

# A SOCIO-LEGAL STUDY OF WOMEN IN LEGAL EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY OF NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITIES IN INDIA

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## ABSTRACT

*Women had to struggle to make their place in the legal profession but a lot has improved with time. The development of legal education has a key role to play in this improvement. National law universities have changed the discourse of legal education in India. Prof. Madhava Menon had set up the National Law School with a vision to make it as 'Harvard of the East' and to transform legal education. In this paper, the authors have tried to study women academicians in national law universities.*

*The research paper in the first part discusses the need for studying women in legal academics. The second part of the paper tries to analyse women in the top management as Vice-Chancellors and Registrars. It also brings attention to the numbers of women appointed as full-time Professors and Associate professors. The authors argue that there is a disparity in women's representations in the national law universities. The third part of this paper discusses the different struggles that women in academics go through to fight the odds. It further discusses about stereotypes that cause hurdles in the career paths of women and suggests a few steps that can be taken to solve this issue.*

“There is no hope for the family or country where there is no estimation of women, where they live in sadness. For this reason, they have to be raised first.” – Swami Vivekananda

Women have historically faced discrimination and inequalities in the workplace is an understatement.<sup>1</sup> Talks and writings about women empowerment are neither new for India nor for the world but very little has been written about the presence of women in the legal academics in India.<sup>2</sup> Women had to struggle to make their

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<sup>1</sup> Patricia A. Stout, Janet Stagies, Nancy A. Jennings, *Affective Stories: Understanding the Lack of Progress of Women Faculty*, 19 (3) NWSA JOURNAL 124-144 (2007).

<sup>2</sup> See Swethaa S. Ballakrishnen & Rupali Samuel, *India's Women Legal Academics: Who they Are and Where You Might Find Them*, GENDER AND CAREERS IN THE LEGAL

place in the legal profession and a lot has improved with the time at the bar and bench, in law schools and firms.<sup>3</sup> There can always be arguments that why we need to see the development of legal academics through the prism of gender<sup>4</sup> rather than focusing on improving the quality of academics. Gender mainstreaming in legal education needs earnest efforts of the stakeholders in form of institutional, policy and pedagogical changes.<sup>5</sup> The research paper in the first part discusses the need for studying women in legal academics. The second part of the paper will try to discuss the status of women in legal academics in national law universities. The third part of this paper discusses about the different struggles that women in academics go through. This paper argues that there is a disparity in women's representation in the legal academics in national law universities and suggests a few steps that can be taken in this regard.

Farley writes that “women face insurmountable barriers in the legal academics. Numerous studies have shown that women are considered less competent than men and the same work is judged more critically when it is thought to have been done by a woman than by a man.”<sup>6</sup> We cannot deny that such kinds of stereotypes would not be existing in the legal academia. Stereotypes are often very subtle in nature and it needs conscious and systematic study to bring them before everyone.

## I. NEED FOR STUDYING WOMEN LEGAL ACADEMICS

Legal Education is ever-transforming and the development of legal education warrants a comprehensive development which not only works on improving the standards, tools, mode and medium of education but also works on the representation from all classes, sex, race, and religions. A question may arise regarding the need for studying women in legal academics. This question is dealt by Fiona Cownie<sup>7</sup> who writes that apart from the Aristotelian view that the search

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<sup>3</sup> See Prof. Lavanya Rajamani, *Women in the Legal Profession in India*, FACULTY OF LAW, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD (31 Oct 2018) <https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/news/2018-10-31-women-legal-profession-india>

<sup>4</sup> The word ‘gender’ is used loosely in this paper. At places, it has been interchangeably used with the word ‘sex’. Researcher has not tried to make the distinction between both of the terms.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Dragica Vujadinović, *Gender Mainstreaming In Law And Legal Education*, ANALI PRAVNOG FAKULTETA U BEOGRADU 56-74 (2015) DOI 10.5937/AnaliPFB1503056V.

<sup>6</sup> Christine Haight Farley, *Confronting Expectations: Women in the Legal Academy*, 8 YALE J.L. & FEMINISM 333 (1996).

