



A Review of Status of Female Education and its Impact on Gender Development Leading to Human Development in India

KEYWORDS

Female education, Gender disparity, Gender Development Index, Human Development Index, Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient.

Ananya Chakraborty

Guest lecturer; Berhampore College, Murshidabad, West Bengal

ABSTRACT Female education ensures not only all round development of society, but educated generation next. Gender disparity in education sector is still a problem for a country like India, where women constituting 50% of the country's human resource, still faces literacy-gender-gaps with only 54.16% literate female (Census- 2001). The present study is an attempt to evaluate the correlation of female education with Gender Development Index and Human Development Index, based on the data procured from secondary sources. The result of Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient justifies significant impact of female education on Gender Development Indices and Human Development Indices of India. The essence of development lies in literating women which will pave way for better future by literating their kids.

Introduction

Education is a process of cognitive cartography, which enables individuals and communities to act on reflection. Education brings to reduction in inequality and improving the status of female within the family (Suguna, 2011). Women education has remained a matter of prime concern in the present days and a special emphasis is given on the all round development of the female folk. While the present literacy rate is 65.38% female literacy rate is 58%. Male-female literacy gap is more prominent in rural areas in India. The need for female education are:- As it rises, fertility, population growth, and infant and child mortality fall and family health improves. It aids to participation in the labor force and their contributions to household and national income, thus has a positive effect on child nutrition. They are more politically active and better informed about their legal rights, mode to exercise them. Thus with the female education, female empowerment is connected and further it aids to development of a region.

Objectives

1. To present a historical overview of women education in India.
2. To evaluate spatial pattern of male-female literacy rates of India.
3. To analyze and quantify female education in respect to Gender Development index and thus Human Development Index of India.

Methodology

For the entire study, secondary data has been gleaned from various official websites of Central Government. In addition, various journals and working reports are also scrutinized for shape the study a geographical identity. Descriptive statistical techniques and simple cartographic presentation have been used for analyzing the data.

To show the impact of women education in HDI of India, Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient has been used in the last stage of the paper.

According to Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient i.e. rho (ρ):

$$\rho = 1 - \frac{6\sum di^2}{n^3 - n}$$

Results and Discussion

History of Women Education:

Women's Education in Ancient India

In pre-ancient India, less was thought about female education. However, the Vedic period women had a good access to education, but gradually lost with due time pace. Eminent

women like, Gargi, Maitrei, Apala, Lopamudra, etc. proves that women education prevailed during the early Vedic period. The Indian scriptures like Rig Veda and Upanishads mention about many women sages and seers. Though, in the early Vedic era, they enjoyed equivalent position and rights; after 500 B.C, the position was not same as it started to decline. The Islamic invasion restricted freedom and rights of the women.

Women's Education in Medieval and Colonial India

After the introduction of Purdah system, women education in medieval India weakened and declined. Various customs and conventions of diverse religions further deteriorated and depreciated the condition of women. Luckily, an array of socio religious movements aided to the development of the then women literacy. Indian women education revived with the invasion of the British and with the advent of Bhakti movement. In the early centuries of the Christian era, the ordered form of women education was incorporated.

Women's Education in Modern India

The post independent Government of India is more aware of women education, which understood by the apparently rise in literacy rate. Women education has become a compulsory concern resulting in the soar of female literacy rate. The 86th constitutional amendment has made elementary education fundamental of children between 6-14. The Right to Free and Compulsory Education incorporated in the Constitution of India guarantees free primary school education for both boys and girls up to age 14. The Saakshar Bharat Mission launched the Government of India by for Female Literacy, aims to reduce female illiteracy and spread education and awareness even in the most remote and rural parts of the nation.

The University Education Commission (1948-49) made recommendations regarding women education. Smt. Durgabai Deshmukh (the then chairman) set up national Committee on women education in 1958. The resolution on the National Policy on Education (1968), emphasized on women education with views to remove inequalities and disparities.

Statewise male-female literacy rates of India:

Recently the Indian government has launched Saakshar Bharat Mission for Female Literacy. It aims to bring down female illiteracy by half of its present level. The Eighth Five Year plan had an exclusive National Plan of Action for girl child.

