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PROBLEMS OF FEMALES IN HIGHER EDUCATION



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ABSTRACT:

The statistics revealed that there is gender gap in higher education as female participation is lower in higher education. As such, Government and UGC have taken many of the welfare schemes and policies to increase female participation in higher education. Hence, there is slow increase of female enrolment in higher education courses. Still there is gender gap and to fill up gender gap in higher education, it is essential to look into the problems of females in higher education and provide facilities essentially needed for female students.

KEYWORDS

Problems of females , higher education and provide facilities , society.

INTRODUCTION :

Education has been regarded as the most significant instrument for changing women's subjugated position in the society. It not only develops the personality and rationality of individuals but qualifies them to fulfill certain economic, political and cultural functions and thereby improves their socio-economic status. One of the direct expectations from educational development in a society is the reduction in the inequality among individuals and that is why Education was included as the basic right of every human being in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The constitution of UNESCO also directs its efforts to achieve "The ideal of equality of educational opportunity without regard to race, sex or any distinction, economic or social".

Education is a double-edged instrument; it can contribute to and be an ally of structural changes in society by training people in required skills- old, newly emerging and anticipated. It is also a value-generating process-influencing the behaviour, norms and cultural attitudes of people, particularly younger ones. From the beginning of the movement for the equality of women in recent history, great emphasis was placed on education as the major instrument for the elimination of gender inequality. Developing countries have viewed education as an instrument to stimulate development in all fields, and to reduce their dependence on external advisers. The basic problems were to promote a rapid expansion of development and cultural structures to meet the manpower requirements of development and cultural progress in general. Scarcity of resources and the shifting priorities of development have constrained the balanced pursuit of these aims. One of the objectives which had a low priority in the allocation of efforts and resources was the elimination of gender inequality (Snyder, 1994).

Problems and Challenges for Girl's Access to Higher Education:

Some of the prominent problems in girls' higher education are:

i) Social Problem: Social attitude towards education of girls is generally not positive. Education for the girl is considered as unimportant. Practice of 'Purdah' system and early marriage, parental illiteracy, lack of educational facilities at home, male teachers in the schools and girls' responsibilities at home etc. are the other hindrances in girls access to education.

ii) Economic Problems: When there is no one to feed the family and educate the male 'Wanted' child, how can the parent afford to enroll the girl child in school. Who will take care of siblings, perform household chores, earn and contribute to family income? In the families where they can afford education, it is the boys who get this benefit.

iii) Educational Problems: The major educational problem is lack of educational institutions especially beyond elementary level areas. According to Sixth All India Educational Survey, for 74% of rural population there are fewer schools than for 26% of the urban population. The schools lack in physical facilities such as furniture, water, blackboard, toilets etc. The attractive textbooks, male teachers, lack of sports and extra curricular activities, suitable school timings are the demotivating factors for girls to attend schools. The girls who are able to reach the high school level are very few, approximately 2-4 in a

Village and they have no access to further education or training in rural areas. There are some institutions for men but they too are far away from the villages. Moreover, they lack in hostel facilities for girls. The problem is both ways. On one hand the girls are not prepared (socially) to join further education or training and on the other hand there are no institutions and facilities available to them. At places where the institution or training facilities for girls are available, the courses offered to girls are traditional which lack in market value. Sometimes the girls have to opt for such courses due to their earlier educational preparation. It has been found that under universalisation of elementary education, more and more girls are crossing 8th standard and reaching high school. But these girls are weak in science and mathematics; therefore they go for softer options, which don't require science and mathematics, that is, joining home science courses such as tailoring, cooking, bakery, etc. and not the technical and engineering courses. As the educational status is directly relate to career development, the above mentioned educational problems severely restrict the educational development of girl and hence hinder their career development.

The problem of gender inequality and discrimination is interlinked with the differential rates of literacy of a particular locality, access to primary and basic education, health and nutrition indicators. The policy interventions of the Government have had mixed effects in this regard. The beneficiaries of policy of land reform tended to aggravate gender discrimination. Women's participation in Panchayat, has been greater and much significant effect than in many other states and there are some regions within the state where this has had very striking positive social impact. It upholds the very notion empowerment of women in more diverse form. With respect to human security issues, women in Karnataka state are in relatively better position than in other states of the country. Economic exclusion appears as one of the most significant problems for women in the state, which tends to have spill-over effects in other aspects of life. However, the trends in all of these variables are broadly in a positive direction, although the pace of change is not as rapid as could be desired. There are various reasons which deter the girl child's education, especially in rural areas. They are:

