

ABSTRACT

Measuring disparities and identifying the sources or causes of its persistence among different individuals is an important area of inquiry in development literature. There exist several dimensions of disparities and this study examines the concepts of parity, equity, and equality and attempts to establish its relationship within the framework of capabilities approach. For operationalising it, the domain of education is considered. Education is a fundamental right and a key factor in the development of individuals and societies as it promotes freedom of choice, well-being, and economic growth of the country. The study further examines the intersection of gender and caste/religion in the Indian context based on select variables that capture educational opportunities and outcome. It provides evidence on the social hierarchies prevalent at this intersection and identifies challenges in social issues and policy implementation in India. From the analysis, we find that though individuals at younger age face both gender and caste segregation, the magnitude of gender segregation increases in the older population. It also shows that women, lower caste, and Muslims experience a higher level of deprivation to access and face several barriers such as, discrimination and social norms that prioritise one section of population over others.

Keywords: Parity, Equity, Equality, Education, Intersectionality, Gender, Caste, Religion

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