

# **An Analysis of The Sociological Aspects of Discrimination Based on Gender in Higher Education in West Bengal**

Aparna Saha<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Urmila Parteti<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> *Department of Sociology, Mansarovar Global University, Sehore, MP*

---

## **Abstract**

*This paper presents a sociological analysis of gender-based discrimination in higher education. The examination focuses on how structural, cultural, and institutional variables contribute to uneven experiences and outcomes for students. The research investigates the persistence of gender inequalities in academic environments, including inequities in access, participation, representation, and career development. It does so by drawing on foundational sociological concepts such as patriarchy, social stratification, and intersectionality. According to the study's findings, conventional gender norms, implicit prejudices, and institutional practices all contribute to uneven chances, which disproportionately affect women and persons who belong to gender minorities.*

*The research investigates a range of issues, including gender stereotyping in subject choices, unequal interactions between faculty and students, sexual harassment, and the under-representation of women in leadership positions and STEM fields. It employs a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, such as surveys, interviews, and secondary data analysis. In addition, it examines how characteristics such as social class, ethnicity, and caste interact with gender to exacerbate prejudice across various settings. The data clearly show that gender discrimination remains deeply ingrained in higher education systems, despite policy measures and enhanced awareness. The research highlights the importance of implementing inclusive policies, gender-sensitive teaching, institutional responsibility, and awareness programs to cultivate equal academic settings. In the end, the research contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of how higher education can function as a site of both the reproduction and transformation of gender disparities, thereby providing avenues for social change and empowerment.*

**Keywords:** *Empowerment, disparities, institutional, inclusive, responsibility, sociological*

---

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The word "gender discrimination" encompasses all types of bias against a person because of their gender. Women are more likely than men to be the targets of gender-based discrimination. An important reminder of the need for equitable education opportunities for all individuals is the gender gap in India's literacy rates. Among adults aged 7 and up, the 2011 census found that women's effective literacy rate was 65.46 percent while men's rate was 82.14%. For many families, sending their daughters to college is seen as a waste of money because, in their minds, women will only ever work for their husbands or in-laws. While the Indian constitution does indeed ensure that men and women have equal rights and advantages, the vast majority of Indian women do not actually get to enjoy these rights and chances. This is because of a number of things.

Biological differences between the sexes give birth to social and cultural variations, which in turn perpetuate gender inequality in every civilization. The gender gap makes men and women feel inferior to each other and forces them to do different things in society. Ripping one gender of their rights, power, resources, and opportunities while providing the other these same things promote gender inequality and the marginalization of women in both the private and public realms. Contrasted with sex, which has its roots in biology, gender is a concept that has evolved through time and culture. A person's sex determines their gender, which in turn affects whether they are deemed masculine or feminine. As a social and cultural phenomena, gender inequality refers to the unequal treatment of men and women. Despite the tremendous social and economic disruption that accompanied the industrial revolution, this patriarchal structure that prioritizes males over women has endured. Gender inequality has been present throughout history, with varying degrees of material dependence, social power, and status, reflecting societal and economic shifts. The patriarchal system that benefits men at the expense of women has never been fully abolished.

Women graduates must be seen as part of the essential human resource base in the country. As such, they have then right to the same access and career opportunities as their male counterparts. Discriminatory practices are not only unjust but a flagrant wastage of valuable expertise, which, today, is vital for the nation. In higher

education academic resources reform is the priority, what is about other areas one cannot entertain a myopic vision? there should be a strong commitment to equipping women with the necessary range of managerial skills to contribute to the overall renewal of this sector; the nature of power, as it is used in positions of leadership and management, may need to be conceived quite differently. Feminine leadership needs clearer analysis and definition and may be preferred as a model more suited to the needs of social development across all sectors including, higher education.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF GENDER INEQUALITY:**

- Gender inequality happens when men and women are given different rights, resources, power, and chances because of social traditions and norms.
- Gender inequality is the trend to give one gender better chances than another or limit one gender's chances in areas like society, family, politics, and the economy.
- Gender imbalance gives one gender more power, resources, and rights than the other, which leads to one gender being in charge of the others.
- Gender inequality, or the level of male dominance and female subordination, has not been the same everywhere and at all times, making it an asymmetrical idea.
- Gender injustice has been around for a long time because people never thought about it. It shows that women are always seen as second-class in families and society.
- At times, gender disparity is referred to as a gender-neutral term. In some areas, women are preferred over men, which leads to gender inequality for men.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

To collect the opinions of respondents with respect to gender discrimination in education among the students of the universities of West Bengal.

