
WOMEN EMPLOYMENT ISSUES, EDUCATION & STRATEGIES

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Abstract: In favor of an accelerated socio-economic development of any community the active participation of women is crucial. In a social set-up like India, the participation of women in the development process has to be ensured through tangible measures taken at various levels which result in empowerment of women in the real sense. Women empowerment is one of the main items to tackle rural poverty and socio-economic issues. The socio-economic impact is examined in terms of the increase in the income, savings, and assets creation etc. the socio-political impact is examined in terms of entry into politics change of attitude of husbands towards and finally overall improvement in overall status of members of self help groups. Any economic development depends on the people savings habits prevailing in the country.

Education plays the most significant role in determining human resource development in general and women in particular at every stage of sociological and economically sustainable social environment conducive to empowering the inclusive social status of women in India. An effective education system for women both at urban and rural levels interlinked our cultural and socio-economic heritage in a systematic scientific manner is only a viable way to take the Indian economy successfully ahead by making the half of her women population more inclusive towards the attainment of social status to women in the present century as per the framework of 11th five year plan. On the whole, it is recommended that, the government should continue the programme with more enthusiastic way to cover, educate and motivate rural poor women to improve their overall status in the society.

Introduction: In the beginning of the third millennium it has become the focal agenda of global debate that what role women are playing and can play in development. It is also a fact that in last few centuries' women has achieved much as far as their socio-economic and political empowerment is concerned. Despite that it is an open secret that a large section of women in the developing countries are far away from the fruits of developmental machinery. Even in the developed world, of course women have been well empowered as far as social economic rights are concerned but they are not equally empowered in political sector. The best example of the argument is the US, despite it is more than 200 years of democratic governance it has not been able to elect any women as its president. We totally agree with the argument by a section of scholars that merely electing president or prime minister of any country is not the certificate of women empowerment. The best ex of this argument is south Asia, where in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Srilanka, women have been prime minister and presidents but it could not deliver positive impact on women empowerment. For ex oxford educated

Benazir twice elected pm of Pakistan but it could not be realized in the empowerment of women.

Education for Girl: Essential For health: The constitution of India mandates universal and compulsory educations for all No. of Programs have been implemented and still under implementation to improve the level of female literacy. Some states have been made remarkable progress in this direction, but some have not. it is almost axiomatic to state that a literate mother is the greatest guarantor of education to the next generation with a great bearing on the socio-economic and cultural advancement of a nation.

Article 14 of constitution provides for equality before the law and equal protection of the law. Article 15 prohibits discrimination against any citizen on grounds of religion, cast race, sex, of place of birth. Article 16 guarantees equality of opportunity to all the citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office of the state and forbids discrimination on the bases of religion, cast, sex, ext in matters of employment or appointment to any office under the state. However, article 15 (3) empowers the state to make any special provision for women.

First, let us understand the meaning and importance of education in general for all whether male or female "Asato ma Sadgamyaya

Tamaso ma Jyotirgamaya"

"Lead me from untruth to truth

Lead me from darkness to light"

Education has been of central significance to the development of human society. It can be the beginning, not only of individual knowledge, information and awareness, but also of a holistic strategy for development and change. Late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru rightly remarked, "Some people seem to think that education is not so important as putting up a factory. I ma sacrifice any no of factories , but I will not sacrifice human beings and their education because it is the human beings who set-up a factories and produce things we want ". UNESCO has described illiteracy as "The most

monstrous of all the many instances of wasted human potential which still at the present time keeps more than one-third of the human race in a state of hopelessness, below the level of modern civilization”.

“The general purpose and objective of women’s education cannot, of course, be different from the purpose and objective of men’s education.....At the secondary and even at university stage women’s education should have a vocational or occupational bias”

“In a democratic society where all the citizens have to discharge their civic and social obligations, differences which may lead to variation in the standards of intellectual development achieved by boys and girls cannot be envisaged”.

