal agency under Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, which releases data on reported crimes and violence. It shows that the crime against women has decreased in recent years. Incidence of rape cases has decreased from 11 per cent in 2015 to 9 per cent in 2018. Similarly, the cases related to kidnapping, assault, violence, and dowry are also decreasing with time. Cases of kidnapping and abduction, however, have not improved much. Percentage of case related to cruelty by husband and relatives has decreased from 35 in 2015 to 27 in 2018. Cases reported under dowry prohibition act remained almost the same (Table 2.11).

**Table 2.11: Year-Wise Status of Crimes Committed Against Women: 2015-2018.**

Crime Head	2015	2016	2017	2018	% share in			
					2015	2016	2017	2018
Rape	34651	38947	32559	33356	11	11	9	9
Kidnapping and Abduction	59277	64513	66333	72751	18	19	18	19
Cruelty by Husband and Relatives	113403	110378	104551	103272	35	33	29	27
Assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty	82422	84746	86001	89097	25	25	24	24
Insult to the modesty of women	8685	7305	7451	6992	3	2	2	2
Dowry Prohibition Act	9894	9683	10189	12826	3	3	3	3
Others	2931	23376	52765	59983	6	7	15	16
Total Crime Against Women	327394	338954	359849	378277	100	100	100	100
% Crime Against Women to total crime	7	7	7	7				

Source:- National Crime Record Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, Crimes in India Report, Volume-1, 2015-2018.

NCRB also provides data on sexual harassment at workplace. Table A.2.13 shows that the highest number of cases related to sexual harassment at workplace was reported in the year 2017 which were 570 cases. While the lowest number of cases were recorded in 2015 with 522 cases. Uttar

Pradesh records the highest number of cases of sexual harassment at workplace at 231 in 2018 followed by Delhi (55), Haryana (37) and Rajasthan (28). Many states and Union Territories did not report any cases of sexual harassment.

National Family Health Survey (NFHS) reports on percentage of ever married women who have faced spousal violence in the age group 18-49 years in major states of India. Table 2.16 shows spousal violence in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Goa, Gujarat, Kerala, Mizoram, Nagaland, Manipur, and West Bengal has declined substantially during the three NFHS periods. On the other hand, few states such as Karnataka, Meghalaya, Assam, and Himachal Pradesh have reported increase in the spousal violence Table (2.12).

**Table 2.12: Percentage of Ever Married Women who have Faced Spousal Violence of those aged 18-49 years in Major States of India, 1998-2020 (NFHS 3-5).**

States	NFHS-3	NFHS-4	NFHS-5
Andhra Pradesh	35.00	43.40	30.00
Assam	39.40	24.50	32.00
Bihar	59.00	43.70	40.00
Goa	16.80	12.90	8.30
Gujarat	27.50	20.20	14.00
Himachal	6.20	5.90	8.30
Jammu & Kashmir	12.60	9.40	9.60
Karnataka	20.00	20.60	44.40
Kerala	16.40	14.30	9.90
Maharashtra	30.70	21.30	25.20
Manipur	43.80	53.20	39.60
Meghalaya	12.80	28.80	16.00
Mizoram	22.10	17.10	10.90
Nagaland	15.20	13.10	6.40
Sikkim	16.30	2.60	12.10
Tripura	44.10	28.10	20.70
West Bengal	40.10	33.10	27.00

*Source- National Family Health Survey, 1998-2020(NFHS 3-NFHS-5).*

There are studies which suggest that improvements in women's access to justice increases with increased women representation in policing. Across the globe, women are under-represented in law enforcement. India is no different. This also shows that the inclusion of women in this traditionally male dominated occupation can improve women's access to justice and help deter future crime<sup>9</sup>.

NFHS-4 data on Men's attitude towards wife beating reveals (Table A.2.10) that a man tends to get violent on his wife: -

- When she goes out without telling him;
- Neglects the house or children;
- Argues out with him;
- Refuses to have sexual intercourse with him;
- She does not cook properly;
- He suspects her to be unfaithful;
- She shows disrespect to her In-laws.

Disrespect to In-laws and argument with the husband are the factors that cause maximum violence.

**Table 2.13: Men's Attitude towards Wife Beating: NFHS-4 (2015-16).**

Age Group	She goes out without telling him	She neglects the house or children	She argues with him	She refuses to have sexual intercourse	She doesn't cook properly	He suspects she is unfaithful	She shows disrespect for in-laws	Percentage who agrees with at least	Number of Men
15-19	17.9	21.2	23	10.7	11.6	23.3	31.9	44.7	18740
20-24	16.9	20.2	21.6	10.0	10.8	23.6	30.8	43.6	16624
25-29	15.9	20.8	20.2	8.9	10.7	23.0	29.3	42.6	16171
30-39	15.1	19.2	19.4	8.2	9.5	22.1	28.5	41.2	28374
40-49	14.9	18.5	18.9	8.0	9.1	22.1	26.9	40.1	23501
									112122

Table 2.14 shows that the total percentage of Female Police Officers is only 7. The highest percentage of female police officer is registered in

<sup>9</sup>[https://www.bu.edu/econ/files/2019/05/womenstations\\_did\\_Jan19.pdf](https://www.bu.edu/econ/files/2019/05/womenstations_did_Jan19.pdf).p.24

Civil Police (11.48%) and the lowest in National Security Guard (0.32%) and National Security Police Force (0.77%). According to BPRD, out of 30,67,188, there are only 2,15,228 female police officers. Such a poor strength of female police officers is a matter of great concern for the crime and violence against women. It has been found women even do not dare to report the crime due to a strong patriarchal society and male dominated police department which does not understand the sensitivity of the crime against women. A study conducted on the women police stations in India shows that the reporting of the crimes and violence increases with the opening of women police stations<sup>10</sup>.

**Table 2.14: Strength of Female Officers in India: 2018.**

Police Deptt./Organization	Total Police Strength (Actual)	Female Police Strength (Actual)	Percentage of Female Police Officers
Civil Police	1303724	149624	11.48
District Armed Reserve Police	265656	19583	7.37
State Armed Police	497890	16483	3.31
Assam Rifles	61976	859	1.39
Border Security Force	242440	5231	2.16
Central Industrial Security Force	143216	8592	6.00
Central Reserve Police Force	301830	8268	2.74
Indo-Tibetan Police Force	82861	1951	2.35
National Security Police Force	11173	86	0.77
National Security Guard	10358	33	0.32
Railway Protection Force	64945	2344	3.61
Sashastra Seema Bal	81119	2168	2.67
Total	3067188	215228	7.02

Source- Data on Police Organization, Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD)

## 2.7 Summary and Conclusion

The status of gender equality in India, analysed, based on the statistics and literature information from various sources, reveals a mixed bag of success stories.

<sup>10</sup> Ib.id. p.1

1. There has been little improvement in the overall sex-ratio, Child sex-ratio and Sex-ratio at birth, despite Government's all-out support programmes and initiatives.  
It appears that sensitization of public, social awareness have not gone for enough to change the mind-set of public and the society. We still have miles to go before we achieve our targets set for 2030.
2. In health parameters, considerable progress has been noticed in the reduction of Infant Mortality Rate and Maternal Mortality Ratio, for which infrastructure and government policies and programmes are to be commended.  
Somehow, the expectation of life at Birth (e:) for women continues to be higher for female than males. It is a matter of great satisfaction and one should maintain the tempo. Mean age at marriage has also shown a rising trend, though still there are wide state level variations.
3. In education, the literacy rate has improved, the gross enrolment ratio has gone up and the drop-out rates have gone down. The gap in the educational parameters needs to be removed further.
4. In economic participation, a large number of women are returned as marginal workers. The gap in full time work participation between men and women needs to be drastically reduced.
5. The statistics reveal low participation of women in Political and Administrative activities. Efforts made by the Centre and the States are not yet sufficient to provide one-third to one-half job opportunities to women in these fields.
6. Violence, both public and domestic against women, shows a very high discrepancy at the level of states. The reported incidences against women have declined over the years but still the measures adopted to curb crimes against women need serious introspection.

## Chapter 3

### Gender Equity and Empowerment: State Initiatives

#### 3. Introduction

Ensuring gender equity and equality and thus empowering women has been the mission of the successive governments in India. The national and state governments have taken number of initiatives. In this chapter, an attempt has been made to map efforts for gender equity through various Acts, plans, policies, and programmes. Apart from the Ministry of Women and Child Development, schemes and policies are also initiated by various other ministries such as Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare etc. Some of the key initiatives taken by the Central and State Governments for empowering of women and bringing them at par with their male counter-parts are discussed in the proceeding section.

#### 3.1. Gender initiatives in Five-Year Plans

##### *First Five-Year Plan (1951-56)*

The approach of the first five-year plan was “to provide the welfare of women” so that they could play a legitimate role in the family and community. In 1952, Government of India launched the Family Planning programme. The programme was meant for not only achieving population stabilization goals but also promoting reproductive health and reduces maternal, infant & child mortality and morbidity. In 1953, Central Social Welfare Board was set up. It emphasized the role of NGOs for welfare activities related to women.

##### *Second to Fifth Five Year Plan (1956-79)*

The general approach “to promote the welfare of women” continued during the Second to Fifth Five-Year Plan. During this period, there were condensed courses for promoting education for women. There were also socio-economic programmes for women such as working girls’ hostels, stay home schemes etc.



### ***Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85)***

The Sixth Plan laid emphasis on three core social sectors namely health, education, and employment. Priority was given to women working in agriculture and its allied activities (dairying, poultry, animal husbandry, small scale industry). This plan also launched women's employment programme. During this plan, District Family Courts were established in the country to expedite the settlement of disputes related to marriage and family affairs. Family court judge is preferably a female.

### ***Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90)***

Seventh Plan prioritized on education and employment of women. It initiated two new schemes for training and skill for job-opportunities: (a) Support to training and employment programme (STEP), and (b) Awareness generation programme (AGP) for rural and poor women. Under the 1987 Legal Services Authorities Act, free legal aid was provided to the underprivileged groups which included women.

During this Plan, three remarkable documents were prepared which had a wonderful vision for the gender equity. These reports were:

- i) *Shram Shakti* – It was a report from the National Commission on Self-Employed Men and Women in informal sector (1988) which studied plight of women in the informal sector and suggested ways for their amelioration.
- ii) *National Perspective Plan on Women* which promised to free Indian women from the clutches of social oppression, and
- iii) *SAARC Guidebook on 'women and development'*.

### ***Eighth Five Year Plan (1990-95)***

In Eighth Five Year Plan, two new schemes were introduced to promote gender equity. The purpose was to ensure that the benefits of development do not bypass the women. These were: i) Indira Mahila Yojana (Micro finance scheme for women and organizing them in the Self Help Group (SHG), and ii) Mahila Samridhi Yojana (IMY recast as MSY).

During this plan, the National Commission for Women and National Credit Fund for Women were also set up. During this period, 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments were made wherein one-third seats were reserved for the women in the rural and urban local bodies.

### ***Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002)***

In the Ninth Plan, empowerment of women became the prime objective. Thus, 'National Policy for the Empowerment of Women' was adopted. 'Women's Component Plan' was also adopted whereby not less than thirty per cent funds were to be earmarked in all women related sectors.

Basic issues related to women's empowerment that were focused were social and economic empowerment of women; training, employment and education; attitudinal change towards the girl child; support services and women's rights and the laws.

