



ROLE OF WOMEN'S EDUCATION IN INDIA

Kavita

Assistant professor, Tika Ram P.G Girls College, Sonipat.

Abstract

Female literacy is considered a key factor in the rapid development of the nation. She not only helps in the development of human resources but in improving the quality of life. There is a disparity in literacy between men and women in India. An educated woman is important for decision-making in relation to health seeking, family planning, nutrition, and economic issues, educated women can also help in the reduction of infant mortality rate and the growth of the population. The education of women is the most powerful tool to change their position in society.

KEYWORDS: Education, Female literacy.

Introduction

Indian women are indeed performing a lion's share in the growth and development of the Nation. The development of the nation cannot be turned progressively if a larger part remains untouched in education. The literacy of women in a country determines whether a country can be taken as an ideal country or not. In a growing country like India, it is only education that played a vital role in the development of the nation. It is indeed pathetic to say that in this globalization era women are still on the last benches in education, health, and socio-economic stages.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru revealed his liberal ideas thus:

We do not wish to turn women into cheap imitations of men or to render them useless for the great tasks of motherhood and nation-building. But in demanding equal status and equal opportunity we desire to achieve for women, the possibility of development under favorable circumstances of education and opportunity, and while so doing, urge upon the State its responsibility towards women in this respect.

Rabindra Nath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, and other eminent leaders in India expressed their views on women's education. Despite this and after six decades of Independence we are still stagnant in education. A

mother who is the first teacher of the child and who manages the home is now not regarded in the progress of the State. In light of this, women's education is very sacred in the success of every aspect of the country. A nation cannot progress without giving proper emphasis on its health and education. Good health provides a healthy generation and good education establishes a civilized society. Thus, at this juncture when India projects herself as the fastest growing developing nation in the Asian Continent, we must make an in-depth study on the status of women and their educational status in our country with special reference to IT education as today's age is the age of technology and IT education occupies a special choice for all career conscious students. Education is not a product; marks, degree/diploma, job: money—in that order it is a process, a never-ending one. The process begins right from conception up to the last breath for learning never ends. Real education helps us to develop our sensitivity to the problems outside. It creates conditions for the development of a wholesome personality so that a man/woman can contribute his/her best to the family, society, and the nation.

Objectives of Research

The primary aim of the study was to analyze the factors contributing to low female literacy in India. In addressing this aim, the study focused on the following objectives:

- a) To identify the importance of women's education in our society.
- b) To analyze the status of female literacy rate post-independent India.
- c) To identify the root causes of the low female literacy in India.

Methodology

The study is based on mainly secondary data on the census of India and some data are collected from different journals, books, etc. methodology applied in the study depends on statistical analysis by tables, charts, index marks, and interpretation.

Importance of female education in India

Recognizing the importance of girls' education, the **Kothari Commission** had said that the amount of attention given to it is less. The commission said that only by educating women we can get rid of many other serious problems. Educated women have lower fertility rates. Therefore, the ever-increasing population of the country can also be controlled through educated girls.

A woman was to play three roles in the course of her life. The first duty of a woman is to be a good mother. Education teaches a woman what she would be. An educated lady is a good friend, a clever nurse, and a useful adviser to her husband. So, she is a true help mate. She can get her husband's affection and love and regard. An educated lady is always able to show her sorrows. Education helps balance personality development by giving due weight to various aspects of personality. Education also plays an important role in teaching her expression of feelings or through effective communication which can solve disputes and adjustment problems of any level. An educated woman is a guiding light for the children, family members,

society, and nation. She knows how to have a happy family and a balanced and healthy relationship with others.

Women's education in India plays a very important role in the overall development of the country. It not only helps in the development of half of the human resources but in improving the quality of life at home and outside. Educated women not only tend to promote the education of their girl children but also can provide better guidance to all their children. moreover, educated women can also help in the reduction of the infant mortality rate and the growth of the population. Gender discrimination can also be reduced and eliminated to some extent by educated women. Women are the basis of our society, it plays an important role in changing the social nature of society. Educated women can get rid of the conservative ideology running in society, which is being passed on from generation to generation in society.

Literacy In Post-Independent In India

Education is universally regarded as a means of improving the status of women and is regarded as a 'ladder for vocational and social mobility. The status of women's education in the country in the post-independence period is still not satisfactory.

