

*AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON EMERGING TRENDS IN
GLOBAL GENDER GAP INDEX 2021*

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ABSTRACT: Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) is a bench mark index reflects periodical progress in gender parity of global countries. World Economic Forum (WEF) prepares this index since 2006 by collecting and comparing gender data in four broad parameters such as economic opportunities, education, health and political leadership which is known as framework of gender gap index. The study concludes that, 68 percent of gender gap closed over the last sixteen years. The study found large variation in closing gender gap in sub-indices. The world has closed 96 percent gender gap in health and survival and 95 educational attainment aspects which implies only narrow gender gap to be closed in future. In contrast, wide gender gap still existed in economic participation and opportunities and political empowerment. In economic participation and opportunities still 42 percent of gap remains, similarly, widest gender gap was observed in political empowerment i.e. 78 percent. The study forecasted that 267.6 year of time for closing of gender gap in economic aspects and 145.5 years of period for attainment of political parity. India has reported underperformance in the aspects of the global gender gap indices compared to other countries in world and region, which calls for immediate strategic plan to reduce the gender gap and achieve gender parity in the country.

Key words: Gender GAP, Gender equality, Political empowerment gender, GGGI 2021.

Introduction

Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) is a bench mark index reflects periodical progress in gender parity of global countries. World Economic Forum (WEF) prepares this index since 2006 by collecting and comparing gender data in four broad parameters such as economic opportunities, education, health and political leadership which is known as framework of gender gap index. These four parameters represent our indices comprises of 14 sub parameters. Inclusion of any country in this index is subject matter of availability of country data pertaining to minimum 12 out of 14 parameters. In this index, ranks are assigned country wise and regional wise on the basis of their score in given parameters of gender gap. The main objective of the index is to show the standing position of men and women in the aspects of health, education, economic participation and political empowerment.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY OF STUDY: Present study is a descriptive study done on the basis of secondary data collected from Global Gender Gap Index sixteen years of reports. The study has focused on the emerging trend in the methodology of preparation of GGGI, size of the index, selected parameters, country wise and region wise performance in Index. The study is also specially focused on the India's status in GGGI.

METHODOLOGY AND SUPERIORITY OF GGGI: Global gender gap index measures the gap between male and female in accessing resources and opportunities in their nations rather than availability of them, this makes index unique and differ from country's development level indices. GGGI ranks the countries on the basis of gender gap and gender equality rather than women empowerment and country's development level. GGG index reward the countries with narrow gaps in accessing resources rather availability of all resources. This index captures gaps in output which are results of inputs such as country specific policies, rights, culture or customs. This index neither rewards where women are outperformed men nor penalize where men outperformed women. This index assigns similar ranks to the countries where women outperformed men and to the countries where women and men performance is equal. The global gender gap index is a composition of four sub-indices such as economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival and political empowerment. These four indices are comprises of country's data regarding fourteen indicators. Present study analyzes the performance of total 156 countries in total GGG index representing total eight regions, four sub-

indices and 14 indicators. The methodology of index construction is unchanged since its inception 2006.

INDEX CONSTRUCTION PROCESS: The GGGI construct through four steps process comprises of conversion of data into ratios, truncation of data into bench mark, calculation of sub-index scores and calculation of final scores. In primary step raw data regarding gender converts into ratios (0-1) such as 25 percent of women ministerial position assumes that rest of 75 percent is men positions, thus value is 0.25. These ratios are truncates at the equality bench mark in second step for all indicators, except two health indicators. GGGI measured gender gap by one side scale which does not reward or penalize countries for having a gender gap in the other direction. In the third step, sub-indices scores are calculated by giving average weights to indicators of the indices (for this purpose data would be normalized). The final step of the process is calculation of final score in GGGI, this is a simple average of all four sub-indices scores. The highest and lowest scores in the index are in the range of one to zero, one indicates parity and zero indicates imparity, downtrend in score indicates increasing imparity and uptrend in score is a sign for improving parity. These final score helps in ranking and comparing the country's relative parities.