### ***Gender Focus in Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007)***

Tenth plan continued to focus on empowering women and promoting gender equity. The approach was to continue with the major strategy of "Empowering women" as agents of social change and development. Based on the prescriptions of the National Policy for Empowerment of Women, it adopted a sector-specific three-fold strategy. They included:

- 1) *Social Empowerment* to create an enabling environment through various affirmative developmental policies and programmes for development of women besides providing them easy and equal access to all the basic minimum services to enable them to realize their full potentials;
- 2) *Economic Empowerment* to ensure provision of training, employment, and income-generation activities with both 'forward' and 'backward' linkages with the ultimate objective of making all potential women economically independent and self-reliant; and
- 3) *Gender Equality* to eliminate all forms of gender discrimination and thus, allow women to enjoy not only the *de-jure* but also the *de-facto* rights and fundamental freedom on par with men in all spheres, viz. political, economic, social, civil, cultural etc.

### ***Gender Initiatives in Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012)***

The vision of the Eleventh Five Year Plan was to end the multifaceted exclusions and discriminations faced by women and children; to ensure that every woman and child in the country can develop her full potential and share the benefits of economic growth and prosperity. The Eleventh Plan recognizes that women cut across all social identities and therefore it

talks of general programme interventions as well as special targeted interventions.

Under the eleventh five-year plan some of the major interventions that were initiated are:

- *Swayamsiddha*, an integrated scheme for women's empowerment through Self Help Groups was the major scheme implemented by the Ministry of WCD in the Eleventh Plan.
- Revamping the Training and Employment Programme (STEP), a scheme for skill training of women,
- A separate Women Empowerment and Livelihood Project assisted by United Nations' International Fund for Agricultural Development, implemented during the Eleventh Plan in four districts of UP and two districts of Bihar.
- Various social empowerment schemes for women will be implemented during the Eleventh Plan. Condensed courses of education will be run to facilitate skill-development and vocational training of adult girls and women who could not join mainstream education system or were forced to dropout from formal schools.
- The most important programme for women to be run by the Ministry of WCD during the Eleventh Plan was to the provision of maternity benefits. This involves integrating conditional maternity benefits under the ICDS scheme. The benefits under the scheme however, are to be conditional to the mother being registered with the Anganwadi, undergoing regular health check-up and immunization.

### ***Gender Initiatives in Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-2017)***

The Twelfth Plan strategy of inclusion envisages the engendering of development planning and making it more women and child-centric. The ending of gender-based inequities, discrimination and violence is an overriding priority in the Twelfth Plan. The key strategies for women's development in the Twelfth Plan have been identified as: (i) Economic Empowerment; (ii) Social and Physical Infrastructure; (iii) Enabling Legislations; (iv) Women's Participation in Governance; (v) Inclusiveness of all categories of vulnerable women, (vi) Engendering National Policies and Programmes under the 12th five-year plan, a number of initiatives thus were taken for women empowerment.

- The twelfth five-year plan emphasized on promoting socio economic development existing schemes like the Support to Training and Employment Program (STEP), *Priyadarshini* and *Swayamsiddha*.

- For the prevention and combating trafficking of the women, the *Ujjwala* scheme would be strengthened for the rescue, rehabilitation, and reintegration of victims into the mainstream society.
- A scheme for providing restorative justice to victims of rape through financial assistance as well as support services is to be implemented in the Twelfth Plan in pursuance of the Supreme Court of India directives.
- The twelfth five-year plan talks of continuation of the Gender Budgeting Scheme to assess gender differential impact of the budget.

## **3.2. Initiatives for Gender Equity in Various Policies**

### **3.2.1 The National Health Policy 2002**

In 2002, Government of India brought out National Health Policy. The key objectives of the policy were to realize acceptable standard of good health among the general population and to reduce MMR to 100 per lakh by 2010; to reduce IMR to 30 per thousand by 2010 and to reach basic health services to women.

### **3.2.2 National Health Policy of India 2017**

The National Health Policy of India 2017 has laid much emphasis on women and child health. With the focus on reproductive, maternal, child and adolescent health, the policy emphasises on availability of free, comprehensive primary health care services.<sup>11</sup> The policy under RMNCH+A services recognises that maternal and child survival is a mirror that reflects the entire social development.<sup>12</sup>

The policy also advocates for women's health and gender mainstreaming and has also laid emphasis on addressing gender-based violence.

### **3.2.3 National Education Policy 2020**

The new "National Education Policy 2020" emphasizes on equitable access to the highest-quality education for all learners regardless of social or economic background and lays much thrust on girls' education.<sup>13</sup> It acknowledges the high drop-out rate of girls and other vulnerable children

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<sup>11</sup> Ministry of Health and Family Welfare,(2017), *National Health Policy 2017*, pg 3, MoHFW: New Delhi.

<sup>12</sup> Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, (2017), *National Health Policy 2017*, pg 11, MoHFW: New Delhi.

<sup>13</sup>Ministry of Education, 2020, *National Education Policy 2020*, pg.3, New Delhi:GOI

and the need to bring them back into the system and to increase the retention.<sup>14</sup> It enunciates upgrading and enlarging the schools that already exist and providing safe and practical conveyances and/or hostels, especially for girls, so that all children have the opportunity to attend a quality school and learn at the appropriate level.<sup>15</sup>

The policy also entails to constitute a “Gender-Inclusion Fund” to provide equitable quality education for all girls as well as transgender students. This fund is available to States to implement priorities determined by the Central Government critical for assisting female and transgender children in gaining access to education.<sup>16</sup> The policy also aims to strengthen and expand Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya to provide equal educational opportunities for girls from marginalised section of the society. The policy also emphasises on making the school curriculum inclusive and more sensitive towards gender identities and develops respect for diversity.<sup>17</sup>

### **3.3 Initiative for Women Empowerment through various Acts**

#### **3.3.1 Pre-conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic Technique (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act 1994**

To check the rising cases of female foeticide, Pre-conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic Technique Act 1994 was implemented. The law provided stringent punishments for the illegal abortion and sex determination test of the foetus. Under the Act, appropriate authorities are given power to search, seize and seal the machines, equipment and seal the premises.

#### **3.3.2 Hindu Succession Act 1956 and Hindu Succession Amendment Act (2005)**

Since ancient time, women in India were generally not given property right due to the patriarchal norms of the Indian society. Hence, they have limited right over succession of the landed family property.

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<sup>14</sup> Ministry of Education, 2020, *National Education Policy 2020*, pg 10, New Delhi:GOI MHRD, 2020.

<sup>15</sup> Ministry of Education, 2020, *National Education Policy 2020*, New Delhi:GO

<sup>16</sup> Ministry of Education, 2020, *National Education Policy 2020*, New Delhi:GOI

<sup>17</sup> Ministry of Education, 2020, *National Education Policy 2020*, New Delhi:GOI

In the independent India, based on the Hindu Code Bill, a uniform succession law, the Hindu Succession Act (1956) was implemented for Hindus that gave women the right to inherit the landed property like their male counterparts.

174<sup>th</sup> Law Commission emphasis on bringing about reforms in the Hindu Succession Act led to the amendment in 2005. It is now said that a woman could be a coparcener by birth in her own right in the same manner as the son.

The Supreme Court verdict on Vineeta Sharma case in 2020, has brought an end to the ambiguities related to the women right in the ancestral property by emphasising that “it is a right ‘by birth’ of a Hindu woman to become a joint heir to ancestral property”<sup>18</sup>

### **3.3.3 Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA) 2005**

In India, the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 (henceforth referred to as PWDVA) not only proposes a feminist definition of domestic violence, but it also provides a single access point for women, with the provision of protection, shelter, medical services, interim custody of children, maintenance and compensation.

### **3.3.4 The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019**

Triple Talaq has been one of the most criticised and draconian processes in the Muslim Personal Law that committed atrocities and hampered the gender justice of women belonging to Islamic sect. Muslim women have approached judiciary several times against the provision of triple talaq. The Shah Bano Case Vs. Union of India and others and Shayara Bano case in 2017 are the intriguing examples that initiated this debate in the past.

The Government of India enacted Muslim Women Protection of Rights on Marriage Bill, 2019. This act abolished the much controversial triple talaq

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<sup>18</sup> Editorial (2020), Women’s Right to Property Ownership, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 55, Issue No. 35, 29 Aug, 2020 (/journal/2020/35)

provision. The bill is viewed as a step forward for Muslim women to have parity with Hindu and Christian women in India.

### **3.3.5 Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005**

Women are more vulnerable to income and other shocks because of the absence of insurance mechanisms, for example, lack of assets to be used as collateral, ill-health and shorter duration of paid employment. MGNREGA provides equal rights to men and women to participate in employment through this Act. Various studies have concluded the positive impact of the MGNREGA on the lives of the women. Study conducted by Darshan Das in the five village panchayats of Barpeta Development Block of Barpeta district of Assam shows the implication in the lives of the women due to MGNREGA. The study found that “majority of the women beneficiaries (54%) said that they were empowered through MGNREGA.”<sup>19</sup>

## **3.4 Efforts of Gender Equity through Various Programmes and Schemes**

### **3.4.1 Policies, Schemes and Programs under Ministry of Women and Child Development**

The Ministry of Women and Child Development has implemented various schemes for the protection of women and child. The following two are worth mentioning:

#### **i. ICDS (Integrated Child Development Services)**

The ICDS, one of the flagship programmes of the Government of India under the Ministry of Women and Child Development, is a unique programme for early childhood care, supplementary nutrition and development. The beneficiaries under the Scheme are children in the age group of 0-6 years, pregnant women and lactating mothers. For children below 3 years of age and pregnant and lactating mothers, appropriate ‘Take Home Rations’ (THRs) in the form of pre-mix/ready-to-eat food are provided.

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<sup>19</sup> Das, D. (2020), Empowerment of rural women through MGNREGA- A study of mgnrega implementation in Barpeta development block of Barpeta district of Assam, *Journal of Critical Studies*, Vol 7, Issue 7, 2020.

## **ii. POSHAN Abhiyan**

The Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India has set-up POSHAN Abhiyan (National Nutrition Mission) which was launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2018 from Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan. The programme, addressing malnutrition, strives to reduce the level of stunting, under-nutrition, anaemia and low birth weight in children, as also, focus on adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers. The programme aims to ensure service delivery and interventions by use of technology, behavioural change through convergence and lays-down specific targets to be achieved across different monitoring parameters over the next few years.

### **3.4.2 Policies, Schemes and Programmes under Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**

Improving the health status of both maternal and children have been a key priority of the consecutive government and as such many schemes have been introduced in this endeavour by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. To name a few:

#### **The National Health Mission**

The programme was initiated in 2013 and follows the framework of RMNCH+A (Reproductive, Maternal, New-Born, Child and Adolescent Health).

Major initiatives under National Health Mission are:

#### ***i. Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY)***

In 2005, the government implemented Janani Suraksha Yojna, a conditional cash transfer scheme under the flagship programme of National Health Mission since 2005. It is a safe motherhood intervention under the National Health Mission. It is being implemented with the objective of reducing maternal and neonatal mortality by promoting institutional delivery among poor pregnant women. The Yojana has identified Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) as an effective link between the government and the pregnant women.



In 2013-14 (until December) more than 78.27 lakh beneficiaries have availed JSY benefits and expenditure under JSY is Rs. 1220.40 crores.<sup>20</sup>

***Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakaram (JSSK)***

It was a new avatar of JSY and was launched on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2011. It entitled all pregnant women delivering in public health institutions to have free and no expense delivery including caesarean section. The entitlements included free drugs, consumables, free diet during stay, free diagnostics and blood transfusion services. It also provides free transport from home to institutions, between facilities in case of a referral and drop back home facilities.

***ii. Comprehensive Primary Health Care through Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs)***

Under the flagship programme of Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Scheme, Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs) have been set up and there has been a thrust on expanding and strengthening the RCH services. The programme focuses on including and expanding service packages at the AB-HWCs by including services like- care in pregnancy and child birth; neonatal and infant health care; childhood and adolescent health care services; family planning, contraceptive services and other reproductive health care services.