<sup>7</sup> Fiona Cownie, *Women Legal Legal Academics: A New Research Agenda?*, 25 (1) JOURNAL OF LAW AND SOCIETY, TRANSFORMATIVE VISIONS OF LEGAL EDUCATION, 102-115 (Mar., 1998).

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for knowledge is part of human existence there are important reasons for conducting research in this area. Citing Bourdieu in her article she writes that

“...terms of the development of the university as an institution; the academy is not just a site of intellectual debate and critical dialogue, but is a sphere of power. The ways in which academic careers are made, defended, and destroyed have implications for the development of higher education as a whole... In the same way, the behaviour, attitudes, and values of legal academics have implications for the future development of the discipline of law.”<sup>8</sup>

University as an institution can also be studied to see if any practices have unconsciously seeped inside and getting disadvantageous to any sex, religion, race, caste etc. There is a necessity of conducting researches on different aspects to ascertain how much national law universities are free from these vices. Cownie cites the work of Thronton and argues that:

“The congruence between bureaucratic power and masculinity is central to organizational structuring, making this interface a site of particular interest for those exploring the relationship between the academy as an institution and the women legal academics within it. ...there has been significant resistance to women carrying out authoritative functions within the academy and that the acceptance of women into the academy is possible only if they slot themselves into one of the limited positions available which reify the sexual regime. Such positions are characterised by conventional notions of the feminine, in that they emphasise appearance, sexuality, deference, docility, diligence, care and self-sacrifice”.<sup>9</sup>

Dwelling into the question of women in legal academics will bring out the nature and functioning of the institution, its biases and vices. All of these are not understood or paid attention until research is done to understand women in academics. Another important reason for conducting the research is that the research will contribute not only to understanding the nature of the institution but also about the discipline of law.

Robert Steinbuch in his paper<sup>10</sup> cites Farley’s writings where she argues that law has a male orientation. “Law is rational, logical, dispassionate, objective, professional, intimidating, and demanding. Women are defined as lacking all of

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<sup>8</sup> *Id.* at 103.

<sup>9</sup> *Id.* at 108.

<sup>10</sup> Robert Steinbuch, *Finding Female Faculty: Empirically Assessing the State of Women in the Legal Academy*, 36 WOMEN’S RTS. L. REP. 375 (2015).

these qualities.”<sup>11</sup> Cownie argues that the relationship between legal academics and women reverberates with gender.<sup>12</sup> Many researchers have argued that the law is attributed as male and resonates with masculinity.<sup>13</sup> She cites the Richard Collier who contends that

“a further connection between masculinism and law lies in the fact that the power of each can be seen to relate to their ability to exclude that which would challenge their hegemonic power, their univocity and claims to authority. There is, it would seem, a convergence between the construction of both masculinity and law in that both are enmeshed within notions of hierarchy, authority, rationality and abstraction, and involve a distancing of the personal, the emotional and the sexual in the constitution of a univocal authoritative voice.”<sup>14</sup>

Thus, in an institutional set-up where the institute, the office bearers and the discipline resonates more with masculinity, there tends to be the biasness towards another gender. Margaret Thornton & Weiping Wang in their paper<sup>15</sup> argues that it becomes the rule of men in place of rule of law. The ‘burefication’ of universities in appointments and the presence of men at almost all levels makes the entry of women difficult. The structure of the universities intentionally or unintentionally supports the systems and adds the strength to continue working in the same manner. National law universities primarily focus on the discipline of law, so if the discipline of law is reverberating with masculinity then it would also lead to creeping of involuntary biasness in the university.

The changes in the system are brought about by intentional efforts by the universities when they recognise the inherent vices and biasness of the system and takes pro-active measures to go beyond that. Without consciously recognising the short fallings of the system which tends to promote men and inherently becomes disadvantageous to the women, the system cannot improve. Studying women in legal academics is a baby step in this direction. Until we study women in legal

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<sup>11</sup> *Id.*

<sup>12</sup> Fiona Cownie, *Women Legal Legal Academics: A New Research Agenda?*, 25 (1) JOURNAL OF LAW AND SOCIETY, TRANSFORMATIVE VISIONS OF LEGAL EDUCATION, 111 (Mar., 1998).

<sup>13</sup> See generally, Richard Collier, *Nutty Professors, Men in Suits and New Entrepreneurs: Corporeality, Subjectivity and Change in the Law School and Legal Practice*, 7 Soc. & LEGAL STUD. 27 (1998).

