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**DYNAMICS & DIMENSIONS OF GENDER
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Dynamics & Dimensions of Gender Inequality in India

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Abstract – Gender inequality occurs at various dimensions and is the combined result of various socioeconomic, policy and cultural factors. The present study attempts to evaluate the trends of gender gap of India in the key dimensions such as education attainment, economic participation, health and political empowerment using data on Global Gender Gap Index of World Economic Forum for the sample period of 2006-2015. The global gender gap rank of India is 108 for the year 2015 among 145 countries. The global gender gap score and the score of all indicators has increased during the sample period. The gender inequality is very high in economic participation and political dimension in India. The gender inequality is very close to the global average in case of health and education. The positive and significant correlation was found between gender equality, economic growth and Human development Index of India.

Keywords: Gender Equality, Global Gender Gap Index, Women, Gender Education Inequality

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1. INTRODUCTION

Gender inequality is deep rooted in India. Gender-based inequality is a phenomenon that transcends the majority of the world's cultures, religions, nations and income groups. Equality between women and men (gender equality) refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. The gender equality cannot be based only on the principle of sameness but it means the absence of bias. Gender indices can give us a summary measure of different indicators affecting the wellbeing and development of women and girls. There are very important psycho-socio-economic-political reasons feeding the gender inequality across the world. The Gender inequality has to be evaluated with diverse dimensions. This study investigates whether women and men are converging or diverging with respect to key dimensions of such as educational attainment, economic activity, length of life, and representation in national legislatures in India. The rest of the paper is organized as follows: Section two reviews the relevant literature, while the research methodology is briefly described in section three. Section four presents empirical results and findings; the fifth section concludes the paper with policy implications and suggests avenues for future research.

2. EXISTING LITERATURE ON GLOBAL GENDER-INEQUALITY MEASURES

There exists number of Gender-Inequality indices that comprises of variety of dimensions and variables. The two gender-sensitive measures have been established by UNDP viz. Gender Development Index (GDI) and Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM). GDI measures provided gender inequality in terms of income, education and health variables. GEM measures gender inequalities in relation to political participation, economic participation and decision-making. The two measures lack certain variables such as local political representation of women, financial access and information access for decision-making. Further, the absolute value of measures are used to measure women well-being rather than relative measures of variables in comparison to male. The simple arithmetic average of different values of components is used to estimate gender inequality and so the social differences are relatively given less weightage as compared to income factors. According to Diskstra (2002) "High income countries have a higher GDI than low-income countries with the same level of gender inequalities". The present paper used Global Gender Gap Index of World Economic Forum that provides alternative gender inequality index. It takes diverse variables which are specified in relative terms and provides greater weightage of social variables.

3. DATA AND METHODS

The study used the data of Global Gender Gap Index, World Economic forum (WEF) for the sample period of 2006-2015. The Global Gender Gap Index, WEF examines the gap between men and women in four fundamental categories (sub-indexes): Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival and Political Empowerment. Table1 detail the structure of the global gender gap index with the dimensions. Economic participation and opportunity dimension consists of three dimensions: the ratio of female labour force participation over male value; wage equality between women and men for similar work; ratio of female estimated earned income over male value ratio of female legislators, senior officials and managers over male value; ratio of female professional and technical workers over male value.

Education attainment is captured through women to men ratio in primary secondary and tertiary level education and ratio of female literacy rate to male literacy rate. Health and Survival ratio is female to male ratio and ratio of female life expectancy to male life expectancy. The political Empowerment consists of three concepts: ratio of female to male in minister-level position, ratio of female to male in parliamentary positions and ratio of number of years with female head of state over male value (in last 50 years of country). The correlation coefficient is estimated between Global Gap index and Human development Index. The HDI estimates are obtained from HDI reports.

4. EMPIRICAL RESULTS

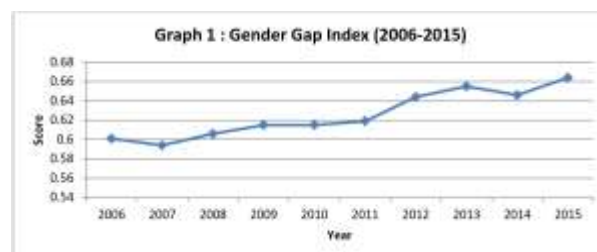
The global gender gap rank of India is 108 for the year 2015 among 145 countries. Graph 1 shows the global gender score during the sample period 2006-2015 for India. The global gender gap score of India has improved from 0.601 in the year 2006 to 0.664 in the year 2015 with an increase of gender equality by 6.3%. A decade of data revealed that India is witnessing the closure of Gender Gap slowly. By the year 2015 India has been able to close 67% of the gender gap.