***iii. Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA)***

This scheme has been launched on June 2016 and provides free of cost assured and quality antenatal care to all pregnant women in the country for a fixed period of time. It is provided to the beneficiaries on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of every month. It also involves the participation of private sector health care providers as volunteers to provide specialist care in government facilities.

***iv. Other new initiatives towards improving Maternal and New-born Health***

In the recent past, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has initiated various schemes and programme towards the improvement of maternal

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<sup>20</sup> Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, (2013-14), *Annual Report:2013-14*, pg:53 MoHFW: New Delhi.

and infant health. This includes SUMAN, Midwifery Initiative, Home-based Care of new-born and young children and Anaemia Mukh Bharat.

A web-based tracking system called Mother and Child Tracking System (MCTS) has been introduced across all the states and UTs.<sup>21</sup> It is a tool for providing relevant information and guidance directly to the pregnant women, parents of children and to community health workers to create awareness among them about health services and promoting healthy practices and behaviour.<sup>22</sup>

SUMAN is a new initiative introduced in October 2019 to provide assured, dignified, respectful, and quality healthcare at no cost and zero tolerance for denial of services for woman and new-born visiting the public facility. The expected outcome of this new initiative is *“Zero Preventable Maternal and New-Born Deaths and high quality of maternity care delivered with dignity and respect.”*

### **3.4.3 Ministry of Education**

#### ***i. Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, 2018***

In 2018, the education system in India witnessed implementation of new integrated education scheme called “Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan” which is an amalgamation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya Madhyamik Abhiyan and the Teachers Training Programme. The purpose to implement an integrated education system through a single programme has been to facilitate effective and optimal utilization of budgetary allocations and human resources. Under this scheme impetus was laid on girls’ education and reducing gender gap.

#### ***ii. Other special programmes like***

*Beti Bachao Beti Padhao*, Balika Samriddhi Yojana, CBSE Udaan Scheme, National Scheme of Incentive to Girls for Secondary Education, Dhan Lakshmi Scheme etc. are some of the other recently sponsored schemes which intends to promote gender equality, equity and women empowerment.

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<sup>21</sup> Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, (2019-2020), *Annual Report: 2019-20*, pg 23  
MoHFW: New Delhi

<sup>22</sup> Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, (2019-2020), *Annual Report: 2019-20*, pg 24  
MoHFW: New Delhi.

Apart from centrally sponsored schemes, various States have formulated and implemented schemes to facilitate girl's education. Some of these states sponsored schemes include- Bicycle Scheme for girls in Bihar, Girls Child Protection Scheme in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, Rajshree Yojana in Rajasthan, Majhi Kanya Bhagya Shree Yojana of Maharashtra, etc.

### 3.5 Gender Budgeting

Gender Budgeting is an internationally recognized approach since 2001. It encourages governments to take a Fiscal Path to address many of the women issues to improve the overall well-being of women. It refers to the allocation of resources for the formulation and implementation of programmes and policies related to women equality, equity and empowerment; impact assessment of such programmes and their corrective follow up.

In India, Gender Budgeting has been in vogue for well over a decade. Many of the schemes have been carried on by various ministries through Gender Budgeting. In the Union-Budget of 2020 – 2021, nearly 5 per cent of the total funds, (amounting to Rs. 1.4 lakh crores or \$ 19 Billion) were earmarked to be spent on schemes that benefit women partially or fully.

### 3.6 International Laws and Treaties' obligations

India being a signatory to several international laws and conventions is bound to implement the commitments made at the global level. Some of these particularly related to gender equity for which India is committed are:

1. **1978 – Alma Ata declaration's goal of "Health for All" by the year 2000:** International Conference on Primary Health Care, Alma-Ata, USSR, expressed the need for urgent joint action/efforts by States, and range of other stakeholders especially in the social and economic sector to all protect and promote the health of all the people.<sup>23</sup> In pursuance of above objective, the member states signed "Alma-Ata Declaration" that acknowledged health as a fundamental human rights and the states obligation to provide the same with cooperation of civil society, world bodies like World Health Organization.<sup>24</sup> It acknowledged the existing disparities and inequality in the health status of the people. The declaration also emphasised the role of

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<sup>23</sup> [https://www.who.int/publications/almaata\\_declaration\\_en.pdf](https://www.who.int/publications/almaata_declaration_en.pdf)

<sup>24</sup> *ibid*

Primary Health Care as instrumental for attaining this human right by the year 2000.<sup>25</sup>

2. **1979 - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)** – Adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, it is often described as an international bill of rights for women.<sup>26</sup> Consisting of a preamble and 30 articles, it defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination.<sup>27</sup> The Convention further talks of the attainment of equality between men and women through providing women equal access and opportunities in various agencies-politics, education, health and employment.<sup>28</sup> CEDAW acknowledges the reproductive rights of women and targets culture and tradition as influential forces shaping gender roles and family relations<sup>29</sup>. Additionally, the convention obliges the state parties to take appropriate measures not only against women trafficking and their exploitation but also to ensure that women are able to enjoy their basic human rights and fundamental freedom.<sup>30</sup> India is a state party.
3. **1994 – International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action–I:** The conference being attended by 180 States, international bodies, various government and non-government bodies, media and other stakeholders adopted a new Programme of Action on population and development.<sup>31</sup> This New Program of Action focused on the deep interconnection between population and development.<sup>32</sup> It also advocated for attainment of better quality of life for all individuals within the framework of human rights.<sup>33</sup>
4. **1995 – Beijing Declaration and platform for action:** The 1995 Beijing Platform for Action flagged 12 key areas where urgent action was needed to ensure greater equality and opportunities for women and men, girls and boys. It also laid out concrete ways for countries to bring about change. The 12 key areas that the member states committed towards the gender equality in - Women and Poverty, Education and Training of Women, Women and Health, Violence against Women, Women and Armed Conflict, Women and the

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<sup>25</sup> *ibid*

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>

<sup>27</sup> *ibid*

<sup>28</sup> *ibid*

<sup>29</sup> *ibid*

<sup>30</sup> *ibid*

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/population/cairo1994>

<sup>32</sup> *ibid*

<sup>33</sup> *ibid*

Economy, Women in Power and Decision-making, Institutional Mechanism for the Advancement of Women, Human Rights of Women, Women and the Media, Women and the Environment and The Girl-child.<sup>34</sup>

5. **2000 – United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs):** Goal 3 of the MDG advocates for promoting gender equality and women empowerment especially in developing and under-developed countries.<sup>35</sup> It endeavoured to eliminate gender equality in school education by 2005 and all level of education by 2015. It acknowledges the continuous gender disparities in labour market, wages, participation in private and public decision-making.<sup>36</sup> The MDG obliged the states to meet the targets under Goal 3 in a time-bound manner by 2015. India is a party to it.
6. **2016 – United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, lay down blueprint for peace and prosperity for humanity and planet in whole. It documents 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which require an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. Goal 5 of the SDG talks of achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. The various targets under this goal focused on eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against all women and girls everywhere. It also advocates for removing all harmful practices including female genital mutilation, recognition to unpaid and domestic work, effective and equal participation at all level of decision making, equal access to sexual health and reproductive rights and so forth.

### 3.7 Summary and Conclusion

The Government of India has taken great initiative to raise the status of women in society through various active measures since independence as is evident from the approach to this goal right from the first five-year plan. Over the years (from 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Five year plan), the planning strategy for women and children evolved from welfare to development to social and economic empowerment and gender equality.

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<sup>34</sup> <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/>

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/gender.shtml>

<sup>36</sup> *ibid*

The backbone of all legislative measures and policies framed from time to time in this regard is the constitution of India (that came into force on 26<sup>th</sup> January, 1950). The preamble reads India as a “Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic Republic” that secures justice, liberty, equality and fraternity to all citizens. It reiterates that there would be no discrimination on account of gender.

From Hindu Succession Act 1956 (Amendment in 2005), to Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019, attempt has been made to raise the status of women. The National Health Policy (2002/2017), National Education Policy (2020) are steps towards inclusive growth and development of women and girls. To name a few, Ministries of Women and Child Development, Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of Education have been taking pro-active measures to improve the status of health, skill and education of women. India is also signatory to several international laws and treaties to improve the status of women in society and to take concrete measures in this direction. The efforts of the government to work towards Minimum Development Goals and now towards Sustainable Development Goals are on to achieve a respectable rate of ‘target’ achievements.

However, a midterm appraisal is mandatory to assess the tempo and direction of achievement of the said goals and the targets.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Parliamentarians' Concerns: Awareness on Gender Issues**

#### **4. Introduction**

In the Indian parliamentary system, the legislative can exercise control over the executives through various parliamentary proceedings and business-like debates. These proceedings enable the people's representatives to understand the work and the progress of the executive on various arenas and issues. Question hour is one such instrument in the parliamentary proceedings.

The first hour of every Parliamentary Sitting in India is known as the Question Hour. The legislators raise questions on various issues of local, regional, national and international importance.

The relevant Ministry (executive) is required to provide answers to such questions raised by the Parliamentarians. Parliamentary questions are instrumental in understanding the level of awareness and interest among the Parliamentarians about the issues raised by them. Additionally, it unveils the existing gaps in the knowledge and information of the Parliamentarians on various issues. Gender related questions are posed to the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Analysis of the parliamentary questions helps to understand whether the gender related issues are concerns only for the women legislatures or whether their male counterparts are also equally vocal and concerned about the gender related issues.

These questions are raised for the relevant Ministries.

#### **4.1 An Overview**

A total of 2375 questions were raised in the Parliament for the WCD Ministry between 2014-2019. Of these, 1117 questions are raised in Rajya Sabha (Upper House) and 1258 questions were raised in Lok Sabha (Lower House).

Out of the total 2375 questions raised in the Parliament for WCD Ministry, a total of 1161 questions were on gender related issues.

Out of 1161 gender related questions, 590 questions (51%) were raised in Rajya Sabha while 566 questions (49%) were raised in Lok Sabha. There was a total of 2274 sub-questions within 1161 gender-related questions. Of these 2274 sub-questions, 1215 (53.4%) sub-questions were raised in Rajya Sabha and 1059 (46%) sub-questions were raised in Lok Sabha.

**Table 4. 1: Gender related Questions raised in the Parliament.**

House wise distribution		
House	Frequency	Per cent
Rajya Sabha	594	51.2
Lok Sabha	567	48.8
Total	1161	100
Sub-questions		
Rajya Sabha	1215	53.4
Lok Sabha	1059	46.6
Total	2274	100
Question type		
Starred	91	7.8
Unstarred	1070	92.2
Total	1161	100
Gender-wise		
Male	957	82.4
Female	204	17.6
Total	1161	100.0
Question per member		
Male (Lok Sabha + Rajya Sabha)	1.37	
Female (Lok Sabha + Rajya Sabha)	0.44	

The analysis of total women related questions show that the percentages of unstarred questions are much higher than the starred questions. Only 7.8% of questions were starred questions whereas 92.2% questions were unstarred questions. Starred question are those questions on which the member desires oral answer whereas in the unstarred questions, the written reply is given from the ministry.



## 4.2 Gender-wise questions

The gender-wise analysis of questions show that out of 1161 questions, male members have raised 82.4% questions whereas 17.6% questions were raised by women. It is also to be noted that the number of male Parliamentarians are far more than female.

Questions raised per member are a better indicator to understand male-female differentials in asking questions. However, it was found that the questions raised per member were lower for female Parliamentarians than male Parliamentarians. On an average during the time-period 2015-2019, male members in the Parliament have raised 1.37 questions per member, while women members have raised 0.44 questions per member.