<sup>14</sup> Fiona Cownie, *Women Legal Legal Academics: A New Research Agenda?*, 25 (1) JOURNAL OF LAW AND SOCIETY, TRANSFORMATIVE VISIONS OF LEGAL EDUCATION, 112 (Mar., 1998). See R. Collier, *Masculinism, Law and Law Teaching*, 19 INTERNATIONAL J. OF THE SOCIOLOGY OF LAW 427, 428 - 429. (1991).

<sup>15</sup> Margaret Thornton & Weiping Wang, *Sexing Modernity: Women in the Chinese Legal Academy*, 10 CAN. J. WOMEN & L. 401 (1998).

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academics, we will not be able to recognise the scenario and thus will not be analysing the biasness of the system.

## II. THE USE OF STATISTICS

Numbers can be useful in assessing what adjectives and adverbs cannot.<sup>16</sup> This paper provides the recent statistics regarding the gender of the vice-chancellors and registrars in the National Law Universities. The method used for research was collecting the information available in the public domain by visiting the websites of the universities and collecting the information, Same method has been used to record the number of females in the position of the Professors and Associate Professors. The authors have focused on studying females only at Professors and Associates Professors. Since the data is collected from observing the information of faculties provided on the website the author acknowledges the limitations and the human error that might have come while recording the data.

### A. Women as Vice-Chancellors and Registrars

Table 1:  
Gender of Vice-Chancellors and Registrars in National Law Universities  
(as on the University's website on 12th May 2022)

S. No.	Name of the University	Gender of Vice-Chancellor	Gender of Registrar
1	National Law University, Jodhpur	Female	Female
2	Tamil Nadu National Law University, Trichy	Female	Female
3	National Law University Odisha, Cuttack	Female	Male
4	Himachal Pradesh National Law University, Shimla	Female	Male
5	Dr. B. R. Ambedkar National Law University, Sonapat	Female	Male
6	West Bengal National University of Juridical Science, Kolkata	Male	Female
7	National Law University Assam	Male	Female
8	National Law University, Delhi	Male	Female
9	National Law School of India University, Bangalore	Male	Male
10	National Academy for Legal Studies and Research, Hyderabad	Male	Male
11	National Law Institute University, Bhopal	Male	Male
12	Hidayatullah National Law University, Raipur	Male	Male
13	Gujarat National Law University, Gandhinagar	Male	Male
14	Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia National Law University, Lucknow	Male	Male
15	Rajiv Gandhi National Law University, Patiala	Male	Male
16	Chanakya National Law University, Patna	Male	Male

<sup>16</sup> See generally, Richard K. Neumann Jr., *Women in Legal Education: What the Statistics Show*, 50 (3) JOURNAL OF LEGAL EDUCATION, ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN LAW SCHOOLS, 313-357 (September 2000); Robert Steinbuch, *Finding Female Faculty: Empirically Assessing the State of Women in the Legal Academy*, 36 WOMEN'S RTS. L. REP. 375 (2015).

17	National University of Advanced Legal Studies, Kochi	Male	Male
18	National University of Study and Research In Law, Ranchi	Male	-
19	Damodaram Sanjivayya National Law University, Vishakhapatnam	Male	Male
20	Maharashtra National Law University Mumbai	Male	Male
21	Maharashtra National Law University Nagpur	Male	Male
22	Maharashtra National Law University Aurangabad	Male	Male
23	Dharmashastra National Law University, Jabalpur	Male	Male

Table 1 demonstrates the gender of Vice-Chancellors and Registrar of the National Law Universities. These two positions are part of the top management. The other positions which can be part of the management are Dean, Head of Department, Controller of Examination and Chancellor. The researchers in this study have limited the research to Vice-Chancellors and Registrar.

