



A STUDY ON THE IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN EDUCATION IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

The education of women is a fundamental requirement for modifying their position in the social order. Women who have received an education have the potential to play a significant part in the socioeconomic development of their communities. Education is the mechanism through which individuals may reclaim their standing both inside and outside of their families, hence eliminating inequities and disparities. It is the determining factor in terms of women's economic empowerment, advancement, and general wellbeing. Women get more power and resilience via education. This kind of power is gained via the process of empowerment, and the education is what will bring about the empowerment. Education is a key factor in addressing issues of inequality and precariousness faced by women in Indian society, where it plays a crucial part in the empowerment of women. The purpose of this study is to make an attempt to capture the evolving picture with regard to the education of women in India.

Key Word: *Women education, Female literacy, Education.*

INTRODUCTION

PT. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

If you educate a man, you educate an individual, however, if you educate a woman, you educate a whole family. Women empowered means mother India empowered”.

The education of women is highly vital for the healthy development of the country's social and economic systems. It is comparable to a powerful medication that may restore a patient to full health after curing them of their illness. Education of India's female population presents a significant growth potential on both the social and economic fronts. Women who have received an education are powerful tools that may be used to make a constructive contribution to Indian society, both in the domestic sphere and in the workforce. They are the reason why both the economy and society in the country have become better in recent years. A woman who has completed her education is in a position to successfully manage both her personal and professional responsibilities. They are able to make a significant contribution to the process of population control in India since, in compared to illiterate women, they are more likely to want to marry later in life.

During the time that the British ruled India, prominent social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Ray and Iswara Chandra Vidya sagar directed their focus towards improving educational opportunities for women. Equal numbers of men and women make up the other half of the country's population. They should both have an equal chance to contribute to the growth of the country since they are like two sides of the same coin. One cannot exist without the other because women are essential to society since they are the ones who bring new life into the

world. If they had access to quality education, they would be able to raise intelligent offspring, which would contribute to India's flourishing social and economic conditions.

When it comes to the development of a family, a community, and a nation, women play a very significant role. In order for democracy to function properly in the country, it is essential that both men and women have access to educational opportunities. Women who have received an education are the true drivers of happiness in the home. Education is one of the key stepping stones on the path to women's empowerment since it helps women to respond to difficulties, to challenge their conventional position, and to change their way of life (Bhat, 2015). In India, the percentage of females who can read and write is lower than the percentage of males who can do so. Compared to males, there are fewer girls enrolled in schools, and many of those who are enrolled end up dropping out. The old adage goes, "Educate a Girl, Empower a Nation." The progression of the country is significantly aided by the contributions that women make. In the 21st century, the economic well-being of a nation is not just in the hands of its male citizens; rather, it is also in the hands of its female citizens. The government has placed a primary emphasis on enhancing the educational options available to women and expanding job openings for them as a means of enhancing the role that women play in society. Under these conditions, we require the continued improvement of gender equality, levels of literacy, and the empowerment of women in every region of India. Because of this, the government of India has initiated a number of different plans and schemes in order to bring these areas into the mainstream of development. The socio-economic situations of women have been shown to shift as a direct result of these initiatives, which have brought about these developments. After India achieved its independence, the role that women played in the independence movement was widely acknowledged. When the Constitution of India was written, it included provisions that allowed women the same rights as males. It also recognised women as legitimate citizens of India and on par with men in terms of the freedoms and opportunities available to them. According to the 86th Amendment of the Indian Constitution, all residents of India have the basic right to provide their children, between the ages of 6 and 14, with access to an education that is both free and mandatory. Despite the fact that the Indian government has implemented various initiatives, such as the "Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan" (the major goal of this programme is to provide elementary education, particularly to girl children who live in deprived rural regions), the situation remains dire. In spite of these efforts, there are still a lot of roadblocks in the way of women getting an education. As a result, the analysis in this paper is mostly focused on the education of women in India.

The Indian Educational System

The education of women in India is playing a very significant part in the overall growth and development of the nation. According to Suguna (2011), this not only assists in the development of half of the human resources but also in enhancing the overall quality of life both within and beyond the house. One of the most significant components of the Indian education system is its formal schooling, while the other is its non-formal education component. Some additional educational programmes, such as online education and distance education, have also been developed to motivate women to further their education. The education of every girl kid is the primary focus of the entirety of the aforementioned educational program's objectives. This low level of literacy not only displays a detrimental influence on women's lives, but also on the economic growth of their families and the country as a whole. As a consequence of this, enhancing the degree of education attained by women is of the utmost significance. According to the All India Survey on Higher education report for 2015, conducted by the

HRD ministry, there are now over 33,3 million Indians enrolled in higher education courses inside the country of India. As of the 2014-2015 school year, there are 17.9 million males and 15.4 million females among them. Equality, the ability to freely practise any religion, protection against cultural and educational exploitation, the right to an education, and the right to freedom are among the fundamental rights of women. It has been established that raising the educational levels of girls has demonstrable implications on the future health and economic well-being of young women, which in turn enhances the chances for the whole community of that community. According to Ramachandran (1998), since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, basic education has become more than a goal in itself; rather, it is the basis for learning that continues throughout one's life and for human growth.