### State-wise questions on Gender

Gender related parliamentary questions referring to a particular State/UT were very few. A total of 103 questions were state specific on the gender issues. Members from Rajya Sabha asked more States/UTs specific questions on gender than Lok Sabha. Out of 103 state-specific questions on women issues, only 26 questions were raised in Lok Sabha whereas 73 were raised in Rajya Sabha. Maximum number of gender related questions were raised for the state of Uttar Pradesh (6 in Lok Sabha and 4 in Rajya Sabha) followed by Tamil Nadu (1 in Lok Sabha and 8 in Rajya Sabha), Chhattisgarh (1 in Lok Sabha and 5 in Rajya Sabha). Among UTs, questions were on Delhi-NCR (6), Jammu & Kashmir, and Goa (1 each). There were 5 gender related questions for the north-eastern region, as indicated in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: State-specific Gender Questions raised in the Parliament.**

State	Lok Sabha	Rajya Sabha	State	Lok Sabha	Rajya Sabha
Andhra Pradesh	0	4	Maharashtra	1	1
Bihar	0	2	Odisha	2	2
Chhattisgarh	1	5	Punjab	0	1
Goa	0	1	Rajasthan	2	3
Gujarat	1	1	Tamil Nadu	1	8
Haryana	0	3	Telangana	0	1
Himachal Pradesh	0	1	Uttar Pradesh	6	4
Jharkhand	2	3	West Bengal	0	5
Karnataka	1	4	North East	1	4

State	Lok Sabha	Rajya Sabha	State	Lok Sabha	Rajya Sabha
Kerala	2	2	Delhi	2	4
Madhya Pradesh	2	1	Jammu & Kashmir	2	1
<b>Total All States &amp;UTs (Lok Sabha)</b>			<b>26</b>		
<b>Total All States &amp;UTs (Rajya Sabha)</b>			<b>73</b>		

The questions on Uttar Pradesh predominantly revolved around the rehabilitation and welfare schemes of widows based in Vrindavan. Out of ten questions on Uttar Pradesh, five questions were on widows in Vrindavan and Kashi. Other questions on Uttar Pradesh were on malnutrition among women and children in Uttar Pradesh, and gender inequalities in urban and rural areas of Uttar Pradesh.

Questions related to schemes for women were the major focus of Tamil Nadu. For the state of Tamil Nadu, questions were related to SABLA Scheme, implementation of Ujjwala Scheme, Mahila Shakti Scheme, Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for empowerment of Adolescent Girls. Questions were also raised on utilization of Nirbhaya Funds as well as on destitute women in Tamil Nadu.

The questions on Chhattisgarh majorly revolved on women well-being like nutritious food to lactating women in Chhattisgarh, SABLA Yojana, malnutrition among the pregnant women etc. Questions were on gender disparity and violence against women in naxal affected areas of Chhattisgarh was also raised.

The state of Haryana which has been grappling with issue of worst sex-ratio, has been the cause of concern for Parliamentarians. Questions related to declining trends of child sex ratio, *beti bachao beti padhao*, and schemes for women and girl child empowerment was raised for Haryana.

For Delhi, there were questions related to placement of girls, safety and security of women against sexual harassment, and status of women hostels.

The queries on the North-Eastern Region of India revolved around the schemes for empowerment of women and working women hostels. Questions were also raised on the discrimination meted out to women and the rehabilitation of the trafficked women and children from North Eastern states.

For the states like Bihar, Odisha and Jharkhand, the questions revolved around the malnutrition among women in general and pregnant women in particular. Questions were also raised on schemes on women in these states.

### 4.3 Broad Areas of Concern

For systematically understanding the concerns of the Parliamentarians, the gender related questions were divided into various themes. These are: (i) Women Well-being, (ii) Welfare Schemes for Women, (iii) Violence against Women, (iv) Women Empowerment, (v) Funds and Finances, (vi) National and State Commission on Women, (vii) Gender Parity Index, (viii) Housing Facilities, (ix) Destitute Women, and (x) Sexual Harassment at Work Place.

Out of 1161 questions analysed, 20.7% were concerned with women wellbeing, followed by questions related to welfare schemes (19.6%). Violence against women called for 15.3% while questions related to women empowerment formed 12.4% followed by funds and finance (8.6%). Further, questions related to housing facilities (5.2%), women in distress (3.7%), sexual harassment at work place (2.3%) followed. Gender parity index (5.4%) and questions on various Commissions are some other issues of concern.

**Table 4.3: Theme-wise distribution of questions on Gender raised in the Parliament.**

S. No.	Themes	Frequency	Per cent
i	Women Wellbeing	238	20.7
ii	Welfare Scheme	227	19.6
iii	Violence against Women	178	15.3
iv	Women Empowerment	144	12.4
v	Funds and Finance	100	8.6
vi	National and State Commissions	79	6.8
vii	Gender Parity Index	63	5.4
viii	Housing Facilities	60	5.2
ix	Women in Distress	43	3.7
x	Sexual Harassment at Workplace	27	2.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1161</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The theme-wise and house-wise analysis of the parliamentary questions on gender-related issues further indicates that gender parity index questions (66.7%) came largely from Rajya Sabha while 33.3% of them were raised in Lok Sabha. Questions related to funds and finances have higher proportion from Rajya Sabha (57%) and so are the ones on violence against women (55.6%), and welfare schemes (53.2%), than from Lok Sabha. Questions related to Commissions for women (55.7%), women empowerment (52.1%), housing (62.7%) and women in distress recorded higher proportion from Lok Sabha compared to Rajya Sabha (Table 4.4).

**Table 4.4: Theme-wise and House-wise Gender related questions raised in Parliament.**

	Themes	House				Total
		Rajya Sabha	%tage	Lok Sabha	%tage	
i	Women Wellbeing	118	48.7%	120	51.3%	238
li	Welfare Scheme	122	53.2%	105	46.8%	227
lii	Violence against women	99	55.6%	79	44.4%	178
lv	Women Empowerment	69	47.9%	75	52.1%	144
v	Funds and Finance	57	57.0%	43	43.0%	100
vi	National and State Commission	35	44.3%	44	55.7%	79
vii	Gender Parity Index	42	66.7%	21	33.3%	63
viii	Housing Facilities	23	38.3%	37	61.7%	60
ix	Women in Distress	21	48.8%	22	51.2%	43
x	Sexual Harassment at Work Place	11	40.7%	16	59.3%	27

### **Concern expressed by male/female members of Parliament**

The male members of the Parliament have raised issues such as well-being and welfare schemes for women. They have raised queries in the context of violence against women and also on women empowerment.

Moreover, the male Parliamentarians have raised fewer questions on sexual harassment of women at workplace in comparison to their women counterparts. For women Parliamentarians, the major issues of concern

have been welfare schemes followed by well-being and women empowerment of women.

## **4.4 A Short Script on Content**

### **i. Women Wellbeing**

The questions under this head relate to health and education of women and girls and the programme launched by government in this regard. The questions revolved around malnutrition, anaemia among women especially among pregnant women, awareness related to health of women, Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana, Mamta Scheme, *Beti Bachao Beti Padhao* Scheme, SABLA Scheme, Maternity benefits, Poshan Abhiyan. Status of PMMVY has also been covered under this theme.

Quite a few questions were raised on *Beti Bachao Beti Padhao* Scheme in both the Houses.

Questions have been raised on salient features of Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana followed by the sub-questions on the status of its implementation and the possibility of revising the scheme by the government. The sub-questions on IGMSY relate to the incorporation of the National Food Security Act 2013 in providing assistance under the IGMSY. The question pertaining to IGMSY also revolved around the issues and challenges which the States have been facing to implement the scheme especially in the state of Odisha.

The proper implementation of the schemes related to the nutrition of the pregnant women in the rural areas of the country was another area of concern. Queries were further raised on the remedial steps/actions taken by the government against any irregularities in these schemes.

In the salient features of SABLA Scheme and its implementation, sub-questions pertained to funds released and utilized along with the beneficiaries of the said scheme. The Parliamentarians through the sub-questions also sought information pertaining to increasing the number of districts to be covered under the scheme, bringing reforms in the scheme and the steps taken for the effective implementation of the scheme. In Lok Sabha, one question was raised on the implementation of Sabla Scheme in the context of Chhattisgarh.

In the Lok Sabha, the Parliamentarians have shown their interest on the education and safety of women and children in the erstwhile state of

Jammu and Kashmir. The Parliamentarians raised their apprehension towards proper utilization of funds allocated for the educational development and safety of the women in the State.

In another question raised in the lower house (Lok Sabha), any scheme launched or proposed to provide health-check-ups, counselling for nutrition, personnel hygiene management and skill development training to the out-of-school adolescent girls including SC/ST girls were inquired into.

## **ii. Welfare Schemes**

Under the theme of welfare schemes, questions related were raised to schemes for the protection and empowerment of women. These included queries on Nirbhaya Centres, One Stop Women Protection Centres, Crises centres, financial assistance for marriage of girls, self-defence training for women, Kishori Shakti Yojana, scheme for single earning mothers, and welfare of tribal women.

In Lok Sabha, the representatives have also raised queries about the implementation of the welfare schemes for women in the affected areas of Jharkhand. A similar question was also raised for the rural areas in Gujarat. The sub-question on the implementation of welfare schemes of Gujarat also revolved around the evaluation of the scheme, funds released and utilization of the funds for the schemes and steps proposed by the government for proper utilization of funds allocated for these schemes.

## **iii. Violence against Women**

The theme violence against women comprised all those questions which are related to sexual exploitation, sexual violence, atrocities on women and girls, child trafficking, indecent representation of women in advertisements, domestic violence, girl child abuse, suicides among women, frauds through matrimonial websites, online harassment, and dowry related deaths.

Question was raised on violence and discrimination against women in context of the North-Eastern States. The Parliamentarians sought details on the increasing cases of violence and discrimination against women in North Eastern States and the reasons behind such rise. The sub-question on the same focused on the probability of the government conducting or sponsoring any study in association with the Central Universities in this

regard. It further showed the concern of Parliamentarian on the programmes being designed and implemented to prevent such incidences.

The aims and objectives of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005, the achievements of the Act and the government intention to bring about amendment in the legislation were sought for. Questions were raised on the number of cases registered under the said legislation and actions taken against the perpetrator. They also focused on the measures and steps taken by the government to ensure effective and proper implementation of the said legislation to restrict/eliminate any misuse of the legislation.

Question was also raised on the survey conducted by the United Nations Population Fund on cases of domestic violence and abuse by men against wives/female live-in partners and the unprecedented rise in such violence. The Parliamentarians focused on the number of such cases reported and the government's intention to conduct its own survey on the said issue. Through sub-questions, information was sought about the corrective measures taken by the Government to strengthen the existing laws to restrict the incidents of domestic violence.

Questions also revolved around the status of crime against women in India and any agenda being formulated to tackle these crimes. The sub-questions highlighted the concerns of a Rajya Sabha member about the failure of the country to control the crime against women and doing worse than many other countries. The members have further shown the inclination to know the possibility to adopt the action plans of other countries to curtail the crime against women.

#### **iv. Women Empowerment**

The theme of women empowerment covered all the issues related to the employment of women, their training, status of employment, women self-help groups, economic empowerment, schemes for women development, awards for women empowerments, remuneration and benefits for working women, crèche facilities, awareness programmes, women reservation bill, etc.

Questions related to the Stree Shakti Puraskar for the recognition of women in field of women empowerment were raised. The Parliamentarians have raised queries on the criteria and procedure for selecting such awardees.

There was an enquiry about the effectiveness of the National Policy for Empowerment of Women in achieving its objectives and the schemes/programmes under the policy were also issues of concern.

#### **v. Funds and Finances**

All the questions related to funds available under various schemes, funds allocated to different states, utilization of funds, delays in allocation of funds, budget for schemes, Nirbhaya Funds, Rashtriya Mahila Kosh, Gender Budgeting were included in funds and finance section.