5 out of the 23 i.e., only 21.73% of national law universities have females as the Vice-Chancellors (National Law University, Jodhpur – Prof. (Dr.) Poonam Saxena, National Law University, Orissa – Prof. (Dr.) Ved Kumari, Tamil Nadu National Law University – Prof. (Dr.) V. S. Elizabeth, Himachal Pradesh National Law University, Shimla – Prof. (Dr.) Nishtha Jaswal and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar National Law University, Sonapat – Dr. Archana Mishra). 5 out of 23 i.e., 21.73% of national law universities have females as their Registrar (National Law University, Delhi – Prof. (Dr.) Harpreet Kaur, West Bengal National University of Juridical Science, Kolkata – Mrs. Sikha Sen, National Law University, Jodhpur – Mrs. Vandana Singhvi, National Law University and Judicial Academy, Assam - Dr. Indranoshee Das and Tamil Nadu National Law University - Mrs. K. R. Leela). Only 2 out of 23 (National Law University, Jodhpur and Tamil Nadu National Law University, Trichy) have both the Vice-Chancellor and Registrar as females whereas 14 out of 23 national law universities have males at both the positions. When we see a larger picture 10 out of the 23 i.e., 43.47% of national law universities have females in either of the positions which gives a ray of the hope that the situation can be better in the future.

## B. Women as Professors and Associate Professors

Table 2 :  
Number of Female and Male Professors in National Law Universities  
(as on the University's website on 12th May 2022)

S. No.	Name of the University	No. of Female Professors	No. of Male Professors	Total No. of Professors
1	National Law University, Delhi	6	7	13
2	National Academy for Legal Studies and Research, Hyderabad	3	4	7
3	Gujarat National Law University, Gandhinagar	3	3	6
4	National Law University Odisha, Cuttak	3	2	5

5	Damodaram Sanjivayya National Law University, Vishakhapatnam	3	2	5
6	National Law School of India University, Bangalore	1	10	11
8	West Bengal National University of Juridical Science, Kolkata	1	8	9
7	National Law Institute University, Bhopal	1	7	8
10	Hidayatullah National Law University, Raipur	1	4	5
11	Rajiv Gandhi National Law University, Patiala	1	4	5
9	National Law University, Jodhpur	1	2	3
14	Himachal Pradesh National Law University, Shimla	1	2	3
12	National University of Advanced Legal Studies, Kochi	1	1	2
13	Tamil Nadu National Law University, Trichy	1	0	1
21	Maharashtra National Law University Aurangabad	0	6	6
16	Chanakya National Law University, Patna	0	4	4
20	Maharashtra National Law University Nagpur	0	3	3
15	Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia National Law University, Lucknow	0	2	2
18	National Law University Assam	0	2	2
19	Maharashtra National Law University Mumbai	0	2	2
17	National University of Study and Research in Law, Ranchi	0	1	1
22	Dharmashastra National Law University, Jabalpur	0	1	1
23	Dr. B. R. Ambedkar National Law University, Sonapat	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>104</b>

Table 2 demonstrates the number of female and male professors in the National Law Universities. The study has recorded only full-time professors and has not considered the adjunct, guest, honorary professors or professors on lien. While visiting the websites of the NLUs it was observed that many women are working as assistant professors but the number of female academics at the level of professors is very low. Only 27 out of 104 professors in NLUs are females. In the percentage form, only 25.96% of professors in national law universities are females. The highest number of female professors is at National Law University of Delhi, where the Registrar is also female. 5 out of 23, i.e., only 21.73% of national law universities (National Law University, Delhi, National Academy for Legal Studies and Research, Hyderabad, Gujarat National Law University, Gandhinagar, National Law University Odisha, Cuttack and Damodaram Sanjivayya National Law University, Vishakhapatnam) have more than one female Professors. National Law School of India University has the second-highest number of professors after the National Law University of Delhi, but out of 11, only 1 female has been appointed as a professor.

8 out of 23 national law universities i.e., 34.78% more than 1/3 of the universities have only one female professor. 9 out of 23 universities (Maharashtra National Law University Aurangabad, Chanakya National Law University, Patna, Maharashtra National Law University, Nagpur, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia National Law University, Lucknow, National Law University Assam, Maharashtra National Law University Mumbai, National University of Study and Research in Law, Ranchi, Dharmashastra National Law University, Jabalpur, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar National Law University, Sonipat) do not have any female professors. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar National Law University, Sonipat does not have any male or female professors.

