



**PROCEEDINGS  
of  
NATIONAL CONFERENCE  
on**



***“Revamping Higher Education for Girls in India by Exploring  
Possibilities through Traditional and Innovative Teaching Techniques-  
Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Perspective”***

***28<sup>th</sup> August, 2019***



**Organised by:**

**Aditi Mahavidyalaya, University of Delhi, Bawana, Delhi**

**at**

**Auditorium, CPDHE, University of Delhi, Delhi**

**Sponsored by**



**University Grants Commission,  
New Delhi**

***Compiled By: Dr Bhawna Rajput & Dr Sunita Dahiya***



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*“Revamping Higher Education for Girls in India by Exploring Possibilities through Traditional and Innovative Teaching Techniques-Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Perspective”*

*28<sup>th</sup> August, 2019*



बेटी बचाओ  
बेटी पढ़ाओ,  
साक्षरता बढ़ाओ..



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ज्ञान - विज्ञानं विमुक्तये

**University Grants Commission**

*Compiled By: Dr Bhawna Rajput & Dr Sunita Dahiya*

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## Foreword



**Dr. Mamta Sharma**

It gives me immense pleasure to host the U.G.C. sponsored National Conference on ‘Revamping higher education for girls in India by exploring possibilities through innovative teaching techniques – Beti Bachao Beti Padao perspective’ organised at the C.P.D.H.E., University of Delhi. The conference has been organised as a series of initiatives taken by our college to create sensitization about roles portrayed by women as a nurturer, a child, a giver, a creator, a mentor, a transformer, a bearer and many more, through each of which she carries on and sustains life on this planet which itself is worshipped in its divine female form of *the mother earth*. Since the vedic age, women have held a high pedestal in our country which seen the rise of females as Kalpana Chawla (astronaut), Sarojini Naidu (political activist), Chanda Kochhar (C.E.O., ICICI Bank), Padma Bhushan Mallika Sarabhai (classical dance), Lata Mangeshkar (melody queen) and many more who have gained respectful positions in their respective domains due to their hard work, and serve as role models for other aspiring women.

With the belief in holistic development of students, our college has been actively contributing to meet the academic needs of girl students most of whom belong to the semi urban and rural Delhi. Our institution has dedicated itself completely to the task of creating empowerment of women through provision of numerous avenues both academic and non-academic, for the students to learn, rise and shine. The conference has been conceptualized as a small step to carry forward the legacy maintained by college, and is in tune with the ‘Beti Bachao Beti Padao’ campaign initiated by our esteemed Prime Minister –Shri Narendra Modi. It’s time that we as an entire nation begin to celebrate the birth of women who are the creators and generators of life. According to a famous African proverb, “if you educate a man, you educate an individual; but if you educate a woman, you educate a nation”. If we wish to build a strong nation, we need to build up its strong foundation which lies in empowering the females academically, economically and socially as it is through their strength we will be able to raise a confident and mature

generation which is sure of itself and its values. We all are aware of the existing deficit in the sex ratio in our country which is symbolic of the massive infanticide and foeticide, where females are not given even the opportunity to be alive, leave alone the right to live with dignity. It's high time that we all stand tall together as a nation to grant the females the rights long due to them which enables them to blossom and make our world a better place and, this conference is an endeavour on our part to achieve the same. I would like extend my thanks to all the delegates for their sincere contribution to this noble cause, and hope that the knowledge shared on this platform will rekindle our efforts towards building a beautiful space for human development.

**Date**

**28/08/2019**

**Dr.Mamta Sharma**

**(Convener)**

## Message



**Dr. Poonam Silotia**

**(Chairman, Aditi Mahavidyalaya)**

Dear Participants,

*Greetings of the day!*

Educating a girl means changing the world — not just her world, but the world she lives in. Education is the key to unlocking access to economic opportunity and other life-giving resources for millions around the world. Educated girls grow into women who are empowered to care for themselves, their families, and their communities. When you invest in a girl, the dividends are immeasurable. What we are learning around the world is that if women are healthy and educated, their families will flourish. If women have a chance to work and earn as full and equal partners in society, their families will flourish. And when families flourish, communities and nations do as well. Education is the key for women to achieve economic independence. For the women who are struggling to access education, and for those who want to end educational inequality, I hope that such conferences would inspire you to make a change!

**Thank you all**

**Dr. Poonam Silotia**

## Message



**Prof. Geeta Singh**

**(Director, CPDHE, University of Delhi)**

India – our mother land is a country where women have been respected and worshipped since the vedic times. Our country takes pride in homing great female warriors like Rani Lakshmi Bai, Razia Sutan and Maharani Jijabai who had shown exemplary courage and conviction in our struggle against the foreigners with their virtuous strength and determination. We have raised female philosophers like Gargi and Maitreyi in historic past, and sportsperson like P.T. Usha and Mary Kom in recent past who have made immense contribution to their respective fields in spite of growing up in a patriarchal society. It is very disheartening to witness the glaring gender inequalities existing in our country at present represented by the declining sex ratio of many states. There is a huge disparity between the female and male population with respect to various rights to education, property etc. all which aim at repressing the movement, thought and expression of girls. Considered as a financial burden, girls in poverty struck families are married off at a tender age, lest they develop a voice of their own, with which they may demand liberation from bondage which is incidentally the prerogative enjoyed by boys in most of the families. *'Beti bachao beti padao'* is a noble initiative started by our honorable prime minister Shri Narendra Modi to address to the needs and cause of empowering our girls with education, so that they may nurture and grow. Today we can see that girls are performing very well in all spheres like the corporate sector, sports, research, aviation and animation which were once considered to be the male's domain. Today the females are not just performing but, due to their dedication, sincerity and hard work are raising up to top positions like the C.E.O., C.F.O. and Vice Chancellor of Universities serving as role models for others to follow. The initiative provides financial, social and academic support to people to encourage them to teach their girls who shall grow up to become confident, independent and secure individuals who will nurture similar values in others. Education provides knowledge and broadens up mental horizons of girls by bringing them in contact with ideas of development and advancement which promotes their

confidence and they are capable of making better career choices, to not only support themselves but also their families. We are proud of fathers like Shri Mahavir Singh Phogat who believed in the potential of his daughters - Geeta and Babita Phogat , and challenged prevalent conservative and male-dominated system of society to raise women world champions in wrestling, an area which was earlier closed for girls, making the family, state and entire nation proud. It gives confidence to other families with similar aspirations to acknowledge, promote and support girls in academic endeavors. Many researches have shown that family members of educated females are educated, healthy and enjoy a better standard of living. So, let us pledge this day to foster all the beautiful children with love, care and education irrespective of their gender, to build up a nation with strong, tolerant and secure individuals who are sure of their economic and social liberations taking India to a high world pedestal.

**Thank you all**

**Prof. Geeta Singh**



## Message



**Professor Namita Ranganathan**

**Dept of Education, University of Delhi**

**Presiding Officer, ICC, University of Delhi**

I am very happy to see the efforts of Aditi Mahavidyalaya in coming out with a book containing an anthology of articles on Gender and Women's Issues which cut across all domains of public life. The book is inspired by the discourse that emerged from the invited lectures and paper contributions in the UGC National Seminar that the College organised earlier in the year. The theme of the seminar was 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' with a clear aim to address policy imperatives, best practices and innovative approaches related to girl's education and well-being. Issues of identity, self, gender roles, stereotypes, health hazards, vulnerabilities and institutional support mechanisms all surfaced in the presentations and discussions. The developmental continuity between girlhood and womanhood also emerged as a significant point.

It is indeed very heartening to see the discussion and discourse generation in a seminar finding expression in a book.

Congratulations to Aditi Mahavidyalaya.

**Professor Namita Ranganathan**

## Message



**Dr. Bhawna Rajput**

### **Co-Convener & Organising Secretary**

It is a well known fact that educating a girl is an investment not only to the family, but to the whole community, and the nation. The educated girls correspond to empowered women and the result can be seen in the future generations as empowered women are often linked to empowered children. Higher education is the gateway to economic security and opportunity particularly for women in India. Women are part of socio-economic system and hold rich cultural and traditional values. Thus, the progress of women is equated with the progress of the nation.

There has been phenomenal growth of higher education in India since independence. There were only 20 Universities and 500 colleges at the time of independence. There are 903 Universities, 39050 Colleges and 10011 Stand Alone Institutions (as listed on AISHE) with 36.6 million students in the year 2018. India's higher education system is the third largest in the world, next to the United States and China. The total Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in age 18-23 is steadily increasing from 20.8 in 2011-12 to 25.8 in 2017-18. Female enrollment rose even faster, with a GER under 20 to 25.4, a significant jump of 30 percent. **The GER between genders is normalizing**, again indicating that more women are turning towards higher education to improve their livelihood. The gender parity index (GPI) in higher education – measured as the ratio of female to male enrollment in higher education institutes has improved but remains lower than 1 (In 2017-18 the number of female student per 100 male students are 91). This gender gap is more significant for technical and professional educations such as BTech, MTech, law and MBA. For instance, In BTech, there are only 39 women per 100 men. The under-representation of women in higher education demonstrates the non-optimal utilization of the vast pool of human talent in the country.

The theme of conference echoes an urgent call for the adoption inclusive approach of higher education as the foundation of the sustainable development and it conforms to our Government's objective of *Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao mission*. The conference will bring together leading academicians, researchers and Government officials to exchange, present and discuss the most recent innovations, trends, and concerns as well as practical challenges encountered and solutions adopted for improving the women's access to higher education in India.

**Thank You All**

**Dr. Bhawna Rajput**

## Message



### **NATURE.**

### **Ms. Shalini Gulati**

National Association Targeting Upliftment through Research and Education (NATURE) a registered voluntary organization under the collective wisdom of educationalist and social workers has been working for improving the plight of children from the slums of Delhi. Ms. Shalini Gulati, a development Professional is founder of the organization. She has worked for 25 years with marginalized group (disabled, HIV/AIDS victims and Women) in different parts of India and Africa. So far with our intervention we have supported more than 500 children getting admissions in the main stream schools. We have observed that more than 75% of the girls we supported could not continue their education for more than a year. When the team of NATURE discussed with them and their parents the shocking revelations were: a. The erratic classes b. Eve teasing c. Responsibilities of younger siblings and other household work d. Inability to do homework

We also observed that particularly mothers did not see much significance of getting their daughters educated as they feel that their daughters must learn the household skills and practice them so that at the time of marriage they have efficiency in household skills. We feel that the high truancy is also due to poor connect by the Govt. teachers with the parents of children from lower social economic background. In the focus group discussions the parents pointed out that their adolescent girls have high sense of insecurity, molestation and fear of rape, Thus they are not at ease going to the co-education school.

NATURE is working in Raghubeer Nagar JJ Cluster, West Delhi. Raghubeer Nagar is biggest community in Delhi. The organization is providing education to drop out children and focussed on alternative education. We are teaching students to develop their communication skills, enhance their memory through mnemonics and upgrade their calculation skills through Vedic Maths.

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### Women's Participation in Higher Education: The Indian Perspective\*

**Dr Bhawna Rajput (Associate Professor, Department of Commerce, Aditi Mahavidyalaya, University of Delhi.)**

**Dr Anupama (Associate Professor, Department of Commerce, Janki Devi Memorial College, University of Delhi.)**

**'You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women' - Jawaharlal Nehru**

#### **ABSTRACT**

The paper examines the trends and issues concerning women's access to higher education in India. The study provides an overview of the challenges and strategic initiatives of Government of India for improving the status of women's access to the higher education. The participation in terms of distribution of institutes and enrolment has been studied during the period of **2012-2019**. It is also relevant to analyze whether of states according to their level of women's participation vary significantly over the sample period. To address this issue, Kendall's index of rank concordance is computed. . The study shows that the women participation in terms of women's based higher education institutes is increasing in almost all states of India. The women enrolment in higher education is also increasing. The rate of increase is however slow in almost all the states of India. The result of **Kendall's index of rank concordance** shows that there exists stability in ranks obtained by various states with regard to their women's participation in higher education.

**Key Words: Women's Education Institutes, Women Enrolments, Kendall's Index of Rank Concordance.**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Higher education refers to the education beyond the secondary level especially provided by a college or university. The cultural, social and economic development of the country is highly dependent on higher education of women. Higher education improves skills for girls to become

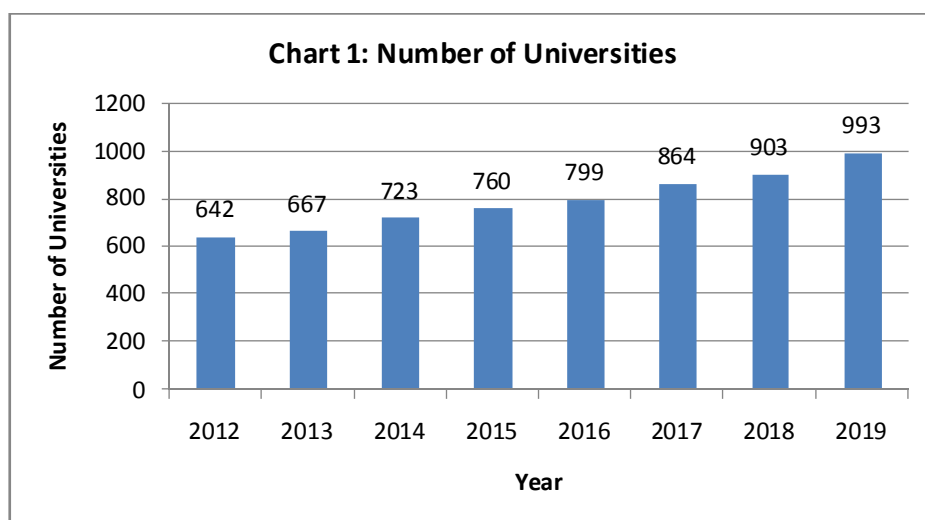
more self-reliant and provides them with more opportunities and also provides a better overall quality of life. Education is considered as a milestone for women empowerment.

Higher education for women in India has gained a wider role and responsibility all over the world.

Government Policy on Education in India gives high priority to gender equality and committed the entire educational system to work for women's empowerment. An overview of the participation of women in higher education shows that women in India are benefitting from the expansion of educational opportunity. There had been a phenomenal growth in the number of women students' enrolment in higher education across all the states in India.

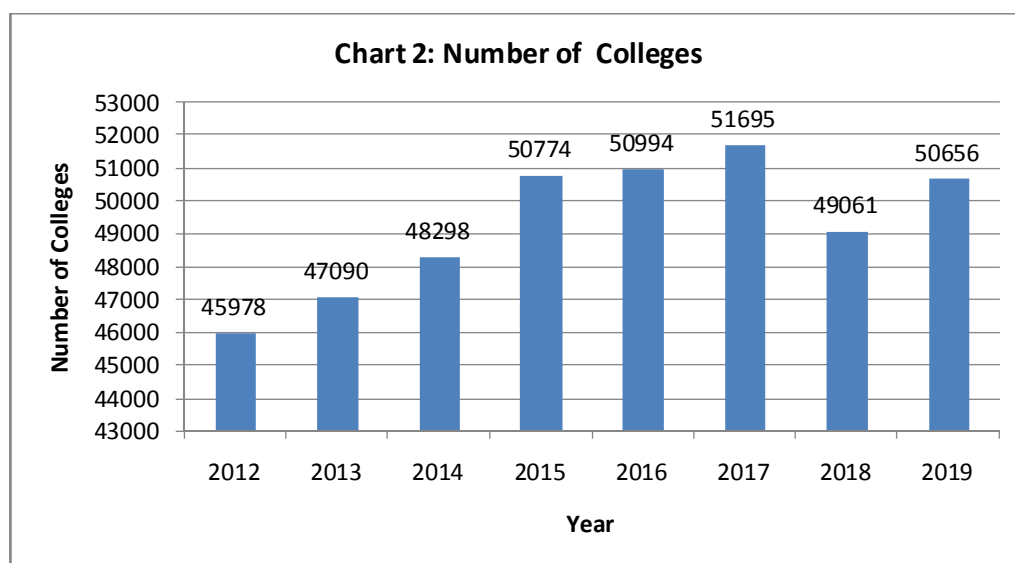
### **GROWTH OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA**

At present, India possesses a highly developed higher education system which offers facility of education and training in almost all aspects of human's creative and intellectual endeavors. The number of universities has increased consistently from 642 in the year 2011-12 to 993 in 2019 (**Chart 1**). Universities are the Institutions which are empowered to award degree under some Act of Parliament or State Legislature. Universities include central universities managed and funded by central government and state universities managed and funded by state (provincial) governments, institutions of national importance, deemed to be universities, private universities, open universities and women universities etc.



**Source: Author's Own Compilation based on AISHE Annual Reports**

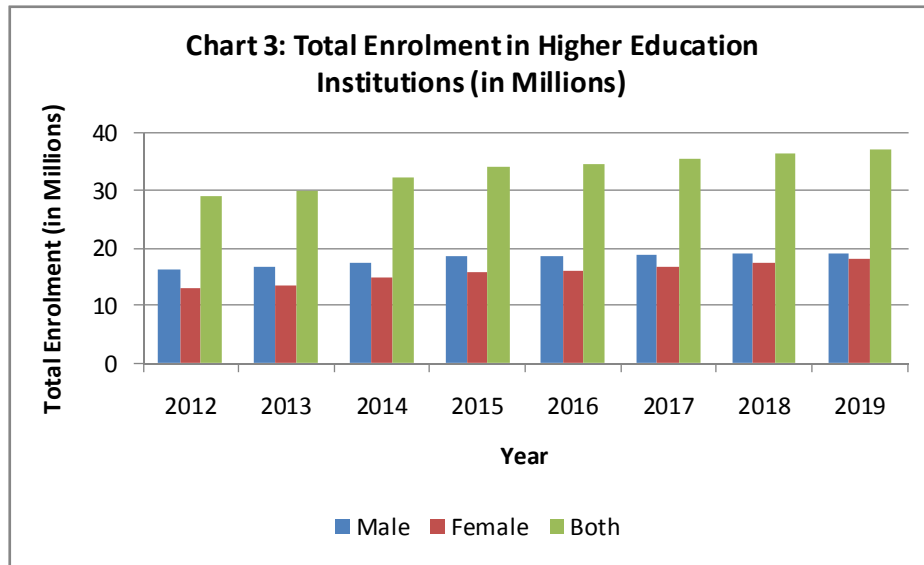
The number of colleges during the sample period is showing an increasing trend except the slight fall in the year 2017-18 (**Chart 2**). The colleges are the institutions that are not empowered to provide degree in its own name and therefore are affiliated/recognized with Universities. Stand-alone Institutions(not affiliated with Universities) are also not empowered to provide degree and run Diploma Level Programmes. The examples are Polytechnics, Nursing Institutes, Teacher Training Institutes etc.



**Source: Author's Own Compilation** The number of colleges includes stand alone institutions.

The enrolment of students in the higher education institutions has increased from 29.19 million 2011-12 to 37.4 million in 2018-19 registering around 28 percent growth during the sample period (**Chart 3**).





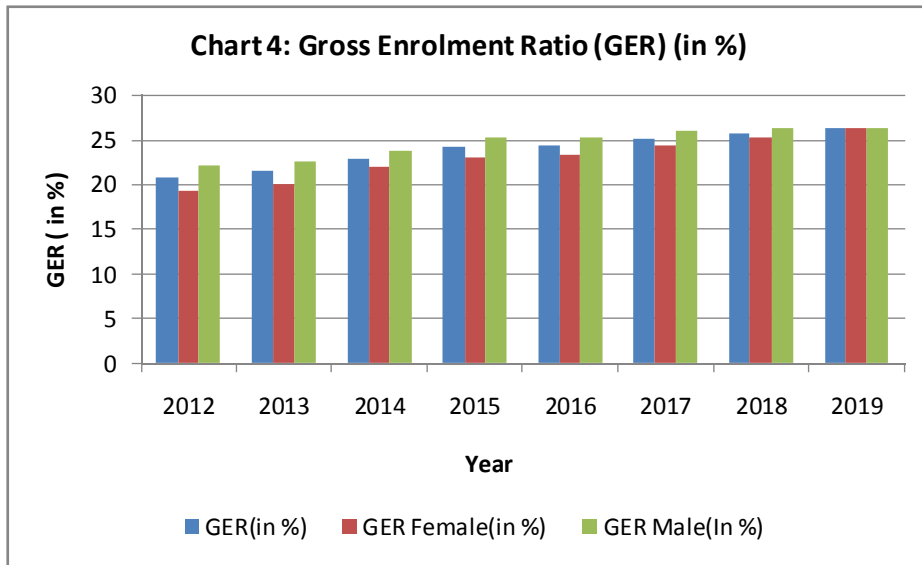
Source: Author’s Own Compilation based on AISHE Annual Reports

**GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO (GER) IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

The GER is widely used to show the general level of participation in and capacity of higher education. The Gross enrolment ratio is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Gross Enrolment Ratio} = \frac{\text{Enrolment in higher education}}{\text{Population in the age group 18-23}} \quad \text{(equation 1)}$$

India’s higher education Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is at 20.8 percent in 2011-12 which has increased to 26.3per cent in the year 2018-19(**Chart 4**).Even though our higher education system is one of the largest in the world, the GER is far below the world average of 27per cent. Though the Indian Government’s target is to achieve a GER of 30% by 2020, yet it is not very ambitious.



Source: Author’s Own Compilation based on AISHE Annual Reports

### GROWTH OF WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

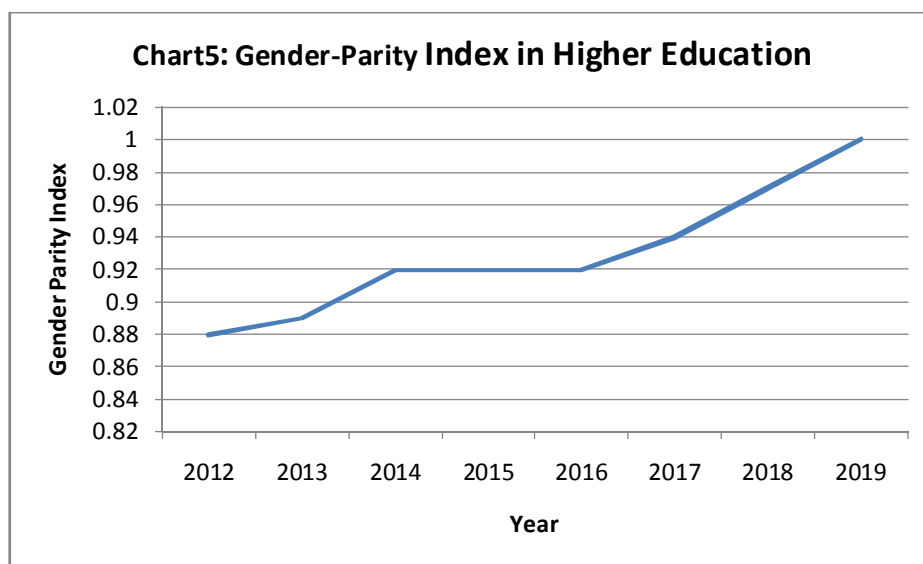
India had observed a consistent growth in the participation of women in higher education. The Percentage of women enrolment and gross enrolment ratio in India is showing an increasing trend (Chart 3 and Chart 4). Further, the Gender Parity Index (GPI) in higher education is calculated for 18-23 years of age group. The ratio of the female to male in higher education measures progress towards gender equity and the level of learning opportunities available for women in relation to those available to men.

The Gender Parity Index is given by:

$$\text{Gender Parity Index} = \frac{\text{GER of girls in higher education}}{\text{GER of boys in higher education}} \quad \text{(equation 2)}$$

GPI for higher education equal to one indicates the parity between females and males. The value less than one indicate a disparity in favor of boys and a value greater than one indicates a disparity in favor of girls. Chart 5 shows that GPI value remains below one during the sample period but showing an increasing trend and reaches to one in the year 2018-19. Thus there is progress towards

gender parity in education participation and learning opportunities available for females in relation to those available to males.



**Source: Author's Own Compilation based on AISHE Annual Reports**

#### STATE-WISE WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

In 2018-19, 16 States have percentage of women Gross Enrolment ratio less than average national value and include Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep, Bihar, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Tripura etc. The states having the GER more than average national value includes Uttar Pradesh, Meghalaya, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Arunachal Pradesh etc (Table 1).

**Table 1: Female Gross Enrolment Ratio (2011-2019)**

| States                      | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Andaman and Nicobar Islands | 13.8    | 22.7    | 27.1    | 24.6    | 24.7    | 24.2    | 22.4    | 26.1    |
| Andhra Pradesh              | 26.4    | 23.6    | 26.7    | 27.3    | 26.9    | 28.4    | 27.1    | 29      |
| Arunachal Pradesh           | 20.2    | 19.8    | 26.6    | 27.9    | 28.5    | 28.5    | 27.8    | 29.5    |

|                                   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| <b>Pradesh</b>                    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| <b>Assam</b>                      | 14.8 | 13.7 | 15.2 | 14.3 | 14.7 | 16.6 | 17.8 | 18.3 |
| <b>Bihar</b>                      | 10.8 | 11.6 | 11.5 | 12.4 | 12.6 | 12.8 | 11.5 | 12   |
| <b>Chandigarh</b>                 | 54.4 | 58.3 | 65.6 | 66.4 | 70.4 | 68.8 | 67.7 | 63.9 |
| <b>Chhattisgarh</b>               | 10.1 | 11.7 | 13.1 | 14   | 14.6 | 15.8 | 18.3 | 19.2 |
| <b>Dadra and<br/>Nagar Haveli</b> | 6.4  | 7.1  | 8.3  | 9.5  | 11.3 | 11.9 | 12.4 | 12.6 |
| <b>Daman and<br/>Diu</b>          | 6.2  | 6.9  | 7.9  | 9.5  | 9.2  | 8.5  | 8.9  | 9.8  |
| <b>Delhi</b>                      | 39   | 40.8 | 44.6 | 45.4 | 48.2 | 48.4 | 48   | 50   |
| <b>Goa</b>                        | 25.9 | 31   | 31.8 | 30.7 | 30.9 | 31.9 | 31.9 | 35   |
| <b>Gujarat</b>                    | 14.7 | 16.2 | 17.2 | 17.5 | 18.3 | 17.3 | 18.2 | 18.7 |
| <b>Haryana</b>                    | 27.7 | 26.6 | 25.9 | 27.5 | 26.4 | 29.7 | 30.7 | 32.4 |
| <b>Himachal<br/>Pradesh</b>       | 25.1 | 26.3 | 28.8 | 33.3 | 35.5 | 40.7 | 42.2 | 44.9 |
| <b>Jammu and<br/>Kashmir</b>      | 24   | 27.1 | 26.7 | 25.5 | 26.2 | 27.7 | 29   | 32.2 |
| <b>Jharkhand</b>                  | 9.5  | 12   | 12.5 | 14.8 | 14.8 | 17   | 17.6 | 18.7 |
| <b>Karnataka</b>                  | 22.7 | 24.5 | 25.6 | 26   | 25.9 | 26.6 | 28.5 | 29.4 |
| <b>Kerala</b>                     | 25.6 | 25.8 | 28.7 | 33.3 | 35   | 40.1 | 40.4 | 43.2 |
| <b>Lakshadweep</b>                | 17.5 | 17.7 | 18   | 6.2  | 10.2 | 10.6 | 12   | 11.6 |
| <b>Madhya<br/>Pradesh</b>         | 14.6 | 15.2 | 17.3 | 17.3 | 17.9 | 19   | 20.5 | 21.2 |
| <b>Maharashtra</b>                | 24.3 | 20.6 | 23.9 | 25.6 | 27.6 | 28.2 | 29.5 | 30.3 |
| <b>Manipur</b>                    | 29.9 | 29   | 37.6 | 34.8 | 33.1 | 34.7 | 32.2 | 33.8 |
| <b>Meghalaya</b>                  | 18.5 | 19.7 | 18.9 | 21.2 | 21.1 | 23.8 | 25.1 | 27.7 |
| <b>Mizoram</b>                    | 18.3 | 22   | 22.7 | 23   | 23   | 23.7 | 21   | 24.8 |
| <b>Nagaland</b>                   | 13.4 | 12.8 | 13.9 | 16.1 | 15.6 | 17   | 17.9 | 19.7 |
| <b>Odisha</b>                     | 15   | 14.1 | 14.8 | 15.9 | 17.8 | 18.9 | 20.1 | 20   |
| <b>Puducherry</b>                 | 36.3 | 41.8 | 44.3 | 44.2 | 42.1 | 44.5 | 48.1 | 51.6 |

|                      |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Punjab</b>        | <b>23.6</b> | <b>25.6</b> | <b>27.4</b> | <b>28.4</b> | <b>28.5</b> | <b>30.6</b> | <b>33.6</b> | <b>34.3</b> |
| <b>Rajasthan</b>     | <b>15.5</b> | <b>14.8</b> | <b>17.8</b> | <b>17.9</b> | <b>18.5</b> | <b>19.3</b> | <b>20.6</b> | <b>23</b>   |
| <b>Sikkim</b>        | <b>27.4</b> | <b>26.9</b> | <b>29.3</b> | <b>32.4</b> | <b>38.5</b> | <b>40.8</b> | <b>41.1</b> | <b>53.9</b> |
| <b>Tamil Nadu</b>    | <b>36.8</b> | <b>38.7</b> | <b>40.4</b> | <b>43.4</b> | <b>42.4</b> | <b>45.6</b> | <b>48.2</b> | <b>48.3</b> |
| <b>Telangana</b>     | <b>0</b>    | <b>29.3</b> | <b>32.4</b> | <b>33</b>   | <b>33.4</b> | <b>33.6</b> | <b>34.2</b> | <b>36.5</b> |
| <b>Tripura</b>       | <b>10.2</b> | <b>11.7</b> | <b>12.9</b> | <b>13.5</b> | <b>14</b>   | <b>16.8</b> | <b>18.8</b> | <b>17.4</b> |
| <b>Uttar Pradesh</b> | <b>17.2</b> | <b>20.4</b> | <b>23</b>   | <b>25.5</b> | <b>24.9</b> | <b>25.3</b> | <b>26.7</b> | <b>27.5</b> |
| <b>Uttarakhand</b>   | <b>32.3</b> | <b>34</b>   | <b>34.9</b> | <b>32.8</b> | <b>32.9</b> | <b>33</b>   | <b>36.3</b> | <b>39.1</b> |
| <b>West Bengal</b>   | <b>11.8</b> | <b>13.2</b> | <b>14.4</b> | <b>15.8</b> | <b>16.2</b> | <b>17.2</b> | <b>17.6</b> | <b>18.7</b> |
| <b>ALL India</b>     | <b>19.4</b> | <b>20.1</b> | <b>22</b>   | <b>23.2</b> | <b>23.5</b> | <b>24.5</b> | <b>25.4</b> | <b>26.4</b> |

**Source: Author's Own Compilation based on AISHE Annual Reports**

The state wise Gender Parity Index (GPI) is given in **Table 2**. In the year 2018-2019 the states below national average of one are Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Tripura, Gujarat, Maharashtra etc. The state with GPI score of greater than one are Manipur, Telangana, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Jammu and Kashmir, Nagaland etc. three states have GPI of one which includes Rajasthan, Uttarakhand and Sikkim.

**Table 2: Gender Parity Index (2011-2019)**

| <b>States</b>                      | <b>2011-12</b> | <b>2012-13</b> | <b>2013-14</b> | <b>2014-15</b> | <b>2015-16</b> | <b>2016-17</b> | <b>2017-18</b> | <b>2018-19</b> |
|------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Andaman and Nicobar Islands</b> | <b>1.26</b>    | <b>1.28</b>    | <b>1.13</b>    | <b>1.13</b>    | <b>1.11</b>    | <b>1.13</b>    | <b>1.06</b>    | <b>1.29</b>    |
| <b>Andhra Pradesh</b>              | <b>0.79</b>    | <b>0.76</b>    | <b>0.76</b>    | <b>0.78</b>    | <b>0.77</b>    | <b>0.78</b>    | <b>0.78</b>    | <b>0.81</b>    |
| <b>Arunachal Pradesh</b>           | <b>0.89</b>    | <b>1.08</b>    | <b>1.04</b>    | <b>0.97</b>    | <b>0.99</b>    | <b>0.97</b>    | <b>0.88</b>    | <b>0.99</b>    |
| <b>Assam</b>                       | <b>1.01</b>    | <b>0.97</b>    | <b>0.92</b>    | <b>0.93</b>    | <b>0.9</b>     | <b>0.93</b>    | <b>0.96</b>    | <b>0.95</b>    |
| <b>Bihar</b>                       | <b>0.77</b>    | <b>0.8</b>     | <b>0.81</b>    | <b>0.82</b>    | <b>0.8</b>     | <b>0.8</b>     | <b>0.79</b>    | <b>0.79</b>    |
| <b>Chandigarh</b>                  | <b>1.64</b>    | <b>1.13</b>    | <b>1.35</b>    | <b>1.37</b>    | <b>1.45</b>    | <b>1.45</b>    | <b>1.39</b>    | <b>1.54</b>    |

|                                   |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Chhattisgarh</b>               | <b>0.92</b> | <b>0.88</b> | <b>0.88</b> | <b>0.91</b> | <b>0.93</b> | <b>0.97</b> | <b>0.99</b> | <b>1.06</b> |
| <b>Dadra and<br/>Nagar Haveli</b> | <b>1</b>    | <b>1.26</b> | <b>1.19</b> | <b>1.24</b> | <b>1.45</b> | <b>1.56</b> | <b>1.72</b> | <b>1.7</b>  |
| <b>Daman and<br/>Diu</b>          | <b>2.07</b> | <b>2.06</b> | <b>2.13</b> | <b>2.12</b> | <b>2.01</b> | <b>1.87</b> | <b>2.21</b> | <b>2.34</b> |
| <b>Delhi</b>                      | <b>1</b>    | <b>1.05</b> | <b>1.07</b> | <b>1.08</b> | <b>1.12</b> | <b>1.13</b> | <b>1.07</b> | <b>1.16</b> |
| <b>Goa</b>                        | <b>1.21</b> | <b>1.57</b> | <b>1.46</b> | <b>1.22</b> | <b>1.23</b> | <b>1.28</b> | <b>1.28</b> | <b>1.33</b> |
| <b>Gujarat</b>                    | <b>0.81</b> | <b>0.8</b>  | <b>0.8</b>  | <b>0.79</b> | <b>0.8</b>  | <b>0.75</b> | <b>0.83</b> | <b>0.85</b> |
| <b>Haryana</b>                    | <b>0.98</b> | <b>0.92</b> | <b>0.9</b>  | <b>1</b>    | <b>1.02</b> | <b>1.04</b> | <b>1.13</b> | <b>1.23</b> |
| <b>Himachal<br/>Pradesh</b>       | <b>1.02</b> | <b>1.04</b> | <b>0.97</b> | <b>1.14</b> | <b>1.2</b>  | <b>1.23</b> | <b>1.24</b> | <b>1.3</b>  |
| <b>Jammu and<br/>Kashmir</b>      | <b>1.1</b>  | <b>1.12</b> | <b>1.09</b> | <b>1.06</b> | <b>1.12</b> | <b>1.17</b> | <b>1.1</b>  | <b>1.09</b> |
| <b>Jharkhand</b>                  | <b>0.93</b> | <b>0.98</b> | <b>0.91</b> | <b>0.93</b> | <b>0.92</b> | <b>0.93</b> | <b>0.96</b> | <b>0.96</b> |
| <b>Karnataka</b>                  | <b>0.91</b> | <b>0.94</b> | <b>0.96</b> | <b>0.97</b> | <b>0.99</b> | <b>1.01</b> | <b>1.05</b> | <b>1.04</b> |
| <b>Kerala</b>                     | <b>1.44</b> | <b>1.39</b> | <b>1.36</b> | <b>1.38</b> | <b>1.32</b> | <b>1.41</b> | <b>1.26</b> | <b>1.4</b>  |
| <b>Lakshadweep</b>                | <b>2.84</b> | <b>2.8</b>  | <b>2.8</b>  | <b>3.08</b> | <b>2.48</b> | <b>2.6</b>  | <b>3.79</b> | <b>3.4</b>  |
| <b>Madhya<br/>Pradesh</b>         | <b>0.67</b> | <b>0.67</b> | <b>0.8</b>  | <b>0.8</b>  | <b>0.85</b> | <b>0.91</b> | <b>0.94</b> | <b>0.97</b> |
| <b>Maharashtra</b>                | <b>0.86</b> | <b>0.83</b> | <b>0.85</b> | <b>0.86</b> | <b>0.86</b> | <b>0.88</b> | <b>0.91</b> | <b>0.9</b>  |
| <b>Manipur</b>                    | <b>0.98</b> | <b>0.94</b> | <b>0.99</b> | <b>0.94</b> | <b>0.94</b> | <b>0.98</b> | <b>1.03</b> | <b>1.01</b> |
| <b>Meghalaya</b>                  | <b>1.13</b> | <b>1.06</b> | <b>0.96</b> | <b>1.07</b> | <b>1.04</b> | <b>1.03</b> | <b>1.04</b> | <b>1.17</b> |
| <b>Mizoram</b>                    | <b>0.93</b> | <b>0.98</b> | <b>0.96</b> | <b>0.98</b> | <b>0.91</b> | <b>0.94</b> | <b>0.85</b> | <b>0.94</b> |
| <b>Nagaland</b>                   | <b>0.74</b> | <b>0.77</b> | <b>0.82</b> | <b>1.06</b> | <b>1.1</b>  | <b>1.06</b> | <b>1</b>    | <b>1.11</b> |
| <b>Odisha</b>                     | <b>0.82</b> | <b>0.76</b> | <b>0.82</b> | <b>0.81</b> | <b>0.83</b> | <b>0.82</b> | <b>0.85</b> | <b>0.82</b> |
| <b>Puducherry</b>                 | <b>0.9</b>  | <b>0.9</b>  | <b>0.87</b> | <b>0.93</b> | <b>0.95</b> | <b>1.06</b> | <b>1.12</b> | <b>1.24</b> |
| <b>Punjab</b>                     | <b>1.05</b> | <b>1.14</b> | <b>1.16</b> | <b>1.09</b> | <b>1.1</b>  | <b>1.13</b> | <b>1.22</b> | <b>1.35</b> |
| <b>Rajasthan</b>                  | <b>0.75</b> | <b>0.69</b> | <b>0.83</b> | <b>0.82</b> | <b>0.85</b> | <b>0.89</b> | <b>0.91</b> | <b>1</b>    |
| <b>Sikkim</b>                     | <b>0.95</b> | <b>1.23</b> | <b>1.11</b> | <b>1.14</b> | <b>1.05</b> | <b>1.2</b>  | <b>1.21</b> | <b>1</b>    |
| <b>Tamil Nadu</b>                 | <b>0.85</b> | <b>0.85</b> | <b>0.89</b> | <b>0.92</b> | <b>0.92</b> | <b>0.95</b> | <b>0.98</b> | <b>0.97</b> |

|               |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Telangana     | 0    | 0.79 | 0.84 | 0.84 | 0.85 | 0.88 | 0.92 | 1.02 |
| Tripura       | 0.7  | 0.71 | 0.72 | 0.67 | 0.7  | 0.78 | 0.79 | 0.83 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 0.98 | 1.09 | 1.13 | 1.04 | 1.03 | 1.03 | 1.06 | 1.14 |
| Uttarakhand   | 1.07 | 1.04 | 1.06 | 0.94 | 0.98 | 0.98 | 1    | 1    |
| West Bengal   | 0.76 | 0.77 | 0.79 | 0.83 | 0.85 | 0.87 | 0.88 | 0.94 |
| ALL India     | 0.88 | 0.89 | 0.92 | 0.92 | 0.92 | 0.94 | 0.97 | 1    |

Source: Author's Own Compilation based on AISHE Annual Reports.

### INTER-STATE VARIATION FOR INDICATORS OF WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

It is relevant to analyze whether rankings of the states according to their level of Women's participation in higher education (as measured by female enrolment, female GER and GPI) vary significantly over years. To address this issue, Kendall's index of rank concordance for each of the variable is computed (**Table 3**). It may be seen that null hypothesis of no association among ranks of different years is rejected decisively for all years and for all variables at 5 percent level of significance. Thus, cross-sectional dispersion of women participation in higher education is not diminishing over time and the laggards are not showing any indication of improvement over the years. It is clear that there exists stability in ranks obtained by various states with regard to their level of female participation in higher education. So, overall gap among states is not showing any evidence of narrowing down.

**Table 3: Kendall's Index for Indicators of Women Participation in Higher Education**

| Year | Kendall's index<br>of Female GER | Kendall's index<br>Of Female Enrolment | Kendall's index<br>Of Gender Parity Index |
|------|----------------------------------|--|---|
| 2011 | 1                                | 1                                      | 0.9921                                    |
| 2012 | 0.7508*                          | 0.8857*                                | 0.7492*                                   |
| 2013 | 0.7413*                          | 0.8698*                                | 0.7190*                                   |
| 2014 | 0.7000*                          | 0.8603*                                | 0.6810*                                   |
| 2015 | 0.6968*                          | 0.8444*                                | 0.6524*                                   |
| 2016 | 0.7159*                          | 0.8508*                                | 0.6175*                                   |

|      |         |         |         |
|------|---------|---------|---------|
| 2017 | 0.7000* | 0.8413* | 0.5873* |
| 2018 | 0.6841* | 0.8444* | 0.5651* |

**Source: Authors own Calculation \* Significant at 5% level of significance.**

## CONCLUSION

The development of higher education is one of the most important key factors in promoting socio-economic growth in India. The concerted effort to expand the base of education has resulted into substantial increase in the number of institutions and the enrolment of students. The women's participation in higher education in India has also grown both in terms of number of women's enrolment. The analysis of Gender parity index in higher education in India reveals that there is an improvement in equality of opportunities in higher education for women. GER in institutions of higher education is approximately 26.4 per cent in 2018-19, which is lower than the average of the world as well as average of the developed countries. Although, overall demand for higher education in India is increasing but there are wide variations in Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) and Gender Parity Index (GPI) across states and union territories. **Kendall's index** for female participation in higher education shows that there exists stability in ranks obtained by various states with regard to their level of female higher education. So, overall gap among states is not showing any evidence of narrowing down.

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### नुक़्कड़ नाटकों में स्त्री-शिक्षा और स्त्री-सशक्तिकरण

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भारत विविधताओं से भरी संस्कृति का देश है। सदियों के अनेक उतार-चढ़ावों के कारण यहाँ राजनीतिक, सामाजिक, सांस्कृतिक, आर्थिक और धार्मिक स्थितियाँ बदलती रहीं। निरंतर होने वाले परिवर्तनों में समाज और परिवार में 'स्त्री' का स्थान पीछे होता रहा। पितृसत्तात्मक व्यवस्था से पूरित भेदभावपूर्ण दृष्टिकोण होने के कारण स्त्रियों की शिक्षा और उनके व्यक्तित्व के विकास को हमेशा अनदेखा किया गया, उन्हें उनके बचपन से ही मूलभूत अधिकारों से वंचित रखा गया। यहाँ तक कि उन्हें पैदा होते ही या भ्रूण में मार डालने की कुप्रवृत्ति चली जिससे एक ओर स्त्री-पुरुष की अनुपात दर में असमानता आयी तो दूसरी ओर समाज के विकास की दिशा भी स्वस्थ नहीं रही। इन्हीं नकारात्मक परिणामों से देश, समाज और परिवार को बचाने और विकास की संतुलित दिशा में ले जाने के लिए भारत सरकार द्वारा 'बेटी बचाओ बेटी पढ़ाओ' जैसे कार्यक्रम शुरू किये गये। इस कार्यक्रम का मूल उद्देश्य यह है कि यदि लड़कियों को भली-भाँति शिक्षित किया जाएगा तो उनके साथ हो रहे अन्याय, शोषण और असमानता का अंत होगा, वे अपने अधिकारों और अस्मिता के प्रति जागृत होंगी और स्वयंमेव सशक्त होकर समाज के विकास में सहायक बनेंगी।

शिक्षा वह साधन है जिसके माध्यम से कोई भी मनुष्य अपने जीवन और व्यक्तित्व को सँवार सकता है। 'बेटी बचाओ बेटी पढ़ाओ' के अंतर्गत 'बेटियों के पढ़ने' पर जोर देने का तात्पर्य यह कतई नहीं है कि नारी शिक्षित और आर्थिक रूप से आत्मनिर्भर होकर पुरुष को अपना प्रतिद्वन्द्वी मानते हुए उसके सामने ही मोर्चा लेकर खड़ी हो जाए। बल्कि इसके उद्देश्य के अंतर्गत पुरुष के बराबर समानता का अधिकार प्राप्त करके उसके साथ मैत्रीपूर्ण सम्बन्ध के समीकरण बनाने में सक्षम बनना अधिक महत्वपूर्ण है। जिस प्रकार संतुलित विकास के लिए शरीर को भोजन की आवश्यकता होती है, उसी प्रकार मानसिक विकास के लिए शिक्षा आवश्यक है। अगर नारी ही शिक्षित नहीं होगी तो वह सफल गृहिणी और कुशल माँ नहीं बन पाएगी, जिसका खामियाजा पूरे राष्ट्र को भुगतना पड़ेगा। समाज में बाल-अपराध बढ़ने का मुख्य कारण बालक का मानसिक रूप से परिपक्व और विकसित न होना है। अगर एक माँ ही अशिक्षित होगी तो उसे अपने बच्चों का सही मार्गदर्शन करके उनका मानसिक विकास करने में कठिनाई आने की आशंका रहेगी, जिसके चलते एक स्वस्थ समाज का विकास की दिशा में बढ़ना भी समस्यापूर्ण होगा। अतः शिक्षित नारी ही अज्ञान और निराशा के अन्धकार से निकालकर परिवार को अपेक्षाकृत अधिक सही राह दिखा सकती है।

‘बेटी बचाओ बेटी पढ़ाओ’ योजना भारत सरकार के महिला एवं बाल विकास मंत्रालय, स्वास्थ्य मंत्रालय और परिवार कल्याण मंत्रालय एवं मानव संसाधन विकास की एक संयुक्त पहल है। बालिकाओं को संरक्षण और सशक्त करने के लिए ‘बेटी बचाओ बेटी पढ़ाओ’ योजना की शुरुआत 22 जनवरी, 2015 को की गई है। इस योजना के लक्ष्य को आम जनता तक प्रसारित और प्रचारित करने की दिशा में अन्य जागरूकता सम्बन्धी कार्यक्रमों के साथ ही नुक्कड़ नाटक एक महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा रहे हैं।

जन-जागरूकता के लिए नुक्कड़ नाटक एक प्रभावशाली प्रदर्शनकारी माध्यम है जो समसामयिक मुद्दों पर सशक्तता से बात रखते हुए एक संतुलित और विवेकशील दृष्टिकोण बनाने में समाज मदद करता है। यह अपनी प्रकृति से ही जनता के सामाजिक सरोकारों का पक्षधर होता है, इसके माध्यम से सामाजिक, राजनीतिक, आर्थिक, सांस्कृतिक और मानवीय स्तर पर विकास की दिशा बनाने में मदद मिलती है। उत्साह, साहस और उत्तेजना से पूर्ण शैली और बिना किसी ताम-झाम के, कम-से-कम संसाधनों में नुक्कड़ नाटक महत्वपूर्ण सन्देश देने का काम करता है। “नुक्कड़ नाटक एक ऐसी नाट्य विधा है, जो परंपरागत रंगमंचीय नाटकों से भिन्न है। यह रंगमंच पर नहीं खेला जाता तथा आमतौर पर इसकी रचना किसी एक लेखक द्वारा नहीं की जाती, बल्कि सामाजिक परिस्थितियों और संदर्भों से उपजे बहुत जरूरी विषयों को इनके द्वारा उठा लिया जाता है। जैसाकि नाम से जाहिर है इसे किसी सड़क, गली, चौराहे या किसी संस्थान के गेट अथवा किसी भी सार्वजनिक स्थल पर खेला जाता है।” देश, काल और समाज की परिस्थितियों और तात्कालिक मुद्दों के सन्दर्भ में नुक्कड़ नाटकों के विषय अनेक हो सकते हैं। नुक्कड़ नाटकों में युवाओं की भागीदारी अधिक रहती है, इसीलिए इनकी प्रदर्शन शैली भी ऊर्जावान और उत्तेजित करने वाली होती है जो अपने दर्शक में ‘कुछ करने’ का जज्बा भर देती है।

विभिन्न सरकारी / गैर-सरकारी, शैक्षणिक / गैर-शैक्षणिक संस्थानों, विभिन्न एन.जी.ओ., विश्वविद्यालयों के कैम्पस में स्त्री-शिक्षा और स्त्री-सशक्तिकरण को केंद्र में रखकर नुक्कड़ नाटकों का प्रदर्शन किया जाता रहा है। नुक्कड़ नाटकों में आम जनता के परिवेश के बहुत ही निकट के घरेलू उदाहरणों के माध्यम से मार्मिक दृश्यों को प्रस्तुत करते हुए जनता को झकझोरने और जागरूक करने का प्रयत्न किया जाता है। इन नाटकों में शामिल दृश्यों में अत्यंत संवेदनशीलता के साथ राष्ट्रीय, सामाजिक, आर्थिक, सांस्कृतिक और पारिवारिक उन्नति के मुद्दों पर महिलाओं की भागीदारी को बढ़ावा देने की बात समझाई जाती है। लड़कियों के बचपन, किशोरावस्था, वैवाहिक जीवन – आदि जीवन के विभिन्न पड़ावों में आनेवाली हर छोटी-बड़ी घटनाओं और परिस्थितियों का हवाला व उदाहरण लेते हुए इन नुक्कड़ नाटकों को तैयार किया जाता है, जो दर्शकों को वास्तविक जिन्दगी के बहुत ही निकट के लगते हैं।