Nirbhaya Funds have caught the attention of the Parliamentarians in both the Houses and large number of questions was raised on it. The questions were on the amount released from Nirbhaya Funds for building Nirbhaya Centres, and guidelines for the utilization of funds under the Nirbhaya Fund Corpus. The sub-questions on the Nirbhaya Funds revolved around the irregularities, corruptions or diversion of the fund and the steps taken by the Central Government against such complaints. Additionally, the Parliamentarians also wanted to know through the sub-questions, the steps/measures taken by the Government for proper implementation, monitoring, awareness and utilization of the Nirbhaya Fund Corpus. State specific question was related to the status of the proposal submitted by the Delhi government to Ministry of Women and Child Development for seeking financial assistance under the Nirbhaya Fund Corpus.

Questions were also raised on the budget for the development of women and children. The questions revolved around the amount released and utilized for such initiatives. The Parliamentarians further enquired if the amount being sanctioned has been sufficient for overcoming the various social barriers that women encounter.

#### **vi. Commissions on Women**

All the questions related to National Commission of Women, State Commissions of Women, Commissions set up by the Centre or the States, Internal Committees, and National Task Forces are included under the theme of National and State Commissions.

National Commission of Women was one of the focus areas of the Parliamentarians in both the houses. The Parliamentarian sought information on the response of the National Commission of Women on the missing girls and the actions taken by the Commission in forms of the



surprise raids conducted in the shelter homes and the steps taken to ensure safety and security of women in the shelter homes to avoid/restrict the cases of missing girls.

#### **vii. Gender Parity Index**

Questions related to Gender Parity Index were around sex ratio, gender development index, sex determination, infant mortality rate of girls, measures to prevent female foeticide, number of missing girls, global gender gap report etc.

Gender inequalities in the urban and rural areas and the measures taken by the government to eliminate such disparities existing due to gender identities are the other areas of enquiries.

The declining child sex ratio in the country and the steps taken by the government were also the concerns of the Parliamentarians expressed through their questions. The sub-questions on the same also focused on the impact of *Beti Bachao Beti Padhao* campaign to save and educate the girl child. Sub-questions were on discussions/consultations being held between the Union and State governments on the awareness programmes to eliminate declining trends of child sex ratio and the steps taken by the government in each district to improve the child sex ratio in the country.

A question was raised in Rajya Sabha about the declining trends of child-sex ratio in the state of Punjab, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh. The member expressed the apprehension about the child sex ratio between the age of 0-6 since independence as has been reported in the Census 2011. The missing girl children are reported across all states but their incidence is the highest in the three states -Punjab, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh and they were the cause of concern for the Parliamentarians. The sub-questions related to governments' intention to take measures for curtailing such ill-practice and reduce the missing girls and women in these states.

#### **viii. Housing Facilities**

Housing facilities related questions basically dealt with shelter homes, women in shelter- homes, ashrams for women, working women hostels, *Swadhar Greh*, homes for women and children and hostels for migrant women labour. Question was raised in the context of ashrams for widows in the country. The Parliamentarians have shown their apprehensions

about the lack of basic infrastructure and maintenance of existing infrastructure in the ashrams for widows in the country. They sought information about the government initiative towards increasing the facilities at these shelter-homes.

Questions with regard to working women hostels related to their existing numbers, norms criteria related to financial assistance for their construction, remedial actions taken by the government to ensure proper sanction and utilization of funds for construction of working women hostels. Questions were also raised on the availability of physical infrastructure in the working women hostels. State specific questions related to working women hostels were raised for the state of Maharashtra and Gujarat.

#### **ix. Women in Distress**

Questions related to women in distress/destitute women focused on widows, women with disabilities, sex workers, old women, survey of widows, rape victims, women from religious minorities, destitute women, single women, and abandoned women.

Parliamentarians wanted to know about the number of the widows, divorcee and destitute women in various parts of the country and the rehabilitation status for these women. The sub-questions focused on the funds sanctioned and released for their rehabilitation and the status of such rehabilitation programmes. Further the question was raised on the assessments being conducted by the government to understand the impact of such programmes and schemes. Sub question was on the governments' probability/intention to implement special schemes and rehabilitation plan for the widows living in Vrindavan in consultation with the state government of Uttar Pradesh.

In Lok Sabha, one of the Parliamentarians raised queries related to the study being conducted by the Government pertaining to the identification of unmarried mothers in the tribal areas of the country and the outcome of such study. The sub-question on the same revolved around information about the national or state specific programmes/schemes being initiated by the government for the rehabilitation of such women and their children.

## **x. Sexual Harassment at Workplace**

Sexual harassment at workplace comprised of queries related to case of violence that women suffered in workplace including domestic workers, 'Me too' Movement, fine for sexual harassment at workplaces, and internal complaints about sexual harassment at workplace.

The Parliamentarians focused on the sexual harassment cases in the workplace and the implementation of the women complaint cell to address such incidences both in public and private institutions/organizations. They expressed their apprehension on the non-existence of Internal Complaint Committees within various Ministries and Departments of the Central and State governments under the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2013.

## **4.5 Conclusion**

The present chapter brings forth the concerns of Parliamentarians in India on women issues through the analysis of parliamentary questions. During the period 2014-2019, 2375 questions were raised both in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha for the Ministry of Women and Child Development, of which 1161 questions were gender-specific. The quantitative analysis of these parliamentary questions reveals that there has been marginal difference in the number of questions raised on gender issues raised in both the houses. Also, the analysis of questions raised per member side-lines the much-accepted notion that female representatives are more vocal on gender related issues. Male members have raised more questions on gender related issues than their female counterparts. There were very few states level questions and the representatives have raised questions either general or pan-India specific. Few questions were however, raised for the states of Haryana, Punjab and Madhya Pradesh with glaring gender discriminations.

The content analysis of these questions reveals that Parliamentarians have raised their apprehensions and anxieties on a range of women issues irrespective of their gender, political or ideological affiliations. The questions have been raised broadly on issues pertaining to women well-being, violence against women, women discrimination, violence against women in workplace, gender index, parity schemes and policies for women, women empowerment, and functioning of women commissions both at national and regional level. The analysis reflects that the voice of women from marginalised sections especially those having disabilities,

women in tribal areas, refugee women, women who have been victim of geographical and natural disasters continue to be unaddressed. Given the socio-economic scenario, man-made disasters and vulnerabilities which affect the lives of women across all social categories, the need of the hour demands universally designed and all-inclusive capacity building of the Parliamentarian on gender issues so that no-one is left behind in the sustainable growth of the nation and the society.

## Chapter 5

### Discussion and Recommendations

#### 5.1 Discussion

The socially constructed phenomenon of gender, focusing primarily on the norms, principles and roles of men and women in society has relegated the position of the women across all states and society. The preconceived notion of women belonging to the four walls of the house, has alienated them from their rights that are so crucial for making a sustainable, egalitarian, and just society. The importance of inclusion and equal participation of women in the growth and development process has been acknowledged from time to time by the state. Much of this must be attributed to the government initiative that has created environment for women in the socio-economic and political development process. Range of initiatives in forms of international conventions and conferences have been organized at the international level to highlight the issues pertaining to women equality, equity and empowerment which in turn provides guiding principles and framework for the gender sensitive legislative and policy initiatives for the member states including India.

This study reflects the deep gender differentials that still exist in India among various demographic, socio-economic and political parameters. A paradoxical scenario exists in Indian state wherein women have been accorded the position of deity and worshipped, at the same time subjected to various forms of maltreatment discrimination and inequalities. Despite legislative and policy interventions, sex-ratio continues to remain unfavourable for women and girl-child in India. Some positive movements are, however, visible in the field of health for women. Among health parameters, we have selected three indicators namely infant mortality rate (IMR), maternal mortality rate (MMR) and life expectancy at birth (LEB) to understand the status of gender equality. IMR trend suggests narrowing of gaps between male and female. The MMR has shown a decline and the sex-ratio at birth has shown slight improvement. However, much needs to be done to bring it at par with global and national targets. Education and employment are yet other sectors where women have been facing undue inequalities though a declining trend is now visible. More proactive measures need to be taken to eliminate discrimination that girls and women in India face in education and employment. The status of women

in any country is also reflected through their representation and participation in politics. Throughout our history, women in India have shown their deep concern and immense interest/in politics of our country, even then women representation in Parliament and in State assemblies continues to be abysmal. Thanks to the 112<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act, 2009 that the women representation at the local level has increased many-fold.

The quality change and improvement in the status of its people to a great extent depends upon the initiatives taken by the government and efforts made in that direction through various policies, programmes and efforts to transform public opinion. The improvements, big or small, in the status of the women in India and elsewhere have been possible due to the state endeavour and commitments towards gender equality. Government of India and state governments irrespective of party-in-power have from time to time taken several measures towards bringing gender equality. The present study highlights not only constitutional provisions for women but also range of the gender sensitive legislative measures, policy level initiatives for women empowerment and equality. The history of independent India shows the serious intention of the government to bring women at par with the men of the country. Women have played an effective role in the constitution-making process, in its drafting and envisioning the future of the country. Since the inception of India as a Republic, the five-year planning process adopted in India accommodated a range of interventions for the welfare of the women, improving their status and empowering them. The much-needed efforts for empowering the women are apparent through some of the legislations pertaining to the rights of women in ancestral property, protection of women against domestic violence, law on triple talaq, protection of women at workplace, and so forth.

Similarly, at the policy level, women and girls are given special attention under the newly implemented National Education Policy 2020. The role of schemes in reducing the gender inequalities in education like bicycle scheme for girls, scholarship for girls that have been implemented by the Union as well as State governments are appreciable.

Various world conferences on the women issues have been organized from time to time under the aegis of United Nations; the first one being First World Conference on Women in 1975. Delegates from across the globe including India have been the part of these conferences and shown their commitments towards addressing the women related issues. The Beijing Conference of 1995 is one of the most important international initiatives

towards the cause of women. The action plans and goals adopted in these conferences have been instrumental and acted as a guiding path for the signatory countries like India to make the society better place to live for women.

The parliamentary questions before the Ministry of Women and Child Development have also provided us the picture of the policy-makers' inclination and interest towards women equality, equity and empowerment. Quite a few questions have been raised before the Ministry of Women and Child Development in the Parliament during the last five years, and these queries related to a wide range of themes that are crucial for women' equality, equity and empowerment. These questions and sub-questions were nation, state and region specific. The parliamentary questions reflected the concerns of the representatives on issues pertaining to tasks performed by the commissions for women, gender parity, women empowerment, funds and finances, housing facilities, destitute women, violence against women, women well-being, sexual harassment at workplace, and welfare schemes for women. Paradoxically, the findings of the content analysis of the parliamentary questions before the MoWCD in last five years side-lines the much-anticipated norms and perception that women representatives are more vocal towards women' cause and issues.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

Based on the foregoing study and discussion, the following recommendations are made to augment the efforts towards gender equality and equity so that women empowerment is reflected on a large scale in the society.

- i. The demographic and socio-economic profile indicates that overall Sex-ratio, Sex-ratio at Birth and women employment are still the main issues to be concentrated upon. Though State laws and policies have been towards reducing the discrepancies, strong public opinion needs to be generated on these issues. Public needs to be sensitized, for which political leaders need to take initiative right at the grass-root level.

Lately, our health infrastructure has been more geared to tackling the problem of Covid-19, with a subsequent adverse impact on the facilities provided for maternal and child-health-care, affecting the overall reproductive health care. These services need to be

strengthened again. To regain our SDG goal, it is necessary to revisit the health services related to women.

