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Globalisation and women education in India: An analysis

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ABSTRACT

Education is one of the important components of the human development and women education is much emphasised in the globalised world. Women participation in the socio-economic and the political activities has been emphasised since the emergence of democratic governance at the national and international level. Education is of the important tool to ensure the socio-economic and political participation of women at the national and international level. Under the pressure of the global institutions and women groups and international declaration on women rights the old concept of human development is broadened and it is now linked to the gender development index. Simultaneously a new concept of principles of inclusive growth and women participation in the national and international development along with the professional education to the women has been focused upon. In the developing countries like India a new dimension to the women education has been given and the new private agencies are entering the education section which was earlier under the state control. Women role in the nation building has been much focused upon and special schemes for the education of have been also adopted by the Indian government. An attempt is being made in this paper to analysis the historical trends of women education in India along with the impact of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation on women education in India. A special focus is given on the analysis of five years plans and women education along with focus on the special policies and programmes of Indian government for the girl child education in the globalised India.

Key Words : Women, Education, Girl, School, College, Policies, Programmes, Institutions

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the important components to measure the socio-economic and political development of any society. It always plays a vital role in ensuring the future of any nation. An educational institution is a vital place to inculcate the moral values and national ideals among children and to prepare the future generation of the nation.

The innovations and creations of technology particularly after globalisation have changed the production system and production process to a large extent. It has definitely impacted Indian education system and posed new challenges before the Indian educationists to make

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the Indian youth capable for global level competition. Globalisation has also posed many challenges for Indian youth and particularly for young women as their education is now considered as the family oriented earlier. Globalisation has posed a new challenge in making women education market orientated. Accepting the challenges of globalisation the policy makers have started focusing on women education and inclusive growth under the Eleventh and Twelfth Five Year Plans.

Therefore, women's entitlement to education for preparing them to play multiple roles of productive and reproductive citizens has become important and essential for the positive and healthy growth of the nation. The New Education Policy (1986) (NEP) as amended in 1992, has started focusing on education for Women's equality, the necessity of women's access to vocational, professional and technological education.[1] As per 1991 census female literacy rate was 39.42 per cent as compare to 63.86 per cent for men. The urgent need for the higher education of women has been realised only after the marketisation of education and as the demand for the Indian educated women increased in the MNCs and TNCs in India and abroad. Although a woman is yet not accepted as an earning hand in the families under the patriarch set-up of the family, the government initiatives and the exposure of the Indian female workforce in the global labour market has been helping Indian women to play their potential role in the family and the society.

The new phenomenon of 'earning' and 'learning' has become a marked sign from 90s onwards. Tele- networking and tele-trade is drawing a lot of Indian women in the high salaried sector. Open Schools, open universities, correspondence courses and distance education are becoming popular among Indian women. Lectures and demonstrations by globally renowned teachers, experts and specialists telecast by various television channels have become a source of learning for women in India. Globalisation has encouraged the induction of women engineers, architects, pilots, scientists, technicians and journalists with super-specialisation in challenging and rewarding assignments. The facilities of safe transport and flexible working hours with the availability of variety of fresh and durable food in the market have helped Indian women to come out from their traditional set-up of the house-hold. The old thinking of considering women as a burden and as less productive by the employers as women need separate toilets, rest- rooms and flexible working hours has been changing as the Indian women have proved themselves as competitive and hard- working as their male partners are.

The social parameters of women education and the conservatism regarding them have changed to a large extent. The very foundation of women education in India was laid down by the conservative socio-religious reform movements which related women education with house- hold work, family and social values, has now been changed and a professional approach to education of the girl child is developing in these days. Another important point that needs to be emphasised is that the trust of the NEP in letting the education system play an interventionist and empowering role for women by sensitising the whole society for an egalitarian social order.

New players have entered the education services along with the already established state-sponsored education system. New schemes, strategies, innovation and creations of the government and non government institutions in the education sector have both positive and

negative impact on the Indian society in general and women in particular. Women education has become a concern not only for the government of India but also for many non-governmental organisations at every level and everywhere.

So the policies for the education of women in India not only require a careful analysis but their working at the ground level should also be documented and presented carefully along with their actual outcome. The strategies for women's education, development and empowerment are becoming the new mantras for the policy makers in the government set-up and the non-government agencies.

Government policies and women education :

Although educational development was on the priority of the Indian leadership from the independence onwards, the special requirement of women education was recognised in the Third Five Year Plan (1961 – 66) and the largest share for expending on social welfare services was allocated to the education sector. The emphasis on women education was continued during the Fourth and Fifth Year Plan also (1969 – 1974). The basic policy was to promote women's welfare as the base of operation. The outlay on family planning was stepped up to reduce the birth rate through education.

The Fifth Five Year plan also recommended a strategic programme of functional literacy to equip women with skills and knowledge to perform their functions as good housewives. The Fifth Five Year Plan was implemented during the International Decade for Women and the submission of the Report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India (CSWI) entitled "Towards Equality" also took place at the same time. The CSWI had comprehensively examined the rights and status of women in the context of changing social and economic conditions and the problems relating to the advancement of women. The CSWI reported that the dynamics of social change and development had adversely affected a large section of women and had created new imbalances and disparities and to educate women was felt to be the immediate need of the nation.[2]

In the Sixth Five Year Plan the development of women was treated as a separate issue from the family welfare. Until then they were provided welfare services along with other weaker and handicapped sections. It was, for the first time that a chapter on development of women had been documented in the Sixth Five Year Plan. According to the document four strategies namely, Economic independence, educational advancement, access to health care and amily planning and supplementing income of tribal women, were emphasised.[3]

