

PROBLEMS AND GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES FOR WOMEN'S EDUCATION IN INDIA

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Abstract

Women education is very important for full growth and development of the country. Women education can help to improve the socio-economic of India. Because they have an ability to balance their household as well as professional life. Now a days, women are reaching to the top position of the different field like agriculture, industrial and service sector. But still, they have been neglected for education from the ancient period to present days. They are not getting equal opportunities for education in rural areas and urban areas. People in India still expect that women should do household work, taking care of their children and family rather than education. So, they continue to lag and depend on men. It is very important to empower the women through education as it help them to take decision and impart various opportunities for better livelihood. Women are the foundation of the future generation. If they learn, they can educate the future generation. The present research paper focuses on status of women education, their problems and government initiatives to improve women education in India. The present paper is based on secondary sources of data, and it is collected from books, journals, website, and annual reports etc. The government has implemented several schemes to promote women's education in India. To improve the women education in India in terms of increasing enrollment rates, quality of education and inclusive and comprehensive learning environment is needed which involves government intervention, community engagement, and collaboration with civil society organizations.

Keywords: Women Education, Literacy rate, Dropout rate, Government Educational schemes, BBBP, SSA KGBV etc.

INTRODUCTION:

Women education play a very important for economic growth and development of the economy. Women constitute around 50 percent of India's population, and they contribute to various sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, services, and informal economy thereby driving economic growth. But still, they have been neglected for education and not getting equal opportunities for education in rural areas and urban areas. People in India still expect that women should do household work, taking care of their children and family rather than education. So, they continue to lag and depend on men. It is very important to empower the women through education as it help them financially independent. Women are the foundation of the future generation. If they learn, they can educate the future generation. Thus, women education is not only the significant or the basis of human right and social justice but also it is economic investment which can significantly contribute to the Indian Economy. The present research paper focuses on status of women education, their problems and government initiatives to improve women education in India.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To analyse the status of women education in terms of enrollment ratio, literacy rate and dropout rate in India.
- To understand the problems of women's education in India:
- To highlight the initiatives of Government for women's Education.

PROBLEMS OF STUDY:

Although there many schemes introduced by the government to improve the women education in India but actual implementation on the ground may not be effective due to bureaucratic hurdles, corruption, lack of

resources, quality of education, high dropout rate, less funding for scheme. There are number of problems faced by women in education, to overcome these challenges broad minded approach is required that involves effective implementation of government policies, community engagement, and efforts to change societal attitudes towards gender and education that will help to improve status of women's education.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

The present research papers help the policymakers to frame effective educational policies and implementation. The present research can also contribute to understand the magnitude of the problems, opportunities and promote socio economic development through women education. Research will create awareness regarding various scheme of government for women education so accordingly people can take advantage of those scheme.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The present paper is based on secondary sources of data, and it is collected from books, journals, website, and annual reports to analyse status of women's education, their problems and government schemes to promote education in women. The present paper focuses on theoretical analysis of factors that affect women's education in India.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY:

Although there many schemes introduced by the Indian government to improve the education of women in India, the researcher has selected few schemes to analyse the aims and significance. Researcher have discussed the education status of women in terms of some variables like gross enrollment ratio, literacy rate and dropout rate etc. There are number of problems faced by women in education, but research have heighted major challenges or factors which affect women education.

EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF WOMEN IN INDIA:

The educational status of women has seen significant improvements over the years and continue efforts and government schemes are needed to improve their educational status, Here educational status of women explained with the help of some variable like gross enrollment ration, literacy rate and dropout rate etc.

Table 1: Literacy and Education in India

Year	Primary (I-V) (6-11 age)		Upper Primary (VI-VIII) (11-14 age)		Elementary (I-VIII) (6-14 age)		Literacy rate		Dropout Rate (I - X) (6-16 age)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1950-51	60.6	24.8	20.6	4.6	46.4	17.7	27.16	8.86		
1980-81	95.8	64.1	54.3	28.6	82.2	52.1	56.38	29.76	79.8	86.6
1990-91	114	85.5	76.6	47	100	70.8	64.13	39.29	67.5	76.9
2000-01	104.9	85.9	67.2	49.9	90.3	72.4	75.26	53.67	70	77.3
2010-11	115.4	116.7	87.7	83.1	101.5	99.9	82.14	65.46	50.4	47.9
2021-22	NA	NA	NA	NA	99.3	101.1	84.4	71.5	NA	NA

Source: Statistics of School Education 2009-10, Educational Statistics at glance 2014

This table provides data on decade wise student's enrollment, the literacy rates and dropout rate in India. Gross Enrolment Ratio is a percentage of eligible students enrolled in different levels of education. The GER for primary education and upper primary education shows a significant increase over the years. The gender gap in upper primary education GER is narrower compared to primary education but still exists, with males consistently having higher GER than females. The GER exceeding 100% in some cases suggests possible issues with over-age or under-age enrollment, indicating the need for further analysis of enrollment patterns. Thus, there is still room for improvement, particularly in addressing potential issues with over-age or under-age enrollment and ensuring equitable access to education for all.

Trends in literacy rate shows consistent improvement for both males and females but male have higher literacy rate than female which indicates challenges in ensuring equal access to education for girls and women. The magnitude of the gender gap in literacy rates has been decreasing over time. In 1950-51, the gender gap was considerable in terms of literacy rate was 18.13, However, by 2021-22, the gap has narrowed with 12.5, Thus there is a positive trend of literacy rate but still a notable disparity that needs to be addressed. The increasing

literacy rates, especially among females, have positive implications for socio-economic development, gender equality, and empowerment. Educated individuals are more likely to contribute to the workforce, make informed decisions, and participate actively in society.