- ii. Every effort should be made to percolate the details of policies and programmes to the ground level (village, household, etc.) in their true perspective, so that they are not-misunderstood or wrongly perceived. It may be exercised through personal contacts, social media and other forms of communication. Our elected representatives can play a very effective role in subscribing to the State laws, policies and programmes.
- iii. Several women related crucial issues have been identified by the Parliamentarians in both the houses. We feel violence against women, and the plight of women in distress is the major issues to look into. Economic security for destitute women, old age homes for the elderly and abandoned women are need of the hour. We recommend at least one old age home for each district for women to provide them physical comfort, economic and social security so that they could lead a respectable life so long as they live.
- iv. There is a need to educate and develop an understanding among the policymakers about gender as intersectional phenomenon. Women are present in all social categories and vulnerabilities. The issues and challenges of women in all social categories are both similar and unique. All policy-level interventions right at the formulation phase must give cognizance to this fact and the policies must be formulated in a way that they address and give voice to the needs of women from all vulnerable groups.
- v. At the formulation and planning phase of policy, the participation of women should be enhanced, and a bottom-up approach must be adopted. Women have the best experiences of their needs and issues. It should be ensured that right at the formulating, designing, and planning phase of policies, and the representatives must involve women to understand their needs. This would enable in making more effective and efficient policies catering to the needs of women both in principles and in practice.
- vi. There is no denying the truth that political parties have been acknowledging the role of women in winning the elections and for strengthening democracy. Almost all parties in India also have their own women wings and in every election manifesto, promises are made to empower the women in India. However, the political parties must understand the need to provide more tickets to women candidates



and provide them with the same support as their male counterpart. For this, there must be a proactive capacity building of political parties wherein they must be trained on what and how to address women issues and increase their political participation.

- vii. There is a need to build a strong partnership between the state and civil society for effective and efficient policymaking and their implementation for women welfare and empowerment. In every policy-making initiative, there should be a representative of women groups to address the voice of the women. The members of civil society must in return make the policy-makers aware of the issues, challenges and needs of women in challenging times especially in time of crises like COVID.

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## Annexure – 1.1

### Initial draft National Indicator Framework for Sustainable Development Goal 5

Target	Initial Draft National Indicator
<b>Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (Nodal Ministry: M/o Women and Child Development)</b>	
5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere	Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex
5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation	Proportion of crime against women to total crime reported in the country during the calendar year.
	Proportion of sexual crimes against women to total crime against women during the calendar year
	Proportion of cruelty/physical violence on women by husband or his relative to total crime against women during the calendar year
	Proportion on rape of women by persons known to them, inter-alia, live-in partner or separated husband or ex-husband to total rape of women during the calendar year
	Proportion of sexual crime against girls children to total crime against children during the calendar year
	Proportion of Trafficking of girl children to total children trafficked during the calendar year
	Percentage of currently partnered girls and women aged 15-49 years who have experience physical and / or sexual violence by their current intimate partner in the last 12 months.
	Child sex ratio
5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation	Proportion of women subjected to dowry related offences to total crime against women.
	Proportion of cases reported under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (early marriage of children below 18 years of age) total crime against children.
	Proportion of women aged 20-24 years

Target	Initial Draft National Indicator
	who were married or in a union before age 18.
5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate	Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work by sex, age and location.
5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life	Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament, State legislation and Local Self Government
	Number of women in Board of listed companies
5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences	Contraceptive Prevalence Rate
	Unmet need for family planning for currently married women aged 15-49 years
	Proportion of population aged 15-24 years with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS
5.a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws	Operational land holding – gender wise
	Proportion of female agricultural labourers
	Wages of casual labourers (gender wise)
	Agricultural wages (gender wise)
	Number of accounts opened under PMJDY
	Amount of Over Draft (OD) availed from PMJDY accounts by women.
5.b Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women	Number of mobile phone users, by sex
5.c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels	Number of gender Budget Cells in Central and State Ministries

- Prepared by Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Govt. of India in March 2017.

## Annexure – 1.2

### Data Sources and Methods

This chapter includes sources of data and methods which have been used in the given study. This study has used multiple sources of data to accomplish analytical outcomes. As data sources and methodology play a major role in carrying out any research, it is very important to give description of both in detail. This annexure will provide a brief description of major sources of data and methodology that has been adapted to analyse the objectives of the study.

**1.2.1 Census of India** - Census of India provides data on various socio-economic, cultural as well as demographic characteristics of a population which helps various organization, like government and non-profit organizations to formulate policies etc. at a particular time of ten-year interval. Here, we have used Census of India data from 1951 to 2011, to calculate proportion of each indicator given in the study, like various indicators related to demographic, economic and social profile of India. We have used Primary Census Abstract, General Economic Tables, Socio and Cultural Tables to fulfil the objective of this study.

**1.2.2 Sample Registration System (SRS)** - Sample Registration System is a demographic survey for providing reliable annual estimated Birth Rate, Infant Mortality Rate, Death Rate and other fertility and mortality indicators at the national and subnational levels. In this study, we have used SRS, Statistical Report, from June 2011 to May 2020 to generate various tables related to birth rate and death rate like Infant Mortality Rate and Maternal Mortality Rate as well as Sex Ratio at Birth and Life Expectancy at Birth.

**1.2.3 National Family Health Survey (NFHS)** - In India, Demographic Health Survey is also known as National Family Health Survey. It is a large-scale, multi round survey, which is conducted in a representative sample of households throughout India. It provides information on relevant emerging health and family welfare issues. Here we have used NFHS round 3 (1998-1999) to round 5 (2019-2020), and also we have used the proportion method to provide percentage of birth attended by health personal and for some insights related to domestic violence against women.

**1.2.4 National Sample Survey Office (NSSO)** - It is formerly called the National Sample Survey Organization. It is one of the largest organizations

in India which conducts periodic surveys on socio-economic, demographic, agricultural and industrial subjects for collecting data from households and from enterprises located in villages and in the towns. In this study we have used Time Use Survey, 2019 to calculate the proportion of unpaid domestic services and care giving services. With the help of Periodic Labour Force Survey Report 2018, we got the wages of casual and agricultural labourers.

**1.2.5 Civil Registration System (CRS)** - Civil Registration System in India is the unified process of continuous, permanent and compulsory recording of the vital events like births, deaths and still births with their characteristics. The data generated through a complete and up to date CRS is essential for socio-economic planning and to evaluate the effectiveness of various social sector programmes. Statistics derived henceforth helped us to get the information regarding registered births and deaths in India for the year 2018.

**1.2.6 Reports** - Some of the statistics has been taken from various reports which are available on Government of India website to calculate the proportion of various indicators provided in the study. We have used *Educational Statistics at a Glance 2018 Report by MHRD* for calculating the Enrolment Ratio in India. Similarly, Crimes in India 2015-2019 Report, published by *National Crime Record Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs* has helped us calculating the percentage of crimes that has occurred in the meantime against women. With that, Lok Sabha Secretariat, 2015-20 and Ministry of Panchayati Raj 2018 has also helped us in getting important information related to women participation in both Lok Sabha and Panchayati Raj Institution. We have also used Data on Police Organization Report 2018 given by *Bureau of Police and Development* to calculate the strength of female officers in India. For number of board members in listed companies in 2015-2018, we have used data given by *Ministry of Corporate Affairs* and similarly, *Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare* has given us data on landholding under women in India during 2015-2016. *Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojna (PMJDY)*, a progress report from February 2021 gives us the total number of beneficiaries under PMJDY till now. We have used Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) or Department of Telecommunication 2017-2020 data to calculate the number of telephone subscription in India. *Ministry of Women and Child Development* gives us data on gender budget under central and state ministries from 2015 to 2020.

## Annexure 2

**Table A.2.1: State-Wise Sex Ratio in India: 1951-2011.**

State/UT	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	625	617	644	760	818	846	876
Andhra Pradesh	986	981	977	975	972	978	993
Arunachal Pradesh	NA	894	861	862	859	893	938
Assam	868	869	896	910	923	935	958
Bihar	1000	1005	957	948	907	919	918
Chandigarh	781	652	749	769	790	777	818
Chhattisgarh	1024	1008	998	996	985	989	991
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	946	963	1007	974	952	812	774
Daman & Diu	1125	1169	1099	1062	969	710	618
Delhi	768	785	801	808	827	821	868
Goa	1128	1066	981	975	967	961	973
Gujarat	952	940	934	942	934	920	919
Haryana	871	868	867	870	865	861	879
Himachal Pradesh	912	938	958	973	976	968	972
Jammu & Kashmir	873	878	878	892	896	892	889
Jharkhand	961	960	945	940	922	941	948
Karnataka	966	959	957	963	960	965	973
Kerala	1028	1022	1016	1032	1036	1058	1084
Lakshadweep	1043	1020	978	975	943	948	946
Madhya Pradesh	945	932	920	921	912	919	931
Maharashtra	941	936	930	937	934	922	929
Manipur	1036	1015	980	971	958	974	985
Meghalaya	949	967	942	954	955	972	989
Mizoram	1041	1009	946	919	921	935	976
Nagaland	999	933	871	863	886	900	931
Odisha	1022	1001	988	981	971	972	979
Puducherry	1030	1013	989	985	979	1001	1037
Punjab	844	854	865	879	882	876	895
Rajasthan	921	908	911	919	910	921	928
Sikkim	907	904	863	835	878	875	890
Tamil Nadu	1007	992	978	977	974	987	996
Tripura	904	932	943	946	945	948	960
Uttar Pradesh	908	907	876	882	876	898	912
Uttarakhand	940	947	940	936	936	962	963
West Bengal	865	878	891	911	917	934	950
INDIA	946	941	930	934	927	933	940

Source: Census of India 2011, Office of Registrar General, Primary Census Abstract, Total Population: 2011; 2001; 1991.

MOSPI, Statistical Year book of India, 2015, Table 2; \*NA- Data Not Available.



**Table A.2.2: State-Wise Child Sex Ratio in India: 1981-2011.**

State/UT	1981	1991	2001	2011
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	978	973	957	966
Andhra Pradesh	992	975	961	943
Arunachal Pradesh	997	982	964	960
Assam	NA	975	965	957
Bihar	981	953	942	933
Chandigarh	907	899	845	867
Chhattisgarh	NA	984	975	964
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	995	1013	979	924
Daman & Diu	NA	958	926	909
Delhi	926	915	868	867
Goa	965	964	938	920
Gujarat	947	928	883	886
Haryana	902	879	819	830
Himachal Pradesh	971	951	896	906
Jammu & Kashmir	964	NA	941	859
Jharkhand	NA	979	965	943
Karnataka	975	960	946	943
Kerala	970	958	960	964
Lakshadweep	964	941	959	908
Madhya Pradesh	977	941	932	912
Maharashtra	956	946	913	883
Manipur	986	974	957	934
Meghalaya	991	986	973	970
Mizoram	986	969	964	972
Nagaland	988	993	964	944
Odisha	995	967	953	934
Puducherry	975	963	967	965
Punjab	908	875	798	846
Rajasthan	957	916	909	883
Sikkim	978	965	963	944
Tamil Nadu	967	948	942	946
Tripura	972	967	966	953
Uttar Pradesh	935	927	916	899
Uttarakhand	NA	949	908	886
West Bengal	981	967	960	950
INDIA	962	945	927	914

Source: Census of India 2011, Office of Registrar General, Primary Census Abstract, Total Population: 2011; 2001; 1991.

Gender Composition Report, Census of India, Page No. 88; \*NA- Data Not Available.

