

Girls Education in India

Prof. Asha V Bodele and Khushi Kelaskar

ICLES' Motilal Jhunjhunwala College, Vashi, Maharashtra, India

Abstract: *Every day, girls face barriers to education caused by poverty, cultural norms and practices, poor infrastructure, violence and fragility. Girls' education goes beyond getting girls into school. It is also about ensuring that girls learn and feel safe while in school; have the opportunity to complete all levels of education, acquiring the knowledge and skills to compete in the labour market; gain socio-emotional and life skills necessary to navigate and adapt to a changing world; make decisions about their own lives; and contribute to their communities and the world*

Keywords: Women education, empowerment, opportunities.

I. INTRODUCTION

Whenever we talk about girls' education, we often observe that in India there is backwardness in girls pursuing higher education, a taboo to be precise. Most of the girls' population are restricted from getting education, while some are allowed only up to ssc level and then the next step in their lives is to get married. Although we say India is developing, we can't see any development in girls' education. We need both gender equality in education to ensure that both girls and boys can access and complete programs of study as well as become empowered equally in and through education.

Education

Education is one of the basic activities of people in all human societies. The term education is derived from the Latin educare, which literally means to 'bring up', and is connected with the verb educare which means to 'bring forth'. The idea of education is not merely to impart knowledge to the pupil in some subjects but to develop in him those habits and attitudes with which he may successfully face the future. Emile Durkheim conceives education as the socialization of the younger generation. He further states that it is a continuous effort to impose on the child ways of seeing, feeling, and acting, which he could not have arrived at spontaneously through birth. Education simply stands for deliberate instruction or training. In our day to day life we have functions of appliances, such as education has its functions. It completes the socialization process, transmits the central heritage, nourishes the formation of social personality, reformates various attitudes, provides an occupational placement as an instrument of livelihood and it also encourages the spirit of competition. There are various objectives of education which include promoting education among girls, changing lives of women and girls through education with a powerful future and an increase in participation of women in socio-economic aspects in accordance with the nation.

Benefits of Girls Education

There are innumerable benefits of investing in girls 'education for a country which includes an educated woman, which positively impacts economic, social and health standards. There are higher female literacy rates, which reduces child mortality. Education lowers crime rates; girl's education reduces inequality in society, it empowers marginalised women and helps them build better futures for themselves and their families. An educated society is more stable and can recover faster after a conflict. Educated girls are less likely to marry at a young age and more likely to raise healthy children. Women who complete higher education and acquire skills dramatically increase lifetime earnings. Kids of educated women are less likely to experience malnutrition or stunting.

Lack of Education

Without educating girls, nations lose productivity and risk instability and conflict. A lack of education puts girls at risk of child marriage, poor health, early pregnancies, joblessness and poverty, experts say. This creates more rigidity in society where women are objectified and are limited to households and slavery works. According

to UNESCO estimates, around the world, 129 million girls are out of school, including 32 million of primary school age, and 97 million of secondary school age. Challenges like gender biasness, poverty, violence, and Covid-19 and child marriage are the main objects in lesser education among girls. Lack of education among girls can lead to dependency on male significant, domestic violence and many different problems.

Giving girls and women access to quality education and equal opportunities goes beyond solving one of the biggest moral challenges facing our generation. As the world sets out to inaugurate the new sustainable development goals, holistic quality education for girls in and out of school must be a core priority. As countries get more modern and strive towards developing their economic status, girl education assumes an ever bigger role. Since half of the active workforce is female, to not have them receive an education will end up being a burden on the country's economic progress. Girls' education strengthens economies and reduces inequality. It contributes to more stable, resilient societies that are able to give all individuals numerous opportunities to fulfil their potential and realize their dreams.

Gross Enrolment Ratio India 2022

.According to the survey, the countrywide female literacy rate in India is 70.3 percent, while the male literacy rate is predicted to be 84.7 percent. According to the NSO, India's average literacy rate is 77.7 percent. Women's education is vital to the overall growth of the country. A well-educated lady can manage both her personal and professional lives. In simple words, an educated woman rides a boat in a reservoir, but an illiterate woman can just be a mere pebble thrown into the reservoir by society.

