



STATUS OF WOMEN EDUCATION IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Education plays most important role in the development of male and female of every country. Education is a milestone of empowerment particularly for women because it enables them to face the challenges, to tackle their problems, to change their traditional role and develop their life. So that no one can neglect the importance of education. India is a developing country, but the rate of women's literacy in rural areas of India is very low. This obviously means that large number of women in India is still illiterate, backward and exploited. Education is the most powerful tool to reduce inequalities and improve the position of women in any society. In this regard, to provide education to everyone, the Government of India made many programmes and policies, 86th Constitutional Amendment in 2002 is one of them and it says from age 6-14 of every Indian child has got education as a fundamental right. But position of girl's education is not improving according to determined parameter for women. Hence the study conducted to know the present status of women education and the study concluded that the rate of women education is increasing but not in proper manner.

Keywords: Women Education, Women Empowerment, 86th Indian Constitutional Amendment, Female Literacy Rate, Provisions for Girls Education.

Education plays an important role in shaping every individual's career. The level of education helps people to earn recognition and respect in the society. Undoubtedly education is both socially & personally an indispensable part of human life. Education is the only way to get knowledge. Besides knowledge education can make a person more civilized and useful for the society. One cannot imagine a prosperous life without appropriate education. It also helps to develop healthy surroundings. Everything that person creates is based over the knowledge that he attains through education. The more the society develops the more life becomes dependent over education. Education helps us in many ways as mentioned below.

- Education helps people aware of their fundamental rights.
- Education boosts economic growth.
- Educations promote rights for women and children in the society.
- Education helps to eradicate poverty.
- Education makes people confident.
- Education makes people healthier.
- Education encourages good governance.

Hence, education conquers towards the betterment of people. An educated individual can create a big difference between wrong and right. Thus education of



people in general is must particular for women because the empowerment and knowledge of one woman can aware not only her family.

Education of women promotes both individual and national well-being. An example is the strong links between a woman's education and her employment and income. By educating a woman you educate the whole family. Given that a woman has the responsibility of the whole family on herself, an educated woman is better capable of taking care of the health, nutrition and education of her children and more so be an active agent in the social and economic development of the country. When women are deprived of education, families as well as the societies will be suffered. When women are adequately educated, everyone benefits. But in reality since centuries women were treated as most deprived and discriminated because of the patriarchal ideology of the society.

Women form almost one half of the world's population and they constitute 70 per cent (1.3 billion) of the world's poor population. Women who live in absolute poverty an average have done more than 67 per cent of the hours of work done in the world. But they are paid 30-40 per cent less than men for comparable work on an average. They earn only 10 per cent of the world's income and own only 1 per cent of the world's property. Because of the hegemonic masculine ideology made them suffer a lot as they were denied equal opportunities. Of the 960 million illiterate persons in the world, 640 million, or 2/3rd are women. 61 million children of primary school age are out of school. 42 percent of these children live in conflict-affected poor countries. At least 250 million children are not able to read, write or count well even for those who have spent at least four years in school. In at least 63 countries, young women from poor households are significantly less educated than poor young men. Women in Southern Asia and an estimated 50% of all women in Africa and in the Arab region are still illiterate. In India out of 428 million illiterates, women account for 275 million (64.25%), in 2011 the literacy rate of women has increased to 65.46, still it is lower than the male literacy rate. It is also known that a gender inequality is present in the utilization of health services. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNDFW) estimates that 50 per cent of the women in Asia and Africa are malnourished. Regarding political participation of women, it has also always been monopolized by the men. But these are all the indicators of women empowerment. Therefore empowerment is entirely dependent on variables like educational status, health, economic, political and social status of women.

Education of girls is vital not only on grounds of social justice but also because it accelerates social transformation. No society has ever liberated itself economically, politically, or socially without a sound base of educated women. Education has a direct impact on women empowerment as it creates in them awareness about their rights, their capabilities and the choices and opportunities available to them.



