

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Gender Disparity:

Gender refers to either of the two sexes (male or female), especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones. Gender means the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between girls and boys and women and men, as well as the relations among men and among women and these attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialisation processes. Equality does not mean that female and male will become the same but that females' and males' rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born female or male (United Nations, Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, 2001). Gender disparity or inequality, therefore, is disparity between female and male. Disparity between female and male may be of various kinds. As far as economic aspects are considered, disparity in education, life expectancy and professional life can be mentioned. However, in general, it is necessary to clarify that inequality, such as, differences in physical structure and bodily strength between female and male are certainly not of discriminatory nature but simply a biological fact. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the disadvantages faced by women and girls are a major source of inequality and, all too often, women and girls are discriminated in health, education, political representation, labour market etc. with negative repercussions for development of their capability and their freedom of choice. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) mentions that, there are close links between sustainable development, reproductive health and gender equality.

1.2 Discourses on Measurement and India's Status at Global Level of Gender Disparity:

Over the years different indices have been introduced to measure gender inequality. Gender Development Index (GDI) and Gender Empowerment Measure

(GEM) were introduced in 1995 by the UNDP to measure gender inequality. Later on Gender Equity Index (GEQI), Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI), Social Institution and Gender Index (SIGI) and Gender Inequality Index (GII) were introduced by the Social Watch, the World Economic Forum (WEF), the OECD Development Centre and the UNDP in 2004, 2006, 2007 and 2010 respectively.

GDI addresses gender gaps in the same dimension and variables of the Human Development Index (HDI) i.e., life expectancy, education and income. Therefore, GDI on its own is not an independent measure of gender gaps. Moreover, it does not include empowerment issues. GEM measures the extent of gender inequality based on estimates of women's relative participations in high paying positions with economic power, access to professional and parliamentary positions and economic income. GEM fails to address the issues of gender inequality among the poor and disadvantaged class. In other words, it only measures gender inequality among the most educated and advantageous group of women. GEQI based on three dimensions of gender inequality indicators namely education, economic participation and empowerment, was developed to make gender inequalities more visible. GEQI is criticised for ignoring gender inequality in health, which is one of the important areas of gender inequality.

The World Economic Forum in 2006 introduced the Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) to examine the gap between men and women. It examines the gap between men and women in four sub indexes, namely, economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival and political empowerment. For the sub index economic participation and opportunity, the indicators are female labour force participation over male value, wage equality between women and men for similar work (converted to female over male ratio), female estimated earned income over male value, female legislators, senior officials and managers over male value and female professional and technical workers over male value. For the educational attainment sub index, the indicators are female literacy rate over male value, female net primary enrolment rate over male value, female net secondary enrolment rate over male value and female gross tertiary enrolment ratio over male value. For the health and survival sub index, the indicators are sex ratio at birth (converted to female over male ratio), female healthy life expectancy over male

value. For the political empowerment sub index, the indicators are females with seats in parliament over male value, females at ministerial level over male value, number of years of a female head of state (last 50 years) over male value. In the case of all sub indexes, the highest possible score is one (1) representing equality and the lowest possible score is zero (0) representing inequality. As in the sub indices, the final value ranges between one (1) representing equality and zero (0) representing inequality. Although it is criticized for being too broad, it is the most comprehensive measure.

SIGI is a composite indicator of gender inequality that focuses on social institutions that have an impact on the equality between women and men, as well as on the four dimensions of family code, physical integrity, ownership rights and civil liberties. SIGI is criticized as being less applicable in developed countries though it has been found to be a valuable measure for developing countries. Moreover, according to the authors of SIGI, it is not a replacement of previous measures but just a supplement.

In the 2010 Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Gender Inequality Index (GII) was introduced as a measure of Gender Inequality. This index is a composite measure which captures the loss of achievement within a country due to gender inequality. It uses three dimensions, namely reproductive health dimension measured by maternal mortality ratio and adolescent fertility rate, empowerment dimension measured by share of parliamentary seats held by each sex and higher education attainment levels and labour market dimension measured by women's participation in workforce. GII range between zero (0) to one (1), with zero (0) being 0 (zero) per cent inequality and 1 (one) being 100 per cent inequality. Although GII is a comprehensive measure, yet it fails to incorporate many more dimensions such as gender based violence, child care support, asset ownership and participation in community decision making. It does not capture the length and breadth of gender inequality as the use of national parliamentary representation excludes participation at the local government level and elsewhere in community and public life.