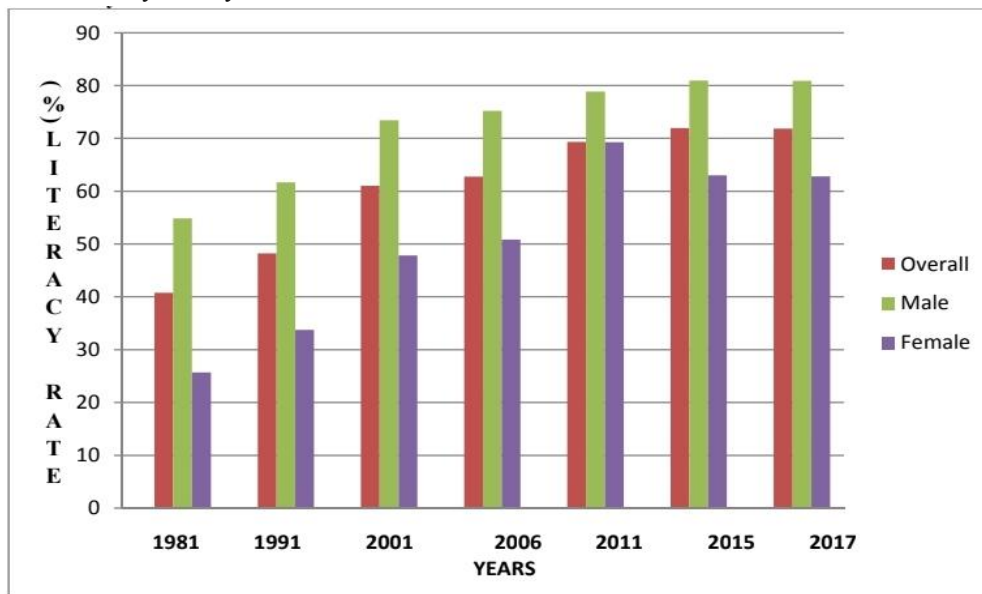


Figure: The literacy rate in India from 1981 to 2017

As stated in the latest UDISE+ report, the Gross Enrolment Ratio in primary schools has increased from 101.3% in 2018-19 to 103.3% in 2020-21. Similarly, the Gross Enrolment Ratio of upper primary schools has registered a notable growth as it has increased to 92.2% in 2020-21, while it was only 87.74% in 2018-19.

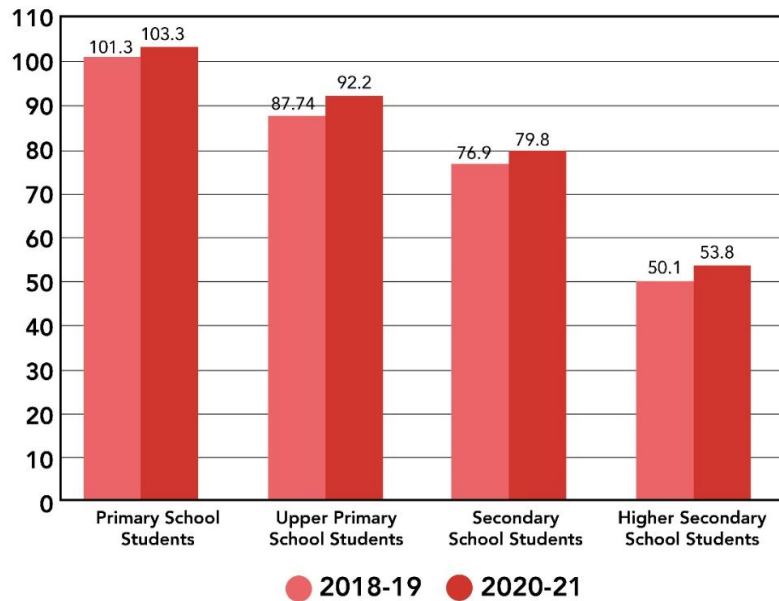


Figure: The Gross enrolment rate in India of 2018-19 and 2020-21.

Obstacles in Girls Education

Gender Discrimination in India:

Girls in India face discrimination both inside their homes and outside in their communities. Inequality in India means unequal opportunities for girls are encouraged and also engaged more in household work and drop out of school at an early age. Most of the time their movements are restricted to get an education and engage in social exchanges.

Poverty:

Poverty and gender-based preference are two of the main challenges which impact girl child education. Girls are forced to stay at home or engage in daily wage labour to contribute to the income of the house. According to a UN report, every year more than 1.5 million girls in India are married before they turn 18. They are not allowed to go to school after marriage. Eventually, these young girls become mothers at an early age which has adverse effects on the health of both mother and child.

Distance from Home:

Even though 80 percent of schools in India are in the country's villages, most of them are non-functional. There is a severe lack of teachers, proper teaching-learning facilities, and infrastructure. Children in rural areas often have to walk a long distance to reach school in a different village or city. Due to fear of harassment and violence against girls, most parents prefer to not send their girls to school.

Lack of Toilets in Schools

In developing countries like India, a lack of separate toilets for girls and boys is one of the top barriers to education. Adolescent girls frequently miss school due to hygiene-related problems and eventually drop out. Schools do not provide sanitary napkins due to extreme taboo which often lead to girls of menstruating age dropping out of school.