SUBINDICES AND INDICATORS OF THE GLOBAL GENDER GAP INDEX:

Global gender gap index is a composition of four major sub indices such as economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival and political empowerment. All four indices is composition of fourteen indicators concern to country and region wise gender data. The first sub index is related to gender wise economic participation and opportunity, this sub-index is measures the gender gap in three concepts such as participation gap, remuneration gap and advancement gap. These three gaps are measured from the data collected from five indicators. The participation gap is measured by gender wise gap in labor force participation rate, remuneration gap is measured by two indicators such gender wise wage similarity for similar work and female to male estimated earned income, the advancement gap between male and female is measured through two indicators such as ratio of women to men in positions of legislators, senior officials and managers, second ratio of female to male in technical and professional works. The second sub-index is educational attainment index which measures the present gap in accessibility of education between female and male. This index is prepared on

the basis of data regarding four indicators such as enrolment rate of female to male in primary education, secondary education and tertiary education and the long term ability of the country in educational attainment measure through literacy rate of female to male. The third index reflects the gender wise health and survival position which is measured by two indicators such as sex ratio at birth and healthy life expectancy. The final sub-index is relating to political empowerment index measures the gender wise gap in political participation. This index is prepared based on the data relating to three indicators such as women in parliament, women in ministerial positions and women in leading States/local governments. The data regarding indicators is collected highly reliable sources i.e. from the international institutions such as ILO, UNESCO, World Bank, inter-parliament union and WEF own research data.

COUNTRY WISE AND REGION WISE PERFORMANCE IN GGG INDEX:

GGGI index 2021 ranked total 156 countries in 2021, three new countries are added to present index namely Afghanistan, Guyana and Niger. In first GGGI covered 115 countries represents 90 percent world population. In the present discussion country wise and regional wise performance is observed. The country wise performance disclosed that Ice land outperformed with index with first rank for the past 12 years with consistent performance is all sub-indices, this a sign that gender parity in Iceland is highest in world, Particularly with highest closing of political gender gap. In contrast, Afghanistan stood in last rank (156th) with lowest score which is a sign for highest imparity in the world. The study observed that Timor Leste embarked by 53 ranks over last year and stood at position of 64th position, which is a sign for improvement in gender parity, in contrast, Uruguay top loser of 48 ranks to earlier and stood at 85th position. In the index five companies performance is unchanged,

Regional wise performance reveals that, western Europe region reported gender parity is 77.6 percent, this is highest among all regions followed by north America 76.4 percent, Latin American and caribbean 72.1 percent, eastern Europe and central Asia 71.2 percent, these countries gender parity is much higher than world average parity rate (67.7 percent). In contrast, South Asian (62.3percent) and Middle East and North Africa (60.9 percent) parity is lower than world average parity. On the other hand, East Asia and other pacific (68.9 percent) and Sub-Saharan Africa (67.2 percent) parity rates are closer than global average parity. In East Asian and

Pacific Region out of 20 nations, New Zealand stood in first position with highest gender parity of 0.84 percent and Vanuatu stood in last position with parity of 0.62 percent in the region. Similarly, Eastern Europe and Central Asia consists of 26 countries out of this, Israel stood in first position with gender parity of 0.724 percent, in contrast, Yemen stood in last position gender imparity of 0.508 percent in the region. Latin America and the caribbean region consists of 26 countries, out of this, Nicaragua stood in first position with highest gender parity rate of 0.796 percent, in contrast, Guatemala stood in last rank with highest gender imparity of 0.45 percent. Similarly, South Asian region included eight countries, out of which Bangladesh stood in first rank with parity score of 0.719, in contrast, Afghanistan stood in last score with imparity rate of 0.556 percent in the region . Thereafter, Sub Saharan Africa region total countries are 35, out of this, Nambia reported first rank with high gender parity of 0.809 percent, in contrast, Congo, Democratic Rep reported last rank with highest gender imparity of 0.424 percent in the region. Similarly, Western Europe and north American region consists of 22 countries, out of this, Ice land stood first rank with highest gender parity of 0.892, in contrast, Greece stood in last position with highest imparity of 0.311 in the region. The study observed narrowest gender gap of 77.6 percent in the Western Europe Region and widest gender gap of 60.9 percent. The study also observed regional wise disparities in performance of gender gap parity.

SUB-INDICES PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS: Global Gender Gap index is composition of four sub-indices as said earlier. Therefore, in the present study countries and regions performance in these four indices are analyzed.