Need and Necessity of Women Education

Education is means of empowerment of women because it can bring many positive changes. It is therefore, education is crucial for the development of women in socio-economic and political progress. Generally illiterate women have high levels of fertility, poor nutritional status, low earning potential and little autonomy within the household. But educated mothers usually have economic independency and sound knowledge not only in household activities but also in family and children's health issues and children's education. But it is relatively low in uneducated women. Therefore there is no doubt about women who are educated will play a vital role in contributing to the development of the family and the nation. Education would gives power to know and ask for their rights about education, employment, health and minimum needs. It would also give power to fight against discrimination, and for equal treatment with their male counterparts. Education makes them to feel equal with their men even in facing problems, making solutions and also in taking decisions. Education gives awareness to reduce female foeticides and infant mortality through improved hygienic conditions, nutritious food, health care and preventive measures. Education also gives awareness about participating in political arena. Even empowerment can only be achieved through education by the womenfolk. Education is important because no matter how rich or powerful people are, without education they will be dependents on educated people for every need and problem, because it is difficult to stand on their own. Education gives self confidence, self realization to everybody and all that are needed for the overall development to country. Hence education is a compulsory need for the womenfolk.

Importance of Women's Education

Education plays the most important role in empowering women. It not only generates momentum but also sustains empowerment process in the long run. It helps in the development of women and improves their status at home as well as in the society. Education in terms of literacy equips women with the skills of reading and writing but it does not only mean reading and writing. Education here does merely means to make women aware of their rights and realization of the discriminatory treatment which is the reason of their subjugation. Socially and psychologically, education develops and strengthens women's self-confidence, courage and awareness of the self and of the external world.

The major factor behind improvement in the social and economic status of women is education. Education is useful for occupational achievement and economic independency. Educational attainment and economic participation are the key constituents in ensuring the empowerment of women, why because the economic empowerment of women is a vital element of strong economic growth in every country. Besides that, education develops their personality by exposing them to the society. Empowering women enhances their ability to influence changes and to create a better society. That means when she is educated, she will make such impression on the mind of her children that will enable them in the later life to grow into a great human being. Hence it is very necessary that women should be educated. Therefore



women education in any where plays a very important role in the development of the country.

Status of Women Education in India

To describe the status of women education in India there will be a need to know the historical background of women in India. In fact it is not easy to find educational status of women in ancient period and position that women occupied in ancient, medieval, British periods but regarding women these periods have utmost importance.

Women Education in India: A Historical perspective

The history of female education in India has its roots in Ancient Vedic age. This covers the period between 2,500 BC - 1500 BC. During this period women were assigned a high place in society. They enjoyed a high position and had accessed to education and other social positions. They enjoyed property rights, discussed political and social issues and authored books. They had social privileges and rights. They shared an equal standing with their men folk and enjoyed a kind of liberty that actually had societal sanctions. The mention of female scholars and sages of the Vedic age like Vac, Ambhrni, Romasa, Gargi, Khona in the Vedic tradition supports this view. These highly intelligent and greatly learned women, who chose the path of Vedic studies, were called '*brahmavadinis*' and women who opted out of education for married life were called '*sadyovadhush*'. Co-education seems to have existed in this period and both the sexes got equal attention from the teacher. Moreover, ladies from the *Kshatriya* caste received martial arts courses and arms training. Women were actively involved in religious and social matters. They had some freedom to choose their partner in marriage and a widow was permitted to remarry.

As India started taking steps towards civilization, social discrimination increased. Jainism and Buddhism emerged as potent religious reform movements. According to Buddha, women's spiritual capacities were equal to men's. "Buddhism began as a religion that treated women as equal to men in their capacity for personal spiritual development". "The universal prejudices against women, who are said to be weak-minded, fickle, treacherous and impure are shared by the Jains and expressed in several passages of the canon and in the form of maxims." The high status that women enjoyed during early Vedic period gradually started deteriorating in the late Vedic period. Lineage began to be traced in the male line and sons were the sole heirs to family property. As the economic and social status of sons began to rise, the position of women saw a steep decline. Although in the Vedic period women had access to education in India, they had gradually lost this right. In cultural reality, the women enjoyed a privileged position in the Vedic period. The women had special customs, rituals and spirituality, with which men were not allowed to interfere.

The position of women reached an all-time low during the age of the later vedic period. It is during this age that codes of conduct prescribing behaviour norms for women were evolved. This period saw the exclusion of women from both economic and religious sphere. During this period, child marriage was encouraged



and widow marriage was looked down upon. The birth of girl child was considered as a sin and many parents went to the extent of killing the female infants. The practice of Sati became quite wide spread because of the ill treatment meted out to widows.

