

Equal Opportunity to Female Researchers at Symbiosis International University: An Exploratory Study

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ABSTRACT

As per the latest UNESCO report (2015) the scope given to female researchers all over the world and across the disciplines is very limited. India stands 10th on the ranking scale of UNESCO for publications and research grants of 0.9% from GDP. Gov. of India started KIRAN (Knowledge Involvement in Research Advancement through Nurturing) for women scientists however, only 25 -30 % Ph.D. scholars are female in the population of researchers in India. As per the SCOPUS citation impact report (2014) only 14% women writers' among 2 lack full time researchers from India reaches to the International platform.

Why Indians are behind in the research in general and providing platform to women researchers in particular? National and International reports about the research world show that women are not leading the research the way they can. This is an exploratory study to find out the research scope given to female researchers at "Symbiosis International University" (SIU).

This study is an attempt to do the quantitative analysis of last 5 years information regarding the research activities in the university. The findings of the study will state the scope given to the female researchers in "Symbiosis International University".

Introduction:

It is research that expands knowledge, leads to new discoveries and builds foundation for new knowledge. Research is not only critical to economic and social development of the society and nation at large but also critical to the vision and mission of a particular university.

Teaching and research go hand in hand. They enrich and complement each other. And thus research is of utmost importance to academia. A teacher cannot be a good academician without research.

Albert Einstein once remarked: "If we knew what it was we were doing, it would not be called research, would it?"

Nevertheless, it is this research which is the foundation for knowledge that makes possible so much of the innovation and application that provides wider benefit. It is this very nature of research that motivated the researchers to explore the position of research in academia. In doing so, we thought of understanding the status of women researcher's in relation to pursuing and publishing their research work as against men researchers.

The present study is an effort to explore the scope given to women researchers in Symbiosis International University.

Need and Significance of the study:

As per the latest UNESCO report (2015) the scope given to female researchers all over the world and across the disciplines is very limited. India stands 10th on the ranking scale of UNESCO for publications and research grants of 0.9% from GDP. Gov. of India started KIRAN (Knowledge Involvement in Research Advancement through Nurturing) for women scientists however, only 25 -30 % Ph.D. scholars are female in the population of researchers in India. As per the SCOPUS citation impact report (2014) only 14% women writers' among 2 lakh full time researchers from India reaches to the International platform.

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Literature Review:

The researchers have reviewed many articles and reports on the current scenario of research worldwide and status of women researchers'. These reports highlight the present picture of research in India and specifically women researchers. This review can be classified at international level, Asia specific, national level and then the status of research in Symbiosis International University.

International Level:

- Richard Van Noordan in his article, 'India by the Numbers' (Journal Nature,

May 2015) says that more women are participating in science, although their number still falls far below those of men. Also since 2000 India has almost quadrupled its scholarly output, but that rate is surpassed by Brazil's and China's. India underperforms relative to its gross domestic product (GDP) and population. And its scholarly impact remains low: in 2013, it was nearly 30% below the world's average. With only 200,000 full-time researchers (14% of them female) in a population of nearly 1.3 billion, India ranks below Chile, Kenya and many other countries in terms of its scientific workforce. Some more interesting facts seen in the article are:

1. India gives 0.9% of its GDP in research & development.
2. More women are winning funding from competitive government grant scheme.
 - 2000 – 10%
 - 2003 – 20%
 - 2006 – 25%
 - 2009 – 30%

The annual report given by the Global Research Council (GRC) May 2016: 'Equality and status of women in research' presents disquieting facts about representation of women in research. The report says that all countries have a lower

portion of women participating in research, although the percentage differs between countries. It further states that less than 25% of academicians are women and the number lowers down further as they reach the Professor Level. In some Middle East countries this is even less than 5%.

The 'UNESCO Science Report (revised edition ,2016), 'Towards 2030' reveals the division of research activities as well as researchers in various sectors in India, i.e. Government, Academia, Industry and the private non-profit sector. The percentage of division of the total budget allotted by the government is: 60% to government institutes, 35% to industries and only 4% to the universities. This in itself depicts the sad state of research in Indian universities and more so of women researchers.

Asian level:

An economist Intelligence Unit Report' produced for the British Council, January 2015, titled 'Defined by Absence: Women and research in south Asia, says that in India, almost half of post graduate candidates are women, but only few later take on a career in research. The proportion of articles with female authors published in peer reviewed journals till 2012 is 23% only.

According to 'Mapping the social science research in India', DFID, South Asia

Research Hub report, September 2011; only 15 – 20 % of the 433 universities in India have achieved an international standard in teaching and research. The report also substantiates the tendency to publish books rather than papers in referred journals and a large number of publications appear in low-impact journals.