Table 1: Structure of the Global Gender Gap Index

Economic Participation and Opportunity	Ratio: female labour force participation over male value
	Wage equality between women and men for similar work (converted to female-over-male ratio)
	Ratio: female estimated earned income over male value
	Ratio: female legislators, senior officials and managers over male value
	Ratio: female professional and technical workers over male value

Educational Attainment	Ratio: female literacy rate over male value
	Ratio: female net primary enrolment rate over male value
	Ratio: female net secondary enrolment rate over male value
	Ratio: female gross tertiary enrolment ratio over male value
Health and Survival	Sex ratio at birth (converted to female-over-male ratio)
	Ratio: female healthy life expectancy over male value
Political Empowerment	Ratio: females with seats in parliament over male value
	Ratio: females at ministerial level over male value
	Ratio: number of years of a female head of state (last 50 years) over male value

Source: World Economic Forum , Global Gender Gap Index, 2015



Source: World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Index 2006-2015

The gender gap index score reflects the distribution of resources more equitably between women and men regardless of the overall level of available resources.

Table2: Summary Table on Gender Inequality in Various Dimensions

Year	Overall Score	Economic	Education	Health	Political
2006	0.601	0.397	0.819	0.962	0.227
2007	0.594	0.398	0.819	0.931	0.227
2008	0.606	0.399	0.845	0.931	0.248
2009	0.615	0.412	0.843	0.931	0.273
2010	0.615	0.403	0.837	0.931	0.291
2011	0.619	0.396	0.837	0.931	0.312
2012	0.644	0.459	0.852	0.931	0.334
2013	0.655	0.446	0.857	0.931	0.385
2014	0.646	0.41	0.85	0.937	0.385
2015	0.664	0.383	0.896	0.942	0.433
% of Close of Gender Gap (2006 to 2015)	0.063	-0.014	0.077	-0.02	0.206

Source: World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Index 2006-2015

The index will show the gap between women's and men's in different indicators used in estimating the index. The Government policies in context to economic, political and cultural parameters have resulted in the reduction of the magnitude of gender gaps in India. The Table2 also shows that there is a consistent increase in gender equality except in the year 2007. The gender inequality has declined in

education and political dimensions and increased for economic and health dimensions. The gender inequality is very high in case of political indicators and economic indicators for India during the sample period. In other words, the economic and political inequalities are the significant causes for overall gender inequality in India during the sample period. The widest gender gap exists in the political Empowerment Index. However, it is also true that the biggest improvement has been achieved in this index. It is clear that India has been able to close this gap by around 21% during the sample period. The gender equality in health and survival index though is quite high but the gap has slightly increased by 2% during the sample period. India has able to close 38.3%, 89.6%, 94.2% and 43.3% of economic, education, health and politics dimension of gender inequality.

4.1 Comparison of Gender Gap Index of India with Global Average (2006-2015)

The overall average performance of India in comparison to global average in closing the gender gap in different indicators based on average value of each indicator during the sample is presented in Graph 2.



Source: Compiled by Author based on data of World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Index

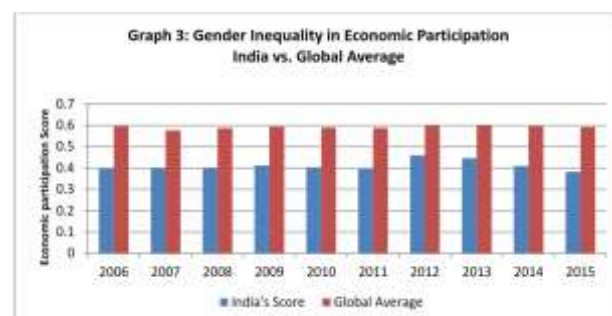
The global results during the sample period shows that the globally nations on an average were able to close the gender gap in economic, education, health and political by 60%, 93%, 96% and 19% respectively. The India's performance in closing the gender gap in three indicators viz. economic, education and health indicators is below the global average. So the gender inequality is quite high against the global standards in all indicators except the political empowerment. India has been able to close the gender gap in political empowerment far above the one that exists globally.