Table 3:  
Number of Female and Male Associate Professors in National Law Universities  
(as on the University's website on 12th May 2022)

S. No.	Name of the University	No. of Female Associate Professors	No. of Male Associate Professors	Total No. of Associate Professors
1	National Law School of India University, Bangalore	5	3	8
2	Rajiv Gandhi National Law University, Patiala	5	1	6
3	National Academy for Legal Studies and Research, Hyderabad	4	3	7
4	National Law University, Delhi	3	6	9
5	National Law University, Jodhpur	3	1	4
6	Damodaram Sanjivayya National Law University, Vishakhapatnam	2	1	3
7	Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia National Law University, Lucknow	2	4	6
8	National Law University Assam	2	3	5
9	National University of Study and Research in Law, Ranchi	2	2	4
10	Gujarat National Law University, Gandhinagar	1	5	6
11	Hidayatullah National Law University, Raipur	1	6	7
12	Himachal Pradesh National Law University, Shimla	1	3	4
13	Maharashtra National Law University Aurangabad	1	1	2
14	Maharashtra National Law University Mumbai	1	0	1
15	Maharashtra National Law University Nagpur	1	2	3
16	National Law University Odisha, Cuttak	1	1	2
17	National University of Advanced Legal Studies, Kochi	1	2	3
18	West Bengal National University of Juridical Science, Kolkata	1	6	7
19	Chanakya National Law University, Patna	0	2	2



20	Dharmashastra National Law University, Jabalpur	0	1	1
21	Dr. B. R. Ambedkar National Law University, Sonipat	0	0	0
22	Tamil Nadu National Law University, Trichy	0	1	1
23	National Law Institute University, Bhopal	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>37</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>91</b>

Table 3 demonstrates the number of female and male Associate Professors in the National Law Universities. The study has recorded only full-time associate professors and has not included associate professors on lien as they are working in other universities. 37 out of 91 associate professors i.e., 40.65% percentage of associate professors in NLUs are females. The highest number of female associate professors are in the National Law School of India University, Bangalore and Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Patiala. Both of the universities have 5 female associate professors. National Academy for Legal Studies And Research, Hyderabad have the third-highest number of female associate professors. National Law University, Delhi and National Law University, Jodhpur have 3 female associate professors whereas Damodaram Sanjivayya National Law University, Vishakhapatnam, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia National Law University, Lucknow, National Law University Assam and National University of Study and Research in Law, Ranchi have 2 female associate professors each.

Information about the Associate Professor was not available on the website of National Law Institute University, Bhopal. 9 out of 22, i.e. 40.9% of national law universities (Gujarat National Law University, Gandhinagar, Hidayatullah National Law University, Raipur, Himachal Pradesh National Law University, Shimla, Maharashtra National Law University Aurangabad, Maharashtra National Law University Mumbai, Maharashtra National Law University, Nagpur, National Law University Odisha, Cuttack, National University of Advanced Legal Studies, Kochi, and West Bengal National University of Juridical Science, Kolkata) have only one female associate professor. 4 national universities (Chanakya National Law University, Patna, Dharmashastra National Law University, Jabalpur, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar National Law University, Sonipat and Tamil Nadu National Law University, Trichy) do not have even a single female associate professor.

Dharmashastra National Law University, Jabalpur and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar National Law University, Sonipat does not have any female professor or associate professor.

Emphasis needs to be given to the large difference in the percentage of women who are professors and those who are associate professors. Only 40.65% of the total number of associate professors in national law universities are females and the disparity increases in the case of professors where only 25.96% of the total number of professors are females. This means that very less females are being

appointed as professors whereas they still exist in a larger proportion as associate professors. The percentage of men being appointed professors is more than the percentage of men that get appointed as associate professors.

### III. FIGHTING THE ODDS

The scarce number of women reaching the top positions showcase that woman holding the power at national law universities is not the norm, but an exception that few females fought the odds to reach the top ladder. Swethaa in her paper<sup>17</sup> also supports this argument and writes that ‘women had to fight to make them heard.’ Although every woman faces their own problems but as a class, women across the globe had to face similar kinds of problems while making a place for themselves and getting heard in the organization.