प्रस्तुत आलेख में दो चर्चित नुक्कड़ नाटकों के उदाहरण से स्त्री-शिक्षा और स्त्री-सशक्तिकरण के मुद्दे पर प्रकाश डालने का प्रयास किया जा रहा है। ये नाटक हैं – ‘वो बोल उठी’ और ‘दुलारी की माँ’। विभिन्न संस्थाओं द्वारा इन दोनों नाटकों के सैंकड़ों प्रदर्शन हो चुके हैं। “दोनों नाटक पुरुष-प्रधान समाज के अंधे पूर्वाग्रहों और जातिगत आधार पर किये जा रहे दोहरे अपमान का करारा जवाब बनकर उभरते हैं। ये नुक्कड़ नाटक दुनिया की आधी आबादी द्वारा समानता और सम्मानपूर्वक जीवन जीने के लिए किये जा रहे संघर्ष के सच्चे हमदर्द और हमसफ़र बनकर आते हैं। ‘दुलारी की माँ’, ‘वो बोल उठी’ की रजनी, माँ और रेशम आज की जागृत औरतों की प्रतिनिधि हैं। ये वे आवाजें हैं जो पुरुष वर्चस्ववाद के बंद कानों और कुंद दिमागों को झकझोरती हैं। इन नाटकों से यह साफ़ जाहिर होता है कि मात्र समस्याएँ गिना देने भर से वह दूर नहीं होती बल्कि उनके लिए अनवरत और अनथक लड़ाई लड़ी जानी जरूरी है।”

‘वो बोल उठी’ नुक्कड़ नाटक में स्त्री-जीवन से सम्बंधित तीन छोटी-छोटी कहानियों के माध्यम से स्त्री के पक्ष की बात कही गयी है। पहली कहानी में रजनी नामक एक छोटी बच्ची के बचपने को, उसके ही घर में पितृसत्तात्मक व्यवस्था के चलते छीनते हुए दिखाया गया है। अपनी माँ की मदद करने के कारण रजनी को कई-कई बार स्कूल से छुट्टी लेनी पड़ती है, उसकी पढ़ाई का हर्जाना भी होता है, इसके बावजूद भी उसकी मन की छोटी-सी इच्छा – बालों में रिबन बाँधने को लेकर हंगामा खड़ा कर दिया जाता है। कभी भाई, कभी दादाजी और कभी अपने पिता के मनमाने और पक्षपातपूर्ण व्यवहार से संघर्ष करता नन्हीं बच्ची का मन आक्रोशित हो उठता है जिसके फलस्वरूप ‘अपनी’ चीज को ‘अपने’ लिए प्रयोग करने का अस्मिता-बोध उसमें पूरी मजबूती से पैदा होता है। दूसरी कहानी में एक घरेलू और सुशील कही जाने वाली महिला - सावित्री चाची है, जो ताउम्र परिवार के पुरुषों की मर्जी से चलती रही, परिवार को बनाने में उसने पूरी जिन्दगी खपा दी, किन्तु जब उसकी बेटी के विवाह की बात चलती है तो उससे और बेटी से पूछा तक नहीं जाता, उसके विरोध करने पर कमरे में बंद कर दिया जाता है। इन विपरीत परिस्थितियों में भी वह हार नहीं मानती और बड़ी ही सूझ-बूझ से घर के पुरुषों द्वारा थोपे गये अपनी बेटी के विवाह संबंधी निर्णय को पलट देती है। ‘प्रतिष्ठा’ के नाम पर अपनी बेटी के जीवन को बर्बाद होने से बचा लेती है। तीसरी कहानी मजदूर महिलाओं से सम्बन्धित है जिसमें वे अपने स्वास्थ्य के लिए फैक्ट्री में महिलाओं के लिए अलग शौचालय की पुरजोर माँग रखती हैं। इस माँग को मजदूर यूनियन के पुरुष प्रतिनिधियों के सामने रखने और उन्हें अपनी बात मनवाने के लिए स्त्रियों को काफी जद्दो-जहद करनी पड़ती है, अपने ही पुरुष मजदूर साथियों के सहयोग की बजाय उपेक्षा, अपमान और तिरस्कार का सामना करना पड़ता है। महिलाओं द्वारा शौचालय की माँग उठाना संकीर्ण सोच वाले

पुरुषों को अस्वाभाविक, यहाँ तक कि 'अश्लील' लगता है किन्तु महिलाएँ अपनी माँग पर अड़ी रहती हैं और अंततः नाटक के अंत में बुलंद आवाज में कहती हैं –

“बिंदिया : जब कौल पर ठानी, पहाड़ सी तनी

फौलाद में ढली, गोली सी चली

सब : हर गाँव हर गली

वो बोल उठी, वो बोल उठी ।

रेशम : न लक्ष्मी रणचंडी हम, न दुर्गा अवतार

न अग्निपरीक्षा, न जौहर स्वीकार

न पांचाली, न मैथिली, न हम करमजली

सब : वो बोल उठी, वो बोल उठी

मंजू : लड़ी तो बहुत खूब है, मगर नहीं मर्दानी

औरत है हाड़मांस की, नहीं महज कहानी ।

रेशम : जब चुप भली, जो बोली तो खली ।

सब : वो बोल उठी, वो बोल उठी ।”

इस प्रकार 'वो बोल उठी' नुक्कड़ नाटक अलग-अलग सन्दर्भों और परिस्थितियों में स्त्री-जीवन के अलग-अलग रूपों को रूढ़िवादी और संकीर्ण सोच से साहसपूर्वक लड़ते हुए दिखाता है । वस्तुतः समाज स्त्रियों को 'मानव' की दृष्टि से देखने का आदी नहीं है, वह या तो उन्हें 'देवी' कहेगा या उन्हें 'दलित' बना देगा या उन्हें सिर्फ 'देह' समझेगा । 'वो बोल उठी' नाटक समाज की इस रूढ़िवादी सोच को तोड़ते हुए 'स्त्री' को अपनी इंसानी पहचान के लिए लड़ते और उसे हासिल करते हुए दिखाता है ।

'दुलारी की माँ' नुक्कड़ नाटक में दुलारी की माँ वसंती एक ऐसी साहसी स्त्री के रूप में चित्रित है जो अपने आत्मविश्वास और सूझ-बूझ के बूते पर न केवल अपनी बेटी को उच्च शिक्षा दिलवाती है बल्कि अदम्य साहस के चलते

अपने शराबी पति को भी सही राह पर ले आती है। इसके साथ ही वह समाज की प्रतिरोधक शक्तियों का भी डटकर मुकाबला करती है -

“वो जो अपने को अबला समझती रही

तो ले वो औरत अब देखो अपना ही बल

अपनी स्वाधीनता, अपने सम्मान को

करने हासिल उठा उसका जज्बा मचल।”

दुलारी की माँ धर्म और जाति के भेद से ऊपर उठकर स्वयं अपनी बेटी का विवाह विजातीय योग्य और समानधर्मा युवक से करने की क्रांतिकारी सोच भी रखती है। दुलारी की माँ इस बात से भली-भाँति परिचित है कि शिक्षित दुलारी पर विवाह को थोपा नहीं जा सकता -

“दुलारी की माँ : देखो, दुलारी नासमझ लड़की नहीं है, जो जिधर हॉक दोगे उधर ही हँक जाएगी। सब

समझती है। पढ़ी-लिखी है। मास्टरनी बनना चाहती है। वह ऐसे नहीं मानेगी।”

इन दोनों नाटकों में स्वयं के प्रयासों से अपने अधिकारों, सम्मान और अस्मिता के लिए स्त्रियों को संघर्ष करते और सशक्त होते हुए दिखाया गया है। वस्तुतः “विश्व भर में चल रहे युद्धों, सत्ता परिवर्तनों, बढ़ते हुए कट्टरवाद तथा बदले हुए आर्थिक माहौल का सबसे अधिक प्रभाव महिलाओं पर पड़ा है। दुनिया की आधी आबादी पर कठमुल्लाओं और समाज की रुढ़िवादी ताकतों ने पहनने-ओढ़ने, सोचने-विचारने, चलने-फिरने, शिक्षित होने न होने से लेकर मनुष्य की तरह जीने तक पाबंदी लगा दी है। अब समाज में औरतों की हर सामान्य गतिविधि के लिए एक कायदा निश्चित कर दिया गया है। उस पर तुरा यह कि ऐसे समाज में बलात्कारों, इज्जत के लिए की जा रही हत्याओं, भ्रूण हत्याओं और आत्महत्याओं के लिए स्वयं स्त्रियों को ही जिम्मेदार ठहरा दिया जाता है। पुरुष वर्चस्ववाद, कानूनों और सामाजिक मान्यताओं के लिए भीतर ऐसे चोर दरवाजे खोज लेता है जिसके जरिये हर स्याह को सफ़ेद और सच को झूठ सिद्ध करना उसके लिए आसान हो जाता है।” बेटियों को बचाने और उन्हें पढ़ाने के माध्यम से स्त्री-शक्तिकरण की लड़ाई केवल संवैधानिक अधिकार देने से ही नहीं जीती जा सकती, इसके लिए एक लंबा सामाजिक और सांस्कृतिक संघर्ष करना पड़ेगा। यह संघर्ष शिक्षा के माध्यम से ही सहज और स्वाभाविक ढंग से हो सकता है, इसे थोपा नहीं जा सकता। यह प्रक्रिया धीमी भले ही हो, किन्तु इसके परिणाम दूरगामी और समाज के स्वास्थ्य

और समरसता के लिए हितकर साबित होंगे। इस रूप में स्त्रियों के प्रति समाज की संकीर्ण दृष्टि, रूढ़िवादिता और जड़वाद को तोड़ने और उसके स्थान पर स्त्री-शिक्षा और स्त्री-सशक्तिकरण की दिशा में सकारात्मक भूमिका निभाते हुए विकास की राह को आसान बनाने में नुक्कड़ नाटक महत्वपूर्ण कार्य कर सकते हैं।

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### Universal Role of Womenfolk

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Womenfolk are the prime caretakers of kids and seniors in all nations of the world. Universal readings reveal that when the political and economic association of a society changes, womenfolk take the lead in facilitating the family to modify themselves according to the new challenges and realities. They are considered to be prospective chief motivator of external support, and play a significant role in facilitating (or hampering) deviations in family lifestyle. The impact of womenfolk to a society's changeover from ill-literate to literate similarly is indisputable. Elementary education is crucial to a country's aptitude to progress and attain national goals. Study has revealed that education can increase agricultural efficiency, develop the position of women and girls, shrink population growing rates, enhance ecological security, and extensively increase the standard of living. Womenfolk are the essence of power, affection, sacrifice and bravery. The character of womenfolk in today's world has reformed considerably and for better future. Currently women are independent, well attentive and money-wise liberated. They have accomplished enormous victory in all arenas, either it is legal, political, sports or education. Through the boost of co-education, womenfolk are currently marching sideways with men, in every march of life.

**Keywords:** Role of Womenfolk, Universal, Education.

#### **Introduction**

Womenfolk are the developers of country. According to secretary general of United Nations in an issued report, womenfolk contribute around 50% of human resource. A woman plays a vital role in sustainable development and maintaining family lifestyle. The diverse role played by the womenfolk is those of daughter, wife, mother, administrator, leader, and last but not the least manager of family income. During past, the principal role of womenfolk in society has safeguarded the stability, advancement and long-term improvement of countries. Universally, womenfolk encompass 43 percent of the labor force in world's agriculture – increasing to 70 percent in certain nations. For example, in Africa, small farmers mostly womenfolk contribute to the 80 percent of the agricultural

production. It's extensively acknowledged that agriculture can be the growth engine and tool against poverty in developing countries. Womenfolk, particularly mothers, play the significant role in decision-making about household meal planning and nutrition. And, womenfolk self-report more frequently their creativity in maintaining child well-being and nourishment.

### **The Caretakers Role of Womenfolk**

Womenfolk are the main caretakers of kids and seniors in every nation of the world. Universal readings validate that when the political and economic group of a culture change, womenfolk proceeds with the main step in facilitating the change so that family can adjust to fresh truths and tests. They are expected to be the main originator of external support, and show a significant character in enabling (or impeding) deviations in family lifecycle.

### **The Educators Role of Womenfolk**

The role of womenfolk to a civilization's changeover from pre-literate to literate is indisputable. Elementary education is crucial to a country's capacity to progress and attain sustainability goals. Study has revealed that education can expand agricultural efficiency, boost the prestige of girls and women, shrink population growing rates, increase environmental protection, and extensively nurture the standard of living. It is the mum in the household who utmost frequently impulses offspring of both genders to be present and stay in school. The contribution of womenfolk is at the front end of the chain of developments leading to the families, the society's long-term capability.

### **The Workforce Role of Womenfolk**

Currently, the average feminine share of the universal labor force is 45.4 percent. Females' recognized and casual labor can renovate a community from a moderately self-sufficient society to a contributor in the domestic economy. In spite of major hurdles, females' minor companies in rural emerging communities not only can be a protracted family's support, but can form a strong economic basis for forthcoming generations. The starring role of womenfolk in the rural and urban labor force has extended exponentially in modern eras. The subject for International Women's Day 2019 "Think equal, build smart, innovate for change," was selected to recognize groundbreaking behaviors to advance gender equality and the authorization of womenfolk, fast-tracking the 2030 Plan, building force for the active application of the innovative U.N. Sustainable



Development Goals. Of course, females' prospects still holdup late those of males worldwide. But, the past and present role of womenfolk is indisputable.

### **The Global Volunteers Role of Women**

Women as a Global Volunteer struggle in host nations universally help to develop stronger females' and youngsters' ability and funds their constant healthiness and growth. Further down the route of native leaders, our volunteers support safeguard educational accessibility, nurture parental involvement, offer psycho-social care, deliver food and wellbeing learning, fund daughters' studies, create institutes with girls' restrooms, tutor literacy, and skill, and so much more. Global Issues: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Gender parity is a human right, but our world faces a determined gap in entrée to prospects and decision-making power for men and women. Universally, womenfolk have fewer prospects for financial contribution than men, less entrée to basic and higher teaching, superior wellbeing and safety risks, and a smaller amount administrative demonstration. Ensuring the rights of females and providing them prospects to grasp their full prospective is acute not only for achieving gender fairness, but also for meeting a variety of global expansion goals. Authorized females and girls pay to the well-being and efficiency of their relatives, societies, and republics, making a current affect that welfares everybody.

The term gender defines the socially-constructed characters and tasks that people ponder suitable for men and womenfolk. Gender equality means that men and womenfolk have equivalent control and equivalent prospects for monetary freedom, teaching, and individual development. Females' authorization is a precarious characteristic of attaining gender parity. It comprises growing a woman's intellect of self-esteem, her policymaking power, her entrée to prospects and incomes, her influence and mechanism over her individual life inside and outside the household, and her skill to effect variation. So far gender matters are not concentrated on womenfolk alone, but on the bond among men and womenfolk in society. The activities and boldness of menfolk and boys play a vital role in attaining gender parity.

Teaching is a important part of attention. Though the world is creating growth in attaining gender equality in teaching, daughters motionless make up a upper percentage of out-of-school offspring than sons. About one section of daughters in the emerging world does not be present in school.

Characteristically, relatives with partial incomes who cannot have enough money such as school dues, dresses, and provisions for all of their offspring will rank teaching for their sons. Relations may also trust on girls' work for domestic responsibilities, carrying water, and baby-sitting, send off partial time for teaching. But ordering daughters' education delivers feasibly the sole uppermost yield on asset in the emerging world. A cultured girl is additionally to delay wedding, educate a minor family, have well children, and direct her own offspring to school. She has additional prospects to make an income and to contribute in political procedures, and she is less likely to develop disease-ridden with HIV.

Females' wellbeing and security is another key area. HIV/AIDS is attractive an progressively impactful matter for womenfolk. This can be associated to womenfolk having fewer occasions for health learning, unfit power in sexual trust, or as a outcome of gender-based ferocity. Motherly fitness is also a matter of precise concern. In numerous countries, womenfolk have partial access to prenatal and baby care, and are more likely to practice difficulties throughout gestation and delivery. This is a serious anxiety in republics where daughters marry and have offspring earlier they are prepared; often well beforehand the age of 18. Excellence motherly fitness care can deliver a significant entrance point for info and facilities that authorize moms as knowledgeable decision-makers regarding their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of their offspring.

A concluding part of effort in achieving gender equality is women's financial and administrative empowerment. Though womenfolk encompass more than 50% of the world's population, they only own 1% of the world's prosperity. All through the world, womenfolk and girls do prolonged hours of unpaid domestic work. In certain places, womenfolk still want rights to own property or to inherit assets, get access to glory, earn revenue, or to move up in their office, free from job judgment. At all levels, including at household and in the community field, womenfolk are lessened as decision-makers. In administrations around the sphere, womenfolk are outstripped 4 to 1, yet women's governmental contribution is vital for attaining gender equality and sincere equality.

The World Economic Forum in recent times graded the United States as 19th in the world on its gender gap index. With womenfolk encompassing less than one fifth of designated memberships of Congress, the report recognizes administrative authorization as the utmost gender fairness matter for the United States. The U.S. graded developed in economic authorization, but women's receiving influence ruins roughly 20% lower than men's. Womenfolk in the United States have a very high

grade of informative accomplishment, though, with high stages of knowledge and membership in key, minor, and university education. At present, there are more U.S. women appearing college than men.

Internationally, no nation has entirely accomplished gender equality. Scandinavian nations like Iceland, Norway, Finland, and Sweden prime the world in their growth toward finishing the gender gap. In these countries, there is somewhat reasonable circulation of available income, funds, and occasions for men and women. The maximum gender gaps are known principally in the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia. Though, an amount of nations in these regions, including Lesotho, South Africa, and Sri Lanka outrank the United States in gender equality.

Everywhere the world, Peace Corps Volunteers is occupied with societies to statement gender equality and empowers women and girls. In 1974, Congress signed the Percy Amendment requiring Peace Corps Volunteers to vigorously assimilate womenfolk into the economic, political, and social growth of their countries. Many Harmony Corps Volunteers implement the Camp GLOW platform, or Girls Leading Our World, to help girls develop self-confidence and management services. Knowing that men and boys must be equivalent associates in attaining gender equality, Volunteers also communicate control and life skills to boys through Teaching Our Boys Excellence (TOBE) camps. Peace Corps Volunteers promote gender equality and women's authorization through health education, business development, and by floating consciousness of women's rights and aids to their communities. Learn more about how Peace Corps Volunteers are working with communities by visiting the Paul D. Coverdell World Wise Schools capitals.

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**शिक्षा में लैंगिक समानता की प्राप्ति सतत् विकास की बुनियाद****सरोज जानू शोधार्थी, राजनीति विज्ञान विभाग, राजस्थान विश्वविद्यालय, जयपुर**

संयुक्त राष्ट्र ने सतत् विकास हेतु एजेंडा 2030 घोषित किया। एजेंडा फॉर सस्टेनेबल डेवलपमेंट (2030) और इसके 17 सस्टेनेबल डेवलपमेंट गोल्स के साथ 2015 में विश्व के राजनेताओं के प्रयास से धारणीय विकास की संकल्पना को अपनाया गया जो सभी वर्गों को साथ लेकर चलती है। साथ ही लैंगिक समानता एवं सशक्त महिला समाज की दिशा में सतत् विकास लक्ष्य-17 प्रत्येक का उद्देश्य है। लैंगिक समानता एक अधिकार है। इस अधिकार को पुरा करने हेतु 21वीं सदी सबसे बेहतर समय है। आर्थिक व स्वास्थ्य संकट दुनियाँ को चुनौती दे रहे हैं। जिसका दुष्परिणाम जलवायु परिवर्तन है। बच्चियाँ और महिलाएँ इन समस्याओं और भेदभाव से ज्यादा प्रभावित होती हैं। सर्वसुलभ गुणवत्तापूर्ण, शिक्षा की उपलब्धता में इन तमाम समस्याओं का समाधान उपलब्ध है। एजेंडा 2030 के 17 लक्ष्यों में चौथा लक्ष्य विशेष रूप से बच्चियों व महिलाओं को क्वालिटी एजुकेशन उपलब्ध कराने के लिए प्रतिबंध है। जेंडर एजुकेशन मॉनिटरिंग रिपोर्ट जेंडर रिव्यू 2018 यह बताती है कि ग्लोबल एजुकेशन मॉनिटरिंग रिपोर्ट लिंग समानता की व्यापक अवधारणा पर ध्यान केन्द्रित करती है जो कक्षाओं में छात्र-छात्राओं की संख्यात्मक गिनती से आगे की बात करती है। यह रिपोर्ट शिक्षा व राजनीतिक संरचनाओं में नेतृत्व के पदों में बराबर भूमिका एवं कौशल और बुनियादी संरचना एवं पाठ्यक्रम के चयनित पहलुओं में भेदभाव के तत्वों की जाँच करती है। शिक्षा में लैंगिक समानता पर जवाबदेही तय करने पर जोर देती है। हमारे समाज को अब यह समझना होगा कि बच्चियों के लिए शिक्षा में निवेश नहीं करना किसी भी दृष्टि से उचित नहीं है। जबकि लड़कियों की शिक्षा अर्थव्यवस्था के विकास में सहयोगी है, महिलाओं के वेतन में बढ़ोत्तरी करती है, महिलाओं के दैनिक जीवन एवं स्वास्थ्य में सुधार करती है, बाल-विवाह को रोकती है और घर परिवार और समाज के सशक्तिकरण को गति प्रदान करती है।

**कुंजी शब्द :** बालिका, महिला सशक्तिकरण, सतत् विकास, शिक्षा, लैंगिक समानता।

**मुख्य भाग –**

तकनीकी युग में हमारे पास पहले से ज्यादा ज्ञान है, लेकिन हर कोई इससे लाभ नहीं उठा सकता है। वैश्विक स्तर पर सभी देशों ने शिक्षा के सभी स्तरों पर पहुँच बढ़ाने और विद्यालय में नामांकन दर बढ़ाने हेतु प्रगति की है। ढाँचागत शिक्षा में जबरदस्त सुधार हुआ है। अधिकांश देशों ने शिक्षा के सभी स्तरों पर लैंगिक भेदभाव को दूर किया है। सफलता भी मिली है। यह सम्मान व गर्व की बात है क्योंकि गुणवत्तापूर्ण शिक्षा सतत् विकास की नींव है। शिक्षा आत्मबल के साथ-साथ आत्मनिर्भरता को बढ़ाती है।

शिक्षा व्यक्तिगत कौशल को बढ़ाकर आर्थिक विकास को तेज करती है और बेहतर आजीविका के अवसरों को खोलकर मानव के जीवन को खुशहाल व समृद्ध बनाती है। एजेंडा 2030 का लक्ष्य-4 सभी स्कूली छात्र-छात्राओं की शिक्षा सुनिश्चित करता है। गुणवत्ता युक्त तकनीकी और रोजगार परक शिक्षा के उपयोगी अवसरों तक बराबर पहुँच बनाता है। शिक्षा में नवाचार और सतत् विकास लक्ष्य-4 सार्वभौमिक गुणवत्ता शिक्षा और आजीवन सीखने के लक्ष्यों को साझा करता है।

अब यह समझने की दरकार है कि शिक्षा में लैंगिक समानता का प्रभाव वैश्विक स्तर पर देखा जायेगा। परिणाम स्वरूप सभी क्षेत्रों में प्रगति की पूर्ण सम्भावना देखी जायेगी।

1. कमाई और जीवन स्तर में सुधार होगा,
2. बाल-विवाह व प्रारम्भिक प्रसव पर रोक संभव,
3. जनसंख्या वृद्धि पर रोक,
4. निर्णय क्षमता में बढ़ोत्तरी,
5. पोषण सम्बन्धित जानकारी व स्वास्थ्य कल्याण में वृद्धि,
6. पारिवारिक व सामाजिक पूंजी और संस्थाओं में भागीदारी,
7. सम्पोषणीय समाज के लक्ष्य की प्राप्ति।

बच्चियों की शिक्षा, धारणीय विकास की अवधारणा हेतु आवश्यक है क्योंकि कई मुद्दे हैं जो बच्चियों के अधिकार को खत्म करते हैं, या शिक्षा के अधिकार को पूरा करने से रोकते हैं। ये तमाम उलझने सामाजिक और लैंगिक मानदण्डों से लेकर वित्तीय बाधाओं और हानिकारक पारम्परिक प्रथाओं तक शामिल हैं।

दुनियाँ भर में कई बच्चियाँ और युवा महिलाओं के लिए विद्यालय जाना केवल एक सपना है। ये तमाम बच्चियाँ बहुत बार बाल-विवाह, यौन तस्करी और जबरन वेश्यावृत्ति की शिकार होकर शिक्षा से वंचित रह जाती हैं जो बहुत दुःखद है। इसके परिणाम स्वरूप मानव असमानता और लैंगिक असमानता बनी रहती है। जिससे आखिरकार देश गरीबी, खराब स्वास्थ्य और लिंग आधारित हिंसा के जटिल जाल में फंस जाते हैं, ये मुद्दे देश के समक्ष सामाजिक, राजनीतिक, आर्थिक एवं सांस्कृतिक विकास हेतु चुनौती हैं।

यूनेस्को के एक अध्ययन के अनुसार यदि सभी महिलाओं की प्राथमिक शिक्षा होती तो 15 प्रतिशत कम मरने होती। अतः हम महिलाओं की शिक्षा के बेहद आश्चर्यजनक परिणामों की कल्पना कर सकते हैं। एक शिक्षित माँ पोषण में सुधार करती है। मातृत्व मृत्यु दर में भी आश्चर्यजनक कमी आयेगी। पट्टी-लिखी बच्चियाँ और महिलायें संक्रामक रोग एचआईवी/एड्स जैसी घातक बीमारियों से खुद को बचाने के लिए अधिक जागरूक रहेगी।

लैंगिक असमानता कई तरह से परिभाषित होती है, जिसमें लिंग मानदण्ड, आय असमानता, मजदूरी भेदभाव व सभी तरह की हिंसा शामिल है। लैंगिक समानता का विषय दुनियाँ की आधी आबादी की चिन्ता मात्र ही नहीं है, यह मानवाधिकारों के अन्तर्गत आता है जो सभी के लिए चिन्ता का विषय होना चाहिए। कमजोर वर्ग को पीछे छोड़कर आगे बढ़ना अच्छी बात नहीं हो सकती। इसलिए स्कूली बच्चियों एवं उनकी माताओं पर विशेष ध्यान देने की जरूरत है। अब विश्व की सरकारों को बदलाव की पहल करनी ही होगी। तब जाकर हम वास्तविक स्तर पर टिकाऊ विकास की ओर बढ़ेंगे।

नवाचार मानव व्यक्तित्व से जुड़ी तमाम सम्भावनाओं के केन्द्र में रहा है। हम देखते हैं कि आज तक के इतिहास में हुई तमाम खोजें, विचार या पर्यवेक्षण से विकसित हुई हैं। फिर चाहे कृषि हो, अंतरिक्ष विज्ञान हो या फिर जैव तकनीक, स्वास्थ्य, शिक्षा आदि सभी क्षेत्र को इस नवाचार से फायदा मिला है। ये नवाचार आम आदमी की जिन्दगी से काफी गहराई से जुड़े हुए हैं। इस

बात में पूरी सम्भावना नजर आती है। कि अनंतकाल में समाज में बदलाव लाने में नवाचार की अहम भूमिका होगी। अतः नवाचारा की प्रेरणा सभी क्षेत्रों में पोषित होनी चाहिए। विद्यालय में छात्र-छात्राओं को कुछ नया पढ़ाया-सिखाया जाने की आवश्यकता है। उन्हें कुछ हटकर सोचने के बारे में बताना चाहिए, शिक्षा व्यवस्था में नवाचार ही इस दिशा में परिवर्तन ला सकती है।

रवीन्द्रनाथ टैगोर जी का कहना था कि "उच्च शिक्षा ज्ञान के साथ-साथ जीवन में समृद्धि और हमारी खुशियों को स्थायित्व प्रदान करती है।" हिन्दुस्तान में केन्द्रीय, राजकीय, निजी, डीम्ड तथा अन्य को शामिल कर लगभग 800 विश्वविद्यालय हैं जो की 1.25 करोड़ छात्र-छात्राओं को उच्च शिक्षा प्रदान करते हैं। अधिक प्रभावी और व्यापक बनाने के लिए मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय ने उच्च शिक्षा में नवाचार कार्यक्रम शुरू किए हैं। मंत्रालय ने नवाचार प्रकोष्ठ की स्थापना कर, 21वीं सदी को नवाचार की सदी घोषित की है। 21वीं सदी नवाचार की सदी है। रैंकिंग के माध्यम से नवाचार को प्रोत्साहित किया जा रहा है। मंत्रालय ने नवाचार उपलब्धियों के बारे में संस्थाओं की रैंकिंग की शुरुआत की है। ताकि नवाचार संस्कृति को व्यवस्थित रूप से बढ़ावा मिल सकें।<sup>1</sup>

कुछ नवाचार विशेष रूप से प्रभावशाली परिणाम दिलायेंगे जैसे-अकादमिक नेटवर्क के लिए वैश्विक पहल (ज्ञान) के तहत विदेशी प्रतिभाशाली वैज्ञानिकों को पढ़ाने के लिए आमंत्रित करने की शुरुआत की है जो अनुसंधान में भी भागीदार बनेंगे। जिससे शिक्षण संस्थाओं में पेशेवर गुणवत्ता में वृद्धि होगी।

#### **सहयोग द्वारा अकादमिक अनुसंधान और संवर्धन योजना :**

इसके माध्यम से दुनियाँ के सर्वोत्तम संस्थाओं तथा भारतीय संस्थाओं के बीच शिक्षण तथा अनुसंधान जैसी नई व तार्किक पहल मंत्रालय की तरफ से की गई है। यह पहल भारतीय विश्वविद्यालयों की शोध की प्रवृत्ति संवर्धन व विश्वविद्यालय रैंकिंग सुधार में सकारात्मक असर डायेगी। नए आविष्कार तथा नवाचार में मदद करेगी। डिजिटल इण्डिया-ई लर्निंग, वचुअल क्लासरूम और मैसिव ओपन ऑनलाईन पाठ्यक्रम का मुख्य उद्देश्य लाखों युवाओं को आसानी से उपलब्ध होने वाली सर्वोत्तम तरीके से गुणवत्ता वाले शिक्षण और शिक्षण पाठ्यक्रमों तक पहुँचने में सक्षम बनाना है।

#### **अनुसंधान तथा नवाचार :**

यह पहल डिजाइन नवाचार के लिए राष्ट्रीय पहल बहुत प्रभावी होने की सम्भावना है। जो भारत को वैश्विक स्तर पर मूल्य श्रृंखला को बढ़ाने और उद्योगों प्रतिस्पर्धी बनाने में मदद कर सकता है।

#### **उच्चतर आविष्कार योजना :**

इसके तहत बड़े उद्योग और शिक्षा संस्थान आपस में मिलकर सहयोग कर रोजगार के नये आयाम खोल रहे हैं। उद्योग प्रायोजित बेरोजगारी की समस्या को वास्तविक धरातल पर कम करने का सार्थक पर्यास है।<sup>1</sup>

#### **उच्च शिक्षा संस्थाओं में नवाचार :**

इम्प्रिंट इसका मुख्य उद्देश्य अनुसंधान से प्राप्त जानकारी का इस्तेमाल व्यवहारिक रूप में उत्पाद/प्रक्रिया में करना है। इम्प्रिंट, सामान्य शोध पहलों से अलग है। यह सृजन से आगे व्यवहार्य प्रौद्योगिकी में ज्ञान का समावेश है। यह क्राउड सोर्सिंग के



समावेशी मॉडल पर निर्भर करती है। इम्प्रिंट की वेबसाइट (<https://imprintindia.org>) पर नॉलेज पोर्टल की शुरुआत की गई है। विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में चुनौतियों से निपटने हेतु उत्पादों/प्रक्रियाओं और विकास में सक्षम प्रौद्योगिकी का विकास करना एवं प्रौद्योगिकी हस्तांतरण के नए तरीके विकसित करना। वर्तमान समाज सूचनाओं से आगे अनुभव जनित ज्ञान की मांग की तरफ बढ़ रहा है जरूरत है इंजीनियरिंग आविष्कारों और प्रौद्योगिकीय नवाचार के जरिए इस ज्ञान को समाज के हित में इस्तेमाल किया जाए।<sup>1</sup>

मात्र विद्यालय जाना और परीक्षा पास करना ही काफी नहीं है। शिक्षा से तात्पर्य वैचारिक व मानसिक विकास के साथ-साथ शारीरिक विकास भी है। स्कूल में छात्राओं के खेलकूद की अच्छी व्यवस्था नहीं देखीजाती है। इस भेदभाव को मिटाना होगा। जब-जब अभिभावकों ने अपनी बेटियों पर सामान्य से विशेष ध्यान दिया तब-तब बेटियों ने भी विश्व स्तर पर बेहतरीन प्रदर्शन कर समाज और देश का नाम रोशन किया है।

महात्मा गांधी जी के विचारों में यदि हम एक लड़की को पढ़ाते हैं तो एक परिवार को पढ़ाते हैं। इस बात पर अमल करने की जरूरत है। महिलाओं के चहुँमुखी विकास हेतु एक स्वच्छ राजनैतिक सोच का अभाव है। संसद ही देश का भविष्य तय करती है और अगर वहाँ 33 प्रतिशत महिलाएँ होंगी तो कानून और सरकारी योजनाओं में महिलाओं की उपेक्षा नहीं होगी। महिला शिक्षा की मुख्य चुनौतियां उनके लिए उचित व्यवस्था और सहयोग प्रदान करना है। शहरों की बजाय गाँवों में बालिकाओं के विद्यालय आने-जाने के उचित साधनों का न होना मुख्य समस्या है। सड़कों का न होना और सुरक्षा अहम कारण हैं जो स्कूली बच्चियों को उच्चस्तर की शिक्षा तक जाने में अवरोधक बनते हैं। भारतवर्ष को खुशहाल और समृद्ध देश बनाने का सुगम रास्ता शिक्षा व्यवस्था में ढाँचागत सुधार से बढ़कर वैचारिक सुधार लाने का ही हो सकता है। क्योंकि लड़कियों की सहभागिता वर्तमान शिक्षा प्रणाली की सबसे बड़ी खामी है। जो किसी भी प्रगृतिशील समाज के लिए शर्मनाक है। सृजनात्मक नवाचार के साथ "बेटी बचाओ, बेटी पढ़ाओ", कस्तूरबा गांधी आवासीय विद्यालय योजना, तथा ऐसी ही दूसरी योजनाएँ जैसे झारखण्ड की 'तेजस्विनी', अल्पसंख्यक मंत्रालय की 'नई मंजिल' आदि को उत्साह के साथ जारी रखना होगा ताकि पूरा-पूरा लाभ बालिकाओं को मिल सके।<sup>1</sup>

मिशेल ओबामा के अनुसार "कोई समुदाय, कोई देश और अंततः, समूचा विश्व, उसी अनुपात में मजबूत होता है जिस अनुपात में उनके यहाँ इनमें रहने वाली महिलाओं का स्वास्थ्य बेहतर होता है।" महिलाओं और बच्चों के स्वास्थ्य के क्षेत्र में निवेश से कई जिंदगियों को बचाया जा सकता है और कई दुखद घटनाओं को टाला जा सकता है। स्वास्थ्य अच्छा होगा तो उसका असर शिक्षा में भी दिखेगा। लैंसेट में 2019 में छपे एक शोध में बताया गया कि स्वास्थ्य के खर्च में सन् 2035 तक प्रति व्यक्ति 5 डॉलर की वृद्धि करने से 9 गुणा अधिक आर्थिक और सामाजिक फायदे हासिल किए जा सकते हैं। उत्पादकता में सुधार और बीमारियों की रोकथाम के साथ-साथ घरेलू उत्पाद (जीडीपी) में आश्चर्यजनक सुधार देखने को मिलेगा। किशोरी बालिकाओं को सम्पूर्ण पोष्टक आहार उपलब्ध कराना हमारी सरकारों की प्राथमिकता में होना चाहिए।<sup>1</sup>

सतत् विकास लक्ष्य-4 और 8 सभी के लिए न्याययुक्त अच्छी शिक्षा सुनिश्चित करने के साथ ही सभी को समान रूप से सिखने का अवसर देने की मांग करते हैं। यह समान अवसर देश दुनियाँ के आर्थिक-विकास में सहयोगी हो सकेंगे। भारत की बढ़ती बेरोजगारी दर चिंता का विषय होना चाहिए।<sup>1</sup>

स्कूली शिक्षा में नवाचार बढ़ाने हेतु नवाचार फण्ड बनाने की बजट घोषणा की गई जिसे स्थानीय नवीन खोजों को बढ़ावा मिलेगा।<sup>1</sup>

‘बेटी बचाओ, बेटी पढ़ाओ’ अभियान के तहत लड़कियों की गर्भ में ही मार देना एक सामाजिक बीमारी के रूप में सामने आया है। भ्रूण हत्या बेटी की हत्या के साथ एक माँ के लिए मानसिक एवं शारीरिक प्रताड़ना का कारण भी है। स्वामी विवेकानन्द जी कहते हैं कि किसी कारणवश कोई गरीब शिक्षा तक नहीं पहुँच पाता है तो हमें शिक्षा को उस तक ले जाना चाहिए। ग्रामीण परिवेश में जवाहर नवोदय विद्यालय के माध्यम से विश्वस्तर की सृजनात्मक शिक्षा प्रणाली बेहद अच्छी पहल है। कोरेस्पोंडेंस कोर्स विद्यालय मुक्त ऑनलाईन शिक्षा तथा दूरस्थ शिक्षा प्रणाली का लाभ सभी तक पहुँचा है।<sup>1</sup>

सरकार स्कूलों की हालत सुधारने के साथ उन्हें अधिक जवाबदेह बनाने का प्रयास समग्र माध्यमिक शिक्षा अभियान के माध्यम से कर रही है। अध्यापक की जिम्मेदारी लर्निंग आउटकम तक सुनिश्चित करने हेतु जवाबदेही पर जोर दिया जा रहा है। राष्ट्र की पहचान मानव संसाधन है जो शिक्षा व्यवस्था पर निर्भर है। स्वामी विवेकानन्द जी ने तो यहाँ तक कहा कि हमारी देश-दुनियाँ शिक्षा पर ध्यान देती तो आज हम मन से हारे हुए स्थिति में नहीं आये हुए होते। मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय ने डिजिटल शैक्षिक सामग्री तैयार कर उसे ऑनलाईन उपलब्ध कराने पर जोर दिया है। डिजिटल शिक्षा के प्लेटफार्म जिसमें स्वयं (Swayam), स्वयंप्रभा (Swayam Prabha) ई-यंत्र, राष्ट्रीय डिजिटल पुस्तकालय वाई-फाई सुविधा प्रमुख है। हैकथान भी एक नवाचारी पहल है। अनुसंधान को बढ़ावा देने हेतु प्रधानमंत्री रिसर्च फेलोशिप भी एक शानदार शुरुआत है। उद्योग शिक्षा साझेदारी की नवाचारी पहल सराहनीय है जो रोजगार सृजन करती है।<sup>1</sup>

प्रत्येक देश के विकास का मूल ऊर्जा स्रोत युवा ही होते हैं। भारत विश्व की तेजी से बढ़ती अर्थव्यवस्था हैं जो निरन्तर गति करेगी। भारत के युवाओं के लिए अर्थव्यवस्था में व्यापक अवसर मौजूद है।

दक्षता एवं कौशल युक्त कार्य में निपुण होना जरूरी है। अतः विद्यालयों में आलोचनात्मक विचार, रचनात्मक एवं व्यवस्थागत विचार प्रणाली पर ध्यान देना होगा। उद्योग व शिक्षा में नवाचार की साझेदारी को प्रोत्साहन देना होगा। जो बेरोजगारी से मुक्ति दिलाने का काम करेगी। ग्रामीण युवा असाधारण उद्यमिता व क्षमता रखते हैं जिन्हें कौशल प्रदान करने की आवश्यकता है। इन युवाओं को नया वातावरण व नई सोच मिले तो नूतन आविष्कारों का सृजन करने की भरपूर क्षमता का सदुपयोग किया जा सकता है। जरूरत है उन्हें वित्त, सही सलाह, उचित प्रौद्योगिकी की उपलब्धता और अच्छा नेटवर्क सुनिश्चित कराकर प्रोत्साहित करने की। तभी उनकी क्षमता का पूर्ण दोहन हो पायेगा।

‘बेटी बचाओ, बेटी पढ़ाओ’ कार्यक्रम का उद्देश्य गर्भ में बालिका भ्रूण की हत्या की प्रवृत्ति पर रोक लगाना, बच्चियों को बचाना, उनका संरक्षण करना तथा उनकी शिक्षा में सहभागिता सुनिश्चित करना है।

पण्डित जवाहरलाल नेहरू जी के अनुसार जनता में जागरूकता लाने का अच्छा काम महिलाओं के द्वारा किया जा सकता है जब महिलाएँ पढ़ेंगी-लिखेंगी तो पूरे समुदाय को आगे बढ़ायेगी और तब राष्ट्र भी आगे बढ़ेगा।

यू.एन.डी.पी. (संयुक्त राष्ट्र विकास कार्यक्रम) का मानना है कि कई समूहों को उनके लिंग, जातीयता, आयु, यौन अभिविन्यास, अक्षमता या गरीबी के कारण विकास के दायरे से बाहर रखा गया है। इस बहिष्करण की प्रवृत्ति से दुनियाँ में असमानता बढ़ी है जो समावेशी विकास की अवधारणा के उलट है। डब्ल्यू.एच.ओ. (विश्व स्वास्थ्य संगठन) अपील करता है कि

बच्चों में उनकी शुरुआती अवस्था में निवेश कीजिए। प्रत्येक बच्चे का अस्तित्व कायम रहे और बच्चों को अपनी संभावनाओं को विकसित करने के लिए पोषण सम्बन्धी देखभाल की जरूरत होती है। महिलाओं, बच्चों और किशोरों का स्वास्थ्य वैश्विक रणनीति (2016–30) सतत् विकास के लक्ष्यों के केन्द्र में है। समृद्धि और टिकाऊ समाज निर्माण में महिलाओं, युवाओं और बच्चों की पूर्ण भागीदारी होना इनके पूरे वजूद और आगे बढ़ने के लिए जरूरी हैं। बोहरा समुदाय की युवा लड़कियों का खतना किए जाने सम्बन्धी गम्भीर मामले सामने आए हैं ऐसे में सरकार को गंभीरतापूर्वक हस्तक्षेप करने की जरूरत है। अतः महिला सशक्तिकरण की गुंजाईश बनाई जाए तो ज्यादातर चीजों का समाधान खुद-ब-खुद हो जाएगा।<sup>1</sup>

### सारांश –

शिक्षा में लैंगिक समानता की प्राप्ति सतत् विकास की बुनियाद है। क्योंकि सतत् विकास का लक्ष्य-5 लैंगिक समानता तथा लक्ष्य-4 समावेशी शिक्षण वातावरण के निर्माण, सार्वभौमिक गुणवत्ता शिक्षा और आजीवन सीखने के लक्ष्यों के प्रति संकल्पित है। 2030 के सतत् विकास एजेंडा में 'लैंगिक समानता' 09 बार, 'महिला' 28 बार, 'बालिका' 16 बार, तथा 'शिक्षा' को 20 बार विशेष तौर पर उल्लेख किया गया है। भारत निर्धारित समय-अवधि के भीतर सतत् विकास लक्ष्यों की प्राप्ति हेतु प्रतिबद्ध है। बालिका एवं महिलाएँ राष्ट्र की आवाम का सर्वाधिक गतिशील हिस्सा होती हैं। इस हिस्से का विकास और सशक्तिकरण बेहद जरूरी है। क्योंकि यही युवतियाँ देश के विकास के लिए अवसरों का सृजन करती हैं। बालिकाओं व महिलाओं द्वारा समाज को अग्रिम पंक्ति में लाने हेतु, उनको शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य व रोजगार की सुनिश्चिता प्रदान करना अति आवश्यक है। सतत् विकास के लक्ष्यों की प्राप्ति में लैंगिक समानता की सकारात्मक परिकल्पना सदैव ही लाभदायी रहेगी। ऐसी सम्भावना व्यक्त करना एक खुशहाल और समृद्ध समाज के लिए सदैव ही लाभदायी साबित होगी।

सस्टेनेबल डेवलपमेंट गोल्स (एसडीजी-17) को आपस में जुड़ा हुआ कहा जाता है क्योंकि एक (एसडीजी लक्ष्य-5) एस.डी.जी. को हासिल करने की सफलता की कुंजी दूसरे लक्ष्य (एसडीजी लक्ष्य-4) से जुड़े मुद्दों से निपटने में निहित है। महिलाओं और बच्चियों को शिक्षित करना, लैंगिक समानता को बढ़ावा देना, विश्व समाज के लिए सभी सतत् विकास लक्ष्य-17 को प्राप्त करना आवश्यक है। निष्कर्षतः हमें बच्चियों के लिए शिक्षा के महत्व को लैंगिक समानता और महिलाओं को उनके परिवारों, समुदायों एवं दुनियाँ के जीवन में बदलाव लाने हेतु, इसे उत्प्रेरक के रूप में अति आवश्यक कदम समझ, सही दिशा में प्रयास करना होगा।

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## **Making education enjoyable and accessible for girls: What counts?**

**Dr Reema Lamba, Aditi Mahavidyalaya**

### **Abstract**

If India has to progress, the critical role of the other gender in development of the nation cannot be ignored. Many changes have happened in terms of the way girls are addressed but it's a long way to go. An important question to be unravelled is how to make higher education more accessible and enjoyable for girls? How to develop a system of education that is based keeping women's needs in mind, doing away with gender stereotypes and discrimination? The paper has tried to explore the barriers to higher education for women which if done away with can lead to more sustainable education, one which not only ends gender inequity but also empowers women for newer challenges.

Key words- gender stereotypes, sustainable education, discrimination

### **Introduction**

Millennium development goals have clearly highlighted education as a significant aspect related to the development and progress of the nation. Researches have pointed that education is a must to put an end to gender inequality. There have been laws and amendments to ensure education is accessible to all irrespective of sex, colour, caste and creed. However in India still the sons are being sent to schools while girls tend to drop out and this is a practice more popular as girls grow into adolescence years. The statistics points that nearly 17percent of the world's adult population is illiterate and two third of this percentage is comprised by women. As far as India is concerned the literacy rate is 82percent of males and 65percent of females according to 2011 census. This female literacy rate of 65percent is substantially lower than the world average of 79.7percent. This state of affair is more worrisome as the statistics points that the percentage of school dropout is highest for girls in adolescence. The World Bank data also points that female population is still considered second class citizen in large groups of India when it comes to access to tools for a decent life namely, education, health and wealth. Several Indian families, till date, prefer spending on their daughter's marriage than their education, especially higher or specialized education. The enrolment of women in technical or vocational education is still measured with the yard stick of how well it compliments

with the “must do” tasks as household chores, child care etc. Hence if a difference has to be made then it’s important to understand the culture specific and context specific barriers to women education in India, only then can accessibility be worked out. Let us understand the key issues that have emerged as barriers to education of girls in India.

### **Barriers to Gender fair accessibility**

- **Poverty:** One of the major reasons why children in developing countries are either left out of school or drop out is because families are not able to pay for their children’s education. Even if they can support education, there is often a bias towards paying for boy’s education and letting the girl drop out. The girls hence are left with no choice but drop out from school to work in order to support their families.
- **Infrastructure:** Census 2011 has put the girl drop out figure as 65percent in adolescence. One of the reasons for this enormous drop out number of girls is lack of facilities in schools especially toilets. Menstruation unsettles girls’ participation in school because they lack access to products and facilities that would help them manage this time of the month. Stigma and lack of awareness about menstruation is also key factor that keeps girls at home during menstruation.
- **Health status:** Girls in large segments of India are treated as second class citizen according to World Bank data especially in terms of access to nutrition or health. Poor nutritional status in growing years leads to frequent illnesses hindering their school attendance. Frequent urinary tract infections and lack of access to good medical facilities also interferes in attending school.
- **Culture:** Studies by UNICEF have pointed a low value perception for education of girls among Indian families. The data points that every year, at least 9 million more girls than boys are not getting an education. This is due to certain countries’ tradition and culture, which require girls to marry at a young age and even in some countries as young as 14 years old.
- **Safety:** Another factor getting in the way of girls education is to do with their safety. It has emerged that in cases of intolerance, discrimination and violence, girls are often soft targets. The parents of such communities in an effort to protect their girls prefer not to send them to school. Hence it is an important issue that needs to be addressed if genuine change has to happen.

- Education System: Monotonous education that lacks connect to real life or stimulates thought or innovation also seems to be a deterrent. It may demotivate girls to invest time and effort in pursuing such education. Lack of infrastructure or trained and sensitive staff may also be a discouragement.

If the higher education can be made more meaningful for the girls, preparing them for newer challenges may be the situation could change for good. Now let us look at some of the approaches that can be embraced to make the difference.

### **Making Education Accessible for Girls: Suggestions**

To make learning not only accessible but also enjoyable the first step would be to know the learners and their needs. It is only then that conditions for learning can be created. As has been pointed by statistics if the key prerequisites could be interlinked with education namely nutrition, training and material for menstrual health and skills for self- sufficiency reversal of drop out trend may be thinkable.