**Table A.2.3: Sex Ratio at Birth in Major States of India, 2014-2018.**

States/UT	2014-2016	2015-2017	2016-2018
Andhra Pradesh	913	928	920
Assam	896	918	925
Bihar	908	904	895
Chhattisgarh	963	985	958
Delhi	857	926	844
Gujarat	848	865	866
Haryana	832	828	843
Himachal Pradesh	917	920	930
Jammu & Kashmir	906	919	927
Jharkhand	918	927	923
Karnataka	935	958	924
Kerala	959	965	957
Madhya Pradesh	922	908	925
Maharashtra	876	886	880
Odisha	948	946	933
Punjab	893	874	890
Rajasthan	857	858	871
Tamil Nadu	915	919	908
Telangana	901	922	901
Uttar Pradesh	882	862	880
Uttarakhand	850	849	840
West Bengal	937	943	941
INDIA	898	898	899

*Source: Sample Registration System, Fertility Indicators, Statistical Report: 2014-2016, Registrar General of India, New Delhi, 2014-2016, Page No. 56.*

*Sample Registration System, Fertility Indicators, Statistical Report: 2015-2017, Registrar General of India, New Delhi, 2015-2017, Page No. 56.*

*Sample Registration System, Fertility Indicators, Statistical Report: 2016-2018, Registrar General of India, New Delhi, 2016-2018, Page No. 56.*

**Table A.2.4: State Wise Infant Mortality Rate in India, 2018**

State/UT	Total	Male	Female
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	9	8	9
Andhra Pradesh	29	30	29
Arunachal Pradesh	37	31	43
Assam	41	40	44
Bihar	32	30	35
Chandigarh	13	12	14
Chhattisgarh	41	42	39
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	13	11	15
Daman & Diu	16	17	16
Delhi	13	14	12
Goa	7	8	7
Gujarat	28	29	27
Haryana	30	31	29
Himachal Pradesh	19	19	20
Jammu & Kashmir	22	22	23
Jharkhand	30	27	34
Karnataka	23	21	25
Kerala	7	9	5
Lakshadweep	14	15	13
Madhya Pradesh	48	51	46
Maharashtra	19	19	19
Manipur	11	8	14
Meghalaya	33	34	31
Mizoram	5	2	9
Nagaland	4	3	6
Odisha	40	40	39
Puducherry	11	10	12
Punjab	20	21	20
Rajasthan	37	37	38
Sikkim	7	6	8
Tamil Nadu	15	16	14
Telangana	27	27	26
Tripura	27	30	23
Uttar Pradesh	43	43	44
Uttarakhand	31	33	28
West Bengal	22	21	22
INDIA	32	32	33

Source: Sample Registration Bulletin, Volume 53 No.1, May 2020.

**Table A.2.5: State-Wise Work Participation Rate in India, 2001-2011**

	Total Workers in 2001						Total Workers in 2011					
	Main Worker			Marginal Worker			Main Worker			Marginal Worker		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
A & Nicobar Islands	31.90	27.33	4.56	6.36	3.32	3.04	33.08	27.23	5.86	7.00	4.54	2.46
Andhra Pradesh	38.11	25.53	12.58	7.68	2.90	4.78	39.06	25.37	13.69	7.55	3.22	4.33
Arunachal Pradesh	37.80	24.35	13.45	6.18	2.39	3.79	34.60	21.76	12.84	7.87	3.55	4.32
Assam	26.69	21.94	4.75	9.10	3.83	5.26	27.84	22.54	5.30	10.52	4.83	5.69
Bihar	25.37	21.10	4.27	8.34	3.58	4.76	20.52	16.59	3.93	12.84	7.64	5.20
Chandigarh	36.53	3076	5.77	1.27	0.82	0.45	36.57	30.05	6.51	1.73	1.04	0.69
Chhattisgarh	33.86	22.77	11.10	12.60	3.79	8.81	32.26	21.91	10.35	15.42	6.01	9.40
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	43.62	32.27	11.35	8.14	2.12	6.01	37.91	31.75	6.16	7.82	2.96	4.86
Daman and Diu	42.68	37.21	5.47	3.33	1.07	2.26	47.87	43.01	4.86	1.99	1.16	0.83
Delhi	31.17	27.39	3.78	1.64	1.20	0.45	31.61	27.18	4.44	1.67	1.19	0.48
Goa	31.56	24.26	7.29	7.24	3.58	3.66	32.54	24.47	8.16	6.94	4.29	2.65
Gujarat	33.60	26.60	7.00	8.35	1.97	6.38	33.70	27.41	6.28	7.28	2.37	4.91
Haryana	29.52	23.33	6.19	10.10	3.70	6.40	27.67	23.12	4.55	7.50	3.73	3.77
Himachal Pradesh	32.31	21.94	10.37	16.92	5.81	11.11	30.05	20.96	9.08	21.81	8.80	13.00
Jammu & Kashmir	25.72	21.95	3.76	11.29	4.47	6.82	21.08	18.39	2.70	13.38	7.09	6.29
Jharkhand	23.92	19.05	4.87	13.59	5.66	7.93	20.67	15.87	4.80	19.04	9067	9.37
Karnataka	36.64	26.29	10.35	7.89	2.53	5.36	38.30	26.76	11.54	7.33	3.14	4.18
Kerala	25.87	20.29	5.58	6.43	4.10	2.33	27.93	21.49	6.44	6.85	3.81	3.05
Lakshadweep	19.31	16.96	2.34	6.01	4.81	1.20	16.76	14.17	2.59	12.33	9.59	2.74
Madhya Pradesh	31.65	23.29	8.36	11.09	3.54	7.54	31.26	22.53	8.73	12.22	5.21	7.00
Maharashtra	35.87	25.20	10.66	6.63	2.51	4.12	38.94	26.69	12.26	5.04	2.34	2.70
Manipur	30.43	19.86	10.57	13.19	4.48	8.72	34.11	21.54	12.57	11.57	4.35	7.22
Meghalaya	32.65	20.95	11.70	9.19	3.57	5.62	31.06	19.74	11.33	8.90	3.98	4.92
Mizoram	40.79	25.37	15.42	11.78	4.23	7.55	37.83	24.00	13.83	6.53	2.50	4.03
Nagaland	35.38	21.35	14.03	7.23	3.22	4.00	37.46	22.35	15.11	11.77	5.31	6.46
Odisha	26.05	21.75	4.31	12.74	4.88	7.85	25.51	20.95	4.56	16.28	7.41	8.88
Puducherry	32.57	25.17	7.41	2.60	1.38	1.21	32.03	24.55	7.47	3.63	2.13	1.50
Punjab	32.17	26.38	5.79	5.30	2.19	3.11	30.46	26.19	4.28	5.21	2.92	2.30
Rajasthan	30.86	22.73	8.13	11.20	3.28	7.92	30.72	22.24	8.48	12.88	4.45	8.42
Sikkim	39.36	27.29	12.27	9.27	3.55	5.73	37.73	26.29	11.45	12.73	5.54	7.19
Tamil Nadu	38.07	26.12	11.95	6.60	2.88	3.72	38.73	26.28	12.45	6.85	3.43	3.42
Tripura	28.52	23.19	5.32	7.73	2.79	4.94	29.32	24.17	5.15	10.68	4.29	6.40
Uttar Pradesh	23.67	20.66	3.01	8.81	4.00	4.82	22.34	18.73	3.61	10.60	6.22	4.38
Uttaranchal	27.36	19.31	8.05	9.56	4.20	5.36	28.46	20.53	7.93	9.93	4.77	5.16
West Bengal	28.72	24.32	4.40	8.05	3.61	4.45	28.14	23.75	4.39	9.94	5.52	4.42
<b>India</b>	<b>30.43</b>	<b>23.35</b>	<b>7.08</b>	<b>8.67</b>	<b>3.39</b>	<b>5.29</b>	<b>29.94</b>	<b>22.56</b>	<b>7.38</b>	<b>9.85</b>	<b>4.85</b>	<b>5.00</b>

Source: Census of India 2011, Office of Registrar General, General Economic Tables, B-Series, B-1 Total Population: 2011.

Census of India 2001, Office of Registrar General, General Economic Tables, B-Series, B-1 Total Population: 2001.

**Table A.2.6: State-wise Percentage of Cultivators, Agricultural Labourers, Household Industry Workers and Others, 2011.**

	Cultivator			Agriculture Labourers			Household Industry Workers			Other Worker		
	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female
A & N Islands	10.86	8.30	2.56	3.13	2.45	0.68	2.44	1.48	0.96	83.56	67.01	16.55
Andhra Pra.	16.47	11.05	5.41	43.04	20.62	22.42	3.65	1.63	2.02	36.84	28.04	8.80
Arunachal Pra.	51.51	26.01	25.50	6.16	3.13	3.03	1.42	0.71	0.72	40.91	29.76	11.15
Assam	33.93	25.90	8.04	15.42	9.43	50.98	4.10	1.72	2.39	46.55	34.31	11.24
Bihar	20.72	16.55	4.18	52.83	36.20	16.63	4.06	2.19	1.87	22.38	17.69	4.69
Chandigarh	0.64	0.52	0.11	0.42	0.34	0.08	1.19	0.86	0.32	97.76	79.4	18.28
Chhattisgarh	32.88	19.90	12.98	41.80	19.25	22.56	1.54	0.93	0.61	23.78	18.49	5.29
D & N Haveli	17.92	11.64	6.28	11.33	3.47	7.86	1.40	0.87	0.53	69.36	59.92	9.43
Daman and Diu	1.91	1.23	0.68	0.64	0.30	0.34	0.56	0.27	0.29	96.89	86.79	10.10
Delhi	0.60	0.49	0.11	0.71	0.56	0.15	3.25	2.73	0.52	95.44	81.45	13.99
Goa	5.43	3.27	2.17	4.64	2.57	2.07	2.55	1.70	0.85	87.38	65.15	22.24
Gujarat	21.99	17.14	4.86	27.61	14.74	12.88	1.39	0.85	0.54	49.00	39.96	9.05
Haryana	27.82	20.07	7.76	17.14	11.68	5.46	2.94	2.09	0.85	52.10	42.50	9.60
Himachal Pra.	57.93	25.46	32.47	4.92	2.90	2.02	1.65	1.04	0.61	35.50	28.01	7.49
Jammu & Kash.	28.81	17.71	11.10	12.67	9.59	3.09	3.99	2.11	1.88	54.53	44.51	10.02
Jharkhand	29.12	17.49	11.63	33.87	17.88	15.99	3.47	1.72	1.75	33.53	27.23	6.30
Karnataka	2361	17.06	6.55	25.67	11.78	13.89	3.28	1.57	1.70	47.44	35.14	12.30
Kerala	5.77	4.71	1.06	11.39	7.38	4.00	2.35	1.42	0.93	80.50	59.23	21.27
Lakshadweep	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.41	0.71	0.69	98.59	80.97	17.62
Madhya Pra.	31.18	20.87	10.30	38.61	19.99	18.63	3.04	1.62	1.42	27.17	21.33	5.84
Maharashtra	25.43	15.36	10.07	27.28	13.71	13.58	2.48	1.40	1.08	44.81	35.53	9.28
Manipur	44.00	25.07	18.93	8.81	3.53	5.28	7.00	1.60	5.40	40.19	26.48	13.71
Meghalaya	41.72	23.39	18.33	16.73	8.97	7.76	1.73	0.79	0.94	39.82	26.20	13.62
Mizoram	47.17	26.60	20.57	8.59	4.62	3.97	1.61	0.80	0.81	42.63	27.71	14.91
Nagaland	55.20	26.63	28.56	6.46	3.27	3.19	2.34	0.97	1.37	35.99	25.31	10.68
Odisha	23.40	19.24	4.15	38.42	19.85	18.57	4.46	2.50	1.96	33.72	26.26	7.46
Puducherry	2.72	2.25	0.46	15.37	9.62	5.75	1.77	0.91	0.86	80.14	62.04	18.10
Punjab	19.55	17.72	1.83	16.05	12.52	3.53	3.90	2.52	1.38	60.51	48.82	11.68
Rajasthan	45.57	25.16	20.14	16.53	7.14	9.39	2.41	1.46	0.95	35.49	27.47	8.02
Sikkim	38.10	20.55	17.55	8.43	4.18	4.25	1.67	0.96	0.71	51.80	37.39	14.41
Tamil Nadu	12.92	8.31	4.61	29.21	14.73	14.49	4.15	1.80	2.35	53.72	40.35	13.37
Tripura	20.14	15.57	4.56	24.06	14.57	9.49	2.82	1.19	1.63	52.97	39.80	13.17
Uttar Pradesh	28.96	23.57	5.39	30.30	20.97	9.32	5.92	3.58	2.35	34.82	27.62	7.20
Uttaranchal	40.81	18.99	21.82	10.42	7.40	3.02	2.95	1.79	1.16	45.82	37.72	8.10
West Bengal	14.72	12.95	1.77	29.32	21.44	7.87	7.09	3.21	3.88	48.87	39.27	9.60
India	24.65	17.17	7.48	29.95	17.17	12.78	3.81	2.03	1.78	41.59	32.51	9.08

