# An Analysis of Social Equity and Inclusive Development Among Educated Women in Eastern U.P. in the Context of Unemployment

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## Abstract

In this paper, we present a focused study on the unemployment of female post-graduates in the eastern region of Uttar Pradesh (U.P.). Education is fundamental to human resource development and serves as a powerful tool for empowering women, enhancing their social standing, and boosting their economic independence in India. Although female participation in higher education is increasing, various challenges continue to drive the high unemployment rate among female post-graduates in this region. These include limited job opportunities, a mismatch between education and required job skills, persistent gender-based discrimination, and traditional societal expectations. Education is widely acknowledged as one of the most powerful tools for social upliftment. This study serves as an initial attempt to examine the outcomes of women's higher education in terms of human resource development in the U.P., particularly in the context of employment. The findings aim to highlight the gap between academic achievement and employment accessibility, providing valuable perspectives that could inform future policies and programs designed to promote inclusive development.

***Keywords: Unemployment, Education, Gender Discrimination, Social Status, Human Resource Development.***

## Introduction

Unemployment among female post-graduates is a significant issue that impacts social equity and inclusive development. This study centers on Eastern Uttar Pradesh, a region in India known for its rich cultural heritage and distinguished educational institutions. By examining unemployment rates and the contributing factors, this study aims to highlight the challenges faced by female post-graduates and suggest measures for promoting social equity and inclusive development. Female post-graduates leaving colleges and universities need to understand that work, even if undertaken out of necessity, is not only a means of earning a livelihood but also a crucial step toward acquiring an identity. India ranks as the world's second-largest country by population. Referring to the 2001 census, the female population of India was 495 million, compared to 117 million in 1901. Between 1901 and 2001, the female population increased by 367 million. In 2001, the male population was 531 million, with 933 women per 1,000 men. By the 2011 census, the female population had risen to 586 million, with 943 women per 1,000 men.

In 1999–2000, the percentage of persons aged 15 years and above in the labor force at the national level was 61.8%, compared to 66.5% in 1983. In 2009–2010, the labor force included 10.1 million children (3.9% of the total child population), comprising 5.6 million boys and 4.5 million girls (Ministry of Labor & Employment). For males, the labor force participation rate was 83.5%, down from 87.1% in earlier years, while for females, it was 38.5%, a decline from 44.4%. In rural areas, the labor force participation rate stood at 66.2%, with 85.4% for males and 45.6% for females. In urban areas, it was 51.1% overall, with 78.6% for

males and 20.9% for females. Between 1993–1994 and 1999–2000, employment grew by 1.6% overall—1.9% for males and 0.9% for females ( National Human Development Report released by India in 2001).The Human Development Index (HDI) increased by 21% from 1999–2000 to 2007–2008, rising from 0.387 to 0.467. In Uttar Pradesh, the HDI rose from 0.316 in 1999–2000 to 0.380 in 2007–2008, maintaining the 18th rank during this period. Over an eight-year period, India's HDI increased by 21%, compared to an 18% rise in the country's HDI from 2000 to 2010, as reported in the global Human Development Report (HDR) 2010.

India's most recent HDI value of 0.633 places it in the medium human development category, lower than its value of 0.645 in the 2020 report. India ranked 132nd among 191 countries and territories on the 2021 HDI, a drop from 131st among 189 countries in the 2020 report. This decline in ranking was largely attributed to a decrease in life expectancy.

Education plays a vital role in determining an individual's socio-economic position, as higher levels of education significantly enhance employability. The female literacy rate increased from 0.69% in 1901 to 54.16% in 2001. Over the same period, the male literacy rate rose from 9.83% to 75.85%.
By New Education Policy (NEP) 2020, India's first education reform of the 21st century, seeks to meet the changing developmental needs of the nation. It proposes a comprehensive overhaul of the entire system of educational institutions, including its regulation and governance, to create a structure aligned with the aspirational goals of 21st-century education and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4). The policy also seeks to build upon India's rich traditions and value systems.