Women Education in Medieval Period

Women's role declined in the later Vedic period. Later vedic period is also called as medieval period. The medieval period witnessed wars and invasions and a steady deterioration of women's position. Social changes and war have relegated their rights to the background. The advent of Muslim rule further secluded women on all fronts. Their rights within marriage have also been curtailed. The practices of *Jauhar*, *Purdha*, *Sati* and ban from visiting shrine have all come into being. Prohibition of remarriage of widows, female infanticide etc., have been introduced. At the same time many women excelled in arts, literature and music. Women were also rulers in the medieval period. Some of the great women rulers were Razia Sultana, the only women monarch to rule the throne of Delhi. The Gond queen Durgavati ruled for 15 long years, before she lost the battle to Asaf Ali emperor Akbar's general. Chand Bibi also fought the Mughals in 1590's. Nur Jahan is still considered as the most effective ruler. In spite of all these successful women the condition of poor Indian women was the same. At this time, girls were married at a very tender age. Sati was also practiced where women were forced to jump in the burning funeral of their dead husband. Devdasi tradition was common in southern India where girls were married to deity or trees.

Immediately following the Bhakti movements, Guru Nanak, the first Guru of Sikhs, preached equality between men and women. He advocated that women be allowed to lead religious assemblies; to lead congregational hymn singing called Kirtan or Bhajan; to become members of religious management committees; to lead armies on the battlefield; to have equality in marriage, and to have equality in Amrit (Baptism). In this period, education for women's was not common at every level, only few girls of rich and famous families could achieve the basic and religious education. The situation was slightly better in south India which was for long outside the purview of northern invaders. There are also instances of women rulers, however they are exceptions.

Women Education in British Period

In the British period there was revival of interest in women's education in India. Initially social reformers emphasized the need to educate Indian women. Women's education was supported by not only social reformers, but also by the philanthropic foreigners, Christian missionaries, and the British government. During this period, various socio religious movements led by eminent persons like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar emphasized on women's education in India. Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and Periyar were leaders of the lower castes in India who took various initiatives to make education available to the women of India. Charan Sarkar, a former student of Hindu College, Calcutta and a member of "Young Bengal", set up the first free school for girls in India in 1847 in *Barasat*, a suburban area of Calcutta (later the school was named Kalikrishna Girls' High School).



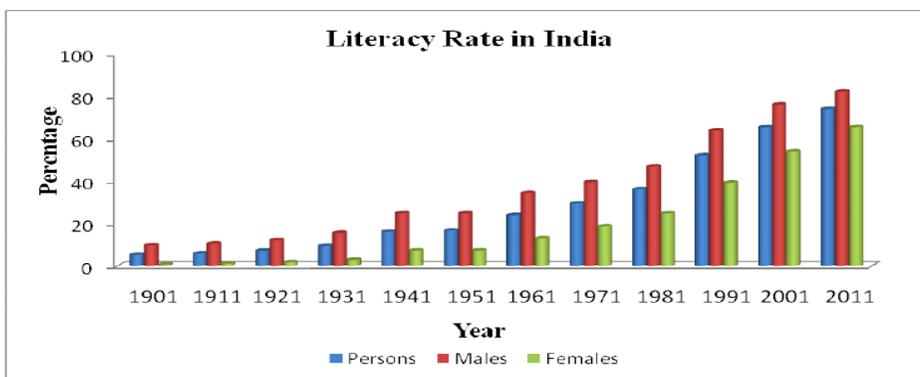
Chandramukhi Basu, Kadambini Ganguly and Anandi Gopal Joshi were some of the earliest Indian women who were obtain a degree.

By the 1900, leaders and reformers believed that educating girls meant educating families. In 1917, the first women's delegation met the Secretary of State to demand women's political rights, supported by the Indian National Congress. The All India Women's Education Conference was held in Pune in 1927, it became a major organisation in the movement for social change. By 1929, women were given the right to vote, and female marriage age was mandated as a minimum of 14 years. Women leaders around the turn of the century were educated elite. Women's group activity before the 1930s cantered on welfare, social reforms, social service, and education, but not on political activity.