Table 1. Statewise Male-female Literacy Rate, with respective GDI and HDI Scores

States	Male(%)*	Female(%)*	GDI**	HDI***
Jammu & Kashmir	70	51	0.568	0.529
Himachal Pradesh	89	72	0.664	0.652

Uttarakhand	85	64	0.647	0.490
Punjab	81	68	0.663	0.605
Haryana	78	56	0.632	0.552
Delhi	92	77	0.701	0.750
Uttar Pradesh	75	52	0.509	0.380
Bihar	71	42	0.479	0.367
Jharkhand	73	48	0.558	0.376
Rajasthan	71	40	0.526	0.434
Chhattisgarh	72	48	0.542	0.358
Madhya Pradesh	75	49	0.516	0.375
North-East	90	81	0.652	0.573
Assam	83	75	0.585	0.444
West Bengal	78	65	0.622	0.492
Orissa	80	57	0.524	0.362
Gujarat	85	63	0.624	0.527
Maharashtra, Goa	89	71	0.712	0.594
Andhra Pradesh	69	49	0.574	0.473
Karnataka	81	62	0.611	0.519
Kerala	96	91	0.745	0.790
Tamil Nadu	81	65	0.655	0.570
India	79	58	0.590	0.467

Source: *India Human Development Survey 2004-05

**Gendering Human Development Indices: Ministry of Women and Child Development of India, Govt. of India, 2009.

***India Human Development Report 2011, Oxford University Press, New Delhi.

Table 1 shows that Kerala has the highest female literacy rate (91%) among other states in India. It is followed by North-East states (81%, excluding Assam), Delhi (77%), Goa (77%) and Assam (75%). Rajasthan (40%) scores the poorest rank. It is followed by Bihar (42%), Chhattisgarh (48%) and Madhya Pradesh (49%).

Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan are Bottom liners in GDI scores. States like Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Orissa have HDI below 0.42. The seven north-eastern states (taken together), excluding Assam, have done remarkably well in terms of human development outcomes.

Impact of Women Education on GDI and HDI of the country:

Gender Development Index

It is the ratio of attainments for female to male counterpart with values between 0 and 1. It is based on the components:- i. female life expectancy, ii. female adult literacy and gross enrollment and iii. female per capita income. With female literacy increases per capita income that ensures better health and raised life expectancy. GDI helps to detect inequalities present, thus more the gap between the two, the more is disparity. As the gap between life expectancy of male and female is very small so, literacy and empowerment is an important indicator. Promoting education among the female and bring them better status in family and society and in turn increase the GDI score.

With raised female enrollment female literacy increases. A literate female folk has a range of choice, raised family status, decision making powers and thus raised empowerment. When the literate female becomes income earners, they have direct control over family, family structure, freedom to use contraceptives, combat Sexually Transferred Diseases like HIV/AIDS, improved maternal health, control on number of children, managing capacity to arrange better conditions to offspring's, avoid domestic violence etc. A literate mother

extends more care to her child's education thus ensuring a better tomorrow and raised savings. Even social norms like dowry etc. are checked with female empowerment. Moreover, education makes female more conscious of their being.

To quantify the above said the author arranged Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient technique where the value of $r = +0.811512$. This shows a positive relation between the impacts of female literacy on GDI of India. Even the impact range is strong as the value obtained is close to the whole number:-1.

Human Development Index

Human development is used to rank countries based on human development. The index is 1 when it is maximum and 0 when minimum. It is the process of widening the choice and the level of well-being, which can be measured by:- i. HDI (Human Development Index), ii. GDI (Gender Development Index) and iii. HPI (Human Poverty Index). It is measured by life expectancy, adult literacy rate and descent standard of living measured by purchasing power. Human development requires the need for education, better conditions for living and range of choices for individuals. The right for education without any gender discrimination, better living conditions for both sexes, welfare approach both sexes relates to intellectual development leading to rise in levels of societal development.

Educated female are more concerned about the child health leading to decrease in infant mortality and extended life expectancy in the new born. This in turn affects the shape of age-sex pyramid resulting into tapering and shrinking base and bulging body.

With Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient the author has tried to quantify the value of $r = +.802619$. The value shows a positive relation between the impacts of female literacy on HDI of India and that the impact range is strong as the value obtained is close to the whole number:-1.

Conclusion

Women education deals not only with entire female realms but with the future of family and nation; as there is a saying that 'a literate mother will never have an illiterate child'; thus educating women means an educated tomorrow. Education helps women in the lessening of child death rate, bettering health and living conditions of children and controlling population. Female education and economic growth are co-related aiding independence and equality with men counterpart. In Kerala, female literacy rate is about 86 %, while Bihar and Uttar Pradesh have female literacy rates around 55-60 % consequently Kerala has lowest infant mortality rate, which indirectly affects human development indices.

The social norms, customs and traditions are determinants of such disparity and are basically due to the desire of male child and consequently rising negligence for the girl child. They are prepared for laws' house, by involving in domestic chores, which results to low enrolment, low retention rates, high dropout rates, etc. Absence of female teachers in schools, establishment of schools in faraway places, etc. are decelerating factors for most orthodox families.

Universalization of Elementary Education with emphasis to girl child can oppress the issue to some extent. Disparity can also be treated by special and exclusive scholarship schemes for girl children. Reservation for female can not only provide employment of women, but encourage mass to involve in such activity.

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