- Encouraging Active Learning: The first step could be transforming a traditional classroom into a more engaging space wherein students can learn by doing things hands on as far as possible. This would motivate girls to put in extra effort to come to classrooms.
- Flexible timetable: If the focus is shifted from fixed schedule to flexible schedule as per student availability, girls could be more involved as they could balance house tasks with education.
- Improving Infrastructure: It is a very important aspect to ensure participation of girls especially in adolescence. Ensuring clean toilets and availability of sanitary products to support adolescent girls during their menstrual period would help them focus on education and not skip school.
- Innovative teaching learning methods: If education has to reach the masses innovations would have to be practiced in the teaching learning methods. Peer tutoring is one such practice that can be included wherein the more educated girls teach and guide the less educated and the learning becomes mutually interdependent. Use of technology to extend the learning experience during and beyond the class time could be one another approach. Use of audio visual aids in classroom would make it more interactive and enjoyable. Recording lesson proceedings and making it available for

students who could not attend class would also help them learn. The teachers can also opt for open classrooms. Hence many innovations can be thought of keeping learner need in mind and followed to ensure true knowledge and not just deliberations from books.

- Installing new values in students: The school system should take this responsibility purposefully and in a planned and sustained way so that the new values of equality of the sexes can replace the traditional value system of inequality. Only then can education promote equality for women.

### **Conclusion**

As has been proposed above to ensure gender equity in access to quality education and to ensure sustainable change from seclusion to participation innovative approaches have to be embraced. Most importantly the women need to be involved in the change for it to be true, as it is about their needs and their growth. For the change to be sustainable the gender disparity embedded in the system since childhood; may it be in terms of denial to education, under nutrition and forced marriage needs to be addressed. The battle would be half won if the society at large understands that investment in girls would help break cycle of poverty and may set rolling the path of economic development.

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### Breaking Gender Stereotypes In Classrooms

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**ABSTRACT:** *Competitive, leader, rational. Patient, docile, emotional.* These are common adjectives. But, we are likely to describe the first set of traits as masculine and the second set as feminine. This simple observation is a reflection of the broader theme that male and female specific traits are stereotyped on the basis of gender. They grow out of our cultural understanding of men's and women's respective roles in society. These stereotypes can be restrictive and harmful. But, within the classroom, there are methods to address this problem. Teachers can play an important role in guiding the students away from these preconceived views.

**KEY WORDS:** Gender, Stereotypes, tolerance, Men, Women, Restrictive, Classroom, Society

#### BREAKING GENDER STEREOTYPES IN CLASSROOMS

- Gender [ jen-dur ] (noun) the state of being male or female. 'Gender' also refers to the social roles, behaviours and traits that a society may assign to men (masculine) or to women (feminine).<sup>1</sup>
- Stereotype [ ster-ee-uh-type ] (noun) an oversimplified and unfair belief or idea that groups of people have particular characteristics or that all people in a group are the same.<sup>2</sup>
- Gender stereotype is a pre-determined set of attitudes and behaviours that is believed to be typical of all men or women. They grow out of our historical and cultural understanding of the roles of men and women in society – many of which are out-dated but continue to be powerful.<sup>3</sup>

Before you start reading this article let me ask you about your "Gender Light Bulb Moment". You may ask- what is that? A "Gender Light Bulb Moment" is the exact moment when you became conscious of being treated differently because of your gender. For example, when you were not allowed to play football because you are a girl, or your brother was told that he cannot join dance

classes because dancing is for girls or any other similar instance. It could encompass anything from the toys you were allowed to play with (dolls are for girls, guns are for boys only); or being aware of different rules for boys and girls, or to feeling uncomfortable because of your gender in a particular situation. You will realize that everyone has gone through such experiences one time or another.

Gender refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men, such as norms, roles, and relationships of and between groups of women and men. It varies from society to society.<sup>4</sup> Gender roles do not spring out of nowhere. They are rooted in every culture. They encompass a range of behaviours and attitudes that are generally considered acceptable, appropriate, or desirable for people based on conceptions of masculinity and femininity. A gender stereotype is a commonly held generalisation about women and men's attributed behaviours and personalities. Females are often portrayed as being emotionally weak, gentle and needing protection. Males are often characterised as being rational, career driven and emotionally strong. These assumptions can be negative (women are irrational, men are insensitive) or seemingly benign (women are kind and intuitive, men are sensible and rational). But, one thing is certain that all stereotyping is limiting and restrictive.

There are four basic types of gender stereotypes:

1. Based on Personality traits — For example, women are often expected to be accommodating and docile. They do not have a primary interest in their careers. Men are usually expected to be self-confident and aggressive. They are career oriented and do not have interest in marriage and parenthood.
2. Based on Domestic behaviours — Society expects that women will take care of the children, cook, and clean the home, while men will take care of finances, drive the car, and do the home repairs.
3. Based on Career choices — There is a general assumption that teachers and nurses are women, and that pilots and engineers are men.
4. Based on Physical appearance — Women are expected to be slim and graceful, while men are expected to be tall and muscular. Men and women are also expected to dress and groom in ways that are stereotypical to their gender (men wear kurta-pajamas/suits and short hairstyles, women wear sarees/dresses and make-up).

Gender stereotypes are complicated and originate from native culture and traditions. Youngsters learn what comprises of feminine and masculine behaviour from their family and society, the media and institutions including schools, colleges and religious bodies. Gender stereotypes can have an adverse effect on all genders, as adolescents find themselves regularly exposed to messages about how boys and girls should dress, conduct themselves and interact in social scenarios. These socially stamped ideas unconsciously become a part of our life from infancy. They shape self-perception, attitudes to relationships and influence work sphere participation. They can influence the classroom experience, academic achievement, topic selection and emotional well-being of a young person in a school setting. The suppositions we make about teenagers may be conscious or unconscious and can result in students being treated in a different way or offered different opportunities based on their gender.

Gender norms are so ingrained in our society that adults are often surprised to realize how early children internalize these ideas. When young children get caught up in orthodox views of gender, it can harm their self-images and the way they interact with peers. Children need opportunities to consider these internalized stereotypes and think about the problems they cause.

Adolescence is a time where young people are forming their attitudes, behaviours and expectations on lots of topics like relationships and the world, in general – and the opposite sex, in particular. While exploring and testing their ideas, many young people will already have begun to accept some stereotypes as universal truths.

Your sex is biological, but, your gender is socially constructed: it's shaped by the society and the culture we live in. Gender refers to the established ideas society has about the roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that men and women should have. Gender expectations vary between cultures and can change over time. Society attempts to lock people into simple and rigid gender roles, when actually there's no single way of belonging to one gender. Within this set framework, we present ourselves to the world and express our masculine and feminine qualities to communicate our gender outwardly.

Gender stereotypes are oversimplified ideas. They impact how young people go about their lives. They can restrict individuals into narrowly defined roles, interests and characteristics. Young people make decisions about their lives and relationships according to what attitudes and behaviours they observe being encouraged and discouraged. For example, they can feel pushed into education and

career pathways because ‘this is the subject for boys or this is what girls should study.’ These stereotypes impose and reinforce inequality between young men and young women. People who do not conform to these dominant ideas about gender face consequences, including facing judgement or exclusion, verbal and physical abuse and discrimination. Women and girls are more likely to experience disrespect and violence due to stereotypes such as “men are violent” and “women are submissive”.

A society that has historically seen men as superior to women wants the status quo to be maintained. Men’s disproportionate access to power and authority in public and private life is seen as normal because men are believed to be better leaders. This is not surprising given that young people and adults alike are immersed in a social and cultural environment that produces and perpetuates stereotypes. Television shows, advertising, sporting codes, schools and workplaces all communicate messages, explicitly and implicitly, about what is considered ‘appropriate’ for girls and boys, men and women.

While we are all exposed to gender stereotypes, young people are particularly susceptible to them when forming an understanding of their place in society and their potential. When we say: ‘Girls only like...; Boys don’t cry; Girls have to be lady-like; or Act like a man’ - we are expressing preconceived notions about gender, and we present these stereotypes as ‘fact’ – rather than considering actual evidence, or an individual’s unique talents or interests. This means that if the society lets go of its preconceived ideas and treats the young generation with an open and receptive mind then they can learn different things and start to develop their own understanding of what their limitations and abilities are. They can learn to overcome their inhibitions also.

When these young men and women come to classrooms, they bring these preconceived perceptions with them. They are conditioned to believe and not challenge this imbalanced matrix of power. Even if they do not consciously subscribe to these gender roles, our culture bombards us with comments about what it means to be ‘men’ and ‘women’. As teachers, it becomes our responsibility to dismantle these stereotypes. We can begin to take a good look at these influences and see how they affect the sense of self-worth of the youngsters. This can happen when we inspire young people to question stereotypical gender roles and enable them to make informed choices about their futures, broaden their opportunities and be who they want to be. We are in a position to call out examples of gender prejudices and encourage students to question and dispute them. The classroom is an ideal

environment to raise their awareness and teach tolerance to students so they are equipped to come to their own informed conclusions.

Inspiring young people to question gender stereotypes enables them to make choices about their futures and broaden their opportunities. As a teacher, you are in a position to call out examples of gender stereotyping and encourage students to question and dispute them. This might be through highlighting examples of sexism in teaching materials or through calling out toxic comments and behaviour.<sup>5</sup> It is important to teach our young generation to question and challenge the impact of unyielding stereotypes on their lives. It is necessary for their wellbeing, so that they can make decisions about how to conduct themselves in society by respecting the choices of others.

Here are a few ideas for how you can draw attention to, and challenge gender stereotypes through your work with young people:

When you see/hear examples of gender stereotypes use them as an opportunity for ‘teachable moments’ and ask a young person to reflect on what they mean and why they use them.

Acknowledge and learn from young people’s experience about the ways gender stereotypes play out in the context of other forms of discrimination and humiliation. For example, question the label that ‘young women who wear western outfits are easy-going’. This stereotype is the result of sexism.

Challenge traditional stereotypes when giving examples to young people like ‘a female fighter pilot’ or ‘a male dancer’.

Avoid making assumptions about a young person’s gender identity based on their appearance or behaviour.

Use gender neutral language (e.g. theirs, they, people, humankind).

Avoid statements that generalize based on gender e.g. ‘girls always tend to...’ or ‘boys are more...’

Don’t limit what you ask a young person to do due to assumptions about gender. Ask girls to referee sports, ask boys to clean up after an activity.

Consider the way you interact with young people.

Actively encourage young people to engage in activities that might challenge gender stereotypes, for example, ask boys to participate in cooking classes, and girls to play cricket or football.

In group settings, take note of where you direct your attention, particularly non-verbal communication, to ensure that it includes both young women and young men.

Encourage mixed gender group seating arrangements.

Use examples of gender inequality in your lesson, e.g. looking at statistics on the gender pay gap for a maths lesson, or use a history class to talk about the lack of women leaders and how things may or may not have changed.

Actively discuss and analyse sexist advertising and the media's representation of men and women.

When you question their beliefs and challenge gender stereotypes, be prepared that it will, sometimes, evoke strong reactions or emotional responses. As a teacher, it is your responsibility to create a safe space for critical reflection.

Rather than categorically declaring that gender inequality exists, or stating the negative impact of a gender stereotype, invite young people to consider "What are the consequences of the belief about men/women?" and question, "Who benefits?", "Does anyone miss out?" or, "Is this fair?"

Acknowledge and encourage reflection on the way that gender stereotypes impact young people in different ways due to other forms of discrimination and stigma. Ask young people to reflect on the specific stereotypes that exist in relation to LGBTQ people who share their identities. How are these limiting? Who do we know who challenges these stereotypes?

When talking about the limitations, extend reflections from considering the impacts on young men and young women to include the impacts for non-binary, transgender and gender diverse young people. Work at assuming and judging young people on the basis of their gender. Framing conversations in this way will ensure that you are inclusive of all young people.

Be guided by young people's responses as to the degree to which you pursue these conversations. Listening is the key. Support young people who decide for themselves about the impact of gender stereotypes in their own lives.

To conclude, we need to acknowledge that stereotypes are destructive because they limit our potential. They curb our normal behaviour and cause damage to the people around us. Boys are not naturally violent or girls are not born to be confined to the four walls of the house. We learn these attitudes and behaviours through the stereotypes of the society around us. They only cause

unhappiness, loneliness and violence. Youngsters need to be guided and teachers can share this responsibility. Respecting the other person and treating them as equal is the key to a progressive world. Students can be taught tolerance towards the opposite gender which can lead to making healthy choices about how to behave in society. They can choose to free themselves from the restrictions and start the process of change.

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## Women Empowerment and Government Initiatives

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### Abstract

Women are the main pillar of every family, society and the nation. Last few decades women have touched new heights of success at national and international level, which is really admirable. But to come to this position, women had to fight with her family and the society, especially men dominated society. According to census 2011, the total population of India is 1210.19 crores including men 623.7 crores (51.54%) and women 586.46 crores (48.46%). Thus it is necessary, economically, socially and politically empower to the women due to almost half part of the total population. But in India, women have to fight for her rights and equality to become empower in the society for a long period.

**Key Words: Women Empowerment, National Commission for Women, Women and Child Development**

Women empowerment is a campaign to empower women all over the world so that women can take their own decisions and break through the many personal boundaries of this society and their family and move forward in their lives.

According to the provisions of the Constitution of India, it is a legal point to grant equality to women in the society in all spheres just like male. Women and Child Development Department functioning well in this area for the proper development of the women and child in India. Women are given a top place in India from the ancient time however they were not given empowerment to participate in all areas. They need to be strong, aware and alert every moment for their growth and development. Empowering women is the main motto of the development department because an empowered mother with child makes the bright future of any nation.

There are many formulating strategies and initiating processes started by the government of India in order to bring women into the mainstream of development. Women constitute half population of the

whole country's population and need to be independent in every area for the holistic development of women and children.

Even today in this modern era, there are 40 to 50% women who, despite being educated are still sitting at home. That is, half the knowledge of the country is being wasted sitting at home. However, taking care of children or family at home is also a part of life. But this does not mean that life is limited there. Women, like men, should go to the office and work because it increases their knowledge and they too can do something good for the country.

Lack of women empowerment in India is one of the biggest reasons that India is still counted among developing countries. If the women of our country become strong and like men, share their knowledge with the world and go out of the house and work shoulder to shoulder with men, and then the day is not far when our country India will also appear in the list of developed countries.

Many rules and laws have to be introduced to help men to empower women and to empower women by the government. The slogan of women empowerment was raised in the society because gender discrimination in our society is still happening in this modern era which is a great shame. Even today, in many places, illegal feticide is being done by illegally examining the gender.

In this continuation, government has taken various initiatives and made various policies to empower the women. Provisions made under the constitution of India such as Right to Equality under Article 14 of the Indian Constitution guarantees to all Indian Women Equality; before law. Equal pay for equal work under Article 39(d), towards the economic rights of women by guaranteeing equal pay for equal work, Maternity Relief under Article 42 and Child Care Leave, allows provisions to be made by the state for securing just and human condition of work and maternity relief for women.

Other than that, various acts i.e. Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, Special Marriage Act, 1954, Re-marriage Act 1956, Dowry Prohibition Act 1961, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, Sexual Harassment of Women at Work Place (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act to give one-third participation of women in local self government i.e. Panchayati Raj Institutions, and various policies like Swadhar (1995), Swayam Siddha (2001), Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP-2003), Asha Yojna (2008), Sabla Scheme (2010), Indira Gandhi Single Girl Child Scholarship

Scheme(2006), National Mission for Empowerment of Women (2010), Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas-DWCRA, are the major steps to empower the Indian women.

### **Challenges for Women in India**

There are many confront that are currently pestilence the issues of women's rights in our country. A lot of issues are superfluous and quite basic which has been faced across the country; they are causative to the overarching position of women in India. Targeting these issues will directly benefit the empowerment of women.

### **Education of Women**

Whereas the country has grown from leaps and bounds since its independence education is severe only 65.46% of adult literate women are there in India.

### **Poverty in the Country**

Poverty is measured the great threat to peace in the world, and eradication of poverty should be a national goal as important as the eradication of illiteracy. If poverty were not a concern, then the girl child will be able to follow her thoughts without concerns of sexual exploitation, domestic mistreatment

### **Health and Safety of Women**

The health and safety concerns of women are supreme for the welfare of a country in gauging the empowerment of women in a country. While there are several programs that have been set into motion by the Government and several NGOs over the entire nation. The empowerment of women commences with a promise of their health and safety.

In these coming years, the government has also introduced many new rules and laws to promote the concept of women empowerment. We hope that this law and the thinking of the people will prove to be helpful in getting women their rights. We must also understand the importance of our women empowerment and respect the women of the society and give them their rights.

### **Economic Empowerment of Women schemes by Government:**

The following initiatives by launching schemes are directly or indirectly influencing the women workers and their financial condition. These schemes basically give stress on the individual training and entrepreneurship. They also provide employment policies to the women centric. These schemes are playing a key role in women empowerment.

Schemes of Department of Animal Husbandry Dairying Fisheries, Scheme on Development of Inland Fisheries & Aquaculture, Scheme on Development of Marine Fisheries, Infrastructure and Post harvest Operations, National Award Scheme/ Guidelines [Launched by Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprise (MSME)], Scheme for Working Women Hostel, Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY), Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC), Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme, Mid Day Meal (scheme provides a post of BHOJAN MATA in every primary and secondary school who make the food for school children) etc.

Women have always held a high position in Indian culture. It is said that a woman is respected by women and she is the abode of gods. The famous sentence said by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, "To awaken people", women must be awakened. Once she takes her step, the family moves forward, the village moves forward and the nation is oriented towards developing.

Women Empowerment Women Empowerment means that any woman can take decisions related to her life. In the name of Women Empowerment, today, women keep hearing many things like reservation, safety of women. But actually Women Empowerment Women Empowerment will start when we teach women to take right decisions for themselves from childhood. Give the freedom to choose the field in which they want to make their career.

It is said that a woman can build an entire house - meaning if the woman is cultured, by giving good values to her entire family, she can contribute a lot in the progress of the country. Women Empowerment is most important for women to have confidence in themselves, to break all their fears and to see life in a new way. Women have to face different problems everywhere - to solve these problems it is necessary that women should first be taught self defense techniques from school itself.

Women empowerment Women empowerment is as complex as hearing these words, if you understand the meaning of empowerment directly then it means "the process of gaining freedom and

power to do what you want or to control what happens to you:" Meaning an action that gives you freedom, and power to do what they want to do or that happens with them.

But we add women empowerment only to the fact that whether the woman does the job or not, the women must have the freedom to do the job. Women's empowerment simply means that woman should be strong enough to do what she feels is right for her selves, but also cannot force them to do jobs when they don't want to or when they want to do jobs.

Actually, real change should come in the life of common people. There is a need to change their thinking to change them; changes in the lives of ordinary women, in their situation, in their thinking. This is the real empowerment.

Crimes against them are increasing. Cities are becoming unsafe. Due to select events and select few people, the exit doors of many other women and girls are closed. Need to open the closed door. Let the light come in. To see your image in the light, to improve it, to be hold & to refine

Another door in this episode is self-reliance - need to be taught that it is also important to earn and must indulge in financially competent. Not for the family but for yourself also. Money does not bring happiness, but a lot comes that brings happiness. If education is to be added some fraction; which will give women practical knowledge along with book knowledge that will also upgrade their skills, make them worthy only then will have the meaning of education in a right manner.

Women's Economic empowerment is the ability of women to participate & contribute and benefit from growth processes in ways that be familiar with the value of their contributions, respect their dignity and make it possible to negotiate a fairer distribution of the benefits of growth.

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**Role played by education & micro finance on female empowerment in India****Dr. Mamta Sharma, Principal, Aditi Mahavidyalaya, University of Delhi****Dr. Sandeep Sharma, Associate Professor, Rajdhani College, University of Delhi****Dr. Parul Chopra, Assistant Professor, Aditi Mahavidyalaya, University of Delhi****Abstract:**

According to the Gender Inequality Index (G.I.I.) 2017 report, India stands at rank 127 indicating a high level of patriarchal gender bias prevalent in our country. For a nation as India which takes pride in being known as a sacred place of woman worship, the low G.I. I. presents great mockery of the glaring inequalities that have been daunting our image, culture and economy since centuries. For a nation to be truly developed there is a need to build up a system which considers and presents equal social and economic opportunities to all. Financial inclusion is one such mechanism which tries to ensure fiscal reach to those in a state of financial poverty. Since the inception of micro financial institutions in Bangladesh, the concept of helping others to help themselves has spread to many other developing nations, leading to establishment of M.F.I.'s across the globe. Particularly so in case of our country where access to financial resources whether at home or from the formal sector is a privilege enjoyed only by the males, creating a huge financial disparity among the two sexes. In the last two decades due to education and exposure of females to modern ideology and concept of self-worth, we have seen a rise in the females challenging the patriarchal structure in various arenas. Numerous M.F.I.'s center their lending to women, who they believe exhibit venture success rate higher than the male counterparts. The paper tries to theoretically study the roles played by M.F.I.'s through lens of various paradigms as women empowerment, poverty alleviation and financial sustainability. It states that grant of education opportunities and micro finance to females not only empowers them economically but also aids in combating poverty crisis in our country. Educated women make up empowered entrepreneurs who ensure higher repayment rate by them thereby confirming financial sustainability of the micro finance organizations in the long term.

**Key words:** Micro finance, financial inclusion, female empowerment

India is a one of the world's most poor nations homing one out of every five poor people across the globe. With glaring gender disparity in economics, education and society, women in our country formulate the poorest of the poor with absolutely neither financial independence nor financial

security. Therefore one of the major goals of our government is female education and empowerment as it believes that if we educate a female, we educate a family. As a result, many micro finance programs have been initiated in our country which have become a floorboard of poverty alleviation and promotion of gender equality. Micro financial institutions have also developed a general consensus on desirability of targeting women due to their higher credit repayment rates as compared to the male counterparts. Since last three decades, various women movements in various countries have become interested in the extent to which women were able to access and derive benefit from poverty focusing credit programs. For example in our country organizations like S.E.W.A. (Self Employed Women's Association) and many other working for women upliftment understood lack of credit availability as a major constraint to work in informal sector. This lead to development of large micro credit institutional networks like the Grameen Ban, Finca etc. which focused on higher women lending (with high repayment rate) which could also ensure financial sustainability of these organizations. Micro finance for women has not only played an instrumental role in ensuring women financial empowerment, but also in meeting other millennium goals of poverty reduction, health etc. There has been an apparent merger of policy initiatives of the government and common concerns with sustainability and empowerment. However, we are able to identify three contrasting models with different aims and priorities with respect to micro finance and gender policy. The various paradigms are explained as the female empowerment paradigm, the poverty reduction paradigm and the financial sustainability paradigm.

### **The Female Empowerment Paradigm:**

Female empowerment is one of the main goals our country strives to attain at present, as women are incidentally also a big source of economic contributors, the potential of which is untapped at present. Here the underlying factor is achievement of gender equality and human rights as empowerment is considered as an integral part of a wider social transformation process. The main target group here is the women who are poor and men who also play an important role in challenging gender biasness. Micro finance is thus promoted as a gateway in relation to a broad strategy that is built for socio economic and political empowerment and must belong to a strategy for change that is able to identify opportunities and constraints within different sectors that can raise large employment returns for women. Some of the potent industries may be development of existing infrastructure, food processing, shifting to new markets etc. it must also be made on participatory principles that would



require industries to increment their existing knowledge and enable women to cope up with and develop strategies for change.

Economic empowerment of women is much more than mere seeking of industrial employment as it also includes issues like property rights, intra- household role change, patriarchal challenges etc. Thus, several programs have been developed to integrate gender awareness and organizing people to challenge and change gender discrimination. All of these interventions to increase political and social empowerment are pre requisites for economic empowerment of women.

### **Poverty Reduction Paradigm:**

The poverty alleviation paradigm encompasses numerous poverty targeting development programs initiated by N.G.O.'s at the community level. It not only includes increasing earning capacity of the poor but also, making efforts to decrease their vulnerability. The primary focus of the paradigm is to develop livelihoods for the poor which are sustainable in the long run and community building services like provision of health care and education facilities. Development of national infrastructure is considered as an important contributor here due to its ability to absorb a vast poor population spread across the nation. Literature collected from various debates emphasize on the importance of small savings and provision of loan for the production, consumption, capital formation and, justifying subsidy programs working in desirable sectors. Some of these programs are based on adoption of effective methodologies for removal of poverty in targeted remote areas. At this place also gender lobbies have argued on targeting women due to existence of high level of female poverty and role played by women in household well-being.

### **Financial Sustainability Paradigm**

The financial sustainability paradigm is based on the model adopted for development of micro finance that got promoted in the last decade of previous century. The main aim is to initiate large programs that are not only profitable but also self sustaining while meeting competition with other private sector banking institutions. The main target group here is to reach the bankable poor which include small entrepreneurs, farmers and poor women all which exhibit higher repayment rates. The financial sustainability paradigm has also gained relevance due to declining aid budgets for such institutions and to be able to meet the goal of reaching out to maximum number of poor. Discussions of various policies have focused on setting up of interest rates that would cover costs, separate micro

level finance from other interventions so as to separate accounting and program expansion that would help in increasing the program outreach, economies of scale and reduce the costs of transaction and delivery. Recent trend emphasizes on development of best practices on generation of a 'financial sustainability index' which charts the progress of programs in covering costs from income. In this paradigm, the gender lobbies argue for targeting women due to their higher repayment rates and to stimulate economic activity of females as they are the underutilized resource capable of contributing to a great extent to the economic growth. It also ensures that female targeting are integrated into conditions viable for micro finance delivery and evaluation of the programs developed.

A critical appraisal of the three paradigms as discussed above prove that there is no systematic cross cultural or inter organizational comparison of gender impact in relative terms on different models or strategies that have been adopted for micro finance. And also that educating the female population would play an instrumental role in poverty alleviation when coupled with provision of adequate, cheap and timely finance at micro level. Therefore many micro finance instruments have been developed which cater to the growing financial needs and requirements of this sector. Targeting the female poor is also financially sustainable for the micro finance organizations due to less default rates. Thus efforts have also been made to integrate women's needs to micro finance product designs so as to ensure quality and equitable access. For example, gender discrimination experienced during dispersal of loans in the form collateral requirements has been done away with. Application and promotion measures have been developed to facilitate easy and timely loans to them at locations desirable to them. Micro finance organizations have revised repayment schedules and interest rates to reflect quality of economic activities of women and their life cycle. Savings facilities both small and large have been considerably improved with restricted access to assets held by women, which ensures their economic independence. Likewise numerous provisions in finance products have been devised to encourage males to take up household roles such as the loan scheme for education of a daughter, or loan for purchase of a productive asset for an unmarried daughter. Hence, educating the women equivalent to their empowerment in true sense when they are also provided with an opportunity to develop financially.

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### **Women Empowerment: An Initiative by the Indian Companies Act, 2013**

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In recent times the discussion about Women Empowerment has gained new momentum as it has been realized that women participation is necessary to build stronger economies, achievement of goals of development and sustainability, and improve the quality of life for women and community.

In the modern era, the role of Indian women has changed from merely daughters, wives, sisters and mothers to stepping out and using their managerial skills in the corporate sector with full credibility.

“Women have the right instincts to be excellent accountants and leaders,” says Kimberly Ellison-Taylor, chair of American Institute of CPAs (AICPA). In order to encourage women empowerment The Indian Companies Act, 2013 has introduced a new provision regarding appointment of at least one women director as a board member in the following types of companies:

1. It is a listed company whose securities are listed on any stock exchange.
2. It is a company having a paid up capital of rupees 100 crores or more and a turnover of rupees 300 crores or more.

The present paper seeks to analyze the status of women participation in the Board of Directors in 50 companies from 10 different industrial sectors in India for the years 2006-07 (before enactment of Companies Act, 2013) and 2016-17 (after enactment of Companies Act, 2013). For this the annual report of both the years are studied. The companies under study are listed in BSE Sensex as on 31<sup>st</sup> march 2017. The objective of the study is to determine whether there is a significant improvement of women participation in companies under study.

The results show that there is a significant improvement in women participation in Board of Directors in selected companies over the above stated period.

Keywords: Women Empowerment, Companies Act 2013, Listed Companies, Women Directors, Annual Reports.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Many years ago, Aristotle called the male principle active and the female, passive. For him a female was a 'mutilated male', someone who does not have a soul. In his view the biological inferiority of a woman also makes her inferior in her capacities, her ability to reason and therefore to make decisions. Because the male is superior and female inferior, men are born to rule and women born to be ruled.

Having accessed some of the richest resources on Gender and Women's Studies by the most eminent scholars of modern times and having sailed through different aspects on the issue. We were tempted to believe that times have changed and so has the stigma associated with gender. Sadly but truly, Shradha, the Indian Woman is a paradox. She poses a pathetic figure in history where the role assigned was 'he for the sword and for the needle she'. Barring the early Aryan period where she enjoyed due to respect and status, her position has undergone a steady deterioration which has impaired her identity relegated her to an inferior, inhuman place in Indian society. It is said that times have changed and so has the status of women in society. She is dreaming a new world. There are examples to prove that women are finally liberated. But can a handful of cases boast of changing the entire scenario? Definitely not.

Woman empowerment is a hotly debated topic across the world. This includes advocating gender diversity on Board of Directors of corporates. Those who favour these propositions argue that female representation in the board brings different outlook, spontaneity in corporate boardrooms.

Consequently, a number of countries across the world have passed legislation to promote more inclusiveness in their board of director. India has also tried to achieve gender diversity in Indian companies' board by enforcing a quota. As per second proviso to sec 149(1) of Indian Companies Act 2013, classes of companies as may be prescribed shall have at least one woman director. As prescribed under Rule 3 of the companies (Appointed and qualification of Directors) Rules, every listed company and every other public company having : paid up shares capital of Rs. 100 crore or more and turnover of Rs. 300 crore or more shall appoint at least one women director.

Any casual vacancy of woman director shall be filled up by the Board at the earliest but not later than immediate next board meeting or 3 months from the date of such vacancy whichever is later. The relevant date for a paid up share capital or turnover criterion shall be as on the last date of latest audited financial statements.

SEBI's on the basis of recommendation of Kotak Committee on Corporate Governance has decided that at least one woman independent director should be appointed in the top 500 listed entities by market capitalization by April 1, 2019 and in the top 1000 listed entities, by April 1, 2020.

The paper explores the participation of women as Board of Directors in 50 companies across 10 industrial sectors.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **OBJECTIVES**

To determine whether there is a significant improvement of women participation in selected 50 companies across 10 industrial sectors listed on BSE Sensex as on March 2017 by comparing the data of two years i.e. 2006-2007 and 2016-17.

### **SAMPLE SIZE AND SOURCES OF DATA**

The study is based on secondary data obtained from annual reports of the year 2006-2007 and 2016-2017 of 50 companies from 10 industrial sectors namely power, steel, telecommunication, transport and logistics, banking, IT, oil and gas, FMCG, automobile, and pharmaceutical are examined. For the purpose of the study the selected companies are given a score on the basis of participation of women directors.

### **RESULT**

The study shows that in 2006-07, 25 companies out of sample of 50 companies failed to appoint any woman director on their Board. But after the enactment of Indian Companies Act, 2013, in the year 2016-17 only three company's namely Indian oil, ONGC and ITC did not have any woman director. This shows that the introduction of regulation regarding appointment of a woman director on the Board had a significant improvement in women participation on Board of Directors. Thus, we can say that in a way this regulation has led to women empowerment in some way.

### **CONCLUSION**

As the regulation in India are in their nascent stage, there are very few studies available which can throw light on the impact of gender diversity in corporate boards on financial performance of companies. However, global researches have shown a strong positive association between share of women in senior positions and company's return on assets. In India, this positive impact of appointing women on board shall be felt over the next few years. By introducing gender diversity, the government has taken the first step in the direction of women empowerment. Now the companies need to push this initiative forward as India is lagging behind the developed countries where the proportion of woman directors ranges between 20%to 40%.

### Skill Based Education for Girls

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**Abstract:**

*Beti Bachao Beti Padhao* campaign is a catalyst of change in society and reinforces women empowerment. Education is considered as a powerful weapon for social change and transformation and it works more effectively combines with innovative teaching learning practices. In India education becomes a prime concern when it comes to girls' education. Despite the genuine efforts, the outcomes are far from ideal. The problems which a girl faces are essentially the problems of gender biased thinking and traditional patriarchy system. Although the situation has changed much, the girls are required to be empowered by the skill based learning. Higher education is required to be innovative so that girls can learn new skills and develop new insights and approaches towards the solving of social problems which they face. The present study aimed to investigate innovative teaching learning practices in higher education especially for girls. The focus is on empowering girls by imparting job skills, and self-improvement skills. The discussion is based on revamping the curriculum that helps in developing soft skills of girl students. This task involves identification of the skill sets and then molding them into a curriculum to improve employability skills of girls.

**Key Words:** Revamping, Empowerment, Soft Skills, Curriculum, Transformation

Girl's education is red-hot issue in India. A girl works as a pivot for the society around whom the whole society revolves and completes its targets. In India the condition of girls was very pitiable in the pre-independence era but after independence some positive changes came into the lives of girls due to education and government policies. In 1960 feminism rose against the colonial rule, patriarchal practices and traditions enhance the ideology of female subordination. Feminism works against the secondary and inferior position of girls in the male dominated society. As a socio-economic movement, it demands equal rights for girls as the boys get in this male dominated society. It challenges the age long tradition of gender differentiation.

Now a day, girls are strong, fully awakened and ready to fight against the patriarchal norms. From last few decades they are trying to participate actively in various economic and social activities but in the male dominated society their efforts need more attention and determination. They are



struggling for their own identity in the social, economic and educational field. They are not only ready to manage their homes as a homemaker but trying to give their best at their workplace. Unfortunately their efforts remain unrecognized and they have a lack of confidence to face the global competitive challenges. Education is the only mean to get them aware about their rights and to make them confident. They can polish their talents through education and training. It gives them the opportunity to identify their capabilities, knowledge and skill set. The emergence of a new woman is not a stagnant process. It is actually a dynamic process of realization of skills and achievement of their goals. It is compulsory for them to be confident and strong to achieve their goals.

In India the status of girl's education is improving by the passing of time. The government is taking certain measures to empowering females through education. Girls are getting their real status by participating in different financial and political activities. Because of education they are redefining their identity. Now they are aware about their rights. They are trying to break themselves free from traditional cultural shackles such as child marriages, the dowry system, gender bias, caste distinction etc. Although the village girls are still facing appalling situation to get educated and independent, they are challenging the older system of society and authority.

Unfortunately in India the educational system is based on theories. It lacks practical approach of learning. Students' learning potential is measured through their reading, writing and arithmetic capabilities. But these are not enough for excelling as individuals in the 21st century. We need something additional for preparing future leaders within the nation and for expediting growth of a nation into an economic powerhouse. The students are getting degrees but when it comes to employability skills, they feel underprivileged. As our former President Pranab Mukherjee said in a CII event in Kolkata, "We often boast about India's demographic dividend. But the question that arises is what we do with this if we cannot skill them, if we cannot educate them and cannot enhance their employability."

The education system in the most developed international countries like Germany, Switzerland, USA, Singapore, Japan and Sri Lanka and the Scandinavian provides opportunities to the students to move laterally and vertically to attain their academic targets in mainstream education. They are enrolled to formal skill development at age 16 onwards or at upper secondary level onwards. They have a comparatively well-established vocational track.

The condition becomes worse in India in case of girls education. Most of the Indian girls are not able to complete their higher education due to certain reasons. There are many girl students who are not able to cope with main stream education. This could be because of economic reasons or academic incapacities. So we have to think over the options available to them, such that they lead a dignified life without being exploited or being helpless? For those students introducing skill training at a young age can open the path of success and numberless opportunities. It will also be effective to improve the workforce in our country.

There are many cases where we find that a girl starts working at an early age so that the men in the family can learn, and girls can support their brother's education. From the very young age, girls are exposed to societal conventional practices, and backgrounds that form their understanding of what they should do to be a successful human being. They started appreciate informal education more than the formal one. It is not an overstatement that Girls are taught how to survive instead of how to thrive. The situation becomes worse when these teachings are coupled by gender discrimination and negative influences. Actually we need to equip students with an innovative prolonged skill set so that they can relate their academic learning innovatively into new situations for overcoming modern challenges.

Skill based learning strategy is a new paradigm learning teaching process. Skill development is not an out-of-the-way learning process. It has to be a vital part of education. Lack of education and lack of skills is considered as pandemic that we need to overcome in the present scenario. Skills development is the only way to improve their earning opportunities, employability and productivity. Indian girls have great talent but lack of employability skills. Skill development is a bridge between education and employment. Indian girls face many barriers to retrieving skills and productive employment. Skill based education is an important and primary way to create a skilled female workforce who will be participating in the economic prosperity in the coming years. The main target of skill development, in the case of girls, is not just simply preparing them for jobs; but also to boost their confidence and performance to face the challenges in the male dominating society. The main aspect of skill based development is to give a sense of internal strength to them - to control their lives.

If Education opens the door to lead an independent life, skill development enables independence meaningful by permitting one to achieve fortune. Skill based education both in schools and colleges is the requirement of the hour. Educational accomplishment and economic immersion are the key

elements in ensuring the empowerment of girls. Skill development does not mean cookery, tailoring, etc. It is about the identification of skill set and involvement of soft skill development in the curriculum. Definitely it will enhance their capabilities & qualities to move ahead and to be self-dependent. At school level, there must be options available for skill development courses and they must be provided in the secondary stage of schooling.

The focus should be on the development of literacy, numeracy, political & life skills in girls through various ways. Some ways to improve the life skills are as following:

- Improvement in Communication skills
- Basic Entrepreneurship
- Mathematics and Reasoning Lessons
- Management Skills
- Basic accounting skills
- Computer Knowledge
- Leadership Skills
- Lateral Thinking Exercise
- Critical & Analytical Skills
- Professional Etiquettes
- Personality Development

Besides these many more courses such as Hospitality and Tourism, Handicraft, Healthcare, Textiles, Photography, IT, Retail, Banking, and Insurance can be added according to the students' interest. These concepts should be incorporated with the curriculum so that it can help in developing skills of girl's student. Besides it some vocational training can improve the situation. For example, every state has its own culture and specialty for handicrafts. They can start compulsory training for handicrafts practice at initial level. According to UNESCO, women empowerment implies developing self-ingenuity among women for change and ability to learn skills the ability to make decisions of their own. It is not just saying yes or no but having a range of opinions and ability to change others perceptions. It is also having access to resources involving in the growth process.

By this way we can save our culture as well as this program will help to give them sustainable income, especially in rural areas. There is a huge scope of female engineers in industries. They can learn machine designs. Girls have natural creative abilities so they can use their potential by putting themselves in household industries for handicraft, artistic & designed products. Girls should be

involved in sports. It must be compulsory for the girls to adapt a sport in schools. Computer education, web designing should be the part of girls education so that they can face the competitive global challenges. Startups can be a better opportunity for the girls. But to avail the opportunity girls should have entrepreneurship skills. There must be project based learning activities in the curriculum which will motivate the entrepreneurship skills in girls. They should encourage their own strengths, weaknesses and interests to explore their real interest and potential.

Skill development will boost their confidence with high productivity & earnings. Skills lead to confidence among them to be more innovative. Gender inequalities in education and employment hinder the way of success not only of an individual but for the nation. Education and training must be provided to girls ensuring that they feel respected, confident and safe so that they can develop to their full potential. Government investments in educational policies and programs open rich avenues for the development of girls at all levels, across all professional areas, which encourage them to enter the non-traditional sector.

Although there is a long way to go in that direction, introducing girls to some of the employable skills mentioned above will help them prepare and acclimate to real work conditions without much effort. It will definitely ease the evolution phase from being a student to being a professional. A confident smile on their face is the only mark of their success.

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**Education, Empowerment & Sustainable Development of Women: An Imperative Linkage**

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**Abstract**

The Millennium Development Goals and the objectives established by the international community, considers women's education a critical component of development policy and planning, and central to sustainable development. The present paper focuses on the above theme and endorses the fact that although education is important for everyone, but it is more so for the women. Women's educational achievements have positive ripple effects within the family and across generations thus is an essential investment which countries should make for their futures. While the economic benefits of educating girls are similar to those of educating boys, recent findings suggest that the social benefits are greater. Women have the potential to change their own economic status and that of their communities and countries in which they live.

The article also highlights that usually women's economic contributions are unrecognized, and while there has been notable progress in some gender equality dimensions there remains much to be done in every country, at every level, to achieve equality and women's empowerment. Empowerment means moving from enforced powerlessness to a position of power. Education is an essential means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to fully participate in the development process. Sustainable development is only possible when women and men enjoy equal opportunities to reach their potential. The paper also brings to light the multiple and intersecting inequalities and barriers in the economic, social, political and environmental spheres which produce and reinforce gender bias.

The article concludes on the note that education is definitely the most powerful instrument for changing women's position in society and therefore investing in it is one of the most effective ways to not only reduce poverty but also for sustainable development.

**Key Words:** Education, sustainable development, empowerment, sustainable development goals, gender discrimination

## **INTRODUCTION**

Women empowerment is a topic of global discussion. It has now been distinctly realized that education is the only means for empowering them. Therefore, literacy should spread amongst women. Depriving women of education leads to multiplication in other forms of gender discrimination. Although education is important for everyone, but it is more so for the women. Women's educational achievements have a positive ripple effect within the family across generations and are thus an essential investment which countries today have opted for their futures. While the economic benefits of educating girls are similar to those of educating boys, recent findings suggest that the social benefits are greater.

While more women have entered political positions in recent years, including through the use of special quotas, they still hold a mere 23.7 per cent of parliamentary seats, far short of parity. The situation is not much better in the private sector, where women globally occupy less than a third of senior and middle management positions.

The Millennium Development Goals and the objectives established by the international community, considers women's education a critical component of development policy and planning, and central to sustainable development. Women have the potential to change not only their own economic status but that of their communities and countries too in which they live. It is a harsh fact that usually women's economic contributions are unrecognized, their work undervalued and while there has been notable progress in some gender equality dimensions there remains much to be done in every country, at every level, to achieve equality and women's empowerment. Empowerment means moving from enforced powerlessness to a position of power and education is an essential means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to fully participate in the development process. Sustainable development is possible only when women and men enjoy equal opportunities to reach their potential.

## **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Around the world, women do the vast majority of the unpaid work, including child care, cooking, cleaning and farming. This unpaid work is essential for households and economies to function, but

unfortunately is undervalued than paid work. Women do 2.6 times more unpaid care and domestic work than men. While families, societies and economies depend on this work, for women, it leads to lower earnings and less time to engage in non-work activities. Even though everybody is aware of this fact, yet nobody is ready to accept it. As a result, the importance which used to be given to women is declining in today's society. This growing tendency of underestimating women and making them occupy a secondary position denying them of their basic rights led to the need for empowering women. No Constitution of the world discriminates between men and women, but our societies do. We, as a nation, dreamt of becoming a Super Power by 2020. For becoming a Super Power, each element of our society/ nation should contribute in the nation building process. But women, who are a major part of this society, if not literate, shall become a barrier to become a Super Power. This leads us towards the understanding of the importance of women's education, which would, in turn, definitely give a motivation to the process of women's empowerment. With stepped up action on gender equality, every part of the world can make progress towards sustainable development by 2030, leaving no one behind.

### **HOW DOES EDUCATION EMPOWER WOMEN?**

The only way a society or nation can move forward, and aspire to achieve economic growth and development is through education especially among the women citizens. There are several reasons for this;

- **Education Liberates:** Education liberates the mind by gaining knowledge and educating oneself about the world, about how nature, people and nations work. Books which educate open up the minds to places, people and possibilities never thought of otherwise. Therefore, an educated woman will also be a liberated woman.
- **Education Breaks Down Barriers:** Education enables us to break down all barriers-religious, linguistic, cultural, political, gender and geographical. An educated woman will not discriminate on the basis of these barriers- she will treat everyone the same, and work with them. She might also chose a husband neglecting such barriers, and can bring families from different backgrounds together. This can form a nice way of fostering both national and international integration.



- **Education Allows the Privilege of Choice:** As education opens up new worlds to women, it will enable them to make their own choices, in everything- whether it be lifestyle, career, life-partner, sexuality, food etc. Education will teach them to discriminate between wrong and right, and make the correct choices in life. Plus it will also teach them to be independent, make their own choices and not bow down to anyone, or societal norms.
- **Education Mobilizes:** Education will galvanize women into fighting against the social evils which still plague Indian society. An intellectually enlightened woman will actively fight against dowry, bride-burning, marital rape; rape in general, molestation and sexual harassment, and objectification of women. She will also fight misogyny and patriarchy.
- **Education Fosters Independence:** Most young, educated women of today are coming into their own being. They know about their autonomy over their lives- they no longer bow down to moronic societal diktats. They live life on their own terms. They live how they want to, they date who they like, they also chose their life-partners and just about everything else.
- **Education Helps Choose a Career and Gets Financial Independence:** Education, today, is enabling women to go beyond professions considered traditionally good for them- like medicine, nursing, teaching, librarian etc. Today, women are becoming models, actors, fighter pilots, gym instructors, cops, writers, engineers, architects, journalists, scientists, corporate, law, filmmaking and whatnot- they are breaking the glass ceiling. Today's intellectually liberated and emancipated woman is also earning her own keep. Now she doesn't have to depend on a man to give her a house, food, clothing and shelter. She can earn her own keep, and buy her own house and feed herself. Today, women are leading good lives sans men- they are no longer forced to play second fiddle to males who treat them, in many cases, like doormats.
- **Educated Women Contributes to Economy:** Imagine a nation where women are qualified and are able to get jobs. The contribution to the workforce will enhance the output, and therefore, the economy will develop. And I'm not just talking about industries and corporations, but also about healthcare, the education sector itself, arts, science, literature etc. This will contribute greatly to the advancement of any society, both culturally and economically, and also help its human development indicators. Women can help, through their work, get rid of problems like India's high maternal mortality rate, high rates of gender

violence and other crimes against women, child sex abuse, female feticide, implement family planning and other schemes etc.

Apart from these seven reasons listed above, there is a much deeper reason that women must be educated, and they must be encouraged to learn as much as they want. Paraphrasing a popular saying here – educate a man and you will educate one person, educate a woman and you will educate a whole family. Educating a woman can, in fact, educate more generations.

### **TARGET AREAS FOR ENSURING WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**

- Ending all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.
- Eliminating all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.
- Eliminating all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.
- Recognizing and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.
- Ensuring women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.
- Ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.
- Undertaking reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.
- Enhancing the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women.
- Adopting and strengthening sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

## TURNING PROMISES INTO ACTION: GENDER EQUALITY IN THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In some countries, there are stigmas attached to the education of women and girls, and as a result, untapped human potential and gender inequality persist. The outcome is that countries become trapped in a complex web of economic paralysis, poverty, poor health, and gender-based violence.

Therefore, it is critical for us to understand the importance of education for girls as an essential step along the path to gender equality and a catalyst for change in the lives of women, their families, communities and the world. The **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** are a collection of 17 global goals set by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015 for the year 2030. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are said to be interconnected — often the key to success for achieving one SDG will involve tackling issues associated with another. Educating girls and promoting gender equality are key for the world to deliver on all the SDGs. The Sustainable Development Goals are:

1. No Poverty
2. Zero Hunger
3. Good Health and Well-being
4. Quality Education
5. Gender Equality
6. Clean Water and Sanitation
7. Affordable and Clean Energy
8. Decent Work and Economic Growth
9. Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure
10. Reducing Inequality
11. Sustainable Cities and Communities
12. Responsible Consumption and Production
13. Climate Action
14. Life Below Water
15. Life On Land
16. Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

17. Partnerships for the Goals.

## **IMPACT OF GIRL EDUCATION ON THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SDG'S**

### **1. EDUCATING GIRLS LEADS TO POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND ZERO HUNGER (SDG 1 AND SDG 2)**

According to a research by the World Bank, for every extra year of primary education, a girl's individual wage rate increases an average of 10–20% and 25% with an extra year of secondary school. Furthermore, 90% of a mother's wage goes towards caring for her family, thus lifting a household out of poverty and hunger.

### **2. EDUCATING GIRLS LEADS TO IMPROVED HEALTH AND WELL-BEING (SDG 3)**

According to a study by UNESCO, if all women had a primary education, there would be 15% fewer child deaths. If all women had a secondary education, child deaths would be cut in half, saving almost 3 million lives across the globe. Furthermore, the study showed that an educated mother **improves nutrition**. If all women had a primary education, 1.7 million children would be saved from malnutrition and 12 million if all mothers obtained a secondary education. Maternal deaths too would decrease by 60%, saving approximately 98,000 lives. UNAIDS report indicates that women and girls with at least 6 years of school are more likely to protect themselves against HIV/AIDS and other diseases.

### **3. EDUCATING GIRLS LEADS TO GENDER EQUALITY, WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH, SUSTAINABLE CITIES, INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION AND REDUCED INEQUALITIES (SDGS 5, 8, 9, 10 AND 11)**

**Increase in Equality (SDG 5, SDG 10):** Gender inequality is reflected in many ways, including income disparity, wage discrimination, gender norms and gender-based violence. By advancing girls' education, girls are more likely to realize their potential, exercise their human rights and contribute to society. Educated girls will form the next generation of women leaders and make significant advances toward bridging the gender gap.

**A Catalyst to Economic Growth and Sustainable Communities (SDG 8, SDG 11):** As a country's inhabitants become better educated, they are more likely to make cities and settlements safer, sustainable, and resilient. According to the World Bank's study in 100 countries, every 1% increase in the number of women with a secondary education yields an increase of 0.3 percentage

points in the country's annual per capita income growth rate. For example, if India had a 1% increase in girls in secondary school, their GDP would increase by \$5.5 billion. Additionally, women with an education are more likely to work, create economic growth and develop their communities.

**Advancement of Innovation and Industry (SDG 9):** Compared with boys, girls have fewer opportunities and lower rates of entrepreneurship and innovation in many countries. Educating girls can create an environment that encourages innovation, entrepreneurship and creativity. Furthermore, educating girls in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) subjects also increases sustainable industries, and investing in scientific research and innovation helps to facilitate sustainable development.