4.2 Gender Inequality Gap in Economic Participation

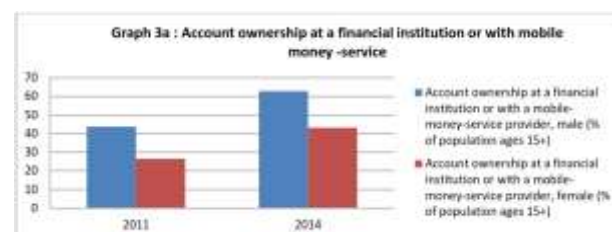
India lags in closing the gender gap in economic participation by women as compared to global average during the sample period (Graph 3). The lag in women's access to basic economic opportunities presents enormous challenges for women. The continuous drop in the overall female labor force participation rate reflects an employment policy failure. It is important to mention here that most women working in the self-employed or unpaid household

employment category are inadequately captured by indicators. **Graph 3a** depicts the gender inequality in the financial inclusion. Men dominate the number of accounts in the financial institutions. Female have lower number of account with formal financial institution. The labor force participation rate though increasing for the females but is lower than males (**Graph 3b**).

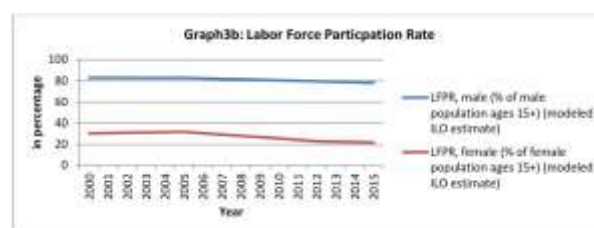
There is also a lack of wage equality for the similar work performed by women and during sample period women's estimated earned income is lower for women. Women are underrepresented for senior official and managerial and professional positions in India as compared to global average.



Source: Source: Compiled by Author based on data of World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Index



Source: World Development Indicators, World Bank



Source: World Development Indicators, World Bank

4.3 Gender Inequality Gap in Education Attainment

Over the last few decades, with multiple state-led child education programmes targeting school enrolment levels, the enrolment rate for females have gone up in the primary schooling system (Table 3). The percentage of closure of gender gap in education attainment is lower than global average during the sample period (Graph 4).



Source: Source: Compiled by Author based on data of World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Index

Table 3: Key Indicators of Women Inequality in India (2006-2015)

COUNTRY SCORE CARD	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Labor force participation rate, % avg	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.67	0.67
Labor force participation rate, %m	0.41	0.43	0.43	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.40	0.40
Wage equality for similar work, 3-7 (best)/m	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.66	0.65	0.65	0.64	0.64	0.63	0.63
Wage equality for similar work, 3-7 (best)/m	0.62	0.67	0.67	0.66	0.63	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.56	0.55
Estimated earned income, Int'l \$ 1,000/m	0.52	0.5	0.53	0.52	0.53	0.52	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.54
Estimated earned income, Int'l \$ 1,000/m	0.38	0.31	0.31	0.30	0.30	0.31	0.37	0.37	0.24	0.25
Legislators, senior officials and managers, %m	0.37	0.35	0.38	0.3	0.27	0.35	0.25	0.25	0.27	0.27
Legislators, senior officials and managers, %m	0.09	0.09	0.05	0.09	0.09	0.09				
Professional and technical workers, %m	0.79	0.68	0.72	0.84	0.64	0.64	0.63	0.64	0.65	0.64
Professional and technical workers, %m	0.27	0.27	0.27							
Literacy rate, %m	0.06	0.05	0.07	0.07	0.06	0.06	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.08
Literacy rate, %m	0.65	0.65	0.71	0.7	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.75
Enrollment in primary education, %m	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.98	0.98	0.97	0.93	0.94	0.93
Enrollment in primary education, %m	0.94	0.94	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.99	1	0.97	0.97
Enrollment in secondary education, %m	0.94	0.91	0.91	0.92	0.92	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.62	0.64
Enrollment in secondary education, %m	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.86
Enrollment in tertiary education, %m	0.86	0.81	0.86	0.87	0.86	0.86	0.88	0.87	0.88	0.92
Enrollment in tertiary education, %m	0.66	0.66	0.72	0.72	0.7	0.7	0.73	0.73	0.76	0.92
Sex ratio at birth, %m	0.94	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92
Sex ratio at birth, %m	0.95	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.88	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.88
Healthy life expectancy, year/m	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04
Healthy life expectancy, year/m	1	1.03	1.03	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.04	1.05
Women in parliament, %m	0.22	0.29	0.23	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.23	0.24	0.25	0.27
Women in parliament, %m	0.09	0.09	0.1	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.13	0.14
Women in ministerial positions, %m	0.21	0.23	0.27	0.27	0.18	0.18	0.19	0.19	0.2	0.24
Women in ministerial positions, %m	0.06	0.06	0.11	0.13	0.13	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.1	0.19
Years with female/male head of state (last 50)avg	0.04	0.11	0.11	0.14	0.15	0.15	0.17	0.2	0.2	0.2
Years with female/male head of state (last 50)/m	0.63	0.43	0.45	0.47	0.52	0.56	0.61	0.72	0.72	0.72