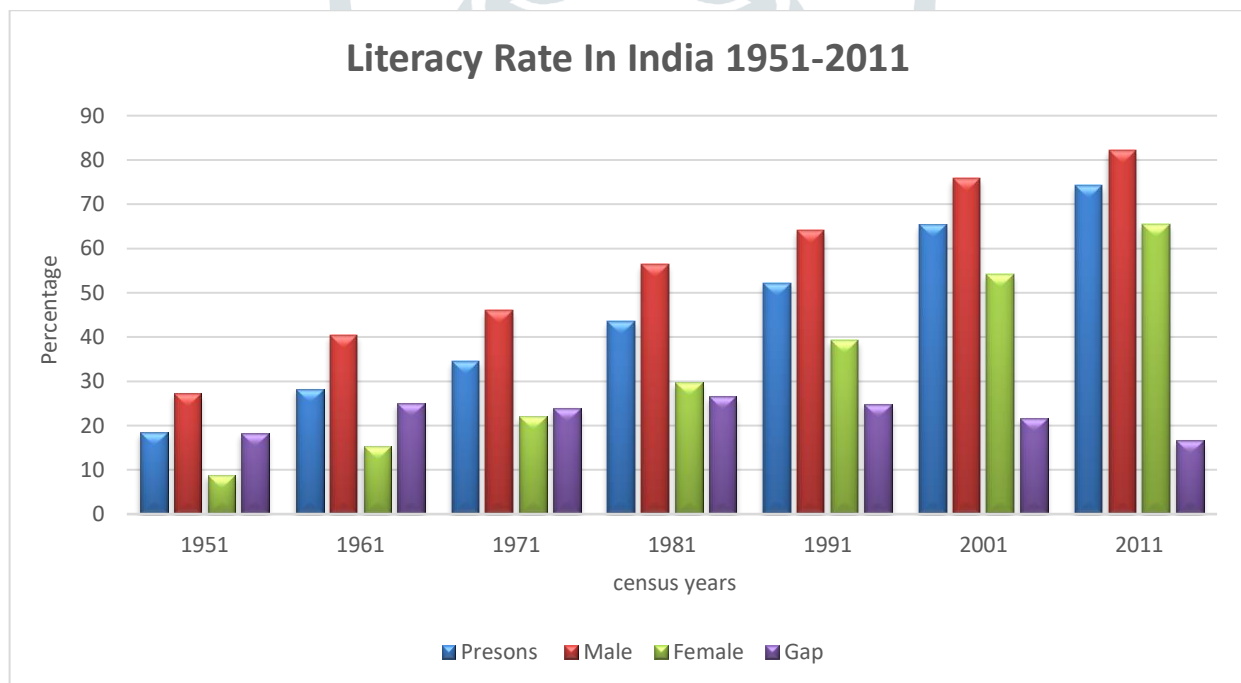


Figure 1

Since independence, literacy has been given due recognition for social and economic development. There has been a significant increase in the female literacy rate in the last two decades. But this increase did not happen as much as the male literacy rate. The female literacy rate has increased by 6.3 times during 1951-2011 while it is only 2 times in the case of males. By 1961 the literacy rate among both males and females had improved significantly but this pace could not be maintained during 1961- 1971. The literacy gender inequality in 1981 was 26.62 which was the highest in all the decades. In 1991, the female literacy rate could only increased by 9.53% from 1981. In the 2001 census, female literacy was 54.16%. We can further

find out that the female literacy rate is 65.46 percent as compared to the male literacy rate (82.14) in 2011. Thus, we can see that still, the percentage of female literacy is 16.68 percent less than that of males. Therefore there is an urgent need to take a drastic step to bridge the gap between the two by making special arrangements to increase the education level of women in India.

Status of Female Literacy Rate In India 2011

As per the 2011 census, the total literacy rate in India stands at 74.00 percent and the rate of literacy among women is 65.46 percent.

