

# Moving beyond Education for Women to Employment for Women: The 2030 Agenda to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goal of Gender Equality

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## Abstract

The latest Human Development Index (2018) released by the United Nations Development Programme shows that India climbed one position to 130 out of 189 countries which only indicates a steady development. One of the major barriers to human development is gender inequality which persists at a global level. India's slow progress and recent trends point out towards the fact that there is a huge gap between educational and employment opportunities in case of women. One of the indicators of sustainable development goals is gender equality without which the overall development of society will be incomplete. The paper thus tries to focus on the fact that women, despite representing in higher education in large number, do not have much access to employment opportunities which push them back in economic participation. Even if women have access to some professions, they are restricted to only women oriented professions like nursing and teacher training. The persistent gender inequality in India in terms of education and employment results in overall decrease in human development index at a global level. Despite many attempts by the government in form of policies and regulations, the patriarchal mindset of the society poses a hindrance in transformation of India from being a developing country to a developed country. In light of that, the paper suggests some measures to counteract the prevailing challenges to achieve the gender equality goal of sustainable development till 2030.

**Keywords:** Education, Employment, Women, Sustainable Development Goals

## Introduction

South Asia is the southern region of the Asian continent that consists of about 1.891 billion population. Writing about education in South Asian region means writing about one-fourth of the world's population. South Asia comprises seven adjacent countries; Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. The region is geographically knit together and is homogenous in terms of socio-cultural, political, historical, economic, and educational factors. While looking at the beginning of the twenty-first century, it is one of the most backward regions of the world, both educationally and economically. Most of the countries in the region rank fairly poor in terms of the human development index, a crude summary of statistics compiled by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). It is done to analyze the situation of countries in terms of certain indices at a global level. South Asia is one of the most backward regions of the world in terms of educational development, with the exception of Sri Lanka. All the countries of the region, except Sri Lanka, are classified as medium human development countries, wherein India fall in the middle. Except Nepal and Bhutan, other countries of the region experienced short and long phases of colonial rule and became independent in the middle of the twentieth century. The devastating colonial impact can be noted on the development of education in the region. Coming to India, the long colonial rule uprooted its basic essence of indigenous knowledge and transformed it into a society which is confused and neither Indian nor

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