GGGI values for the first five and the last 38 countries according to the 2015 Global Gender Gap Report (GGGR) has been shown in Table 1.1. It has been shown in Table 1.1 that Iceland, Norway, Finland, Sweden and Ireland occupied first,

second, third, fourth and fifth ranks with scores of 0.881, 0.850, 0.850, 0.823 and 0.807 respectively.

Table 1.1
GGGI of the First Five and the Last Thirty Eight Countries in 2015

Sl. No.	Country	GGGI Score	Rank
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
1	Iceland	0.881	1
2	Norway	0.850	2
3	Finland	0.850	3
4	Sweden	0.823	4
5	Ireland	0.807	5
6	India	0.664	108
7	Cambodia	0.662	109
8	Nepal	0.658	110
9	Malaysia	0.655	111
10	Liberia	0.652	112
11	Maldives	0.652	113
12	Burkina Faso	0.651	114
13	Korea Republic	0.651	115
14	Zambia	0.650	116
15	Kuwait	0.646	117
16	Bhutan	0.646	118
17	UAE	0.646	119
18	Mauritius	0.646	120
19	Fiji	0.645	121
20	Qatar	0.645	122
21	Bahrain	0.644	123
22	Ethiopia	0.640	124
23	Nigeria	0.638	125
24	Angola	0.637	126
25	Tunisia	0.634	127
26	Algeria	0.632	128
27	Benin	0.625	129
28	Turkey	0.624	130
29	Guinea	0.618	131
30	Mauritania	0.613	132
31	Cote d'Ivoire	0.606	133
32	Saudi Arabia	0.605	134
33	Oman	0.604	135
34	Egypt	0.599	136
35	Mali	0.599	137
36	Lebanon	0.598	138
37	Morocco	0.593	139
38	Jordan	0.593	140
39	Iran Islamic Republic	0.580	141
40	Chad	0.580	142
41	Syria	0.559	143
42	Pakistan	0.559	144
43	Yemen	0.484	145

Source: World Economic Forum (2015), *GGGI 2015*.

Yemen occupied the last rank, i.e., 145th with a score of 0.484. Out of the last 38 countries, India was one, occupying 108th position with a score of 0.664 performing worse than its neighbouring countries Bangladesh and Sri Lanka whose positions were 64th and 84th with scores of 0.704 and 0.686 respectively. In the GGGR, 2014, India's position was 114th with score of 0.6455 performing worse than the neighbouring countries Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal whose positions were 6th with a score of 0.6973, 79th with a score of 0.6903 and 112th with a score of 0.6458 respectively.

Table 1.2
GGGI of India in 2014 and 2015

Year	Overall		Economic participation and opportunity		Educational attainment		Health and Survival		Political Empowerment	
	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score
2014	114	0.6455	134	0.4096	126	0.850	141	0.9366	15	0.3855
2015	108	0.664	139	0.383	125	0.896	143	0.942	9	0.433

Sources: 1. World Economic Forum (2014), *GGGR 2014*.

2. World Economic Forum (2015), *GGGR 2015*.

Table 1.2 shows the GGGI and its components values of India in 2014 and 2015. In the years, except in political empowerment, the ranks or performances of the other components were not satisfactory. The overall score improved a little due to the improvement in educational attainment, health and survival and political empowerment.

In Table 1.3, GII values of the first five countries and the last twenty six countries in 2014 according to the UNDP, Human Development Report (HDR) 2015 has been shown. It can be observed from Table 1.3 that Slovenia, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark and Austria with GII scores of 0.016, 0.028, 0.041, 0.048 and 0.053 achieved first, second, third, fourth and fifth ranks respectively. Moreover, out of the last twenty six countries, India was also one of them occupying 130th position with a score of 0.563. Yemen occupied the lowest position i.e., 155th with a score of 0.744. India's position was worse than even Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Nepal whose positions were 121st with a score of 0.536, 111th with a score of

0.503, 97th with a score of 0.457, 72nd with a score of 0.370 and 108th with a score of 0.489 respectively.