- ▲ Still there is convention of child marriage and beliefs such as women should not learn and are for housework.
- ▲ Generally the numbers of schools in the rural areas are far fewer than in the cities.
- ▲ There is, to a great extent, shortage of girls' schools in rural areas.
- ▲ Middle schools are located at a distance and are fewer in number.
- ▲ Due to poor enrollment of girls, girls' schools are being converted into boys' schools within a year or two.
- ▲ There are few women teachers in rural areas- a result of low rural female education and urban teachers are not prepared to accept rural postings. Even if they accept the employment, they frequently remain absent. i.e., on leave without pay and always try for transfer in or near any urban centre.
- ▲ In appropriate and inconvenient location of schools in isolated remote rural areas often forbids girls from joining them.
- ▲ Rigid school timings are not suitable for the rural girls.
- ▲ Hostel facilities, free board and lodging are provided for girls from the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes, but other girls from families below the poverty line do not avail themselves of this facility. Moreover, these facilities are also scarcely available.

- ▲ The curriculum bears no relationship to the real life activities and interests of rural girls (Upreti and Upreti, 2000).

There is reality that where is there is education, there is more status and respect. For this purpose, the Indian Government took to education measures to women in a relatively larger number. For example, in 1901, the literacy level of the females in India was just 0.6% in increased to 54.16% in 2001. This brought down the gap between male and female literacy rates from 28.84% in 1991 to 21.70% in 2001. Various benefits such as free education, scholarship, loan facility, hostel facility etc. are being given to women who go for higher education. By making use of the new opportunities, a large number of girl students go for higher education today. For example, in 1950-51 the percentage of girl students pursuing higher education was 10.9% that is, out of the total enrollment) and this increased to 32.0% in 1992 in fact, the National Educational Policy 1986, has been in favor of empowering woman through education. It gave a call to remove the gender prejudices by the inclusion of relevant lessons in the curriculum. It promoted the opening of women study centres in colleges and universities. The State-wise total enrolment in higher education in India during the Academic Year 2006-07 revealed that there is increase in enrolment of women to higher education courses in India.

Table No. 1. State-wise Total Enrolment in Higher Education in India (2006-2007)

States/UTs	Others * (Not Included in Specified Faculty)			Total Enrolment (Higher Education)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Andhra Pradesh	113787	107626	221413	936080	584644	1520724
Arunachal Pradesh	84	68	152	6411	4139	10550
Assam	4868	1947	6815	145227	70534	215761
Bihar	28891	7151	36042	440098	99640	539738
Chattisgarh	6836	5634	12470	114737	84933	199670
Goa	790	812	1602	11158	12761	23919
Gujarat	22909	12498	35407	339554	241216	580770
Haryana	15564	15228	30792	202426	151058	353484
Himachal Pradesh	7787	5201	12988	61433	60432	121865
Jammu & Kashmir	2134	1173	3307	73526	59286	132812
Jharkhand	9713	3717	13430	160602	101486	262088
Karnataka	161438	129298	290736	634160	427296	1061456
Kerala	48563	54767	103330	205861	245506	451367
Madhya Pradesh	357369	104081	461450	698758	296604	995362
Maharashtra	302467	157251	459718	1111132	695693	1806825
Manipur	12226	11059	23285	21517	18940	40457
Meghalaya	5519	3614	9133	21130	19410	40540
Mizoram	4453	1393	5846	8491	5353	13844
Nagaland	960	973	1933	17105	11137	28242
Orissa	128951	19938	148889	352413	86137	438550
Punjab	34726	22324	57050	204219	169242	373461
Rajasthan	65203	16314	81517	347034	177347	524381
Sikkim	155	180	335	5869	4302	10171
Tamil Nadu	146362	119302	265664	916528	671004	1587532

PROBLEMS OF FEMALES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Tripura	523	443	966	15039	11063	26102
Uttar Pradesh	63852	56447	120299	1209583	693906	1903489
Uttaranchal	16497	7283	23780	92392	82761	175153
West Bengal	40103	24738	64841	514382	321443	835825
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	76	87	163	1741	1900	3641
Chandigarh	11950	7048	18998	28525	28668	57193
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0	0	0	0	0	0
Daman & Diu	60	63	123	858	421	1279
Delhi	232382	226502	458884	677522	506370	1183892
Lakshadweep	0	0	0	105	154	259
Pondicherry	1193	966	2159	18004	14450	32454
India	1848391	1125126	2973517	9593620	5959236	15552856

Note : * : Figures Pertains to Last Year

Source: Indiatat.com

CONCLUDING REMARKS:

It is noted that though women are facing many problems such as lack of hostel facilities, more distance to universities from their native places, suppression of parents due to orthodox culture and feeling that female education is economic burden, etc, there is increase in participation of females in higher education. But, it is noted that still there is wide gender gap in higher education and female students at higher education are facing many of the problems. As such, it is essential to look into such problems and solve by the universities, UGC, institutions of higher education, etc.

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