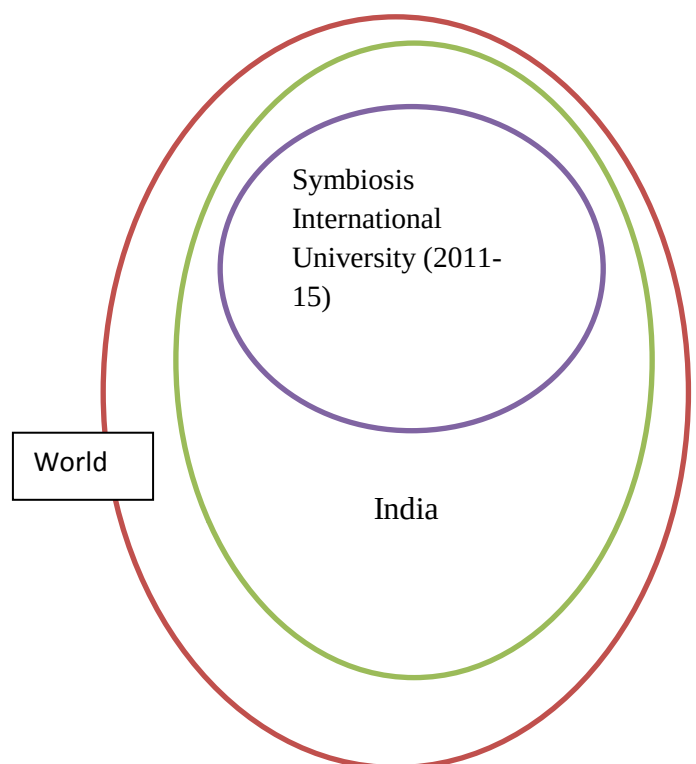
National Level:

The article titled ‘The She in science’, authored by Aashima Dogra and Nandita Jayaraj in Journal, Economic and Political Weekly, (May 2016) say that for the past 25 years, 25–30% of PhD students in India have been female. However, this does not translate to women actually pursuing research or holding faculty positions.

The book chapter ‘The ‘TRIPLE BURDEN’: A Cross-Cultural Analysis of the Consequences of Discrimination for women in science’, in the e-book, ‘Gender and excellence in Making’ authored by Namrata Gupta, (2004) states that women formed only about 9% of the personnel engaged in research and development in the fields of natural science and engineering and technology in 1996; 15% of such personnel had doctorate degrees, and only about 12% of such doctorate personnel were women (Research and Development Statistics 1996-97, Ministry

of Science and Technology, Govt. of India).

Understanding the picture of the status of research worldwide the researchers thought of exploring the situation of women researchers in one of the well renowned private university in India, known as the Symbiosis International University.



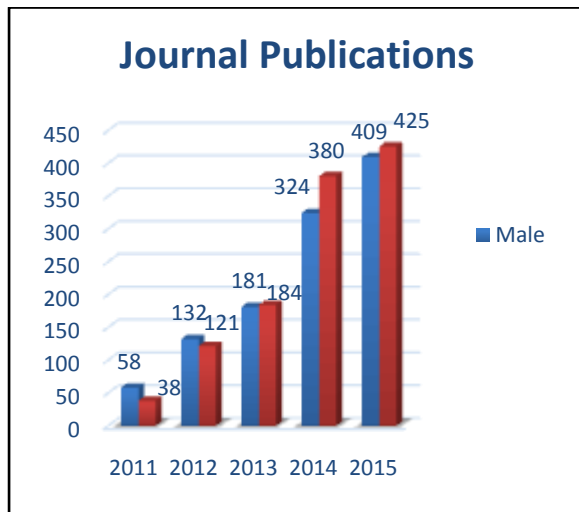
Scope and Limitation:

The study is limited to one university only. The data used for analysis is from year 2011 to 2015.

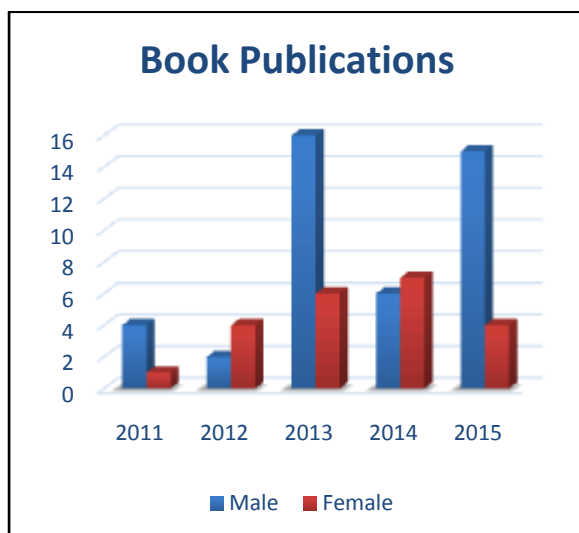
Symbiosis International

University: Publications

Type of publication and year wise data:

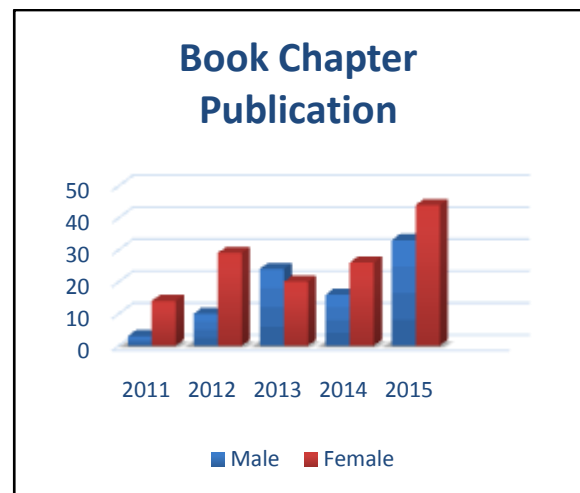


According to this diagram number of women researchers' publishing in journals were less compare to men researchers up to 2012 but in the year 2014 and in 2015 the number of women researcher has been increased.

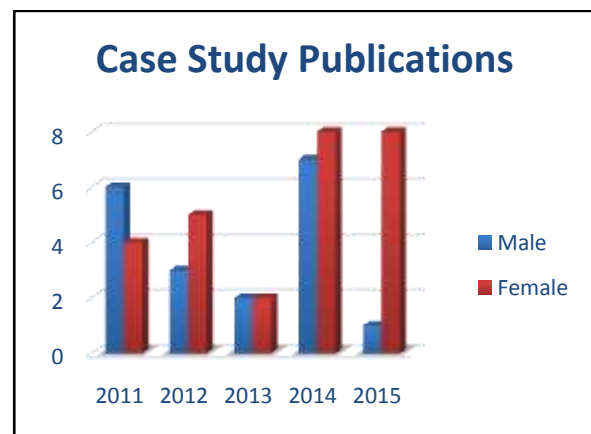


According to this diagram number of women researchers' publishing books is

inconsistent compare to men researchers. In the year 2012 they have more publications, however again their number falls down but in the year 2014 the number of women researcher has been increased. It falls down in 2015.

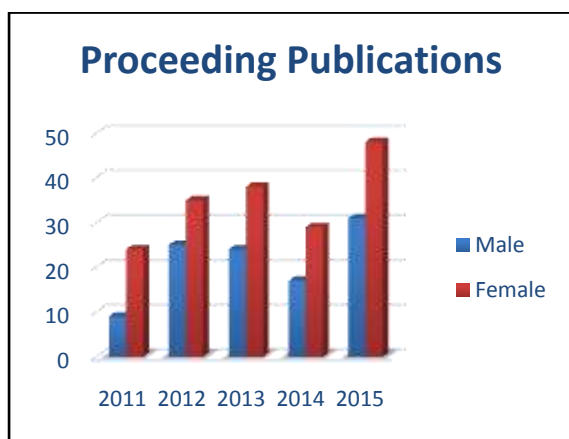


According to this diagram number of women researchers' publishing book chapters is consistently greater as compared to men researchers.



According to this diagram number of women researchers' publishing case study is inconsistent as compared to men researchers. In the year 2012 they have

more publications, however again their number falls down but in the year 2014 the number of women researcher has been increased. It falls down again in 2015.



The number of women researchers publishing proceedings has remained high over the past five years as compared to men.

Conclusions:

The status of women researchers in Symbiosis International University as seen in the study is as follows:

- a. Both men and women publish at par with each other as far as the Journal publications are concerned.
- b. There is a big room for improvement for women in the area of Book Publications; men excel in this area.

- c. It is encouraging to see that the number of women writing and publishing book chapters is greater than men.
- d. Women are far better in publishing case studies as compared to men.
- e. Women have been consistently publishing proceedings more than men.

Discussion:

It indeed is a joy to see a comforting picture of women researchers in Symbiosis International University against the sad condition of research at large and women researchers in specific world-wide.

Indian gender scholars have highlighted the need for strong mentorship throughout all levels of education and the promotion of women who have carved out successful careers as researchers. (An economist Intelligence Unit Report' produced for the British Council, January 2015, titled 'Defined by Absence: Women and research in south Asia')

Although the constraints such as lack of proper institutional support and funding along with multidisciplinary approaches to research remain prominent, conscious efforts can certainly help us creating a better picture of women researchers world-wide.

Another area of improvement could be citing of gender- related policies as a good example of research placing in the policies framed at international as well as international level.

It would also be worth noting that the Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) which was launched by the Ministry of Human Resource Development in October 2013 aims to ensure that public universities and colleges conform to prescribe norms and standards and that they adopt accreditation as a mandatory

quality assurance framework. Certain academic, administrative and governance reforms are a precondition for receiving funding under RUSA. All funding disbursed under RUSA is norm-based and outcome-dependent. (Source: Lok Sabha (parliament), answer by Minister of Human Resource Development to question number 159, 7 July 2014; DST (2014); government website).

Thus even though at one end we do not see a healthy picture of women researchers, but efforts taken to make this situation better are definitely worthwhile.