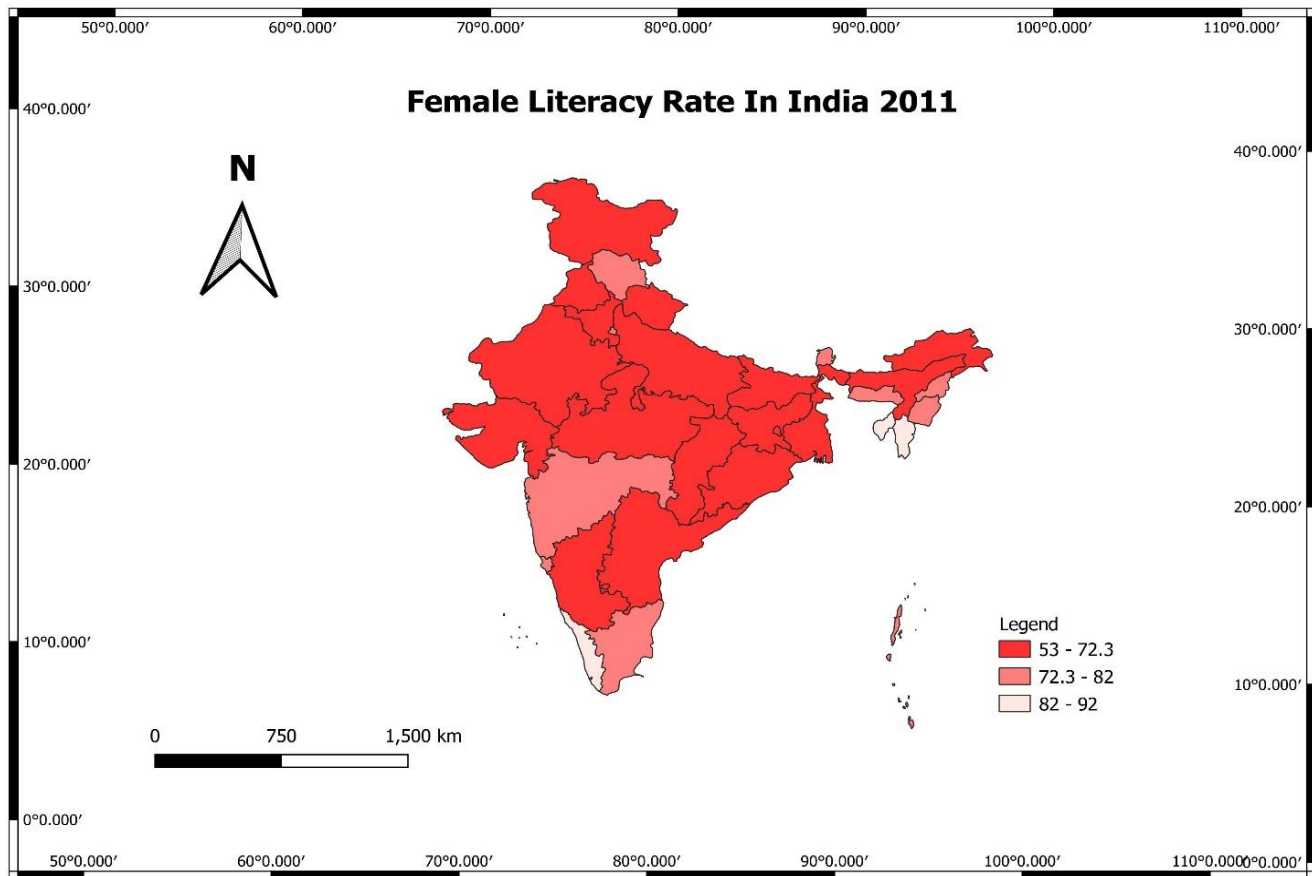


Figure-2

As figure 2 shows, how is the status of women's education in India, most of the states fall with a low female literacy rate? There are 17 states with a 53 -72.3 percent low female literacy rate. In which the lowest female literacy state is Rajasthan 52.6% with which gender difference is 27.85 percent, Bihar 53.33 gender difference 20.39 percent, Jharkhand 56.21 percent, Jammu and Kashmir with 58.01 percent, it is those states which have less than 60 percent literacy. Here the condition of female literacy is much more unsatisfactory, if we talk about all the states in India, then there is not a single state in India in which female literacy is more due to male literacy. This shows that gender discrimination is highest in India which we can see in all census data. Literacy variation was 21 percent in 2001, it has come down to 16.68 percent in 2011 but this situation is not as good as it should be.

There are 8 states with a 72.3 -82 percent medium female literacy rate. Goa 81.84 percent, Nagaland 76.69 percent, Himachal Pradesh 76.60percent, Sikkim 76.43 percent, Maharashtra 75.48 percent, Tamilnadu 73.86 percent, Meghalaya 73.78 percent, Manipur 73.17 percent.

There are 3 states with a high female literacy rate of 82-92 percent. Kerala is the only state where female literacy is more than 90 percent. Mizoram is 89.40 percent and Lakshadweep is 88.25 percent.

The Root Causes Of The Low Female Literacy In India

The following factors were given by respondents as causes for low female literacy in India such as.