Education was a state subject till 1976 and then was placed in the concurrent list by the 42nd

constitutional Amendment. Placing education in the concurrent list means a dominant role for the central government viz.:

- 1) To determine the policies, priorities and programs relating to education.
- 2) To provide effective leadership to the states.
- 3) To take steps for a minimizing regional imbalances in educational development and for equalization of educational opportunities in different states.
- 4) To take steps for promoting national integration through education.
- 5) To carryout uniform educational forms in the country

Female Literacy Rate:The following table indicates the literacy rate in India and male and female literacy rates in the country from 1951

Census year	Persons	Male	Female	Male Female Gap in Literacy Rate
1951	18.33	21.16	8.86	18.30
1961	28.30	40.40	15.35	25.5
1971	24.35	45.96	21.97	23.98
1981	43.57	56.38	29.76	26.62
1991	52.21	64.13	39.29	24.84
2001	65.38	75.85	54.16	21.70

Source: censuses of India

It is evident from the above table that the gap in male-female literacy rates of 18.30 per points in 1951, increased to 26.62 in 81 but has improved since then. In 1991 this gap was reduced to 24.84 and in 2001 it has further gone down to 21.70 per points. These declines according to the Dept of Elementary Education and Literacy are bound to be slow initially as result of the continuing past legacy of a large no of adult illiterate women, but will show accelerated trends in the coming decade.

Enrolment Trends:Enrolment at the primary level (grades 1 to v) increased from 19.16 million in 1950-51 to 113.8 million in 200-2001. In comparison, the growth in enrolment at the upper primary level (grades 6 to 8th) has been much more impressive, although it is still not adequate to attain the constitutional goal of universal enrolment of children up to the age of 14. From 3.12 million in 1950-51, enrolment at the upper primary level increased to 42.6 million in 1999-2000, indicating a 13.5 times increase as against 6 times at the primary level. The per share of girls in total enrolment, both at the primary and upper primary levels, has increased consistently between 1950-51 (28.1) and 1999-2000 (43.6). However, girls share in total enrolment at the upper primary level (40.4) continues to be lower than their share at the primary level in 1999-2000.

Elementary Education: Education has an intrinsic value for the development of the society and helps in the achievement of a better social order. Greater literacy and basic education helps individuals to make better use of available economic opportunities. The Government has decided to make free and compulsory elementary education a fundamental right.

The constitution of India has made it obligatory on the part of the Government to provide free and compulsory education to all children until they complete the age of 14 years. This was to be achieved by the year 1960, but could not be achieved and the target dates had to be repeatedly extended to 1990. The National policy on education, 1986 again extended the target date to 1995. The modified policy, 1992 further revised. The target date so as to achieve compulsory education for all children upto 14 years of age by the end of 20th century. In spite of the provisions having been made in the constitution and the efforts made by successive governments it has not yet been possible to universalize elementary education. Free and compulsory elementary education still remains a major challenge in most of the states.

Sex-wise Enrolment by stages/classes since 1950-51

Year	Primary (I-V)			Middle / Upper Primary (VI-VIII)			High/Hr/sec/ Degree (IX-XII)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1970-71	35.7	21.3	57.0	9.4	3.9	13.3	5.7	1.9	7.6
1980-81	45.3	28.5	73.98	13.9	6.8	20.37	7.6	3.4	11.0
1990-91	57.0	40.4	97.4	21.5	12.5	34.0	12.8	6.3	19.1
1991-92	58.06	42.3	100.9	22.0	13.6	35.6	13.5	6.9	20.4
1992-93	57.9	41.7	99.6	21.02	12.9	34.1	13.6	6.9	20.5
1993-94	55.1	41.9	97.6	20.6	13.5	34.1	13.2	7.5	20.7
1994-95	60.1	45.1	105.1	22.1	14.5	36.4	14.2	7.9	22.1
1995-96	60.6	46.2	107.1	22.7	14.8	37.35	14.6	8.3	22.9
1996-97	62.5	47.9	110.4	24.7	16.3	41.0	17.2	9.8	27.0
1997-98	61.2	47.5	108.4	27.7	15.8	39.5	17.1	10.2	27.2
1998-99	62.7	48.2	110.9	24.0	16.3	40.3	17.3	10.5	27.8
1999-2000	64.1	49.5	113.6	25.1	17.0	42.1	17.2	11.0	28.2
2000-01	64.0	49.8	113.8	25.3	17.5	42.8	16.9	10.7	27.6

Shockingly, of the 900 million illiterates in the world, almost one third belong to India. In other words, Indians constitute the largest number of uneducated people in the world. It is a paradoxical situation in which the gains made in the realm of education since independence have been overshadowed by the presence of a huge population of illiterates, especially in rural India, and more so among girls. Admittedly, the massive increase in the population in the last 50 years has been one of the major reasons for the imbalance in the literacy- population ratio. But, this can hardly be a ground for absolving the nation of its responsibility for the failure in providing primary education to all children.