Education for women in ancient India: throughout the Vedic period, women had access to education; but, over time, this right was gradually taken away from them. The Indian scriptures such as the Rig Veda and the Upanishads make reference of a number of wise and wise women. During the early Vedic period, equality of position and rights was guaranteed for women. However, beginning around the year 500 B.C., the status of women began to deteriorate. In ancient India, the role of women played an extremely important role. During the time of the Vedas, ancient India had a strong tradition of educating its female population. In ancient times in India, it was believed that Indian women were more advanced than males. Women in ancient India were accorded prominence, and they occupied an important place in the Indian society that existed at that era. During the Vedic period, there was a significant development in the educational system. Through the course of history, women have bravely and enthusiastically participated in all aspects of life. The annals of Indian mythology are replete with tales of highly advanced and educated female figures. It is possible to trace the historical evidence of education in ancient India all the way back to the third century B.C., when education was transmitted verbally and many women academics were involved in the process. Nalanda, Vikramshila, and Takshila are only a few examples of the illustrious educational establishments that were founded in India as a result of the introduction of Buddhism. According to the findings of the research, there were quite a few female students attending these academic sanctuaries. These educational institutions experienced a golden age roughly between the 5th and 13th centuries. During the reign of Muslim rulers in the 11th century, universities were established in the cities of Delhi, Lucknow, and Allahabad. It has been discovered that education is only available to specific classes of people inside the society.

Several statements with regard to the education of women:

Women are the pillars upon which our civilization is built. Mahatma Jyotirao Phule was a true humanitarian and was born in Pune in 1827. He is credited with creating the first home for widows of upper castes as well as a home for newborn girl children so that they might be protected from female infanticide. He was the one who opened the first girl school in India. He is also credited with opening the first home for widows of lower castes. Among the most significant considerations are:

1. "If you educate a man, you educate an individual. But if you educate a woman, you educate a family (nation)". Dr. James Kwegyir Aggrey

2. It is a slander and an act of injustice towards women when men refer to women as being of the inferior sex. If you are referring about anything like moral authority, then a woman much surpasses a man in terms of her strength. Mahatma Gandhi
3. "There is no other investment that is more valuable than investing in a girls' education." The Secretary-General of the United Nations is Mr. Ban Ki Moon.
4. "True empowerment of women would only be possible through education, encouragement of economic self-dependence, and provision of opportunities that enable the unfolding of one's full potential," as stated in the aforementioned article. President Pranab Mukherjee
5. If I have to sit on the floor at school, it's not a big deal for me. I am not frightened of anyone and all that I desire is an education.

The significance of education for girls and women in India:

The International Encyclopaedia of Women (1999) cites several authors who stress the importance of education as a key factor in the liberation of women and its role in achieving this goal. According to Dominic and Jothi (2012), education of women is of the utmost significance in any initiative aimed at empowering women. This is because employment is one of the most important factors in elevating women's position within a society. Providing a woman in India with an education opens up significant doors for the country's further social and economic progress. An educated Indian woman would be able to make a significant contribution to the economy of both her nation and her society, which will result in a favourable influence on the Indian society as a whole. A mother who has completed her education lowers the likelihood that her kid would pass away before reaching the age of five. In comparison to uneducated women, educated women are more likely to wait until they are older to start a family, which increases the likelihood that population growth can be contained.

The following is a basic overview of why women's education is so crucial.

Education will give women the confidence to go forward and contribute to the growth and prosperity of the nation's economy. This will be made possible via the empowerment that education provides.

Economic empowerment: As long as women are economically reliant on males and remain in a backwards economic position, their powerless status will not alter. Women will never achieve economic autonomy and independence unless they have the education and work opportunities they deserve.

Education makes a significant contribution to the quality of life that a woman can enjoy. It is impossible for her to lose her identity as a person. She has the ability to read and can educate herself on her rights. Her rights will not be infringed in any way. If we take a holistic approach to the problem of educating women, then the lives of women, or the circumstances in which they find themselves, will significantly improve.

Improved Health Girls and women who have received an education are more conscious of the need of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and practising good hygiene.

Women who have completed their educations are in a better position to look after themselves as well as their families.

