

## **WOMEN IN HIGHER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN INDIA**

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**Abstract:** India is the world's largest democracy in the world with a population of nearly 1.25 billion. Higher and Technical education of women in India plays an important role in improving living standards and prosperity of the country. A higher women illiterateness rate improves the quality of life at home and outside home. By encouraging and promoting education of children, especially female children, and in reducing the child mortality rate. As an independent group, women constitute 48% of the total population of India. Women's constitute valuable human resource of the country. Their development and growth in the socioeconomic area also sets step for sustainable growth of the economy. The principle of gender equality is protected in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles of State Policy. The Constitution officially grants equality to women in India. Indian constitution also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive perception in favor of women by making various helpful laws and schemes and policies for women. The education to everyone, EFA programme was launched in 2002 by the Government of India after its 86th Constitutional Amendment made education from age 6-14 the fundamental right of every Indian child. Even though girl's education is not improving according to determined parameter. Women India has made significant progress towards the goal of education for all during the past few years. Keeping in view the speed of progress accomplished till 2000, several programmes have been formulated and implemented since 2001 to advance the goal of Education. Women Education is milestone and breakthrough strategy of women empowerment because it allows them to responds to the challenges, to provoke their traditional role and change their life style accordance with modern society. Due to this we cannot disregard the

importance of education in reference to women empowerment India is self-confident to becoming superpower, a developed country by 2020. In this paper we try to describe the present representation of higher education in India and women participation in it. In this paper we shall try to define the picture of women involvement in higher education in India. We also mention the necessity and factors responsible for women participation in higher education. Finally effort will be made to give some recommendations which can speed up women participation in higher education in India. As our prime minister started The 'Beti Bachao - Beti Padhao' scheme, which seeks to address gender imbalance and discrimination against the girl child.

### **Methodology:**

For this study descriptive methods are followed and secondary data has been collected. For this study data and information has been collected from various books, Research Article, Magazines, Research Journal, E-journal, Report of UGC, and Report of the higher education and Websites.

### **Objectives:**

- To study need and importance of women education
- To state benefits of women education.
- To study importance of women education
- To analysis educational development of women through Government initiatives and schemes
- To identify main factors Inducing women in finishing Higher & Technical education
- To give Suggestions for promoting women participation in higher education

### **Need and importance**

There is a huge gap between male (82.14%, in 2011) and female (65.46%, in 2011) literacy rates in India. Low women literacy rate has a huge negative impact

on the overall growth and development of the society – where women are majorly responsible for child care and development. As per research results, it is proved that children who are taken care by educated mom are well-nourished and have all-rounded development. Though slow, in the last decade (2001-2011) the gender gap is seen to be narrowing rapidly – women literacy rate has been growing at 11.8% and men at 6.9%.

#### **Why Education is Crucial for Women?**

UN report says that education for women is the single most effective way to improve lives and health of a family and a society at large. A woman with education is a powerful person, she has the power to educate the children in her family, guide them in taking effective decisions, contribute economically and gives valuable inputs for improvement on home and society both. Women constitute nearly half of a country's population, when 50% of the population is left without education – a nation remains underdeveloped. Empowered women contribute to the development of the society, community and nation in several ways.

Education is the most important power that outline the lives of manhood. It empowers with the ability to think, reason, take appropriate decisions and protect women's in India from oppression & abuse. In most of the developing world around the world including India, women are often deprived of education opportunities. In spite of, women constitute 48% of the total population in India – the women literacy rate in urban area is 79.11% as against 88.76% males, and the figures are even lower in the rural situation where 57.93% women are literate as against 77.15% literate males. In 2014, India GDP growth ranges between 4.6% – 5.3% (1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter) and this growth percentage can be significantly improved if women are educated and starts contributing equally economically. Many surveys and studies worldwide have proved that educating women is the best profitable investment in terms of safety of children health, community welfare and building long-term achievement and success of developing countries. Education unlocks a whole new world of chances for a girl, it gives her the confidence to tackle different problems of life, become economically independent, make better choices, resolve family or community

matters appropriately, stand for her rights and guide her children over the years, the literacy rate among Indian women has increased and as per an article in one of India's leading newspapers – women enrollment for higher studies have increased from 10% (during Independence) to 43.8% in 2014 (<http://www.linkfried.com/importance-education-women-india date 26/11/2015> By think vidya 2015).

#### **Importance of Women education**

The importance of women education are briefly summarized below:

**Economic and financial development and prosperity:** Education will allow women to come forward and contribute towards the development and prosperity of the society and county for better development of nation.

