



The evolution of women participation in research activities: A panorama in Mexico and Latin America.

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Human development can be simply defined as the opportunities individual have to do more choices. It is more formally defined as the process of enlarging people's freedoms and opportunities and improving their well-being. Human development is then related to the real freedom common people have to decide who to be, what to do, and how to live.

One of the key factor related to the human development is the education since it allows the individuals to extend their choices improving health variables such as income and life expectancy (Basu, 2002; Kravdal and Rindfuss, 2008; Albouy and Lequien 2009; De Gregorio and Lee, 2003; Backlunda et al., 1999). Education is also linked to the women well-being and to the reduction in the gender gap for present and next generations (Cleland and Van Binneken, 1988; Subbarao and Raney, 1995; Castro Martin, 1995; Castro Martin and Juarez, 1995; Grown, C. et al. 2005, and Tembon, M. and Fort, L. Eds, 2008)

The human development index is based on variables grouped in the areas: Health, Income and Education, however education is only measured based on the expected number of schooling. In order to measure the gender inequality the UN introduced the Gender Inequality Index (GII) which includes variables in the areas: Reproductive Health, Labour Market and Empowerment. The variables “Percentage of labour force” and “Educational Attainment (secondary and above)” are included into the second and third areas, respectively.

In this work we present a panorama of this two variables regarding the postgraduate education and work in research. We analyse women participation trends and evolution (since 1994) in higher education and in academic research in Mexico. We use official statistical data and information from the Mexican National System of Researchers (SNI). We also discuss the findings regarding the Latin American Region trends

Our overall aim is to address substantially less investigated issues faced by Latin American women in academia and statistics as well as to highlight particular strategies and skills that can improve the overall women participation.

Keywords: research; education; human development; women participation.

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