Dignity and Honour: In today's society, women who have completed their educations are regarded with dignity and honour. They end up serving as role models for millions of young women throughout the world, who look up to them as a source of motivation.

Justice: Women who have had an education are better able to understand their legal rights. It would eventually result in a drop in instances of violence and injustice against women, such as the practise of dowry, forced prostitution, child marriage, female foeticide, and other such practises.

Freedom to pursue whatever line of work she so desires: educated women have the potential to achieve remarkable levels of achievement in many different areas of life. A girl should have the same opportunities as a boy to receive an education so that she may plan to have a successful career as a doctor, engineer, nurse, air hostess, chef, or any other job of her choosing.

Education for women is a necessary condition for alleviating poverty and should be encouraged as such. Women are need to have the same responsibility as males in terms of working long and hard to relieve poverty. It will require significant contributions from educated women in large quantities. If girls and women are not granted the right to an education, there will not be significant social or economic progress.

The education of females is advantageous in many different ways. Girls who receive an education have the potential to play a significant part in the growth and development of their nation. They are able to shoulder a portion of the load that males carry at certain points in their lives. They are able to contribute to society in the roles of educators, attorneys, physicians, and administrators. They are qualified for work in a variety of settings, including banks, hospitals, government agencies, and major enterprises.

They have the potential to make a significant contribution to the military effort. In this age of mounting economic challenges, a good education is more important than ever for young women. Gaya is a day that will bring about even more success. People in the middle class are having a hard time making ends meet in today's society. After marriage, educated women have the potential to raise the income of their husbands. If a woman has an education, she will be able to maintain her standard of life even if her spouse passes away. It is imperative that the Birlas have an education in order to turn our houses into joyful places.

Girls who receive an education have a better chance of producing healthy children, which in turn will benefit their nation. The ability to think for oneself is one of the many benefits of education. This helps her see things from a broader perspective and brings her awareness of the tasks and responsibilities she has. A woman of a certain age can achieve economic autonomy via the power of education.

They will be able to advocate for themselves and protect their rights. Girls have the same rights as boys to receive an education. Combating gender prejudice requires, first and foremost, the emancipation of girls and women. Education for young women living in rural areas is also very essential. There is a lack of educational possibilities for girls living in rural areas. The decision to educate these young women will have a beneficial effect not only on the economy but also on society as a whole.

Most there is a widespread opinion that girls should not pursue higher education.

They are mistaken since females have already demonstrated their competence in a variety of fields and areas of life. There is no valid argument against providing females with the same educational opportunities as males. However, they should not ignore the responsibilities they have at home. As a result, women and young women should be educated in areas such as child psychology and household science.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To the study of Women education in India
2. To the study of present picture of female literacy in our country.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is mostly based on secondary data obtained from the census of India, with additional data obtained from a variety of sources such as journals, books, and so on. The methodology that was used in the study was completely reliant on statistical analysis, which was done through tables, figure, index marks, and interpretation.

DATA ANALYSIS

Before India's independence, the country's literacy rate was.

This time period is traditionally referred to as India's colonial period. It was the most significant time in our nation's history for the growth of the educational system. There was a resurgence of interest in women's education during the time that India was ruled by the British. During this time period, numerous socio-religious movements in India placed an emphasis on the education of women. These movements were led by prominent individuals such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar. According to Kumar and Sangeeta (2013), leaders of the lower castes in India such as Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and Periyar were instrumental in establishing a number of programmes that made it possible for Indian women to receive an education. According to Bhuimali (2004), formal education is not the only means by which individuals in India or other developing nations may acquire knowledge. In 1901, just 0.6% of women could read and write due to societal and economic barriers that prevented them from doing so. In 1931, it had somewhat increased to 2.93%, but by 1941, the literacy rate for women had dropped to just 7.30%. Literacy rates for women during the time before independence are displayed in table-1.

Table-1 Before India's independence, the country's literacy rate was.

Census year	Persons (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
1901	5.35	9.83	0.60
1911	5.92	10.56	1.05
1921	7.16	12.21	1.81
1931	9.50	15.59	2.93
1941	16.10	24.60	7.30

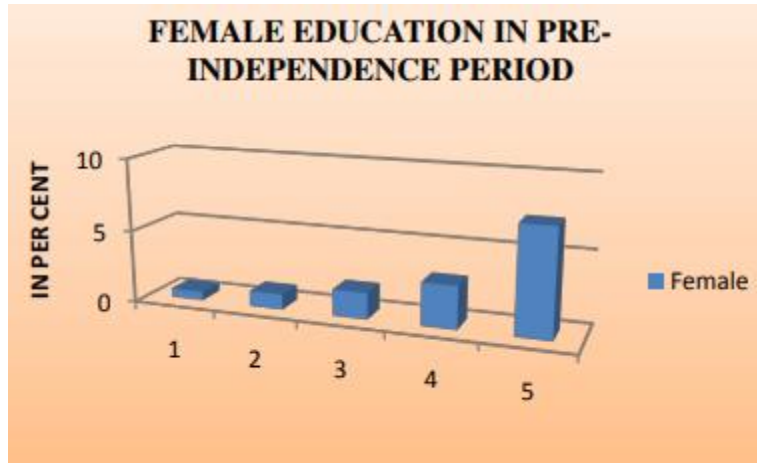


Fig-1; rate of female education in the years leading up to independence.