Source: World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Index 2006-2015

4.4 Economic Participation and Educational Attainment

Though India has closed around 90% of the education gap (Graph 4) but show low levels of women's economic participation (Table 3) It means that India has untapped but educated talent pool and can gain much through women's greater participation in the workforce. The cultural factors, such as norms restricting the mobility of women, and structural factors, such as a lack of appropriate job opportunities for educated women, largely explain this phenomenon. The government has made investments and policy formulation for the women's education but the barriers to women's participation in the workforce has not been removed. The policies allowing the women to combine work and family may play an important role for greater participation of women in economic activities. This also has an important implication for business practices to adopt the policy that can facilitate women's integration into workforce. Government policy should encourage and make it easier for women to work. The measures such workplace equality, child care leave etc. have played an important role to improve women's economic participation India.

4.5 Gender Inequality Gap in Health and Survival

The gender inequality in health and survival is high in India as compared to Global average. It means women have less access and control over healthcare resources (Graph 5). The sex ratio at birth reflects the gender bias against women. The cultural construct of Indian society with strong preference for male children has led the lower female to male ratio (Table3). India has witnessed an improvement in overall life expectancy of women and is higher than men.



Source: Source: Compiled by Author based on data of World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Index 2006-2015

4.6 Gender Inequality Gap in Political Empowerment

India ranks significantly higher in gender equality in political empowerment as compared to global average (Graph 6). However, there is a significant improvement in the representation of women in different political positions (Table 3).The gender inequality in politics is mainly combated by Government efforts has instituted reservations for seats in local Government.



Source: Compiled by Author based on data of World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Index 2006-2015

4.7 Correlation between Gender Gap Index, Economic Growth (GDPPC) and Human Development Index (HDI):

The correlation coefficient between gender gap index, Economic Growth as measured by GDP per Capita (GDPPC) and human well-being as measured by HDI is found to be high significantly positive at 1% level of significance. It shows that the country successful in closing the gender gap or improving gender inequality will achieve high level of human well-being (Table 4).

Table4: Correlation between Gender Gap Index and Human Development Index

	GDPPC	Gender Gap	HDI
GDPPC	1	0.9478*** (0.000)	0.99515*** (0.000)
Gender Gap	0.9478*** (0.000)	1	0.9524*** (0.000)
HDI	0.99515*** (0.000)	0.9524*** (0.000)	1

Source: Author's Calculation @ figure in parenthesis denotes p value. *** Significant at 1% level of Significance

5. CONCLUSIONS:

Gender inequality and discrimination is one of the most important problems of India. This discrimination continues in every aspect of woman life and is a social-political issue. The girls are treated unequally for education, health protection, economic participation or political positions. The study investigated the gender inequality with different dimensions using the data from Global Gender Gap Index of World Economic Forum for the sample period of 2006-2015. The global gender gap rank of India is 108 for the year 2015 among 145 countries, the rank of economic participation and opportunity is 139, the rank of educational attainment is 125, the rank of health and survival is 143, the rank of political empowerment is 9. The gender inequality is very high in economic participation. The country ranks lower in all dimensions except for politics dimension as the gender inequality index is lower than the global average. The gender inequality index for politics is higher than the global average value. Further India is witnessing the paradoxical situation of high female literacy levels with lower female economic participation. It is analyzed that though India has closed around 90% of the education gap but show low levels of women's economic participation. India is unusual but not unique for having lower rates of labor force participation among adult women with secondary education. The public and private business practices need to be adopted to facilitate women's integration into workforce. Governments, business and civil society must adopt the policies and attitudinal transformation to foster growth that reduces the gender gap. The gender equality is found to have positive association with higher Human development and economic growth in the country.

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