**II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

**Research Design:**

A research design is like a road map; it helps us choose the right methods and processes to follow so we can reach our destination—the objective, accurate answers to our research questions. In most cases, it addresses the steps one takes to begin, conduct, and complete the research.

The study's stated goals—to investigate gender inequality in higher education from multiple angles—led the researchers to choose a descriptive cum exploratory research pattern. While exploratory research seeks to understand phenomena, descriptive research seeks to describe them or the problem. This study makes use of quantitative method for gathering and analyzing data.

**Sources of Data:**

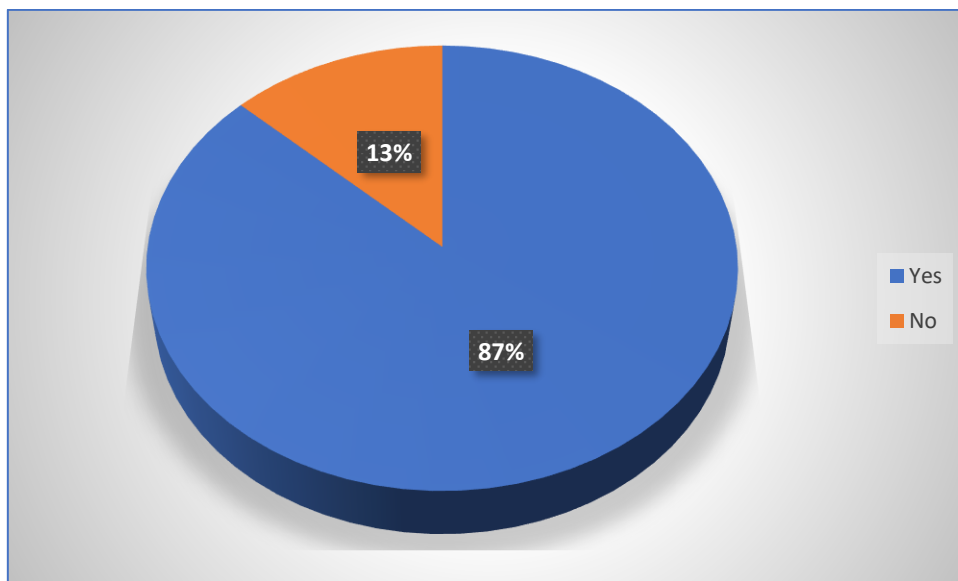
**Primary Data:** Primary data collection is the systematic acquisition of data through methods such as surveys, interviews, or experiments. Primary data refers to information that has been collected directly from its original source. Primary data were collected from respondents at the selected universities in West Bengal.

**III. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS :**

**1. Issue regarding the Education of Girls is as Important as that of boys in Universities of West Bengal**

**Table 1: Education of Girls is as Important as that of Boys**

Options	Nos. of Students	Percentages
Yes	520	87
No	80	13
TOTAL	600	100



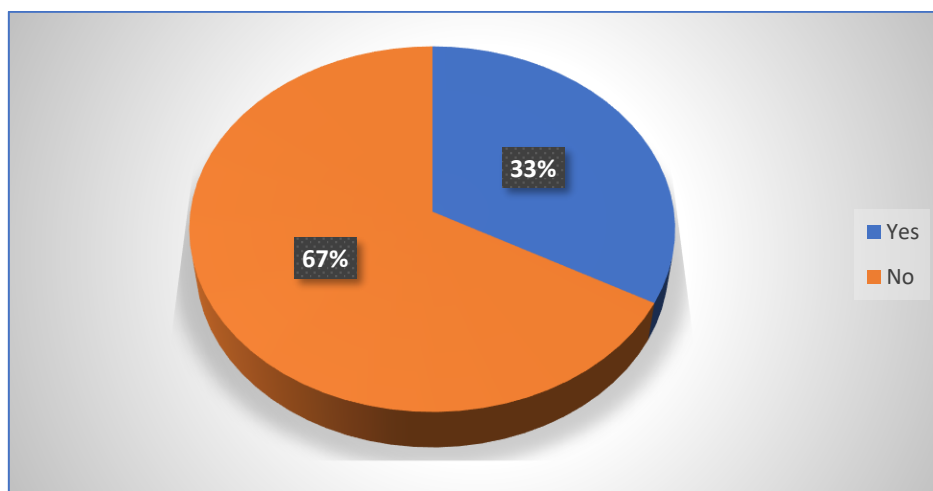
**Fig. 1 : Education of Girls is as Important as Boys'**

As per the view of total respondents, 520 respondents have given positive answer regarding the issue of Higher Education in Universities of West Bengal whereas 80 respondents have given negative answer.

