

**STATUS OF EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA: A
COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SOUTHERN STATES**

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Abstract

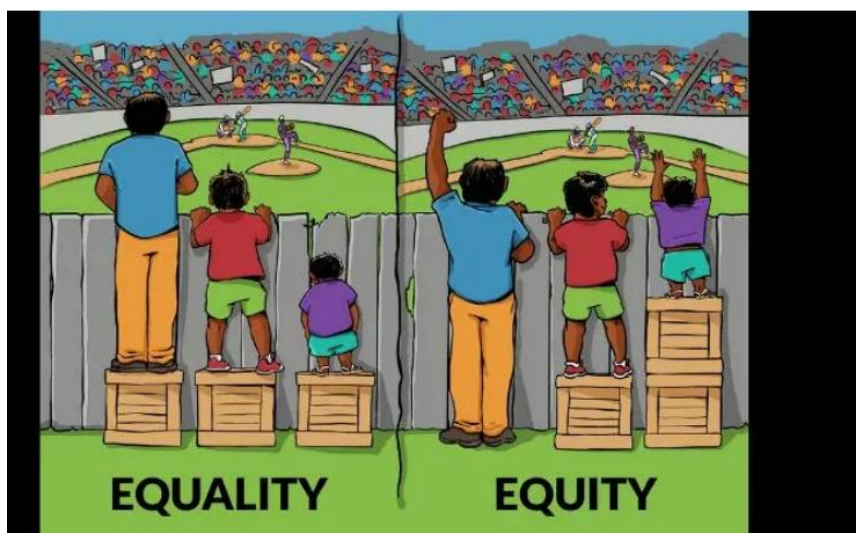
Any nation irrespective of its geographical and demographical characteristics becomes stronger and stronger with a kind of higher education system which provides equal opportunity to all by way of equity and inclusion. The broad definition of inclusion concerns all students and marginalized groups, not only those with disabilities. It gives the people equal opportunities to face the challenges with regard to social, economic, regional, cultural, moral and spiritual issues of humanity. Higher education contributes to national development through dissemination of specialized knowledge and skill. The study aimed to compare the status of inclusion and equity in higher education in all five Southern states of India i.e., Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamilnadu and Telangana. The variables which are considered for the study are social category wise, gender-wise Gross enrollment ratio, Gender Parity Index, Regional-wise number of Universities, Number of Colleges per lakh population, Types of universities, number of teachers and pupil-teacher ratio in Higher Education in selected states during study period. The period of Study is 2015-16 to 2019-2020 and Secondary data is used for the study. Analysis is done in MS Excel. Among five south Indian states, Karnataka needs to put more efforts in improving female enrollment ratio since it has recorded overall, SC and ST female GER. Higher Education system may adopt special strategy in case of Andhra Pradesh to fill the gap of SC male to female enrollment in Higher Education. Kerala may be considered as the role model in case of GPI by all other states. Tamilnadu state has to have special strategies for the improvement of GPI in case of STs. All the stakeholders of Higher Education system need to focus on Andhra Pradesh in improving the GPI of all, SCs and STs as it was in last position in South India. There is a need of appointing more number of female teachers in all the five southern states and particularly in Kerala state which has witnessed a continuous decline of female teachers in Higher Education.

Key Words: Equity, Inclusion, Gender parity Index, Gross Enrollment Ratio, Teacher-Pupil Ratio

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Introduction

Equality and Equity are the words that share the same etymological roots, though interrelated, but have two distinct meanings. Equality something related to equal treatment to all people irrespective of their gender, race, ability, caste, class, and/or ethnicity with equal rights, access and opportunities. The word Equity, on the other hand, relates to justice or proportional fairness. Sameness of treatment or equality does not always equate to "proportional fairness," or equity. Equity is about providing different levels of support and assistance to needy recipients in order to achieve an equal level of outcome. That means equality has to do with giving everyone the exact same resources, whereas equity involves distributing resources based on the needs of the recipients. Below image is the best example of equality and equity.



Inclusive education

The narrow definition of inclusion deals with special education only (Arduin 2015). An analysis of relevant research databases from 2012 concluded that, as expected, the dominant use of the term inclusion was in relation to special education and disability (Norwich 2014).

The broad definition of inclusion concerns all students and marginalized groups, not only those with disabilities (Thomas 2013). This is in line with the Salamanca Declaration from 1994, which covers all groups of students in danger of facing problems in school because of diversity (UNESCO 1994). It can be clearly understood as narrated in below picture.

