

Tracking Progress Toward Gender Parity in Higher Education: Haryana vs National Trends

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyses five years of AISHE gender ratio data in Haryana's higher education enrolment between 2019-20 and 2023-24, and contrasts the state trajectory with the national average drawn from the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE). A descriptive time series method has been applied to Scheduled Caste, OBC and overall, Gender Parity Index (GPI) values released by the Ministry of Education. Findings reveal steady improvements in Scheduled Caste (SC) and Other Backward Class (OBC) gender ratios, with Haryana overtaking national averages in several instances by 2023-24. These findings inform five practical actions—scholarships tied to credit completion, OBC targeted hostels, STEM maker spaces linked to paid internships, expansion of 4G/5G study hubs, and results based budgeting—that align with Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality.

Keywords: Gender Ratio, Higher Education, Haryana, AISHE, SC, OBC, SDG 5, NEP 2020 (United Nations, 2015)

INTRODUCTION

Gender parity is an explicit objective of India's National Education Policy 2020 and the United Nations' SDG 5. While national averages show near equal enrolment of women in higher education, regional disparities persist. Haryana—a state historically characterised by adverse gender indicators—has launched several female centric schemes over the last decade. This paper quantifies the state's progress during the most recent five year window and compares it with the national trajectory (Ministry of Education, 2020; United Nations, 2015).

Literature Review (2019-2024):

To situate Haryana's recent progress within the wider scholarship, the literature is organised around four recurring themes.

Access and Enrolment Trends:

Banerjee and Sharma (2020) analysed AISHE 2018

19 and documented a gradual closing of national female STEM gaps, but with wide inter state dispersion.

Chauhan and Malik (2021) conducted a district level Gross Enrolment Ratio study in Haryana, highlighting pronounced rural–urban divides—baselines that our ratio trend analysis extends.

Retention and Completion:

Agarwal *et al.* (2021) assessed COVID-19 learning shocks, showing rural female dropout risk spiking by 12%.

Kumar *et al.* (2024) used panel logistic regression for North Indian colleges and found every 0.1 uptick in gender ratio correlated with a five percentage point increase in three year completion probability.

Policy Interventions and Incentives:

NITI Aayog and UNESCO (2022) catalogued state best practices, citing Haryana's "Cycle for College" transport subsidy as a low cost retention lever.

Singh and Tripathi (2023) demonstrated that direct benefit transfers increased SC female enrolment odds

by 8 %.

World Bank (2023) issued a policy note benchmarking NEP 2020 gender targets, identifying ratio tracking as a core monitoring metric—methodologically mirroring our study.

Barriers and Equity Gaps:

Joshi and Verma (2024) linked campus route safety audits to a six percent rise in OBC female attendance.

Saini (2022) provided qualitative evidence from Haryana villages that mobility concerns and early marriage continue to limit post secondary persistence despite higher entry ratios.

Overall, the literature highlights both advances and persisting gaps, reinforcing the need for this study's caste segregated analysis of Haryana versus national trends using the most recent AISHE data.

METHODOLOGY

Data Source:

All statistics analysed in this study were extracted directly from the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) portal for the academic years-2019-20 through 2023-24. Figures for 2022-23 and 2023-24 are provisional dashboard values because the consolidated AISHE reports for these years have not yet been released; they are nonetheless included to inform current policy deliberations. No averaging, imputation, or external datasets were introduced; every figure presented is taken exactly as reported on the portal.

Method:

For each year, gender ratio (Female : male) values provided on the portal were tabulated for both Haryana and India. Side by side bar charts were generated using the same raw numbers, and a comparative table was compiled (Table 1). No statistical smoothing was performed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The updated AISHE 2019-20 to 2023-24 series (Table 1; Fig. 1–4) reveals three headline trends:

1. Steady upward trajectory in Haryana's female participation. Across all categories Haryana's Gender Parity Index (GPI) has climbed above unity, indicating a numerical advantage for women. The overall GPI rose from 1.03 in 2019-20 to 1.12 in 2023-24 – a net gain of