Figure 1 demonstrates that only a select few were able to receive an education. Prior to the country's independence, the vast majority of people living in rural areas were denied their access to an education. Even when India won its independence from its foreign overlords in 1947, not much of a difference could be seen in the scenario (Bhimali, 2004).

reading and writing abilities of women in post-independent india

At the time of India's independence, the percentage of females who could read or write was dismally low. After it gained its independence, India went through a number of different processes of social change. Today, a variety of policies implemented by both the federal and state governments contribute to an increase in the literacy rate of women in our country. Literacy among women in today's society confers equal rights on women in all spheres, including education, among others.

Table-2 Literacy Rates After India Achieved Its Independence

Census year	Persons	Male	Female
1951	18.33	27.16	8.86
1961	28.30	40.40	15.35
1971	34.45	45.96	21.79
1981	43.57	56.38	29.76
1991	52.21	64.13	39.29
2001	64.84	75.26	53.67
2011	73.00	80.89	64.64

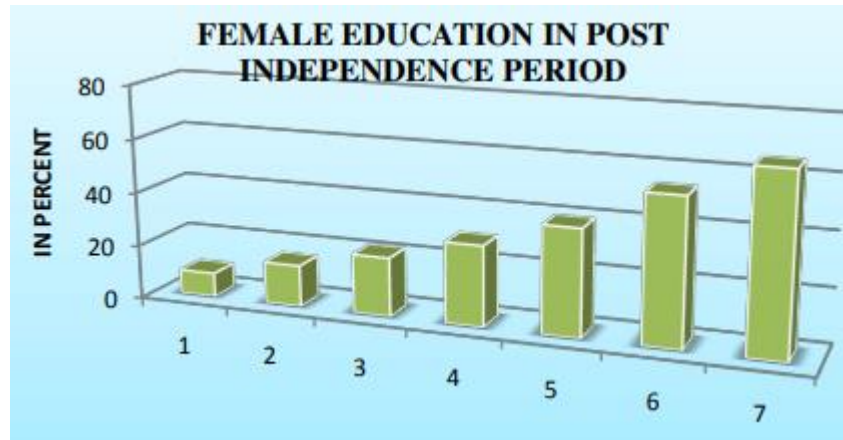


Fig-2 Education for Women in the Decades Following Independence

Table 2, which shows that the percentage of literate women was 8.86% in 1951 and improved to 39.29% in 1991. It was discovered that the literacy rate of females grew from 53.67% in 2001 to 64.64% in 2011 (fig-2); this rise was seen.

Table-3 Women-Men Disparity Index And The Growth Of Literacy In India, 1901 To 2011

Census year	Men	women	Women-men disparity index
1901	9.83	0.60	6.10
1911	10.56	1.05	9.94
1921	12.21	1.81	14.82
1931	15.59	2.93	18.79
1941	24.60	7.30	29.67
1951	27.16	8.86	32.62
1961	40.40	15.35	38.00
1971	45.96	21.79	47.41
1981	56.38	29.76	52.78
1991	64.13	39.29	61.27
2001	75.26	53.67	71.31
2011	80.89	64.64	79.91

According to Khullar (2010), the difference in literacy rates between men and women is an important indication of literacy. It reached a high point of 17.30% in 1941, after having risen to 9.23% in 1901, but then began to fall. It was 25.05% in 1961, but by 2011 it had dropped down to 16.68%. The gender gap is displayed in Table 3, which can be seen here.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we are able to state without hesitation that the education of women in India plays a very significant part in the general growth and development of the nation. It contributes not only to the growth of human resources

but also to the enhancement of the overall quality of life, both within and outside the house. "You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women," Jawaharlal Neheru, the first Prime Minister of India, once remarked. "You can tell the necessity of women education by looking at the status of its women." This is an unquestionable fact. The women of each given nation are a reflection of that nation's civilisation. According to Aggrawal, Kotwal, and Sharma (2012), a sign that a society has attained a degree of maturity and a feeling of responsibility is when a woman is able to enjoy a high social standing. Therefore, it was necessary for our country to work towards increasing the literacy rate of its female population.

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