Inclusive Education in Higher Education



Narrow Definition



Broad Definition

The strategies firmly are to be followed in India include measures to reduce regional inequalities in the provision of institutions and infrastructure, reservation policies, relaxation in admission criteria, and financial support for the disadvantaged groups.

Statement Of The Problem

According to AISHE report 2019-20, Gross Enrollment Ratio for female population at all India level was 27.3% whereas for SC female it was 24.1% and for ST female, it was only 17.7%. In the current context, the unequal distribution of opportunities for different gender, region, social category is seen which become hurdle for developing human capital with equity. Hence the present study aimed to

compare the status of inclusion of higher education in broader perspective in all five southern states taking the aspects of gender, social category and various regions in to consideration.

Literature Review

Many Research studies have been conducted on equity and inclusion in higher education in India earlier. Here are some of the literature reviewed for the present study:

N. V. Varghese Nidhi S. Sabharwal C. M. Malish. 2019 study argues that while access to higher education has improved across all segments of the population, the rate of progression has varied, resulting in widening of regional inequalities and persisting socio-economic inequalities.

Preeti Oza, 2019, study deliberated on the various ideas and approaches of Higher Education in India on 'Inclusivity' in general and Equity and Equality in particular.

Tanveer Ahmad Zoie Showkat Rashid Govt. GDC (Boys) Pulwama, 2019 attempts to highlight the extent and manifestation of non-inclusion or exclusion in Indian higher education with special reference to marginalized sections like schedule castes, schedule tribes and women.

Dr. S.N. Misra and Dr. Monalisa Bal, 2014, found through study that India had witnessed significant increase in Gross Enrolment Ratio and inclusivity through affirmative action. However persistent disparity exists across States, Religious Minorities and Backward Castes.

IV: RESEARCH GAP: No other earlier study elucidated a comprehensive comparative study on equity and inclusion in Higher Education in southern states in India. Therefore the present study titled "**Status of equity and inclusion in Higher Education in India: A comparative Study of Southern States**" tries to compare the regional wise equity and inclusion in Higher Education in a broader sense.

Scope Of The Study

The study is confined to five southern states of India namely Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamilnadu, Telangana.

Objectives Of The Study

- i) To understand the change in status of gender-wise and social category wise and region wise enrollment and compare among Southern states of India in Higher Education during last five years.
- ii) to study the change in status of gender Parity Index and compare among Southern states of India in Higher Education during last five years.
- iii) to study the change in status of number of colleges, type of number of universities and compare among Southern states of India in Higher Education.
- iv) to study the Pupil teacher ratio and compare among Southern states of India in Higher Education.

Research Methodology

The research methodology of the study is as detailed below:

(i) Sources of Data: The study is based on secondary data. To study and make comparison of regional wise equity and inclusion in Higher Education of selected stated, Reports of AISHE are used and other relevant articles and websites are referred.

iii) Period of the study: The period of study is taken as 5 years ie., 2015-2020 in making comparison among Southern states.

iv) Tools for Analysis: To analyze the changing status of equity and inclusion of region, gender, social categories, the variables considered for the study are; state wise Gross Enrollment Ratio, Gender Parity Index, College per lakh population, number of universities, Average enrollment per college, post-wise number of teachers, Pupil - Teacher Ratio. Period of Study is 5 years (2015-16 to 2019- 2020). Data Analysis is done in WS Excel which alone could aptly serve the purpose.

Data Analysis & Findings

1.Gross Enrollment Ratio(GER): Gross enrolment ratio in higher education is calculated for the 18-23 age group. It is the ratio of enrolment in higher education to the population in the eligible age group. A high Gross Enrollment Ratio indicates a high degree of participation of the concerned age group in higher education. The status of GER in southern states in Higher Education during five years period is as detailed in table 1.