Source: Census of India 2011, Office of Registrar General, General Economic Tables, B-Series, B-1 Total Population: 2011

Census of India 2001, Office of Registrar General, General Economic Tables, B-Series, B-1 Total Population: 2001

**Table A.2.7: State-Wise Literacy Rate in India, 2011**

State/UT	Total	Male	Female
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	86.30	90.10	81.80
Andhra Pradesh	67.70	75.60	59.70
Arunachal Pradesh	67.00	73.70	59.60
Assam	73.20	78.80	67.30
Bihar	63.80	73.50	53.30
Chandigarh	86.40	90.50	81.40
Chhattisgarh	71.00	81.50	60.60
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	77.70	86.50	65.90
Daman & Diu	87.10	91.50	79.60
Delhi	86.30	91.00	80.90
Goa	87.40	92.80	81.80
Gujarat	79.30	87.20	70.70
Haryana	76.60	85.40	66.80
Himachal Pradesh	83.80	90.80	76.60
Jammu & Kashmir	68.70	78.30	58.00
Jharkhand	67.60	78.50	56.20
Karnataka	75.60	82.80	68.10
Kerala	93.90	96.00	92.00
Lakshadweep	92.30	96.10	88.20
Madhya Pradesh	70.60	80.50	60.00
Maharashtra	82.90	89.80	75.50
Manipur	79.80	86.50	73.27
Meghalaya	75.50	77.20	73.80
Mizoram	91.60	93.70	89.40
Nagaland	80.10	83.30	76.70
Odisha	73.50	82.40	64.40
Puducherry	86.50	92.10	81.20
Punjab	76.70	81.50	71.30
Rajasthan	67.10	80.50	52.70
Sikkim	82.20	87.30	76.40
Tamil Nadu	80.30	86.80	73.90
Tripura	87.80	92.20	83.10
Uttar Pradesh	69.70	79.20	59.30
Uttarakhand	79.60	88.30	70.70
West Bengal	77.10	82.70	71.20
INDIA	73.00	80.90	64.60

Source: Census of India 2011, Office of Registrar General, Social and Cultural Table, C-Series, C-8: 2011.

**Table A.2.8: Distribution of Women's Mean Age at Marriage in Major States of India, 2016-2018**

<b>States</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
Andhra Pradesh	21.90	22.00	22.10
Assam	22.20	22.30	22.10
Bihar	21.50	21.80	21.70
Chhattisgarh	21.60	21.80	22.00
Delhi	23.40	23.70	23.70
Gujarat	22.00	22.50	22.60
Haryana	22.30	22.50	22.40
Himachal Pradesh	23.30	23.40	23.60
Jammu & Kashmir	24.70	25.10	25.60
Jharkhand	21.50	21.90	23.40
Karnataka	22.50	22.30	22.60
Kerala	23.10	23.20	23.20
Madhya Pradesh	21.60	21.40	21.40
Maharashtra	22.40	22.50	22.60
Odisha	22.10	21.90	21.90
Punjab	23.30	23.50	23.80
Rajasthan	21.50	21.50	21.70
Tamil Nadu	23.00	23.00	23.20
Telangana	22.10	22.00	21.90
Uttar Pradesh	22.30	22.20	22.30
Uttarakhand	22.30	22.30	22.30
West Bengal	21.20	21.20	20.90
<b>India</b>	<b>22.20</b>	<b>22.10</b>	<b>22.30</b>

*Source: Sample Registration System, Statistical Report, 2016-2018.*

**Table A.2.9: Percentage of Women of age 20-24 years who has married before age 18 years: NFHS-5 (2019-2021)**

State	Percentage of Women of age 20-24 years who married before age 18 years
Andaman & Nicobar Island	16.2
Andhra Pradesh	29.3
Arunachal Pradesh	18.9
Assam	31.8
Bihar	40.8
Chandigarh	9.7
Chhattisgarh	12.1
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	26.4
Daman & Diu	26.4
Delhi	9.9
Goa	5.8
Gujarat	21.8
Haryana	12.5
Himachal Pradesh	5.4
Jammu & Kashmir	4.5
Jharkhand	32.2
Karnataka	21.3
Kerala	6.3
Ladakh	2.5
Lakshadweep	1.3
Madhya Pradesh	23.1
Maharashtra	21.9
Manipur	16.3
Meghalaya	16.9
Mizoram	8
Nagaland	5.6
Odisha	20.5
Puducherry	6.5
Punjab	8.7
Rajasthan	25.4
Sikkim	10.8
Tamil Nadu	12.8
Telangana	23.5
Tripura	40.1
Uttar Pradesh	15.8
Uttarakhand	9.8
West Bengal	41.6
INDIA	23.3



**Table A.2.10: Percentage of Women in Lok Sabha Elections, 2020**

<i>State/UT</i>	<i>Women MPs</i>	<i>Total Seats</i>	<i>%Women MP</i>
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	0	1	0
Andhra Pradesh	4	25	16
Arunachal Pradesh	0	1	0
Assam	1	14	7
Bihar	3	40	8
Chandigarh	1	1	100
Chhattisgarh	3	11	27
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0	1	0
Daman & Diu	0	1	0
Delhi	1	7	14
Goa	0	2	0
Gujarat	6	26	23
Haryana	1	10	10
Himachal Pradesh	0	4	0
Jammu & Kashmir	0	6	0
Jharkhand	2	14	14
Karnataka	2	28	7
Kerala	1	20	5
Lakshadweep	0	1	0
Madhya Pradesh	4	29	14
Maharashtra	8	45	17
Manipur	0	2	0
Meghalaya	1	2	50
Mizoram	0	1	0
Nagaland	0	1	0
Odisha	7	21	33
Puducherry	0	1	0
Punjab	2	13	15
Rajasthan	3	25	12
Sikkim	0	1	0
Tamil Nadu	3	39	8
Telangana	1	17	6
Tripura	1	2	50
Uttar Pradesh	11	80	14
Uttarakhand	1	5	20
West Bengal	11	42	26
Total	78	542	14

*Source: Lok Sabha Secretariat, 2020.*

**Table A.2.11: Number of Women MPs in Rajya Sabha 2019-2024.**

<b>State</b>	<b>Women MPs in Rajya Sabha 2022</b>
Bihar	1
Chhattisgarh	3
Gujarat	2
Himachal Pradesh	1
Karnataka	1
Kerala	1
Madhya Pradesh	1
Maharashtra	4
Nagaland	1
Odisha	1
Punjab	1
Tamil Nadu	1
Uttar Pradesh	4
<b>India</b>	<b>26</b>

*Source: Rajya Sabha Secretariat, 2022.*

**Table A.2.12: Status of Representation of women in Panchayati Raj Institutions, 2018**

	Number of Panchayats			Elected Representatives		
	District Level	Intermediate Level	Village Level	Total	Total Women	Women %
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	3	9	70	858	302	35.20
Andhra Pradesh	13	660	12918	156050	78025	50.00
Arunachal Pradesh	22	177	1785	9383	3658	38.99
Assam	26	191	2201	26820	13410	50.00
Bihar	38	534	8386	127391	57887	45.44
Chandigarh	1	1	1	169	58	34.32
Chhattisgarh	27	146	10978	170285	93287	54.78
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	1	NA	20	136	47	34.56
Daman and Diu	2	NA	15	172	92	53.92
Delhi	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Goa	2	NA	191	1564	516	32.99
Gujarat	33	248	14292	144016	71988	49.99
Haryana	21	126	6197	70035	29499	42.12
Himachal Pradesh	12	78	3226	28723	14398	50.13
Jammu & Kashmir	22	360	4482	33847	11169	33.00
Jharkhand	24	263	4370	60782	30757	50.60
Karnataka	30	176	6021	104967	50892	48.48
Kerala	14	154	941	18372	9630	52.42
Lakshadweep	1	NA	10	110	41	37.27
Madhya Pradesh	51	313	22817	392981	196490	50.00
Maharashtra	34	351	27870	240122	121490	50.60
Manipur	6	NA	161	1723	868	50.38
Meghalaya	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mizoram	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Nagaland	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Odisha	30	314	6798	3502	828	23.64
Puducherry	NA	10	98	NA	NA	NA
Punjab	22	147	13279	97180	32393	33.33
Rajasthan	33	295	9892	124854	70527	56.49
Sikkim	4		185	1096	548	50.00
Tamil Nadu	31	385	12523	117599	39975	33.99
Telangana	9	438	13057	103468	51735	50.00
Tripura	8	35	591	6646	3006	45.23
Uttar Pradesh	75	822	58791	826458	272733	33.00
Uttarakhand	13	95	7762	64606	35957	55.66
West Bengal	22	342	3340	59402	30157	50.77
<b>Total</b>	<b>630</b>	<b>6614</b>	<b>253268</b>	<b>3100804</b>	<b>1375914</b>	<b>44.37</b>

Source: Ministry of Panchayati Raj, 2018.

\*NA- Data Not Available.

**Table A.2.13: State-Wise number of Complaints registered under Sexual Harassment at Workplace, 2015-2018**

State/UT	2015	2016	2017	2018
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	2	2	0	1
Andhra Pradesh	4	11	12	2
Arunachal Pradesh	NA	NA	NA	NA
Assam	1	6	6	3
Bihar	12	20	15	20
Chandigarh	3	4	2	3
Chhattisgarh	5	4	6	2
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	NA	1	0	0
Daman & Diu	NA	NA	NA	NA
Delhi	100	82	77	55
Goa	1	NA	2	1
Gujarat	15	7	12	7
Haryana	33	30	39	37
Himachal Pradesh	5	NA	3	2
Jammu & Kashmir	3	5	3	0
Jharkhand	14	9	4	4
Karnataka	21	22	38	14
Kerala	9	9	4	7
Lakshadweep	NA	NA	NA	NA
Madhya Pradesh	38	35	39	23
Maharashtra	28	35	41	22
Manipur	NA	NA	NA	NA
Meghalaya	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mizoram	1	NA	NA	NA
Nagaland	5	9	8	5
Odisha	5	9	8	5
Puducherry	1	1	3	3
Punjab	6	8	16	14
Rajasthan	23	31	31	28
Sikkim	NA	1	1	0
Tamil Nadu	24	38	17	17
Telangana	20	12	8	10
Tripura	1	NA	1	0
Uttar Pradesh	120	129	147	231
Uttarakhand	8	5	7	7
West Bengal	19	23	28	15
Total	522	539	570	533

Source: National Crime Record Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, Crimes in India Report, Volume-1, 2015-2018.

\*NA- Data Not Available

Source- Census of India 2011, Office of Registrar General, Social and Cultural Table, C-Series, C-8: 2011.