During this period voluntary organizations were also participated in creating favorable public opinion and changing parent's views on educating daughters. Education suffered from limited resources, but expansion occurred nonetheless. Madras and Bombay pioneered women's education. Purdah in the north and early marriage in the south hindered girls' education. Parental apathy and social prejudice also accounted for regional variations. Separate schools for girls were founded initially in Bengal and other provinces with strong missionary activity. Coeducation was accepted in Madras and Bombay. Most supported different curricula for boys and girls. By the 1940s, the constitution incorporated the idea that men and women were equal.

Women Education in India after Independence

Women's education got a fillip after India got independence in 1947 and the government has taken various measures to empower women. The constitution of India guarantees the right to equality to all Indian women without any discrimination. Since then women in India are participating fully in the areas of education, sports, politics, media, art and culture, service sectors, science and technology, etc. As a result of their participation women's literacy rate has growing. The literacy rate of women (in 1941) before independence was 7.3% rose as 65.46% by the year 2011. In fact it is relatively low compare with male literacy rate 82.14% as per 2011 census.



Source: Figure - I Literacy rate in India

**Table – I, Literacy Rate in India**

S. No.	Year	Male	Female	Total
1.	1901	9.8	0.7	5.3
2.	1911	10.6	1.1	5.9
3.	1921	12.2	1.8	7.2
4.	1931	15.6	2.9	9.5
5.	1941	24.9	7.3	16.1
6.	1951	24.9	7.3	16.7
7.	1961	34.4	13.0	24.0
8.	1971	39.5	18.7	29.5
9.	1981	46.9	24.8	36.2
10.	1991	63.9	39.2	52.1
11.	2001	76.0	54.0	65.38
12.	2011	82.14	65.46	74.04

Source: Census Report of India, 2011

The Table and Figure - I shows the literacy rate of women from pre-independence time to present. It had a very poor percentage in comparison to literacy rate of men. This is proved from the fact that literacy rate of women has risen from 0.7 % to 7.3 % whereas the literacy rate of men has risen from 9.8 % to 24.9 % during these four decades. During the post-independence period literacy rates have shown a substantial increase in general. However the literacy rate of male has almost tripled over the period e.g. 25% in 1951 and 76 % in 2001. Surprisingly the female literacy rate has increased at a faster pace than the male literacy during the decade 1981 and 2001. The growth is almost 6 times e.g. 7.9 % in 1951 and 54 % in 2001.

Indian Constitution and Educational provisions

In India, providing education to all the citizens is a constitutional commitment. This is stated in its promising articles to improve literacy levels of girls. The principal of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian constitution, in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles.

Provisions of Education for Women in the Indian Constitution

The Constitution of India not only grants equality to women but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women for neutralizing the cumulative socio economic, education and political disadvantages faced by them. Fundamental Rights, among others, ensure equality before the law and equal protection of law; prohibits discrimination against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, and guarantee equality of opportunity to all citizens in matters relating to employment.

Article 14: Equality before law. The State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India.



Article 15: Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. Nothing in this article or in clause (2) of article 29 shall prevent the State from making any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

Article 15 (5): Nothing in this article or in sub-clause (g) of clause (1) of article 19 shall prevent the State from making any special provision, by law, for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes in so far as such special provisions relate to their admission to educational institutions including private educational institutions, whether aided or unaided by the State, other than the minority educational institutions referred to in clause (1) of article 30. (93rd Amendment Act, 2005)

Article 21A: The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine. (86th Amendment Act, 2002)

Article 24: Prohibition of employment of children in factories, etc. No child below the age of fourteen years shall be employed to work in any factory or mine or engaged in any other hazardous employment.

Article 25 :Freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion.

1. Subject to public order, morality and health and to the other provisions of this Part, all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion.
2. Nothing in this article shall affect the operation of any existing law or prevent the State from making any law
 - a. Regulating or restricting any economic, financial, political or other secular activity which may be associated with religious practice;
 - b. Providing for social welfare and reform or the throwing open of Hindu religious institutions of a public character to all classes and sections of Hindus.

Article 26: Freedom to manage religious affairs. Subject to public order, morality and health, every religious denomination or any section thereof shall have the right

- a. To establish and maintain institutions for religious and charitable purposes;
- b. To manage its own affairs in matters of religion;



Article 28: Freedom as to attendance at religious instruction or religious worship in certain educational institutions.