Sl.No	Year	State/UT	All			SC			ST		
			Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female
1	2015-16	Andhra Pradesh`	30.8	34.7	26.9	25.5	28.6	22.4	23.4	27.4	19.8
	1016-17		32.4	36.5	28.4	29.3	32.8	25.9	24.9	29	21.3
	2017-18		30.9	34.7	27.1	26.9	29.5	24.4	24.5	27.9	21.5
	2018-19		32.4	35.8	29	28.9	31.5	26.4	26.4	30.4	22.9
	2019-20		35.2	38.3	32.2	31.2	33.4	29	29.4	33.6	25.6
2	2015-16	Karnataka	26.1	26.3	25.9	18.7	19.3	18	16.1	16.9	15.1
	1016-17		28.8	28.2	29.4	21	21.2	20.9	19	19	19
	2017-18		27.8	27.2	28.5	19.7	20	19.4	17.7	17.9	17.4
	2018-19		26.5	26.4	26.6	18.8	19.1	18.4	16.5	17	16.1
	2019-20		31.2	32.7	32	23.3	23.1	23.2	20.9	21	20.9
3	2015-16	Kerala	30.8	26.6	35	22.4	16.4	28.5	16.5	13.6	19.2
	1016-17		34.2	28.3	40.1	23.6	17	30.2	18.3	15.4	21
	2017-18		36.2	32	40.4	25	17.8	32.2	21.5	17.5	25.3
	2018-19		37	30.8	43.2	25.9	18.2	33.7	23.1	18.9	27.1
	2019-20		38.8	32.9	44.7	26.7	18.7	34.8	24	19.1	28.7
4	2015-16	Tamilnadu	44.3	46.3	42.4	34.4	34.6	34.2	31.8	36.4	27.3
	2016-17		46.9	48.2	45.6	38.3	38.6	38	36	44.7	27.6
	2017-18		48.6	49.1	48.2	42.1	41.8	42.5	40.5	45.7	35.6
	2018-19		49	49.8	48.3	41.6	41.4	41.7	37.8	43.3	32.5
	2019-20		51.4	51.8	51	39.6	38.8	40.4	40.7	43.8	37.7
5	2015-16	Telangana	36.3	39.3	33.4	36.1	38.1	34.2	33.9	39.2	28.7
	1016-17		35.8	38	33.6	34.1	34.9	33.3	32.7	37.2	28.3
	2017-18		35.7	37.1	34.2	31.5	30.6	32.4	29.4	32.3	26.6
	2018-19		36.2	35.8	36.5	33.7	30.9	36.4	30.7	32.7	28.8
	2019-20		35.6	34.8	36.4	32.5	29.1	35.8	30.2	31.3	29.1

(Data Compilation is done by the researcher as per the requirement of study - Source AISCHE 2019-20 Report)

It can be understood from the table 1 that, Karnataka has continuously stood at last in overall, SC ST Female enrollment ratio even after five years though there is an improvement. Kerala seemed to be in top position for having more GER of female in all social categories of women during the period. The gap of SC male to Female enrollment ratio is high in Andhra Pradesh(33.6 : 25.6), Tamilnadu (43.8 : 37.7) and marginal difference was found in Telangana with 31.3: 29.1. SC Female GER is Highest in Kerala among all the states (18.8 males and 34.8 females in 2019-20).

Gender Parity Index: The Gender Parity Index (GPI) is a socioeconomic index usually designed to measure the relative access to education of males and females. A GPI equal to one signifies equality between males and females. A GPI less than one is an indication that gender parity favors males while a GPI greater than one indicates gender parity that favors females. The closer a GPI is to one in higher education means that the closer a country is to achieving equality of access between males and females in Higher education. The status of GPI in southern states in Higher Education during five years period is as shown in table 2.

Sl.No	Year	All			
		State/UT	All	SC	ST
1	2015-16	Andhra Pradesh`	0.77	0.78	0.72
	1016-17		0.78	0.79	0.74
	2017-18		0.78	0.83	0.77
	2018-19		0.81	0.84	0.76
	2019-20		0.84	0.87	0.76
2	2015-16	Karnataka	0.99	0.93	0.89
	1016-17		1.01	0.96	0.95
	2017-18		1.05	0.97	0.97
	2018-19		1.04	0.98	1.00
	2019-20		1.05	0.99	1.00
3	2015-16	Kerala	1.32	1.73	1.41
	1016-17		1.41	1.78	1.36
	2017-18		1.26	1.81	1.45
	2018-19		1.4	1.85	1.43
	2019-20		1.36	1.85	1.5
4	2015-16	Tamilnadu	0.92	0.99	0.75
	1016-17		0.95	0.98	0.62
	2017-18		0.98	1.02	0.78
	2018-19		0.97	1.01	0.75
	2019-20		0.99	1.04	0.86
5	2015-16	Telangana	0.85	0.9	0.73
	1016-17		0.88	0.95	0.76
	2017-18		0.92	1.06	0.82
	2018-19		1.02	1.18	0.88
	2019-20		1.05	1.23	0.93

(Data Compilation is done by the researcher as per the requirement of study -
Source AISCHE 2019-20 Report)

It is found from the table 2 that, Kerala kept continuing better Gender Parity Index in all the years having more than 1. Tamilnadu state has shown a very Good improvement of GPI in case of all and SCs in all the years but witnesses a little low GPI in case of STs. Andhra Pradesh stood at last among southern state in GPI of all, SCs and STs.