**2. Issue Regarding Girls Having Equal Access to Higher Education in Universities of West Bengal**

**Table 2: Girls Having Equal Access to Higher Education in Universities**

Options	Nos. of Students	Percentages
YES	200	33
NO	400	67
TOTAL	600	100



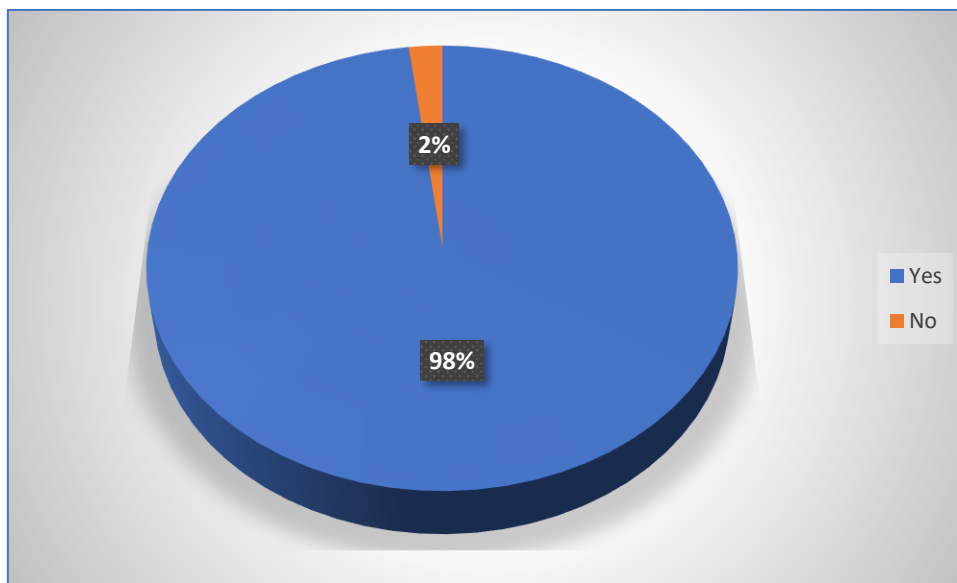
**Fig.2 : Girls Having Equal Access to Higher Education in Universities**

As per the view of total respondents, 200 respondents ( 33%) have given positive answer regarding the issue of Higher Education in Universities of West Bengal whereas 400 respondents( 67%) have given negative answer. Hence most of the respondents , have given their view that the girls do not have equal access to higher education in Universities of West Bengal

**3. Issue regarding any kind of inequality in terms of Boys' and Girls' Education in the universities of West Bengal**

**Table 3 : Any kind of inequality in terms of Boys' and Girls' Education**

Options	Nos. of Students	Percentages
Yes	590	98
No	10	2
TOTAL	600	100



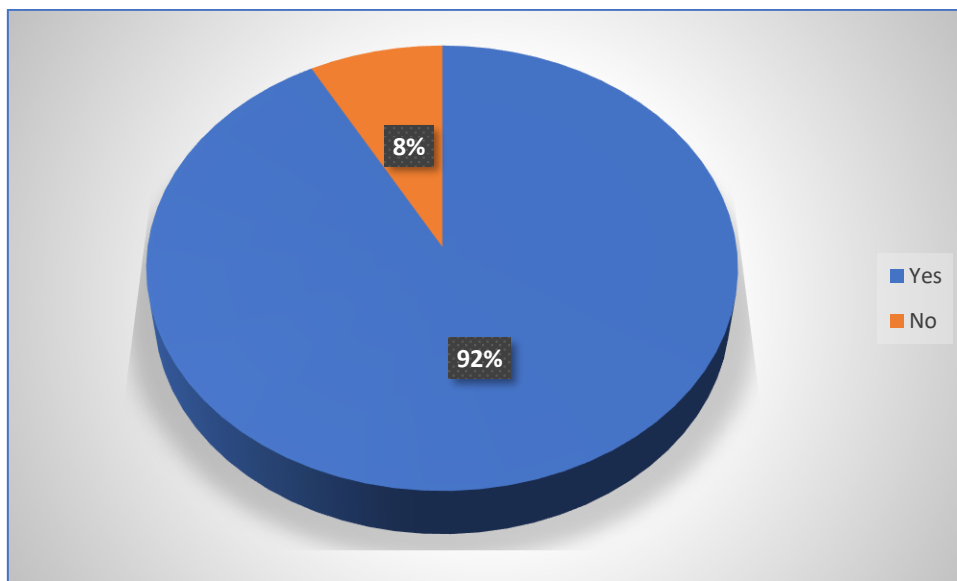
**Fig. 3: Any kind of inequality in terms of Boys' and Girls' Education**

As per the views of the total respondents, 590 respondents (98%) have given a positive answer regarding the issue of inequality in boys' and girls' education in universities of West Bengal, whereas 10 respondents (2%) have given a negative answer.