1) Gender-biased inequality

Many parents view educating sons as an investment because the sons will be responsible for caring for aging parents. On the other hand, parents may see the education of a daughter as a waste of money as the daughter will eventually live with their husband's family and the parents will not benefit directly from their education. Girl children are not allowed to go outside the house and village because it is a social taboo.

2) Social discrimination and economic exploitation

In India, dowry refers to durable goods, cash, and real or movable property that the bride's family gives to the groom to his parents or his relatives as a condition of marriage. It is believed that the dowry system puts a heavy financial burden on the bride's family. Dowry system and other social work are the main causes of discrimination against girl children including neglect of girl children and denial of the right to education. Parents have to think that if the girl gets more education If given, she has to pay more dowry.

Poverty is the single biggest cause of illiteracy in India and the harbinger of all other effects. Due to poverty, parents can pay more attention only to boys, and less attention to girls. Due to this, their education is not completed.

3) Occupation of girl child in domestic chores

The parents go to their workplace and the household activities are done by the little girl. Whose time is spent on household chores and the responsibility of taking care of the little ones in the house is also the responsibility of the girl. Because of this, they are not able to study and their parents do not pay much attention to their studies.

4) Low enrolments of girls in schools

The major educational problem faced by girls, especially girls from rural areas, is that although they may be enrolled at the beginning of the year, they do not always remain in school. Girls are often taken out of school to share family responsibilities. Children belonging to low caste families are forced to learn skills and work and not encouraged to go to school due to various factors in the sphere of strict instruction from high caste communities for their selfish motives of keeping them as

domestic servants. The data on school attendance collected by the World Bank shows the proportion of girls attending school decreases with age while for boys it remains stable.