The Department of Elementary Education and literacy have asserted that consistent efforts have been made to improve the participation of girls in the field of education in the last 50 years. According to them, the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for girls has gone up from 24.8 percent in 1950-51 at the primary level to 81.8 per cent in 1996-97. The committee find that while the GER for girls at the primary stage in the country, as whole and in most states, has improved, it is low as compared to GER for boys. A study of the progressive enrolment of girls and boys at primary middle school levels points to a massive gender gap. Further there are a few states/UTs where the (GER) is considerable low in respect of girl students. These are Bihar (54.6%), Jammu and Kashmir (53.1%), Uttar Pradesh (59.9%) and Chandigarh (62.1%). Similarly, The dropout rate in respect of girls is very high in some of the states such as Bihar (63.44%), West Bengal (55.59) Tripura (56.65%), Sikkim (55.4%) Rajasthan (57.2%) Mizoram (56.95) and Meghalaya (62.46%).

Issues And Problems Of Elementary Education

1. Less Coverage
2. Large Dropouts
3. Excessive and Uninteresting Curriculum
4. School Lack Facilities
5. Lack of Supervision
6. Lack of Rapport Between the school and the community

Secondary Education; Secondary education serves as a bridge between elementary and higher education and prepares young persons between the age group of 14-18 for entry into higher education.

The impact of recent initiatives undertaken for the universalization of elementary education is resulting in increased demand for expansion of secondary education. Unless steps are taken to expand the secondary education system, it would be difficult to accommodate the increasing number of upper primary pass-outs. While there has been an increase in the number of secondary schools, the spread has been uneven; there are regional disparities and variations in the socio- economic status of various states and union Territories. The significant gender gap also has to be narrowed down.

The key theme in the tenth plan is imparting quality education at all stages of education and the pursuit of excellence. The on- going efforts in revision of curricula at the secondary education level, so as to make it more relevant, would continue in the Tenth plan. The Convergence of centrally sponsored schemes will help in imparting science, mathematics and computer education as well as environmental and value education in a more focused manner. There is a line of thinking which believes that subsidizing students through a voucher system, as is the practice in some of the Latin American countries, is more effective than subsidizing institutions. The

Students will enroll themselves in reputed schools letting the market forces weed out the inefficient and poor quality institutions.

Secondary Education prepares the students for future life career as the education at this level exposes the students to differentiated roles of science, the humanities and social sciences. Secondary education commission set-up in September 1952 under the chairmanship of Dr.A.Lakshmana Swami Mudaliar, suggested four aims of secondary education.

- i) Training of character and developing qualities essential for citizenship in a democratic social order,
- ii) The improvement of vocational efficiency,
- iii) Personality development and

iv) Leadership Training. There has been expansion in the fields of secondary education.

The Committee desire that adequate secondary schools be provided in the country particularly in rural, semi- urban and tribal areas. The central School systems such as the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) and the Navodaya Vidyalaya (Where one thirds of the seats are reserve for girls) should be expanded. Further the National Open School (NOS) particularly for children who do not get the chance to go to the regular school system, such as, working children, children with disabilities and children from other marginalized groups such as rural youth, girls and women SCs and STs, etc. should be strengthened.

Number Of Girls Per 100 Boys Enrolled In Schools And Colleges

Year	Primary (I-V)	Middle (VI-VIII)	Secondary (IX-X)	Colleges and universities for general education
1950-51	39	18	16	11
1955-56	44	25	21	14
1960-61	48	32	23	21
1965-66	57	37	30	25
1970-71	60	41	35	27
1975-76	62	46	39	39
1979-80	62	48	41	42
1980-81	63	49	44	42
1981-82	63	49	43	46
1982-83	64	51	41	46
1983-84	64	51	43	46
1984-85	65	52	44	49
1985-86	67	54	44	51
1986-87	69	54	46	51
1987-88	69	55	47	46
1988-89	70	55	50	46
1989-90	70	56	50	8
1990-91	71	58	50	50
1991-92	72	62	52	48
1992-93	72	61	51	50
1993-94	76	66	57	50
1994-95 P	75	66	55	52
1995-96 P	76	64	57	56
1996-97 P	77	64	59	56
1997-98 P	77	66	60	60
1998-99 P	77	67	62	66

Higer Education And Women’s Development And Empowerment: Provision of educational opportunities for girls and women has been a part of the national endeavor since independence. The Constitutional of India is clearly committed to the cause of education and unequivocally endorses state intervention to redress an adverse educational scenario. The Supreme Court has given the right to education the status of a fundamental right.

