

Education of adolescent girl for development in India

Dr. Manjula Devappa
Dept/ women's studies
KSAWU VIJAYAPURA

“If you educate a man you educate an individual, however, if you educate a woman you educate a whole family. Women Empowered means Mother India Empowered”. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU Women and girls in the developing world are often denied opportunities for education. Lack of education limits prospects, decreases family income, reduces health, puts women and girls at risk of trafficking and exploitation, and limits the economic advancement of entire countries. Education for girls and women is the single most effective way to improve the lives of individual families as well as to bring economic development to poor communities worldwide. Education has a long history of successfully working with local partners to design, manage, and evaluate community-based initiatives to advance the conditions of girls and women. World Education's programs help girls enrol and stay in school and help women gain access to or create new educational, financial, and social resources in their communities. They also help girls and women improve their own lives, the lives of their families and the conditions in their communities. For parents and especially mothers this means creating conditions that ensure their daughters have equal access to basic education, are able to make informed decisions about their futures, and are able to protect themselves from trafficking, sexual exploitation, HIV, for example. By improving educational opportunities for girls and women, World Education helps women develop skills that allow them to make decisions and influence community change. In turn, these programs have a positive impact on some of the most profound issues of our time: Population growth, HIV, peace and security, and the widening gap between the rich and poor.

Barriers and Problems against Girl education In spite of certain outstanding examples of individual achievements, and a definite improvement in their general condition over the years, it remains true that Indian women still constitute a large body of under - privileged citizens. Women of course do not form a homogenous group in class or caste terms. Nevertheless, they face distinctive problems that call for special attention. The Backward Classes Commission set up by the Government of India in 1953 classified women of India as a backward group requiring special attention. The Ministry of

Education clubs girls with Scheduled Castes and Tribes as the three most backward groups in education. The educational, economic, political and social backwardness of women makes them the largest group hindering the process of social change. It is inevitable that when this 'backward' group has the major responsibility of bringing up future generations the advancement of society cannot be rapid or take any significant form of development. In the report of the committee appointed by the National Council for Women's Education it was emphatically stated that what was needed to convert the equality of women from de jure to de facto status was widespread education for girls and women and are education of men and women to accept new and scientific attitudes towards each other and to themselves. A changing society and a developing economy cannot make any headway if education, which is one of the important agents affecting the norms of morality and culture, remains in the hands of traditionalists who subscribe to a fragmented view of the country's and the world's heritage. The differences between the positions of men and women in the society will not lessen; leave alone disappear, as long as there are differences between the education levels of men and women. Inadequate education or no education is the most important factor contributing to the backwardness of our masses, especially women. The low literacy among women brings down the national literacy. This gap which exists between the literacy rates of the two sexes also exists between the enrolment of girls and boys at all levels of education. Right from the primary school to the university, we find that the number of girl students is considerably lower than boys. According to Article 45 of the Constitution, universal compulsory and free education until the age of 14 was to be achieved by the year 1960. Looking at the present condition of primary education in villages, it is doubtful whether we can achieve 100% enrolment of girls. It is unfortunately true of our society that children are sent to school not according to their intelligence or aptitude but according to their sex. The reasons for not sending girls to school are both economic and social. In rural areas, girls are required to help in household work. The resources of the rural poor are so limited that they do not have anything to spare for children's education. If resources are available, it is the boy who is sent to school first. Parents also do not see the value of educating especially a daughter who would get married and remain a housewife. Since they cannot see any direct relationship between education and economic betterment, they have very little motivation to send their children to school. It is still not being realized that there is definite connection between education, good motherhood

and efficient house management. The management of millions of households and the upbringing of millions of children is thus in the hands of illiterate women. It is here that a change is required if our democratic and socialistic intensions are not to remain a mere pretence. People can be motivated to have their children educated only if educational system is directly linked with economic and social development. The plight of women, in terms of education is further compounded by the negative attitude of parents toward female education. Some parents are usually reluctant to send their girl child for formal education especially to higher levels like their male counterpart. Another problem closely related to this is the reluctance to acquire western education and misunderstanding on the part of the girls themselves about the values of the acquisition of formal education. In education, equity means equal access to good schooling. Restricted access to education by women in this country is profoundly rooted in history, religion, culture, the psychology of self, law, political institution and social attitudes which interact in several ways to limit women's access to formal education when compared with their male counterparts. It has been observed that Indian women are lagging behind their counterparts in developed and some developing nations due to the late start in educating them. This is caused by our traditions and culture which are hostile to women. This tradition reduces them to kitchen manageresses and producers of babies. Thus, their education ideally, is expected to end in kitchen a condition which ironically is detested by many parents thereby discouraging their investment in girl-child education. Other problems against women education include the familiar problems like lack of funds, inadequate facilities, inadequate manpower, sexual harassment, conflicting societal role expectations, government policies and lack of political will power to implement the entire educational programme. The inferiority complex observable in Indian women can be attributed to the influence of environmental manipulation. Through the traditional socialization process of the typical society, women are made to accept negative self-fulfilling prophecy, stereotyping and stigmatization that they are members of a weaker sex. At present, the forces which combine to hamper women education and development in India could be viewed broadly to include denial of access to education, early marriage, confinement to solitary living, subjugation by culture to accept choices forced on them, discrimination and harassment at work, political Disenfranchisement from elective and political appointment and exposure to cruel mourning rites upon the death of their husband.