**Economic empowerment:** Due to remain backward and economically dependent on men, the helpless condition of women cannot be altered. Proper financial empowerment and independence will only come through proper education and employment of women in every filed and area.

**Improved quality of life:** In India, girls wait for marriage and after marriage they lost their identities and sometime freedom and dignity also. Their rights are compressed & crushed down, sometimes situation becomes abusive& in salting. So we have to take broad outlook in the field of women education to improve their quality of life, otherwise situation will be worse for women's in India.

**Dignity and honor:** Educated women can looked upon with dignity and decency. They become a source of inspiration for millions of young girls and women who make them their role-models for social up-liftment and advancement in their career in society.

**Justice for rights:** Educated women are more knowledgeable of their rights for social justice. It would eventually and finally lead to decline in instances of violence and injustice against women such as dowry, forced-prostitution, child-marriage, female feticide, etc.

**Choice to choose a profession for women:** It is detected that educated women can prove be highly successful in the fields of life. A girl-child should get

equal opportunity for education, so that, she can plan to become a successful teacher professor, doctors, engineers, nurses, dietician, pharmacist air-hostesses, pilot .banker, cook, or choose a profession of her choice.

**Alleviate poverty of India:** Women education is an essential to alleviate poverty. Women need to take equal burden of the huge task of eliminating poverty. This would demand huge contribution from educated women. For proper social and economic changes girls and women are given their rights for education.

**Improved health:** Educated girls and women are conscious of the importance of health by health education, they are prepared to lead a healthy life-style. Educated mothers can take better care of both herself and her baby safely.

**Improved standard of living:-**Educated girls and women improve standard of living of her family with prosperous life.

**Develop capacity of women:-**Women higher education provided to women would mean independence in decision making and economic independence. It would develop capabilities to discharge duties and responsibilities in the fields of social, economic, political and cultural grounds.

**Benefits of Women Education:** There are numerous benefits of women education. Here are few of them:

- Educated women are able to take charge of their future for benefits of their family and society as a whole.
- Women can earn better and contribute to their family income by taking equal financial and economical responsibility
- Well educated women help reduce child and maternal mortality with better understanding/
- Educated women are better equipped herself to take care of their children's growth and education for better development of society and nation.

- Educated women are less likely to be taken advantage of and lowers disclosure to domestic abuse and exportation.
- Educated women have great confidence and takes right decisions at right time for family and society.
- Educated Women contributes in a positive way to the society and the nation at large for welfare and prosperity of both.
- Women are included in key decision-making positions, they take holistic decisions for the development and growth of the society and her family.
- Women in politics ascent to have different growth dimensions.
- Educating a boy is educating a person...Educating a girl is educating a nation', this statement is 100% true statement. (Think vidya 2015)

#### **Educational Development of Women through Government Initiatives and Schemes**

The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986, as revised in 1992, a path breaking policy document, articulates the Government of India's unequivocal commitment, that "Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women. In order to neutralize the accumulated distortions of the past, there will be a well-conceived edge of women....This will be an act of faith and social engineering.... The removal of women's illiteracy and obstacles inhibiting their services, setting time targets and effective monitoring of entire system..."

#### **HIGHER EDUCATION**

It has always been a constant endeavor of the Department of Higher Education to frame different schemes and projects to ensure larger participation and enrolment of women. Therefore, reducing the gender gap in higher education is a focus area. There has been a phenomenal growth in enrolment of women students in higher education in the country. The share of girl's enrolment which was less than 10% of the total enrolment on the eve of independence has been increased to 44.89 % in the academic year 2012-13. The GER for both Male and Female has an increasing trend. The Gender gap in

GER has also decreased during the period 2010 to 2013. (MHRD Report 2014-15 Chapter 13 Part-2)

The Women registration as a percentage of total enrolment in a State is the highest in Kerala (58.94) followed and the lowest in Madhya Pradesh (36.39). The women constitute 44.89% of total enrollment which is positive sign and indicate about empowerment. (AISHE-2012-2013)

**Different schemes of MHRD:**

**(A) Higher education of women through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) Mode:** Open and Distance Learning system is a system wherein teachers and learners need not necessarily be present either at same place or same time and is flexible in regard to modalities and timing of teaching and learning.

**Post School Diploma (Polytechnics etc.)**

additional stream available for enrolment to the school pass out students is Post School Diploma (Polytechnics etc.), which constitute major part of the Skill Development Strategy.