Mary Ann Mason in her article<sup>18</sup> writes that many women begin climbing but do not reach the top of the Ivory Tower to become deans and professors because ‘babies matter’. Priyanka Chauhan writes that a woman has to undergo difficult choices of choosing between motherhood and a thriving career.<sup>19</sup> Many a time it struck when the women start establishing themselves in their career path and then they have to make the choice of choosing between the two. This leads them to drop their career path which hinders their growth in an institution. Though Maternity Benefits Act, 1961 and University Grants Commission regulations 2010<sup>20</sup> provides for maternity and child leave, motherhood still becomes an

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<sup>17</sup> See Swethaa S. Ballakrishnen & Rupali Samuel, *India's Women Legal Academics: Who they Are and Where You Might Find Them*, GENDER AND CAREERS IN THE LEGAL ACADEMY, UC Irvine School of Law Research Paper No. 2021-31 [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3180526#](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3180526#)

<sup>18</sup> Mary Ann Mason, *The baby penalty*, CRONICLES, (August 5, 2013) <https://www.chronicle.com/article/the-baby-penalty/>.

<sup>19</sup> Priyanka Chauhan, *Between motherhood and career*, THE HINDU (May 20, 2018) <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/open-page/between-motherhood-and-career/article23936760.ece>

<sup>20</sup> UGC Regulations On Minimum Qualifications For Appointment Of Teachers And Other Academic Staff In Universities And Colleges And Measures For The Maintenance Of Standards In Higher Education, 2010

#### 8.4.8 Maternity Leave

(i) Maternity leave on full pay may be granted to a woman teacher for a period not exceeding 180 days, to be availed of twice in the entire career. Maternity leave may also be granted in case of miscarriage including abortion, subject to the condition that the total leave granted in respect of this to a woman teacher in her career is not more than 45 days, and the application for leave is supported by a medical certificate.

(ii) Maternity leave may be combined with earned leave, half pay leave or extraordinary leave but any leave applied for in continuation of maternity leave may be granted if the request is supported by a medical certificate.

#### 8.4.9 Child Care Leave

impediment to many women academicians continuing their career in the same manner. Many women find difficulties in restarting their careers after the break.<sup>21</sup> Women just after their maternity leave are considered less productive in the institutions. McGinley argues that the ‘motherhood penalty’ of taking the ‘decision’ of staying back and raising the kid is seen as her ‘choice’ and ‘nature’.<sup>22</sup>

The gender roles defined in the societies also serve as roadblocks in the path of women legal academicians. Women are expected to stay back in the house or sacrifice their careers for the “breadwinners” of the house. It is expected of women to take care of the household and raise obedient children while the husband is expected to work hard and be successful in his career. This stereotyping affects both genders but more harshly affects the female where she is expected to prioritise family over career.<sup>23</sup>

This does not mean that the hurdles cannot be overcome by the women. The change will come with the vision, intent and motivation of the stakeholders. There needs to be a change not only in the way the institution functions but also in the structure of these institutions. Women need to be motivated to cross these roadblocks.<sup>24</sup> Kathy Mack suggests that there should be at least 30% representation of the women in the important committees that are formed by the institution as a “preponderance of men in the decision-making process may perpetuate the existing gender imbalance in appointments and make more difficult curriculum changes which address gender issues.”<sup>25</sup> The presence of women in important governing bodies like the General Council, Executive Council, Standing Committee, and Academic Council will increase the participation of women in managerial and executive work. The increased participation in these bodies can also lead to an increase in appointment of the women at the top levels as then the voices and problems of women will get a better audience and will make the institution more inclusive and will reduce the gender gap.

The search committee formed for shortlisting candidates for the appointment of Vice-Chancellors should also have representation from women so that more

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Women teachers having minor children may be granted leave up to two years for taking care of their minor children. Child care leave for a maximum period of two years (730 days) may be granted to the women teachers during entire service period in lines with Central Government women employees. In the cases, where the child care leave is granted more than 45 days, the University/College/Institution may appoint a part time / guest substitute teacher with intimation to the UGC.

<sup>21</sup> Ann C. McGinley, *Reproducing Gender on Law School Faculties*, 2009 BYU L. REV. 99, 103 (2009).

<sup>22</sup> *Id.* at 122.

<sup>23</sup> See generally, *Id.* at 99.