#### **4. EDUCATING GIRLS LEADS TO CLIMATE ACTION, CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION, CLEAN AND AFFORDABLE ENERGY, RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION, IMPROVING LIFE BELOW WATER AND ON LAND (SDGS 13, 6, 7, 12, 14, 15)**

Educated citizens are more inclined to build and maintain clean energy infrastructures, show greater concern about the well-being of the environment, use water more efficiently and recycle.

**Ability to Combat Climate Change (SDG 13):** Women and girls are among the most vulnerable to climate change. They are also the most powerful agents of change. Providing girls with relevant education on disasters in a school environment can increase their knowledge of responding to climate change while contributing to sustainable development in their communities.

**Increase in Responsible Consumption (SDG 12):** When girls can access information about how to adapt to a changing climate they can play an instrumental role in reducing consumption. They can also contribute to the resilience of their families and communities. In fact, UNICEF says that educating girls and women is one of the best ways of strengthening communities on climate change. Furthermore, as girls' prospects improve through education, they can support the family economically. By doing so, they could help make families more resilient to climate change.

**Awareness in the well-being of the Environment (on land and below water) and Rise of Innovation (SDG 14, 15 and SDG 7):** By increasing girls' participation in STEM subjects, girls and women will be more educated in subjects related to the environment such as marine biodiversity, life

below water or on land. Educated girls are also more likely to be innovative and advance new ideas such as reliable modern energy services.

**Better Hygiene and Sanitation (SDG 6):** Educated girls are more likely to learn about hygiene and improved water sanitation through schools or other programs.

## **5. EDUCATING GIRLS LEADS TO STRONG INSTITUTIONS, PEACE AND JUSTICE (SDG 16)**

**Increased Involvement in Democratic Processes and Awareness of Rights:** According to UNDP, women and girls who receive an education are more likely to seek justice and tackle discrimination such as gender-based violence or other injustices as they are more aware of their rights. We also know that literate people are more likely to participate in the democratic process.

**Rise in Peace and Tolerance:** Studies by UNESCO indicate that children who receive a secondary education are more likely to show tolerance than those with a primary education only towards people who speak another language, immigrants, homosexuals, people of a different religion and race. Furthermore, if the enrolment rate for secondary school is increased by 10%, the risk of war is decreased by 3%.

## **6. EDUCATING GIRLS LEADS TO PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (SDG 17)**

**Formation of Partnerships and Healthy Societies:** When players work together we see greater productivity and impact from the available resources. And we see real progress in countries that are driven to bring quality education to their children and move closer to the goal of sustainable international development.

### **Conclusion**

Awareness of the importance of girls' education must be raised all over the world — and urgently. For as long as girls and women are prevented from achieving their full potential, the world is only taking steps backwards. Through cooperation and partnerships across the world we can achieve gender equality in and through education, and in turn, deliver on the promises set out in the SDGs. Women and girls, everywhere, must have equal rights and opportunity, and be able to live free of violence and discrimination. Women's equality and empowerment is one of the 17 Sustainable

Development Goals, but also integral to all dimensions of inclusive and sustainable development. In short, all the SDGs depend on the achievement of Goal 5.

Gender equality by 2030 requires urgent action to eliminate the many root causes of discrimination that still curtail women's rights in private and public spheres. For example, discriminatory laws need to change and legislation adopted to proactively advance equality. Yet 49 countries still lack laws protecting women from domestic violence, while 39 bar equal inheritance rights for daughters and sons. Eliminating gender-based violence is a priority, given that this is one of the most pervasive human rights violations in the world today. Based on data from 87 countries, 1 in 5 women and girls under the age of 50 will have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner within the last 12 months. Harmful practices, such as child marriage, steal the childhood of 15 million girls under age 18 every year. A highly educated, liberal-minded, independent and professionally successful and sensible woman will choose an educated husband. Then she will also educate her kids, and make them into wise, responsible citizens, who will push forward their kids, and so on.

The difference between men and women created by the Nature is but natural. It is education through which we realize this fact. Only a society that educates, empowers and respects its women can become an advanced society.

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## **Beti Padao: Challenging Gender Stereotypes in Primary Schools using ‘Women Lead Roles’ in Hindi Cinema**

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### **Abstract**

This research paper focused on the identification of gender stereotypes of primary school students, which served as hindrance to girls’ education and hence girls tend to drop out from schools. In order to motivate girls to continue their school education many instances from women’s lives were taken to challenge gender stereotypes prevalent in classroom environment. It was found that gender stereotypes were strongly internalized by students and it requires consistent efforts to challenge and break gender stereotypes. It was also found that examples of women in unconventional roles like astronaut, mountaineering, kabbadi player were taken, which served as a powerful tool in addressing gender stereotypes, thus enabling ‘*beti padao*’.

**Key Words:** Beti Padao, Gender Stereotypes, Gender biases, Primary School

### **Introduction**

The census 2011 reported children sex ratio aged 0-6 yrs as 918 girls per 1000 boys which was 927 per 1000 boys in 2001. Data like these show a continuously declining girl child sex ratio. In such a scenario, there is an immediate need for scheme like ‘Beti Bachao Beti Padhao’. It was launched by Prime Minister, Narendra Modi on 22 January 2015 at Panipat, Haryana on the occasion of International Girl Child Day with the mantra ‘celebrating the birth of girl child’, “*Beta Beti, Ek Samaan*”. This scheme has objectives- to eliminate the gender sex selective biasness; survival and protection of girl child; and participation of girl child in education and empower them.

According to the ministry of human resource development (MHRD), 62.1 million children are out of school in India. The 2011 Census estimated the figure at 84 million—nearly 20% of the age group covered under the Right to Education (RTE) Act. According to Annual Survey of Education Report (Aser) 2017 findings 32% girls are not enrolled—compared to 28% boys. The traditional gender norms push girls into helping with household chores and sibling care, leading to irregular attendance



that eventually results in dropouts. Girls find it difficult to re-enter education once they have dropped out. All these stacks are odds against girls' education and leads to dropouts. There is an urgent need of women education, to empower them so they face any hurdles in their life. If women in society are empowered then the child sex ratio (declining ratio of girl) and status of women will definitely improve.

This paper explores the hurdles faced by girls in schools. If these hurdles are not taken care off then girls may drop out from school. Thus, beti padhao is as important as beti bachoa. For 'beti padhao' the society and school have equal responsibility as that of family. What goes inside a school boundary is very important to motivate girls to be educated and achievers in life.

The following is an excerpt from children's conversation from class V:

*Boy 1: There are 30 children in our class - 15 girls and 15 boys. For the games period I will divide the entire class into two teams – one team of girls and the other team of boys. Then we will play kho-kho*

*Boy 2: The two teams are not equal.*

*Boy 3: Yes, boys will run faster than boys and they will catch the girls quickly. The team of boys will team*

*Boy 4: Both teams should be both boys and girls.*

*Boy 1: Why?*

*Boy 4: Girls can't play well. If there is a separate team of boys and girls then boys will quickly win*

*Boy 2: Teams should be equal.*

Conversations like this are part of everyday talk which happens in classroom. The statements like 'Boys run faster; Girls can't play well' are gender stereotypes. These are over-generalizations about the characteristics of an entire group based on gender. Generally, gender stereotypes have negative connotations likewomen aren't meant for combat; men do nothing but watch sports. Gender is a large

part of our identity which is often defined by our psychological differences as men and women. These differences are reflected in many gender stereotypes.

Gender stereotypes are one-sided and exaggerated images of men and women which are deployed repeatedly in everyday life. They are also found commonly in the mass media. These are relatively fixed and overgeneralized attitudes and behaviours that are considered normal and appropriate for a person in a particular culture based on his or her biological sex. Gender stereotypes can influence beliefs and create the impression that the differences are large. A few examples are 'women are supposed to have "clean jobs" such as secretaries, teachers, and librarians'; 'Women are nurses, not doctors'; 'Women are quieter than men and not meant to speak out'; 'Women are supposed to be submissive and do as they are told'; 'Women do not have technical skills and are not good at "hands on" projects such as car repair'; 'Women are never in-charge'; 'Men do jobs such as construction and mechanics'; 'Men enjoy outdoor activities such as camping, fishing, and hiking'; 'Men are always at the top'; 'As husbands, men tell their wives what to do'; 'Men are lazy and/or messy'; 'Men are good at mathematics'; 'It is always men who work in science, engineering, and other technical fields'.

We are all surrounded by such beliefs. Thinking deeply about it we realize that these are always part of our growing up in the family and community. We as children were always instructed about what to do and how to behave. The instructions varied for boys and girls for example, girls are expected to be quiet, while boys are loud. As children get older, gender stereotypes become more apparent in styles of dress and choice of leisure activities. Gender stereotypes are also result of gender socialization. Sociologists often see stereotyping as part of the process by which children are socialized into sex roles and by which adults and children are denied opportunities for more individually varied development. (Dictionary Of Sociology, 1998)

Gender roles are based different expectations that individuals, groups and society have of individuals based on their sex, which is based on their values and beliefs about gender (Ann Oakley, 1972).

### **Objectives and Limitations**

B.El.Ed. (Bachelor of Elementary Education) is an undergraduate programme in elementary teacher education. In its final and fourth year students (also called interns) are placed in primary schools to

teach children - Language, Mathematics and Environment Studies. This research was conducted in class V in a Municipal Corporation School located in North West of Delhi. Many gender stereotypes were observed among these children aged between 10 to 13 years during 13 - 14 weeks long internship programme. Some of the common stereotypes were:

‘Girls are not as strong as boys’;

‘Girls make less money than boys in life’;

‘Girls stay at home’;

‘Girls don’t need to go to college’;

‘Girls don’t participate in sports’;

‘Girls don’t actively participate in politics. They can’t be politicians’;

‘Girls cook and do household work’;

‘Girls are responsible for raising children’;

‘Pink is the favourite colour of girls’;

‘Boys do not do housework’;

‘Boys are not responsible for taking care of children’;

‘Only boys play video games’;

‘Only boys take part in games and sports’;

‘Men do not cook, sew, or do crafts’ and many more.

With an objective to challenge the gender stereotypes some activities were designed like play, discussion, questioning etc.

This research study has the following limitations:

The study was conducted for duration of 13 – 14 weeks.

The study was conducted on 30 children of class V.

Research Studies on Primary Children

Gallucci (2017) set up a series of activities with 5 to 7 years old children in US (New York University). In a task a story was told about a "really, really smart" person. Children were expected to guess the sex of the person. It was found that 5 years old children had chosen their own gender as "really, really smart". By the age 7 girls were significantly less likely than boys to associate brilliance with their own gender. However, in another task of guessing topper in a school girls had chosen girls as having top grades. Thus, the researcher concluded that girls' perceptions of school achievement were separate from their perceptions of brilliance. In the other task children were asked about who "try really, really hard". This study found that girls believe brilliance is a male trait. It had drawn attention to the fact that even young children can absorb and be influenced by gender stereotypes – such as the idea that brilliance or giftedness is more common in men.

Herring, A. (2014) found that boys are interested in things like — trucks, baseball, and construction work—while girls are interested in dolls, dress-up, and tea parties. Boys like to build things and go fishing and want to be football players when they grow up. Girls like to sew, wear makeup, and want to be ballerinas. For the young examinee, the behavioral tendencies of boys and girls are just as fundamental as their physical attributes. Most research has found that this stereotypical, or "essentialist," thinking tends to fade as we get older. By the time children are in elementary school, environment plays a large role in the manifestation of gender roles. It was observed that girls aren't *inherently* more inclined to be teachers and nurses, but that environment and experiences urge them into such gender-normal behaviors. Eidson and Coley (2014) found that adults retain some of childlike essentialist-thinking. It showed that essentialist thinking is automatic and deeply-rooted, but it can be overcome with time and cognitive resources.

#### Intervention Activities in Primary Classroom

To challenge gender stereotypes of students' intervention activities were organized in class. A few activities, followed by their analysis are mentioned here. These activities encouraged students to think upon about others' perspective and then finally challenge their own stereotypes. A few examples are as follows:

##### Example 1: Which Games Children Play?

Teacher asked children about games they play during their school hours.

Boy 1: Cricket, football, leg hockey

Boy 2: Kabbadi

Boy 3: Girls don't like these games. They don't like to run. They like games where they have to sit and play like ludo, gitta, stappu...

Girl 1: I like to play football

Girl 2: We play it daily in the school playground and sometimes with boys too of our class during recess time.

Boy 4: Girls don't play football often. When they play, they loose match with boys.

It is clearly evident from children's responses that they associate more physical activity with boys and 'easy to do work' with girls. It was observed that both boys and girls play football. In spite of this real example from their class, students have very strong gender stereotyped notions about what male and female.

Example 2: Picture Reading

The teacher in an activity showed a picture in which...

'A girl was carefully watching boys playing with a ball on a street'.

Then teacher told that girl wanted to go out and play them. She asked her father. But her father refused.

Teacher asked children whether her father did right thing.

Children's responses to the situation were as follows (translated from Hindi):

*We should not stop girls from playing because if they will not play or study then how will they achieve something in life*

*Girls can also win prizes and medals in sports*

*Girls also love playing like boys so we should not stop them.*

Such responses clearly indicated that students were aware of right and wrong. But when it comes to their own settings, then gender stereotypes dominate. It can be easily analysed from this situation that there is a gap between children's thinking and their real-life situations. If such situations persist

then girls may find biases too much and tend to lose interest from school. It is important that such biases should be dealt at an early stage in life.

#### Example 3: Distribution of work in a Family

In a task, teacher asked that “How will distribute work among family members on a day when the entire family had returned from a hectic schedule”.

All students divided work as

Females (sister, mother): Household work like cooking, washing utensils, washing clothes, dusting;

Males (brother, father): Going to market buying milk or groceries or any other work related to market.

It is clearly visible from student responses that they have completely internalized gender roles at per the patriarchal society.

#### Example 4: Role Play

Role play of a scene where in a family has gone for shopping to a market.

It was observed in all groups that before spending or buying females (mother or sister) asked the father for his permission to buy.

It clearly showed that father is the head or the controller of the money in the family. It was also observed that parents instruct their children to work according to their gender.

#### Challenging Gender Stereotypes in a Primary Classroom

The prescribed school textbook of Environment Studies: Looking Around (Class V) has several chapters with female in un-conventional roles. All these chapters are based on true stories. These chapters were used for discussion to challenge gender stereotypes. To illustrate here, chapter ‘Up You Go’ is about real experiences of a girl leading a group of Mountaineering camp. The chapter is in the form of dairy where the girl had shared her everyday challenge of mountaineering. It also covered the role model of Bachhendri. In the chapter ‘Wall Tell Stories’ the main character is a didi. She is a girl guide and studies history and enjoy visiting different places. The Girl Guide takes children to Golconda Fort and discussed details of engineering of fort and showed how technology

was advanced even in earlier times. The chapter on 'Sunita in Space' is about the challenges faced by Sunita, an astronaut, before and during space travel in the spaceship. The text has real pictures of Sunita in spaceship during her travel. The chapter on 'Across the Wall' is about the basketball player Afsana who crossed the gender wall her mother had put up for her, to become a Basketball player in Nagpada Basketball Association. The text also has an interview with the female football team. In another chapter on 'Whose forests?' the central character is 'Suryamani'. She is an Adivasis and she now works for the Movement to Save the Forests of Jharkhand. It is a true story of a girl star. Girl stars is a project which tells extraordinary tales of ordinary girls, who have challenged their lives (NCERT, pp182).

Each of these chapters has females in unconventional roles like – mountaineer, guide, astronaut, football player. These provided a platform to challenge thinking of students about roles played by women. There were varied responses of students and clearly indicated that they questioned biases and tried to reason out on why or why not.

#### News Articles and Photograph of Women Players from Newspapers

Different news articles and photograph of various Indian women players – Mithali Raj (Cricket), P.V. Sindhu (Badminton), Saina Nehwal (Badminton). Saina Mirza (Tennis), Mary Kom (Boxing), Sakshi Malik (Wrestling), Hima Das (Athletics- Sprint), Geeta Phogat (Wrestling) were shown to students. It was discussed how they achieved milestones in their lives and bring laurels to the country, thus challenging their gender stereotypes. These articles and photographs were able to make students realize that girls also like sports, participate in sports and won. As these pictures and articles were from newspaper, students did not doubt about the authenticity of the examples. Some students had also watched the news items related to these on television. They also corroborated these facts.

#### Movies with female lead roles as players

Clippings from movies 'Dangal' and 'Chak de India' were shown to students in class. It was followed by discussions. 'Chak de India' is a film released in 2007, a fictional story of a coach of Indian National Women's Hockey Team and showed struggles of women which they have to go through to participate in sports. 'Dangal' was released in 2016 about two female wrestlers. It is biographical film on Phogat family from Haryana. It tells a story of Mahavir Singh Phogat, an amateur wrestler, who trains his daughters Geeta Phogat and Babita Kumari to become India's

first world-class female wrestlers. The film is a real story and the way it is made is entertaining and at the same time engaging. When the selected clippings from the movie were shown, students were quietly watching and then participated in the discussion. Some excerpts from the discussion are:

*Girl 1: Ldkiyon ko khelne se nhi rokna chahye kyonki agr ldkiyan khelnge or pdenge tbhi to age bdenge. (One should not stop girls from playing, only if girls play and study, they will have success in life)*

*Girl 2: Ldkian bhi khelker ldko ki trah aapne mata peeta ka nam roshan kreng. (Even through sports girls can bring fame to family like boys)*

*Girl 3: My parents let my brother play even late in evening but I am not allowed to play.*

*Boy 1: Jese ldko ko khelna acha lagta hai vese hi ldkiyon ko bhi khelna acha lagta hoga islye papa ko aapne bete ko khelne dena chahye . (girls like playing as boys do; her father should but stop her from playing)*

*Girl 1: If given a chance girls can do wonder in sports... like Geeta and Babita... Girls should play games to bring fame for family as boys.*

*Boy 2: Both boys and girls should play and participate in sports.*

*Boy 3: Everyone enjoys playing games therefore parents do not stop girls from playing.*

Such discussion clearly showed that students started questioning about why parents are not allowing girls to participate in sports. Secondly everyone agreed that girls should participate in sports. With the real-life role models in the movie, their conviction that girls can also do wonders in sports was strengthened. Such discussions were organized after every activity whether it was a role play or picture reading from textbook but discussions after watching movie clippings were phenomenal. The impact of movies was intense especially when one girl reminded the entire class that is a true story not a fictional film.

### Conclusion

The school as an agent of socialization reinforces gender roles through practices followed in schools, behavior of teachers and peers, illustration in textbook and in curriculum. Schools are major context for gender socialization as children spend large amount of time engaged with peers. Schools can



magnify or diminish gender differences by providing environment that promote within gender similarity and between gender differences or the inverse. Teachers' own gender stereotypes and prejudices shape their classroom behavior. First as they often model gender stereotypic behaviour. Second, they often exhibit different expectations from boys and girls. Third, they facilitate gender biases by marking gender as important by using it to label and organize students. Teacher plays the very important role in magnifying or diminishing gender stereotypes prevalent among students. Conducive and non-judgmental classroom environment created by teacher (intern) encouraged students to participate in class activities even with opposite gender. It can be said that she played a very crucial role in challenging gender stereotypes.

As gender stereotypes are strongly embedded in the students. It is not easy task even to challenge their gender stereotypes. For challenging students' gender stereotypes different intervention activities were planned and conducted in classroom. Role play, picture reading, discussion, sharing newspaper articles, videos and clips from various movies were used during the internship period of about 14 weeks. As a result, students started questioning gender stereotypes. They started to participate with opposite gender in different class and out of class activities comfortably. They began sharing examples of gender biases from their family, school and society. They started to hear and even accept others' point of views. Out of all the intervention activities the effect of real-life female heroes (whether in movies or in newspaper articles) was phenomenal. It brought out the deep-rooted biases and by the end of 14 weeks internship period, those primary school children agreed that girls can participate in sports and if provided with similar opportunities as that of boys, they can also do wonders.

The irony of our country is that we have very few women role models and very few popular films like 'Dangal' in Hindi Cinema. Hindi Cinema at large also promotes the gender biased notions, which is also the coded language of our society. We need to question movies which promote gender stereotypes prevalent in our society. This project on a small sample has shown that even primary school children can be sensitized through gender stereotypes and with appropriate examples from media which has a strong impact on children, gender stereotypes can be adequately challenged making Indian society a better living place for all.

To end, we would like to highlight a comment by Kirthiga Reddy, Head, Facebook India:

*“I strongly believe that the first step and the most important tool towards women empowerment is education. The right education will ensure that women are more competent and confident in taking up bigger challenges and raising the bar in any field.”*

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## बेटी है अनमोल

## डॉ. तुप्ता ( प्रवक्ता अदिति महाविद्यालय हिन्दी-विभाग )

शीर्षक 'बेटी बचाओ' बेटी पढ़ाओ का पूर्व पक्ष (बेटी बचाओ) अत्यन्त सोचनीय व चिन्तनीय विषय है। यह शीर्षक हमें बता रहा है आने वाले भविष्य का दृश्य। हमारी एक पक्षीय सोच का परिणाम अर्थात् बेटियों का तेजी से घटता हुआ अनुपात। यह शीर्षक हमें ऐसे विचार-बिन्दु तक पहुँचाकर छोड़ता है जहाँ हम विवश हो जाते हैं यह सोचने के लिए कि हमने तो कभी भी ऐसा सोचा ही न था कि स्थिति इतनी भयावह है? एक सवाल यह उठता है कि ऐसे कौन से घटक हैं कि लोग नहीं चाहते कि उनके घर लड़की पैदा हो? एक ओर जहाँ हम आधुनिकता के चरम शिखर तक पहुँच गए हैं लड़के-लड़की के बीच समान भाव बरतते हैं तो दूसरी ओर एक समृद्ध वर्ग ऐसा है जो गर्भ में ही जाँच करवाते ही 'कन्या-भ्रूण' की हत्या कर देता है।

मेरे विचार से शायद आज की वर्तमान स्थिति दहेज देने की प्रथा जो कि प्रत्यक्ष भी है तथा अप्रत्यक्ष-रूप से भी विद्यमान है, यह भी इस हत्या के लिए उत्तरदायी है? इसके अतिरिक्त बढ़ती हुई बलात्कार की समस्याएँ, अशिक्षा, संकुचित, मानसिकता, रूढ़िवादी विचार लिंगानुपात तथा अन्य अनेक कारण हो सकते हैं। आज के समाज में बेटियाँ तीव्र गति से प्रगति कर रही हैं। एक वर्ग तो ऐसा है जो कि अपनी लड़कियों को उच्च शिक्षा प्रदान कर विभिन्न क्षेत्रों की ओर अपनी लड़कियों को अग्रसर कर रहा है। मेरे समक्ष कई ऐसे उदाहरण हैं जो कि मध्यम-वर्गीय संकुचित मानसिकता को उजागर करते हैं। घर के पास वाली बिल्डिंग की सविता आठ साल की पहली बेटी के बाद दोबारा 'माँ' नहीं बनना चाहती कि कहीं दूसरी भी 'बेटी' न हो जाए जो कि परिवार में अपेक्षित नहीं है। यह एक अत्यंत गूढ़ व विचारणीय विषय है कि यह एक नहीं लाखों सविताओं की समस्या है? एक अन्य उदाहरण के अंतर्गत हमारे करीबी मित्र के यहाँ तीन बेटियाँ हैं एक बेटे की चाह के कारण पत्नी ने अनेकों बार गर्भपात की पीड़ा को भुगता। आज वही स्त्री अपनी पुत्री के विवाह के पश्चात् उनके यहाँ पहली बेटी के जन्म पर खुश न होकर खूब रोयी कि हाय! बेटा क्यों नहीं हुआ। मुझे सुनकर अजीब-सा भी लगा और उन लोगों की मानसिकता पर आश्चर्य भी हुआ।

प्राचीन काल से ही हमारे समाज में यह सोच बनी हुई है कि पुत्र जन्म पर परंपरानुसार 'काँसे की थाली' बजायी जाती है तथा पुत्री के जन्म पर ठीकरें (पत्थर) फोड़े जाते हैं? ऐसा क्यों है? पहले जब अधिकतर लोग अशिक्षित थे तो वह लड़के व लड़की में असमानता का व्यवहार करते थे। आज जब एक ओर शिक्षा का प्रचार व प्रसार हमें मानसिक-विकास प्रदान कर रहा है तब भी एक वर्ग वही पुरानी सोच लिए हुए है। आज भी आसपास के परिवेश में हमें अनेकों बार पता चलता है कि परिवारों में जब बहुएँ व बेटियाँ गर्भवती होती हैं तो प्रारंभ में ही लिंग-जाँच करवायी जाती है हालांकि डॉक्टरी सूत्रों के अनुसार यह अपराध है तथा इसकी मनाही भी है लेकिन फिर भी कोई न कोई अस्पताल तो यह कार्य चोरी-छिपे करता ही है कि भ्रूण का पता चलते ही वहाँ गर्भपात करवाया जा सकता है। इसके विपरीत यदि 'नर-लिंग' का पता चलता है तो खुशी-खुशी नौ महीने तक उसका पोषण किया जाता है।

यहाँ पुनः एक विचार बिंदु उत्पन्न होता है कि इन सबके पीछे कौन उत्तरदायी है? मेरे विचार से स्वयं एक स्त्री, एक माँ ही इस सोच को क्रियान्वित करती है। क्यों वह अपने ही स्त्रीलिंग की हत्या दूसरों के कहने पर करवाती है? क्यों वह इसका विरोध नहीं करती? क्यों इस प्रश्न पर ही वह लाचार व असहाय हो जाती है? मेरे विचारानुसार चाहे बेटा हो या बेटी एक माँ दोनों को जन्म देने के लिए 'प्रसव-पीड़ा' समान रूप से झेलती है। मैंने ऐसा तो कहीं भी नहीं देखा-सुना या स्वयं भुगता कि पुत्री बिना पीड़ा के उत्पन्न हो गई और पुत्र ही केवल पीड़ा से जन्मते हैं। क्यों एक तथाकथित पुत्र की चाह ही बार-बार स्त्री को पीड़ा भोगने के लिए मजबूर करती है। मेरे

अनुसार यदि प्रत्येक स्त्री आने वाली संतान को बिना लिंग-जाँच करवाए हुए जन्म देने का बीड़ा उठाएगी तो समस्या स्वयं ही हल हो जाएगी। जैसे स्त्री आज आधुनिकता के रूप में हर क्षेत्र में इतनी सशक्त और कामयाब है तो केवल कन्या जन्म के क्षेत्र में ही क्यों पिछड़ी रहे अर्थात् नहीं, स्वयं स्त्री को भी अपनी सोच का दायरा विकसित करना होगा तभी तो समस्या हल हो पाएगी। प्रभु ने बहुत सोच-समझकर हमारे भाग्य में संतान योग लिखा होता है हमें उसे सहर्ष स्वीकार करना चाहिए। पुरुष को भी इस मामले में अपनी पत्नी की भावनाओं का आदर कर उसे सुरक्षा प्रदान करनी चाहिए। मेरे मस्तिष्क में एक प्रश्न बार-बार उद्वेलित होता है कि जब एक पुरुष अपने नर लिंग की हत्या नहीं करवाता तो फिर स्त्री ही स्त्रीलिंग की हत्या क्यों करवाती है? यदि प्रभु केवल पुरुष वर्ग की संख्या बढ़ाना चाहता तो केवल पुरुष ही पुरुष को जन्म देता लेकिन विधाता ने नारी को ही नर-मादा उत्पन्न करने का दायित्व प्रदान किया है तो हमें यह सीख लेकर दोनों का स्वागत समान भाव से करना चाहिए।

लिहाजा डॉक्टरी सूत्रों के आधार पर यह ज्ञात होता है कि स्त्री कोख तो धरती के समान है पुरुष के द्वारा प्रदत्त बीज से ही वह अंकुरित होती है। पुरुष को ही विधाता ने नर व मादा दोनों प्रकार के शुक्राणुओं की शक्ति प्रदान की है। स्त्री कोख तो केवल भ्रूण-पोषण व पल्लवन का कार्य करती है। मेरे विचार से महत्वपूर्ण बात तो मातृत्व गौरव प्राप्त करना है फिर संतान चाहे लड़की हो या लड़का। मातृत्व का सुख भी सभी के नसीब में नहीं होता। हमारी एक परिचित हैं जो कि लगभग दस-पंद्रह सालों से संतान प्राप्ति का प्रयास कर रही हैं लेकिन असंख्य उपायों के बावजूद वह आज भी बाँझपन से अभिशप्त है। जब कभी भी मेरी उनसे बातचीत होती है तो वह कहती है कि प्रभु चाहे एक लड़की ही दे दे मैं कम से कम 'माँ' तो बन जाऊँ। लेकिन मालिक उनकी यह इच्छा भी पूरी नहीं कर रहा है।

अधिकतर परिवारों में देखा गया है कि घर की बड़ी-बूढ़ी औरतें जब भी बहुओं व बेटियों को आशीर्वाद देती हैं तो कहती हैं 'दूधो नहाओ पूतो फलो' कभी भी पुत्री होने का आशीर्वाद नहीं देती मुझे आज तक उनकी इस उक्ति का तर्क समझ में नहीं आया। लेकिन यह आशीर्वाद सुनते ही मेरा मन विचलित होकर पूछना चाहता है कि क्या दूध और पुत्र ही महत्वपूर्ण है पुत्री नहीं। या वह स्वयं स्त्री नहीं है क्या? मुझे यह आशीर्वाद अभिशाप-सा प्रतीत होता है। मानों यही अभिशाप आज समाज को ग्रसित कर रहा है कि लड़कियों का अनुपात घटता जा रहा है।

जाहिर है मानवोत्तर सृष्टि के सभी जीव-जन्तु, पशु-पक्षी कभी भी लिंग के आधार पर भेदभाव नहीं करते अपितु स्त्रीलिंग को अधिक सम्मान व अधिकार प्रदान करते हैं। अक्सर देखा गया है कि हाथियों में वरिष्ठ हथिनी पूरे झुंड की अधिपति होती है। नर पेंगुइन पक्षी अपनी दोनों संतानों (नर-मादा) की देखभाल अत्यंत स्नेह-पूर्ण ढंग से करता है। इन उदाहरणों के अतिरिक्त सभी पशु व पक्षियों में लगभग समान भाव की स्थिति है। फिर पशुओं से उत्कृष्ट विवेकपूर्ण प्राणी मानव की सोच की यह दशा क्यों हो गई है? हमारे समाज में स्त्री-पुरुष की सोच इतनी निकृष्ट स्तर की क्यों हो गई है? लोकप्रसिद्ध मनु स्मृति शास्त्र में कहा गया है कि 'यत्र नारियस्तु पूज्यन्ते रमन्ते तत्र देवता' अर्थात् जहाँ स्त्री की पूजा की जाती है उसे आदर व सम्मान दिया जाता है वहाँ ही देवता निवास करते हैं। तो फिर एक बेटे की जन्म पूर्व हत्या क्यों की जा रही है? क्या यह अपराध नहीं है। जी हाँ यह बहुत ही वीभत्स पूर्ण अपराध है। मेरा मानना है कि सभी प्रकार की दान-परंपरा में सर्वोत्तम 'कन्यादान' है। प्राचीन परंपरा के अनुसार आज भी जब कहीं गाँवों में लड़की का विवाह होता है तो लोग चाहे जाएँ या न जाएँ कन्यादान अवश्य भेजते हैं और कन्यादान जो कि फेरों के समय किया जाता है उसमें तकरीबन अधिक से अधिक संख्या में लोग इस दान द्वारा पुण्य कमाते हैं। मैं मानती हूँ कि हमें आज भी इस परंपरा का निर्वाह खुशी-खुशी करना चाहिए 'बोझ' या 'थोपा हुआ' कार्य समझ कर नहीं। वह व्यक्ति भाग्यशाली है जिसे प्रभु ने इस दान योग्य समझकर पुत्री का दायित्व प्रदान किया है। एक कुपुत्र को जन्म देने से बेहतर एक सुपुत्री को जन्म देना है जो कि हर क्षेत्र में अपने माता-पिता का नाम गौरवान्वित करती है। अक्सर मैंने लोगों की सोच में अंतर महसूस किया है वह अपनी पुत्री की तो प्रशंसा करते हैं लेकिन पुत्रवधू जो कि दूसरों की बेटे है उसकी आलोचना करते हैं जो कि गलत है।

दरअसल प्रकृति को संतुलित रूप प्रदान करने के लिए विधाता ने दो ध्रुवों के रूप में स्त्री-पुरुष का निर्माण किया है। दोनों का संबंध अन्योन्याश्रित है दोनों एक दूसरे के बिना अधूरे हैं। दोनों की सहभागिता द्वारा सृष्टि का विकास होता है। एक दिन मैं अपने एक करीबी संबंधी जिसके पंद्रह साल से कोई संतान नहीं थी उससे मिली। बातचीत के दौरान पता चला कि उसने किसी अनाथालय से एक लड़की को गोद लिया है तथा अत्यंत सुंदर ढंग से दोनों पति-पत्नी उसका लालन-पालन कर रहे हैं। मैंने उस दंपति से प्रश्न किया-कि लोग तो 'पुत्र' की चाह रखते हैं लेकिन तुमने तो पुत्री गोद ली है। इस पर उनकी पत्नी बोली क्योंकि पुत्री दो परिवारों का उद्धार करती है। मैं तो हमेशा से ही एक बेटी को ही जन्म देना चाहती थी। भाभी जी का यह उत्तर सुनकर मेरे अंतर्मन ने राहत की साँस ली।

गौरतलब है कि आज इस सेमिनार में हम बेटी बचाओ-बेटी बढ़ाओ शीर्षक के तहत बेटियों की महत्ता पर विचार कर रहे हैं। वास्तव में इस शीर्षक के पहले दो शब्द बेटी बचाओ समस्या की ओर इंगित करते हैं जबकि बेटी बढ़ाओ शब्द समाधान परोसते हैं। बेटी को साक्षर बनाकर ही हम बेटी बचाओ की मुहिम को सार्थक बना सकते हैं। बेटियों के प्रति परंपरागत पितृसत्तात्मक खाँचे को तोड़ सकते हैं। मसलन आज इक्कीसवीं सदी के इस युग में बेटियाँ उच्च पदों पर कार्यरत हैं। वह अपनी बौद्धिकता का परचम न केवल, धरती अपितु अंतरिक्ष तक फहरा रही हैं। सरकार द्वारा भी अनेकों कन्या योजनाओं की पहल की गई है। जिसका लाभ-हमारी बेटियाँ उठा रही हैं। आज तब्दील होते विश्व, देश परिवार समाज अमूल्य बेटियों का साहस बढ़ा रहे हैं। लेकिन गाहे-बगाहे स्त्री हत्या, घरेलू, बलात्कार जैसी घटनाएँ हमारा दिल-तोड़ देती हैं। मीडिया और स्त्री संबंधी योजनाएँ इस मानसिकता को खारिज करने का प्रयास कर रहे हैं। तब भी जब समाचार पत्रों से हमें यह सूत्र ज्ञात होते हैं कि कूड़े के ढेर पर, मन्दिर की सीढ़ियों पर या अनाथालय के प्रांगण में नवजात बच्ची मिली है तो हम सभी निराश हो जाते हैं इसी श्रृंखला में जब हम पढ़ते हैं कि हरियाणा में बेटियों का अनुपात इतना अधिक घट गया है कि वहाँ के लोग अपने पुत्रों के विवाह हेतु दक्षिण राज्यों में जाकर बहुएँ लाने का प्रयास कर रहे हैं यह अत्यन्त दुःखद स्थिति है हमें ऐसी दुःखद स्थिति से समाज को उबारना होगा बेटियों को जन्म देना होगा, बेटों को शिक्षित कर संस्कार देकर उन्हें बेटियों के सम्मान का पाठ पढ़ाना होगा नई सोच का आगाज करना होगा कभी अंजाम सुखद होगा।

लिहाजा यदि सभी सामाजिक प्राणियों की मानसिकता बेटी का महत्व स्वीकार कर ले तो समस्या स्वयं ही हल हो जाएगी। आज सभी लोग आने वाले संकट से बेखबर हैं। बेटियों की घटती हुई संख्या की कीमत भविष्य में हमें तथा आने वाली पीढ़ी को ही चुकानी पड़ेगी प्राकृतिक अंसतुलन की भाँति सामाजिक व पारिवारिक-संतुलन भी डगमगा जाएगा। क्या हमारा समाज जीवन-रूपी गाड़ी को केवल एक चक्र या धुरी द्वारा चला पाएगा। इस समस्या का उत्तर है कभी भी नहीं!

बहरहाल भविष्य की इस चिंता को देखते हुए हम सभी का दायित्व बनता है कि हम सभी 'बेटियों के जन्म लेने दें उनकी गर्भ में ही हत्या न करे। इस समस्या का हल स्त्री वर्ग अपनी जागरूकता व अधिकार द्वारा ही समाज को प्रदान कर सकता है। पुरुष व स्त्री दोनों ही वर्गों को अपने आधुनिक व स्वस्थ विचारों द्वारा भावी स्वस्थ समाज हेतु बेटियों की रक्षा करनी है। सरकार द्वारा भी बेटी-बचाओ, बेटी-पढ़ाओ अभियान चलाया जा रहा है जो कि सराहनीय कदम है। मैं ऐसा मानती हूँ कि हमारी युवा पीढ़ी भी इस समस्या के हल के लिए कारगर कदम उठाएगी। और भावी समाज स्वस्थ एवं संतुलित समाज होगा ऐसी सुखद कामना तो हम कर ही सकते हैं।

'बेटी बचाओ-बेटी बढ़ाओ पढ़ाओ

जन्म उसे दे सृष्टि का सौन्दर्य बढ़ाओ।

पुत्री है रत्ना पुत्री है, सुलक्षणा,

करो उसका लालन-पालन, साक्षर उसे बनाओ।

सृष्टि का संतुलन रहेगा कायम तभी

जब होगा पुत्र-पुत्री का अनुपात बराबर ।

करो प्रण न हो कम 'बेटी अनुपात'

आओ मिलकर संवारे-सुधारे पुत्री अनुपात ।

#### संदर्भ

1. जनसत्ता अखबार
2. हिन्दुस्तान
3. पत्र-पत्रिकाएँ

## स्त्री शिक्षा : परंपरा और आधुनिकता

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भारतीय समाज पितृसत्तात्मक समाज हैं 1 सामाजिक निर्माण के प्रारम्भिक चरण से ही इसका स्वरूप पुरुष प्रधान रहा है 1 पुरुषों के वर्चस्व के बीच समाज में अपने स्थान को तलाशती नारी निरंतर संघर्षरत रही है 1 इसके परिणामस्वरूप ही स्त्रियों ने जब शिक्षा प्राप्त करनी चाही तब समाज के शीर्ष पर बैठे अधिकांश पुरुषों ने इसका विरोध किया 1 यही नहीं सामाजिक विरोध का सामना स्त्रियों को केवल पुरुषों के द्वारा ही नहीं मिला 1 बल्कि अधिकांश स्त्रियों ने भी स्त्री शिक्षा का विरोध किया क्योंकि शिक्षा के अभाव ने उन्हें इतना जागरूक ही नहीं किया कि वे शिक्षित और अशिक्षित का भेद समझ सके 1 दरअसल रुढ़िवादी समाज ने स्त्रियों के पारंपरिक रूप जिसके अंतर्गत माता, पत्नी, बहन आदि को तो स्वीकारा परंतु स्त्री पुरुषों के समक्ष समानता के स्तर पर खड़ी हो सके यह स्वीकार्य नहीं किया 1 हालांकि प्राचीन समय से ही भारत में स्त्री शिक्षा की परंपरा रही हैं 1 भारतीय इतिहास में ऐसी कई स्त्रियों का जिक्र है जिन्होंने विद्वत्ता प्राप्त करके समाज को दिशा भी प्रदान की 1 वेदों में भी स्त्री की शिक्षा, शील, गुण, कर्तव्य और अधिकारों का विशद वर्णन है 1 इस प्रकार का वर्णन संभवतः संसार के किसी भी धर्मग्रंथ में नहीं है 1 वैदिक साहित्य के अध्ययन से ज्ञात होता है कि प्राचीन भारतीय समाज में स्त्री का गौरवपूर्ण स्थान था 1 स्त्रियों की शिक्षा - दीक्षा की उत्तम व्यवस्था थी 1 स्त्रियाँ राजनैतिक, सामाजिक और प्रशासनात्मक कार्यों में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाती थीं 1 ऋग्वैदिक काल में ऐसी कई विदूषी स्त्रियों जैसे - मैत्रेयी, घोषा, अपाला, इंद्राणी, गार्गी आदि को गौरवान्वित किया गया है और ज्ञान-विज्ञान में निपुण होने के कारण उन्हें ब्रह्म बताया गया है 1 वैदिक काल की भाँति बौद्धधर्म और जैन धर्म ने भी स्त्री शिक्षा का समर्थन किया है 1 यही नहीं मिथक कथाओं और महाभारत, रामायण जैसे महाकाव्य में भी पत्नी-लिखी स्त्रियों का उल्लेख मिलता है जिन्होंने विवेक और वीरता के बल पर राज और राज्य के क्रिया-क्लापों को भी प्रभावित किया 1 'रामायण' में कैकयी ने युद्ध में दशरथ की रक्षा की थी 1 इसी प्रकार महाभारत में विदुला की शिक्षा से 'संजय' वापस युद्ध क्षेत्र में चला गया था 1 मंडन मिश्र की पत्नी भारती ने शास्त्रार्थ में शंकराचार्य को हराया था 1 मध्य काल में 'नूर जहाँ' योग्य शासक थी 1 उसे राजनीति की अच्छी समझ थी 1 उसने इत्र का भी आविष्कार किया था और सैनिकों की पोशाकों को भी डिज़ाइन किया था 1

यहाँ यह प्रश्न समीचीन है कि ऐतिहासिक रूप से इतने उदाहरणों के बावजूद स्त्रियों की स्थिति इतनी निम्नतर क्यों हैं ? और क्यों बार-बार स्त्रियों की समानता और सशक्तीकरण की बातें उठाई जाती हैं 1 इसका सीधा



जवाब है देश की प्रतिकूल परिस्थितियाँ, रूढ़िवादी मानसिकता और स्त्री शिक्षा का अभाव (कमोवेश अब पहले जैसे परिस्थितियाँ नहीं है) 1 प्राचीन काल के बाह्य आक्रमण और मध्यकाल में मध्य - एशियाई आक्रमणों ने भारतीय सामाजिक व्यवस्था को छिन्न-भिन्न कर दिया फलतः इसका प्रभाव प्रत्येक क्षेत्र पर पड़ा 1 अठारवीं सदी में विदेशी हुकूमत ने स्त्रियों की सामाजिक स्थिति को और भी अधिक प्रभावित किया 1 असुरक्षा ने जहाँ उन्हें पर्दा प्रथा, बाल विवाह, सती प्रथा, विधवा विवाह जैसी कुरीतियों में धकेला वही शिक्षा को उनके लिए गैरजरूरी बना दिया 1 स्त्री मात्र एक वस्तु के रूप में मनोरंजन का साधन बनकर रह गयी 1 शिक्षा से वंचित होने पर राष्ट्रीय विकास में उसकी भूमिका नगण्य होने लगी 1

आधुनिक काल आते - आते देश की परिस्थितियाँ ऐसी बनी कि स्त्री शिक्षा के महत्व को समझा गया 1 स्त्री के लिखने पढ़ने की शुरुआत तो हुई लेकिन उसका स्वरूप सीमित ही रहा 1 अधिकांश विचारकों और रचनाकारों ने स्त्री के श्रद्धा रूप को ही देखना चाहा 1 जयशंकर प्रसाद अपनी रचना 'कामायनी' में ऐसी नारी का उल्लेख करते हैं - "नारी तुम केवल श्रद्धा हो / विश्वास रजत नग पग तल में 1 / पीयूष स्रोत सी बहा करो / जीवन के सुंदर समतल में 1" पंत ने भी देवि, माँ, सहचरी, प्राण कह कर स्त्री के प्रति अपना आदर व्यक्त किया 1 महादेवी वर्मा, सुभद्रा कुमारी चौहान, बंग महिला आदि लेखिकाएं समाज में स्त्री के लिए प्रेरणा स्रोत बनकर उभरीं 1 पुरुषवादी मानसिकता के बीच समाज में अपनी पहचान बनाती स्त्री निरंतर संघर्षरत है 1 वर्तमान युग में तेज रफ्तार से भागती जिंदगी में स्त्री की स्थिति पहले से ज्यादा जटिल हो गयी है 1 उससे परम्परागत और आधुनिक दोनों तरह के गुणों की एक साथ माँग की जाती है 1 "पुरुष को अलग - अलग 'श्रद्धा' या 'इडा' नहीं चाहिए 1 उसे एक साथ अंतर्विरोधों से रहित श्रद्धा और इडा दोनों चाहिए 1" 1 (कसौटी भाग 1,) 1 परम्परागत मूल्यों के अनुसार स्त्री से स्वार्थहीन, बलिदानी, स्नेहशील, करुणाशील और ममतामयी आदि होने की अपेक्षा की जाती है जबकि नवीन परिस्थितियों के दबाव में स्वतंत्र, तेज तर्रार, आत्मविश्वासी, सक्षम और जुझारू होने की 1 स्पष्ट है कि आज के समय में स्त्री का शिक्षित होना कितना अनिवार्य है 1

स्त्रियाँ देश की आधी आबादी हैं 1 ऐसे में मुट्ठी भर स्त्रियों का उदाहरण देकर हम इस सच्चाई से मुँह नहीं मोड़ सकते कि अधिकांश स्त्रियों की वास्तविकता क्या हैं ? भारतीय स्त्री की दयनीय स्थिति का ठोस और प्रमुख कारण उसकी 'निरक्षरता' है 1 भारत में सबसे अधिक निरक्षर महिलाएँ हैं 1 स्त्रियों में जागृति, चेतना लाने एवं आत्मविश्वास जगाने के लिए शिक्षा बहुत महत्वपूर्ण है लेकिन भारतीय समाज में अधिकांश स्त्रियों की शिक्षा विवाह के लिए योग्यता जुटाने और विवाह की प्रतीक्षा के समय का उपयोग बनकर रह जाती है 1 विवाह और शिक्षा में से समाज विवाह को वरीयता देता है और विवाह पर होने वाला खर्च ही उनकी शिक्षा पर खर्च करने से रोकता है 1

नीति निर्धारकों के अनुसार -'किसी भी राष्ट्र का विकास उसकी संपूर्ण मानव क्षमता के ऊपर निर्भर करता है, और स्त्रियाँ विश्व की आधी आबादी हैं 1' 2 (रेखा कस्तवार -स्त्री चिंतन की चुनौतियाँ, पृष्ठ 85)

विभिन्न विद्वानों ने भी स्त्री शिक्षा के महत्व को समझा और अपने विचार सांझा किए 1

स्वामी दयानन्द ने जोरदार शब्दों में कहा था कि 'राष्ट्र, समाज, प्रशासन तथा परिवार के क्रिया-कलाप तब तक उचित ढंग से नहीं किए जा सकते, जब तक स्त्रियों को शिक्षा न मिले 1' 3

स्वामी विवेकानन्द का कहना था कि 'वही देश उन्नति कर सकते हैं, जहाँ स्त्रियों को उचित स्थान दिया जाता है तथा उनकी शिक्षा का भी उचित प्रबंध किया जाता है 1' 4

गांधीजी ने स्पष्ट शब्दों में कहा कि 'स्त्रियों को वही शैक्षिक सुविधाएँ दी जाए जो पुरुषों के लिए हो 1' यदि हो सके तो उन्हें विशेष सुविधाएँ मिलनी चाहिए 1' 5

पंडित जवाहरलाल नेहरू ने ठीक ही कहा था कि 'लड़के की शिक्षा केवल एक व्यक्ति की शिक्षा है 1' किन्तु एक लड़की की शिक्षा सारे परिवार की शिक्षा है 1' 6

श्रीमती हंसा मेहता समिति (१९६२) का कथन है कि 'यदि नए समाज का निर्माण ठोस आधार पर करना है तो स्त्रियों को वास्तविक और प्रभावपूर्ण ढंग से पुरुषों के समान अवसर देने होंगे 1' 7

शिक्षा आयोग (१९६४-१९६६) ने लिखा है -'स्त्रियों की शिक्षा पुरुषों की शिक्षा से भी ज्यादा महत्वपूर्ण है 1' लड़कियों की शिक्षा पर जितना भी ज़ोर दिया जाए, उतना थोड़ा है 1' 8

प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने भी स्त्री शिक्षा के महत्व को समझते हुए 'बेटी बचाओ, बेटी पढ़ाओ' का नारा बुलंद किया है 1' इस प्रकार समय - समय पर अनेक विद्वानों ने स्त्री शिक्षा को बढ़ावा देने की पुरज़ोर वकालत की है 1

समाज में स्त्री को पुरुष के समान दर्जा प्राप्त हो इसके लिए सरकारें भी स्त्री समानता हेतु विशेष योजनाएं बनाती रहती हैं 1' आज समय बदल रहा है 1' लोग स्वयं भी जागरूक हो रहे हैं और सरकार भी ऐसे प्रावधान कर रही है जिससे स्त्री शिक्षा को बढ़ावा मिले 1

1. ऑपरेशन ब्लैकबोर्ड - शिक्षा विभाग की यह एक ऐसी योजना है जो सुनिश्चित करती है कि शिक्षकों की नियुक्ति के समय 50% स्त्रियाँ होनी चाहिए 1

2. छात्रावास योजना - अधिक से अधिक छात्राएं माध्यमिक शिक्षा का लाभ उठा सके 1

3. अनौपचारिक बालिका शिक्षा केंद्र - इस योजना के अंतर्गत एमएचआरडी (मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय) बालिकाओं के अनौपचारिक शिक्षा केंद्रों को 90% सहायता देती है 1
4. नवोदय विद्यालय में लड़कियाँ - सरकारी देखरेख में इन विद्यालयों में 31% लड़कियों का दाखिला सुनिश्चित हो पाया है 1
5. महिला साक्षरता अभियान - इस योजना में स्त्रियों को साक्षर करके पूर्ण अधिकार देने के उद्देश्य पर विशेष ध्यान दिया गया है 1
6. महिला उच्च शिक्षा - उच्च शिक्षा में बदलते समय के अनुसार सामान्य और तकनीकी दोनों दृष्टियों से स्त्रियों के लिए शैक्षिक अवसरों में अद्भुत विस्तार हुआ है 1
7. महिला अध्ययन - विश्व विद्यालय अनुदान आयोग इस योजना के अंतर्गत स्त्रियों के अध्ययन के लिए शिक्षा के विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में अनुसंधान की परियोजनाएं सुनिश्चित करने और वित्तीय सहायता प्रदान करने का कार्य कर रहा है 1
8. महिला समाख्या - महिला की समानता हेतु शिक्षा - 1989 में महिलाओं की समानता और सशक्तिकरण हेतु महिला समाख्या नाम से एक ठोस कार्यक्रम आरंभ हुआ 1 आंध्र प्रदेश, असम, बिहार, गुजरात, झारखंड, कर्नाटक, केरल, उत्तर प्रदेश और उत्तरांचल आदि राज्यों ने इस योजना के अंतर्गत ऐसे कार्यक्रम सुनिश्चित किए जिससे महिलाएँ शिक्षित होकर समाज में सकारात्मक भूमिका निभा सके 1
9. कस्तूरबा गांधी बालिका विद्यालय योजना - यह योजना मुख्य रूप से दुर्गम क्षेत्रों में पिछड़े वर्ग की बालिकाओं को शिक्षित करने के लिए चलायी जा रही है 1

(1 से 9 तक - उदीयमान भारतीय समाज में शिक्षा - गुप्ता एवं अग्रवाल पृष्ठ 526, 527)

10. महिला -ए- हाथ - इस योजना के अंतर्गत स्त्री एवं बाल विकास मंत्रालय ने स्त्रियों को सशक्त करने हेतु डिजिटल बाज़ार में स्वयं उत्पादित वस्तुएँ और सेवायें देने के लिए ऑनलाइन प्लैटफ़ार्म तैयार किया है 1
11. नारी शक्ति पुरस्कार - यह योजना पिछड़े वर्ग की स्त्रियों को सशक्त करने हेतु उनके द्वारा किए गए उत्कृष्ट कार्यों के लिए अंतरराष्ट्रीय महिला दिवस पर राष्ट्रपति भवन में पुरस्कृत करती है 1 (उपरोक्त 10 से 11 तक - इंटरनेट से लिया है)

इस प्रकार स्त्रियों को शिक्षित और सशक्त बनाने के लिए समय - समय पर विभिन्न सरकारी योजनायें बनायी गयी जिससे स्त्रियाँ लाभान्वित होती हैं 1 स्त्रियों और बच्चों के विकास को सुनिश्चित करने के लिए मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय भारत सरकार ने कई ऐसे विभाग भी गठित किए हैं जो इस दिशा में समग्र विकास को वांछित गति प्रदान करने का काम कर रहे हैं 1 हमारे समाज की रुढ़िवादी मानसिकता ने अपने खोखले आदर्शों को स्त्रियों पर थोपने का सदैव प्रयास किया है 1 पुरुषवादी समाज में स्त्री की असहाय स्थिति को सुधारने के लिए सरकार ने स्त्री हित में कई ऐसे कानून भी बनाये हैं जो उन्हें समाज में समानता के साथ जीने का अधिकार देते हैं 1 समाज में फैली कुरीतियों के निवारण के लिए भी ये कानून काफी हद तक कारगर साबित हुए हैं 1 इन कानूनों की तरह ही स्त्रियों के सशक्तिकरण के लिए राष्ट्रीय नीति भी बनायी गयी जिसका उद्देश्य स्त्रियों की प्रगति और विकास को सुनिश्चित करके उन्हें सशक्त बनाना है 1 संविधान में संशोधन करके स्त्रियों के लिए पंचायती राज में एक तिहाई आरक्षण का भी प्रावधान किया गया है 1 सरकार ने स्वावलम्बन, स्वशक्ति, स्त्री शिक्षा के लिए कंडेंस पाठ्यक्रम, कामकाजी स्त्रियों के लिए छात्रावास, स्वाधार आदि कई ऐसे कार्यक्रम भी प्रारंभ किए जिससे स्त्रियों को शिक्षा, रोजगार और आत्मसम्मान से जीवन जीने की सुविधाएँ प्रदान की जा सके 1 21वीं सदी में जहाँ स्त्रियाँ पुरुषों के साथ कंधे से कंधा मिलाकर जीवन के प्रत्येक क्षेत्र में उन्नति के पथ पर अग्रसर हो रही हैं, वहीं उन्हें कई ऐसे अधिकारों की भी आवश्यकता थी जो उन्हें विवाह, गर्भधारण, तलाक और दहेज प्रथा जैसे मुद्दों पर स्वतंत्रता से फैसला लेने की इजाजत दें 1 सरकार की इस पहल से धीरे - धीरे ही सही समाज की सोच में परिवर्तन हो रहा है 1 परिस्थितियाँ बदल रही हैं 1 स्त्रियों को हाशिये की स्थिति से बाहर लाने में शिक्षा का महती योगदान है 1 शहर ही नहीं बल्कि ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों ने भी शिक्षा के महत्व को समझा है इसीलिये वर्तमान समाज स्त्री शिक्षा को तरजीह दे रहा है 1 सरकार की नीतियों, कानूनों और कार्यक्रमों से सुधार आएगा जिसका लाभ स्त्रियों को मिलेगा 1 देश की आधी आबादी के शारीरिक, मानसिक, आर्थिक और सामाजिक विकास से ही पूरे देश का विकास होगा 1

BBBP15

### **Women's Economic Empowerment in India: Role of Indian Life Insurance Sector**

**Dr. Nitu Rana (Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Aditi Mahavidyalaya)**

#### **ABSTRACT**

Women's economic empowerment is the ability of women to enjoy their right to control and benefit from the financial resources, assets, income and at the same point of time the ability to manage risk and improve their economic status and well-being. For empowering the women economically,

financial planning and money stability is required. In India the insurance market has changed drastically and to meet the need of their customers, the insurance companies are coming up with a wide range of insurance products. The insurance sector especially the life insurance sector is playing a very important role in the financial planning of the women. The different life insurance plans offered by the life insurance companies for the women can help them in securing ways against financial uncertainties and systematically plan for the important goals of their life. The life insurance companies in India (both public and private sector) has designed many policies specifically for the benefit and requirement of women. There is a huge insurance gap in India, and now that women are buying life insurance policies, they should do proper risk analysis and insure themselves adequately instead of looking at insurance from the point of view of investment and tax savings only. The women are managing every aspect of the society, hence they also deserve a strong protective cover for themselves. If a woman own a life insurance plan, then it will ensure her security against an unforeseen financial uncertainty. It was observed that the women bought thirty two percent of the total individual life insurance policies sold in India in the financial year 2017-18 (Annual Report IRDAI 2017-18). Hence it can be concluded that when women are playing a very invaluable role in providing for their family, it is a must for all women to purchase life insurance plans for themselves. Life insurance plans, in addition to providing financial security to one's beneficiaries, can also act as a savings or investment instrument, thus helping in reaching the financial goals faster.