1. No religious instruction shall be provided in any educational institution wholly maintained out of State funds.
2. Nothing in clause (1) shall apply to an educational institution which is administered by the State but has been established under any endowment or trust which requires that religious instruction shall be imparted in such institution.
3. No person attending any educational institution recognised by the State or receiving aid out of State funds shall be required to take part in any religious instruction that may be imparted in such institution or to attend any religious worship that may be conducted in such institution or in any premises attached thereto unless such person or, if such person is a minor, his guardian has given his consent thereto.

Article 29: Protection of interests of minorities.

- (1) Any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same.
- (2) No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out of State funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them.

Article 30: Right of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions.

- (1) All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.
 - (1.A) In making any law providing for the compulsory acquisition of any property of an educational institution established and administered by a minority, referred to in clause (1), the State shall ensure that the amount fixed by or determined under such law for the acquisition of such property is such as would not restrict or abrogate the right guaranteed under that clause.
- (2) The State shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority, whether based on religion or language.

Article 39: Certain principles of policy to be followed by the State. The State shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing

- a. That the citizens, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means of livelihood;



- b. That the health and strength of workers, men and women, and the tender age of children are not abused and that citizens are not forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their age or strength;
- c. That children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment.

Article 41: Right to work, to education and to public assistance in certain cases. The State shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, and in other cases of undeserved want.

Article 45: Provision for free and compulsory education for children.

- (1) The State shall endeavour to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of the Indian Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years.
- (2) The State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years. (86th Amendment Act, 2002)

Article 46: Promotion of educational and economic interests in Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections. The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.

Article 51A (k): Who is a parent or guardian to provide opportunities for education to his child or, as the case may be, ward between the age of six and fourteen years. (86th Amendment Act, 2002)

Article 350A: Facilities for instruction in mother-tongue at primary stage. It shall be the endeavour of every State and of every local authority within the State to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother-tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups; and the President may issue such directions to any State as he considers necessary or proper for securing the provision of such facilities.

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, commonly known as the Right to Education (RTE) Act, is being seen with much hope to bring about the long awaited changes in education of children aged 6-14 years, addressing disparities of access and quality.



Policies for women Education in India

The Constitution not only guarantees equality to women, but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. Just after Independence, in 1951, literacy levels were very low (25% for men and 9% for women), in the next ten years there was not much progress in the literacy levels. It is only after the recommendations of the Indian Education Commission (1964) and the National Policy of Education (1968) that the education of girls was seen as a means of accelerating social transformation. The policy placed special emphasis on initiating programmes to give equal educational opportunities to all the groups and both sexes. The constitution also gave primary responsibility for elementary education to the state governments, while the central government was given responsibility for technical and higher education. This situation changed in 1976 after the 42nd Amendment to the constitution was passed, making all education the joint responsibility of the central and state governments. One of the consequences of this was that the foreign assistance, so far restricted to technical and higher education, now began to flow into primary education as well. Between the mid-1960 and the early 1980s, the proportion of resources going into elementary education showed a steady increase.

National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 and its Programme of Action (POA) gave high priority to gender equality and committed the entire educational system to work for women's empowerment. The National Perspective Plan 1988-2000 reiterates this point of view and states that women themselves must overcome their handicaps. Thus, there has been a careful articulation of education for equality for women, which is reflected in the educational policy discourse. Monitoring committees for women's/girls' education at the Ministry of Human Resource Development level and also state level were formed to monitor the indicators of gender concerns in all policies and projects. Emphasis was laid on enrolment and retention of the girl child in formal and non formal schooling; recruitment of rural women teachers and removal of gender bias in the curriculum.

Mass literacy campaigns in different parts of India were launched which brought out volunteers from all sections of society as instructors, master trainers and organizers. Adult Education Programmes, Total Literacy Campaigns, Post Literacy Programmes, and continuing Education Programmes were also started. Nationwide gender sensitization programmes were undertaken to cover a large number of educational personnel to include educational administrators, teachers and teacher educators. Complementary to this strategy, media campaigns and parental awareness programmes for generating a positive climate for girls' education were also started. Mobilization of women's groups and projects like Mahila Samakhyas (Education for Women's Equality) with focus on the constraints that had so far prevented women and girls from accessing educational inputs were launched.