Need for Girl education Women empowerment can only be achieved through the provision of adequate and functional education to the women folk. This is crucial because no matter how rich or vast a nation is, without an effective, efficient, adequate and functional education for all its citizens (men and women) education which is relevant to its immediate needs, goals and objectives, such a nation would find it difficult to stand on its own. The brand of education being advocated is that type of education in which is embedded the spirit of self-realization and all that are needed for the country's overall development like mass literacy, economic empowerment etc. The need for women education is also informed by the fact that purposeful occupational achievement and satisfaction is ensured by deep self-awareness and understanding which can only be achieved through the provision of effective and functional education and guidance & counselling. This, has been noted is likely to guarantee women empowerment with its root based on women struggle to improve their status. The empowerment suggested is such that entails the process of challenging power relations and of gaining wider control over source of power. This, however, cannot be achieved without the provision of reasonable access to formal and functional education to the women folk. This is based on the premise that education has been adjudged to be a viable instrument of change in the positive direction. Provision of formal and functional education is needed for the women folk, because: Future educated generations An African proverb says, "If we educate a boy, we educate one person. If we educate a girl, we educate a family and a whole nation." By sending a girl to school, she is far more likely to ensure that her children also receive an education. As many claim, investing in a girl's education is investing in a nation. Decrease infant mortality: Children of educated women are less likely to die before their first birthday. Girls who receive an education are less likely to contact HIV & AIDS, and thus, less likely to pass it onto their children. Primary process. The POA states that education can be an effective tool for women's empowerment, ensuring equal participation in developmental processes; The Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan stresses on improving access to secondary schooling to all young person according to norms through proximate location (say, Secondary Schools within 5 kms, and Higher Secondary Schools within 7-10 kms) / efficient and safe transport arrangements/residential facilities, depending on local circumstances including open schooling and ensures that no child is deprived of secondary education of satisfactory quality due to gender, socio-economic, disability and other barriers.

education alone helps reduce infant mortality significantly, and secondary education helps even more. The Girls Global Education Fund reports that when a child is born to a woman in Africa who hasn't received an education, he or she has a 1 in 5 chance of dying before. Decrease maternal mortality: Educated women (with greater knowledge of health care and fewer pregnancies) are less likely to die during pregnancy, childbirth, or during the postpartum period. Increased education of girls also leads to more female health care providers to assist with prenatal medical care, labour and delivery, delivery complications and emergencies, and follow-up care. Decrease child marriage: Child marriage in some cases involving girls as young as 6 or 8 almost always results in the end of a girl's schooling. The result is illiterate or barely literate young mothers without adequate tools to build healthy, educated families. On average, for every year a girl stays in school past fifth grade, her marriage is delayed a year. Educated girls typically marry later, when they are better able to bear and care for their children.

Decrease population explosion: Educated women tend to have fewer (and healthier) babies. A 2000 study in Brazil found that literate women had an average of 2.5 children while illiterate women had an average of six children, according to UNESCO. Increase involvement in political process: Educated women are more likely to participate in political discussions, meetings, and decision-making, which in turn promote a more representative, effective government. Decrease domestic & sexual violence: Educated girls and women are less likely to be victims of domestic and sexual violence or to tolerate it in their families. Decrease support for militancy: As women become more educated, they are less likely to support militancy and terrorism than similarly educated men. Improve socioeconomic growth: Educated women have a greater chance of escaping poverty, leading healthier and more productive lives, and raising the standard of living for their children, families, and communities. Policy Perspectives for Girls education The policy framework, provision of educational opportunities for women and girls has been an important part of the national endeavour in the field of education since Independence. Though these endeavours did yield significant results, gender disparities persist, more so in rural areas and among disadvantaged communities. The National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986) as revised in 1992 was landmark in the field of policy on women's education in that it recognized the need to redress traditional gender imbalances in educational access and achievement. The NPE also recognized that enhancing infrastructure alone will not redress the problem. It

recognized that “the empowerment of women is possibly the most critical pre condition for the participation of girls and women in the educational process”.

Conclusion Education is one composite single variable, which has the capacity to transform many odds turning in favour of girls more specially so in the rural India. Therefore, an exclusive emphasis on girls’ education is necessary. Education for adolescent girls is constraint due to many factors; the most prominent of them is non-availability of infrastructure and schools. Secondly, the travel time taken in reaching school, fear of crime and unknown eventuality would rise therefore provision of public transport exclusively for girl child is necessary. A legal provision would help rescue girls from the early marriages and open doors of development for them. Awareness programme are needed which would focus on the dynamics of nutrition in physical and mental growth. However, it is to be reiterated at the end that girls need a lot of compassionate treatment and favour to enable them to lead a respectable and meaningful life, and in ensuring this, the role of family members and society is undoubtedly crucial and of prime significance and the change attitude of elders towards girls is urgently called for.

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