

Women
and
Men in India
2023

Introduction



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1.1 Gender equality is a development goal in its own right, as well as a precondition for the achievement of many other developmental goals. Gender equality and women's empowerment are addressed as explicit priorities through the stand-alone SDG 5 and by mainstreaming gender equality across the SDGs. Women are one among the most vulnerable population groups in society. Every effort aimed to advance the status of women requires timely and accurate information on the situations of women and men. Understanding where, why and how gender inequality arises is a vital step in addressing problems and issues related to gender and development.

1.2 The focus on gender statistics globally gained momentum since 1980s, following the declaration of the UN decade for women during 1976-1985. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action subsequently included a strong call for generating and disseminating 'gender disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation'. The UN Statistical Commission (UNSC), 2013 adopted a core set of 9 violence against women indicators and endorsed a Minimum Set of gender indicators – as a guide for national production and international compilation of gender statistics. The 2030 agenda of sustainable development goals re-emphasize the critical need to address gaps in the production of gender statistics, investment in building technical capacities and infrastructure at all levels.

1.3 Empowering women with equal opportunities is essential for inclusive economic growth. Creating a safer environment, free from violence and abuse, is imperative for women to participate fully in nation-building endeavors. This necessitates not only prioritizing women's safety by law enforcement but also fostering societal support systems. Educating women from a young age about their rights and dispelling stigmas surrounding crime reporting are crucial steps. Moreover, increasing female political representation can serve as a catalyst for change, providing role models for future generations and amplifying awareness of women's issues. Ultimately, achieving gender equality not only enhances the quality of life for women but also enables them to shape their destinies beyond traditional norms.

1.4 The passage of the Women's Reservation Bill by the Govt. of India represents a significant milestone for gender advocates and

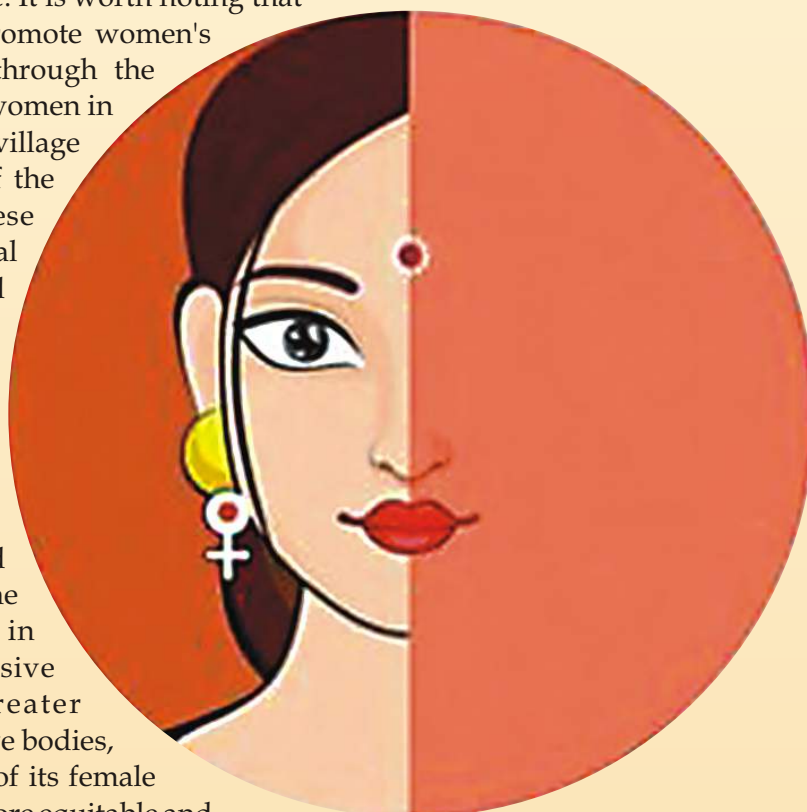


women's empowerment in India. By proposing to reserve 33 per cent of seats in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies & the Legislative Assembly of the National Capital Territory of Delhi for women, the bill aims to address the longstanding gender disparity in political representation and decision-making bodies.

1.5 The impact of having more women in leadership positions cannot be overstated. Women leaders often champion issues such as healthcare, education, and social welfare, which have a direct impact on the lives of women, their families, and communities. Thus, increasing women's representation in politics can lead to more equitable and responsive governance. It is worth noting that India has already taken steps to promote women's participation in local governance through the reservation of one-third of seats for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions at the village level and one-third of the offices of the chairperson at all levels of these institutions, as well as in urban local bodies. These measures have helped empower women at the grassroots level and have been instrumental in increasing their participation in decision-making processes.

1.6 The passage of the Women's Reservation Bill reaffirms India's commitment to women-led development and underscores the importance of gender equality in achieving sustainable and inclusive development. By ensuring greater representation of women in legislative bodies, India can harness the full potential of its female population and advance towards a more equitable and prosperous future for all.

1.7 Gender statistics play a crucial role in promoting and measuring gender equality. They provide benchmarks for progress, making visible the similarities and differences between men and women. Gender statistics are instrumental in challenging stereotypes, informing policy-making, and monitoring progress toward equality. Investing in gender statistics enhances the quality of data available for decision-making across various development fields.



1.8 The publication "Women and Men in India" consolidates gender statistics, serving as a vital resource for policymakers and stakeholders. Disaggregated data allow for nuanced gender analysis, revealing disparities across various demographic characteristics. By providing comprehensive data, this publication contributes to informed policy formulation and fosters progress toward gender equity.

1.9 The publication "Women and Men in India" aims to consolidate gender statistics to facilitate accessibility and serve as a platform for users. Strengthening statistical capacities and disaggregating data are crucial commitments toward achieving the 2030 Agenda. Gender analysis relies on disaggregated data, examining issues across various characteristics such as age, location, marital status, and education level. Enhanced availability and utilization of gender statistics inform policy formulation and contribute to informed decision-making in development fields.

1.10 The comprehensive publication "Women and Men in India" has been releasing by MoSPI since 1995 is a collection of a variety of gender-related statistics released by different agencies of the Government of India. The publication is prepared with the objective to provide variety of available gender statistics at one place to serve as a single platform for accessing gender statistics by users. The publication provides sex disaggregated data on various socio-economic aspects viz. Health, Education, Participation in Economy and Decision Making and Impediments to Empowerment. The publication also includes chapters on SDGs & gender and mapping of Minimum Set of Gender Indicators and success stories of Ministries /Departments of Government of India which improved the lives of women.