<sup>24</sup> See Patricia Grimshaw and Rosemary Francis, *Academic women and research leadership in twentieth-century Australia* IN DIVERSITY IN LEADERSHIP, (Joy Damousi, Kim Rubenstein and Mary Tomsic eds., ANU Press) <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt13wwwj5.14>

<sup>25</sup> Kathy Mack, *Women In Universities*, 15 LEGAL SERVICE BULL. 211 (1990).

female professors may get the opportunities to be appointed as Vice-Chancellors. The representation will ensue participation of women in the decision-making and will increase the chances of selecting a woman. The representation will provide opportunities for women and will pave their path to the top management, access to power and better positioning in the institution.

The governing bodies may look for providing representation of the women at the professors and associate levels so that they can also become role models for the female students. This will have a cascading effect on the entry of women into academics, making the institution gender inclusive. As discussed by Kathy Mack, these suggestions of including women in the committees often meet the opposition of women getting overburdened by work, non-availability of a sufficient number of women to appoint them in the committees, and wrong towards men.<sup>26</sup> While dismantling these opposite arguments, she writes that making representation in the committees will not only increase the power given to women, but it will also show the need for the appointment of more women so that the work can be done properly. A woman will be easily accessible to other women to guide and mentor them in their career paths and will help them in a better way to overcome the hurdles that are being faced by the other female colleague or students. It is definite that not every woman will be able to voice their concern or points effectively but she will definitely be able to place and defend them better than their male counterparts. Against the argument that increasing the opportunities for women will be discriminating against men, Kathy argues that the increasing representation will not be injustice towards men rather it will bring equity and equality to the institution.<sup>27</sup>

Another important step in ensuring that women get equal representation in law schools is by bringing changes in the pedagogy by teaching feminist jurisprudence and gender to the students in all the streams so that they start analysing things critically and understand the need for the representation of women in all walks of life. It is not that law schools do not teach feminist jurisprudence; they teach them mostly as a part of gender studies or as an optional course for the constitutional law group but the students who opt for these courses are very less.<sup>28</sup>

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Law universities have to face many challenges in the rapidly developing world. Competitiveness, dearth of funds, increasing research components, providing quality education, offering better remunerations, and advancing into

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<sup>26</sup> *Id.*

<sup>27</sup> *Id.*

<sup>28</sup> Swetha S. Ballakrishnen & Rupali Samuel, *India's Women Legal Academics: Who they Are and Where You Might Find Them*, GENDER AND CAREERS IN THE LEGAL ACADEMY, UC Irvine School of Law Research Paper No. 2021-31 [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3180526#](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3180526#).

collaborations are just a few examples of the challenges that universities have to tackle and in furtherance to this adding another dimension of seeing the representation of the women can be seen as a far fetch goal or a burden on the institution.<sup>29</sup> In contrast to this, adding the feminist dimension will increase the quality of life at the law schools, not only for the students but also for the staff, academicians and management. It will open up the opportunities for recruitment and promotion of the women in the institution and thus will also affect the society as the institution will become gender-friendly trickling down to ensuring social and economic justice.

Women need to be supported and encouraged in institutions. There need to be workshops for them where they are made aware of the different policies of the government and the institutions regarding maternity and child care leaves and other benefits available for them so that they can plan their career and life in a way that creates fewer hurdles for them and facilitates them for advancing in their career and coming on the top ladder. An increase in the participation of women can help in changing the structure of the organization and the way the discipline of law is seen. There is also a need for increasing women's contribution to academic writing so that their voices and problems can be heard.

Better opportunities and recruitment of women will shorten the gender gap between men and women in academics. Bringing pedagogical changes by teaching gender more widely and critiquing through feminist jurisprudence will bring a positive change not only to students but even the fellow peers. The first step will be by acknowledging the fact that there does exist a gender gap in the legal academics, followed by active efforts for making policies for giving better opportunities and facilities to women so that they surmount the difficulties and stereotypes that exist in the society at large. Like the famous saying that 'Rome was not built in a day' in similar manner these things will also take time to bring a change in the overall scenario of the legal academics but it gives a hope for a better future for everyone.

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<sup>29</sup> See Clare McGlynn, *Women, Representation and the Legal Academy*, 19 LEGAL STUD. 68 (1999).