Research Paper

Gender parity index in selected urban and rural secondary schools of Andhra Pradesh

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■ **ABSTRACT :** The present study was under taken to know the Gender Parity Index (GPI) in selected urban and rural secondary schools in Andhra Pradesh. The sample comprised of 60 schools and 60 head masters. Data about enrolment of boys and girls in selected schools were collected by referring the registers maintained and interviewing the head masters of the selected schools. From the results, it was found that the overall GPI of three regions was 0.8, in rural schools, it was 0.9 and in urban schools it was 0.7. It was interesting to note that the GPI was more in rural secondary schools compared to urban schools of three regions. Regional differences were observed in GPI of secondary schools where Telangana recorded less GPI compared to Andhra and Rayalaseema regions.

■ **KEY WORDS :** Gender parity index, Urban, Rural, Secondary schools

Universal elementary education has been one of the major goals of educational policy ever since independence. Provision of free and compulsory education for children up to 14years is one of the directive principles of state policy, because the primary school education is important in educational ladder as foundation for future growth of the child are laid during primary school education period. It is the most valuable time which influences the child constructively and creatively.

The educational attainment of a population, particularly of the young population, is an important indicator of the society's stock of human capital and its level of socio-economic development. The educational attainment of youth in the age of 15-24 also reflects the achievement of the educational sector in the past 20 years (UNESCO, 2011).

Enrolment of girls at primary level and upper primary level increased over the years and the challenge is to translate the high enrolment into high attendance rates. The survey also indicated that there was an increase in literacy among women, which increased from 53.67 per cent (Census, 2001) to 65.46 per cent (Census, 2011). It was the first time that out of the total of 217.70 million literates added during the decade, females (110.07 million) outnumbered men.

Despite strong economic and social evidence of the high returns to female education, most communities continue to under-invest in female education relative to male education. Even as the thresholds of schooling completion increase, with significantly narrowing gender gaps in primary education in particular, discrimination against girls in secondary and higher education remains an issue. Economic and social privilege also affect gendered patterns of access, with girls in secondary and higher education predominantly drawn from higher income and social groups, endowed with higher social status.

The Gender Parity Index (GPI) is a socio-economic index usually designed to measure the relative access to education of males and females. In its simplest form, it is calculated as the quotient of the number of females by the number of males enrolled in a given stage of education (primary, secondary, etc.).

The Gender Parity Index (GPI) reflects females' level of access to education compared to that of males. This is calculated for each school phase. A GPI of less than 1 indicates that there are fewer females than males in the formal education system in proportion to the appropriate school-age