**4. Issue Regarding Any Difference in the Status of those Females who pursue Higher Education and those who do not in the Universities of West Bengal**

**Table 4: Any Difference in the Status of those Females who pursue Higher Education and those who do not**

Options	Nos. of Students	Percentages
YES	550	92
NO	50	8
TOTAL	600	100

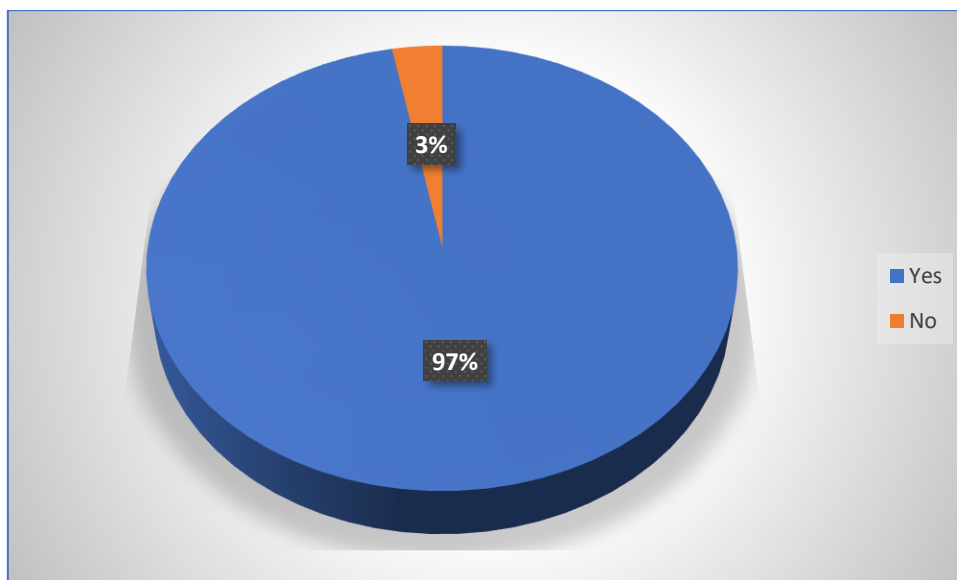


**Fig. 4: Any Difference in the Status of those Females who pursue Higher Education and those who do not**  
As per the view of total respondents, 550 respondents ( 92% ) , have given positive answer regarding the issue whereas 50 respondents ( 8% ) have given negative answer.

**5. Issue Regarding the Improvement of the Female Literacy Rate in West Bengal**

**Table 5: Regarding the Improvement of the Female Literacy Rate**

Options	Nos. of Students	Percentages
Yes	20	3
No	580	97
TOTAL	600	100



**Fig. 5 : Regarding the Improvement of the Female Literacy Rate**

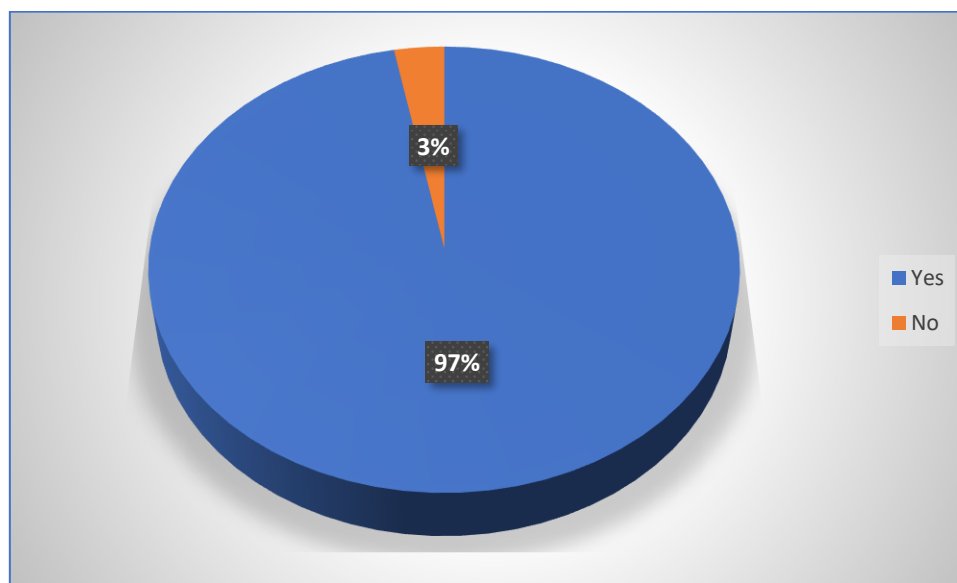
As per the view of total respondents, 580 respondents ( 97% ) , have given negative answer regarding the issue whereas 20 respondents ( 3% ) have given positive answer.