**Keywords:** Women's economic empowerment, Life insurance, uncertainty, investment, financial.

## INTRODUCTION

In the present competitive world, more and more women have started to enter the general workforce, and are increasingly being employed in various sectors. Women are also playing the role of the primary breadwinner and support various members of the family financially. Financial planning and money stability is very crucial for becoming self-empowered woman. Women's economic empowerment is the ability of women to enjoy their right to control and benefit from the financial resources, assets, income and at the same point of time the ability to manage risk and improve their economic status and well-being. The life insurance sector can help in securing ways against financial uncertainties and in systematically planning for the important goals of the life. The life insurance

market is changing drastically and to meet the need of their customers, this sector is coming up with a wide range of products. Given how invaluable the role of a woman can be in providing for her family, it is a must for all women to purchase life insurance plans for themselves. Life insurance plans help in reaching the financial goals faster, in addition to providing financial security to the beneficiaries and as savings or investment instruments. Life Insurance Sector can make women economically empowered. It can be viewed from the following perspectives:

- **Financial Protection:** By purchasing a life insurance policy, financial security can be provided to the dependents. The women can avail this benefit to make themselves more empowered and independent.
- **Savings can be increased:** Many life insurance products like ULIPs, endowment plans, money-back policies, etc. serve as a savings and investment instrument in addition to providing risk protection to the policy buyer. Hence, by making investment in such policies the women can increase their savings and can enjoy the benefit of long-term wealth creation.
- **Enhanced Coverage:** The life insurance companies provides their policyholders option to customise their policies. Certain riders are given by insurance companies like the Critical Illness Rider, Accidental Death and Disability Benefit Rider etc. These riders provide an additional benefit to the women policyholder or their nominee upon the occurrence of the event as mentioned in the rider brochure.
- **Retirement Corpus:** The women can make their life after retirement easy by availing policies like retirement or pension plans. These type of life insurance products help policyholders by providing fixed income after the retirement.
- **Tax Benefits:** The life insurance policies also provide tax benefits to the policyholders. By having these policies the tax can be saved by the women and they can again become economically empowered.

## OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the research paper are:

1. to provide an overview of the opportunities made available by the life insurance sector to the women and the changing scenario in the male female proportion of the population making investment in life insurance sector.
2. to suggest measures to empower women economically through life insurance sector.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The present paper is an exploratory study. The study was conducted by collecting data through secondary data sources. Secondary data in relation to get the information about the role of life insurance sector in empowering the women economically were gathered from the various journals, books, financial newspapers, magazines, dailies and weekly reports of various institutions and online journals like J Store, Sage publications etc. The website of Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) was also used to extract the relevant information for the present paper.

## **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY**

The findings and conclusions of the study are summarised in the following paragraphs.

In India the insurance market has changed drastically and to meet the need of their customers, the insurance companies are coming up with a wide range of insurance products. The insurance sector especially the life insurance sector is playing a very important role in the financial planning of the women. The different life insurance plans offered by the life insurance companies for the women can help them in securing ways against financial uncertainties and systematically plan for the important goals of their life. The life insurance companies in India (both public and private sector) has designed many policies specifically for the benefit and requirement of women. It was found that keeping the requirements of women in mind, the following insurance plans were introduced by the respective companies to help the women to make them economically empowered.

### **1. SBI Life Smart Women Advantage Plan**

In order to cater to the insurance needs of women, SBI Life has launched Smart Women Advantage Plan, which is a traditional participating endowment assurance plan. The plan provides the dual benefits of savings and protection to a woman. The buyer can choose according to their own convenience between Gold and Platinum plan. The plan is most beneficial for those who want a threefold financial coverage including life cover, long-term savings, and critical illness benefits.

### **2. HDFC Life Smart Women ULIP**

This plan is a ULIP (unit linked insurance plan) specially designed for women. This is an investment plan that provides coverage to a woman against pregnancy complications, female specific cancer and so on. As this is a ULIP product, the policyholder has to bear the risk associated with the investment. The plan offers the sum assured equal to forty times the annualized premium.

### 3. Shriram New ShriVivah Plan

This is a traditional participating saving plan which is designed especially for women. The plan focuses mainly on covering the huge expenses of marriage. Shriram New ShriVivah Plan pays out a lump sum amount in case of the unfortunate demise of the insured person helping the family to reduce their debt. One of the major benefits of this plan is that along with the maturity benefit, it offers double life insurance cover as well as regular income.

### 4. LIC Jeevan Bharathi-I Plan

This is a life insurance policy specially designed for women. LIC Jeevan Bharathi-I is a money back plan. An advantage of this plan is that the payout amount can be used to purchase an annuity on the policy maturity. Under this plan, the premium needs to be paid for the entire policy tenure of fifteen to twenty years and the survival benefit of twenty per cent of the sum assured are paid every five policy years. On maturity of the policy, the remaining sum assured amount, accrued reversionary bonus and the final additional bonus is paid to the insured.

### 5. TATA AIG Wellsurance Women Plan

This policy has been specially designed to secure women. The policy provides protection against specific illness and other benefits. Moreover, the plan also provides benefits by covering hospitalization expenses and children's education benefits in case of accidental death.

All life insurance policies, including term life plans, whole life plans, ULIPs (unit-linked insurance plans), endowment plans, annuity plans, etc. can be purchased by women and men alike. Many insurance providers also offer preferential premium rates to women policy buyers. However, HDFC Life Smart Woman Plan and SBI Life Smart Woman Advantage Plan have been exclusively designed for women.

The women can become economically empowered not only by making investments in life insurance products but also by selling the insurance products i.e. by joining this sector as employees in the form



of individual agents. The table 1 is presenting the details of individual agents of life insurance industry.

**Table: 1 Details of Individual Agents of Life Insurers 2017-18**

| Agents                         | Private       | LIC of India   | Industry      |
|--------------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| <b>Male</b>                    | 646942(69%)   | 856505 (75%)   | 1503447 (72%) |
| <b>Female</b>                  | 286914 (31%)  | 292306(25%)    | 579220 (28%)  |
| <b>Total Individual Agents</b> | 933856 (100%) | 1148811 (100%) | 2082667(100%) |

Source: IRDAI Annual Report 2017-18

It can be seen from the table 1 that out of the total individual agents of Life insurance industry, 72 per cent were male and 28 per cent were female. For LIC, the proportion of male and female individual agents is at 75 per cent and 25 per cent respectively. In the case of private life insurers the male and female proportion is at 69 per cent and 31 per cent respectively. It can be concluded that in the private sector women are getting more opportunities for their economic empowerment.

Most of the investment in life insurance sector is made by those people who are employed in the formal sector. It was found that the participation of women is also increasing in the life insurance sector. It can be proved by observing the number of policies that they are buying. The table 2 is showing the male female proportion analysis of population and individual life insurance new business in the year 2017-18.

**Table: 2 Male Female Proportion Analysis of Population and Individual Life Insurance New Business 2017-18**

| Particulars   | Total (Cr) | Male (Cr) | Female (Cr) | Male (%) | Female (%) |
|---|------------|-----------|-------------|----------|------------|
| <b>Population*</b>  | 134        | 69        | 65          | 52       | 48         |
| <b>No. of Policies</b>  | 2.82       | 1.92      | 0.90        | 68       | 32         |
| <b>FY Premium**</b>   | 92,135     | 62,334    | 29,801      | 68       | 32         |
| **Premium in ₹ Crores     *Population estimation as at 2018 from UIDAI web site |            |           |             |          |            |

Source: IRDAI Annual Report 2017-18

Cr: Crores

It can be observed from the table 2 that the females are forty eight percent of the total population but their share in the number of policies and FY (first year) premium is only thirty two percent of the total number of policies and total FY (first year) premium collected in the year 2017-18. The life insurance sector is required to design such policies which can motivate the women to make investment in policies to make themselves stronger financially. There is large scope in this segment of the population.

In table 3, the male female proportion analysis of population and individual life insurance new business for the year 2018-19 is shown.

**Table: 3 Male Female Proportion Analysis of Population and Individual Life Insurance New Business 2018-19**

| Particulars  | Total (Cr) | Male (Cr) | Female (Cr) | Male (%) | Female (%) |
|--|------------|-----------|-------------|----------|------------|
| <b>Population*</b>   | 134        | 69        | 65          | 52       | 48         |
| <b>No. of Policies</b>   | 2.86       | 1.83      | 1.03        | 64       | 36         |
| <b>FY Premium**</b>  | 97690      | 61120     | 38525       | 63       | 37         |
| **Premium in ₹ Crores    *Population estimation as at 2018 from UIDAI web site |            |           |             |          |            |
| Transgender- No. of Policies- 1286 and FYP-45 crores   |            |           |             |          |            |

Source: IRDAI Annual Report 2018-19

Cr: Crores

For the same composition of population in 2018-19 (Table 3), it can be seen that the share of women in case of number of policies has increased from thirty two percent in 2017-18 to thirty six percent in 2018-19 and in case of first year premium it has increased from thirty two percent in 2017-18 to thirty seven percent in 2018-19. It shows that the women have realised the importance of investment, future security and they are more concerned about being empowered economically.

**Table: 4 Percentage Share in Number of Policies in between Male and Female in LIC Vs Private Insurers**

| Particulars | LIC (%) | Private Insurers (%) |
|-------------|---------|----------------------|
| <b>Male</b> | 61      | 73                   |

|               |     |     |
|---------------|-----|-----|
| <b>Female</b> | 39  | 27  |
| <b>Total</b>  | 100 | 100 |

Source: IRDAI Annual Report 2018-19

The table 4 is presenting the percentage share in number of policies in between male and female in LIC and private life insurance companies. The women's share is found to be thirty nine percent in case of total number of policies issued by LIC and twenty seven percent in case of private life insurance companies. It shows that the women feel that their investments will be safer in the LIC. The private life insurers are required to come out with new plans to motivate the Indian women to buy their life insurance policies.

### **SUGGESTIONS**

It is suggested that the women should assess their financial requirements and coverage needs before taking any life insurance plan as money stability is a very important factor for woman empowerment. At least a few different policies should be compared and the features and benefits of each policy should be properly studied. It is always best to do a thorough research and choose the best-suited plan as per the affordability. Proper financial planning is very important for a woman as it is believed that a woman can foresee the danger beforehand. LIC of India is a government-owned enterprise and it is a trusted name in the field of life insurance. It has designed many policies for the benefit and requirement of women. It is suggested that the women can also try various job opportunities in the life insurance sector as this sector has various kind of promising jobs. The life insurance sector is also advised to design such jobs which are flexible enough for the women, so that the skills of this segment of the total population can be used. The insurance sector should also take various steps to come out with customised life insurance policies for the women to make them more empowered economically. There is a huge insurance gap in India, but it is observed that women are now taking interest in buying life insurance policies. It will be sensible for the women to do proper risk analysis and insure themselves adequately instead of looking at insurance from the point of view of investment and tax savings only. Both the private life insurers and the LIC of India should design life insurance policies with small premiums for the women of unorganised sector in India also, so that this untapped segment can also enter into this sector.

### **List of Abbreviations**

IRDAI: Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India

Cr: Crore

LIC: Life Insurance Corporation of India

ULIPs: Unit Linked Insurance Plans

FYP: First Year Premium

UIDAI: Unique Identification Authority of India

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**BBBP16**

### **Anxieties of college going Rural Girls of Delhi**

**Dr. Sadhna Jain (Associate Professor, Department of Home Science, Aditi Mahavidyalaya)**

**Abstract:** Adolescence represents a difficult developmental period in one's life. The society puts heavy demands on them like to be independent, to chose educational and vocational goals, make peer and heterosexual adjustments etc after the completion of adolescent period chronologically and sociologically.

A study was undertaken to study the causes of anxiety, coping mechanisms and the academic performance of rural adolescent girls of Delhi. Unstructured interview, observations and academic progress reports (Marksheets) of adolescent girls were used to collect the information on the causes of anxiety, their coping methods and the relation of anxiety with general academic performance of the girls.

The results of the study showed that although the girls were happy with the environment of their families but to make their relationship better with the parents, they wanted them to change a few of their behaviours. Their main causes of anxiety for them were parental scolding, non compliance of parental orders, restrictions imposed by parents, not allowing them to watch television, younger siblings not following their commands, getting less marks in studies, tough subject(s) etc.

Adolescent girls dealt with anxiety by using either emotion focused strategies like crying, not eating food, not talking to anyone, sitting alone, getting irritated on siblings, hitting them etc or by using problem solving strategies like self analysis of their own behavior, improving their behavior, suppressing their wish, engaging in some other activity.

It was found that anxiety affected their academic performance. As the anxiety increased, their academic performance decreased. Hence, it can be concluded that anxiety may hamper their academic performance. We must need to take into account the adolescent girls' anxieties and inner role of their feelings to promote their academic performance and mental health. The steps must be taken to deal with anxieties at school, home and at individual level.

**Key words:** Anxiety, adolescence, emotions, strategies, academics, performance

The term 'anxiety' or 'fear' is used to indicate what people experience when they feel circumstances as threatening to their well-being. These changes may involve physiological arousal like increase in heartbeat, perspiration etc and subjective feelings of discomfort. The anxiety may be induced by the anticipation of harmful circumstances that one thinks one is likely to confront by an ongoing anxious situation or by harmful effects of anxieties already encountered. Although, there are some situations to which almost everyone responds with high level of stress, but, there are individual differences in how people cognitively appraise a situation. The situations become anxiety producing for an individual only if they are seen as threatening or dangerous by that individual.

Daily hassles or minor events that are constant source of irritation can be very stressful as can more focalized events that require major and sometimes sudden readjustments. Exposure to stress has beneficial effects also. It is an adaptive reaction to stress. It signals danger and prepares people to take defensive action. Over a period of time, individuals learn which coping strategies are successful for them in which situation? Success experience in dealing with anxiety induce positive self concept and induce generalized sense of self sufficiency. It is a part of normal process of personal growth and maturation of an individual. At the same time, anxiety could cause psychological issues, if the demands made by the anxious situation overwhelm person's coping capabilities. If it persists over a long period of time, one's stress signaling system ceases to work in an adaptive way. One misreads and over interprets the actual degree of threat pose by situations, takes poor decisions as to what coping strategies to use and finds that one is coping inefficiently. The people may become socially withdrawn and show other signs of severe emotional dysfunction.

A study was undertaken on college students of first and third semester of Aditi Mahavidyalaya to identify the causes of their anxiety and its relation with their academic performance. Information

was also collected on their strategies to cope with anxiety producing situations. The study required thorough investigation about their relationship with the parents, conflicting situations leading to depression, their academic performance in relation to parental expectations, gender bias if any, impact of comments related to one's physical features on one's personality, relationship with friends, factors prevalent in college that create anxiety in them, and wish to become financially independent. Informal interactions with the girls helped in structuring the tools of study. Unstructured interview schedule, focused group discussions, narratives and observations and their academic progress reports were used to collect data from eighty students of Aditi Mahavidyalaya of semester one and three. Purposive sampling was used to select the students. Mixed methodology was used to analyse the data.

**Results and Findings:** Most of the girls of the sample belonged to nuclear families but their at least one or more relatives lived in the nearby areas. Education of the parents varied from primary level of education to post graduation.

**Anxiety causing situations at home:** as reported by college going students included restrictions imposed by parents, narrow mindedness of parents, parental fights, their younger siblings fighting with them, mothers and their neighborhood friends passing negative comments about them, allocation and comments related to performance of household tasks, excessive use of mobile phones by college going girls, younger siblings disturbing and using their belongings without their permission. One of the girls reported that, 'It is somehow easy to adjust with parents but very difficult to adjust with elder siblings (Mummy papa ke saath to kaise bhi adjust ho jata hai par bade bhai behno ke saath nhi ho pata).

Another girl reported that, 'At times I feel that nobody neither my family members nor teachers are happy with me (Kabhi-kabhi mujhe lagta hai ki mujhe se koi bhi khush nhi hai. Na ghar main na college mai teachers). A few girls (10%) reported that at times situation at home becomes unbearable due to 'display picture' (DP) on their handsets. Their parents compelled them to keep it 'private' and not 'public' or to paste DP of their parents' choice. She felt that the parents should trust their growing children.

These issues may seem very petty to adults or parents and cause them at the seriousness with which these are responded but for girls who are at the border of crossing adolescence and entering into adulthood, striving for independence, nothing is unimportant. The college going girls reported that the situation many times became unmanageable when parents criticized them for becoming increasingly vocal in demanding their rights. The girls reported that their parents should be open minded, allow them to visit friend's house and other places, allow them to watch television and listen songs and they should not fight with each other. One of the girls reported that, 'There should be less restrictions on them. Greater the restrictions, greater are the chances of doing shady deeds' (Rok- tok thodi kam honi chahiye. Jayada galat kam vo karta hai jis par jyada rok tok lagai jati hai').

The girls reported that although there was no gender discrimination in their parental behaviours in terms of food but discrimination was reported in terms of degree of freedom given to girls and boys like number of restrictions imposed on girls, freedom in the choice of dress, freedom to go out and have fun, going to friend's marriages. One of the girls reported that, 'My parents become extremely nervous after watching TV serials like 'Crime Patrol'/ 'Savdhan India'. Telecast of such serials should be stopped at any cost' (Mere parents 'Crime Patrol'/Savdhan India' jaise serials ko dekh kar bahut nervous ho jaate hai, ye serials kisi bhi hal mai band karva dene chahiye). She reported that after watching such serials parents restricts their already restricted choices.

Some girls (35%) reported that their mothers complain about them to their maternal, paternal relatives and neighbours regarding not performing household work properly, singing while working, not performing well in studies, using mobile phones and watching television. They also reported that at times their neighbours instigated their parents to scold them which they found very hurtful. Many of them did not like their neighbours.

Almost all girls were getting pocket money from their parents. Those who were not getting it were earning some amount of money by giving tuitions. Still some girls reported that they did face financial difficulties either because their parents constructed/ renovated the house or their sister got married. Financial scarcity was reported as the main reason for not going on educational excursions organized by the college though, they all expressed their desire to go on excursion.

The girls reported that they felt hurt when the relatives negatively commented about their physical features (small eyes, dark complexion, broad forehead, use of spectacles), physique, (height, weight), being left handed etc.

Most college going girls (90%) reported that their parents do not allow their friends to be invited at home. They also had the feeling that their friends are happier than them. They felt that the parents of their friends are better than their own parents as they are more loving, caring, affectionate, open minded and take them for outings. A few reported that they wished to live in joint family so that other members could fulfill their wishes in times of distress. They all wished to bring up their children in much better manner than their parents.

Most of the girls (85%) had no specific career goals. All they wanted after completing graduation was a job preferably government job. Some (5%) were also attending coaching classes along with graduation to crack the competitive exams. Some (5%) were also pursuing vocational courses like beauty culture, computer courses etc. A few (10%) wanted to do post graduation and B.Ed. Poor performance in academics, non comprehension of the subject, non availability of the teachers and books, non completion of the syllabus, less gap between the papers, finding difficulty in memorizing the text, arrival of relatives during the exams, ill health of the mother, extra burden of household work during exams were the major reasons of anxiety related to academics among them.

**Coping strategies:** The girls reported that they use various methods/ strategies to cope with the anxiety producing situations. Most of them reported that they stop talking to the concerned sibling



and or parent, feel helpless, listen to them and cry, sit alone, scribble on paper, stop eating food, stop studying, try to console them by feeling that their time will also come, by doing the work of their choice, discussing issues with the parents, engaging herself in some work, start studying, confiding in some trustworthy individual. Some of them also reported that they rethink of their behavior and if they found anything wrong with their behavior, then they apologize verbally or by doing the work of their choice. The girls got angry on their mothers and requested them to stop the practice of finding faults in them, cried, stopped doing assigned tasks. Some tried to make fun of it to get rid of the comments from their minds. One of the girls reported that his father consoles her whenever she gets scolding from her mother. She discusses the issue with her father and gets agree to his view.

To overcome their financial crisis, the girls reported that sometimes they borrowed money from their friends, compelled their parents to give money, used their saved money received from relatives. Sometimes, parents explained them their financial situation and the girls got agreed to their decision and forgo their wish.

The girls took various measures to reduce the anxiety related to studies. They reported that, they get irritated and angry on themselves, ask questions like, 'Why I am weak in that particular subject, try to learn again and again, take tuitions, devote more time to difficult subjects.

The analysis of academic progress report of the college going girls showed that excessive anxiety negatively impacted their academic scores. The reasons of anxiety varied from issues related to home, parental health, their own health, finances, incomprehension of the academic discipline etc. From the above mentioned strategies as reported by college going girls, it can be concluded that the girls used two kinds of strategies to cope with the anxiety causing situations.. These are 'emotion focussed strategies and 'problem focussed strategies'. Some of the emotion focused strategies as reported by them were crying, stop taking food, stop talking, sitting alone, fighting with siblings, hitting siblings, feeling helpless, screaming, stop studying , answering back etc.

The problem focused strategies were trying to improve herself, controlling herself, ignoring the comment, make fun of the situation, rethinking, discussing issues with the parents, engaging herself in some work, start studying, confiding in some trustworthy individual. Experiences of girls at higher education institutes exert a potent influence on their personality. The degree of success a college going student earns depends on factors such as the appropriateness of the curriculum in the light of their learning needs, the choice of major fields of study, their relationship with the teachers and fellow students, their participation in the social life of the college. For society, the guidance of the girls at college level is of great importance in fostering the growth of those qualities, attitudes and relationships which will enable the girls to carry out with success her role as wife and mother-responsibilities which many girls meet soon after leaving the college.

**Recommendations:** To keep the students anxiety free, they should be given opportunities to discuss their issues. To foster all round development and cultivating positive habits based on interest, the opportunities for yoga, sports and meditation should be made mandatory for all students. Parental

meetings should be hold regularly. Parents and youth should spend time together. The girls should be given some freedom related to personal matters. Confidence building exercises should be conducted to reduce anxiety.

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BBBP17

### **Journey of a Visually Impaired Vulnerable Girl to an Empowered Woman**

**Sh Baldev Gulati (Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work, Aditi Mahavidyalaya)**

I am Ruhi. I belong to a typical middle class family with typical middle class mentality of my parents. I was born as a normal girl who gradually turned into a blind girl before I could even learn to walk. I had a terrible infection which not only infected my eyes and took away my eyesight but also infected my fate and robbed away all my dreams of growing up in a happy, contented and peaceful family as a successful child. I was the third girl child born to parents who were living in an orthodox joint family. My parents were still struggling to accept me as their third daughter, when this tragedy struck me and my family. My father who was a clerk in a private company abandoned us to become a monk and never came ever again to meet us. The responsibility of brining up of all

three children rested on my mother who herself was dependent on my paternal grandparents for her survival. Our life became an emotional roller coaster. Fights, humiliation, agony, angst became predominant traits of my family. During that time our relatives suggested my mother to abandon me or to drop me to some residential institution for the destitute. But, my physical resemblance with my father did not allow her to take this extreme step. She started working as a part time domestic help in an IAS officer's home to earn a living. His wife suggested some schools for the blind and also some integrated schools which were in Delhi. By the influence of the officer, my mother got me admitted in an integrated school in Delhi simply to have some solace at home. But, this changed the trajectory not only of my life but also of my fortune, from a depressed, unhappy, dissatisfied, vulnerable girl to an ever happy, confident, satisfied, successful and an empowered woman.

This paper talks about the challenges faced by a visually impaired person in general and a girl child in particular. It also talks about what needs to be done by different stakeholders and how assistive technologies are changing the lives of visually impaired people making them more independent.

**An insight into what it is like to be blind:** As a child I was a completely different child after recovering from meningitis. As, I was growing up, I was at the age of crawling and old enough to understand to not to hit myself to a bed, a chair or anything that comes my way. But I used to hurt myself; I crawled in one direction and could not anticipate anything that would come my way. As a child I used to hear the voices called out for me but could not see them and hence could not have eye contact with them. My blindness was the reason why I was unable to respond to certain things and in certain manner. My parents and my family were devastated by my blindness. They were simply not able to believe the bitter truth of my visual impairment. People started to blame them for my impairment. Elders in my own family started to claim that there was something wrong with my mother or it was the result of poor deeds of my parents and mine as well in some other life. To sort these things out my parents started to talk to various ophthalmologists, doctors etc. They started visiting private hospitals with the hope of finding a cure but later shifted to government hospitals because of financial constraints. When nothing could work for me, my parents minds were filled with superstitions by all the people living nearby and the relatives consequently they also concerned people who performed black magic. Eventually they realized that nothing is ever going to work for me. After trying everything and consulting various the doctors and hospitals in their reach, my parents believed that there was no way out to get my sights back and all I needed was proper training for living. My mother and my elder siblings then started to train me accordingly; the instructions to be given were all very different from the instructions given to a normal child. With that, they realized that I had been facing a lot of difficulty in eating properly or performing basic routine work which included brushing, bathing, wearing clothes etc. I was taught all these things sometimes with patience and scolding by my mother and sometimes mischievously by my siblings. In addition to this I was made familiar to all the look and corner of my home so as to make it easy for me to do my personal works with ease.

Imagine growing up of a visually impaired child in a world that is completely different to you and you are different to the world often just a creature sometimes meant for sympathy and charity and sometimes meant for releasing anger and despair. There was always something overwhelming about my physical, emotional and intellectual lives that set me apart from most other people around me. As a small child my so called toys did not reflect my individual unique potentials. My relatives and friends could not relate to my everyday struggles. At times, they were very indifferent, uncaring and unbelievable which used to make me extremely upset.

In society for some people, the **difference (blindness)** in me was an utter inconvenience and therefore by an extension, I was sometimes tagged as an **'inconvenient child'**. Sometimes I was even put in physical danger because people could not understand the condition that made me different. Eventually I too stopped trying to understand it myself. I think, it was the only option for me at that time to ignore it, to brush it aside, to pretend to be someone or something that I was not in order to fit into the society, to get accepted by the society. It was like killing my conscience piece by piece with each passing day. But I was helpless. This was my experience growing with visual impairment.

**Loss of vision can affect all areas of development. Social development gets affected as the child is not able to pick up non verbal cues, the child may not be motivated enough to pick up any unseen object, may not explore the environment, may not have active interaction with the people and environment and there may be delays in the independence training and hence compromising the child's optimal development. Special efforts needs to be made to train them to take care of themselves, safety and independence training, love and trust self and others and feel accepted.**

**My Schooling:** I was getting old and was at home at a time when a normal child would have been started to go to school for his or her basic education. When I was nine years old, it was decided to send me to a school. My mother visited number of schools including private schools but no school was ready to accept a child with visual impairment. Consequently she started to find some alternate solution for this and finally found one. On the other hand I was given admission in a school in Delhi which was recommended by my mother's employer. It was a residential school. Although my mother was a little skeptical regarding the decision to send me to Delhi, a metropolitan city, but she knew that it was in my best interest. Delhi was quite far from my place and I had never stepped out of my house without a family member with me to guide me to walk on the streets or make me cautious of anything which might hurt me. In contrast to this Delhi was also a place which was the only source to make me independent to live my life on my own. It was a city which had a number of opportunities for visually impaired people as well. Feared and tensed, my mother decided to send me to Delhi and my admission was confirmed. Once I reached Delhi with my mother, I was sent to hostel to settle down with my hostel mates while she completed other formalities. That time I was accompanied by a lady who helped me in settling to hostel life and provided me with a tour of the hostel with some of other new students. The room that was allotted me was not very big, so within

a day I was able to measure every inch of it but there were five roommates besides me living in that room and this made the room even smaller and it was very difficult to adjust in that room. Four rooms with five students in each were given one common washroom. The washrooms were filthy and smelled gross always. I also realized that many of the girls had no knowledge about how to perform basic jobs of day to day life and hygiene and hence they were not able to use even the laboratories properly. I was still tackling with all these issues; and I crossed my childhood years and entered into the age of adolescence and its associated hardships. My menstrual cycle begun but I was never introduced to it ever before. Some of my seniors did talk about it among themselves. I just overheard it. I had to learn to adjust to it like recognizing its onset, when to use and change sanitary pads etc.

Mean while, I learnt lot of hobbies like swimming, playing flute, debating, recitation etc and participated not only in school functions but represented my school in zonal and state level swimming competitions and brought laurels for school. Participation in activities of my interest developed immense confidence in me. Soon, I became one of the most popular students of the school. The teachers chased me for competitions. I started accepting my disability. This infused a sense of determination in me to excel and make place for myself in the universe. I really enjoyed my primary and middle level schooling so much so that I never wanted to go back to my home during long vacations. I achieved good grades and had busy social life. My family was also very happy with my progress.

**Its very important to let the children carry out activities of their choice even if they have visual impairment. If one needs to modify the activity or game to involve them, one should not hesitate in doing that. Their participation is important in confidence building.**

During my secondary and senior secondary classes, studies become very rigorous. The teaching-learning experiences were based solely keeping in mind the CBSE board examinations. I had all kinds of issues at secondary level. Earlier, I gave my exams in Braille. Now I had to find a scribe/writer to write the exam. It was an uphill task. They used to charge exorbitant amount of money with no surety of their appearance during the exam and their speed of writing. I was not allowed to study science and mathematics though I was very good in mental maths and was always eager to study biology. Some of my teachers were brilliant and ever ready to help me but some were not so good and were struggling with their own issues. I learnt **Braille** and how to **touch-type**. These are two invaluable skills which are my assets. My school lagged miserably in having books in Braille. This was very detrimental to my academic progress. I learnt Braille but it was of no benefit then because there were no books available in Braille. We had requested for audio recordings of some books which were needed by me to go through again and again but I was not given any. The government institutions worked at a very slow speed at that time. The grants never came on time to make purchases by the school. Well, despite all the setbacks, I completed my schooling with good grades.

**It is the responsibility of the teacher to make provisions for equal opportunities to access educational resources. To teach visually impaired students, a teacher needs to modify the pedagogies. One should allow the use of visual aids and assistive technologies and create conducive learning environment. Simple strategies like explaining the visual, dictating what one is writing on the chalkboard, giving oral instructions for every assignment and activity, asking students to use buzzer or clap to ask the question, provision of tactile learning experiences, addressing the students by name, giving them extra time to complete the task, modify the curriculum suiting to their needs will profoundly help visually impaired students in school.**

**Life at Institutes of Higher Education:** I got admission in my dream college of dream university and in dream course. I was very happy and full of zeal to excel in every endeavor. I expected somewhat better facilities and adaptations for severely visually impaired students in the college but the reality was very far from my expectations. The building of my college was of British time and its floor was made up of asymmetrical stones which made walking on it very difficult. I enhanced my **mobility skills**, learnt new cane techniques. I started going in buses, trains and auto rickshaws etc and enhanced **independent living skills**.

One of the greatest issues at university level was immense scarcity of books in Braille. Since, there were hardly one or two differently abled children, very little efforts were made by the teachers in their pedagogies to accommodate them. I was fully dependent on my friends to read for me. At that time digital technologies were in their starting phase, no e books etc were available. I continuously searched for readers. I worked extremely hard during graduation. Finally with a lot of difficulties I completed my graduation. But due to some personal unfavourable circumstances, unavailability of proper material and unsupportive friends and society I could not score as per my expectations. I was once again getting immersed into despair.

**Visually impaired students face unique challenges in institutes of higher learning. Curriculum planner can ease these difficulties by making necessary accommodations in the curriculum and courses so as to allow them to pursue higher education and enter the work force as an efficient and effective worker.**

**Life after graduation:** I applied for jobs after graduation but was unsuccessful. At that time, there was no placement cell in the universities. I started feeling miserable. The feelings of becoming a burden on family were overwhelming. I spent many sleepless nights thinking about my unemployment and my liability on family. I often thought that I had always been a burden on my parents. Even after completing my graduation I could not support them, neither socially nor financially.

**Career counselling services should be made available to all university students. Efforts should be made to provide supportive employment to visually impaired children. They should also be**



**provided with the knowledge of benefits, concessions and reservations given to them by the government from time to time.**

**Marriage and visually impaired person:** The only option to stop being a burden on my family and move on with a life I could think of at that time was marriage. Although to a normal girl this would have been an easy option but for me this was another task equally difficult like the others. Moreover, I had met a number of visually impaired women older than me and 95% of them were still single. So, I always knew that the idea of getting married would be very challenging for me. I applied for B.Ed, thinking that it might provide me with some job of teaching and my parents will not have to spend money on my marriage. But, all my dreams shattered as I could not crack its entrance examination. Everybody use to whisper that schooling and college were a matter of 15 years but marriage is a matter of life and nobody would marry a visually impaired girl especially in a society where girls are considered to take the charge of the house as soon as they get married. But after lot of searching and talking to various people, a blind man came up with a proposal and in no time I got married to him. My husband was a well reputed officer in the corporate sector and had a great knowledge of everything. He was born in Delhi, a metropolitan city as I said earlier, a city with a large number of opportunities. He was bought up in Delhi, so while he was pursuing his education, he had the least problem of adjustment.

Living alone and independent for almost 15 years, I was soon able to take care of all the household work like cooking, doing dishes, washing etc. My husband also helped me in finishing household tasks. There might be two reasons for it, one, I was living in a nuclear family. It was just me and my husband living in the house and second, I was well experienced in living on my own and doing all the basic jobs at my place as well. My marital life was going on well and I was able to perform daily jobs easily.

With a good source of earning I purchased number of appliances for kitchen which made my job 100 times easier and fun causing at the same time. I was briefed about the uses and ways of application of a microwave. I found it as very adaptive device and slowly and steadily I learnt to use it very efficiently. It was very convenient for any visually impaired person as well. I used to astonish by the degree of precision at which the job was done by the appliances because being a small town girl and spending half of my life in hostel, I just read and heard about these appliances. The apartment in which we have brought our house is also electronically monitored. It is hundred percent safe and secure. There is a system of cameras in front of the entry gates to capture the images of the passer bys. Its gates would open only after the person standing at the door would reply with one's name and hence the voice could be verified easily. It is all the game of technology, and yes it has made the life of a visually impaired person very easy and safe.

Later I was also introduced to fully automatic washing machine, which almost made my job of washing clothes negligible. All I had to learn was to put the proper quantity of clothes and washing powder. To a person with visual impairment, this was a major appliance.

Soon I started to work very flexibly with all the appliances and all other daily jobs. I used to have lot of free time at home. My husband once suggested me to start studying further. He suggested me to pursue my education and complete my PhD in whichever subject I like. The idea was thoroughly discussed within my family and I decided to start my studies once again. After some 6 months of marriage I joined a college in Delhi itself and soon completed my post graduation, B.Ed and later PhD as well. I then gave many interviews and finally started to work as assistant professor in a college.

**Role of technology in the life of visually impaired people:** With the advent of technology and its use my lifestyle has completely transformed. I can use smart phones with great ease. I can now book a cab through my phone, use banking services like pay tm, listen to songs, prepare emails read e books etc. Smart phones in today's era have a special feature of voice talking where one can provide instructions to one's phone just in a sentence or so for visually impaired person. In fact, use of banking services have become easy and one can send money with just a pin which one can type easily with practice and voice talk would also help one to do that.

In addition to this, using a television has become very easy with the improvement in the technology with due course of time. Installing a TV fire stick would allow the device to connect to WI-FI and one would very easily be able to use a television set. For visually impaired people assistive technology is like a gift of science to them.

**Technology has actually changed the life of people in general but also of visually impaired ones in particular. With time, technology has proved itself as a boon to make a life of visually impaired children and adults easy and sorted.** As far as I am concerned, I am today easily able to work with all kinds of electronics, whether it is a laptop or a mobile phone, a washing machine or a microwave.

It has empowered me in a way that today I am able to empower other visually impaired people. With my learning and experiences today, I run an association which trains visually impaired girls to live an independent life and become a valuable source to society and not a burden on any one.

**Word of advice: There are around 200, 000-300,000 blind children under the age of 16 years in India and only 15,000 are in schools. It is a huge gap which needs to be bridged at the earliest. Bringing up of a visually impaired child is pretty much trial and error. It is extremely important to treat a visually impaired child as any other child. Their developmental needs are same as that of other children. It is important to let them live their life and be independent. Independence training is the key that sets them up for bright future. Training them to operate and maintain their assistive devices is of utmost importance.**

I hope, this paper has given you an insight what it is to be a visually impaired person and in developing an empathetic attitude.

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**BBBP18**

**Women Empowerment and their Contribution in Sustainable Development**

**Dr Neenu Kumar (Assistant Professor, Department of English, Aditi Mahavidyalaya)**

**Abstract**

Sustainable development and economic growth can only be achieved through gender equality and women empowerment. Gender inequities are entrenched in many cultures, political institutions,

economies and social establishments in the world. Girls and women are discriminated against at every step. They face intolerable biases and ill-treatment. This is not only erroneous but also impedes them from participating fully in the society as also does not allow them to participate in decision-making. As with everything else, women are at deep risk due to environmental degeneration and climate change. However, their outlooks, concerns and ideas to bring about positive change are different from those of men. Unless these are kept in mind and women are empowered to participate in the decision-making processes at local, national and international levels, environmental sustainability cannot become a reality. Women work in all fields and at many places, their work is neither appreciated nor is it paid for. Through the years women have been working tirelessly for the betterment of nature. But, they are neither regarded as worthy of mention nor appreciated economically, socially and/ or politically. Similarities between women and nature have always been drawn in mythology and religion. Earth has been referred to as 'Mother Earth' as She is also the caretaker and nurturer like woman. In our materialistic world the parameters of success and wellbeing are the increase in GDP and economic growth. The unpaid services of both, thus, continue to be relegated to the background. Women know how to manage resources. They can also adapt to change. The present paper will investigate the different prospects of educating women as also empowering them to care for our bleeding environment for a sustainable future.

**Keywords: Education, empowerment, girls, environment, sustainable development, future.**

**“There is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women.”**

**Kofi Annan**

Equal division of resources can result in sustainable development for the present as well as for the future. The same cannot be possible without gender parity. Total involvement and empowerment of women can ensure sustainability in economic growth, social development and environmental survival. Sustainable development can be defined as growth which not only caters to the needs of the present but does not put the future at stake. All governmental, political and social policies should be made keeping the future in mind. The actions which follow should be based on the principles of sustainable development. Thought should be spared to freedom, democracy and respect for the fundamental rights of all, thus trying to give equal opportunities to everyone. Cohesion should be ensured both within, between and for future generations. Another important aspect of sustainable development should be to ensure balanced economic growth. In the highly competitive market, prices should be stable, trying to ensure complete employment. This can only be achieved through education, social progress and the desire to protect and improve the quality of the environment. Mahatma Gandhi said: “ ‘Earth [prithvi] provides enough to satisfy every man’s need but not for every man’s greed,’ said Gandhiji. So long as we cooperate with the cycle of life, the soil renews its fertility indefinitely and provides health, recreation, sustenance and peace to those who depend on it.

But when the 'predatory' attitude prevails, nature's balance is upset and there is an all-round biological deterioration."

The main aim of all national policies should be sustainable development. The constant effort should be to improve the quality of life on our planet for the present and the future generations. Earth houses abundant biodiversity. Man's continuous effort should be to protect and support this diversity on earth. For this, education should be provided to all to ensure provincial linkages and environmental protection in an atmosphere of peace, respect and security.

Women have always played an important role in the environmental movement/s across the globe. 'The World Commission on Environment and Development, in its report entitled Our Common Future, published in 1988, linked the environmental crisis to unsustainable development and financial practises that were worsening the North-South gap, with women a majority of the world's poor and illiterate.'" Diane Elson, an adviser to UN women, argues that "the disproportionate responsibility that women bear for carrying out unpaid work is an important constraint on their capacity to realise their rights... Both women and men need time to care for their families and communities, and time free from such care."

Almost all around the world, the representation of women among the poor is unequal and out of proportion. And, it is the poor, mostly women, who bear the brunt of environmental pollution and deterioration whether they live in the urban or the rural areas of cities/ towns. Women are responsible for everything whether it is looking after the children, worrying about procuring two square meals a day for them, caring for their well-being or taking care of the house. In addition, more than men, they feel responsible for the environment and try and keep it beautiful and blooming always. In many countries girls and women collect water, twigs for fuel in the house, look after domestic animals and are also farmers. However, despite shouldering the responsibilities for most of the work, they hardly get to have a say in decision-making concerned with the issues of environment and development at the local, political, social, economic, national or international forums. Everything is interlinked and the importance of one cannot supersede the other. It cannot be denied that women have competence, knowledge and an important viewpoint where environmental health is concerned. It is only now that they are demanding their right to be heard. With the passage of time, the voices they are raising against policies which have been endangering the health, environment and general well-being for the future generations, are being heard. They have been constantly fighting for preservation of the environment. In India, it was a mass movement called *angalwatha* (which literally means 'to embrace') and later came to be known as 'chipko' (which means 'to hug') movement to save trees. It was started in the 1970s by a group of illiterate women, led by Gaura Devi, who embraced the trees in the forests of Chamoli district in Uttar Pradesh (now Uttarakhand) to protect them from getting cut.

Women not only took keen interest in the Rio Earth Summit but also participated actively in it. Their efforts bore fruit and they were able to get space for a chapter on 'women and sustainable development' with 'over one hundred references and recommendations' concerning women 'in the

final agreement, Agenda 21.’ In the Rio Summit, women were lauded as a ‘major group’ whose participation in matters concerning sustainable development were understood to be necessary. This is termed as ‘mainstreaming’—constitutently embracing women, their interests and involvement in planning, execution and supervision in matters concerning environmental programmes and development to ascertain that everyone and women gain from them. The primarily gendered approach has to change and the UN is working towards incorporating ‘mainstreaming’ in all its programmes. ‘The Fourth World Conference on Women,’ which was held in Beijing in September 1995, was categorical in insisting that women empowerment, equity as well as their complete participation was/is essential for sustainable development and maintenance of peace. Policies which do not involve both women and men are more likely to fail than those which have equal representation and participation from both.