## Challenges and Opportunities
Unemployment rate among female post-graduates, particularly in regions like east U.P., highlights the gap between educational attainment and employment opportunities. Key factors contributing to this issue include a lack of job opportunities, inadequate skills, gender discrimination, and societal expectations.

## Motivation and Contribution
In this research work examines the critical issue of unemployment among highly educated women in Eastern Uttar Pradesh. It focuses on the gap between women's education levels and the jobs available to them. The study aims to find out why many female postgraduates are unemployed and what social and economic reasons are behind it. It also explores how this unemployment affects fairness in society and overall development. The objective is to offer valuable insights for addressing the issue and promoting gender equality. The findings are anticipated to provide valuable insights, inform policy recommendations and targeted interventions, thereby promoting greater social equity and fostering inclusive growth. This study underscores the critical need to bridge the gap between education and employment, ultimately supporting the development of a more equitable and inclusive society.

In recent years, an increasing number of women have entered executive, managerial, and professional roles, with some achieving top positions in both the public and private sectors. However, despite these advancements, a substantial portion of highly educated women remain outside the workforce. This paradox highlights the need for a deeper understanding of structural barriers such as inadequate employment policies, gender bias in recruitment, lack of skill-matching mechanisms, and limited support systems like childcare and flexible work environments

**Key statistics related to higher education and female enrollment under NEP 2020 include:**
- Enrollment in higher education increased to approximately 4.14 crore in 2020–21, up from 3.85 crore in 2019–20. This reflects a growth of around 72 lakh students, or 21%, since 2014–15.
- Female enrollment rose to 2.01 crore in 2020–21, compared to 1.88 crore in 2019–20. This marks an increase of approximately 44 lakh students, or 28%, since 2014–15.

- The share of female students in overall enrollment rose from 45% in 2014–15 to approximately 49% in 2020–21.
- Based on the 2011 population projections for the 18–23 age group, the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) rose from 25.6 in 2019–20 to 27.3 in 2020–21.
- Since 2017-18, female GER has continuously been higher than male GER. The Gender Parity Index (GPI), which measures the ratio of female to male GER, increased from 1 in 2017-18 to 1.05 in 2020-21.
- Enrollment in distance education reached 45.71 lakh in 2020–21, including 20.9 lakh female students. This represents an increase of about 7% compared to 2019–20, and 20% since 2014–15.
- Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, and Rajasthan are the states with the highest student enrollment. According to the All-India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2020-21, approximately 79.06% of students are enrolled in undergraduate programs, while 11.5% are pursuing postgraduate studies.

## Establishment of Universities

Following the establishment of Allahabad University in 1887, there was a gap of nearly 30 years during which no new universities were founded. However, this period saw the establishment of several new colleges. As the number of colleges increased, it became clear that the existing five universities—Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Punjab, and Allahabad—were unable to cope with the growing academic workload. This situation led to the realization that more universities were needed. The Government Resolution of 1913 emphasized the necessity of establishing new universities, a recommendation that was later reinforced by the Calcutta University Commission in 1917.

From 1916 until 1947, various new institutions were established based on surveys and analyses.
These included: Mysore (1916), Patna (1917), Banaras Hindu (1917), Osmania (1918), Aligarh Muslim (1920), Lucknow (1920), Delhi (1922), Nagpur (1923), Andhra (1926), Agra (1927), Annamalai (1929), Travancore (1937), Utkal (1943), Sagar (1947), and Rajputana (1947).

**Establishment of New Universities:**

Central Universities in India are public universities founded by an Act of Parliament and overseen by the Department of Higher Education under the Ministry of Education. These universities are accredited by the University Grants Commission (UGC) under the UGC Act of 1956. Several universities have been formed under the Central Universities Act of 2009 and subsequent revisions such as the Central Universities (Amendment) Act of 2014 and the Central Universities (Amendment) Act of 2019.Several central universities in India have been built over the years to foster higher education and research.

Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) was founded in 1969, followed by Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya (GGV) in 1983. Tezpur University (TU) came into existence in 1994, while Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University (BBAU) was established in 1996. In 1997, Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya (MGAHV) was set up to promote Hindi language and literature. The Indira Gandhi National Tribal University (IGNTU) was founded in 2007 to cater to the educational needs of tribal communities. Later, The Central University of South Bihar (CUSB**)** was established in 2009, and Rani Lakshmi Bai Central Agricultural University (RLBCAU) came into being in 2014. Mahatma Gandhi Central University (MGCU) was set up in 2016, followed by the formation of The Central University of Andhra Pradesh (CUAP) in 2019.

**Table-1.1    Enrolment Per Lakh Population**

| MBA | 24.8 |
| --- | --- |
| M.Com | 18.1 |
| M.A. | 20.56% |

| | |
|---|---|
| M.Sc. | 14.83% |

## List of Educational Institutions in East U.P. Region

The East UP region, encompassing the division of Varanasi, Gorakhpur etc., is a vibrant hub of educational excellence, reflecting a rich tapestry of cultural and academic heritage. This region hosts a diverse range of educational institutions, each contributing significantly to the academic and professional landscape of Uttar Pradesh. The Purvanchal region of Uttar Pradesh and its neighboring areas host a diverse range of higher education institutions, including central universities, state universities, and private colleges that offer programs in fields such as technology, medicine, management, science, and the arts.

## Major Universities in the Region Include

The Varanasi Division of Uttar Pradesh is home to several prominent institutions of higher education, each contributing uniquely to the academic and cultural development of the region. Banaras Hindu University (BHU), located in Varanasi, stands as a prestigious central university offering an extensive array of undergraduate, postgraduate, and research programs across diverse disciplines. Complementing this is Sampurnanand Sanskrit Vishwavidyalaya, also in Varanasi, a state university renowned for its commitment to Sanskrit education and traditional Indian studies. Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth University, another major state institution in Varanasi, provides comprehensive academic offerings across arts, science, commerce, and related streams.

Further enriching the academic landscape is the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, an autonomous body under the Ministry of Culture, which specializes in Tibetan and Buddhist studies, contributing to the preservation and promotion of ancient knowledge systems. In Jaunpur, Veer Bahadur Singh Purvanchal University plays a vital role in catering to students from eastern Uttar Pradesh through a variety of academic programs. Similarly, Madan Mohan Malviya University of Technology (MMMUT) in Gorakhpur serves as a leading technical university, emphasizing engineering, technology, and applied sciences. Deen Dayal Upadhyay Gorakhpur University, also located in Gorakhpur, offers a broad range of disciplines, supporting a holistic academic environment. Jananayak Chandrashekhar University in Ballia, although relatively new, has rapidly emerged to address the higher education needs of students in Ballia and nearby districts. Lastly, Maharaja Suhel Dev State University in Azamgarh has been established with the objective of enhancing educational access and fostering academic growth in the Azamgarh region. Collectively, these institutions form a vital academic network that supports inclusive and regionally balanced higher education in Eastern Uttar Pradesh.

## Medical Colleges:

- IMS BHU
- Govt. Ayurvedic College & Hospital, Varanasi
- Heritage Medical Sciences Institute, Varanasi
- Meridian Nursing & Paramedical College
- Sai Homeopathic Paramedical College
- Apex Paramedical Institute
- Autonomous Uma Nath Singh State Medical College, Jaunpur
- S.J. Multi-Speciality Hospital & Paramedical Institute, Jaunpur
- J.N. Electro Homeopathy Medical College & Hospital, Jaunpur
- Apollo Para Medical & Nursing Institute, Jaunpur
- Ghazipur Govt. Homeopathic College & Hospital, Ghazipur

- Autonomous Maharshree Vishwamitra State Medical College, Ghazipur
- SGM Unani Medical College & Hospital, Ghazipur
- Vishwakarma Paramedical Institute of Science, Ghazipur
- Singh Life Care Hospital & Nursing College, Ghazipur
- M.D. Nursing & Para Medical College, Chaundali
- Baba Keenaram Medical College, Chandauli