Number of Universities: Establishment of more number of universities indicates the level of access to higher education for the age group of 18-23 in the country. The details of status of changes in number of universities in the selected states during the study period is as detailed in table.3.

Sl. No	State	2015-16	2016-17	% of increase/Decrease	2017-18	% of increase/Decrease	2018-19	% of increase/Decrease	2019-20	% of increase/Decrease
1	Andhra Pradesh	28	33	15.15	34	2.94	41	17.07	41	0.00
2	Karnataka	52	55	5.45	60	8.33	65	7.69	69	5.80
3	Kerala	20	21	4.76	22	4.55	23	4.35	23	0.00
4	Tamilnadu	58	58	0.00	58	0.00	59	1.69	59	0.00

5	Telangana	21	24	12.50	24	0.00	24	0.00	24	0.00
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(data includes mgt, medical, oriental, Sports, technical and others universities)

(Data Compilation is done by the researcher as per the requirement of study - Source AISCHE 2019-2 Report)

It is known from the table 3 that, Karnataka has large number of universities among all southern states followed by Tamilnadu with 59 universities. Higher number of increase of universities were seen in the years 2016-17 (5 universities) and 2018-19 (7 Universities) in Andhra Pradesh followed by Karnataka with more number of increase in universities. No establishment of universities in Tamilnadu state except 1 university in the year 2018-19.

Number of colleges per lakh population: Availability of number of colleges per lakh population is an another parameter to assess the level of access to higher education to needy group of population. The details of status of changes in number of Colleges per lakh population in the selected states during the study period is as detailed in table.4.

Sl.No	State	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
1	Andhra Pradesh	45	48	48	49	51
2	Karnataka	50	53	51	53	59
3	Kerala	43	44	44	45	48
4	Tamilnadu	32	33	35	35	38
5	Telangana	60	59	51	50	53

(Data Compilation is done by the researcher as per the requirement of study - Source AISCHE 2019-20 Report)

It is known from the table 4 that College per Lakh population is least in Tamilnadu state though there was a marginal improvement from 32 colleges to 38 colleges in 5 years. Karnataka has reached from second position to first position in 5 years (from 50 to 59 colleges) by taking the Position of Telangana which was the only state showed a decrease of number of colleges per lakh population in 5 years in the entire South India.

Type of Universities: State wise type of universities indicate that Government and Private role in providing access to higher education in the state. The details of status of changes in number State wise type of universities in the selected states during the study period is as detailed in table.5.

Sl.No	State/UT	Central University	Institute of National Importance	State Public University	Institute under state legislature Act	State Private University	State Open University	Deemed University Govt	Deemed University govt aided	Deemed university private	Total
1	Andhra Pradesh	1	9	22	1	3	1	4			41
2	Karnataka	1	4	30	1	18		4		11	69
3	Kerala	1	6	13				2		1	23
4	Tamilnadu	2	7	21		1			2	26	59
5	Telangana	3	2	15	1	1				2	24

(Data Compilation is done by the researcher as per the requirement of study - Source AISCHE 2019-20 Report)

It is observed from the above table that, Karnataka has highest number of universities with 69, followed by Tamilnadu with 59 universities. But the difference is that Karnataka has more number of state public universities and Tamilnadu has highest number of Deemed Private

Universities. Telangana has more number of Central Universities(3). Karnataka has highest number of Private universities(18).

Number of Teachers: State wise number of teachers in Higher Education is an indicator in providing access to quality education in the state. The details of status of changes post-wise number of teachers in the selected states during the study period is as detailed in table.6.