**University Grants Commission (UGC)**

The women education has been the priority area for the University Grants Commission (UGC), a premier apex body governing university education purpose, the Commission has launched a number of schemes to encourage the enrolment and promotion of girls in Higher Education. Such schemes being run by UGC are briefly as under:

**Day Care Centers in Universities and Colleges:**

The main objective of the scheme is to provide day care facility within the university system on demand basis for children of around three months to six years of age, when their parents (university/college employees/ students/scholars) are away from.

**Post Graduate Indira Gandhi Scholarship for Single Girl Child for Pursuing Higher and Technical Education:** The purpose of the scheme is to support higher education through scholarships to such girls who happen to be the only child in their families and also to make them recognize the values

of observance of small family norms. Girl students up to the age of 30 years at the time of admission of Postgraduate courses are only eligible. The number of slots for scholarships available under the scheme is 1200 p.a. The scholarship amount is @ Rs.3100/- per month.

**Construction of Women's Hostels for Colleges.:**

The UGC has been providing hostels and other infrastructural facilities to achieve the goal of enhancing the status of women and harness the potential availability for the development of the society, as also to bring about gender equity and equal representation of women through a special scheme 'construction of women's hostels'.

**Development of Women's Studies in Universities and Colleges:**

The scheme envisages assistance to universities for setting up new women study centers as well as to strengthen and sustain the university women study centers.

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**Post-Doctoral Fellowships for Women:** The scheme is implemented for the unemployed women candidates holding Ph.D. degree in their respective subject areas with an aim to accelerate the talented instincts of the women candidates to carry out the advanced studies and research.

**Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU):** The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has been making conscious efforts/steps to reach out to the Girl/Women learners especially in remote and rural areas of India for their

growth. (MHRD REPORT 2014-15 CHAPTER 13 PART-2).

**Development of Women's Studies in Universities and Colleges:** This MHRD scheme gives assistance to universities for setting up new women study centers as well as to strengthen and sustain the university women study centers, set up till the X Plan by establishing them as statutory departments in the university system. It also to facilitate their own capacity to network in other constituent so that they are mutually supporting as well as synergizing one and another for women education. The primary role of these centers is to make knowledge simulation and knowledge spread through teaching and research till action and documentation.

**All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)** was set-up in November 1945 as a national level Apex Advisory Body to conduct survey on the facilities on technical education and to promote development in the country in a coordinated and integrated manner. And to ensure the same, as stipulated in, the National Policy of Education (1986), AICTE be vested with statutory authority for planning, formulation and maintenance of norms and standards, quality assurance through accreditation, funding in priority areas, monitoring and evaluation, maintaining parity of certification and awards and ensuring coordinated and integrated development and management of technical education in the country.

In order to increase the enrolment of women in technical education, AICTE has special concessions in the regulations for setting up of new women technical institutions. These include relaxations in the norms for land availability, concession in processing fees, deposits etc. Implementation of the tuition fee waiver scheme for weaker sections has been made mandatory in all AICTE approved institutions. All India Council for Technical Education (MHRD ANNUAL REPORT-2015-15 CHAPTER-13).

**Interventions of Department of Higher Education at a glance having direct impact as the educational development of Women**

- Ministry of HRD has opened 20 Central Universities, 8 IITs, 7 IIMs, 10 NITs, 3 IISERs, 20 IIITs and 2SPAs.
- Sub-Mission on Polytechnics has been launched and 287 New polytechnics have been already sanctioned for the unserved areas/districts.
- Information and Communication Technology Mission has been launched to provide broad band connectivity to all colleges/universities.
- Scheme on interest subsidy on education loan has been launched for the students belong to weaker sections.
- While there is a 50% concession in fee for Girls candidates for appearing in JEE (Main) for admission to Engineering courses, there is no fee for female candidates of all categories for registration of JEE.
- (Advanced) examination for admission to IITs.
- 82,000 scholarships including 41,000 for women have been sanctioned for the students of weaker sections.
- Women Hostel Scheme in Polytechnics: The Scheme has been launched to provide financial assistance for the construction of women hostel in the existing polytechnics in order to enhance women participation in polytechnics II over the country, where in financial assistance of up to Rs. 1.00 crore is provided by central Government for Construction of Women's Hostels.(MHRD Annual Report 2014-2015 Part-2 Chapter13 page 36).