The dropout rate refers to the percentage of students who discontinue their education before completing a specific level or grade. It measures the extent of students leaving the educational system prematurely. From 1980-81 to 2010-11, there's a general decrease in dropout rates for both genders. This suggests improvements in educational access, quality, and infrastructure that contribute to students. It is also found that female dropout rates have been higher than male dropout rates. This indicates specific efforts to address barriers faced by female students. Various factors impact on dropout rates, including economic conditions, availability of educational infrastructure, social norms, cultural attitudes towards education, quality of teaching, and government policies promoting education.

Problems of Women's education:

Three are mainly social, cultural, economic factors affect girl's education in India.

Early marriage:

Girls who marry young or in small age are frequently compelled to drop out of school, which reduces their access to school as well as higher education.

Poverty:

Economic constraints can prevent families from sending their daughters to school. The costs associated with education like school fees, uniforms, and transportation, exam fee financial weak families can't afford therefore they do not send girl to school.

Distance of school from home:

In rural areas, school at considerable distance, lack of transportation facilities, and safety concerns, especially for girls, can prevent them from attending school regularly.

Girl Child labor:

A significant proportion of girls are employed in various sector as they are available at low wages. They work in brick factories, rope making, embroidery, bangles, brassware, carpet, bidi making, and collection of minor forest produce farming and in informal sector. Due to this they don't attend school or attend during off season.

Harmful gender stereotype attitude of the people:

Stereotype views are that girl are domestic, home makers, caregivers as they must become wives and mothers while men should be bread winners means boys are given priority when it comes to education.

Safety concerns:

Sexual harassment and violence can deter parents from sending their daughters to school. Inadequate infrastructure, such as lack of separate toilets for girls, further exacerbates safety issues.

Menstruation:

Once a girl reaches adolescent period, she is more likely to miss school due to hygiene related problems. School doesn't provide sanitary napkin which leads to dropping out of school. There is also lack of separate toilets for boys and girls which is barrier to girl education.

Gender discrimination:

Discriminatory attitudes of the parents towards girls' education can result in lower enrollment rates, limited opportunities, and reduced support for girls in pursuing education.

Government initiatives for women's education:

Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya:

The Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) scheme was introduced in 2004 for establishing residential schools at upper primary education for girls of SC, ST, OBC, minority and families of below the poverty line. Under this scheme 75 percentage of seat reservation provided to the girls of to SC, ST, OBC or minority and 25 percentage of seat reservation is provided to girls from families below poverty line. Objectives of the KGBV scheme are to provide essential infrastructure to residential schools, provide academic support and encourage their families to send them girl child to residential school. KGBV scheme has merged with Sarva Shiksha with effect from 2007.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP):

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) Scheme was launched on 22 January 2015 to understand the issues of girl's education and declining Child Sex Ratio. Initially BBBP scheme was operational in 405 districts only in India but now it is extended to all the districts of the country. Focus of the BBBP scheme are to reduce the abortion of girl child, survival, protection, promoting education for girls, empower the girl through skill development and vocational training and changing the people's mindset about girl child. Thus, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme try to find challenges faced by the girl child and promote their rights, education, and well-being for a more gender-equitable society.

Table 2: Funds under BBBP Scheme (Rs. in Crore)

Year	Revised Estimates	Total Expenditure
2014-15	50	34.84
2015-16	75	59.37
2016-17	43	28.66
2017-18	200	169.10
2018-19	280	244.73
2019-20	200	85.78
2020-21	100	60.57
2021-22	100	57.13

Source: Annual Report 2012-13, p 13, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India
Above table shows the funds provided under BBBP, there's considerable fluctuation in both the revised estimates and the total expenditure during 2014-15 to 2021-22. In some years, like 2017-18 and 2018-19, the revised estimates and total expenditure on BBBP scheme are significantly higher compared to other years. In most years, the total expenditure is lower than the revised estimates, suggesting that the actual spending is often less than what was initially planned or estimated. Thus, fluctuations in budgetary allocations and actual expenditures across different fiscal years indicate the need for improved fiscal management and alignment of resources to achieve the goal of the scheme.

The Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan:

The Ministry of Education introduced the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan in 2018. The program seeks to guarantee that many Indian children receive an equal, inclusive, and reasonably priced education. The Teacher Education Program, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan are the three schemes are merged with Samagra Shiksha Scheme umbrella. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was launched in 2001 to impart free and compulsory education to the children for the age 6 to 14 years and to promote girls' education.

The National Scheme of Incentive to Girls for Secondary Education:

The National Scheme of Incentive to Girls for Secondary Education encourages enrolment girls in secondary education in the 14–18 age group. Under this scheme Rs. 3000 is provided to the eligible girls who have completed secondary education and wanted to continue higher secondary education.

Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan:

Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA) is an scheme launched in 2017 by Indian government to make rural households digitally literate and to enable them to use digital technologies and devices to access various government services, information, and opportunities available online. The scheme also aims to reduce the gap gender gap in education and improve the education of girl child.

CONCLUSION:

Women's education is essential for achieving full growth and development of the country. The GER for primary education and upper primary education shows a significant during 1950-51 2010-11. Trends in literacy rate shows consistent improvement for both males and females but male have higher literacy rate than female. Thus, even though literacy rate has been improved but still lot we have scope to achieve more literacy rate. There are various problems fa like social, economic, and cultural that work as barriers to women education which need to be removed at the earliest. The government has implemented several schemes to promote and improve the status of women's education in terms of increasing enrolment rates, improve quality of education and development of inclusive and comprehensive learning environment is needed which involves government intervention, community engagement, and collaboration with civil society organizations.

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