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Backward Class Disparities in higher Education in India

* Dr. Shankar B. Ambhore **Dr. Pawar Ashok S.

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Keywords : s

Introduction

The role of education in facilitating social and economic progress is well recognized. It opens up opportunities leading to both individual and group entitlements. Education, in its broadest sense of development of youth, is the most crucial input for empowering people with skills and knowledge and giving them access to productive employment in future. Improvements in education are not only expected to enhance efficiency but also augment the overall quality of life.

Education plays an important role in every society and country. It is the major nit of social and economic development. Social and economic development of country depends on the development and growth of education. It is important to note that nation's progress is based on quality of population rather than on quantity. In the new millennium, the prosperity, and quality of all nations will be determined by their ability to solve the problems that face them, their families, their communities and their country. However, with regard to the development of literacy and education, India's achievement is far from satisfactory.

India has been left a way behind in the field of basic education even by countries which have not done better than India in many other developmental achievements such as Kenya, Burma, Indonesia, Ghana, Philippines, Zimbabwe and Zambia. Adult female literacy for the sate like Rajasthan, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh are 20%, 23% and 25% respectively, whereas it is 90% in Kerala, 60% in Tamil Nadu. The problem of educational development in this country is even worse when we analyze this problem from regional perspective. Several diversities could be seen in the development of education.

Most of the states in India are facing these regional diversities. The existence and persistence of spatial variations in the level of development is one of the basic structural characteristics of a developing country like India. If the adequate measures are not taken for the spread of education the education chasm of economic disabilities, regional imbalance and social injustice will widen farther, resulting in building up of disintegrative tendencies. Most of the northern states have remained socially, economically and educational backward than southern states.

Importance of the study

Each and every phenomenon of development cannot be equalized with one another this is law of nature. Therefore, rate and states of development varies from region to region, sector to sector, society to society. But if the national economy to prosper, its constituent regions must be brought some sorts of harmony. The Government of India, to reduce the disparities has taken many steps since independence. Balanced regional development has been one of the major objectives of India planning. But even after several plan-period regional disparities in development process have remained. It is important to note that wide disparities in the development process would not only hurdle the progress the regions, but also have adverse effect upon the progress of the state level.

Against this background, the present study examines the imbalanced growth that exists in Maharashtra. Disparities in the growth of education are one such instance. However, there are hardly any studies where these disparities have been increased or decreased over a period of time.

Scope and objective

More specifically, the present study have been undertaken to address the objective such as

1) To record the historical causes for disparities in the women education in Maharashtra.

2) To examine the disparities and gap in the growth of women literacy in the state.

3) To find out imbalance in the growth of professional and higher education of women.

4) To analyze the implications of these disparities.

5) To Study the Development of Education of SC,ST, Minorities, Girls and other disadvantaged groups in India

Status of Literate Male-Female in Maharashtra

Among the major states, Maharashtra occupies the second position after Kerala with total literacy rate of 77.27% The state have experienced maximum increase in literacy in the last decade, which is described as the "Literacy decade." Despite an overall higher level of urban literacy the increase in rural literacy is even more impressive, with the gap between rural and urban literacy rate declining. The rural literacy has increased by 15.32 per cent points and the urban literacy by 6.56 per cent points. Rural Maharashtra ha witnessed relatively rapid socio-economic and demographic changes during the past two decades. Another important feature worth noting is that the total numbers of literate are increasing much faster than the total population with an increasing share of females in total literate compared to the male counterpart. This trend is faster in the rural areas than the urban area.

Census 2011 maharashtra provisional data is avaialable now. Maharashtra's Population 2011 has shown a growth of over 15% in the last decade. The Sex ratio is 925:1000 in Maharashtra in Census 2011. The Maharashtra Census data shows that there is still a huge gap between male literacy rate and female literacy rate in Maharashtra.

Total Population Maharashtra Census 2011 - 112,372,972
Male Population Maharashtra Census 2011- 58,361,397
Female Population Maharashtra Census 2011- 54,011,575

Census 2011 Sex Ratio Maharashtra – 925
Census 2011 Maharashtra Population Density (per sq km) – 365
Census 2011 Maharashtra Decadal Growth Rate - 15.99%
Census 2011 Maharashtra Literacy Rate - 82.91%
Census 2011 Maharashtra Male Literacy Rate - 89.82%
Census 2011 Maharashtra Female Literacy Rate - 75.48%

Inequality in women's education
Indian society is male dominated. The freedom and liberty of social life are mostly enjoyed by men. Women are not given equally opportunities to reap benefits of education and literacy. There is unequal treatment between boys and girls. Sons are preferred by every body. Girls and daughters are discouraged to pursue education. Girls have much lower access to education than boys do. The reasons for this are many. It is a reflection of their position in society. General feeling about girls, in some part of the country even today is that education of girls has been treated as wasteful expenditure. She will beat her parental house till marriage, after the marriage, she will become the member of her husband's family. Therefore, investing on daughter in uneconomic, as a result most of the India women are facing the problem of basic literacy.