Dr.K.L.Shrimali, the then Minister of Education while addressing their conference of Vice- Chancellors held from 30th July to 1st August 1957 at new Delhi, remarked “A state which does not finance higher education liberally undermines the very basis of civilization. Whether we look from the point of view of the cultural growth of the individual or practical necessities of social life, higher education is vital for the society”.

Zakir Hussain has stressed the positive relationship between Higher Education and Development, “Education is an important input for development, and towards this end the universities are the key institutions in promoting the process of national development through their programmers of teaching, research and extension. The universities provide the required trained and educated manpower to implement activities/ programmes relating to national development”.

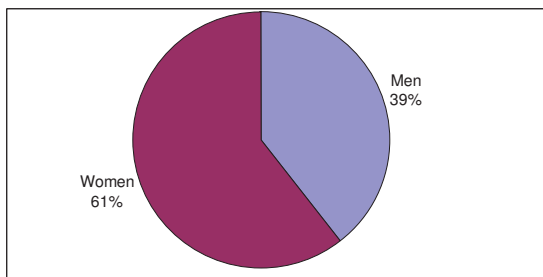
Facilities By Ugc For Women In Higher Education

1. Introduction of Technological courses for women in Universities.
2. Special Scheme for construction of Women’s Hostels.
3. Promotion of studies on women in universities and colleges.
4. Growth in enrolment of women in Higher Education.
5. Distribution of women enrolment by state stage and faculty.

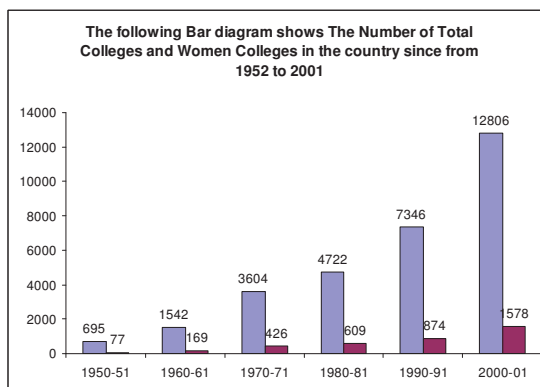
Women Enrolment By Faculty :2001-02

Sl. No	Faculty	Enrolment	Percentage
1	Art	18,20,134	51.79
2	Science	6,99,376	19.90
3	Commerce/ management	5,81,993	16.56
4	Education	59,394	1.69
5	Engineering/ Technology	1,31,792	3.75
6	Medicine	1,23,006	3.50
7	Agriculture	9,137	0.26
8	Veterinary Science	3,163	0.09
9	Law	56,934	1.62
10	Others	29,521	0.84
	Total	35,14,450	100.00

Distribution Of Men And Women Enrolment In Universities And Colleges: 2000-01



1. Women Colleges
2. Cells to combat sexual Harassment
3. Part-Time Research Associate ships for women
4. Day Care Centers in Universities.



Issues And Problems

1. Women study centers are Located in most of the universities in Metropolitan and semi-metropolitan cities.
2. Lack of Clear-cut objective.
3. The Heads of Study centers are mostly engaged in Building a self image by inviting influential Ladies to preside over the function in selected gathering of well- off women i.e who are already empowered need fresh thinking.
4. Courses conducted through Academic staff colleges or by the center directly do not result in multiplier effect as the Topics are repeatedly the same and teachers as students are Non- receptive.
5. Lack of co- ordination: Need of Linkages.
6. Women study centers are functioning in a Routine way.
7. Lack of interest of women study centers.
8. Lack of Monitoring.
9. Need for multi-disciplinary Approach.
10. Need for centers of excellence.
11. Need for affirmative Action.
12. Women as Decision – Makers.
13. Poor Linkage between Education and Modernization : Need of Developing linkages