Programmes for Women's Education in India

The government has introduced many programmes to provide education for all in general and women in particular. Education for All (EFA) means not only having access to schooling but also having quality of education for all children. In the



past two decades, women's participation in primary, middle and secondary level has increased considerably. The programmes have reduced dropout rates and gender gaps. The main objective of the government of India was to bridge gender gaps in primary and secondary education.

Major Schemes and programmes for Women Education

1. Operation Black Board
2. Teacher Education
3. Education Guarantee Scheme & Alternative and Innovative Education (EGS & AIE)
4. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)
5. Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV)
6. Shiksha Karmi
7. Mahila Samakhya
8. District Primary Education Programme (DPEP)
9. National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL)
10. Janshala Programme
11. Padhe Bitiya Badhe Bitiya
12. Ladali Scheme
13. Kishore Vaigyanik Protsahan Yojana
14. Midday Meal Scheme
15. National Literacy Mission Programme
16. Sabla
17. Access and Equity
18. Quality Improvement in Schools (QIS)
19. ICT in Schools
20. Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC)
21. Vocationalisation of Education²²
22. *Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao* (Save girl child, educate girl child): Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi launched the programme on January 22, 2015 from Panipat, Haryana. It is a Government of India's scheme that aims to generate awareness and improving the efficiency of delivery of welfare services meant for women. The objectives of the scheme are to prevent gender biased sex selective elimination, to ensure survival & protection of the Girl Child, to ensure education of the Girl Child, to improve the Nutrition Status of Girl



Child, to promote a protective environment for Girl Child. The scheme was initiated with an initial corpus of Rs 100 crore.

Reasons for low literacy rate of women in India

Women education is a multi-dimensional phenomenon. There are lot of factors or causes (social, cultural, economic, educational demographic, political and administrative) which could be attributed for the present poor status of womenfolk in education and which could be responsible for low literacy rate of women in India. The following are some of the important factors:

1. The lower enrolment of girls in schools. Because poor parents cannot afford on girls for both education and marriage too. Hence she is perceived as a high maintenance liability right from her birth and investing on her for her upbringing, education is equated to a zero return on investment as she will take away all that to another family once she is married. So they prefer to send girl children for work as a child labour.
2. The poor parents have another problem – lack of awareness; even though they perceive the significance of education, many times they are not able to afford it.
3. Drop-out rate among girls seem to be quite high. Generally girls do not attend school is because of their workload, both within and outside of the household to help the family. Therefore the drop-out rate and absence rate in girls is high.
4. Child/early marriage is also one of the reasons for illiteracy or low literacy rate of women in India.
5. Dowry system and other social customs also act as main causes of the neglect of the girl child's education.
6. Poor hygienic condition of school environment. According to a report in 1998 by the U.S. Department of Commerce, the chief barriers to female education in India are inadequate school facilities (such as sanitary facilities), shortage of female teachers and female characters being depicted as weak and helpless and
7. The Constitution of India and various legislations planned and implemented various programmes and schemes pertaining to education to children assure free and compulsory education to all children of this nation but unfortunately the enforcement machinery fail sometimes to discharge its duties and responsibilities to the satisfaction of the public interest and welfare of women.
8. The major problems against women education include lack of political will power to implement government policies and entire educational programmes to increase status of women education in India.

Thus women still constitute a large body of illiterates and unprivileged citizens in India.



Present Status of Women Education in India

The government has taken many steps to increase the rate of women education and employment since its independence. As a result of higher participation of women in literacy campaigns, the gender gap in literacy levels is gradually getting reduced.