Table 1.3
GII of the First Five Countries and the last Twenty Six Countries in 2014

Sl. No.	Country	GII score	Rank
1	2	3	4
1	Slovenia	0.016	1
2	Switzerland	0.028	2
3	Germany	0.041	3
4	Denmark	0.048	4
5	Austria	0.053	5
6	India	0.563	130
7	Egypt	0.573	131
8	Zambia	0.587	132
9	Cameroon	0.587	132
10	Togo	0.588	134
11	Sudan	0.591	135
12	Mozambique	0.591	135
13	Congo	0.593	137
14	Haiti	0.603	138
15	Mauritania	0.610	139
16	Papua New Guinea	0.611	140
17	Malawi	0.611	140
18	Benin	0.614	142
19	Gambia	0.622	143
20	Burkina Faso	0.631	144
21	Sierra Leone	0.650	145
22	Liberia	0.651	146
23	Central African Republic	0.655	147
24	Tonga	0.666	148
25	Democratic Republic of Congo	0.673	149
26	Mali	0.677	150
27	Côte d'Ivoire	0.679	151
28	Afghanistan	0.693	152
29	Chad	0.706	153
30	Niger	0.713	154
31	Yemen	0.744	155

Source: UNDP (2015), *Human Development Report (HDR) 2015*.

According to the UNDP, HDR 2014, in the GII 2013, India occupied 127th position with a GII score of 0.563. India's position has been seen to be worse than Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh whose positions were 75th with a score of 0.383, 98th with a score of 0.479, 115th with a score of 0.529 and 102nd with a score of 0.495 respectively. India scored same with Pakistan and was assigned the same rank. Detail of the GII 2013 and 2014 of India has been shown in Table 1.4. It can be seen

from the table that there was no improvement in India's score in GII. A little improvement has been seen only in Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR), women's share of seat in Parliament and population with at least some secondary education (25+). Instead of improvement, a declining participation rate both for male and female has been seen.

Table 1.4
GII of India in 2013 and 2014

Year	GII value	GII Rank	MMR	Adolescent Birth rate	Share of seats in Parliament (Women share, %)	Female Population with at least some secondary education, 25+	Male Population with at least some secondary education, 25+	Female participation rate, 15+	Male participation rate, 15+
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2013	0.563	127	200	32.8	10.9	26.6	50.4	28.3	80.9
2014	0.563	130	190	32.8	12.2	27.0	56.6	27.0	79.9

Sources: 1. UNDP (2014), *HDR 2014*.
2. UNDP (2015), *HDR 2015*.

1.3 Definition, Discourses on Measurement and India's Status at Global Level of Gender Inequality in Education:

The word *Education* has been derived from the Latin terms *Educatum*, *Educare* and *Educere* according to different groups of educationists. The words *Educatum*, *Educare* and *Educere* mean the act of teaching or training, to bring up or to raise and to lead forth or to come out respectively. All the meanings indicate that education seeks to nourish the good qualities and draw out the best in an individual. Thus, education seeks to develop the innate inner capacities of an individual. Education gives an individual some desirable knowledge, understanding, skills, interests, attitudes and critical thinking. Gender inequality in education refers to the inequality in education between females and males. According to Rabindranath Tagore, the widest road leading to the solution of all our problems is education.

Development is a multidimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular attitudes and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and the eradication of poverty. Development, in its essence, must represent the entire gamut of change by which a

whole social system, turned to the diverse basic needs and desires of individuals and social groups within that system, moves away from a condition of life widely perceived as unsatisfactory toward a situation or condition of life regarded as materially and spiritually better (Todaro and Smith, 2006). In the preamble of the Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal four (2015), it is mentioned that education is the main driver of development and in achieving the other proposed Sustainable Development Goals.