ECONOMIC PARTICIPTION AND OPPORTUNITIES: This is first sub index of GGGI reflects country's and regions gender wise economic participation and opportunity measured through three concepts such as participation gap, remuneration gap and advancement gap. These three gaps are measured from the data collected from five indicators as discussed earlier. The Lao PDR country occupied first position with highest economic gender parity of 0.915 which implies gap of 0.085. In contrast, Afghanistan reported least rank economic gender parity of only 0.514 which implies the gender gap of 0.486. Regional wise economic gender parity analysis reveals that, North America stood in top position with parity of 75.3 percent and imparity of 24.7, in contrast, South Asia stands in last position with parity rate of 33.8 which indicates highest gap of 66.2. Thereafter, Eastern Europe and Central Asia has economic parity of 73.5 percent followed by Western Europe of 70 percent, East Asia and the Pacific of 69.6 percent,

Sub-Saharan Africa of 66.1 percent, Latin America and the Caribbean of 64.2 percent and middle east and north Africa of 40.9 percent. In overall, economic gender parity of world is an average of 58.3 percent which is a sign high gender gap in economic participation and opportunity worldwide. The study opined that, the distribution of gender wise economic participation and opportunity is fairly dispersed in the regions in the range of 18 to 92 percent.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT INDEX: Educational attainment is second sub-index of GGG index which performance is base for all other indices performance. This index measures the present gap in accessibility of education between female and male rather than availability. This index is prepared on the basis of data regarding four indicators such as enrolment rate of female to male in primary education, secondary education and tertiary education and the long term ability of the country in educational attainment measure through literacy rate of female to male. It is found that, out of 156 countries, 36 countries reported complete gender parity with score of one percent followed by 50 countries 0.99 score, ten countries 0.98 score, eleven countries of 0.97 score, six countries 0.96 score et and finally chad and Afghanistan reported lowest of 0.589 and 0.514 score which are last in the index. In overall, the countries performance is concentrated on the upper side of the concentration i.e in the rate of 51-95 score. The gender gap in the education index was second narrowest in the distribution i.e. 95 percent which implies the gender gap of only five percent. The regional wise performance reveals that, North America reported 100 percent gender parity which implies zero gender gap in education. Similarly, in Western Europe, Latin America and Caribbean and Eastern Europe and Central Asia regions educational attainment is above 99 percent which indicates marginal gender gap and highly improved gender parity. Similarly, East Asian and pacific regions educational attainment index is 97.6 percent. In contrast, in Middle East and North Africa and South Asia educational attainment are 94.2 and 93.3 percents which are closer and blow the world average which indicates its attainment is near. Finally, the education attainment of Sub Saharan Africa is 84.5 percent which is a sign for worst performance and indicates so much to attain.

HEALTH AND SURVIVAL: The third sub index of GGGI which reflects the gender wise health and survival position of the countries and regions which is measured by two indicators such as sex ratio at birth and healthy life expectancy. In this index Bahmas country stood in top

position with score of 0.98 which indicates high parity of gender and lowest imparity of 0.02 percent only. In this index all most all countries score are above 0.9 percent. However, the emerging countries India and China stood in last two position with lowest score of 0.937 and 0.935 percent respectively. The study reveals that, the overall average of health and survival index of all countries is 97.5 percent which indicates highest parity of gender in the GGGI. The regional wise performance reveals that, Eastern Europe and Central Asia occupied top position with highest score of 97.7 percent which indicates highest parity rate, in contrast, South Asia reported lowest of position with score of 94.2 percent indicates lowest gender parity. The three regions score is Latin America and the Caribbean and Sub-Saharan Africa regions score is 97.6 percent and 97.3 percent respectively. Similarly, Western Europe, North America and Middle East and North Africa regions are in the range of 96.5 to 9.7 percent. The East Asia and the Pacific region score is 94.9 percent.

POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT: This last sub-index in GGGI relating to political empowerment of gender wise gap in political participation. This index is prepared based on the data relating to three indicators such as women in parliament, women in ministerial positions and women in leading States/local governments. The political index is highest index where gender gap is huge among the all indices. The world average achievement is only 22 percent which index gap of 78 percent for achievement. In political empowerment index, Ice land is in top position with high parity of 0.76 percent where as Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea stood in past position with zero score which implies 100 percent political gender gap. The study also observed wider regional disparities in political empowerment. The regional performance reveals that, Western Europe stood in top position with gender parity of 43.8 percent whereas lowest parity of 12.1 percent is found in middle east and north Africa which is nearly half world average. Thereafter, North America has political gender parity of 33.4 percent followed by South Asia of 28.1 percent, Latin America and the Caribbean of 27.1 percent, Eastern Europe and Central Asia of 14.2 percent and East Asia and the Pacific of 13.5 percent. Among all the indices largest gender gap is found in political empowerment index of GGGI which nearly 78 percent in world.

INDIA'S STATUS

The status of India in GGG index has been decreased since its inception. India's rank was 98 in 2006 which was further decreased to 112th rank in 2010 and ranked 140th in 2021. This indicates that India loss 42 position in the Index since its inception. This is an indication of worst performance in reduction of gender gap in the country over the period. India closed 0.625 percent of gender gap in the country by 2021 which was 0.601 in 2006, this indicates closed gap of 0.024 percent over the sixteen years. However, India reported performance variation in sub-indices. In economic participation and opportunities index closed gender gap was 0.397 in 2006 but in 2021 it was decreased 0.326 which indicates widen the gap by 0.077 percent. Similarly, in Health and survival gender gap widen by 0.27 percent. In contrast, India closed gender gap in educational attainment and political empowerment by 1.43 and 0.49 percent since its inception. Even though India's ranks fallen in these indices by 12 and 31 ranks due to relatively low performance with other countries. The India's regional rank is also relatively not much improved. In south Asia, out of eight countries, India ranked 6th position where only Pakistan and Afghanistan fallen below it. The small neighbor countries reported better position such as Bangladesh first, Nepal second, Sri Lanka fourth and Maldivies fifth. Only positive note that India closed could close remarkable gender gap in educational attainment since its inception while in other indices it is not up to the mark.

OTHER IMPORTANT FINDINGS OF THE REPORT

- The study found that closed gender gap in 2020 is 68.6 percent increased to earlier year and implies only 31.4 percent gap yet not closed. Among four indices political empowerment again which closed only 24.7 percent of gap and still 75.3 percent not closed. Thereafter, economic participation and opportunities closed only 57.8 percent gap. Educational attainment (95.7) and health and survival gaps (96.1) are closed almost total one remains marginal. Total 101 countries reported uptrend in their performance over last year.
- The study found that, on an average of 99.5 years are require to be closed the total gender gap in 107 countries included in the index. The study also observed the absence of progress in gender parity in economic participation and opportunities which takes further 257 years to close the gap. Thereafter, the study opined that 94.5 years are required to

close the gender gap in political empowerment. In educational attainment gender gap is very narrow, therefore, only 12 years are required for closing gap worldwide. Final index is health and survival gap where parity is highest among all indices, 40 countries witnessed full achievement of health and services, while other countries gap is also no more than 001 percent. Therefore, study suggested indefinite for closing the index.

- The study observed that, Ice land retained its first position for even in the 12th year by closing gender gap with 88 percent which is highest in world, similarly, Narway stood in 2nd position with 84.2 percent, Finland with 83.2 percent, Sweden with 82 percent and Nicargua with 80.4 percent.
- The study found regional wise number of years take to close the gender gap as lowest of 54 years to Western Europe and highest of 163 years for East Asia and Pacific.
- In the index, top five improved countries are Ethiopia, Spain, Mali, Albania, and Mexico with more than 3.4 percent over previous year. This is attributable to high political empowerment of women in higher institutions in this country.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that, 68 percent of gender gap closed over the last sixteen years. The study found large variation in closing gender gap in sub-indices. The world has closed 96 percent gender gap in health and survival and 95 educational attainment aspects which implies only narrow gender gap to be closed in future. In contrast, wide gender gap still existed in economic participation and opportunities and political empowerment. In economic participation and opportunities still 42 percent of gap remains, similarly, widest gender gap was observed in political empowerment i.e. 78 percent. The study forecasted that 267.6 year of time for closing of gender gap in economic aspects and 145.5 years of period for attainment of political parity. India has reported underperformance in the aspects of the global gender gap indices compared to other countries in world and region, which calls for immediate strategic plan to reduce the gender gap and achieve gender parity in the country.

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