Table.6. Post-wise number of teachers for the last 5 year (2015-2020)								
Sl.No	Year	State	All Teachers					
			Male	increase /Decrease	% of increase/Decrease	Female	increase /Decrease	% of increase/Decrease
1	2015-16	Andhra Pradesh`	71723			36389		
	2016-17		66014	-5709	-8.6	33787	-2602	-7.7
	2017-18		59131	-6883	-11.6	31108	-2679	-8.6
	2018-19		64591	5460	8.5	34807	3699	10.6
	2019-20		64116	-475	-0.7	35621	814	2.3
2	2015-16	Karnataka	12868			4612		
	2016-17		11431	-1437	-12.6	3889	-723	-18.6
	2017-18		10067	-1364	-13.5	3571	-318	-8.9
	2018-19		11150	1083	9.7	4115	544	13.2
	2019-20		12578	1428	11.4	4748	633	13.3
3	2015-16	Kerala	3412			2103		
	2016-17		3079	-333	-10.8	1813	-290	-16.0
	2017-18		2915	-164	-5.6	1808	-5	-0.3
	2018-19		3119	204	6.5	1982	174	8.8
	2019-20		3193	74	2.3	1976	-6	-0.3
4	2015-16	Tamilnadu	114871			94357		
	2016-17		101257	-13614	-13.4	89035	-5322	-6.0
	2017-18		99790	-1467	-1.5	92510	3475	3.8
	2018-19		100433	643	0.6	95560	3050	3.2
	2019-20		102469	2036	2.0	99616	4056	4.1
5	2015-16	Telangana	59268			33457		
	2016-17		53066	-6202	-11.7	31167	-2290	-7.3
	2017-18		45811	-7255	-15.8	28531	-2636	-9.2
	2018-19		48761	2950	6.0	31557	3026	9.6
	2019-20		49351	590	1.2	33352	1795	5.4
6	2015-16	India	924965	0		593848	0	
	2016-17		811435	-113530	-14.0	554351	-39497	-7.1
	2017-18		745047	-66388	-8.9	539708	-14643	-2.7
	2018-19		819283	74236	9.1	597016	57308	9.6
	2019-20		864337	45054	5.2	638819	41803	6.5

(Data Compilation is done by the researcher as per the requirement of study - Source AISCHE 2019-20 Report)

It is revealed from table 6 that, There is a continuous increase of female teachers in Karnataka state(13.3%) and there is a decline in number of female teachers from year to year in case of Kerala state (-0.3%). in case of rest of southern states, the rate of increase of female teachers in Higher education is lower than the improvement at national level (6.5%).

Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR): It is the ratio indicates the number of students who attend a school or university divided by the number of teachers in the institution. The ideal pupil-teacher ratio depends on many factors. If an institute of higher education is research-centric, the ratio should be lower than 15:1 and if it is teaching-centric, it can be 20:1¹. A low student-teacher ratio indicates the burden on a single teacher of teaching multiple students as well as the lack of time that each student gets. Apart from this simplistic effect, in an institution of higher learning, a smaller number of overburdened teachers are also unable to pursue any research or encourage their students to do so. The details of status of changes Pupil-Teacher Ratio in Higher Education in selected states during 2019-20 is as shown in table.7.

Sl.No	State	All Institutions		University & Colleges		University & its Constituent Units	
		Regular & Distance mode	Regular mode	Regular & Distance mode	Regular mode	Regular & Distance mode	Regular mode
1	Andhra Pradesh	19	16	22	19	46	16
2	Karnataka	15	14	18	18	17	13
3	Kerala	18	14	20	16	67	12
4	Tamilnadu	17	15	21	18	34	14
5	Telangana	17	16	18	17	28	15
	India	26	23	32	28	38	18

It is observed from the table 7 that, Pupil-Teacher Ratio of all southern state is far better than national PTR Ratio of all institutions (University & Colleges and its Constituent Units) of Regular and distance mode. Karnataka is in top position in southern states in terms of PTR Ratio in all institutions.

Conclusion

Among five south Indian states, Karnataka need to put more efforts in improving female enrollment ratio since it has recorded overall, SC and ST female GER. Higher Education system may adopt special strategy in case of Andhra Pradesh to fill the gap of SC male to female enrollment in Higher Education. Kerala may be considered as the role model in case of GPI by all other states. Tamilnadu state has have special strategies for the improvement of GPI in case of STs. All the stakeholders of Higher Education system need to focus on Andhra Pradesh in improving the GPI of all, SCs and STs as it was in last position in South India. There is scope and need in Kerala and Telangana to establish universities to have more higher education access needy since those two states have less number of universities. Tamilnadu state has less number of colleges per lakh population. Hence there is a need to open more number of colleges in that state for the access of higher education of that region. There is a need of appointing more number of female teachers in all the five southern states and particularly in Kerala state which has witnesses a continuous decline of female teachers in Higher Education.

It may be concluded that not one stakeholder of Higher education alone but all the stakeholders of the society including the governments should be gender/Social/region sensitive/responsive in order to foster the equity and inclusion of all, then proportional fairness/equity would not be remained as hope, may not even be exactly real but near to the real is then possible.

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