

Problems of Females in Primary Education in Rural Areas of Gulbarga District: A Sample Survey



Sociology

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ABSTRACT

Female education is important as it helps to reduce maternal mortality, dowry practice, increase family health, more awareness on family welfare, reduce gender based violence, increase child care, etc. Still, female participation in primary education is lower in rural areas. There are many reasons and problems faced by female students in rural areas to get primary education. Hence, the present study was ascertained the problems faced by female students in rural areas of Gulbarga district. Total 150 female students studying in 10 primary schools were interviewed to collect the primary data. The problems faced by female students include household work, social customs, parents' suppression, etc. Due to these factors, the female education is neglected. The paper has also given useful suggestions for the improvement and development of female education.

Introduction:

Female education is significant in India as the Government has taken it as priority area through gender equality can be achieved in society. But, due to orthodox ideas and traditional beliefs, still female children are suppressed and deprived from education, especially in rural areas. Consequently, there is gender disparity in education, which hinders the development of females in particular and national development in general.

It is noted that infant mortality rate, birth rate and total fertility rate are negatively correlated with the lower the educational level of the mother; the more number of children born to her, the greater are the risks of reproductive mortality/ morbidity. Violence against women is also declined if women are educated. Now-a-days technological worlds consider education-especially for women is much more important to slower population growth. Hence, progress in literacy is being considered as a component of progress in development. But as discussed above, due to gender inequality problems faced in families by the female children, still their education is not encouraged in families.

The gender gap in education can be understood in the overall context of the position that women occupy in society. The status of women in India is generally low. They are one of the disadvantaged sections of the society: The cycle of disadvantage starts before birth and continues from neglect of female children through to widowhood. The problem is exacerbated further when gender disadvantage is compounded by class, caste and religious discrimination (Wazir, 2000).

The Government's national policy also laid down that "The education system must produce young men and women of character and ability committed to national services and development. Only then will education be able to play its vital role in promoting national progress, creating a sense of common citizenship and culture and strengthening national integration" (Kalbagh, 1991). With efforts of various policies and plans there has been a desirable change in girls' education indicators, but progress towards education for all is slow. Moreover, very conspicuous gender disparities persist in all educational indicators, especially with regard to enrolment and retention at the primary, upper-primary and higher levels of school education. Girls' enrolment at primary, upper primary and secondary stages has improved since 1951, but gender inequalities prevail at all stages. Girls account for only 43.7 per cent of enrolment at primary level, 40.9 per cent at upper primary level, 38.6 per cent at secondary level and 36.9 per cent at deer and above level. Girls' enrolment

at primary level has risen from 5.4 million in 1951 to 49.8 million in 2001 and at upper primary level from 0.5 million to 17.5 million. However, girls' participation in education is still below 50 percent (Anand and Yadav, 2006). In Karnataka state, the literacy rate of males is 82.85% against the female literacy rate of 68.13% as per the Census of India, 2011. It shows, in spite of the efforts of the Government, still there is wider gap between male and female literacy. It shows the gender stratification in education. Hence, the present study is made to assess the reasons for gender stratification in primary education.

Objectives of the Study:

The present study is made:

1. To assess the caste of female students, as whether females from all castes are getting education;
2. To study the problems and barriers faced by female students in their families and society in getting education; and
3. To look into the problems faced by female students in their schools.

Methodology and Limitations:

Many of the studies were already revealed that female education is backward in rural areas. As such, the study was conducted to assess the disparity of female education in villages of Gulbarga district. Total 10 Government Primary schools were visited by the authors and interviewed the female students studying in 6th, 7th and 8th Standards. Totally 150 students were surveyed through interview schedule and collected information and hence, the present study is limited to 150 female students studying in Gulbarga district.

Area of the Study:

The study is made in Gulbarga district and it is headquarters of Hyderabad-Karnataka backward region. The district has seven talukas and total population of the district as per the Census of 2011 is 2564892, which constitutes 1307061 males and 1257831 females. The district is backward in terms of education, industry, agriculture, employment, etc and considering this aspect, recently, the area has got privileges under Article 371(J) of the Indian Constitution.

Analysis and Discussion:

The collected primary data is analyzed and discussed as under.

1. Caste-wise Distribution of the Respondents:

Caste plays significant role in assessing equal opportunities in society for people of all castes. As such, information on castes of the respondents was collected and presented as under.

Table No. 1. Caste-wise distribution of the Respondents

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Scheduled Caste	34	22.7
Scheduled Tribe	09	6.0
Other Backward Class	55	36.7
Others	52	34.6
Total	150	100

Of all the respondents surveyed, 34 (22.7%) are from Scheduled Castes, only 09 (6.0%) are from Scheduled Tribes, 55 (36.7%) are from Other Backward Classes and 52 (34.6%) of the respondents belongs to others or forward castes. It shows that females from all the castes are participating in primary education.