For measuring gender inequality in education, different methods have come up over the years. The Education for All (EFA) after the Jomtein Conference in 1990 and the follow-up meeting at Dakar in 2000 resulted in the collection of gender disaggregated data on primary Net Enrolment Ratios (NERs) and Gross Enrolment Ratios (GERs). Gender disaggregated data of GER and NER in Primary level only give us a picture of the number of children in the school register but they cannot tell us anything about the attendance and survival of the registered students. It also does not give an idea of whether the acquired knowledge by children can be used outside a school context after passing a grade. Moreover, it does not give a picture of gender inequality in Secondary level (Secondary), Higher Secondary level (HS) and Higher Education level (HE) of education as well as about gender inequality in illiteracy rate and literacy rate.

Another measure of gender equality in education gives a picture of attendance and progression. From the late 1990s, gender disaggregated data on progression, attendance and survival have become available for most of the countries. The approach does not give a complete picture of gender inequality in education prevailing in a country.

Gender related Education for all Index (GEI) was developed by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) for use in its Global Monitoring Reports, which was published annually from 2006 and was discontinued in 2016. GEI indicates the extent to which females and males are equally present at different levels i.e., primary, secondary and adult education in the education system. GEI is a simple average of the three Gender Parity Indexes (GPIs) for primary education, secondary education and adult literacy. The demerit of GEI lies in that even if a GEI of a country indicates complete equality between males and

females, the country may have low rates of access, retention and achievement for females and males. Moreover, it gives equal weights to all its indexes.

GEI along with the two other approaches mentioned above does not provide information on the ways in which gender equality or inequality links with other dimensions of human flourishing such as access to decision making, health, the labour market or income. In other words, these measurements give no indication of gendered relations of power in schooling.

The UNESCO developed the Education for All Development Index (EDI) to provide a composite measure of progress, encompassing access, equity and quality. EDI was included in the Education for All Global Monitoring Report (EFAGMR) that was published from 2002 to 2015. The EFAGMR has been re-launched under a new name as the Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR) with the aim of monitoring progress towards the education targets in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. EDI includes the four most easily quantifiable goals, attaching an equal weight to each:

1. Universal Primary Education (goal two), measured by the Primary adjusted Net Enrolment Ratio (NER).
2. Adult literacy rate (first part of goal four), measured by the literacy rate for those aged 15 and above.
3. Gender parity and equality (goal five), measured by the Gender-specific Education for all Index (GEI), an average of the GPIs of the primary and secondary Gross Enrolment Ratios and of the adult literacy rate.
4. Quality of education (goal six), measured by the survival rate to grade five.

EDI value for a given country is the arithmetic mean of the four proxy indicators. Since they are all expressed as percentages, EDI value can vary from zero (0) to 100 per cent or, when expressed as a ratio, from zero (0) to one (1) per cent. The higher the EDI value, the closer the country is to achieve education for all as a whole. But EDI has the problem of GEI that encompasses GPI which gives insufficient insight into the context. EDI does not take into account of gender in children's survival in schooling. It primarily considers gender in relation to access and not achievement and EDI weights each of its four components equally.

The demerits associated with EDI has led to the development of the Beyond Access Project Score Card for Gender Equality in Education that has been renamed the Gender Equality in Education Index (GEEI).

GEEI better expresses the aspiration for gender equality in education. Four widely used measures were used to develop the GEEI for girls' access to and retention in school:-

- Girls' net attendance rate at primary school.
- Girls' survival rate over five years in primary schooling.
- Girls' secondary net enrolment ratio.
- A country's Gender Development Index (GDI)

These measures were selected because they indicate access to primary schooling, retention in primary schooling, potential of the education system to generate teachers and managers with some concerns with gender equality and the possibility for these women to survive and flourish as adults. GEEI is a weighted index. Girls' survival over five years in primary school and the capacity of women to survive into adulthood, retain literacy and earn a decent livelihood (signaled by the GDI) are weighted twice as important as attendance in primary schools. Girls' enrolment in secondary school is weighted as 50 per cent more important than attendance in primary schools. Although GEEI is a good measure of gender inequality in education, yet it has not been widely used.

Despite the approaches mentioned above for measuring gender inequality in education, new definition of gender equity or approach for measuring gender inequality in education is necessary. In a report to the Education For All (EFA) on

Table 1.5
EDI of India in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2010

Year	EDI	Remark	Rank
2006	0.794	Low EDI	NA
2007	0.775	Low EDI	105 out of 128
2008	0.769	Low EDI	107 out of 127
2010	0.790	Low EDI	102 out of 120

Sources: 1. UNESCO (2010), *The Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2010*.
2. UNESCO (2011), *The Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2011*.
3. UNESCO (2012), *The Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2012*.