Challenges For Inclusive Empowerment Of Women In India: In the Last two sections, we have mainly concentrated our self on the issues relating to economic participation and economic opportunities that have been provided by the central and state Governments and other Ono-Gove mental organizations, social institutions, women welfare groups and others for making more responsive and gender sensitive to women's needs. In this section, an attempt has been made to analyses the challenges before inclusive Economic empowerment of women with respect to their equal economic status for participation in work, and the economic opportunities for independent decision-making and capability creation in face of a highly segregated society with a deep roared social malice practiced in India in many forms since thousands of years.

1) Need for an inclusive outlook for Evaluating the Ground level plan of Action

We have to accept the fact that things are not going to change overnight but because of this we cannot stop taking action either. At this juncture, the most important step is to initiate ground level actions whatever small it might seem. The ground level actions should be focused towards changing the social attitude and practices prevalend in the society which are highly biased against women.

2) Need for Reality check on the specific points before the implementations of Policies

Today, there are lot of things that is happening in the name of women empowerment in India and lot of resources are spent in this direction. Keeping this in mind, it is crucial to have a reality check on what is

happening on paper and what is the actual ground situation.

3) Needs for creativity towards positive Attitude among the women to exercise full control over their circumstances or action.

One of the Major aspects of women empowerment in India is to change the attitude of society towards women. The problem in India is that the society never worked on the premise of gender equality form along- long time. Atrocities and discrimination against women is a way of daily life in Indian society.

4) Need for streamlining the existing women Empowerment Programmes to be more inclusive.

As we know that the government had declared 2001 as the women's empowerment year but nothing much has happened even after that. Women even today are not able to exercise full control over their circumstances or actions. From a welfare society at the inception, India moved on to embrace the developmental model and now the latest fad is the empowerment model.

5) Unification of inclusive women force for ending Gender inequality and bias

It has to be understood that unless we change the basic social attitude which cultivates gender inequality ad gender bias we would not be able to achieve much in terms of inclusive women empowerment in India. There are many laws and there have been many amendments that have been carried out to end the discrimination against women and empower women in all aspects of life.

6) More stringent Legislations are required for ending Violence against women

When we talk about women empowerment in India the most important aspect that comes into the mind is the attitude of the society towards women. Women are still considered as burden and liabilities. They are also considered as properties. These kinds of attitudes give birth to the evil of violence against women.

7) Need of Enthusiasm and Whole Hearted Inclusive Cooperation among Women

To reemphasize once again, Women's empowerment cannot take place unless women come together and decide to self empower themselves, self empowerment should be all round in Nature. Once this happens then we can think about galvanizing the system towards the direction of better health facilities, nutrition and educational facilities for women at a very large scale.

8) All Forms of inclusive positive measures required to protect the right of the Girl Child

All forms of discrimination against the girl child and violation of their rights are prevalent in India. All sort of such forms of discrimination are to be eliminated by undertaking strong measures both preventive and

punitive within and outside the family. All through National Policy for the empowering of women (2001) had stressed much on these aspects of discrimination against the girl.

9) A time Bond Action Plans are required at central and state levels for Translating Inclusive Policies into set Concrete Actions.

All Central and state ministries must draw up time bond action Plans with respect to the measurement of goals relating to policies, identification of commitment of resources involved into the plan, responsibilities and accountabilities for implementation of action points,

10) Role of Mass media to Built up Realistic Guidelines for Protecting the Women Dignity and images

Media has a very special role to portray the images of women consistent with their dignity specially strive

to remove demeaning, degrading and negative conventional stereotypical images of women and violence against them. Private sector partners and media network must involve themselves inclusively at all such to ensure equal opportunities for women particularly for the to develop codes of conduct.

Conclusion: The bold decision to declare Education as the fundamental Right reflects the Government's concern and commitment to ensure that every one born in this country is literate/educated and thus fulfill the constitutional commitment of Education for all by 2007. Through the specially targeted programme of SarvaShikshaAbhiyan (SSA) launched in 2000, efforts will be made to reach the un-reached women and the girl child. Thus, all out efforts will be made during the Tenth plan to ensure that the SSA achieves its commitment within the time targets set.

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