2. Females Need Education:

As the respondents interviewed are minors or between the age of 11 to 15 years, it was asked to these respondents, whether the females need education and the collected information is tabulated as under.

Table No. 2. Females Need Education

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	112	74.7
No	15	10.0
Can't Say	23	15.3
Total	150	100

It is surprising to note from the above table that 15 (10.0%) of all the respondents have expressed that females do not need any education, 112 (74.7%) have agreed that females need education and about 23 (15.3%) have not expressed their opinions on the same. It shows that still few female students are not aware about importance of education in women's life.

3. Attitudes of Parents' Towards Female Education:

In many families, the female education is encouraged and in some families, early marriage of females is preferred and in some families, the parents do not take much interest in education of their girl children. Hence, the information was collected from the respondents on the attitudes of the parents towards girls' education and presented in the following table.

Table No. 3. Attitudes of Parents' Towards Female Education

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Encourage Female Education	36	24.0
Prefer Male & Suppress Female Education	49	32.6
Treat Equal both Gender	65	43.3
Total	150	100

On the attitudes of parents as observed by the respondents, 36 (24.0%) of the parents encourage female education, 49 (32.6%) of the parents prefer male and suppress female education and 65 (43.3%) of the parents treats both gender (male and female children's education) as equal. Hence, it can be concluded that suppression of female education by their parents is the major factor for gender inequality in education.

4. Problems facing for Getting Education:

The female students face many problems for getting education. They include lack of upper primary schools or high schools in

their villages, poor hostel facilities, poor infrastructure such as lack of toilets, social customs like child marriage, etc. As such, information was collected from the respondents on the problems faced by them in getting primary education and the collected information is tabulated as under.

Table No. 4. Problems facing for Getting Education

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Poverty	63	42.0
Household Work	72	48.0
Social Customs	57	38.0
School Far Away from Residence	41	27.3
Any Other	12	8.0
None	44	29.3
Total	150	100

It is highlighted from the above table that many of the girls are facing more than one type of problems and as such, they have chosen more than one type of problem. Particularly, 63 (42.0%) are suffering from poverty, 72 (48.0%) are facing problem of household work, 57 (38.0%) are discriminated by social customs, 41 (27.3%) have stated that their school is far away from their residence, 12 (8.0%) are also facing other problems and only 44 (29.3%) of all the respondents are not facing any of the problems.

5. Problems Faced in Schools:

Female children also discontinue their education due to other problems such as poor infrastructure in their schools. In this way, the problems faced by female children at their schools are assessed on the basis of interviews with these students and presented in the following table.

Table No. 5. Problems Faced in Schools

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
School Far Away from Residence	41	27.3
Poor Teaching/Learning	11	7.3
Caste based Discrimination	06	4.0
Gender based Discrimination	14	9.3
Lack of Adequate Class Rooms/Toilets, etc.	27	18.0
Any Other	--	--
None	78	52.0
Total	150	100

It is noted from the above table that a few of the respondents have stated more than one problem at their schools. Particularly, 41 (27.3%) have stated that their school is far away from their residence, 11 (7.3%) have stated that there is poor teaching or learning in their schools, 06 (4.0%) have expressed that there is caste based discrimination in their schools, 14 (9.3%) have remarked that there is gender based discrimination in their schools, 27 (18.0%) have felt that there is lack of adequate class rooms, toilets, etc in their schools and 78 (52.0%) have highlighted that there are no problems at their schools.

Suggestions from the Study:

Following suggestions may be made from the present study.

- It is suggested to parents of female children to encourage education of their girl children.
- It is suggested to parents to increase awareness on gender equality and realize the benefits and advantages of female edu-

cation in society.

- The females should plan their school studies along with reserving their time for household work.
- It is suggested to the Government to increase number of primary schools and high schools in rural areas and also provide other facilities such as separate toilets, etc to the girl students in the school.

Conclusion:

Education is undoubtedly the most popular choices of ways to improve women's well being. The cause of women's education, in particular, has received much support from the findings of demographers. Male domination in society affected female deprivation in education in society. Further, orthodox beliefs, conventional ideas, etc are also suppressing education of females in society. It is essential on the part of parents to think for gender equality, by encouraging their female children and supporting in getting higher education and employment. In this regard, the parents must have to given adequate freedom to female children in determining their educational choices, employment, marriage, etc. Further, the Government has to increase number of schools in rural areas, so as to education female children in villages.

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