Table II, State-wise Percentage of Female Literacy in the India

S. No.	Name of the State	Female Literacy (%)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	59.7
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	59.6
3.	Assam	67.3
4.	Bihar	53.3
5.	Chattisgarh	60.6
6.	Goa	81.8
7.	Gujarat	70.7
8.	Haryana	66.8
9.	Himachal Pradesh	76.6
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	58.0
11.	Jharkhand	56.2
12.	Karnataka	68.1
13.	Kerala	92.0
14.	Madhya Pradesh	60.0
15.	Maharashtra	75.5
16.	Manipur	73.2
17.	Meghalaya	73.8
18.	Mizoram	89.4
19.	Nagaland	76.7
20.	Orissa	64.4
21.	Punjab	71.3
22.	Rajasthan	52.7
23.	Sikkim	76.4
24.	Tamil Nadu	73.9
25.	Tripura	83.1
26.	Uttar Pradesh	59.3
27.	Uttarakhand	70.7
28.	West Bengal	71.2
Union Territories		
1.	Delhi	80.9
2.	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	81.8
3.	Chandigarh	81.4
4.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	65.9
5.	Daman & Diu	79.6
6.	Lakshadweep	88.2
7.	Pondicherry	81.2
Overall India		

Source: Census of India - 2011



According to the Table - II the state wise female literacy rate had an average of 65.46% in all India basis in 2011 census, the high literacy rate is 92.0% in Kerala and least literacy rate is 52.7% in Rajasthan in 2011 census while comparing literacy rate of female 11% increased in 2011 census is increased from 54.16% to 65.46%. Kerala and Mizoram are the states in India that have achieved universal female literacy rates. Women's are growing well in the last 10 years.

Upswing in Girls' Enrolment and Declining in girls drop-out Rates

Since 1990's access to schooling has a steady increase in enrolment of girls' participation levels. At the primary and upper primary level, the rate of enrolment and the proportion of girls in the total enrolment have also been growing. The overall improvement in girls' enrolment with respect to total population of girls clearly shows that there is a near universal enrolment at primary level. The gap and challenges exists now at upper primary stage, but there too the gap is narrowing steadily. Even more significant is the fact that disparity in enrolment of boys and girls is reducing. Since 2000, girls dropout rates have fallen and the number of out of school children have also been declining rapidly.

Primary and secondary education can bring literacy to the women but real empowerment will come from higher education in different fields. Women enrolment in higher education which was less than 10 per cent of the total enrolment on the eve of independence has risen to 41.5 per cent in the academic year 2010-11. But, the majority of women in the country are enrolled in non-professional graduate level courses. The enrolment position of women students enrolled for Master's level courses have been a very small proportion, of the total number of students had been enrolled for research.

Conclusion

The education of women is the most powerful tool of change of status in society. Education always functions as a means of improving women's status within the family and society. At present in India, there is a small progress and improvement in women's education. But the number of girls enrolled in all levels, i.e. primary, secondary and higher education is less than their counterparts. The phenomenon of drop-outs continues to be a serious problem in India's education scenario.

To change this picture and to bring more girls in education, the government is providing a package of concessions in the form of providing free books, uniforms, boarding and lodging, clothing for the hostilities mid-day meals, scholarships, free cycles and so on. Besides that educational programmes are providing various facilities to enhance the education for women, so these programmes are very helpful to improving the girl's education in India. However, the female -male ratio in education has been steadily improving over the years.

Thus the study found that still the female literacy rate is lagging behind male literacy rate (only half of the female population are literates and three fourth of the male population are literates). The rate of school drop outs is also found to be



comparatively higher in case of girls. This higher rate of illiteracy of women is undoubtedly attributing for women dependence on men and to play a subordinate role. The lack of education is the root cause for women's exploitation and subjugation. Only education can help women to empower. Thus promoting education among women is an important measure to empower women and to accomplish their goals.

Suggestions

- Corrective measures must be taken to increase public awareness for the value of the girl child, to ensure their participation in programmes like Child development, health, nutrition and education.
- The Government of India is providing free and compulsory education for 6-14 years children but what is next? So the government should provide financial help and quality of education till 12th then they can go through.
- government should develop higher secondary schools like IIT, NIT and IIM parents dream should be that their child should become a part of government school instead of any international or high class English medium school so that deserving one can study in best school without paying handsome money. with
- Government should be provided better education than the international or English medium schools without paying any handsome money.
- The Government should be create awareness and sensitization among people of all levels, especially in rural areas, about the special needs of women and girls. They need to be made aware that imparting education to women is a great service to society.
- Policies, programmes and schemes for women education exist at Central, State and local levels but for holistic coverage of these schemes and programmes, proper implementation and monitoring is needed.

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