**Post Graduate Colleges:**
- Harish Chandra PG College, Varanasi
- D.A.V. PG College, Varanasi
- Agrasen PG College, Varanasi
- Mahadev PG College, Varanasi
- Women College Vasanta, Varanasi
- Digvijay Nath P G College, Gorakhpur
- P.G. College, Ghazipur
- Govt. Girl's P.G. College, Ghazipur
- Swami Sahajanand P.G. College, Ghazipur
- TD P.G.College, Jaunpur
- Raja Shri Krishna Dutt P.G. College, Jaunpur
- Sri Ganesh P.G. College, Jaunpur
- Mohd. Hassan PG College, Jaunpur
- Shivangi Mahila PG College, Jaunpur
- Maa Khandwari PG College, Chandauli
- Savitri Bai Phule Govt. PG College, Chandauli
- Pt. Kamalapati Tripathi Govt. PG College, Chandauli
- Sudama Devi Mahila PG College, Chandauli
- Sahid Hira Singh Rajkiya Mahavidyalaya, Chandauli
- Lal Bahadur Shastri PG College, Chandauli
- Govt. PG College, Mirzapur
- Shibli National College, Azamgarh
- Rajeev Gandhi Mahavidyalaya, Mau
- Maryada Purushottam P G College, Mau

**Management Colleges:**
- Institute of Management Studies, BHU
- Faculty of Management & Technology, HCPG College, Varanasi
- Microtek College of Management & Technology, Varanasi
- Jeevandeep Institute of Management & Technology, Varanasi
- Ashoka Institute of Technology & Management (AITM), Varanasi
- SMS, Varanasi
- KIT, Varanasi
- SHEAT, Varanasi
- TERI PG College, Ghazipur
- Prasad Group of Institutions, Jaunpur

**Technical / Professional Colleges:**
- IIT, BHU
- Kashi Institute of Technology, Varanasi

- Ashoka Institute of Technology & Management (AITM), Varanasi
- Saraswati Higher Education & Technical (SHEAT) Group of Institutions, Varanasi
- TERI PG College, Ghazipur
- Prasad Group of Institutions, Jaunpur

**Table 1.2         FACULTY-WISE STUDENT ENROLMENT, WOMEN ENROLMENT (UNIVERSITY TEACHING DEPARTMENTS / UNIVERSITY COLLEGES & AFFLIATED COLLEGES): 2000-2001 (Data source: AISHE 2020-21)**

| Faculty | Overall Enrolment | Enrolment of Women | Women Percentage | Proportion of Faculty Enrollment Relative to Total Enrollment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Arts** | 3875102 | 1712010 | 44.2% | 46.1% |
| **Science** | 1670263 | 658769 | 39.4% | 19.9% |
| **Commerce / Management** | 1500609 | 547342 | 36.5% | 17.8% |
| **Education** | 109196 | 55923 | 51.2% | 1.3% |
| **Engineering / Technology** | 576649 | 123992 | 21.5% | 6.9% |
| **Medicine** | 262753 | 115557 | 44% | 3.1% |
| **Agriculture** | 50308 | 8773 | 17.4% | 0.6% |
| **Veterinary Science** | 13588 | 2838 | 20.9% | 0.2% |
| **Law** | 267043 | 53337 | 20% | 3.2% |
| **Others** | 73932 | 27869 | 37.7% | 0.9% |
| **Total** | **8399443** | **3306410** | **39.4%** | **100%** |

## Objectives

1. To analyze the unemployment rates among female post-graduates in Varanasi Division.
2. To identify the socio-economic factors contributing to unemployment.
3. To explore the effect of unemployment on social equity and inclusive development.