Lyla Mehta, Preetha Prabhakaran and Melissa Leach mention: “Not just victims, women have been and can be central actors in pathways to sustainability and green transformation” (Gender Equality and Sustainable Development 2016: 4). Similarly, Nelson argues: “[Women] are assumed to possess an infinite capacity for self-maintenance and self-regeneration” (Why Women will Save the Planet 2015). It is true that there is a direct connection between gender, environment and development. When developmental patterns forsake regular environmental and economic requirements of all concerned, women are also adversely affected. “For pathways to be truly sustainable and advance, gender equality and the rights and capabilities of women and girls, those whose lives and well-being are at stake, must be involved in leading the way. [Gender Equality and Sustainable Development] calls for policies, investments and initiatives in sustainable development that recognize women’s knowledge, agency and decision-making as fundamental. Four key sets of issues—work and industrial production; population and reproduction, food and agriculture, and water, sanitation and energy provide focal lenses through which these challenges are considered. Perspectives from new feminist political ecology and economy are integrated, alongside issues of rights, relations and power. The book untangles the complex interactions between different dimensions of gender relations and of sustainability, and explores how policy and activism can build synergies between them. Finally, this book demonstrates how plural pathways are possible; underpinned by different narratives about gender and sustainability, and how the choices between these are ultimately political. This... book will be of great interest [for those] working on gender, sustainable development, development studies and ecological economics” (Back cover). Sexual inclination and susceptibility drive most of the thought processes of societies, economies, political and social fundamentals around the world. Girls and women bear unacceptable discrimination, abuse, unequal pay and marginalization due to the increasing corporate/ global structure of the world. It is not only wrong but also keeps them from having a say in matters of importance such as environmental degradation and ecological change. In the process they can neither influence public opinion nor lead the way for a better and sustainable future.

Vandana Shiva argues that “the marginalization of women and destruction of biodiversity go hand in hand” (Ecofeminism 2014: 164). She points out that the devastation of the environment is directly

related to the oppression of women as both are the result of the capitalist cultures. She is of the opinion that women and environment are connected to each other as both are the keepers of well-being and earth. Both have abundant knowledge about the multifariousness of life. She understands diversification to be paramount for “women’s work and knowledge.” Women perform household chores and everything related to reproduction due to their divergent skills “that belie specialization” (165). Women are directly involved with the sustenance of the family. In the process they take care of the environment and the natural resources, which are required for the nourishment of the family and community.

She argues that “women’s work and knowledge is central to biodiversity conservation and utilization both because they work between ‘sectors’ and because they perform multiple tasks” (166). This work “found in spaces ‘in between’ the interstices of ‘sectors’” is what allows the reproductive cycles of earth to sustain life (167). When the environment, especially farming, is shattered by the greed of the capitalist powers, it is the women who act as a connection between the allied systems which have been erroneously and perilously separated from each other. Shiva, thus, points out that “ecological stability, sustainability, and productivity under resource-scarce conditions are maintained” (167).

Women look after the diverse environment and this is what exposes them to imperialistic economy. Shiva points out that women, who are primarily belong to farming families, face a lot of exclusion due to the policies of discriminating economy. The use of GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms) destroys the local biodiversity. It, thus, breaks open the “closed cycle of production and consumption” innate to ‘subsistence farming’ (170). Once this sequence of self-sustainability is broken, the powers that be can extricate materialistic value from the GMO raised crop in the world market. This can result in the local community losing food and girls and women are the first to experience hardship. Shiva writes that “seed diversity and nutritional balance go hand in hand” (169). The modified crop is neither healthy for the body, as it lacks essential nutrients, nor for the environment, because it destroys the fertility of the land (169).

Women face seclusion when they are separated from seeds. Shiva argues that “purchased seeds displace women from decision making and custodianship of seeds and transform them into unskilled labor” (169). Just as textile workers, who were good artists, lost their livelihoods on the advent of industrialization, similarly, the work of women farmers has been reduced to ‘homogeneous hands at the plow of GMO agriculture.’ Vandana Shiva is critical that the reproductive, recurrent work of women is being emulated and debased by big biotechnology companies to produce cash crops for material gains. She writes that “women produce through biodiversity, whereas corporate scientists produce through uniformity” (172). Huge corporation houses have, now, started to patent seeds as if they were the original creators/ producers of them in spite of their methods and aims being in total contrast to the indigenous methods of farmers, both women and men. Shiva argues that “the claim of ‘creation’ of life by corporate scientists is totally unjustified, it is in fact an interruption in the life flow of creation” (172). It is important to note that the ruination of biodiversity dislocates women as

the protectors of ecological balance. In the process they are also marginalized as creators of life by the ‘corporate claims of god-like science.’

There is no doubt that women are vulnerable against ecological degradation and environmental change. However, it cannot be denied that they have different points of view, considerations and ideas for change. The agencies at work have to accept that women have leadership capabilities which can help manage the ecological crisis better. Barbara Stocking, earlier CEO of Oxfam GB writes: “Leadership from the top is essential but the values of gender equality have to permeate the whole organization” (Why Women will Save the Planet). In this connection Nelson asserts: “Women and nature are to a great extent undetectable in standard financial matters... One would look futile in the core models of financial aspects for any suspicion of where the materials utilized underway originated from, or where the waste goes... for a discourse of where individuals originate from, or where they go when they are split or spent. At the point when considered by any stretch of imagination, ladies and nature are treated as latent ‘assets’” (Why Women will Save the Planet).

A change is required in the economics and political clarity is needed to bring women to the forefront. A system has to be fathomed on all levels to bring about equality and work towards sustainable goals. Negative mindsets have to be kept at bay for the world to see progress. Sheryl Sandberg says: “We need women at all levels, including the top, to change the dynamic, reshape the conversation, to make sure women’s voices are heard and heeded, not overlooked and ignored.” Women play an important role in educating their children and honing their socializing skills. They teach them to care and feel responsible for the ‘use and protection of natural resources.’ Women, hence, should be given more responsibility in decision making towards creating a “green economy.” Training programmes and capacity building workshops should be organized to cater to the needs of women. To highlight the role of women in sustainable development, in family building/ values, community, society, nation and the world, women need to be freed from socio-cultural and religious bigotry. The mindset of the patriarchal society has to change for women to take the lead where men have always been in a dominant role.

Over the years, the world has witnessed a change. In the light of this, it can now be seen that women are playing an important role in the formulation and execution of new policies concerning economic, social and environmental objectives. However, the destination is still quite a distance away and more work is required in this field for women to take their rightful position in world matters.

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**BBBP19**

## **Improving Women's Education—Health Key To India’s Anaemia Problem**

**Dr SunilThakur (CMO, WUS Health Centre, University Of Delhi)**

### **INTRODUCTION**



Healthy women are the cornerstone of healthy societies. It is important to realize that poor physical circumstances are not the only factors harmful to health. Lack of education, for example, can lead to reduced ability to find, understand and use health information. Thus, education is an important determinant of health status in both the developed and developing world.

Anaemia is a condition in which a person has an insufficient number of red blood cells or quantity of haemoglobin, which reduces the capacity of their blood to carry oxygen. Normal haemoglobin for women is 12 gram per decilitre (g/dL) and men 13 g/dL. A woman's education proved to be most important factor in reducing anaemia in pregnancy, as per the study. In the case of children, interventions such as consumption of iron and folic acid (IFA) tablets, deworming and full immunisation and vitamin A supplementation worked best.

The high health returns to investing in the education of women are indisputable. Well educated individuals experience better health than the poorly educated, as indicated by high levels of self-reported health and physical functioning and low levels of morbidity, mortality, and disability. In contrast, low educational attainment is associated with "high rates of infectious disease, many chronic noninfectious diseases, self-reported poor health, shorter survival when sick, and shorter life expectancy

It has been suggested that educating women alters the traditional balance of power within the family, leading to changes in decision making and allocation of resources within the household. Therefore, educated mothers are more likely than uneducated women to take advantage of modern medicine and comply with recommended treatments.

Many studies have shown the benefits that education has for girls and women. The studies link education with reduced child and maternal deaths, improved child health, and lower fertility. Women with at least some formal education are more likely than uneducated women to use contraception, marry later, have fewer children, and be better informed on the nutritional and other needs of children.



## **KEY FACTS**

**Fertility:** Girls' education helps women control how many children they have. Increasing girls' participation in school over time decreases fertility rates.

- In Mali, women with secondary education or higher have an average of 3 children while those with no education have an average of 7 children.
- A 35-year study in Guatemala found a link between the years girls spent in school and the timing of childbearing. For each additional year a young woman spent in school, the age at which she had her first child was delayed approximately six to 10 months.

**Maternal Health:** Increasing girls' access to education improves maternal health.

- In Burkina Faso, mothers with secondary education are twice as likely to give birth more safely in health facilities as those with no education.<sup>3</sup>
- It has been estimated that an additional year of schooling for 1,000 women helps prevent two maternal deaths.<sup>4</sup>

**Child Survival:** Increasing girls' education has positive effects on infant and child health.

- A child born to a mother who can read is 50 percent more likely to survive past the age of 5 than a child born to an illiterate woman.
- In Indonesia, child vaccination rates are 19 percent when mothers have no education. This figure increases to 68 percent when mothers have at least secondary school education.

- In Bangladesh and Indonesia, the odds of having a child who is shorter than average for its age decreases by around 5 percent for every additional year of formal education a mother has.

HIV/AIDS: Education decreases a girl's or woman's risk for contracting HIV or transmitting HIV to her baby.

- Women in 32 countries who remained in school after primary school were five times more likely to know basic facts about HIV than illiterate women.
- According to the *2010 Education for All Global Monitoring Report*, in Malawi, only 27 percent of women without any education know that HIV transmission risks can be reduced by taking drugs during pregnancy, but that figure rises to 59 percent for women with secondary education.
- A study in Zambia finds that HIV spreads twice as fast among uneducated girls.
- A study in Uganda demonstrated that each additional year of education for girls reduces their chances of contracting HIV by 6.7 percent.
- Anaemia is widespread in India--58.6% of children, 53.2% of non-pregnant women and 50.4% of pregnant women were found to be anaemic in 2016, as per the NFHS. India carries the highest burden of the disease despite having an anaemia control programme for 50 years.
- Improving women's education could be the single most important intervention to reduce India's anaemia burden, apart from nutrition and health measures, said a study published in medical journal *BMJ Global Health* in August 2018.
- Anaemia doubles the risk of death during pregnancy and leads to poor motor and mental growth in children. It can lower productivity in adults and cause a

loss of upto 4% of gross domestic product, according to this study. This means a loss of \$113 billion or Rs 7.8 lakh crore, which is five times India's budget for health, education and social protection in 2018-19.

- Iron-deficiency anaemia was also the top cause of disability of India for 10 years to 2015, **IndiaSpend** reported in October 2016.

### **HIGHER HAEMOGLOBIN RATES BUT ANAEMIA PERSISTS**

In children, decline in anaemia was explained by nutrition and health interventions (18%); women's schooling (10%) and socioeconomic status (7%). Changes in meat and fish consumption, improved sanitation facilities, maternal anaemia and low body mass index contributed 2-3% each to the shift.

Among pregnant women, fall in anaemia was explained by improvements in maternal schooling (24%), socioeconomic status (17%), and nutrition and health interventions (7%). Other factors included improved sanitation (9%), number of children under five years of age (6%), maternal age (2%), and meat and fish consumption (1%).

### **POOR COVERAGE OF HEALTH AND NUTRITION INTERVENTIONS**

Health interventions targeted at pregnant women together with interventions for women and children during childhood--such as integrated child development scheme interventions for lactating mothers, paediatric iron and folic acid tablets and deworming--could have led to the anaemia reduction in children, said the study.

These services are now increasingly available but their coverage remains inadequate. In 2016, IFA consumption coverage was 30% in pregnant women, deworming coverage was 18% during pregnancy and 32% during early childhood.

Anaemia persisted despite 50 years of National Nutritional Anaemia Prophylaxis Programme because iron supplements in adequate amounts reached all intended beneficiaries but were not actually ingested by all of them, **IndiaSpend** reported in November 2017.

### **INTAKE OF NON-VEGETARIAN, LEAFY VEGETABLES IS NOT ADEQUATE**

There was a 7- to 9-percentage-point increase in weekly meat and fish consumption between 2005-06 and 2015-16 and this led to about a 2-3% fall in anaemia. But while 80% of men and 70% women in India consume fish, eggs and meat occasionally, less than 50% of them do so even weekly, **IndiaSpend** reported in May 2018.

Since eating non-vegetarian diets is expensive, dark green leafy vegetables may prove to be a good source of nutrients and prevent anaemia but NHFS data suggest that daily consumption of dark green leafy vegetables has reduced from 64% to 48% in the last decade.

### **WOMEN AND HEALTH PROMOTION IN THE FAMILY**

While the exact mechanism of education's impact on health is not known, it has been suggested that educating women alters the traditional balance of power within the family, leading to changes in decision making and allocation of resources within the household. Therefore, educated mothers are more likely than uneducated women to take advantage of modern medicine and comply with recommended treatments.

Furthermore, education may change mothers' knowledge and perception of the importance of modern medicine in the care of their children. In a study of child nutrition in the Philippines, access to healthcare services benefited children of educated mothers more than children of mothers with less schooling, a finding which suggested that educated mothers were more likely to take advantage of available public health services.

For example, findings from numerous studies of infant and child mortality conducted in developing countries over the last decade show a nearly universal positive association between maternal education and child survival. Education can modify women's beliefs about disease causation and thus influences both childcare practices and the use of modern healthcare services. These facts reveal that women are important promoters of health education and practices within the home, and the benefits of their education extend to their children and others.

### **WHAT HEALTH ISSUES OR CONDITIONS ARE SPECIFIC TO WOMEN ONLY?**

Women experience unique health issues and conditions, from pregnancy and menopause to gynecological conditions, such as uterine fibroids and pelvic floor disorders. The health topics listed below affect women only. Some other conditions affect men too but affect women primarily or more severely. Because women's health is so broad, these health topics include links to access more information within the NICHD's website.

Gynecological health and disorders affecting women include menstruation and menstrual irregularities; urinary tract health, including urinary incontinence and pelvic

floor disorders; and such disorders as bacterial vaginosis, vaginitis, uterine fibroids, and vulvodynia.

Pregnancy issues include preconception care and prenatal care, pregnancy loss (miscarriage and stillbirth), preterm labor and premature birth, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), breastfeeding, and birth defects.

Disorders related to infertility include uterine fibroids, polycystic ovary syndrome, endometriosis, and primary ovarian insufficiency.

Other disorders and conditions that affect only women include Turner syndrome, Rett syndrome, and ovarian and cervical cancers.

Issues related to women's overall health and wellness include violence against women, women with disabilities and their unique challenges, osteoporosis and bone health, and menopause.

### **THE NEED FOR IMPROVED SANITATION**

Women's education explained 10% fall in anaemia among children and 24% in pregnant women. But 31.6% of women are still illiterate in India and only 35.7% have completed more than 10 years of schooling.

Educated women have healthier children, **IndiaSpend** reported **here**, A one-year increase in age at pregnancy and a 10% reduction in open defecation could each result in a 3.5- to 3.8-percentage-point reduction in anaemia in pregnant women, **IndiaSpend** reported in June 2018.

“One of the primary causes of school dropout in girls is early marriage, thus schemes that help delay marriage may also benefit anaemia in the long run,” said Scott.

Improved sanitation played a role (9%) in reducing anaemia especially in pregnant women, and yet only 50% of households used an improved sanitation facility, according to NFHS-4.

Also, social beliefs about caste impurity and pollution drove 44% of Indians in rural India to defecate in the open in 2018, **IndiaSpend** reported in January 2019. “Further investments in women’s education, women’s livelihoods and household sanitation are needed to optimally reduce anaemia among women and children” said the study.

### **ADOLESCENTS MISSED OUT**

Though focussed mostly on pregnant women and children, India’s national anaemia programme started a weekly IFA supplementation programme for adolescents in 2013. But it was likely to be ineffective given that there was only a 1.7-percentage-point reduction (from 55.8% to 54.1%) in anaemia in girls in the last decade.

Anaemia prevalence in 10- to 14-year-olds is not included in the national family health survey but other studies showed that it is up in early adolescents from 50-90%, IFPRI researchers said.

Also, since Indian girls begin menstruation between ages 12 and 14 years and 8% have their first child between 15 and 19 years, it is important to intervene early and track this group, the study said.

“Adolescents are also growing rapidly, and have high nutrient requirements. Thus, they are at increased risk of nutrient depletion--hence, anaemia” said Scott. “Early adolescence is also an important time to form good habits since many Indians still get married and have children as teenagers. Waiting until the late teenage years may be too late.”

## **NOT JUST IRON-DEFICIENCY ANAEMIA**

In low income countries, only 15-25% of anaemia with high inflammation is caused by iron deficiency, showed a highly cited 2016 paper published in global journal *Nutrients*.

When 75-85% of anaemia is unrelated to iron deficiency, iron supplements will not address the problem, said Scott. Other causes of anaemia include worm infestation, malaria, and infectious diseases that cause intestinal inflammation causing reduced nutrient absorption, genetic causes that affect red blood cells, blood loss, and deficiencies in nutrients other than iron such as folate, vitamin A and B12.

## **TEACHERS AND HEALTH PROMOTION**

Just as mothers are important providers of health information in the home, teachers serve as role models and can play a valuable role in health promotion in the classroom. In order for teachers to promote health practices, they must be “health literate”. Teacher health literacy may be defined as "the capacity of teachers to obtain, interpret, and understand basic health information and services, with the competence to use such information and services in ways that enhance the learning of health concepts and skills by school students."

While significant advances occurred in public health promotion to address traditional early childhood diseases, tremendous challenges remain for improving the health status of school-aged children and adolescents.

For example, in America, the problems of health illiteracy, low self-esteem, and youth risk-taking behavior are becoming more visible in the community and public schools. Risk behaviors and social morbidities have produced alarmingly rising rates of health



problems in youth. Schools in the developed and developing world face the challenge of addressing the needs of students who may not be health literate and who have significant health needs.

### **HEALTH EDUCATION STRATEGIES**

School health education may be delivered in a variety of ways, with varying emphases on biological, behavioral, and pedagogical concepts. Teachers and other health professionals must be prepared to address the complex social, developmental, and health-related issues that youth bring to the classroom. Continued effort should be made to maximize the learning of critical issues and concepts in child and adolescent health.

In the developed world, school teachers are instructed in health education around several themes: 1) Teach health pedagogy skills,

2) Provide health information from the 10 traditional health content areas (community health; consumer health; environmental health; family health; mental health; injury prevention/safety; nutrition; personal health; diseases; and substance abuse),

3) Examine the six adolescent risk behavior categories identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and

4) Describe the eight components of a coordinated school health program.

More research must be conducted in order to identify the most effective health education strategies for students and mothers. For example, innovative approaches may enhance traditional models for education.

The best strategies will promote the four basic skills inherent in health-literate individuals:

- (1) The ability to be critical thinkers and problem solvers,
- (2) Responsible and productive citizens,
- (3) Self-directed learners, and
- (4) Effective communicators.

Health-literate students should be able to:

1. Understand health promotion and disease prevention concepts.
2. Know how to access valid health information, products, and services.
3. Develop positive health behaviors.
4. Analyze the influence of culture, media, and technology on health.
5. Use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health.
6. Develop plans through individual goal setting and decision-making.
7. Become advocates for good individual, family, and community health.

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**BBBP20**

**Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (Women education & women empowerment)**

**Ms Supriya Agarwal (M-Phil UGC-NET,SET, B.Ed)**

“Where the daughters will be respected, the same Country will be great. Daughters are God’s blessings, they should also be respected.”

“Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme is run by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, which started from Panipat in Haryana on 22 Jan. 2015. Initially started in 12 districts, at present it has been started in 161 districts. It is a joint initiative of women and child development, ministry of health, Ministry of family welfare and woman resource development.

**Objective:-**

1. Stop female infanticide and protect their existence.
2. Advancing the education of girls and making them self-reliant, their lives level improvement.
3. Elimination of discriminatory gender election process.

**Stratagia:-**

1. Implementing a social movement to promote education of the girl child and an awareness campaign to promote equal value.
2. Making this issue public discussion
3. Identify the districts with lower sex ratio and take intensive action.

2001 was declared the year of women empowerment in India. Women’s empowerment refers to the ability of women in terms of both men and women. To live together to get equal rights in power and property, to become strong in terms of health and education, to get rid of physical and mental exploitation, there is a need to get opportunities and rights for women. In this harsh, harsh ruthless exploitative environment, she is living her life as a woman, lean, exploited and broken.

After independence, women interests have been protected in articles 14+15 of the Indian Constitution.

Women & child development departments have been established in the Govt of India and other state Governments. Women commissions have been set up at the national and state level. The national women fund was been Established. The 73rd + 74<sup>th</sup> amendments of the constitution prescribes 33

percent reservation for woman in the panchayati Raj system. The bill regarding provision of 33 percent women reservation in parliament and in the legislative assembly is pending.

Mankind's existence on earth is not possible without equal participation by both man & woman. The county of India was known for its mythological culture, Religion, geographical features and respect for women from the very beginning. Dnyaneshwari, Gargi, Vidyotwaya, kiran bedi, Razia sultan, Noorjahan, Jijabai, ranilakshmibai, Sushma Swaraj, PT Usha, sarojni naidu, Indira Gandhi, we are describing the excellence of the personality of a woman in the Indian society and her ability as a man, but in the changing times, the thinking of people has changed so much that the female infanticide in the country has come. There are cases like murder or rape. While India's sex ratio was 942/1000 in 1951, it was 927/1000 in 2001 and 919/1000 in 2011.

In fact in the field of industry, business, government service, education, culture, sports mountaineering etc. women take participation like men but despite this, the goal of achieving equality in every field equal to men is still far away.

On the one hand, the question of women empowerment raised the standard of living of women, to give them freedom for their development, education and all of the same.

It is to create awareness in areas to use them properly and to give them the right respect.

The famous sentence said by Pt. Nehru it is necessary for women to be aware once they take their step, the family moves forward, the village moves forward, the nation is oriented towards development. Wherever we educate a man, we educate only one man, but when you educate a woman, you educate a generation. That is in making the bright future of the nation woman can contribute better.

Women will have to face the challenges of life, leaving shoulder to shoulder with men, leaving these unnecessary shame, inhibitions, self lessens. Men also have to take the women with them as life partner and partner, not as a choice or hostess.

To empower women in India, first of all it is necessary to kill the demonic thinking that kill their rights and values in society like dowry, illiteracy, sexual violence, inequality, feticide, domestic violence, rape, prostitution, human trafficking, gender discrimination, social isolation abuse, etc.

Psychologist Sigmund Freud has proved through his experiments that women are more hard working, patient, non-violent and honest than men. Even after knowing all this, inhuman behavior does with women, where the birth of a son, the festival is celebrated but at the birth of a daughter, silence has come.

Education is the best useful medium for real empowerment. Every child has a right to equal educational opportunities. Women constitute more than 60% of the world's population which ought to place them as pacesetters in education. Sadly in some countries, girl child education is neglected due to cultural beliefs. Women are seen as only relevant in the kitchen and for procreation purpose.

Educating a woman brings about self-esteem and confidence. It also promotes active participation in her society. Women need to be more involved in educational policy decision-making process.

It takes collective effort of the Govt and society in creating equal opportunities for education and increasing the enrolment of the girl child into schools. This in itself reduces poverty. On the long run, an educated woman will actively play a better role in directing her child through life's journey.

Without an education, girls will often marry and have children at a young age, work in unpaid or low-paying positions, and rely on their husbands or families for economic support. Without an education, their futures and their families' futures are limited.

Through education, women have better access and opportunities in the workforce, leading to increased income and less isolation at home or exclusion from financial decisions. With an education, women are able to live their dreams by pursuing their own goals and values.

Studies have found that if every girl completed 10 years of education, child marriage would drop by 64% and health complications from early pregnancy, like early births and child deaths, would drop by 59% and 49% respectively. Educating women and girls also boosts countries' economies, lowers risk of war and extremism and has been called the best investment against climate change by the Brookings institutions.

However, there are still many barriers preventing girls and women to pursue and complete their education, limiting women's empowerment. These can include the cost of school or college, difficulty getting to school due to distance or lack of transportation, being forced to work and provide for their families, being forced to marry and have children or conflict in their hometown or country.

“Countries and nations which do not respect women have never become great nor will ever be in future” – swami Vivekananda

Women have a very distinctive position in our economy and are an indispensable part of the society.

Yes education and knowledge empower women. The only way a society or nation can move forward and aspire to economic growth and development is not just through education but especially among the women citizens.

To awake the people it is the women who must be awakened. Education is a milestone of women empowerment because it enables them to respond to challenges to confront their traditional role and change their life.

Education is one of the ways to spread the message of women empowerment. However rich and humongous our country is not goals or dreams of our citizens will be achieved without effective education.

Education not only educates a person but also helps her realize that she is a vital part to the society. Occupational achievement, self awareness and satisfaction are among the many things that will be ensued by effective use of education.

Guidance and counseling also provided through education, helps women select their jobs and build career paths. Education will help women to empower through the knowledge to face the challenges of today's technological age. It also helps them in garnering information through the compete all over the world.

Education not only educates a woman but enables her to take decisions and accept responsibilities at her home and outer world.

Education helps a woman to understand her rights to equal treatment like a man in the society of this nation.

In conclusion, I can say that the number of women in the corporate world has been steadily increasing. Now in the 21<sup>st</sup> century when women are coming out in each field, empowering them is

truly essential. By 2020 India is poised to be a superpower developed country and hence we cannot ignore the importance of woman education in reference to women empowerment.

Education liberates: Education liberates the mind. Whether you are studying the sciences, history, literature, languages or social sciences, you are going knowledge. You are education yourself about the world, about how nature, people and nation work. Books which educate open up our minds to places, people and possibilities we never have thought of otherwise.

Therefore, an education woman will also be a liberated woman.

Education breaks down barriers: Education enables us to breaks down all barriers religious, linguistic, cultural, political gender and geographical. An educated woman will not discriminate others on the basis of these barriers-she will them. She might also chose a husband neglecting such barriers and can being families from different backgrounds together. This can form a nice way of fostering both national and international integration. Education allows the privilege of choice: As education opens up new worlds to women, it will enable them to make their own choice, in everything-whether it be life style, career, life partner, sexuality food etc. Education will teach them to discriminate between wrong and right and make the correct choices in life.

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**BBBP21**

#### **Innovations and Initiatives for Female Higher Education in India**

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*“Yatra nariyaste pujanya, ramante tatra devata”*

The quote is self suffice to depict the place of women in India. Known for its rich culture and the oldest civilization it is the place where the nation is addressed as ‘Bharat Mata’. Therefore, it is hard to believe that the girl education in India is still lagging behind, but it can be estimated that government of India has taken fulfilling measures to fill this gap of illiteracy of our girls. Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India has come up with a novel scheme of providing free ships and scholarships to all girls from single child families up to the post-graduate level; all single girl children will be eligible for free education from Class VI onwards for graduate and post-graduate studies. The scheme would apply to all government aided or affiliated schools and colleges in the country. If the two children in a family are girls, both will be entitled to a 50 per cent concession in fees. There are private educational institutions also like Amity Universities, which provide 100% scholarships to girl child. Furthermore the government of India has active schemes to help the family owning girl child. If there are two children in a family and one is a girl, she will still get the 50 per cent concession. The fee waiver will cover tuition fee but exclude money charged for transport and food. The scholarships for undergraduates will be given for non-medical and non-engineering courses in recognized colleges. At the end of three years, 1,650 students will receive these scholarships. The CBSE, which conducts entrance examinations for medical and engineering students, will also offer 500 fellowships every year for these courses - 350 for engineering students and 150 for medical students. These too will be given on merit. The UGC will give scholarships of Rs 2,000 a month to first and second rank holders among girls in the BA, B.Sc and B.Com courses to pursue higher degree. It seems a very munificent scheme for worldwide promotion of female education. It is believed that it would have constructive influence on the status of women by escalating their life preferences through free education, right up to college. Perhaps it will also give support to, changing family and community attitudes towards girl's education. Though the scheme aimed at promoting education for girls, it would not benefit the girls belonging to the poor families and those in the rural areas because they generally drop out by high school. It is necessary that the government should improve the educational infrastructure and make it more accessible and meaningful for the girl child.

Key Words: 1. Female Education, 2. MHRD, Government of India, 3. Infrastructure, 4. Promotion, 5. Fellowships, 6. Freeships, 7. Community, 8. Higher Education, 9. Affiliations 10. Girl Child

**Introduction**

Education is the powerful tool in the social, economic and overall growth of any nation. It is a process of facilitating learning, acquisition of knowledge. Bringing about an inherent change in personality and thinking it enables us to exchange ideas and make us capable of passing judgments also. In a country like India where the population is in crores if education is not given importance, the country would remain holding the status of developing country. Someone has rightly quoted, “if

you want to educate the world, educate the mother”, which indirectly mean educating the girls. History of India witnesses various heroines who made the nation proud of their bravery. Indian epics are replete with the examples of boldness of women, but to add to it those were the ancient times when women were indeed worshiped as divine. Today, however to respect women are just words. It is a bold statement but fact within it is enough to give a detailed explanation. The recent Hyderabad lady doctor case, our own ‘*Nirbhaya*’ are just for instance. If we go into the details of it we will see that there are many nirbhayas waiting for the verdict. It is high time for our government to take active and acute actions for ‘beti bachao’ because they are being taught (beti padhao). The government has made many educative plans which are being executed fruitfully. It is time for their safety and security. Government of India has taken major steps to educate women. Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India has come up with a novel scheme of providing free ships and scholarships to all girls. Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme was launched in 2004 in order to provide primary level education to girls. The scheme was specially designed for the underprivileged girls in rural areas. UGC has undertaken a number of measures for the improvement of education of Women. Following the same government is even making digital initiatives for the better education of women. The question here can be raised that not all women are capable of using digital initiatives as they are not friendly, therefore government is even providing platforms where the women can learn free digital education, which will help them in coping with the digital age.

**Government Initiatives for Higher Education :** The central and state government are at head over heels to provide best education to the girls aspiring for higher education, for instance the state government of Jaipur has announced various programmes for universities; under the programme, ‘New Initiatives in College’, initiatives will be taken in colleges to enhance the quality of higher education- workshops and seminars on digitalization of education and organizing faculty development programmes for the teachers to become facilitators which will help the needy girls reach their targets. The minister of the state said, “For the young girls , we will start a programme titled, ‘Girls Empowerment and Mentoring’ which will focus on the overall development of the girls especially revolving around health and safety issues. Women teachers will be trained who will further mentor the girls.”(TOI)

Union Human Resource and Development Minister Dr Ramesh Pokhriyal proposed number of schemes sustaining girl students to take up higher studies. The University Grants Commission (UGC) has two specific schemes for promotion of Women's Studies in universities and colleges:

- Development of Indian Studies in Indian Universities & Colleges
- Capacity Building and Women Managers in Higher Education

**Schemes under which girl students can avail special scholarship**

- Post-Graduate Indira Gandhi Scholarship for Single Girl Child
- Swami Vivekananda Single Girl Child Scholarship for Research in Social Science

UGC has special schemes for promotion of women hostels in universities and colleges and establishment of day care centres. It has provided support for eight exclusive women universities.

**Scholarship for technical education**

The All India Council for Technical Education is implementing the PRAGATI scholarship scheme for assistance of girls pursuing technical education.

**Increase in the enrolment of girl students**

To improve female enrolment in the Indian Institute of Technology (IITs), the government has decided to increase female enrolment in BTech programmes of IITs from the current 8% to 14% in 2018-19, 17% in 2019-20 and 20% in 2020-21 by creating supernumerary seats.

The Government has also decided to increase female enrolment from existing 14% to 20% over a period of 2-4 years by creating supernumerary seats in undergraduate programmes of National Institute of Technology and Indian Institute of Engineering Science and Technology, Shibpur.

**Educational Policies and programmes:**

The girl/women education is the need of the hour. In context of the same the government of India has taken active measures to increase girl/women education and made it an integral part of the government educational policies. The National Policy of Education focuses on the need for women empowerment through the development of girl/women education in India, moreover Ministry of Human Resource Development; Government of India has taken numerous schemes to endorse girl education in our country. There exists number of proposals and Government schemes for girl child education in India. Following is a compiled list of all major initiatives taken and implemented by the Government of India in the direction of girl/women education. The list is just a glimpse of the steps taken by the governance; many more are in pipeline of progression.

**Central Government Digital Programmes and Initiatives for Promoting Girl Education in India****‘Girl child Education’ group on MyGov:**

‘Girl child Education’ group on MyGov offers the platform to discuss ideas to improve girl education in India. Its aim is to prepare a policy framework taking inputs from suggestions received for increasing girl education and providing them with livelihood opportunities.

Besides, specific suggestions, everyone in the group prioritize the need to create an appropriate learning environment to foster girl education in India. Many members in the discussion group are of the viewpoint that parents play the most crucial role in the education of the girl child; hence it becomes essential that parents should be first sensitized about the grave importance of girl child education. Proper infrastructure and access to schools in rural India have always remained a big challenge. Another crucial area of improvement is proper sanitation facilities for girls in schools. Most of the members of the group stressed upon this basic need to promote girl education in the country. Numerous suggestions come on the need for higher education among girls. For this, they suggest opening a college in each taluka to seize school drop out after class 12 among girls.

**Digital Gender Atlas for Advancing Girls’ education:**

India is yet to achieve a high growth rate in regard to girl education in India. The low representation of girls in schools across the country in many states still persists. Schools still witness low attendance rates and high drop-outs among girls. This calls for a thorough analysis of the situation for better planning, effective implementation and monitoring.

In this respect, a Digital Gender Atlas for the country has been initiated to identify the low performing geographic pockets for girls, particularly from marginalized groups. It is developed by the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development with support from UNICEF. This initiative of the Government is to ensure an equitable education for girls by enabling critical decisions and action in pockets where performance needs to be stepped up.

**Udaan:**

Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has launched a scheme “Udaan” to provide free online resources to girl students of Class XI and Class XII for preparation of admission test for the chief engineering colleges in the country. The special focus of the scheme is to tackle with the low enrolment ratio of girl students in these prestigious institutions and to enable girl students to receive special incentives and support so that they can join these institutions and go on to take leadership roles in the future.

**E-pathshala:**

E-Pathshala is a portal jointly initiated by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India and National Council of Educational Research and Training launched. E-pathshala hosts educational resources for teachers, students, parents, researchers and educators, which is available on Web, Android, IOS and Windows platforms. The resources are available in English, Hindi and Urdu languages. The students get easy access to all educational material, including textbooks, audio, video, periodicals and a variety of other print and non-print materials through e-Pathshala. These materials can be downloaded by the user for offline use with no limits on downloads.

**Free Access to Higher Education Study Material Through Mobile App:**

After launching the digitization of the education initiative, ‘E-pathshala’, HRD Ministry announced that the higher education course material will be made available free of cost to the students through mobile app and other sources. According to press reports, additional educational modules would be prepared and efforts would be made to provide free access to all books through a mobile app.

**HRD Ministry Launches More Educational Channels for Students:**

The HRD Ministry has provided a digital platform wherein 32 channels would deliver systematic instruction to students. Of the 32 channels, 3 channels are devoted to IIT aspirants.

Other Educational Schemes and Policies in India Initiated by the Government and Statutory Bodies for Promoting Girl Education in the Country.

**Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao:**

Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (Save the daughter, educate the daughter) is a campaign of the Government of India that is aimed at spreading awareness and enhancing the efficiency of welfare services for girls in the country. The Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao scheme is a national initiative jointly run by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Ministry of Human Resource Development. It attends the issue of declining child sex ratio in the country. The campaign aims at ensuring girls are born, nurtured and educated without discrimination to become empowered citizens of this country. The Campaign interlinks National, State and District level interventions with community-level action, bringing together different stakeholders for accelerated impact. The initiative’s YouTube channel shows various videos related to the campaign.

**National Scheme of Incentive to Girls for Secondary Education (NSIGSE):**

National Scheme of Incentives to Girls for Secondary Education is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for promoting girl education in the age group of 14-18 especially at secondary education level launched by Department of School Education and Literacy, MHRD, GoI. The Scheme does not cover married girls, girls studying in private unaided schools and enrolled in schools run by Central Government like KVS, NVS etc. Under the scheme, a sum of Rs. 3,000/- is deposited in the name of eligible girls as fixed deposit. The girls are entitled to withdraw the sum along with interest thereon on reaching 18 years of age and on passing the 10th class examination.

**Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA):**

Government of India has launched its flagship programme Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) to ensure Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) with special focus on girl education in India. SSA is being implemented in partnership with State Governments. SSA also seeks to provide computer education to bridge the digital breach.

**Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA):**

Under the integrated scheme of RMSA, interventions include the construction of new secondary schools, provision of toilets blocks in existing schools with separate toilets for girls, construction of teachers' quarters, construction of Girls Hostels, organization of empowerment/awareness camps to improve the education of girls at the secondary level etc.

**Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme:**

Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme was launched in 2004 in order to provide primary level education to girls. The scheme was specially designed for the underprivileged girls in rural areas.

**Measures taken by UGC:**

UGC has undertaken a number of measures for the improvement of education of Women.

It has allocated special grants for construction of Women hostels in the Universities, started the Single Girl Child Scheme, and released Post-Doctoral Fellowship for Women, providing funds to Universities in India which are set up exclusively for women.

**The scheme by All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)**

All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has launched a scheme to provide assistance for the Advancement of Girls participation in Technical Education. The scheme empowers young women through technical education for advancing her future. The scheme provides scholarships.

**Maharashtra State Bureau launches E-Balbharti App**

School students can now read textbooks on mobiles. The Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research (Balbharti) launched an application that will let students read textbooks on their mobiles. Textbooks produced by Balbharati are published on ebalbharati.in in pdf format. The pdf e-books can be downloaded free of cost. The policy was aimed at reducing the weight of bags carried by students to school.

**Educate the Mother Educate the World**

When you educate a man, you educate an individual and when you educate a woman, you educate the entire nation. India is steadfastly educating all children, especially the girl child. Through schemes such as the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, we are committed to endow with free and compulsory education to all the children between 6 to 14 years of age. However, even after declaring education

as a fundamental right, the country is facing several challenges in educating the girl child. The prevalent blockage is the orthodox mentality and mind set of families towards girls and their significance in society. In many parts of the country especially rural areas, girls are still confined to domestic drudgery; they are still objectified as a domestic servant. Women empowerment is only on papers perhaps. Keeping in mind the mentality of Indian citizens, government of India has commenced various programs and policies to make sure that a girl does not miss out any opportunity of getting education. However lot more effort is needed to provide proper higher education to our girls. Until we create awareness amongst people about the benefits of women education, all these programs would not bring about the desired result.

We should all accept that women are the foundation of a strong nation. No country can progress fully if women are not given equal opportunities to grow and thrive. Together, we need to vouch that girl/women will be getting education who is the maker of nation builders. For this we need to ensure that each girl child is able to contribute to her full potential. We should keep on striving to seek, to find but not to yield.

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**BBBP22**

#### **A Critical Review on Gender Equality: Towards a Solution**

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## Abstract

This article highlights the gender equality, why it is necessary, few of the prominent areas where the problem of gender inequality is quite visible and how gender equality enhance the socio economic structure of any nation and the set goals in the direction of achieving it.

## Keywords

Gender Equality, Sustainable Development Goals, Men Health, Women Education, Socio economic construction

## Introduction

Historically, there was no as such differentiation in between sex and gender as these two terms used to be interchangeably filled each other's space. From last few decades, society have marked clear differentiation between these two terms 'Sex' and 'Gender'. Sex is so easy to define on the basis of biological, anatomical and physiological differences such as male & female such as genitalia and genetic differences in a regular sense. When it comes to define gender, the major socially-constructed roles and responsibilities come into effect. By considering these responsibilities, norms, and roles, society defines men and women which varies from society to society, can be variably changed. When it comes to the gender, society had developed certain boundry lines and became more rigid towards gender responsibilities. Gender roles and gender stereotypes are highly fluid and can shift substantially over time. The aftereffects of adopting the rigidness towards gender responsibilities resulted into the wide gap between two prominent gender roles. The gap can be visualised in society now as one of the weak gender, is known as 'Women' despite covering half population or half potential of the world. May be she considered and visualised as weaker gender domain which is the violation of one of the fundamental human rights. It arises the demand of gender equality and women empowerment to counterbalance the socio-economic structure of the world. The successful running of any system depends on the balance on its wheel, in the similar pattern the balance of human race is entirely depend on when men and women have equal power and equal opportunities for financial independence, education, and personal development which contribute in the cumulative growth of any nation. The critical aspect of achieving gender equality is women's empowerment. It includes increasing a woman's sense of self-worth, her decision-making power, her access to opportunities and resources, her power and control over her own life inside and outside the home, and her ability to effect change. Women's empowerment is not to attain the entire focus on women, it is completely based on the mutual relationship and growth of men and women in the society. In order to achieve the gender equality, the actions and attitudes of men has its own prominent role. Gender equality is the one of the majorly discussed sustainable development goals which is a necessary milestone for peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Providing women and girls with equal access to education, health care, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision-making processes will fuel sustainable economies and benefit societies and

humanity at large. Implementing new legal frameworks regarding female equality in the workplace and the eradication of harmful practices targeted at women is crucial to ending the gender-based discrimination prevalent in many countries around the world.

### Facts and Figures

Let's have an overlook of the facts and figures what it tells. Whether the gender equality are limited to the pages or on multiple websites or on social media or in the talks of experts or in real it has been executed. How far the world has travelled in attaining this one of the sustainable development goal? Definitely these data will help in getting our attention, enlightening our minds and yes, to show the future direction in which area we should focus to attain this sustainable goal for the overall prosperity of the world.

- Globally, 750 million women and girls were married before the age of 18 and at least 200 million women and girls in 30 countries have undergone FGM.
- The rates of girls between 15-19 who are subjected to FGM (female genital mutilation) in the 30 countries where the practice is concentrated, have dropped from 1 in 2 girls in 2000 to 1 in 3 girls by 2017.
- In 18 countries, husbands can legally prevent their wives from working; in 39 countries, daughters and sons do not have equal inheritance rights; and 49 countries lack laws protecting women from domestic violence.
- One in five women and girls, including 19 per cent of women and girls aged 15 to 49, have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner within the last 12 months. Yet, 49 countries have no laws that specifically protect women from such violence.
- While women have made important inroads into political office across the world, their representation in national parliaments at 23.7 per cent is still far from parity.
- In 46 countries, women now hold more than 30 per cent of seats in national parliament in at least one chamber.
- Only 52 per cent of women married or in a union freely make their own decisions about sexual relations, contraceptive use and health care.
- Globally, women are just 13 per cent of agricultural land holders.
- Women in Northern Africa hold less than one in five paid jobs in the non-agricultural sector. The proportion of women in paid employment outside the agriculture sector has increased from 35 per cent in 1990 to 41 per cent in 2015.
- More than 100 countries have taken action to track budget allocations for gender equality.
- In Southern Asia, a girl's risk of marrying in childhood has dropped by over 40% since 2000.

The conclusions which are floating on the surface after studying these data are, things in terms of women empowerment are getting better but still it has not touched the height where it should be eliminated completely. There is a gap which is still to be filled by taking care of the rights of women and building the scenario which helps in cover the gap of gender inequality. On global level, women are facing many inequalities in terms of less access of property ownership, credit, training and employment. It is really the subject of sadness to share the fact that despite many international agreements affirming their human rights, women are the victim of many harmful practices such as



domestic violence, including sex trafficking, femicide, wartime sexual violence, and other oppression tactics.

### **Few Common Practices in Gender Inequality:**

#### **1. In Healthcare Sector**

Social constructs of gender often have a negative effect on human health and it is arising many health issues not only in women but in men also. Across the world, traditional gender stereotypes such as keep men as bread winner, systematic discrimination in preventing women from equally contributing to their households and participating in the workforce can put additional stress on men, increasing their risk of health issues and men bolstered by cultural norms. The World Health Organisation has cited the example of not asking their husbands to use condom in cultures which harms women health. In Africa, Asia and the Middle East, and among immigrant communities from countries, there is a common cultural practice such as female genital mutilation (FGM), which negatively affect women's health. Female genital mutilation is the ritual cutting or removal of some or all of the external female genitalia. It is rooted in inequality between the sexes, and constitutes a form of discrimination against women. [1]

#### **2. Violence against women:**

Violence against women is wide technical terms which collectively refer to the violent acts that are primarily or exclusively committed against women, it is somewhere the result of patriarchal gender construct. It includes violence committed inside marriage and also due to customs and traditions related to marriage such as dowry, bride price, forced marriage and child marriage etc.

#### **3. Violence against Transgender:**

A data study of United Nation revealed that transgender people are likely to suffer a wide range of violence throughout their life. From a societal stand point, the fact which can not be ignored is that a trans person faces lack of family support, issues with health care and social services, police brutality, discrimination in the work place, cultural marginalisation, poverty, sexual assault, assault, bullying, and mental trauma which is the violence of human right.

#### **4. Women in the Workforce**

Economic prosperity is directly proportional and an encouragement to the gender equality. Gender discrimination often results in women obtaining low-wage jobs and being disproportionately affected by poverty, discrimination and exploitation. [2, 3] A growing body of research documents what works to economically empower women, from providing access to formal financial services to training on agricultural and business management practices, though more research is needed across a variety of contexts to confirm the effectiveness of these interventions.[4] Gender biases also exist in product and service provision. [5] The term "Women's Tax", also known as "Pink Tax", refers to gendered pricing in which products or services marketed to women are more expensive than similar products marketed to men.

## 5. Girl's access to education

In many part of world and in India also, girl's access to education is very restricted and limited. There are many obstacles which are commonly face by girls and women even in present scenario are early and forced marriages; early pregnancy; prejudice based on gender stereotypes at home, at school and in the community; violence on the way to school, or in and around schools; long distances to schools; vulnerability to the epidemic; school fees, which often lead to parents sending only their sons to school; lack of gender sensitive approaches and materials in classrooms. [6-8] It is subjected to misery that two third of world's illiterate population are women which restrict this gender to have opportunities.

These are a few points where gender inequality is over seen, the list is long which include inequality in many other prominent fields of any nation such as political area, in media and many other social and ideological gender areas. Gender based discrimination which is prevalent in many areas of the socio economic structure of any nation, should be eradicated by providing equal access in terms of education, health care, decent work culture and in representation in political and economic decision making processes etc.

Movements in the direction of gender equality

1. Gender equality is one of the objectives of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. [9] World bodies have defined gender equality in terms of human rights, especially women's rights, and economic development. [10-11] The United Nation's Millennium Development Goals Report states that their goal is to "achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women". Despite economic struggles in developing countries, the United Nations is still trying to promote gender equality, as well as help create a sustainable living environment is all its nations. Their goals also include giving women who work certain full-time jobs equal pay to the men with the same job. The UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) underscore women's empowerment as an important development objective, in and of itself, and highlight the relevance of gender equality to addressing a wide range of global challenges. Companies that focus on women's empowerment experience greater business success. Research shows investing in women and girls can lead to increases in productivity, organizational effectiveness, return on investment and higher consumer satisfaction. A growing number of business leaders recognize the importance of women as leaders, consumers, entrepreneurs, workers and caretakers. They are adapting their policies, programmes and initiatives to create environments where women and girls thrive.

In order to achieve the target of gender equality n many prominent areas, which will lead to end all forms of gender discrimination everywhere

Following objectives are set by united nation ≠Goal5 [12]:

- 1 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation

2 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation

3 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate

4 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life

5 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences

5.A Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws

5.B Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women

5.C Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels

## Conclusion

The leading conclusion is, the world is at a turning point. People everywhere across the globe understand and support the idea of gender equality. They know it's not just a women's issue, it's a human rights issue. HeForShe is an invitation for men and people of all genders to stand in solidarity with women to create a bold, visible and united force for gender equality. The men of HeForShe aren't on the sidelines. In order to reach parity and achieve a gender equal world, visionary leaders across the globe are taking actions in the direction of attaining gender equality in their countries, organisations and beyond. At national level, there are many movements running as an effort of achieving gender equality, we can commit there also. We, as a part of educated volunteers of the nation should join our hands together in becoming the part of the efforts in attaining goal no 5 of sustainable development goal set by United Nation which will further contribute in strengthening the core socio-economic structure of any nation worldwide.

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**BBBP23****Perceptions of Rural Parents Regarding Girls Education**

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### **Abstract**

In today's world education is most essential for achieving long term development. As a fundamental human right education should be accessible to all sections of the society on equal terms. Including everyone in the education process helps to improve social productivity. In girl's education gender stereotyping seems to be a global phenomenon. But women in developing countries are severely affected by this and face difficulties in every sphere of their life due to lack of educational opportunities. No doubt women are indispensable part of society and their education influence the future generations. "Educate a woman, educate a nation" is a commonly used phrase. Participation of girls in formal education signifies the well-being of the nation as well as an important indicator of nation's socio-economic development. Educated women have better opportunities, life choices, more job opportunities, more able to contribute to family income and more likely to participate in family and community decision making. Despite of all these benefits of girls' education, this is not getting the proper attention due to traditional beliefs and perception towards girl's education. The practices and value system of society hinders the education of girls. Besides, when financial resources of the family are not sufficient girl's education is scrapped easily considering girl's education as useless and wastage of family resources.

Recently Indian government has launched various schemes and projects for the welfare of the girl child. In spite of the governmental efforts, throughout the nation girls' education participation is not at par with the boys and there remains a wide discrepancy in the education of girl child in comparison to boy child especially in the rural sectors.

Keeping in view this, the present study tries to ascertain perceptions of rural parents regarding girls' education, perception of benefits of girl's education and factors acting as barriers to girls' education. A questionnaire was distributed among the rural parents to collect the necessary data.

**Keywords: perception of parents, girls's education, benefits of girl's education, barriers to girls' education**

### **Introduction**

Now-a-days education is considered as necessary for achieving long term goals and improving social and economic standards of living. With the changes in information technology education has gained more importance. The countries which invest more in education are likely to gain socio-economic development. Education facilitates sustainable development and enables adaptation process with the innovations for social welfare at large. Education is emphasized as acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary for moving out of poverty trap (Lawson and Garrod, 2001; Lyonos, Smuts and Stephens, 2001; Weisberg, 1999 and Simon, 1994). Women are mostly affected by the poverty and its related sufferings (Little, 2003).

