



A STUDY ON THE STATISTICS OF GIRLS' LITERACY IN KACHCHH DISTRICT DURING THE LAST DECADE

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Abstract

Women constitute almost half of the population of the world. Education for women is the best way to improve the health, nutrition and economic status of a household that constitute a micro unit of a nation economy. Education has been regarded as the most significant instrument for changing women's subjugated position in the society. It not only develops the personality and capabilities of individuals, but also qualifies them to fulfill certain economic, political and cultural functions and thereby improves their socio-economic status. Literacy is one of the important indicators of social development. Knowledge is linked with literacy and a formal education. And economic growth is related to degree of literacy. A girl's lack of education also has a negative impact on the health and well being of her children. Kachchh is the biggest and the largest district of Gujarat State. Being such importance of this border area, our state government has put into practice different welfare schemes for its educational, economical and social development. So far as the situation of women education in this borderline area is concerned; the average literacy rate of girl's education is not so satisfying to that of the boy.

Key Words: Girl's literacy, Kachchh District, literacy rate of the last decade

INTRODUCTION:

Education is an instrument of social change. It enhances knowledge, wisdom as well as skill. It refines sensitivities and perceptions that contribute to cohesion, scientific temper and independence of mind and spirit. Education holds the key to the all round development of one's personality. A good educational system produces and nurtures socially sensitive, progressive, responsible and forward looking citizens.

When we are talking about the social change, how can we forget one of the inevitable agents of social change and that is none other but a woman? Women constitute nearly half of the world population. **Growth, development and progress in any society are intimately linked with the development and empowerment of our women.** No nation can afford to neglect such a precious segment of human resource. Our great poet and the Nobel Laureate, Dr. Rabindranath Tagore has rightly quoted:

"Woman is the builder and moulder of nation's destiny. Though delicate and soft as a lily, she has a heart, far stronger and bolder than of a man...."

Women constitute almost half of the population of the world. Education for women is the best way to improve the health, nutrition and economic status of a household that constitute a micro unit of a nation economy. Education has been regarded as the most significant instrument for changing women's subjugated position in the society. It not only develops the personality and capabilities of individuals, but also qualifies them to fulfill certain economic, political and cultural functions and thereby improves their socio-economic status. In this context it can be argued that the lack of women education can be an impediment to the country's economic development. That's why women's education has been an area of major policy concerns since independence and is seen as central to the social, political and economical development of the nation and of women themselves.

Indian government has expressed a strong commitment towards education for all. However India still has one of the lowest female literacy rates in Asia. In 1991, less than 40% of the 330 million women aged 7 and over were literate, which means today there are over 200 million

illiterate women in India. This low level of literacy not only has a negative impact on women's lives but also on their families' lives and on their country's economic development, too. Numerous studies show that illiterate women have high levels of fertility and mortality, poor nutritional status, low earning potential, and little autonomy within the household. A girl's lack of education also has a negative impact on the health and well being of her children. A recent survey in India found that the infant mortality was inversely related to mother's educational level.

❖ **BRIEF HISTORY OF WOMEN EDUCATION:**

➤ **GIRLS EDUCATION IN PRE-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD:**

During the British rule, the state-run-educational system attempted to replace the stratification based on caste to one based on class. However, in the process, the internal differentiation of power, based on caste lines, remained intact as the upper castes took up roles as upper classes in the changed scenario (Carnoy, 1974). While there is considerable documentation on the inequality in the field of education across various caste groups, very little attempt has been made to record the horizontal differentiation that existed between men and women. Thus, in the changed context, no serious attempt was made to promote girl's education. Further gender inequality cut through caste / class as a sub-category and impacted on the position of women in society.

➤ **GIRLS EDUCATION IN POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD:**

After independence, the Constitutional guarantee of equality changed the conceptual thinking on the educational development of women and invited women to play multiple roles in the polity, economy and society. The role of education in preparing women to take on this new responsibility gained a new significance. The objectives of the periodic five year plans reiterated the principle of equality, thus announcing a political consensus for creating conditions which would lead to the progressive removal of all forms of discrimination against women. Alongside, the western liberal education, the social reform movement within the country and the struggle for political freedom gave

rise to forces which began advocating changes in the position of women. In spite of these efforts, evidence point to a situation that the process of change has been slow and far short of expectations. The subject of women's status in India is riddled with contradictions. On one hand, our Constitution not only grants equality to women but also provides for affirmative action and for positive discrimination by empowering the state to make special provisions for women. India bestowed on women the privilege to vote much before this right was given to women in other advanced countries. India also has the distinction of being one of the fewest countries which through the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment ushered a sizable number of women into the political echelons of power at the decentralized governance level. Notwithstanding this, women are grossly underrepresented at the higher levels of decision making in government. Women occupy less than 8 per cent of parliamentary seats and comprise of not even 3 per cent of the administrators and managers. India records an alarming decline in the sex ratio over the decades. Now at 933; 1000 it has to account for nearly 25 million women who are missing. India also houses one of the largest numbers of illiterate women of the world. Even after 50 years of independence, there are still more than 50 per cent of girl children who are outside the formal educational system according to the Gross Enrolment Ratio figures. The drop out rates for girls is as high as 40 per cent at primary school showing even lower participation of girls in Primary education.