**6. Issue Regarding Girls' Enrolment in Higher Education in Universities of West Bengal is not Adequate**

**Table 6 : Girl's Enrolment in Higher Education in Universities is not adequate**

Options	Nos. of Students	Percentages
Yes	580	97
No	20	3

TOTAL	600	100
-------	-----	-----



**Fig. 6 : Girl's Enrolment in Higher Education in Universities**

According to the data, 97% of respondents reported that enrolment in Higher Education in the universities of West Bengal is not adequate.

#### IV. CONCLUSION:

In West Bengal, cultural challenges have inhibited women's development. Historical and cultural barriers mean that women lack opportunities for development. Educated women enable more inclusive and democratic societies. The challenges and cultural barriers mean that educated women enable inclusive societies. The challenge and cultural barriers. The challenges and cultural barriers to women's development mean that educated women help create more inclusive and democratic societies. Barriers mean that women lack opportunities for development. West Bengal faces cultural barriers. It is challenged by barriers in West Bengal. West Bengal has cultural barriers and challenges. Historical and cultural barriers mean that women lack opportunities for development. Educated women contribute to more inclusive and democratic societies; cultural barriers mean that women lack opportunities for development.

While some challenges related to safety or traditional mindsets may exist in certain contexts, the prevailing, forward-thinking view is that educating girls empowers them to thrive and live with dignity.

Higher education in West Bengal improves lives by enabling financial independence, enhancing decision-making skills, and fostering confidence among women, acting as a catalyst for social change. It reduces gender disparity through increased enrolment rates (even surpassing boys in some areas), targeted policies, and the promotion of women's participation in STEM and leadership roles.

Female students face social restrictions, early marriage pressures, and limited educational resources that affect their academic growth and affect enrolment in Higher Education. Quantitative analysis demonstrates how widespread gender-based prejudices are and how they continue to impact in Higher Education in selected universities of West Bengal. Results indicate that female students have experienced discrimination. Female students are undervalued due to grading bias and unequal division of group work.

#### REFERENCE

- [1]. Bose, S. (2012). A Contextual Analysis of Gender Disparity in Education in India: The Relative Effects of Son Preference, Women's Status, and Community. *Sociological Perspectives*, Vol.55, No.1. Sage Publications.
- [2]. Das, D., & Pathak, M. (2012). Tackling the Millennium Development Goals: Reducing the Gender Disparity in Primary and Secondary Education in India. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*.
- [3]. Gupta, R. (2010). Empowerment and gender Difference in Education Status. *Delhi Business Review*, Vol.11, No.1.
- [4]. Hussain, Z. (2010). Gender Disparities in Completing School Education in India: Analyzing Regional Variations. MPRA Paper No.25748. Delhi: Institute for Economic Growth. 26th Sept 2010.

- [5]. Jha, P. and Niti Nagar. (2015). "A Study of Gender Inequality in India", The International Journal of Indian Psychology, Vol.2, Issue.3.
- [6]. Kapur Dr Radhika (2019) Gender Inequality in Education, International Journal of Transformation in Business Management (IJTBM), Vol 9 (1), Jan- Mar, 1-12.
- [7]. Mishra, P. J. and Nadia Ahed. (2017). "Gender Discrimination and Feminist Perspectives for Women Empowerment", Indian Scholar: An International Multidisciplinary Research e- Journal, Vol. 3, Issue 3.
- [8]. Mukhopadhyay, H. (2008). "The role of Education in The Empowerment of Women in a District of West Bengal, India: Reflections on a Survey of Women", Journal of International Women's Studies, Vol.10, No.2.
- [9]. Nayak, P. and Mahanta, B. (2010). "Women Empowerment in India". available at <http://papers.ssrn.com/sol13/papers.cfm?abstractid=1320071>, accessed on 23 Feb. 2016.