Corruption:

Corruption is not at all a new term it is quite prominent and widely practised, due this many underprivileged people and still below the belt and they aren't aware half of the time that they are lagging behind. Many Bollywood movies have tried covering such topics, there are real life examples to; wherein under RTE there were bogus registrations, the needy couldn't benefit from the scheme at times

Tackling the barriers in Education

There is an urgency to bring Indian villages to the centre stage in the agenda. SDG goals in India are not attainable without a robust rural development program with the inclusion of a rural economy. Improving the quality of life and

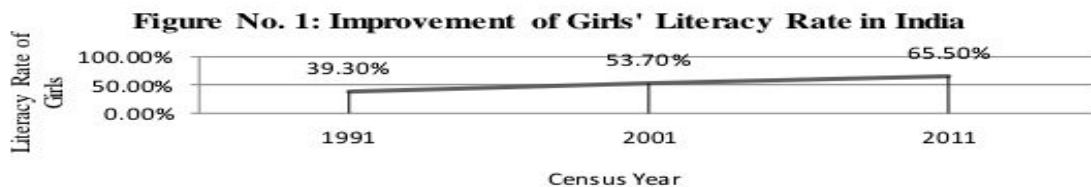
economic well-being of 65% of Indians living in more than 6 lakh villages is a big challenge. Poverty and the disparity in per capita rural and urban incomes have remained persistently high. A lot of work has been done since independence, but the overall slow progress attests to the vision of providing sustainable and inclusive rural development in India by increasing livelihood opportunities, extending social safety and developing child-centred education, healthcare and industrial infrastructure is far from reality. Implementing more schemes for overall education, both male and female, this should be active and on-going till we reach our goal. Spreading awareness among the rural people about education being an important aspect in one's life and a great tool for success is a must. Changing the laws and schemes every year so that its effective and productive with good results. For example the Beti Bachao Beti Padho was launch in 2015, it is the best scheme for sure, but now after the pandemic the 2015 regulations can be of no help to the people because after the Covid -19 situations the challenges and problems are different than that of 2015. Constant changes from time to time and observation in the process of proper and rightful implementation should be the top most priority as well.

Worldwide, 129 million girls are out of school. Only 49 per cent of countries have achieved gender parity in primary education. We can see that out of 195 countries only 49 per cent have archived education up to primary level which is a big problem. This issue should be awakened in all minds and solved so that we achieve the status of gender equality to. The secondary level, the gap widens: 42 per cent of countries have achieved gender parity in lower secondary education, and 24 per cent in upper secondary education. Gender-equitable educations systems help keep both girls and boys in school, building prosperity for entire countries. An education free of negative gender norms has direct benefits for boys, too. In many countries, norms around masculinity can fuel disengagement from school, child labour, gang violence and recruitment into armed groups. The need or desire to earn an income also causes boys to drop out of secondary school, as many of them believe the curriculum is not relevant to work opportunities.

Status of Girls' Education in India:

In recent years, India has reportedly shown considerable improvement in girls' education. The literacy rate has also increased than the past decades. In 1991 girls' literacy rate was 39.3% and in 2001 girls' literacy rate was 53.7%, but in 2011 girls' literacy rate improved by 65.5%.

Source: Census Data, 1991 to 2011



Along with improvements in literacy, India has witnessed a significant increase in primary, upper primary as well as higher education enrolments. The recent data (DISE and U-DISE data 2012-2015) suggests that there has been a considerable increase in the participation of girls in all level of education, i.e. Primary, Secondary and Higher Education because of an increase in enrolments and decline in drop-out rates over the years.

Years	Primary	Upper - Primary	Secondary	Higher Secondary
2014 - 2015	48.19%	48.36%	47.47%	47.06%
2013 - 2014	48.20%	48.66%	48.63%	46.57%
2012 - 2013	48.36%	48.77%	48.33%	46.09%

Table 1: Enrolment Status of Girls' Education in India from 2012 to 2015

Source: DISE and U-DISE data 2012-2015

It is clear from the table no. 1 that girls' enrolment status has been increased in the Higher Secondary level from 2012 to 2015. But the status of girls' enrolment has not been improved from 2012 to 2015 in Primary and Upper Primary level. In Secondary level girls' enrolment status was increased from 2013 to 2014, but it was decreased in 2015.

II. CONCLUSION

A good qualitative and quantitative education for women can lead a nation to prosperity and good will. In this 21st century we are gradually seeing the women shine in their respective fields. We have improved a lot on women education since our independence, but a lot of work has to be done yet. Factors restricting the growth of women education should be eliminated from root so as to have a nation running smoothly in terms of socio-economic problems.

REFERENCES

- [1]. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/271335/literacy-rate-in-india>
- [2]. Nisha Nair, (2010) Women's education in India: A situational analysis, IMJ,
- [3]. <https://www.unicef.org/education/girls-education>
- [4]. Suguna M. (2011). Education and Women Empowerment in India. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research: VOL. I. Issue 8.
- [5]. <https://www.smilefoundationindia.org/blog/equality-and-education-for-girl-child/>
- [6]. <https://www.collegesearch.in/articles/womens-education>
- [7]. Women's education and economic well-being M. Anne Hill & Elizabeth King, 18 Jun 2010