But the parents' negative attitude and barriers to get education results into low attainment in education sector and other related areas especially of girls. Lack of education results into negative effect on health and well-being of not only women but the entire family. Lack of sufficient financial resources act as a major determinant of girls' education. Parents give priority to boys' education in comparison to girls' education. But it is also of interest to note that the development programs are going to fail if the women are not involved (Jariyah, 2012 and Vijayanthi, 2002). Education as the process is a means to achieve fuller participation in development through making use of knowledge and skills (Morris, 1998). This is particularly significant in respect of rural areas because of the peculiar unfavorable conditions of women in rural areas rural women are more vulnerable in terms of physical, social and economic well-being (Batliwala, 1993).

Women are considered to be indulge in various household chores like washing clothes, cooking, cleaning house and caring care of babies. Men are considered as a source defense, old-age security and social prestige. These pre-defined roles on the basis of gender causes parents to have many children so as to have at least one son who can extend family name and take over family property. Traditional practices and beliefs are the root causes of this gender discrimination. Further, lower educational attainment of girls can be attributed to low perceived pecuniary returns to families (Wang, 2005).

Although the traditional role of women still persists in but changes are taking place. Investment in girls' education is the most important investment which a developing country can make to improve its future. In long term, women's rights, nutrition, child and family health etc. are affected by the women education. Hadden and London (1996) observed in their study that girls education reaps economic benefits to the society at large. Despite these benefits preference has always been given to boys education over girls education. Poor awareness and lack of proper education is the main hindrance in India specifically for rural areas. However, parents are becoming aware of the benefits of girls education and are changing their perception towards girls' education.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Education has numerous benefits at the communal, social and personal level. Including all the members of the society in education process will lead to improvement in social productivity. Women education increases the well-being of the society as a whole. Education leads to women empowerment in all walk of life, prosperity, social-economic development and community welfare. Empowerment of women through education results into facing of challenges, change of life and poverty reduction.

Rural areas characterized by lack of basic amenities and backward in terms of income generation, health facilities and distribution of assets and income necessitating the importance of getting proper education. At present Indian women are engulfed with problems like domestic violence, discrimination on the basis of gender, power, work, status in society, sexual and economic exploitation.

Girls without access to proper education facilities are deprived of their basic human right and opportunity for improving their skills and talents. Thus, education is a path which can enlighten the lives of women. In spite of all these benefits, girl's education is not given the required attention. They are supposed to be engaged in domestic work and caring care of family needs. Time and money on girls education is considered as waste. In rural areas young girls work on farms, care take of their siblings or get married at young age. Rural parents think that girl's education is of no use to them which further inhibits the girls education. The purpose of the present study is to ascertain the perception of rural parents regarding women education, benefits regarding the women education and reasons for discontinuation of education.

### Findings and Analysis

The main purpose of the present study is to collect the data regarding perception of parents regarding girls' education, perceived benefits, and reasons for discontinuation of education and government efforts for girls' education. A cross-sectional survey method was used to find out the necessary data. Girls Education Questionnaire (GEQ) was given to the parents to find out their perceptions regarding girls' education benefits and barriers for girls' education. The questionnaire was developed after review of the literature. The books (Lewis and Lockheed, 2006), reports of the international organizations (UNESCO, 2000; UNICEF, 2007; United Nations, 2009), articles in different journals (Anin, 2009; Lincove, 2005; MacNeil, 2008; Mendy, 2008; Ombonga, 2008; Scully, 2006; Somuncu, 2006; Subrahmanian, 2005; Unterhalter, 2005) were reviewed. To curtail the problem of low return rate of completed questionnaires 250 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents in the month of July and August 2019. Out of 250 questionnaires 148 were received back and only 123 could be used for the present study.

*Table 1: Desired Level of Women Education Status in Rural Areas*

| Desired Level of Women Education | Percentage of Women |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Less than primary Level          | 8                   |
| Primary Level                    | 10                  |
| Middle Level                     | 9                   |
| High School Level                | 20                  |
| Higher Secondary Level           | 25                  |
| University level Education       | 20                  |
| Until she gets a job             | 8                   |

Majority of the respondents fill that till higher secondary level girls should study. While 20% feel that university level education is required. Financial problems prevailing in rural areas are the major causes for discontinuation of education family responsibility and preference to son comes next in order. Government is also providing various incentives to girls in rural areas for education in the form of books and study material, scholarship schemes for the girl child, midday meal, uniform and bicycle etc. while ascertain parents perceptions towards girls education majority of the rural parents



documented that given the finance constraints there is not much need of girls education as after all responsibility to run a family is on men and girls should focus on the household chores only. But on the other hand, they ascertained that educated girls are asset to the family and nation and families should try to educate their girls. Possible reason is that they want their girls to be educated but their opportunity cost in terms of foregoing their role in family as a support is not acceptable to them also fear of unknown that their girls might be spoiled (indulge in bad habits, rebellious in nature) prevents them from educating their girls.

**Table 2: Reasons for Discontinuation of Education**

| Cause                      | Percentage of Women |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Family Responsibility      | 57                  |
| Conveyance Problem         | 24                  |
| Negative Parental Attitude | 33                  |
| Reluctance for Education   | 17                  |
| Early Marriage             | 39                  |
| Preference to Son          | 47                  |
| Financial Problems         | 63                  |
| Lack of Female Teachers    | 21                  |

**Table 3: Government Support Received by Rural Girls**

| Government Support          | Percentage of Women |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Uniform                     | 69                  |
| Bicycle                     | 23                  |
| Books & Stationary Material | 78                  |
| Midday Meal                 | 72                  |
| Scholarship                 | 77                  |

**Table 4: Perceptions of Rural Parents regarding Girls Education and Perceived Benefits**

| Statement   | Percentage |    |    |    |    |
|---|------------|----|----|----|----|
|   | SA         | A  | N  | D  | SD |
| I would not like my daughter to go to school once she grows up and reaches puberty.   | 30         | 22 | 10 | 23 | 15 |
| It is not appropriate to send girls to school as they will not appreciate their families and their living conditions in the future. | 24         | 13 | 5  | 45 | 13 |
| It is morally wrong to send girls above certain age to school. .  | 22         | 22 | 28 | 24 | 4  |
| It is not essential for girls to get education and get a job as it is mainly men's responsibility to maintain the family.           | 51         | 24 | 15 | 5  | 5  |
| It is more essential for girls to learn household   | 37         | 19 | 14 | 18 | 12 |



|  |    |    |    |    |    |
|--|----|----|----|----|----|
| chores than going to school.   |    |    |    |    |    |
| It is not necessary for girls to go to school as their husband will take care of them when they get married.                   | 33 | 26 | 9  | 24 | 8  |
| It is not right to send girls to school as they will be in the same environment with boys.                                     | 26 | 14 | 2  | 20 | 28 |
| It is unnecessary to send girls to school as they will eventually get married and leave home.                                  | 35 | 23 | 7  | 22 | 13 |
| It is more essential for girls to learn child-care at home than going to school.   | 29 | 28 | 7  | 21 | 15 |
| It is not appropriate to send girls to school as they might make harmful friends at school.                                    | 39 | 29 | 2  | 20 | 10 |
| I would not like my daughter to go to school if the school is away from our house.   | 27 | 35 | 13 | 20 | 5  |
| It is more important to spare money for boys' education.   | 53 | 33 | 1  | 6  | 8  |
| It is not right for girls to go to school in our religion.   | 36 | 26 | 4  | 23 | 11 |
| It is not appropriate for girls to go to another place for education.  | 72 | 13 | 2  | 8  | 5  |
| Even if my daughter is enrolled at school, she may not attend the lessons if she is needed at home.                            | 46 | 26 | 6  | 12 | 10 |
| Girls will be more rebellious if they are sent to school.  | 36 | 33 | 3  | 13 | 15 |
| It is ill-advised to send girls to school as they might get used to bad habits like cigarettes and drugs.                      | 37 | 32 | 2  | 15 | 14 |
| If someone decent proposes, it is convenient for girls to leave school and get married.  | 49 | 42 | 4  | 2  | 3  |
| It is not appropriate for girls to be educated according to our customs and traditions.  | 33 | 34 | 7  | 16 | 10 |
| It is not appropriate to send girls to school unless their teacher is female.  | 33 | 32 | 7  | 17 | 11 |
| I will send my daughter to school if the expenses are met by the government.   | 47 | 42 | 3  | 4  | 4  |
| Girls cannot be as successful as boys at school.   | 33 | 33 | 13 | 14 | 7  |
| I would send my daughter to school for a longer period if there were more arts and crafts lessons for girls in the curriculum. | 38 | 28 | 15 | 11 | 8  |
| Educating girls contributes to social development.   | 43 | 43 | 6  | 6  | 2  |
| Educated girls can take decisions about themselves independently.  | 14 | 23 | 23 | 20 | 20 |
| Educated girls will be more knowledgeable about raising children in the future.  | 22 | 13 | 24 | 21 | 20 |

|   |    |    |    |    |    |
|---|----|----|----|----|----|
| Girls' education contributes to economy of the country in the long-run. | 32 | 22 | 1  | 25 | 20 |
| Girls should be provided with equal educational opportunities as boys.  | 33 | 23 | 4  | 20 | 20 |
| Educated girls can find more compatible husbands for themselves.        | 12 | 13 | 12 | 33 | 30 |
| Girls can be as successful as boys at school.                           | 23 | 23 | 3  | 26 | 25 |
| Educated girls support their families financially.                      | 33 | 33 | 2  | 16 | 16 |
| Education enables girls to be good housewives in the future.            | 12 | 12 | 34 | 22 | 20 |
| Families should support girls' schooling.                               | 33 | 13 | 35 | 8  | 11 |

Note: 1. SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=Neither Agree nor Disagree, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree

Because of the lack of education facilities and not favorable attitudes of rural parents' susceptibility of women in terms of economic, social, political, legal, health-care, nutrition increases manifold. Women are the centers of any family. Today's biggest challenge in rural areas is women education. Education is something which is helpful everywhere and is never a wastage of time and efforts. Education is a tool that help a women to live a life with head high. Education of the girls will offer them a more democratic participation in the society. Education of women is considered in terms of the contribution they will make to the economy. It is considered that more educated women will contribute more to the economy and of better quality.

### Limitations of the Study

The major limitation is that the data is collected by making use of convenience sampling and on self-reported basis. It is assumed that the respondents has given non-biased response. Another limitation is that the sample consist of parents living around villages of Delhi and NCR so it cannot be generalized to whole India. Impact of other related variables like place of residence, education of parents, income of parents, and number of children on girls' education is not studied in the present study. In future such studies might provide useful insights. Also, in future questionnaires capturing girls' perception should be examined further, the questionnaire can be modified to identify parents' perception towards boys' education. The comparison of these two studies will highlight the issues of gender parity.

### Conclusion

In India emphasis in education especially in rural areas has increased manifold. Parents understand the importance of education and appreciating the fact that educated girls helps for the development of not only family but nation as a whole but at the same time participation of girls in rural education is limited on account of financial resources restriction, preference to boys child education and family responsibility. Also, fear of crime and unknown, non-availability of infrastructure further enhance the problem. Government can fix certain minimum education for marriage. Further, parents should

be made aware about the benefits of getting their girls educated. Role of society and family as a whole should be of support and honor for girls education so as to enable them to live a respectable life in society.

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**BBBP24**

**Empowering women through education in India**

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### **Abstract**

Women are one of the strongest pillars of any country. Women play an indispensable role which cannot be ignored in the development of any society. Education acts as a major tool responsible for uplifting the lives of women today and tomorrow. But the condition of women worldwide needs to be improved and changed. Women's suffering starts from the womb and continues till their death and grave. The Gender suppression resulted mainly from the patriarchal society, which considered males superior than females. Girls remain victims of humiliation at each and every sphere of their lives. Empowering women through education and transforming their lives by development of human rights of women is the concern of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

By guaranteeing human rights and providing basic facilities to women, any nation can empower women. Before Independence, women were treated as objects which are meant to be sold. They faced ill practices of Jauhaur, Devdasi, Purdah, Sati etc. These old practices stop women in developing themselves. But with the changing time, women now are getting education and they can take a stand for themselves. Nowadays women not only opt for professions of a teacher, nurse, doctor etc., but they are accepting all the challenging services and contributing towards the development of the nations. In order to uplift the condition of women in the society especially in the Indian society, it is necessary to educate women. Education acts as a major tool for uplifting the lives of women in India. Empowerment of women is only possible when women are educated. Only when a woman is educated, she will be able realize her own self-importance and demand for respect and dignity in the society. The paper is divided into 4 parts:

1. **Introduction-** It deals with the issue of education of women in India.
2. **Post 1990's Condition of Women in India-** It elaborates the concept of the condition of women in India. It lays great emphasis on the condition of women especially in the post 1990's in India.

3. **Employment Generation among Women in India-** This part of the proposed paper deals with the importance of employment generation in India. It elaborates the importance for creating jobs for women in India. It analyses the challenges faced by working women in India. It also elaborates the importance of empowering women through education in India.

4. **Conclusion-** The last part of the paper deals with the overall achievement gained by women through education in India. It also discusses the development of empowerment of the Indian women.

### **Introduction**

Women are one of the strongest pillars of any country. Women play an indispensable role which cannot be ignored in the development of any society. Education acts as a major tool responsible for uplifting the lives of women today and tomorrow. But the condition of women worldwide needs to be improved and changed. Women's suffering starts from the womb and continues till their death and grave. The Gender suppression resulted mainly from the patriarchal society, which considered males superior than females. Girls remain victims of humiliation at each and every sphere of their lives. Empowering women through education and transforming their lives by development of human rights of women is the concern of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

By guaranteeing human rights and providing basic facilities to women, any nation can empower women. Before Independence, women were treated as objects which are meant to be sold. They faced ill practices of Jauhar, Devadasi, Purdah, Sati etc. These old practices stop women in developing themselves. But with the changing time, women now are getting education and they can take a stand for themselves. Nowadays women not only opt for professions of a teacher, nurse, doctor etc., but they are accepting all the challenging services and contributing towards the development of the nations.

Education acts as a major tool for uplifting the lives of women in India. Empowerment of women is only possible when women are educated. Only when a woman is educated, she will be able realize her own self-importance and demand for respect and dignity in the society. An educated woman will not only educate herself, but she will become the torch bearer of educating her family and the society as well. As quoted by Malala Yousafzai, "Let us pick up our books

and our pens, they are the most powerful weapons” (Malala, 2019). She rightly focused on the importance of pen and books which acts as a weapon to change the world. Education is indeed the need of the hour not only for today but for the world tomorrow also.

Education is the key to overcome the global problems of poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment. The key of success of all the developed nations is their educated population. With the help of education any nation can prosper and utilize its full potential without any barriers. From the very beginning, the women in various societies of the world are exploited in many ways. Since women had a strong will to improve their status in society, they have managed to make a niche for themselves in today’s society this is only possible through education. Also, there are some elements in the society who have helped women to be independent, fight for their rights and injustice against them. Today’s women have succeeded in improving their status and are improving day by day. The 21<sup>st</sup> century is the century of education. The improvement in the status of women in the society is analyzed through legislations, education, economic and employment sector, political participation and awareness of their rights on the part of women etc.

### **Post 1990’s Condition of Women in India**

The ancient India witnessed barriers in the path of women’s empowerment. These barriers were in the form of the old age practices which treated women inferior to their male counterparts. Women were devoid of the basic rights such as right to vote, right of citizenship etc. Many social evils like child marriage and dowry system surfaced and started to engulf women. During Gupta period, the status of women immensely deteriorated. Dowry became an institution and Sati Pratha became prominent. During the British Raj, many social reformers such as Raja Rammohun Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and Jyotirao Phule started agitations for the empowerment of women. Their efforts led to the abolition of Sati and formulation of the Widow Remarriage Act. But with time, many leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Pt. Nehru advocated women rights. As a result of their concentrated efforts, the status of women in social, economic and political life began to elevate in the Indian society (**Position of women in India, 2016**). Through their efforts women started emerging as pioneers by engaging themselves in growth of the nation.

The time period of Post 1990s saw new developments in the world. With the emergence of new technology people have become more independent by adapting the life styles being changed from joint family structure to nuclear families. Even women have started becoming more aware of their self- identity and they have started working outside their households and contributing more to the betterment of the society.

In the technological age, the people of the nation are shedding the notion of gender discrimination by allowing young girls and women to become at par with men at all the levels of their lives. India is witnessing gross change in the thinking of the people to educate girl child. The slogan of –Beti Bachao Beti Padhao is no longer only in terms of paper. The citizens of the country are working to achieve the notion of Beti Bachao and Beti Padhao. Women are the leaders of the modern world. They are expanding themselves from the personal sphere to the global area. They are striving to create a balance between the society by maintaining roles of both being a mother, sister, wife, daughter and also the roles of businesswoman, teacher, architect, doctor, Prime Minister, President etc. they are integrating in an environment which needs to be redesigned according to the needs of the society today. The changing position of women only means that their role is being enhanced and further expanded showing great potential in women of the world.

The world is looking forward for the development of women by providing them right to education, right to health care, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision-making processes. Nations are coming together to fight injustice caused to the females leading to degradation of women's self-esteem and respect. One of the major step to end discriminatory behaviour towards women is by implementation of new laws and regulations by creating a healthy and safe environment for women to live. Government is setting new legal frameworks regarding female equality in the workplace by adopting new bills and acts which aim for helping women to work efficiently in a healthy way without any fear.

The women of the modern society are often called by the names of 'super-woman' who are working immensely for the economic growth of the nation, which shows how the modern women is self- sufficient in handling difficult tasks single handedly. Women are ambitiously working and proving themselves not only on the home front, but also in their respective profession like engineering, medicine, politics, teaching, etc. A nation's progress and prosperity



can be judged by the way it treats its women folk. Only by considering women not as burden but as assets can create a happy world where both men and women are working efficiently to contribute towards the growth of the themselves, their society, the nation and the world. It's high time, the contribution of women should be recognized and be provided with safe and sound environment and be treated as equal member of the society for the betterment of the whole society.

Post 1990's saw a major change in terms of how the world is viewing women folks across the nations. Swami Vivekananda rightly quoted "There is no chance for the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved". Through these words it is clearly stated that welfare of the women of the world lies in the empowerment of the women throughout the world. Women's education is one of the major tools for weapon in India through development policies and empowerment.

### **Employment Generation among Women in India**

The traditional or the patriarchal societies of India prevented women from entering into the public domain and women were considered as inferior to men. To challenge this inferiority status, women began to empower themselves. Since mid-1970s the women have started employing themselves not only in the agricultural sector but also in the big multinational companies taking to the position of CEOs, pilots, Prime Minister, astronauts and many other influential positions.

The period of 1970s saw women uprising in the form of formulation of various women based organizations such as Self Employed Women's Association to uplift the status of women, various other movements such as The Chipko Movement, The Taadi Aandolan, and Narmada Bachao Aandolan gave women a platform to raise their voice. The social movements encouraged women to acquire new roles of doctors, engineers, social workers, teachers etc. These movements encouraged women to break the shackles of discrimination and come forward for protecting the environment and the society at large.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century women demanded equal opportunities as those of men to participate in the political and social affairs. The All India Women's Conference initiated for equal rights to both men and women. Thus, empowerment of women is impossible unless women come with and

help to self-empower themselves” (Hazarika, 2011:2). Creating more and more employment opportunities for women would enhance women’s ability to enrich their knowledge through educating not only themselves but by educating the society at large. The Constitution of India guarantees women with certain fundamental rights in order to foster education and job opportunities. These rights are enlisted in Table 1.1.

**Table 1.1**

**Fundamental Rights of Women in the Indian Constitution**

| <b>S<br/>n<br/>o.</b> | <b>Name of the Right</b>                 | <b>Indian Constitution</b> |
|-----------------------|--|----------------------------|
| 1.                    | Right to Equality                        | Article 14                 |
| 2.                    | Right to Prohibition of Discrimination   | Article 15                 |
| 3.                    | Right to Equality of opportunity         | Article 16                 |
| 4.                    | Right to Abolition of Untouchability     | Article 17                 |
| 6.                    | Right to Life                            | Article 21                 |
| 7.                    | Right to Privacy                         | Article 21                 |
| 8.                    | Protection from slavery and forced labor | Article 23 and 24          |
| 9.                    | Right to education                       | Article 21 A               |
| 10.                   | Right to citizenship                     | Part II Articles 5-11      |

|         |                   |                                      |
|---------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1<br>1. | Political rights  | Article 325 and 326                  |
| 1<br>2. | Rights of workers | Articles 39(a) (d),<br>41, 43 and 47 |

**Source: Constitution of India, 2019.**

The Table 1.1 deals with the various fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution of India to women.

**Article 21 ‘Right to Life’** states as follows: "No person except according to the procedure established by law shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty. Fundamental right under Article 21 of the object personal liberty except according to the procedure established by law is to prevent encroachment on and loss of life." - Anyone, including women, can seek protection under this.

The **Article 15(1)** states as follows: This Article guarantees Right to Equality, "The State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth."

The **Article 19** states as follows: This gives the citizens (which include both women, men and third gender) the Right to Freedom, which among other things guarantees freedom of speech and expression, freedom of movement, freedom of practising trade and profession etc.

**Article 32** states as follows: This Article gives the right to us to seek constitutional remedies through the Supreme Court of India for violation of Fundamental Rights mainly.

According to **Article 15(3)** - State can make any special provision for women and children without any hurdles or obligations.

According to **Article 16(2)**, No citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, descent, place of birth, residence or any of them, be ineligible for, or discriminated in respect of

employment or office under the State. The **Article 23(1)** prohibits the practice of human trafficking in India. Under this article, no person can be forced into trafficking. If any person is found guilty of forcing another person into the act of trafficking, then he/she may be put in jail.

As per **Article 39(a)** men & women have the right to an adequate means to livelihood. This involves the right to fulfil the basic needs such as right to housing, right to life, right to food, right to clothing etc.

### **Constitutional Laws for women related to Panchayats & Municipality**

- **As per Article 243D(3)** Not less than one third of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Panchayat shall be reserved for women.
- **As per Article 243-D(4)** One-third of the total number of offices of chairpersons in the Panchayats at each level shall be reserved for women.
- **As per Article 243-T(3)** One-third of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Municipality shall be reserved for women.
- **As per Article 243-T(4)** offices of chairpersons in the Municipalities shall be reserved for women in such manner as the State Legislature may provide.

Along with constitutional safeguards, there are further rights that women have guaranteed under the law.

### **Legal Rights for Women in India**

- **Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 (Women have a right to equal pay)**  
According to provisions under the Equal Remuneration Act, one cannot be discriminated on the basis of sex when it comes to salary or wages. Working women have the right to draw an equal salary.
- **Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2013 (Women have a right against harassment at work)**

This act gives women the right to file a complaint against sexual harassment. The law enables a sexually harassed woman employee can put in a written complaint to an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) at a branch office within a period of 3 months as per the Sexual Harassment Act. This complaint further is taken up by the Local Complaints Committee (LCC) at a district level, ensuring investigations start regarding the same if proper action has not been taken against the employer. The complaint can also be filed by any of the woman's legal heirs on her behalf or any other person who has written permission given by her to make the complaint. This act is applicable at both the home front as well as in the work front.

- **Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005) (Women have a right against domestic violence)**

The act mostly deals with the violence faced by the women at the domestic sphere. The act primarily looks to protect a wife, a female live-in partner or a woman living in a household like a mother or a sister from domestic violence at the hands of a husband, male live-in partner or relatives. She or anybody on her behalf can file a complaint.

**Section 498** states that whoever, being the husband or the relative of the husband of a woman, subjects her to cruelty, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine. The complaint registered against an offender makes it a non-bailable one, ensuring a woman's safety and provide protection from domestic abuse. The acts of violence are not limited to physical brutality, but also other forms of abuse like verbal, economic, emotional and sexual. With the help of these rights, the women will be able to live free from any form of fear.

- **Women have a right to anonymity for sexual assault victims**

This act calls for protection to the victims of sexual assault. To ensure that her privacy is protected, a woman who has been sexually assaulted may record her statement alone before the district magistrate when the case is under trial, or in the presence of a female police officer.

- **Legal Services Authorities Act (1987) (Women have a right to free legal aid)**

This act enables the women to get free legal aid. All the female rape victims have the right to free legal aid, under the Legal Services Authorities Act. It is mandatory for the Station House Officer (SHO) to inform the Legal Services Authority, who arranges for the lawyer.

- **Code of Criminal Procedure (1973) (Women have right not to be arrested at night)**

This is one of the most important right which explains that a woman cannot be arrested after sunset and before sunrise, except in an exceptional case on the orders of a first class magistrate. Further, the law states, "The police can interrogate a woman at her residence in the presence of a woman constable and family members or friends". A woman can also not be detained at night at the police station without legal permission.

- **Women have a right to register their complaint virtually**

If a woman is not in a position to physically go to a police station and file a complaint, there is a provision for virtual complaints where she can lodge a complaint via e-mail or write her complaint and send to a police station from a registered postal address. This provision leads to the SHO (Station House Officer) sending police to the complaint's place to record her.

- **Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act (1986)**

The depiction in any manner of the figure of a woman; her form or body or any part in such way as to have the effect of being indecent, or derogatory to, or denigrating women, or is likely to deprave, corrupt or injure the public morality or morals", is a punishable offense.

- **Women have a right against being stalked**

**Section 354D** of the IPC and legal action can be taken against an offender. It has been considered as a legal offense. Stalking has been defined by the law as, "To follow a woman and contact, or attempt to contact such woman to foster personal interaction repeatedly despite a clear indication of disinterest by such woman; or monitor the use by a woman of the internet, email or any other form of electronic communication." This act calls for strict action to be taken against the person who stalks women and humiliates her by verbal or physical, emotional and mental forms of abuses.

- **The provision of zero FIR**

The ruling by the Supreme Court mentioned that a woman who is a victim can register her complaint at any police station under the Zero FIR ruling. The Zero FIR is an FIR that can be filed at any police station irrespective of the location where the incident occurred or a specific jurisdiction it comes under. So once that FIR is lodged and investigation and filling are done with a magistrate, it can be moved to the Police Station in whose jurisdiction the case falls under. This ruling was passed to save time that would impact a victim and also lead to an offender getting away scot-free.

These legal and constitutional rights would help women to empower herself. With the initiatives taken by the Government of India, women in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is contributing as much as the men contribute whether in terms of earning for the family or in terms of working for the nation.

**Table 1.2**  
**Developments made by India for Women's Empowerment**

| <b>S<br/>n<br/>o.</b> | <b>Ye<br/>ar</b> | <b>Acts</b>   | <b>Outcomes</b>  |
|-----------------------|------------------|---|--|
| 1.                    | 20<br>05         | Right to Information Act(RTI)   | It requires every public authority to computerize their records for wide dissemination and to proactively certain categories of information so that the citizens need minimum recourse to request for information formally. So that women can easily access the desired information. |
| 2.                    | 20<br>06         | The Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act | Aims to protect forest rights and occupation with forest dwelling tribal and other forest dwellers especially women.   |
| 3.                    | 20<br>06         | Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act  | It aimed to confer livelihood right on the poor. It enables Indian women to earn a livelihood for themselves It was passed in 2005 but launched in 2006.   |

|    |          |   |   |
|----|----------|---|---|
| 4. | 20<br>07 | National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)  | To ensure that all legislative and administrative measures are in consonance with the Child Rights perspective as enshrined in the Constitution of India and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It especially deals with protection of the Girl child.                        |
| 5. | 20<br>08 | Constitutional amendment Bill                                   | Introduced in Parliament to reserve for women nearly 1/3 of seats in the Lok Sabha (Lower House of Parliament) and the state legislative assemblies for a period of 15 years. The Rajya Sabha (Upper House of Parliament) passed this bill in 2010. It is currently in the Lok Sabha. |
| 6. | 20<br>09 | Right to Education Act  | A new fundamental right for free and compulsory education of children especially the girl child in a neighborhood school.   |
| 7. | 20<br>10 | Protection of Women against Sexual Harassment at Workplace Bill | It aims to protect women against Sexual harassment in the organized and unorganized sectors.  |

**Source: India fails UN human rights test, 2013.**

The table 1.2 deals with various conventions ratified by India in order to empower women. Today we have noticed different Acts and Schemes of the central Government as well as state Government to empower the women of India. But in India women are discriminated and marginalized at every level of the society whether it is social participation, political participation, economic participation, access to education, and also reproductive healthcare. Women are found to be economically very poor all over the India. There is a need to formulate reducing feminized poverty, promoting education of women, and prevention and elimination of violence against women.

In 1993, India enacted constitutional reforms (the 73rd and 74th Amendments) making Local Self-Governing Institutions mandatory. To increase women's participation in LSGIs, the



amendments stipulated that 33% of seats in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) were to be reserved for women. This applies to all of India with the exception of 'tribal' (Sixth Schedule) areas in Northeast India where state bodies or autonomous councils are free to choose whether or not to reserve seats for women in local assemblies. In a region with weak participation of women in several state legislatures, customary law often excludes women's political agency at the local level as well. Indian states such as Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Kerala, Rajasthan, Tripura, and Uttarakhand have increased reservations for women from 33 to 50%. On the other hand, there has been persistent opposition to the Women's Reservation Bill that proposes to amend the Constitution to reserve 33% of seats for women in the Lower House of the Indian Parliament, the Lok Sabha, and all state legislative assemblies (**Women's Empowerment in India, 2015**). Earlier women were restricted to certain jobs such as nurse, teacher, doctor etc., but now the purview of jobs for women has expanded immensely.

### Conclusion

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century she can not only be a home- maker but a Bus driver, Pilot, President, Prime Minister, Astronaut, Entrepreneur, Army officer etc. Thus, the parameter of women's world is increasing day by day. Education acts as a major tool for empowering women and creating new job ventures for women. The development of any nation solely depends on the development of the women in that nation. Without women's contribution, no nation can develop itself. The growth of the nation is measured by the work done by both the males and females of the nation. Both are essential for effective and efficient functioning of the society. Women in the world today are trying to break down the shackles of discrimination, by working together hand in hand as compared to the male counterparts. The empowerment of women would only be possible if the women are educated and employed. Education and employment are the most essential tools required for helping women to develop herself and her society at large.

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### **Abstract**

Women constitute over almost half of the population of the world. Education for women is the best way to improve the health, nutrition and economic status of a household that constitute a micro unit of the nation economy. Shri Narendra Modi, Honorable prime minister of India has given stress on the need of educating and protecting the girl child in context of this he launched a government social scheme- “Beti Bachao Beti Padhao”. The country is said more powerful when there is no crises of human witness and women are the powerful asset that a country have to define its all status. So, it is duty of every citizen to protect and secure this asset which also known as the backbone of the country. This scheme not only educate girl but also secure their falling number in terms of sex ratio. Hence, for a development of a country it is required to focus on the part where roots of development lies and that roots are women. And to lead this roots education is powerful equipment we have because someone well said that- Learning gives creativity, creativity leads to thinking and thinking provide knowledge.

### **Introduction**

A famous African proverb apprises us, “If you educate a man, you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a family (nation). Educating girls is pivotal to the development of society. Despite many global declarations and development goals, and significant effort by the international community, gender disparity in education continues to exist. Revamping higher education for girls in India by exploring possibilities through traditional and innovative teaching techniques- Beti bachao Beti padhao perspective.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) was launched by the Prime Minister on 22nd January, 2015 at Panipat, Haryana. BBBP addresses the declining Child Sex Ratio (CSR) and related issues of women empowerment over a life-cycle continuum. It is a tri-ministerial effort of Ministries of Women and Child Development, Health & Family Welfare and Human Resource Development.

The key elements of the scheme include Enforcement of PC & PNDT Act, nation-wide awareness and advocacy campaign and multi-sectoral action in select 100 districts (low on CSR) in the first

phase. There is a strong emphasis on mindset change through training, sensitization, awareness raising and community mobilization on ground.

The aim of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme is to stop the drop in girl child. The CSR census data for 0-6 years was 933 girls per thousand boys in 2001, which drop to 918 girls for every thousand boys in 2011. The ratio replicates both pre birth and post birth discrimination towards girls manifested through gender-based sex-selection. However, decline in CSR is a major indicator of women disempowerment. Abortion of female foetuses, post ultrasonic testing alongside other forms of discrimination against girl infants resulted in a sharp drop in female population.

The specific objectives of this Scheme are:

1. Prevent gender biased sex selective elimination.
2. Ensure survival and protection of the girl child.
3. Ensure education of the girl child.
4. Improve the nutrition status of girl child.

Taking these things in mind government witness with different strategies for fulfilling these measures and provide tools for eliminating these hurdles faced by them.

#### **Different Strategies undertaken by BBBP**

1. Focusing largely on the Districts which are Gender Critical to ensure intensive actions are taken accordingly.
2. Prioritizing cities with low Child Sex Ratio for integrated action.
3. Forwarding and discussing the issue of declining Child Sex Ratio in public discourse, conferences, debates with an aim of rapid awareness and improvement.
4. Implementing innovative and intriguing techniques for the flourishing of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao as per the local requirement and sensibility.
5. Motivating communities to participate and work towards their own development subjecting to the birth and growth of a girl child.

6. Initiating communication campaigns to promote the development and education of the girl child.
7. Challenging the existing gender stereotypes and evil social norms against the girl child.
8. Training the local governing bodies and groups to work as catalysts for social change and improvement.

It may be inferred that the campaign will achieve its target; being amplified by the NaMo factor. The very first question that we should ask ourselves is that do they (girls) need education or do they deserve education. Its answer will decide the momentum of this campaign. Anyways, we need to look into the credibility of the campaign and play our part in the noble cause.

From the ancient time women plays vital role in the life of every individual so empowering them means empowering everything. Coming from marginalise class our country contain major part where women treated as dependent. This dependency closing their words of thoughts to express in this society. Their life is halted for limited task such as giving birth to child and managing all house holds works. Concept of husband dominance in this society is at extreme level. So to lower it we require to give women a powerful tool so that they tackle this dominancy and the tool is 'Education'.

### **Education In women**

As society backbone women 's education is the tool that can help break the pattern of gender discrimination. The longer a girl is able to stay in school, the greater her chances to pursue worthwhile employment and a life without the hazards of extreme poverty. Will lower the male dominance in society. Girls who have had some schooling are more likely to get married. Giving education them about sex will lower the population risk in the society .Every girl child, adolescent girl and young women should have access to education as it supremely important for empowering girls. The UN estimates that for every year a woman spends in primary school, the risk of he child dying prematurely is reduced by 8%.

Girl's education means a comprehensive change for a society. As daughters get the opportunity to go to school and obtain higher level jobs, they gain status in their communities. Women can't defend themselves against physical and sexual abuse until they have the authority to speak against it without fear. Knowledge is that Powerful strength which stand with them till their action of work.

The socioeconomic impact of female education constitutes a significant area of research within international development. Increases in the amount of female education in regions tends to correlate with high levels of development. Some of the effects are related to economic development. Women's education increases the income of women and leads to growth in GDP. Other effects are related to social development. Educating girls leads to a number of social benefits, including many related to women's empowerment.

Implementing this scheme require not only efforts but also understanding of common people because one more problem is faced is dowry system. The dowry system in India is often blamed the expectation that a large dowry must be provided to daughter in order to marry is the major cause in the society. The challenging mindsets and deep rooted patriarchy in the societal system construct discriminating against girls.

The constitution (Article 14), guarantees the right to equality to every citizen of India. It embodies the general principles of equality before law and prohibits unreasonable discrimination between persons within the territory of India. However, gender biased sex selective elimination of girls child is a violation of Human Rights and of the right guaranteed under our constitution.

### **Hurdles In implementing BBBP:**

Despite the key changes brought about by BBBP scheme it will be difficult for it to gain momentum unless properly executed. There are many challenges some are discussed below:

1. Social abuses and orthodox rituals like female foeticide, Sati, child marriage and domestic abuse hinder the due implementation of this scheme.
2. The Government machinery and the police is yet to comprehend the magnitude of women atrocities seriously. This also weakens the effective implementation of BBBP scheme.
3. Moreover, the mindset of people remains conservative as despite numerous of campaigns. This problem is among the grass root problems of this society which weakens the strength of girl.

### **A mission to be accomplished**

Even bigger chances become possible as girls' education becomes the cultural norm. The daughters

of India have hung the flag of the nation always high. Kiran Bedi, Indira Gandhi, Kalpana Chawla, Saina Nehwal, Pooja Thakur and many others have made their families and nation proud. Writing all their names will exceed the word limit by many pages. If we desire our country to be a better place to live in, where sons and daughters are treated equally, we need to be a part of the campaign. Practising a simple technique can help; each one, teach two. Everyone can be a teacher, who may teach against the wrong-doings and impart true meaning of the privilege of having a girl child. Any scheme to empower the girl child also involves driving changes in the deep-rooted mindsets of an entire ecosystem. This involves powerful figures, family members, teachers, and women who might be unknowingly enabling a culture of repression. This is where NGOs like Save the Children come in, fill in the blanks and work hand-in-hand with the government on this noble mission. Saving the girl child also has far-reaching impact on the economic growth of the country. Educated and empowered girls can contribute far more significantly to the process of nation-building.

### **Summary**

This is good initiative taken by government to protect, educate and empower the girl child because from last some decades this section of society treated as vulnerable so uplift the status government build a wonderful plan. This scheme successfully achieving goals and will continue to establish a nation where women are also treated as equal as men. Since past decades our society is ruled by a powerful factor that is male dominance so to lower this dominance this scheme somehow shows positive result in this sense also. This scheme also giving a new feathers to girl child to fly with their color of joy as it provide them strength to come forward and select their area of interest, which also increases participation of girl child in different field. Hence, at last concluding this article by powerful saying of swami vivekanda that-“We want the education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded, and by which one can stand on one’s own feet”.

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## Understanding Gender Equity in Education

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This paper provides an overview on gender equity with reference to educational access inside the Indian schools and tried to explore strategies required for sustainable and significant access for girl child in education system. It deals with the background narratives to the gendered contexts of education in rural areas of India. Involvement of women in the different aspect of education for instance management, teaching, community mobilization was investigated to trace their participation in the decision making. Issues related to education of children belongs to different marginalised groups were taken into account in exploring educational inclusion and exclusion of girl child. The possible reasons of disparities between enrolment rate and attendance rate were identified. Further the schemes formulated to deal with gender disparities were listed out and examined. Possible reasons behind popularization of transitional methods of imparting knowledge (like bridge courses, residential camps, and non-formal educational schools) among parents of girl child were identified. This paper has a scope for educationalists, school personnel, and people working in the field of gender in education and its related issues of our Indian Society.

Keywords: Girl child education, Access, Enrolment, Gender disparities,

### Introduction

After the introduction of Right to Education Act, 2010 stakeholders involved in the area of education tried every possible effort to provide free and compulsory education to all the children till the age of 14, irrespective of their creed, caste, society, socio-economic status or gender, but still there is a gap between the illiteracy rate among males and females. According to the census of India (2011), 73% is the rate of literacy where males having a score of 80.9% and females grab only 64.6%. It means that more than one fourth of the country population still illiterate and there are more illiterate women than men. Although the gender parity index at the primary level was increases from 0.9 in 2003 to 1.15 in 2017.

Agarwal (2000) concluded that regardless to the progression we have achieve in enrollment of children in education system, main area of concern in the context of school education is retention of both boys and girls because their share tend to reduce in higher grades in states like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Another conclusion of his study is related to cases of failure and dropouts. He suggested that cases of dropouts and repetition of classes is associated largely with girls and their number

keeps on decreases as they move from one level to another (for example, while moving from elementary to secondary level of education, we will find less number of girls). Such data emphasize ones to think and work upon disproportionate ratio of educational achievement of boys and girls in Indian society. Limited accessibility of girl child towards schools can be a reason behind such kind of disparity in education among boys and girls.

Keeping a note on all these fact obtained from literature review, author keep on working with general education of girl child in the rural areas of Delhi, India. On the basis of observation schedule and interview with girl child and their family members, author compiled a comprehensive data which is qualitative in nature.

An educated woman can easily take care about general health and nutritional condition of herself and her family members on the other hand it become a tough task for an illiterate woman. It further help in saving money that could be wasted for visiting doctor due to illness caused by unhealthy food habits. So it is not hard for one to conclude that there are instances from economic and social life that speak in the favour of positive impact of female education, but still our society maintain to devote little investment in female education as compared to male education. Following can be the various familiar grounds on which parents justify their low investment in girl child education

- Reorganization of females mainly through her reproductive responsibilities and household chorus.
- Low worth to female labour.
- Perception that educating females leads zero or no gain as they needed to get train in household chorus and responsibilities related to reproduction and nurturance. Since these expertise can be inculcated by other females of the family so there is no need to send girls to schools.
- Problems associated with the marriage of a literate girl, for instances,
  - No male accept his wife to be more educated than himself. In such conditions either a girl remains unmarried or her family needs to search a groom more educated than her. If girl remains unmarried than family has to bear her expenses.
  - Selecting more educated groom require more spending at marriage ceremony which further increases economical load of the family.
- Acceptance of preserving unevenness of members of both genders in educational accomplishment to pose male members of the society at a higher social position.

### **Gendered contexts of education in rural areas of India**

The status of girl child education is already a burning issue among its stakeholders. Our finance ministry Nirmala Sitharaman concludes that the gross enrolment ratio of girls in educational institutes is now higher than boys due to Beti bachao beti padhao scheme. At the elementary level, girl enrolment is currently at 94.32 % compared to 89.28 percent for boys as cited in The Economics Times of February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. On the other hand a survey conducted by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) under the aegis of Ministry of Statistics and Programme (2007), conclude that condition of educational assess of girl child education is bad in all areas but it getting worse in rural areas. Findings of National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) suggested that literacy rate among age group of seven years and above in the country were 75%, which were 71% for rural India and 86% for urban India.

In the case of patriarchic society like India, one can easily conclude that inclination of parents towards boy child direct their decision regarding choices they have made related to the education and opportunities provided to their children. During the time of selecting options related to education for the children of family, parents from economically weaker section of society mostly show their preferences by keeping their son in mind. Similar instances of gendered typed attitude are also visible among various religious groups of society. Research of Jeffery (2007) is in line with it. The result of his study claimed that education of a Muslim girl is define and directed by her attainment of puberty. Since religious schools like Madrasa and Maktaba are the places to get education for Muslim girls, people don't allow them to enter inside its premises by considering them impure (after menses) to enter at a religious place. Hence there is variation with respect to the schooling experience of Muslim boys and girls.

Unequal treatment due to stratification related to caste, economical status and geographical location exaggerate variation among males and females of a particular society. Further varied beliefs related to both gender specifically in underdeveloped rural areas is a reason behind low share of girls than boys towards access and participation in education. These varied beliefs can be identify as,

- Emphasis on women related to performing only socially acceptable roles according to their society.
- Limiting mobility and maintaining monogamy among female.
- Sharing of responsibilities related to domestic chorus with younger girls of the family and not with boys or other male members

- Sexual harassment and violence with the girls at school or in between the way to school.

### **Popularization of transitional methods of imparting knowledge among parents of girl child**

Government has started informal or non-formal education programme keeping those children in mind who were unable to attend regular or mainstreaming education due to any reason. It is a kind of alternative provided to individual who want to pursue their studies. With an increase in the number of these alternative education system i.e. informal or non-formal education programmes, the enrollment of girl child is also increases.

Schemes organized by our Government under the board category of Non-formal education involves strategies like,

- Opening of non-formal schools and organizing educational activity outside the formal system of education. Keeping the convenience to the girls in mind, these schools provide education at any place.
- Bridge courses of one year (or of four to six month) aim to provide out-of-school children with scope to take informal classes as a bridge into the formal school system
- Residential camping to focus on particular segment of girls of society (for instance, girls involve in domestic child labour, school drop outs etc)

While working on identifying possible reasons behind popularization of transitional methods of imparting knowledge (like bridge courses, residential camps, and non-formal educational schools) among parents of girl child, the following conclusions can be made,

- Proximity with location of the centres. Due to the location of these centres within immediate surroundings, parents can send their daughters to these centres without facing any difficulty related to transportation and safety of girl child.
- Economical and low-costing nature of programme. Although the education is provided free of cost till the age of 14years in government schools still a share of earning of parents used to spend on children education. Such programmes are economical and demand low or no costing from parents. In spite of their economical and low-costing nature, these programmes can provide opportunities to girl child to earn simultaneously with getting education.
- Varied nature of curriculum than formal schooling. These programmes associated more with general education and development and hence provided scope for learning of various skills (related to vocation or life skills) in addition to skills of numeracy and literacy

### **Disparities between Enrolment rate and Attendance rate**

Lot of work is done in the area of students' enrolment. Schemes like free distribution of books, copies, uniform of school, providing scholarships, mid day meal etc attract students and their family members towards school education. This aids in reinforcement of parents to send their wards to school and increases enrolment of students. Even after increase school enrolment rate of students it is found that their retention and attendance rate in school is low. Following reasons were identified behind disparities among enrolment rate and attendance rate:-

- Involvement in domestic chorus of others for monetary gain, household activities (either with mother or doing these tasks alone if mother is working) and care of young sibling affects their learning outcome. Working for long hours at home leads to their poor attendance.
- Seasonal unemployment of parents leads to movement of family from one place to another on a regular basis. Due to such regular movement attendance rate of child decreases even after enrolment in school
- Value of education among parents and other family members. Attitude towards significance associated with education of girls seems to affect their attendance rate in schools.
- Gender stereotyping and hidden curriculum inside schools show impact on less attendance rate of girl child. It is found that prescribe textbook portray man in higher position than woman. Accomplishments of women are seldom identified in syllabus of school. Due to this kind of structure of school education girls not find themselves connected with school environment and stay absent most often.
- Unavailability of basic amenities provided to students like drinking water, toilets and infrastructure keeping in mind the problems faced by girl child during periods also enhanced the disparities between enrolment and attendance rate.

Apart from above mention factors uninterested teaching-learning material, teachers' attendance and their attitude towards girl education, low quality teaching, high teacher pupil ratio, parental education, nutrition status of girl child and lack of community participation having a significant relationship with disparities between their enrolment and attendance rate.

### **Strategies required for sustainable and significant access for girl child in education system**

In order to transform perception of society towards women and their educational status, it is vital to empower them by keeping a check on the factors closely associated with their educational attainment. Working to make education and their environment gender sensitive can be a first step in this direction. Other steps in the same line including following steps,

- Training of girls in self-defense to ensure their safety while visiting educational institutes or schools.
- Aiding them in becoming independent by providing better way to transport, for instance, teaching them cycling or riding scooty.
- Improving their home environment by,
  - Guiding girls as well as their parents to maintain a healthy and acceptable relationship with each other.
  - Encouraging mother to be dedicated and becoming interested towards education of girl child
  - Spreading awareness with regards to long working hours of mother and its impact on the schooling of girl child.
  - Engaging mothers in interaction with other women so that they can reflect about their preferences for their daughters and can handle restriction or limitation forced on them. It further aids in finding out the path to move in a direction where they can ensure better prospects for their girls both in terms of aspirations and opportunity.
  - Encouraging equity within the home in terms of food distribution, engagement in domestic work, treatment with love, care and acceptance.
  - Avoiding marriage at a very early age.
- Providing them guidance related to their maternal and reproductive health and handling issues related to it.
- Improving basic facilities of water and sanitation at school level as well as infrastructure that allow girl child to sit and focus in their studies even during their menstrual flow.
- Encouragement of opportunities for women that leads to well compensated job outside their home, motivate them to think about educating their girl child and engaging them in job-oriented education.

- Arranging facilities related to crèches and other form of support for working mothers can share the burden of young girls to handle their siblings in the absence of mother. It indirectly shows significant changes towards girl child education

### **Conclusion**

The introduction of Beti bachao beti padhao scheme on January 22, 2015 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, generate awareness related to the issues of girl child and women. As quoted by Sitharaman, N. on national television while sharing Budget (2020) that girl enrolment in education is increases in past few years. In spite of such notable achievements, abundance of girls still encounter problems while coming to school and continuing their education. So there is a dire need to keep a check on strategies and policies at ground level to ensure their equal participation in education system of India.

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**BBBP27**

**Mahatma Gandhi's vision of Women Development in the Global World**

**Aditi (SRM, University of Delhi)**



**Abstract**

Mahatma Gandhi is great personalities who influence the world with his thoughts and opinions. Gandhi played an influential role in shaping up the future of the world. Even today both South Africa and India continue to face the adverse impact of colonialism. The nations are working to create an environment with a clear vision of inclusive development including Women are the pioneers of development. Mahatma Gandhi's vision of women development caters to focussing on the development of women in various aspects such as economic, social, political, cultural, technological, legal etc. Gandhi ji wanted to see the change in the world not only on paper but in reality as well. Mahatma Gandhi aimed at creating a society which caters to emancipation of women across the globe. A global world is the need of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Development of a nation can be measured when its women are developed and empowered.

**Key Words:** Social emancipation, Development, Women, Empowerment.

The paper includes:

1. Introduction
2. Mahatma Gandhi and Development of Women
3. Aspects of Development of women in India
4. Conclusion

**Introduction**

Development is a process of enlarging people rights and freedoms. It is a concept of guaranteeing freedom to people and removing poverty, unemployment etc., so that nations can foster to develop themselves. A developed nation means developed society which pursuits the notion of inclusive development. The arena of inclusive development entails development of all the people of the societies irrespective of their caste, sex, race, ethnicity etc. In order to put women at the centre of development, the nations should aim at implementing such policies and programmes which cater to allowing women to grow and prosper in the society.

The right to development, a third-generation right, is an innovation which aims to develop women across the globe. The development approach is witnessing an evolution of the concept of women in

development(WID), to women and development (WAD) and to gender and development (GAD). The year 1970s marked as the important landmark for development of women. Both the public and private matters were considered as important tasks for the development process. Women in Development (WID), is one of the most important landmark in the concept of development. The female perspective looks into the perspective of female development by encouraging women to contribute to both public and private spheres.