The gap in literacy between men and women has increased from 1961-1991. However from 1991-2011 it has decreased.

Growth of Literacy in India

Year	Total	Male	Female	Sex Disparity
1961	24.02	34.44	12.92	0.48
1971	29.45	39.45	18.69	0.38
1981	36.25	46.89	24.82	0.33
1991	42.49	52.68	32.52	0.27
2001	65.38	75.85	54.16	0.22
2011	74.04	82.34	64.46	0.17

Source – NIEPA, New Delhi, Oct.-05, 2002, India

Gap in Higher Education
Disparities in higher education are not uniformly is distributed in the state. Girls are worst affected by these disparities, from the data we can see that as the girls move higher tin their education their number is coming down severely. Moreover, the districts having higher education are mainly located in the western and north eastern part of Maharashtra while the districts having lower education over the decade are mainly located in the central part of Maharashtra, mainly the Marathwada region.

Thus, there exists wide gap in the growth and development of women education in Maharashtra. From the primary to higher education severe disparities exist between the districts and division of the state. However, in all the aspects of women's education in Marathwada division remained backward from western and north eastern divisions.

Development of Education of SC,ST, Minorities, Girls and other disadvantaged Groups:
Recommendations of the Working Group on Development of Education of SCs, STs, and other disadvantaged social groups in the higher education sector, including technical education, are as follows:

- Deficiencies in the disaggregated data pertaining to the educational status of social groups like SCs, STs, OBCs, Minorities and other disadvantaged groups is a major handicap. The Working Group, therefore, recommended that this data gap need to be addressed and that the Registrar General of India (RGI) may be directed to ensure availability of disaggregated data for OBCs, Backward Castes amongst minorities and other disadvantaged groups.

- All the universities should establish SC, ST/OBC/Disadvantaged Groups Cells at the earliest, which could also function as anti-discrimination Cell.

- Government should regulate the fee structure in higher education and in order to make higher education accessible by all, should introduce schemes like fee-waiver, fee-reimbursements, scholarships, free textbooks, free hostel accommodation and other facilities at subsidized rates for students belonging to the disadvantaged groups (SC, ST, OBC, Minorities, Women).. This is necessary in view of the increasing cost of higher education due to increasing number of private higher educational institutions. Subsidized loan facilities for the fees/hostel expenditure could also be considered as an option.

- Reservation being mandatory, government should cancel the recognition/accreditation of the universities/institutions, which fail to implement the reservation policy. Institutions of higher learning may have their own autonomy but at the same time they need to provide protection under the law in relation to reservation etc. UGC should make strict rules and regulations to fill in the post of reserved category. Defaulting universities or affiliated colleges should not be granted financial support or any grants.

- Special coaching should be provided to reserved category candidates for successfully clearing SET or NET examination.

- UGC should prepare norms and guidelines for allocating students for Ph.D. courses. The Professors guiding these Ph.D students should be sensitive to their backgrounds. The quota for Ph.D. in technology for reserved category candidates should be increased.

- Coaching schemes for SCs/STs and Minorities should be transferred to IVIHRD from other Ministries.

- In respect of education of girls the Working Group recommended an increase in hostel facilities for girls and women in existing educational institutions. Further, a special scheme for construction of hostels especially for girls need to be introduced. Besides, every institution should have women study centres. Further, Day care centres should be made available in all institutions

Recommendations
1. A special package of education should be formulated to uplift the central part of Maharashtra, mainly the Marthwada region in educational matters.
2. Efforts should be made to see that all the facilities pertaining to the education must be made available for the poor, ignorant, women and low castes as the rate of illiteracy among these people is remarkable low.
3. Policy makers must plan the Programme of action to improve status of women education in central Maharashtra, in general and Marathwada in particular.
4. Participatory development approach should be adopted to develop the low literacy rated areas.
5. Measures to improve the literacy level must get top priority.

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