➤ **GOVERNMENT'S INITIATIVE FOR GIRL'S EDUCATION:**

Education is a basic human right that should be exercised fully in all nations, but for many girls in India, attending school is not an option. A girl's education is an essential starting point in establishing equality everywhere. Despite the Indian Constitution guaranteeing equality before the law and non-discrimination on the basis of sex, India remains a patriarchal society. Male inheritance and property ownership, early marriage, dowry, honor crimes, lack girls' education, witch hunting, violence against women, and trafficking are all serious issues in the country.

There are schools, but most girls do not attend, often because of religious reasons or cultural pressures. The law of the land makes it clear that both boys and girls have an equal opportunity to attend school from the age of six through fourteen, and that primary education is a fundamental right (Indian Constitution, Art 21). If the constitution does not make it clear enough, there is also an article in The Universal Declaration of Human Rights defining that education is a universal human right (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Art 26). Girls are not receiving equal access to primary education in rural India and therefore are not achieving equality.

The Indian government's commitment to education is stated in its constitution with an article promising "free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14" (The World Bank, 1997b). The National Policy on Education (1986), which was updated in 1992, and the 1992 Program of Action both reaffirmed the government's commitments to improving literacy levels, by providing special attention to education for girls.

The impact of education on girls is extraordinary. **Education sustains human values. It forms the foundation for learning and critical thinking.** Education also provides skills for girls to become more self-reliant and provides them with more opportunities. Thinking into the future, education also provides them with the knowledge to manage health problems. **A girl understanding her own body can make the difference between an unwanted pregnancy and an illegal abortion.** Having the knowledge beforehand is crucial to saving and protecting lives.

❖ **GIRLS EDUCATION IN GUJARAT:**

Literacy is one of the important indicators of social development. Knowledge is linked with literacy and a formal education. And economic growth is related to degree of literacy. Thus literacy is one of the important needs of life as well as future development of a particular region.

At present Gujarat is having population of 6, 04, 39,692 people. In this population, the average literacy rate of male is 85.80 % while the average

literacy rate of women is 69.7 %. The average literacy rate of the state is 78.03 %.

The literacy rate in Gujarat has seen an upward trend and is 78.03% as per 2011 population census. Compared to the situation in 1951, the improvement in literacy in Gujarat is phenomenal. From literacy rates of barely 29 and 12 per cent for men and women, respectively according to 1951 Census, they have increased to 87.23% for males and 70.73% for females by 2011. Of that, male literacy stands at 85.8% while female literacy is at 69.7%. In actual numbers, total literates in Gujarat stands at 4,10,93,358 of which males were 2,34,74,873 and females were 1,76,18,485. There are some of the districts in Gujarat have comparatively higher literacy rate such as Surat (85.53%), Ahmedabad (85.31%), Anand (84.37%), Gandhi Nagar (84.16%) and Navsari (83.88%). Dohad is the district has the literacy rate of 58.82% and stands first from the bottom. The male and female literacy rate in Dohad is 70.00% and 47.6% respectively.

The Sample Registration System-Baseline Survey 2014 reveals that Gujarat (with 73.4 per cent of girls in school) is at the 20th position among 21 major states, just a notch above Rajasthan (72.1 per cent). According to the survey, around 26.6 per cent of girls in the age group of 15-17 years in Gujarat have either dropped out or have never been to school. That means 26.6 per cent of girls in the state have not reached the class IX or X level.

It reveals the all-India average of girls attending school, which is 83.8 per cent, is higher than Gujarat's by about 10 per cent. According to officials, when data was gathered, the programme to improve girl child enrolment in Gujarat schools had been in operation for more than a decade. As part of the annual "Kanya Kelavni" program and "Shala Praveshotsav", ministers and government officials fan out in rural areas to ensure children's enrolment. Despite the high-level push, however, even states termed backward have performed better than Gujarat.

❖ **GIRLS EDUCATION IN KACHCHH DISTRICT:**

Kachchh is the biggest and the largest district of Gujarat State. It is spread in the area of 45, 652

square km. out of which 26,252 square km. of area is surrounded by dry desert. Having amazing and varied traditional culture, it owes a lot of outstanding characteristics like the longest sea-coast, the biggest desert, grass sanctuaries, a big port of Kandla, and the most developing port of Mundra. There are world famous places of pilgrimage like Matanamadh, Hajipir, tomb of Jesal-toral and many more. It has been a centre of world attraction for its handicrafts, bandhani work, woolen work, embroidery, clay work etc.