The technological advancements all over the world leads to a society where both men and women contribute tirelessly for the growth of the nations. The nations are working to create an environment with a clear vision of inclusive development including Women are the pioneers of development. Mahatma Gandhi's vision of women development caters to focussing on the development of women in various aspects such as economic, social, political, cultural, technological, legal etc. Gender equality and women's empowerment are powerful enablers of economic growth and human development.

### **Mahatma Gandhi and Development of Women**

Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation was born on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1869 in Porbandar, Gujarat India. He played an important role in the development of the women of India. Gandhi's first encounter with women – power took place in Africa. There he realized how women could become the leaders of Satyagraha. According to Gandhi a woman was endowed with certain distinct qualities and temperaments on the strength of which she can undertake certain special functions for the empowerment of the nations across the globe (Parathara, 2016). He considered women as one of the major pioneers for the growth of the nation. Gandhi ji did not consider women as mere objects to be treated in the hands of the males. He considered both men and women equal. He firmly believed that India's salvation depends on the sacrifice and enlightenment of her women. He was indeed one of the greatest advocates of women's liberty. Throughout the life Gandhi ji stood to improve the status of women in his country. He wanted women to become independent and fortunate enough to make a life of themselves. He saw women as a potential force in the struggle to build a new social order as they are the first nursery of human beings and more important than men for the society to develop and grow in right direction.

“Woman is the companion of man, gifted with equal mental capacities. She has the right to participate in the minutest details in the activities of man, and she has an equal right of freedom and

liberty with him- Mahatma Gandhi” (Mahatma Gandhi, 2015). Gandhi wanted to break the wall of discrimination among men and women so that women can enjoy equal status as men. Guaranteeing equal status to men and women not only ensures equal pay for equal work, but it entails equality in all the spheres of life whether personal, professional or social etc. he wanted women to be treated as pioneers of development which can directly or indirectly foster development of the nation.

For development of women Mahatma Gandhi, stood for freedom of women. He was against the ill practices of Jauhar, sati, child marriage, dowry system which suppress women. He wanted women to uplift their condition by educating them. Education acts as a major tool which empowers women to participate in the process of development of the nation. It was given to women to teach the art of peace to the worrying world thirsting for that nectar. The capacity for silent suffering which Gandhi idealized was in fact one of the key symptoms of her subordination. Gandhi ji was against the concept of male domination which curtails the freedom of women. They were considered as important tools for the nation. Mahatma Gandhi was of the view of separate institutions for women. He was against co-educational institutions. He advocated that women should participate in the political struggles as with this they will be able to liberate themselves from the evil traditions that further degrade position of women.

Women assumed important role in the Gandhiji’s Satyagraha. With the help of Satyagraha struggle women came out of the purdah system, and actively contributed in the freedom struggle. The entry of women in the satyagraha struggle gave the movement a new momentum. The women in India came out of purdah and actively participated in the non-violent struggle. They manufactured contraband salt, picketed foreign cloth shops and liquor shops and even tried to wean both the seller and the customer from these. Gandhi chose women for this job because he believed that women had an inherent capacity for non-violence. Women’s involvement in non-cooperation movement, helped women in finding a new dignity in public life a new place in the national mainstream.

### **Aspects of Development of Women in India**

The word ‘development’ refers to develop oneself. Development of women deals with guaranteeing human rights to the women. Since, women form an essential component of the economy, the development of women is directly linked to development of its men and women. Women’s human rights only emerged as a global movement during the United Nations Decade for Women (1976-

1985), when women from many different geographic, cultural, religious, racial and class backgrounds came together and organized to improve the status of women.

The different aspects catering to development of women are as follows:



**Chart 1.1**

The Chart 1.1 deals with the different aspects responsible for development of women in India and South Africa. The first is the political aspect, it deals with developing women politically. It enables women to access their political rights such as right to vote, right to contest elections, right to form political parties etc. the second aspect is the economical aspect. The economic aspect helps the women to develop themselves economically by contributing in the development of the nation by working as teachers, labourers, businesswomen, doctors, engineers etc. The cultural aspect enables women to preserve and protect their inherent culture by following the rituals and leading towards development. The psychological aspects of development deals with the development including the psychological feeling that women face throughout her life.

Empowerment means that both men and women can take control over their lives: set their own agendas, gain skills (or have their own skills and knowledge recognized), increase self- confidence, solve problems, and develop self-reliance. It is both a process and an outcome' (**Women Empowerment Principles, UN Women Second Edition 2011: 11**). 'The idea of Women Empowerment came forward when the Third International Women's Conference at Nairobi in 1985

introduced and defined “women empowerment- as a re-distribution of social power and control of resources in favour of Women”. So, it is a multidimensional social process that helps people to gain controls their own lives and thus enhancing their position in the power structure of the society’ (Sarania, 2014 : 55). By bridging the gender gap through education and employment, the women of the nation will be able to live a dignified life.

### Conclusion

Mahatma Gandhi concerned women as the engines of development. Education became an important tool for empowering and developing women all over the world. The Constitution of India aims guarantee basic human rights to women such as right to freedom, right to vote, right to education, right to development etc. Thus, every nation should work to protect and promote human rights of women along with development of women.

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**BBBP28**

**Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao**

**Megha Goyal, Aditi Mahavidyalaya**

India is a patriarchal society and in the current scenario also it is the same. Although , we have come a long way from the worst case scenario for females in the past, still a lot is to be done . People in

the Indian society have a rude mindset about the girl child. They consider girl child as a burden who only takes from them and never gives. But is it true?

Whether a boy or a girl - child is child. One should not have expectation of getting back from their child . Just because people think a boy child would support them in old age , they look down upon a girl child. Is there any guarantee that a child will live up to your expectations in future? Ask the consequences of this mentality from the abandoned parents in the old age homes.

Due to their ugly mindset people engage in prenatal sex determination , female foeticide and if they still get a girl child they don't provide her a good life – they deprive her of education. To address these issues and empower girl child ,a scheme was launched in 2015 by our prime minister Shri Narendra Modi – “Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao” . This scheme is to make people aware of the importance of girl child in the Indian society as well as to bring a positive change in the mindset of people.

“Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao” mans “Save Girl Child, Educate Girl Child” in English .This scheme has been launched to curb social evils of prenatal sex determination and female foeticide , to ensure safety of girl child and provide quality education to them. Today , there are a whole lot of opportunities for women highlighting an image of progressing India but when we look deeper in the roots ,we get to see the dark side of our country and society like there is a decline in sex ratio. So, it indicates that there is still a lot to be done to have gender equal environment in India and to protect girl child .

A poem is a means to convey a lot in few words.To portray the plight of a girl child , I wrote a poem titled “YOU ARE A GIRL”

### **YOU ARE A GIRL**

I am always seen below him,  
 Considered unable to do this or that thing,  
 When asked the reason ,  
 “You are a girl” , I am told,  
 I always wonder ,  
 What is my fault?  
 They were going to have a first child,  
 Got me and repented because girls are burden.  
 They wanted a child , I am also a child .

But , late I realized , they wanted a “son”.

Why nobody wants me ?

When asked the reason,

“You are a girl” , I am told ,

I always wonder ,

What is my fault ?

What is my fault ?

To conclude , “Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao” correctly identifies the social problems surrounding girl child and highlights the importance of gender equality in the country. it gives support to the statement that – “if you educate a girl child , you educate a generation”. “Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao” initiative aims towards ensuring survival , protection and empowerment of the girl child.

**BBBP29**

**Revamping Mindsets: A Study Of The Gendered And Patriarchal Nature Of The Social,  
Legal And Political Institutions In India**

**Dr. Pooja Khanna (Assistant Professor, Department of English, Aditi Mahavidyalaya  
University of Delhi)**

**Abstract**



Discrimination, submission, intimidation, oppression and repression are terms synonymous with women who constitute half of humanity but are sadly deprived of their rights, entitlements, freedom, equality and equity largely because of our society which is gendered and patriarchal. This domination of women by men since time immemorial has pervaded almost all areas- social, economic, cultural, legal and political institutions in our society rendering it as hollow as a termite stricken piece of wood . Though women play a decisive role in the reproductive and productive activities of the society , they continue to be relegated to a secondary and undermined position in society due to prevalence of patriarchy that by its very construct heralds gender bias and gender inequality . The present paper attempts to analyse the impact of patriarchal mindsets on the socio-economic, political and legal institutions and the way forward to empower women with the tool of higher education and strengthen the institutional mechanisms for ensuring gender equality . It is only then that schemes like Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao will gain success in true terms . Change cannot be brought about if we are resigned to our situation. It demands self effort and sacrifice..The will power to empower has to come from within. Let education ignite our minds and empower our lives.

**Keywords-**Gender, Patriarchy, Subordination, Perspective, Economic, Legal, Institutions

### **Introduction**

It appears that in the human race, the “creation” has clipped the wings of the “creator”. Man has imposed an imprisonment of a lifetime on woman through iron chains of injunctions. These are no more than societal imperatives of a malignant mindset, which is clamped on a woman from the time of birth to the release at death. Many times the chance to live also snatched away, as the female feticide will show .This derogatory discriminative attitude of gender bias has travelled through generations immemorial like an incurable virus, because it is sustained and supported and incubates in the cradle of prejudice of a sick society.

### **Social Framework : The clipped wings of Creator**

Closely similar to feudalism, the Indian society exhibits the prioritisation of interests of the male over those of the female which is manifested by the social and economic control of one sex by the other. Many political theorists like Jean Jacques Rousseau and Fredrick Engels have questioned the origin of this inequality. While Rousseau advocated the theory that all men and women are born equal...Engels was of the opinion that men and women were equal in the primitive society and that it was the beginning of family and private property that has led to gender inequality in society. The existence of patriarchy is evident not only in the social practices but also pervades the daily life of a woman- her enjoyment of rights and her aims and goals in life- and consequent internalization of values. Her choices and decisions are still controlled, limited and even sacrificed in the interests of the family, children, culture and a deeply gendered society. It is said that times have changed and so has the status of women in society but the fact remains that these values are still prevailing because of the unchangeable mindsets and traditions. In fact, it has deeper vested interests too- because any

change will throw challenges to men and make them insecure as their economic and political advantages will be threatened. The dominant power structures and social stability based on unjust gender practices will be questioned. If more women get absorbed in public life, in offices, in legislatures, in parliament, it will automatically reduce the space for men and the ramification of the dilution of patriarchy will lead to challenged power equations in the society. Thus patriarchy looks like an all pervading, invincible social phenomenon which governs and restricts women from challenging it. As a result, the nation is losing the potentialities of half of its population for whom even today , democracy is an opaque and unachievable dream .

### **Legal Perspective-The Paradoxical Garb of Equality**

Women in India have proved their potentials in almost every field where an opportunity has been provided to them. However, they have been constant victims of the patriarchal and gendered mindset. To address this reality, the framers of Indian Constitution have developed alternative institutional mechanisms by creating special provisions to ensure gender justice and equality. Various legal measures aimed at empowerment have been ensured under Article 14 and 15 to balm the brunt of patriarchy. Article 16 ensures equal opportunity in matters of public employment whereas article 21 assures women a right to life with dignity. In fact, after independence, we have the phase of legal reforms- progressive, bold, legislative initiatives which translated constitutional commitments and guarantees into laws to help improve women's legal status (Government of India 198:135). The Indian government enacted various legal measures for empowerment and protection of women from oppression on the basis of Constitutional mandates. The Equal Remuneration Act, The Factories Act, Maternity Benefit Act, Dowry Prohibition Act, Immoral Trafficking in Women and Girls Act and many more such measures have led to an equal treatment of women. The 'Towards Equality' report in 1975 on the status of women and the formation of the National Perspective Plan for Women's Development 1988-2000 highlighted several measures that were initiated to implement the constitutional mandate for women in Indian Constitution. In order to protect the rights of women statutory bodies like NCW ( National Commission for Women) and many other institutional mechanisms were created by an Act of Parliament in 1990. The year 2001 was declared as the year of Women Empowerment in India. Laws are many but sadly the Indian woman is clothed in a veneer of equality. It is under the façade that lies the appalling reality. In spite of all the bold efforts and legal empowerment attempts, according to the Sustainable Development Goals Gender Index (developed by UK based Equal Measures 2030). India ranked 95<sup>th</sup> out of 129 countries in 2019. The study evaluates the status of women on the parameters of poverty, health, education, literacy, political representation and equality at the work place.

The NCRB ( National Crime Records Bureau ) has recorded a 83% increase in the crime against women from 2007 to 2016.If we analyse the reasons for this, the fact that emerges is a gap in the legal provisions and their implementation .There is an urgent need to strengthen institutional mechanisms so that gender equality and justice can be ensured.

### **Political Mainstreaming: Reality or Façade**

For years women have not be viewed as partners in governance and policy making. Their role has been that of mute beneficiaries. The meagre and minimum participation of women in democratic processes and practices forced a relook at the constitutional and democratic powers and rights of women. To give impetus to the whole notion of ‘empowerment’ additional political instruments were activated. The constitutional 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Amendments on local self-government, with 33% mandatory reservation for women were aimed to make participation real in the political arena. The question that still needs to be asked is that whether the strategies have really empowered women. Has it led to political awakening, consciousness and excise of political rights for women? Has there been a gradual wearing away of traditional attitudes and stereotyped prejudice against women in political system? Has 33% reservation for women in local elections really empowered them? There are conflicting studies- some harp on the fact that it has made women emerge as able, vocal, courageous and capable of bolder initiatives and enhanced decision-making skills. On the contrary some studies lament that after over 25 years of this experiment, the status of women continues to be relegated and unchanged. Results show that most politically successful women are not recognized, encouraged or picked up for higher positions. The political careers of aspiring women are usually cut short in a male dominated arena. It is said that times have changed. We have a woman Finance Minister, and women have decorated the highest offices in the Modi Cabinet. But can a handful boast of changing the whole scenario? The patriarchal backlash leaves its imprints in the political arena too. The role of Khap Panchayats is an example enough to show that such bold initiatives fail to make a dent and are like water on duck’s back in the Indian context.

### **Mental Lockdown :Ways Of Unlocking Plagued And Prejudiced Mentalities**

A whole generation needs to be socially distanced to seek a cure from the malady of contaminated contentions. Yes, contaminated they definitely are, as the woman is worshipped as Durga, Laxmi and Saraswati, then why isn’t the female power in human form recognized?

The whole crux of the problem’s solution lies in empowerment through education. It is because of the darkness of illiteracy and ignorance that envelops the clarity and progress of clear thinking. If emancipation has to effected, we have to enlighten and dispel this darkness.

This can be enabled only when equality is recognized as a ground reality. Schooling and equal opportunity to learn sustainable professions are needed to built confidence and self reliance in women folk. Technology has a big role to play. Women are the primary producers and labourers at the rural level. Here online marketing can open new vistas and venues to reach out to the consumers. Independent earning is one big break away from social prejudice. Hence, skill empowerment in the domestic sphere is the basic need of the day.

The second and equally important dent which has to be made is in the direction of social security. Why should a woman think she is physically weak, when she bravely bears the childbirth pangs? Martial arts training should be made compulsory. Rural sports, wrestling, boxing, shooting etc should be encouraged to awaken the Kali within. More recruitment in Police, Army and security guards should be done. This biased attitude needs to be attacked head-on that a woman becomes impure if she is physically violated or abused. For this, the legal system should be strengthened and very strict and swift laws need to be created and implemented. Domestic violence is not being dealt with a heavy hand by the law.

### **The Road Ahead: From Darkness To Light**

We have to look at the whole resolution of gender disparity in the perspective of totality. It is a universal fact that the weak and vulnerable will be dominated by the strong and arrogant, with the aim of exploitation because the urge to dominate is a basic or rather a base instinct.

Hence, the fight for liberty is long drawn and arduous but can be definitely accomplished one step at a time. Definitely, this contagion of prejudice which has spread its tentacles everywhere, be it female feticide, dowry, rape, eve-teasing, domestic abuse, human trafficking, forced prostitution needs to be struck at the roots.

The mother, the educator, the lawmaker and the teacher has to built the immunity and strength of the woman to fight back. We have to open our minds' window and give the girl child an opportunity to flower. The innate ability with which every child is born needs to be nurtured in a conducive environment. We must remember that the "creation" can never surpass the "creator" who is the Devi when actually worshipped as a human being. For this to happen, she needs to be awakened.

There are and there have been women innumerable, who have broken the male bastion in every sphere. They need to be introduced and popularized for the weak, to see and understand that there are opportunities and efforts to strengthen one and overcome obstacles and day to day challenges. Inspiration is a very important tool for attitudinal change and social media is a global source which can be used in every possible way.

Also, another delicate issue needs to be addressed. Fortune or positive societal changes follow the brave and the courageous or the ones who take the initiative. Change cannot be brought about if we are resigned to our situation. It demands self effort and self sacrifice.

If women condition themselves to think that they cannot fix the fault and deter the growth of their own kind or act like a mere decorative item or a superfluous butterfly in the society, then no change is possible. These pseudo stereotypes need to go. The willpower to empower has to come from within. We have to awaken the Devi within us and have the courage of conviction to be committed to the cause.

Don't suppress the soul of humanity,

Wake up and give me back my true dignity.

If the human race has to survive,

Together hand in hand man and woman must strive.

**Readings :**

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**BBBP30**

## **ARE YOU ONE OF THEM?**

**Ankita Mahindra (Student)**

### **Introduction**

There are always a number of components which are underprivileged of their basic rights mostly in all the society, state and nation, but reason behind this is that, these components are unawareness of their rights. If we pinpoint such components from the society, then women section of the society will secure the top position of the list. Women are the most important factor of every society, Even

though everybody is aware of this fact, yet nobody is ready to accept this universal truth. As a result, the importance which must be given to women is not given in present society. As a significance of this growing tendency of underestimating women such as to make them occupy a secondary position in society even when they are capable and deserving for the best, and to deny them of their basic rights, the need for empowering women was felt. Today we enjoy the benefits of being citizens of a democratic and independent nation, but we really need to think whether each of the citizens of our country is really free and enjoying freedom or not, in the true sense of the terms. If we consider our country, each Indian citizen is given certain basic rights. The Structure of our nation doesn't discriminate among its citizens on the basis of gender, but our society has destitute women of certain basic rights, which were bestowed upon them by our Constitution. Due to such current situation, it was needed to make women free from all the fetters and to empower them as well. Women's empowerment is not limited only for the Indian society. If we deliberate the global aspect in this regard, it can be observed that women are being given equal treatment in developed nations. In fact, if we take a recollection of history, we can observe that women have always been given secondary position in society, why some people don't understand that the difference between men and women is created by the Nature, It is an educational fact. When American women realized this, they opposed the unfairness which was meted out to them by joining hands, resulting in huge movement, through which earned equal rights. For eliminating this injustice, the UNO (United Nations Organization) framed an agreement which is called The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women' (CEDAW), which further led to the formation of Women's Commission.

Taking an account of this background, we know that women's empowerment has now become a topic of global discussion. Seeing all the aspects of this discussion, we realized that education is the only means for empowerment of women. Therefore, literacy should spread amongst women. The literacy rate amongst the women in the post Independent Era was very low. We, as a nation, dreamed of becoming a Super Power by 2020. But for becoming a Super Power, each element of our society/nation should contribute in the process. But if the women, who are one of the most important factor of this society, aren't literate then how even can we can't expect to become a Super Power. Therefore, it is urgent to know the importance of women's education, which in turn will give motivation and boost the process of women's empowerment. This paper is aim at creating the

awareness among all and helps them identifying the importance of women education and overall empowerment.

### **Past Researches**

An official Census 2011 detail of Madurai, a district of Tamil Nadu has been released by Directorate of Census Operations in Tamil Nadu. In 2011, Madurai had population of 3038252 of which male and female were 1526475 and 1511777 respectively. Average literacy rate of Madurai in 2011 were 83.45 compared to 77.82 of 2001. If things are looked out at gender wise, male and female literacy were 89.72 and 77.16 respectively. This study is basically descriptive in nature. Madurai district comprises thirteen revenue blocks, from those 455 women respondents between 20-50 age group were selected for the study. Researcher used convenient sampling method for data collection and well-structured questionnaire was used data collection tool. Using survey method researcher collects the questionnaires with help of well-trained research associates. Respondents were asked to select the options based on their opinions in 5 point Likert scale (1-Strongly disagree to 5- Strongly agree). The research instrument includes questions related with different type of empowerment like personal empowerment, educational empowerment, economic empowerment, social empowerment, psychological empowerment, technical empowerment, political empowerment and demographic characteristics like age, educational qualification, family income, employment type and marital status.

### **Findings of the study**



**Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents**

| Demographic characteristics      | Options             | Frequency | %   |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|-----------|-----|
| <b>Age</b>                       | 20-29 Years         | 251       | 55  |
|                                  | 30-39 Years         | 109       | 24  |
|                                  | Above 40 Years      | 95        | 21  |
| <b>Educational Qualification</b> | Arts & Science (UG) | 206       | 45  |
|                                  | Arts & Science (PG) | 75        | 16  |
|                                  | Professional (UG)   | 101       | 22  |
|                                  | Diploma             | 48        | 11  |
|                                  | Illiterates         | 25        | 5   |
| <b>Marital Status</b>            | Married             | 231       | 51  |
|                                  | Unmarried           | 185       | 41  |
|                                  | Widow               | 39        | 9   |
| <b>Employment type</b>           | House wife          | 243       | 53  |
|                                  | Employed            | 212       | 47  |
| <b>Monthly Income</b>            | Below Rs.20000      | 323       | 71  |
|                                  | Rs.20001-Rs.40000   | 96        | 21  |
|                                  | Rs.40001-Rs.60000   | 36        | 8   |
|                                  | Total               | 455       | 100 |

Table no. 1 concludes that 55 percent respondents were between 20-29 years old, 45 percent responders were have undergraduate level education qualification in the field of art and science. 51 percent respondents were married and 41 percent respondents were unmarried.

**Table 2: Descriptive statistics and Cronbach alpha coefficients**

| Different type of empowerment | Mean | SD   | Cronbach alpha coefficients |
|-------------------------------|------|------|-----------------------------|
| Personal empowerment          | 3.26 | 0.94 | 0.763                       |
| Social empowerment            | 3.28 | 0.95 | 0.754                       |
| Economic empowerment          | 3.36 | 0.92 | 0.811                       |
| Educational empowerment       | 2.96 | 1.19 | 0.879                       |
| Psychological empowerment     | 3.07 | 1.13 | 0.759                       |
| Technical empowerment         | 3.18 | 1.00 | 0.915                       |
| Political empowerment         | 3.23 | 1.17 | 0.785                       |
| Overall empowerment           | 3.86 | 0.94 | 0.704                       |

Table no 2 shows that "Economic empowerment" and "Social empowerment" are the top ranked empowerment with the mean value of 3.36 and 3.28. "Psychological empowerment" and Educational

empowerment" are the last ranked empowerment with the mean value of 3.07 and 2.96. Cronbach alpha coefficient ranges from 0.704 to 0.915; it shows that reliability coefficients for above factors are more than 0.60, which is an acceptable value (Malhotra, 2004). So, the items constituting each variable under study have reasonable internal consistency.

**Table 3: Impacts of different empowerments on overall empowerment**

| Different empowerments    | Beta    | t     | Sig.    |
|---------------------------|---------|-------|---------|
| Personal empowerment      | 0.12    | 1.62  | 0.105   |
| Social empowerment        | 0.06    | 0.84  | 0.404   |
| Economic empowerment      | -0.16   | -1.85 | 0.065   |
| Educational empowerment   | 0.42    | 6.70  | 0.000** |
| Psychological empowerment | 0.54    | 5.59  | 0.000** |
| Technical empowerment     | 0.10    | 1.30  | 0.195   |
| Political empowerment     | -0.33   | -4.52 | 0.000** |
| Multiple R                | 0.773   |       |         |
| R <sup>2</sup>            | 0.598   |       |         |
| Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>   | 0.592   |       |         |
| F value                   | 94.973  |       |         |
| P value                   | 0.000** |       |         |

\*\* Significant at 1 percent

From that above table, it was observed that the overall empowerment explained 60 percent of the variance for the criterion measure. It entailed that 40 percent of overall empowerment was explained by something other than above mentioned empowerment types. Summary of Regression Analysis shows that different types of empowerment were treating as predictors and overall empowerment as criterion variable. It was observed that the overall regression model was significant (F=94.973, p<0.000). Hence null hypothesis is rejected educational empowerment, psychological empowerment and political empowerment are the main and significant predictors for overall empowerment.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

The above study was carried out in Madurai, from the state of Tamil Nadu, one of the fast developing districts in the state. From the above findings, overall empowerment and other related empowerment types are also relatively influenced by the respondents' educational qualification. Regression analysis shows that educational empowerment, political and psychological empowerment were the significant predictors for overall empowerment. The process of empowering entails much

more than awareness of alternative, women's rights and the nature of the requirements. With more education women have greater access to employment opportunities and increase the ability to secure their own economic resources, this study helps to create the awareness about empowering women among 13 revenue blocks of Madurai. During the data collection most the respondents don't have any awareness about empowerment, even though they are educated. Since education is the primary avenue for empowerment and there are other dimension that is also have impact on empowerment. Present study suggest that General awareness programme should be taken among the women of rural area to sensitize them about the modern development of science and technology so that they could give up superstitious beliefs and attitudes. Women of rural areas should be trained up in different vocational courses like handloom and textile, poultry farms, fish farming, piggery, dairy farm, food and nutrition, fashion and designing, beauty parlous etc.

Women reservation policy should strictly be maintained in all aspects like appointment in govt. and semi govt. offices, admission in to the educational institutions, participating in the politics etc. This study concludes that mostly gender barriers still continue particularly on rural area. Research area covers more number of rural areas. Due to current socio economic constraints in rural area, the potential of women have not been fully utilized and further pushed back into the social hierarchy. Most of the educated women feel that, they can able to achieve more than men. But inbuilt idea that women are capable of doing less work than men and less efficient than men. The lack of education becomes the obstacles in getting empowerment. Taking an overview of all the above aspects, we come to know that the transformation is very much needed, accepting at the same time that its pace may be less than the desired pace. For giving this process a momentum, education is indispensable. Hence, if women's empowerment is to be effected, it can be carried out only through the medium of education.

Hence, it is of foremost importance to raise the level of education amongst women and In order to really bring women empowerment in the Indian society, we need to understand and eliminate the main cause of the ill practices against women which are patriarchal & male dominated system of the society. We need to be open-minded and change the old mind set against women together with the constitutional and other provisions.

“To awaken the people, it is the women who must be awakened. Once she is on the move, the family moves, the village moves, the nation moves.” ~ Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru

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## **BETI BACHAO, BETI PADHAO – AN INITIATIVE FOR WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA**

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“Nation is always empowered by its women. It is she who nurtures a citizen as a mother, as a sister in his childhood, and later in the life as a wife. These empowered citizens eventually make an empowered country.” **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**

### **I. Introduction**

During the pre-Vedic period status of women was far better in the society. They were equally treated with the men, had access to education and employment. But, post-Vedic period was marked by series of foreign invasion which eventually reduced her status. They were refused to participate in decision making, freedom of movement was denied, and access to education and employment were restricted. This has thrown them into darkness. Discrimination and prejudice over the centuries against the girl child in the Indian society has led to significant declining in the Child Sex Ratio (CSR), literacy ratio and surge in gender biasness.

The global sex ratios of females per 1,000 males in 2010 were 986 which reduced to 984 in 2011. India has witnessed sharp decline in the Child Sex Ratio (CSR) since 1961. Census 2011 has projected an alarming figure. The Child Sex Ratio (CSR) of children between age group 0-6 years came down to 918 from 976, which was all time low since independence. The Gender Inequality Index (GII) of India in 2018 was 0.501 ranked 129 out of 186 countries. UNICEF report (2012) ranked India 41st among 195 countries in sex ratio. A skewed CSR indicates that number of girls is getting disproportionately less in comparison to the boys. Gender imbalance was prevalent in India which reflects both pre birth discrimination manifested through gender biased sex selection, and post birth discrimination against girls. The decline is widespread across the country and has expanded to rural as well as tribal areas. With the mindset of considering male as an asset and female as liability, has widens the gender gap. Socio-cultural and religious biases, patriarchal mindset and misuse of diagnostic tools are adding fuel to the fire.

The figure 1 represents gender inequality. Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB) which means girls born per 1000 boys is influenced by factors like preference for son, social and religious biases and child mortality rate. According to the statistical report (2012), sex ratio at birth in India was 908 in 2010-12 which was low as against the internationally observed normal of 952. The lesser Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB) rate indicates that number of girls born than the boys in India are low. Existing laws prohibit sex-determination and illegal termination of pregnancy, but still female foeticide in India has grown into Rs1000 crore industry.

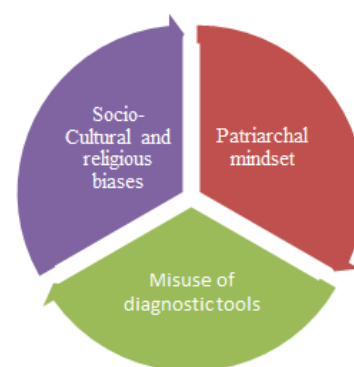


Figure 1 Gender Inequality

In the patriarchal setting of the Indian family, girls have lower status and fewer privileges as compared to boy children. Denial of access to education has resulted in low literacy rates among women than male counterparts. In spite of all the efforts of the government since independence women access to education remains low. According the UNDP Human Development report (2011), there exist gender gap in literacy rate, 66% of women are educated as against 82% of men on an average. Table 1 given below indicates the literacy rate among men and women.

Table – 1: Literacy rate among men & women

| Sl. No. | Census Year | % of literacy rate among men | % of literacy rate among women | % of Gender Gap |
|---------|-------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1       | 1951        | 27.8                         | 8.86                           | 18.30           |
| 2       | 1961        | 40.4                         | 15.35                          | 25.05           |
| 3       | 1971        | 45.96                        | 21.97                          | 23.98           |
| 4       | 1981        | 56.38                        | 29.76                          | 26.62           |
| 5       | 1991        | 64.13                        | 39.29                          | 24.84           |
| 6       | 2001        | 75.26                        | 53.67                          | 21.59           |
| 7       | 2011        | 82.14                        | 65.5                           | 16.68           |

\*Source: National Population Commission, GOI

The education of women plays a significant role in improving livings standards in the country. A higher women literacy rate improves the quality of life both home and outside of home, by encouraging and promoting education of children, especially female children, helps in reducing the infant mortality rate.

## II. STATUS OF WOMEN IN EDUCATION SYSTEM

As **Mahatma Gandhi** said, “*Educate one man, you educate one person, but educate a woman and you educate a whole civilization.*”

Just like food, clothing and shelter education is also one of the basic necessity of life. Education not only helps a person to acquire knowledge but it enables development of mind and soul, enables logical and analytical thinking also. Through education a person can attain organizational, managerial, and administrative skills. Moreover, it enhance self-esteem and improved social and financial status within a community. Therefore, education must be accessible to all without any discrimination.

In India education is the fundamental right of every citizen. Free and Compulsory education is enshrined by the constitution for all children between the ages of 6 to 14. But, statistic on women literacy rate states different story. According to Global Gender Gap report (2020) published by World Economic Form, India ranks 112th on the overall Global Gender Gap Index and the country has closed two-thirds of its overall gender gap (score of 66.8%).

Based on the four categories economic participation & opportunity, educational attainment, health & survival and political empowerment, the Global Gender Gap Index captures the magnitude of gender-based disparities and tracking their progress over time. The rankings are designed to create global awareness of the challenges posed by gender gaps and the opportunities created by reducing them. Table 2 presents below shows cross-country comparison of gender gap index.

**Table 2: Cross-country comparison gender gap index**

| Sl.No. | Gender Gap subindex                    | India |       | China |       |
|--------|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|        |  | Rank  | Score | Rank  | Score |
| 1      | Economic Participation and opportunity | 149   | 0.354 | 91    | 0.651 |
| 2      | Education Attainment                   | 112   | 0.962 | 100   | 0.973 |
| 3      | Health and survival                    | 150   | 0.944 | 153   | 0.926 |

|   |                       |    |       |    |       |
|---|-----------------------|----|-------|----|-------|
| 4 | Political Empowerment | 18 | 0.411 | 95 | 0.154 |
|---|-----------------------|----|-------|----|-------|

*\*Source: Global Gender Gap, WEF*

*\*Note: Compiled by researcher*

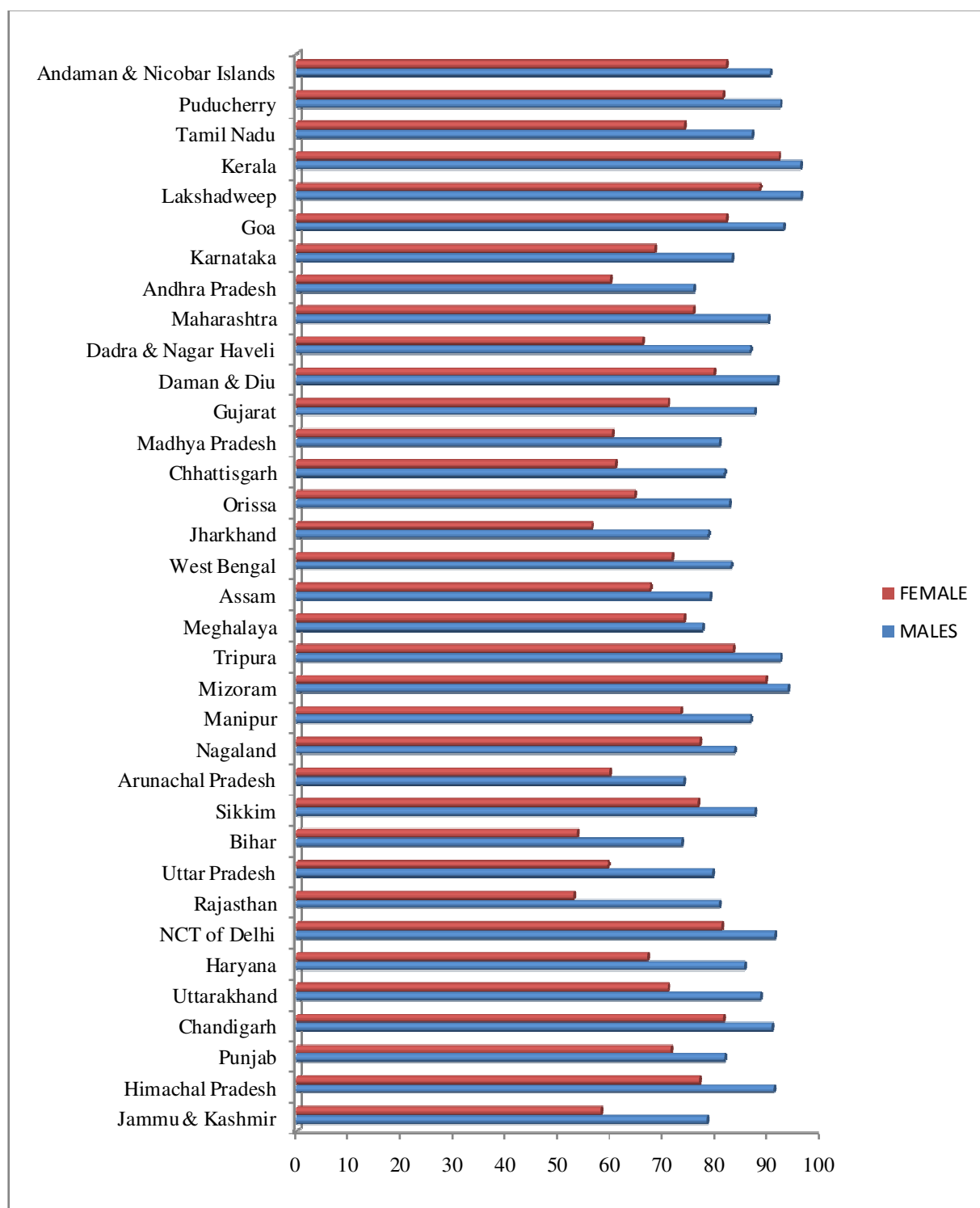
The statistic of cross country comparison between India and China shows that in health & survival and political empowerment, India is ahead of China. Subindex of economic participation & opportunity and education attainment India ranks 149 and 112 respectively.

Post independence there has been a concerted attempt by the government to improve literacy levels among women's in India. Various initiatives have been launched to increase the access, expand coverage and quality of education for womens. Special attention has been given to the education of women in all of the schemes. Despite the concerted attempts of the government and various NGOs operating in the field of education there exists the male-female gap in literacy rates. Table 3 given below projects the state-wise male female literacy gap. A large difference persists for literacy rate; only two-thirds of women are literate compared with 82% of men. Yet the gap has been narrowing in the past decade, because the literacy rate has significantly increased among women (66%).

To bridge the gender based gap on 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 2015 Hon'ble Prime Minister launched (BBBP) Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme which can be translated as "Save the girl child, educate the girl child ". The scheme urged people to change their patriarchal mindset, break the stereotypes attitude towards girl child and give up the inhumane practice of female foeticide. The scheme envisaged prevention of sex selection at pre-conception and conception stage, safe birth of girl child, ensuring health & nutrition of girl child, providing care at Anganwadi and ensuring their education. Converging several existing schemes and program of health, education and women & child welfare, it engage multiple agencies to put up focused efforts in improving the poor sex ratio, girls' education and overall attitude towards girl child.



**Table 3: State-wise male female literacy rate**



\*Source: National Population Commission, GOI & Census, 2011

### III. OBJECTIVES OF SCHEME

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme is a tri-ministerial effort of Ministry of Women and child Development, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and Ministry of Human Resource Development. To alleviate the different treatment of girl child in the society, the scheme focused on the following objectives.

- i. **Gender Baised:** The scheme aims at preventing gender biased sex selective elimination
- ii. **Survival & Protection:** The scheme ensures for survial and protection of girl child
- iii. **Education:** To promote women education and their participation

### IV. TARGET AUDIENCE

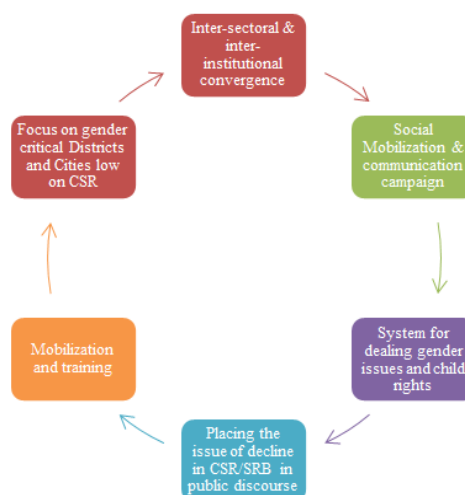
Under Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme different categories of citizens and institutions were targeted. Table 1 shows the categories of those citizens and institutions.

Table 2: Categories of citizens and institutions

| Category         | Description   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Primary</b>   | Young and newly married couples, Pregnant and Lactating mothers, Parents  |
| <b>Secondary</b> | Youth, in-laws, Medical Doctors/Practitioners, Private Hospitals, Nursing Homes, Diagnostic Centres.  |
| <b>Tertiary</b>  | Officials, Panchayat Raj Institution (PRI), Frontline Workers, Women SHGs/Collectives, Religious Leaders, Voluntary Organizations, Media, Medical Associations, Industry Associations |

### V. SIX-PRONGED STRATEGIES

Declining of Child Sex Ratio is a multi-dimensional issue. Therefore, six pronged multi- sectoral strategy adopted by the government to address the issue of gender discrimination and violence against the girls child and women.

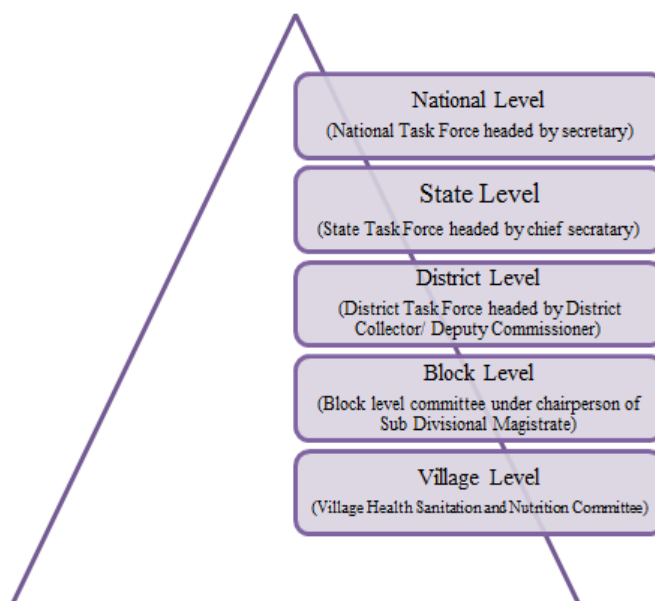


- i. **Inter-sectoral & Inter Institutional Convergence:** The scheme aims at converging of Inter-sectoral and inter-institutional at District/Block/grassroot levels.
- ii. **Social Mobilization & Communication Campaign:** Equal value for the girl child and to promote her education, 360 degree media approach will be used for social mobilization and communication campaign.
- iii. **System for gender issues and child right:** Facilitating service delivery structures/schemes and programmes are sufficiently responsive to issues of gender and children’s rights.
- iv. **Public Discourse:** Public discourse strategy has been adopted to raise the issue of declining CSR/SRB.
- v. **Mobilization & Training:** Mobilization and impart of training to the local community/women’s/youth groups for social change
- vi. **Focus on Districts and Cities low on CSR:** Priorities has been given to cities and districts which has low CSR in census 2011.

## VI. MONITORING AND SUPERVISION OF SCHEME

Under the scheme, 5-tier monitoring and supervision has been undertaken at different levels (National/ State/ District/ Block and Gram Panchayat/Ward level) by task force/committees.

- a. **Tier I - National Level:** National Task Force will monitor the sheme at national level which will be headed by Secretary of the concerned Ministry. The Task Force will provide national level guidance and support; finalize training content; review State plans and monitor effective implementation.



- b. **Tier II – State Level:** State Task Force will be headed by chief secretary. The representation of the concerned Departments including State Level Services Authority and Department of Disability Affairs for Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao to coordinate the Multi-Sectoral implementation of the Scheme. In UTs the Task Force would be headed by Administrator, UT Administration.
- c. **Tier III – District Level:** District Task Force (DTF) led by the District Collector/Deputy Commissioner with representation of Departments like Health, Education, and other concerned departments such as District Legal Services Authority and Police. The DTF will be responsible for effective implementation, monitoring and supervision of the District Action Plan (DAP). District Programme Officer will be responsible for formulation and implementation of Action Plan in the district.
- d. **Tier IV- Block level:** Under the chairpersonship of the Sub Divisional Magistrate/Sub Divisional Officer/Block Development Officer, a Block level Committee would be set up. It would provide support in effective implementation, monitoring and supervision of the Block Action Plan. The college student volunteers would spread awareness in the community on Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao (BBBP).
- e. **Tier V- Gram Panchayat/Ward level,** the respective Panchayat Samiti/Ward Samiti decided by concerned State Governments would have jurisdiction over the concerned Gram Panchayat/Ward and they will be responsible for overall coordination and supervision for effectively carrying out activities. At Village level, Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Committees, will guide and support village level implementation and monitoring of the plan.

## VII. ELIGIBILITY

All girl child upto the age of 10 years are eligible for the scheme. The beneficiaries should have a bank account in their name. At the time of opening a bank account beneficiaries are required to submit the following documents with the post office or bank where they wish to open account.

- Birth certificate of girl child
- Parent or legal guardian's identity proof
- Proof of address of parent or legal guardian

It is a tax free scheme which means no amount will be deducted from the bank. However, it should be noted that NRI cannot avail the benefits of the scheme because according to the guidelines of RBI they do not come under this category.

### **VIII. ASSISTANCE TO WOMEN**

Maximum duration of the scheme is 21 years. When the girl child attains 18 years of age, she gets tranche of money for her higher education. When she reaches 21 years of age she can withdraw money for her marriage purpose. The main focus of the scheme is to explain to the people that education and marriage of a girl child is not a burden for parents. It provides complete financial security of the girl child. Once they complete 21 years from the time of opening the account the entire amount will be credited to her account inclusive of interest.

### **IX. TAKE AWAY**

*“Marriage can wait, Education cannot” –Khaled Hosseini*

Gender discrimination is prevalent in India due to patriarchal mindset. Declining trend in the Child Sex Ratio (CSR), gender discrimination at pre birth and post birth, denial education and empowerment are few examples which portrays biasness toward them. Women, who constitute nearly half of the population, have the ability to change their own economic status, as well as that of the communities and countries in which they live. Often, their contributions go unrecognized, their works undervalued and their promise unnourished. An attempt has to be made to remove the social, psychological and structural barriers, for participation of majority of women in education. The state must play a prominent role in preventing gender stereotyping and segregation in education, and providing stipends, scholarships, loans, transport facilities, guidance and counseling services to women and their families, especially belonging to the lower and marginalised sections of society, and with required regulation and intervention, when necessary, to

correct the imbalances in education access. In this regard, BBBP runs in favour of women and focuses on the empowerment and development of women. With overall objective of celebrating girl child and enable her education, Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme provides girl child access to survival, safety and education. It spread awareness about the importance of girl child in the society. The initiative encourages people to celebrate the birth of a girl child and give up the inhumane practice of female foeticide. Government has launched the scheme with well-planned objectives, strategies and action plan. Utmost importance has been given toward empowerment, uplifting and welfare of girl child & women. But mere allotment of funds would unable to address the problem. People need to be more responsible and give up the patriarchal mindset of considering male child as an asset and girl child as a liability. Gender equality need to be discussed more often so that the citizens, showcase more responsible behaviour and think twice before discriminating against the girl child. In addition, stringent rules and regulation should be made for the violators if they indulge in sex determination and sex-selective abortion practices.

## **X. WAY FORWARD**

Gender discrimination is so much prevalent in India that it can be seen everywhere. Be it be it school, office or at home. At the early age when boy child are force to attend school girls are impel to participate in household chores. Parent reluctant to educate girls is a huge factor inhibiting their access to education. People have a mindset that education for girls unlikely to reap any returns ascribes to the view that investing in the education of the male child is like an investment. Therefore, attempt should be made to remove those social, psychological and structural barriers.

- **Change in Patriarchal Mindset:** The parents should be made aware about the potential of girl child. They should be view investment in the girl child as more promising. Their reluctance of sending the girl child should be addressed through one to one counselling and discussion.
- **Safety & Security:** One of the main reasons for parents petrified to send their girl child to school is concern for safety and security of their daughter. Crimes against women are exclusively committed. Therefore, it is duty of the state as well as community at large to

provide safety and security to the women. Parents psychological and sociological fear of sending the girl child to school are overcome.

- **Infrastructure Facilities:** It has been seen that lack of adequate facility in school like sanitary facilities, shortage of female teachers and gender bias in curriculum are one of the important cause for girl child in participation in school. So, focus should be improving these facilities.

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**Aditi Mahavidyalaya**  
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In collaboration with CPDHE

**National Conference**  
**On**  
**Revamping Higher Education for Girls in India by Exploring Possibilities through**  
**Traditional and Innovative Teaching Techniques- Beti Bachao Beti Padhao**  
**Perspective**  
**28<sup>th</sup> August, 2019**

**Survey on Happiness Index**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Designation: \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliating Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Id: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How happy are you at the moment?
  - a) Happy
  - b) Very Happy
  - c) Normal
2. In what area of your life would you like to increase your feeling of happiness? Select all that apply.

|                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| a) Family       | f) Health       |
| b) Friends      | g) Wealth       |
| c) Relationship | h) Surrounding  |
| d) Workplace    | i) Leisure time |
| e) Career       |                 |
3. Please state your agreement with the below statements
  - 1) I am pleased with the way I am
    - a) Strongly disagree
    - b) Disagree
    - c) Neutral
    - d) Agree
    - e) Strongly Agree
  - 2) I am pleased with the way I approach life
    - a) Strongly disagree

- b) Disagree
  - c) Neutral
  - d) Agree
  - e) Strongly Agree
- 3) I find beauty in daily objects
- a) Strongly disagree
  - b) Disagree
  - c) Neutral
  - d) Agree
  - e) Strongly Agree
- 4) I like dark rooms
- a) Strongly disagree    b) Disagree    c) Neutral    d) Agree) Strongly Agree
- 5) I feel lost in big gatherings.....
- a) Strongly disagree    b) Disagree    c) Neutral    d) Agree    e) Strongly Agree
- 6) I have very warm feeling towards everyone
- a) Strongly disagree    b) Disagree    c) Neutral    d) Agree    e) Strongly Agree
- 7) I am very optimistic about the future
- a) Strongly disagree    b) Disagree    c) Neutral    d) Agree    e) Strongly Agree
- 8) There is a gap between what I would like to do and what I have done.....
- a) Strongly disagree    b) Disagree    c) Neutral    d) Agree    e) Strongly Agree
4. Among them, which movie inspire you for bringing positivity in life.
- a) Zindagi Milegi na Dobarā
  - b) Queen
  - c) Dear Zindagi
  - d) Any other, pls specify.....
5. What is happiness for you?
- a) Pure luck
  - b) I already forgot what it is
  - c) A series of choices and the decision to make the best of my life
  - d) A bit of luck and a bit of hard work
6. What is your goal in life?
- a) Surviving
  - b) Overcoming problems
  - c) Living a fulfilled, healthy life
  - d) Always being grateful for what I have
7. Glass half empty or half full?
- a) Both
  - b) Half full
  - c) Half empty
8. Life is good
- a) Yeah!    b) sometimes    c) I don't understand    d) to everybody else, for sure.

## Organizing Committee

**Dr. Mamta Sharma**

**Convener**

**Dr. Bhawna Rajput**

**Co-Convener  
& Organizing Secretary**

## Members

**Dr. Nalini Singh (Coordinator)**

**Dr. Santosh Kumar Yadav**

**Dr. Sunita Dahiya**

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