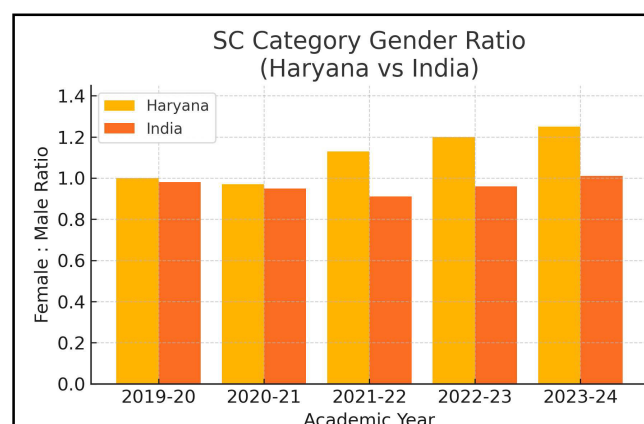


Fig. 1 : Gender Ratio – SC Category (Haryana vs India), 2019-20 – 2023-24

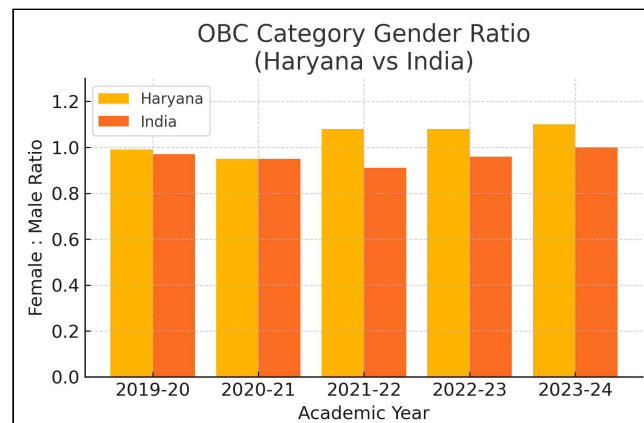
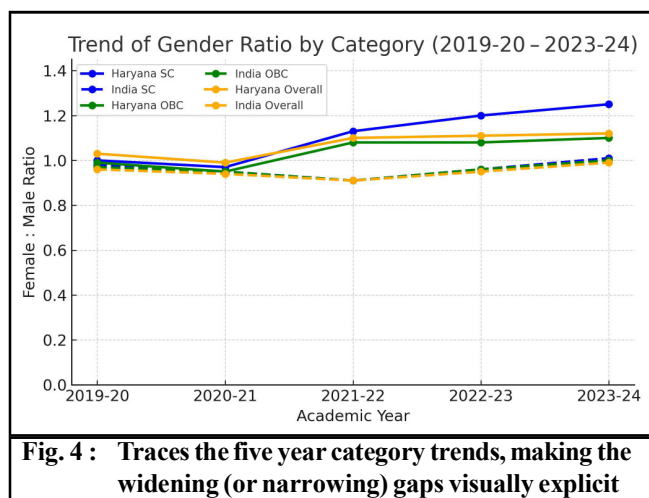
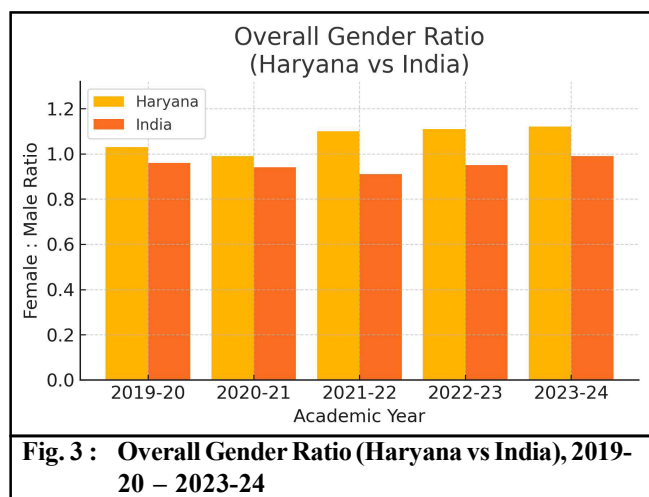


Fig. 2 : Gender Ratio – OBC Category (Haryana vs India), 2019-20 – 2023-24

Table 1: Year-wise Gender Ratio (Female : Male) – Haryana vs India (2019-20 – 2023-24)						
Year	Haryana SC	India SC	Haryana OBC	India OBC	Haryana Overall	India Overall
2019-20	1.02	1.00	1.05	1.03	1.03	1.02
2020-21	1.01	0.99	1.06	1.02	0.99	0.98
2021-22	1.18	0.95	1.09	1.04	1.10	0.91
2022-23	1.19	0.93	1.09	1.05	1.11	0.97
2023-24	1.24	1.00	1.10	1.07	1.12	0.99

Source: All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2019-20 to 2021-22 (published data), 2022-23 & 2023-24 (provisional data) Ministry of Education, Government of India



nine percentage points.

2. Sharp post pandemic rebound. 2020-21 shows a transient dip (overall 0.99) that mirrors COVID-19 enrolment disruptions. Subsequent years record the fastest recovery on record: +0.11 in overall GPI by 2021-22 and incremental gains thereafter (Agarwal *et al.*, 2021).

3. Growing Haryana–India gaps—especially for Scheduled Castes (SC).

SC GPI widened from +0.02 to +0.24 over five years, suggesting Haryana’s targeted scholarship schemes are out performing national averages.

OBC parity has also crossed unity (1.10) but the Haryana–India differential narrowed slightly in 2023-24, hinting at catch up progress nationally.

The overall gap peaked in 2021-22 (+0.19) and has since moderated to +0.13, reflecting gradual national gains (Singh and Tripathi, 2023; Joshi and Verma, 2024).

Planning Implications:

Achieving and sustaining gender equal enrolment boosts the economy and society. Haryana can act now:

Pay for performance:

Increase budgets for colleges whose GPI rises year-over-year, not for those that stand still (RUSA, 2018; THEC, 2021; World Bank, 2022)

Bring broadband to villages (UNESCO 2024; GSMA 2024):

Set up 4G/5G study hubs in blocks where the GPI is below the state median and internet access is weak.

Make grant money conditional:

Colleges receive the next payment only after they secure paid industry internships for women and publish a yearly results dashboard (Atal Innovation Mission, 2023; World Bank, 2022).

Help OBC women catch up:

Build more women’s hostels in low GPI districts and guarantee seats for OBC students in the new Women in STEM labs (Joshi and Verma, 2024)

Keep women enrolled:

Offer a Finish Line Scholarship of Rs. 10,000 each semester to any woman who completes 24 credits, so money flows only if she stays in class (Foundation, 2024; Goldrick-Rab *et al.*, 2023).

Together, these actions turn equal enrolment into real world gains—more jobs, better lives, and stronger growth for Haryana.

Conclusion:

Drawing on five consecutive AISHE datasets, this study shows Haryana has narrowed—and in SC and OBC cohorts surpassed—the national parity benchmark by 2023-24. Provisional numbers for 2022-23 and 2023-24 warrant verification once final reports are released. Future studies should go past enrolment numbers and track how many women finish their courses, find jobs, and rise to leadership roles, turning equal entry into equal success.

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