Being such importance of this boarder area, our state government has put into practice different welfare schemes for its educational, economical and social development. So far as the situation of women education in this borderline area is concerned; the average literacy rate of women education is not so satisfying to that of the male. The average literacy rate of the district is 71.58%. And the average literacy rate of male is 80.60 % while the average literacy rate of female is only 61.62 %. Kachchh ranks 23rd both in literacy and female literacy rate. The statistical table, given below, regarding the population of male and female in each taluka, the average literacy rate of male as well as of female in each taluka and the average literacy rate of each taluka of the district shall make the picture of girl's education in the district more clear and comprehensive:

The population and the literacy rate of each taluka of Kachchh district

N o.	Taluka	Population			Literacy Rate		
		Mal e	Fe mal e	Tota l	M ale	Fe mal e	To tal
1	Bhuj	2281 36	215 133	4432 69	70. 14	56.1 8	63. 36
2	Mandvi	1039 83	993 90	2033 73	72. 83	58.3 5	65. 76
3	Mundra	8987 1	633 48	1532 19	75. 61	56.0 3	67. 52
4	Anjar	1234 01	112 136	2355 37	70. 22	54.6 8	62. 83
5	Bhachu	9789 7	881 38	1860 35	60. 44	40.0 9	50. 80

6	Rapar	1110 65	106 250	2173 15	56. 09	35.6 0	46. 08
7	Abdasa	6138 7	561 51	1175 38	65. 58	48.8 3	57. 57
8	Nakhat rana	7438 0	719 87	1463 67	68. 61	54.6 1	61. 72
9	Lakha pat	3227 4	302 78	6255 2	60. 74	42.2 2	51. 76
1 0	Gandhi dham	1743 43	152 823	3271 66	74. 89	61.3 7	68. 59
	Total	1096 737	995 634	2092 371	80. 60	61.6 2	71. 58

(Source: Census: 2011, District Panchayat Office – Bhuj, Kachchh)

From the above given statistical table, it is vivid that the average literacy rate in the talukas like Gandhidham, Mandvi, Nakhatrana, Bhuj, Mundra, and Anjar is above 60% and below 71% while the average literacy rate in the talukas like Abdasa, Lakhapat, Bhachau and Rapar is above 40 % and below 58 %. Now so far as the condition of women education in each taluka is concerned, the average literacy rate of female in the talukas like Gandhidham and Mandvi is above 60% while in Nakhatrana, Bhuj, Mundra, and Anjar, it is above 50% and below 60% and in Abdasa, Lakhapat, Bhachau and Rapar, it is below 47%.

After considering all the figures of the average literacy rate of female in each taluka above mentioned, it can be said that the present situation of women education in all the talukas except Gandhidham and Mandvi is quite discouraging, especially in Abdasa, Lakhapat, Bhachau and Rapar which are considered as the most backward talukas of the Kachchh district.

But on the other hand, if we go in the past and study the development of women education in the Kachchh district specially after independence, we would have the picture of the overall development of women education in the district quite better than that of the past when the society as well as the education system conspicuously debarred women except in the case of those from higher castes, where only some women could achieve ordinary levels of education leading to literacy. So, the investigator has decided to carry out a research

work on the development of women education in Kachchh district after independence.

❖ **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:**

A study on the statistics of girls' literacy in Kachchh district during the last decade.

➤ **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

A STUDY ON THE STATISTICS OF GIRLS' LITERACY IN KACHCHH DISTRICT THE LAST DECADE

❖ **Main Objective:**

1. To study of the development of girl's literacy in Kachchh district last decade.

❖ **Minor Objectives:**

1. To study the status of girl's literacy in Kachchh district with regard to opportunities for education.

2. To examine the contribution of social volunteer institutions, women's organizations and the government to girl's education in Kachchh district.

3. To examine factors for and against women's education in Kachchh district.

4. To find out the factors responsible for the backwardness of girl's education in Kachchh district and study the role of women's organizations.

5. To study the effect of education on the social and economic condition of girl's education in the Kachchh district.

6. To study the effect of education on the whole total life of the girls in the Kachchh district.

7. To suggest the remedial measures for the better development of girls education in Kachchh district.

❖ **OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS of the TERMS:**

➤ **GIRLS LITERACY:**

Formal education that is received by the girls students at the different levels like Pre-primary, Primary, Secondary, Higher Secondary and Higher Education.

➤ **KACHCHH DISTRICT**

Kachchh is the largest and the biggest district of Gujarat state. It is situated in the west of Gujarat which is better known as 'Sarhadi Jillo' i.e. a district that is very near to Pakistan border by west of its direction. It is spread in the area of 45, 652 square km. out of which 26,252 square km. of area is surrounded by dry desert. An ocean in the south,

a desert in the north and a vast mountain range in the middle are the geographical peculiarities of the Kachchh district. It has become world famous today for its ancient art and culture.

➤ **During the last decade**

The study is focused on the statistics of last census data of 2011.

❖ **VARIABLES OF THE STUDY:**

➤ **Independent Variables:**

Area, Caste and Society, GIRL'S Organizations, Constitution, Government Policies, Social-Volunteer-Organizations, Privatization of Education

➤ **Dependent Variable:**

Girls literacy rate of last decade

❖ **METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:**

➤ **RESEARCH METHOD:**

The method of the present research study will be historical cum survey method.

❖ **POPULATION:**

The population of the study will constitute all the women of the Kachchh district.

❖ **SAMPLE:**

The sample for the present study will be taken 20 % of the whole population using stratified random sampling method.

❖ **TOOL FOR DATA COLLECTION:**

For data collection, the investigator will use Census report of 2011 as secondary data

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