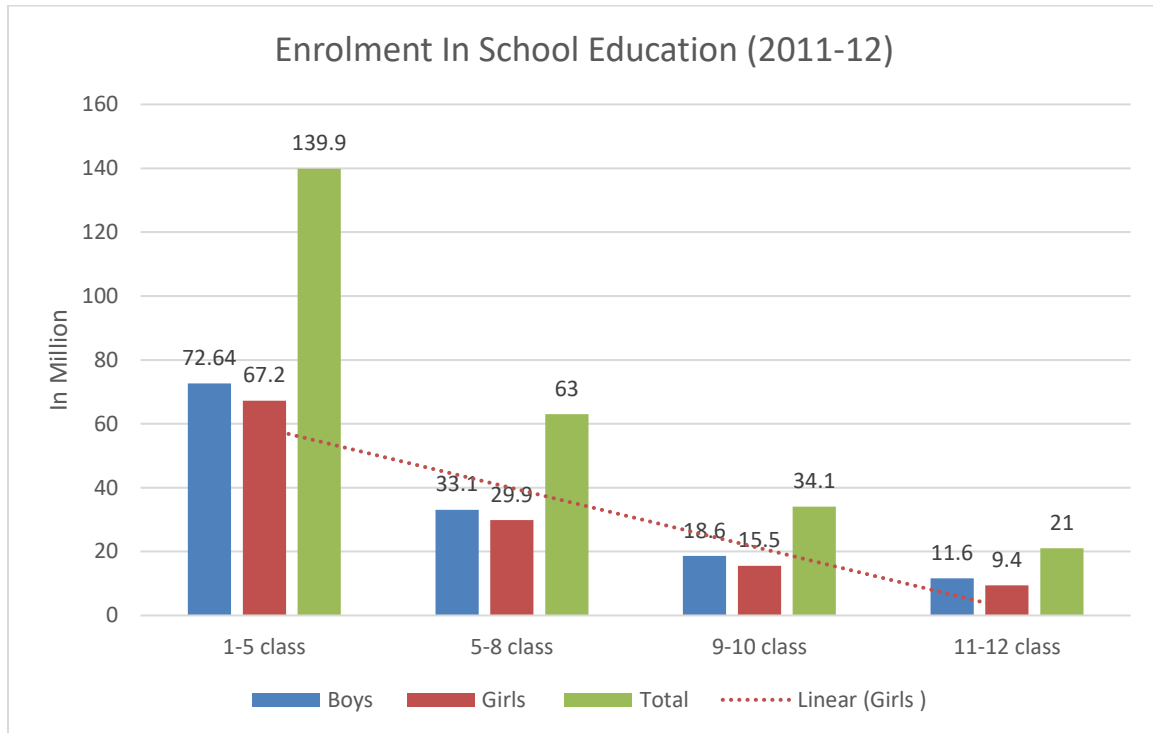


Figure 3

5) Low retention rate and high dropout rate

Dropouts are the main issues found in the primary and secondary education of the Indian education system. The quantity and quality of education cannot be increased if the education system still has dropout issues. The major educational problem faced by girls, especially girls from rural areas, is that although they may be enrolled at the beginning of the year, they do not always remain in school. Girls are often pulled out of school to take on family responsibilities. School attendance data collected by the World Bank shows that the proportion of girls attending school decreases with age while it remains constant for boys. On 21 February 2005, the Prime Minister of India said that he was saddened to learn that "only 47 out of 100 children enrolled in Class I reach Class 8, leaving a school dropout rate of 52.78%."

6) Early marriage

Early or child marriage in India, according to Indian law, is a marriage where either the woman is below age 18 or the man is below age 21. Most child marriage involves underage women, many of whom are in poor socio-economic conditions. Approximately one in four young women in India were married or in union before their 18th birthday. One in three of the world's child brides live in India. Of the country's 223 million child brides, 102 million were married before turning 15. Over half of Indian child brides live in five states: Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh. Uttar Pradesh is home to the largest population of child brides, with 36 million.

There is a high association between female literacy with female age at marriage. By and large the

female age at marriage of 18 as prescribed by various legislations is not at all followed in India. It is very much ignored and neglected by the families of parents with low literacy.

7) Lack of educational facilities

In general, the school environment for girls in India is not interesting and encouraging. Many schools are still poor, with access to drinking water, toilets and toilet facilities, improper buildings, and inadequate numbers of teachers, especially female teachers, to protect their girl children from various forms of exploitation and abuse. Better for any parent., As of 2011-12, India has 79 female teachers per 100 male teachers in primary classes, 76 in upper primary, and 66 in secondary classes. This is also one of the reasons why the number of girls in schools is less.

Conclusion

One may ask why the education of women is even important, or why the state ought to focus on it, beyond improving the numbers and statistics to reflect figures at par with the rest of the developed world. Is it a mere image-building exercise in an attempt to stay on top of the numbers? Although that may be equally important, there is more to accrue for the individual, family unit, and ultimately the nation, with investment in the education of its women.

Neglecting the education of women, who constitute nearly half of the population, does not auger well for the development of any nation. Beyond the obvious imbalance in the labor pool, education for women is an important determinant of their enhanced self-esteem and self-confidence, helping to build a positive image, developing their ability to think critically, fostering better decision making, and helping them make more informed choices about health, employment and even the education of their children. Education will not only ensure more participation in developmental processes but also enhance awareness of rights and entitlements in society so that women can enhance their participation in society on an equal footing in all areas. The economic independence that education brings is an added incentive. Economic independence and awareness will help curtail the vicious cycle of reinforcing negative stereotypes and aid women in charting paths as individuals in their own right, contributing to society, polity, and the economy.

References

- Benedicta Egbo (2005) *Women Education and Social Development in Africa*, Book, Issue in Africa Education, pp.144-157.
- B.S. Vasudeva Rao and P. Viswanadha Gupta (2006) *Low female literacy: factors and strategies*, Australian Journal of Adult Learning Volume 46.
- Challa Sainivas, Guguloth devoji (2015) *Health And Education Status Of Tribal Women –A, Study In Telangana State*, book, *Human Right International Research Journal: Volume 3*, pp.49-52.

- Lakshmy Devi R.K (2002) *Education, Employment, And Job Preference of Women In Kerala*.
- Preet Rustagi, *Gender Development Indicators: Issues, Debates And Ranking Of Districts*.
- Shiv Prakash Katiyar (2016) *Gender Disparity in Literacy in India*, research article.
- Sucharita Sinha Mukherjee (2015) *More Educated and More Equal? A Comparative Analysis of Female Education and Employment in Japan, China, and India*.
- Shiv Prakash Katiyar (2016) *Gender Disparity in Literacy in India*, Research Article.
- Mr. Bhupen barman (2014) *An Overview Of Women Education In India*, The Journal of Bengal geographer volume -111.
- Chandan Kumar Singh(2015) *Women Literacy In India Issues And Challenges*, global journal of interdisciplinary social science
- Rouf Ahmad Bhat(2015) *Role Of Education In The Empowerment Of Women In India*, journal of education and practice
- www census of India.
- Unicef.com