## Analytics Tool
### Comparative Analysis
The comparative data analysis as it-

- In India, total number of universities increased by 70, rising from 1,043 in 2019–20 to 1,113 in the academic year 2020–21.
- Out of the 1,113 universities, 657 are government-run—235 by the Central Government and 422 by State Governments—while 10 are private deemed universities (aided), and 446 are private unaided institutions.
- There are 17 universities in India exclusively for women. These include three in Rajasthan, two each in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, and one each in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Uttarakhand, and West Bengal.
- As of 2020–21, India had 16 open universities—comprising 1 Central University, 14 State Universities, and 1 State Private University—alongside 112 universities offering both regular and distance learning (dual-mode).
- The number of colleges per one lakh population in the 18–23 age group rose from 27 in 2014–15 to 31 in 2020–21.
- Around 10.5% of the total colleges (4,375) are exclusively for women, while only 0.2% (72 colleges) cater solely to male students.
- The states having the most colleges include Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Telangana, and Kerala.
- Total higher education enrollment increased by 28.80 lakh students to almost 4.13 crore in 2020-21, up from 3.85 crore in 2019-20.
- Among those enrolled, 2.12 crore (51.3%) are male students, and 2.01 crore (48.7%) are female students. In 2019–20, male enrolment was 1.96 crore, and female enrolment was 1.89 crore.
- The yearly increase in enrolment has improved steadily: a 7.4% rise was observed in 2020–21, compared to 3% in 2019–20 and 2.7% in 2018–19. Since 2014–15, overall enrolment has gone up by 20.9%.
- According to 2011 demographic predictions, Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for the 18-23 age group increased from 25.6 in 2019-20 to 27.3 in 2020-21. This is the highest increase recorded, up 1.7 points.
- The GER for males stood at 26.7, while for females it was slightly higher at 27.9 in 2020–21.
- In undergraduate programs, the highest enrolment was observed in the Arts stream (33.5%), followed by science (15.5%), Commerce (13.9%), and Engineering & Technology (11.9%).
- Uttar Pradesh recorded the highest share of student enrolment at 16.07%, followed by Maharashtra at 10.98% and Tamil Nadu at 8.06%.

## Findings

According to recent data from the Higher Education Department of Uttar Pradesh, The number of female students enrolling in public universities and related institutes now outnumbers male students. Over the last four years, female enrollment has increased by 13%.In the 2020–21 academic year, Uttar Pradesh had 27 state universities and 7,391-degree colleges, with a total student enrolment of 50.21 lakh—out of which 62.95% were women. This marks a significant increase compared to the figures reported in 2017–18, when the share of female students was 49.81%. In terms of graduates, 9.54 million students completed their degrees in 2020–21, up from 9.4 million in 2019–20. Among postgraduate courses, Master of Arts was the most popular with 5.4 lakh graduates, followed by Master of Science with 2.9 lakh, Master of Business Administration with 2.2 lakh, and Master of Commerce with 1.6 lakh graduates. Additionally, 25,550 students were awarded Ph.D. degrees in 2020, with the highest numbers in science (6,022) and Engineering & Technology (4,556).

## Conclusion

Education is a crucial element in human resource development and significantly contributes to enhancing the status of women in India. Over the years, the emphasis has moved from preparing women for domestic roles to acknowledging their vital contributions to both family and national economies. Education helps boost economic productivity and equips women with skills needed in the workforce. However, even with progress, there is still uncertainty about the role of women's education, especially as more women begin working. Educated women are frequently expected to excel both in domestic responsibilities and professional roles, resulting in increased pressure on them. Recent data shows an increase in labor force participation. For men, it rose from 55.6% in 2018–19 to 57.5% in 2020–21. For women, it grew from 18.6% to 25.1%, with rural women's participation increasing from 19.7% to 27.7%. Over this time frame, there was a notable decline in the overall unemployment rate, dropping from 5.8% to 4.2%.  In the Varanasi Division, unemployment among female postgraduates remains a serious concern. It impacts social fairness and inclusive growth. By understanding the reasons behind this issue, effective policies can be designed to improve job opportunities for women, helping create a more equal and inclusive society.

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## Data Source

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- **"Gender Disparities in Higher Education and Employment in India"** - Articles from journals specializing in gender studies and education.

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