Note: NA represents not available.

“Measuring Gender Equality in Education: A Challenge for the Sustainable Development Agenda” by Elaine Unterhalter and Joan Dejaeghere the urgent need for an informed political and technical discussion on how to develop a normative approach to define gender equality in education was mentioned. The report further expressed the importance to get the parameters right early in the post 2015 era, or else the aim to be achieved by 2030 would not be reached.

In presenting the EDI of countries, the UNESCO divides countries as high, medium and low EDI countries. In the EFAGMR of the UNESCO in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2010, India was ranked in the list of low EDI countries. India's EDI values for the years with its category and rank relative to other countries has been presented in Table 1.5.

Table 1.6
EDI for the First Five and the last Nineteen Countries according to EFAGMR, 2010

Sl. No.	Country	EDI Score	Rank
1	2	3	4
1	Japan	0.997	1
2	Sweden	0.996	2
3	Norway	0.995	3
4	United Kingdom	0.994	4
5	Iceland	0.994	5
6	India	0.790	102
7	Rwanda	0.781	103
8	Uganda	0.771	104
9	Timor Leste	0.769	105
10	Togo	0.742	106
11	Mauntania	0.732	107
12	Nigeria	0.721	108
13	Senegal	0.707	109
14	Mozambique	0.698	110
15	Angola	0.685	111
16	Gambia	0.677	112
17	Pakistan	0.656	113
18	Guinea	0.634	114
19	Eritrea	0.623	115
20	Ethiopia	0.622	116
21	Central African Republic	0.617	117
22	Mali	0.612	118
23	Burkina Faso	0.594	119
24	Niger	0.528	120

Source: UNESCO (2012), *The Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2012*.

Table 1.6 shows the EDI values for the first five and the last nineteen countries in 2010 according to EFAGMR, 2010. It can be seen from the table that Japan, Sweden, Norway, United Kingdom and Iceland occupied first, second, third, fourth and fifth ranks with scores of 0.997, 0.996, 0.995, 0.994 and 0.994 respectively. India was listed in the category of low EDI countries with EDI value of 0.790 occupying 102 rank out of 120 ranks and Niger occupied the last position i.e., 120 with a score of 0.528.

In the Beyond Access Project on "A Scorecard on Gender Equality and Girls' Education in Asia 1990-2000" of the Institute of Education, University of London and Oxfam GB, India's GEEI in 1990 was 27.5 per cent occupying 14th rank out of 16 ranks (25 countries were considered). In 2000, India's GEEI value was 41 per cent with 3rd rank out of 17 (27 countries were considered).

Gender inequality in education is detrimental to development. Klasen (1999) in his study found that gender inequality in education prevented progress in reducing fertility and child mortality rates, thereby compromised progress in well being in developing countries. Klasen and Lamanna in 2009 in their study entitled "The Impact of Gender Inequality in Education and Employment on Economic Growth: New Evidence from a Panel of Countries" observed that gender gaps in education and employment considerably reduced economic growth in Middle East, North Africa and South Asia.

1.4 Treaties on Human Right to Education and Non-Discrimination:

Human right to education and non-discrimination was affirmed by a number of international treaties such as - the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989), the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, 1966), the 1960 UNESCO convention against Discrimination in Education, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2000, the World Declaration on Education for All 1990, the Dakar Framework for Action (2000) and the Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action (2015).

The Education for All movement was a global commitment to provide equal basic education for all children, youth and adults. The movement was launched at the “World Conference on Education for All” in 1990 by the UNESCO, the UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Bank. Participation endorsed an expanded vision of learning and pledged to universalize primary education and massively reduce illiteracy by the end of the decade.