**Main Factors Inducing Women in Finishing Higher & Technical Education**

No of aspects which are accountable for inducing women in completing higher education in India some of these are mentioned below:

- a) In evaluation with men, women are more firm in their task of success. So in education also they are strongly inspired and encourage to succeed and become more prosper in the society.
- b) Women are firm and strong in their task and job, so their performance is also outstanding. Thus on the basis of their excellence they occupy the field of higher and technical education.
- c) In recent day the tendency of preconception & prejudice against women has been reduced in modern society and this helps women to enter in the field of higher education for their overall development.
- d) Due to Increased number of higher and technical educational foundations facilitated women to complete their higher studies and graduate or post graduate study.
- e) There are some courses and which provide scholarship facilities and stipend for women. This also helps many poor female students to complete their higher studies with such type of indirect financial assistance.
- f) There are many institutions which are providing hostel facilities for girl's students. This is also an important factor for girl students to complete their higher studies.
- g) New educational & Technical organizations intended only (like women polytechnic or Engineering College) for girls attracted many conservative families to get admitted their wards in higher educational institutions and colleges
- h) Anticipation for education-based employment is very high amongst women. This factor works very silently in completing their higher and technical studies
- i) Women students also get motivation and inspiration from the teachers and professors working in higher educational institutions which help them to complete their higher studies in all disciplines.
- j) Women enthusiasm and passion to take equal responsibility of the family impulses them to complete their higher study and higher and technical education.
- k) Due to higher and rewarding pay scale for the employees working in higher educational institutions involved women in higher and technical studies.
- l) In India in some cases women are dependent on male both in financially and in decision making and as such they suffer more. To get relief from this, they go for higher studies.
- m) In some rural or tribal area highly educated women are considered as equivalent to „dowry“ of a bride because educated women become one of the earning member of family.
- n) Due to change in global scenario outlook of modern society has been changed in many respects which helps women to complete their higher studies.
- o) In India central and state government should formulate and implement policies for stopping drop out of girl students in primary and secondary schools.

#### **Suggestions for Promoting Women Participation in Higher Education**

- Announce & declare attractive scholarships and financial help for both financially poor girls and meritorious scholars to encourage women students in higher & Technical education.
- Make arrangement for appropriate counseling for both family and person concerned at the secondary stage of education for women.
- Create skill-oriented higher education for women in India and in rural area.
- Education policy has design in such a way so that women participation in higher education accelerated.
- Establish more female educational organizations and institutions and Universities in remote, rural and tribal area.
- Stop violence against women by anti-violence educational programs in the school, reaching every single child, and starting at a young age. Also create awareness through published news and articles social and all types of media.

- Arrangement for bank loan with less interest for women students in higher and technical education for financial back up.
- Establish higher educational institutions in rural and tribal areas for up-liftment of women education in this area and make provision of appropriate transport facilities in this area for women.
- Stop sexual harassment within and outside institutions. And appropriate action taken for such events by imparting various laws and legal action.
- Increase of women teachers in co-educational institutions of higher and technical education.
- Increase women representations in decision making bodies of higher and technical educational institutions.
- Launch equal opportunity commissions for higher educational institutions.
- For financial support of women make provisions of stipends, scholarships and fellowships for women studying in higher & Technical educational institutions.
- Government should formulate and implement various policies and scheme for women up-liftment. For stopping drop out of girl students in secondary and lower classes. As for example Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is Government of India's flagship programme for achievement of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) in a time bound manner, as mandated by 86th amendment to the Constitution of India making free and compulsory Education to the Children of 6-14 years age group, a Fundamental Right Establish post-secondary vocational training institutions for promoting the entry of women in higher education.
- Early marriage of women leads to withdrawal of women from higher studies. This must be stopped by appropriate ways by creating awareness in society through different digital and print media Provide more hostel facilities for women students in universities, colleges and other educational institutions.
- Build or make provision of a library for girls in schools where girls can come and borrow books free of cost including various test guides to board examinations, novels etc Also give proper training to teachers and librarians so that they can appropriately organize, manage, and rotate the collections of books.
- Arrange Community Camps for girls and women emphasize community and values-based education, outdoor challenge, fun, individual growth. Community Camps is unique camping for school girls and women like Summer Camps, Outdoor Schools, weekend programs for women, and meeting and event facilities.
- In today's era attitudes of the male oriented society must be changed. This will undoubtedly help in increasing women participation in higher education for become self-reliable and independent.
- Launch non-traditional curricular for women and extend state provision for this.
- Government should launch special schemes for welfare of women like Pradhan Mantri Sukanya Samridhi Yojana (PMSSY).

### **Conclusion**

In 21<sup>st</sup> century education is widely recognized as the new opening for economic security, safetyman opportunity particularly for girls and women. In India education of women is necessary because an educated woman has high skills, the self-confidence and the information, An educated women wants to become a better paternal, worker and citizen for the overall development of India. When woman is financially in dependent she has the ability to live life on her own terms.

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