Ten years later, with many countries far from having reached the goal, the international community met again in Dakar, Senegal and affirmed their commitment in achieving education for all by the year 2015. They identified six key education goals, namely,

- Goal one
Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
- Goal two
Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girl children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to, and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality.
- Goal three
Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.
- Goal four
Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
- Goal five
Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls’ full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.
- Goal six
Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by

all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

The MDGs originated from the Millennium Declaration adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in September 2000. The MDGs consisted of eight goals and these goals addressed myriad development issues. Goal two: Achieve Universal Primary Education where the target was to ensure that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike would be able to complete a full course of primary education and Goal three: promote gender equality and empower women where the target was to eliminate gender disparity in primary, secondary education, preferably by 2005 and in all levels of education, no later than 2015 was related to gender equality in education.

The UNESCO together with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Bank, the UNFPA, the UNDP, the UN women and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) organised the World Education Forum 2015 in Incheon, Republic of Korea, from 19th-22nd May, 2015, hosted by the Republic of Korea. In the preamble of the Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal four (Education 2030), it is mentioned that their vision is to transform lives through education, recognising the important role of education as a main driver of development in achieving the other proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and they commit with a change of urgency to a single, renewed education agenda that is holistic, ambitious and inspirational, leaving no one behind. It is also mentioned that the new vision is fully captured by the proposed Sustainable Development Goal four - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all and its corresponding targets which are transformative and universal, attends to the 'unfinished business' of the Education For All (EFA) agenda and the education related MDGs, and addresses global and national education challenges.

1.5 The Research Questions:

The study is organised to answer the following questions:

1. What is the extent of gender disparity in education in India and Assam?

2. Have the gender disparity in education affected economic development of India, Assam and of Bodoland Territorial Area District (BTAD)?
3. How is the gender disparity in education in Baksa district different from that of Kokrajhar district?
4. What are the reasons behind gender disparity in education in Baksa and Kokrajhar districts?

1.6 Objectives:

Though the main objective of the study is to investigate the gender disparity in education and its impact on economic development in Assam, the specific objectives of the study are:

1. To examine the extent of gender disparity in education in India with special reference to Assam.
2. To examine the relation between gender disparity in education and economic development of India, Assam and of BTAD.
3. To make a comparative study on gender disparity in education in Baksa and Kokrajhar districts of Assam.
4. To find the reasons behind gender disparity in education and means to reduce the gap in Assam with special reference to Baksa and Kokrajhar districts.

1.7 Hypotheses:

The following hypotheses have been tested in the present study:

1. Poverty has a positive impact on gender disparity in education in India and in Assam.
2. Gender disparity in education has a negative impact on economic development in Assam.

1.8 Organization of the Study:

The study consists of the following chapters:

1. Chapter-1: Introduction
2. Chapter-2: Review of literature

3. Chapter-3: Methodology and data collection
4. Chapter-4: Interstate Gender Disparity in Education in India with special reference to Assam
5. Chapter-5: Impact of Gender Disparity in Education on Economic Development in Assam and in Bodoland Territorial Area District
6. Chapter-6: A Comparative Analysis of Gender Disparity in Education in Baksa and Kokrajhar districts
7. Chapter-7: Reasons of Gender Disparity in Education and the means to reduce the gap in Assam with special reference to Baksa and Kokrajhar districts
8. Chapter-8: Summary of Findings, Recommendation and Conclusion

1.9 Rationale of the Study:

Although various international treaties have affirmed the right to education and non-discrimination, countries still face gender inequality in education where females lag behind males. India is one of those countries that still face gender inequality in education. In 2007, 2008 and 2010, India was listed in the list of low EDI countries by the UNESCO. According to the 2011 Census Report of India, Assam, one of the North-Eastern States of India has the 20th highest gender disparity in literacy rate out of 35 positions (based on GPI of LR). Moreover, in Assam, Baksa district has the highest gender disparity in literacy rate and Kokrajhar district has the 4th highest gender disparity in literacy rate (based on GPI of LR) according to the same Census Report. Several researchers have found negative impact of gender inequality in education on economic development in their studies.

Against this backdrop, the study that has been undertaken is significant. It is expected that the findings of the present study will bring light to the government's policy making regarding the elimination of the gender disparity in education. Moreover, in the field of gender disparity in education and economic development in the State of Assam very limited study has been done so far. Therefore, the study would be a humble attempt to fill the research gap.

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