During the Seventh Five Year Plan period, the Indian Parliament adopted a National Policy on Education 1986, which included a chapter on Education for Women's Equality.[4] The Eighth Five Year Plan strategy for women's development covered new thrust-areas such as improving women's education, database, enumeration of women workers, and provision of supportive services, encouraging women's organizations and stepping up social security measures. The government also initiated certain programmes for women such as social welfare, nutrition, supplement income generation, girls education, equal remuneration for equal work, hostels for working women and crèches for their children, functional and legal literacy, family-welfare, promotion and strengthening of self-employment, review and streamlining laws concerning women etc. [5]

The Ninth Five Year Plan came into effect from April 1, 1997. An approach paper was brought out by the Planning Commission and accepted by the National Development Council, An important objective in the Approach paper was the empowerment of women. In planning process, empowerment at the outset, means choices for women and opportunities to avail of these choices. The supportive environment should be provided to women at all stages by the home, school, religion, government and work place.

To boost up the programmes for women's development, a National Perspective Plan for Women (1988–2000) was brought out by the Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Human Resource Development. Education of girls was given priority and awareness regarding the necessity of educating girls so as to prepare them to contribute effectively to the socio-economic development of the country.[6]

Sahajani Shiksha Kendra: A Programme of Literacy and Education for Women Empowerment[7] :

A comprehensive policy on women education *Nirantar* was initiated by the central government in 2002. The objective of this policy was to educate women from every strata of Indian society, including the tribal, dalit and rural women. For the purpose vernacular was adopted to teach them at primary level. The programme broadly aims at empowering women and adolescent girls through literacy and education – an education that connects with their lived realities and rights, and enables them to develop analytical skills on gender, development and other issues. Nirantar's SSK programme foregrounds 'literacy for empowerment', by linking women's lived realities to its educational initiatives – which take the form of camps, centres or the development of locally contextualised material for enabling and sustaining literacy.

Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya[8] :

KGBVs are residential upper primary schools for girls from SC, ST, OBC and Muslim communities. KGBVs are set up in areas of scattered habitations where schools are at great distances and pose a challenge to the security of girls. This often compels girls to discontinue their education. KGBVs address this need through setting up residential schools in the block itself. KGBVs reach out to: Adolescent girls who are unable to go to regular schools, out of school girls in the 10+ age group that are unable to complete primary school and young girls from the migratory populations in difficult areas of scattered habitations which could not qualify for primary/upper primary school.

KGBVs provide for a minimum reservation of 75% seats for girls from SC/ST/OBC and minority communities and 25% to girls from families that live below the poverty line. Till 2009-10 there were 2570 KGBVs in the country. After the RTE Act came into operation, an additional 1030 KGBVs were sanctioned, taking the total number of KGBVs in the country to 3600.

National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL)[9] :

NPEGEL is being implemented in educationally backward blocks (EBB) and addresses the needs of girls who are in school or out of school. NPEGEL also reaches out to girls who

are enrolled in schools, but do not attend any school regularly. NPEGEL emphasises the responsibility of teachers to recognise vulnerable girls and pay special attention to bring them out of their state of vulnerability and prevent them from dropping out. Both NPEGEL and KGBV are expected to work in tandem to complement efforts under SSA to ensure inclusion of all girls and provide them quality education. While NPEGEL is designed to work through the day schools, KGBV establishes residential schooling facilities for the girls in remote areas that are not served by upper primary schools or in areas with educational disadvantage amongst certain social groups[6].

The Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)[10] :

A centrally sponsored scheme with a funding pattern of 75:25% between Centre and States (90:10%) for Special Category and North Eastern States), was launched in 2009–10. The major objectives of the RMSA are (i) to raise the minimum level of education to class X and universalise access to secondary education; (ii) to ensure good-quality secondary education with focus on Science, Mathematics and English; (iii) to reduce the gender-centric, social and regional gaps in enrolments, dropouts and improving retention. The interventions supported under RMSA included (i) upgrading of upper primary schools to secondary schools; (ii) strengthening of existing secondary schools; (iii) providing additional classrooms, science laboratories, libraries, computer rooms, art, craft and culture rooms, toilet blocks and water facilities in schools; (iv) providing in-service training of teachers; and (v) providing funds for major repairs of school buildings and residential quarters for teachers. Despite being launched in the third year of the XI Plan, RMSA was welcomed and the strength of students increased very fast, the target of enrolling 3.2 million students was achieved within two years of the launch of RMSA and 2.4 million more students were enrolled in secondary schools during the Eleventh Plan period.

As per the 2001 and 2011 census, the literacy rates of women have improved and dropout rates have been reduced. Globalisation has increased the opportunities for higher learning for highly educated women who can compete in the global market. But commercialisation of education has proved detrimental to the majority of girls who belong to poor and lower middle class families.

Table 1 : Literacy rate in 2001, 2011

Literates	% of total population 2001	% of Total population 2011
Persons	65%	74%
Males	76%	82%
Females	54%	65%

Source: Census of 2001 and 2011, Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi.

Literacy is the primary foundation for social, economic and political growth of any country. The 15th official census in India presented the magic figure of 74.04%, of literacy in India, which was just 12% in 1947. Over the years, India has changed socially, economically, and politically. After the 2011 census, literacy rate in India was found to be 74.04%. As compared to the adult literacy rate; the youth literacy rate is about 9% higher. Though this

seems to be a great accomplishment, it is still a matter of concern that till date a large chunk of Indian population still cannot read and write. The number of children who do not get education, especially in the rural areas, is still high, though the government has made primary education free and compulsory and aimed to achieve 100% primary education.

Simultaneously, a cursory glance over the female literacy rate in India proves that the government policies seriously need a new direction and action if it really wants to achieve the goal of 100% primary education for all in India. Female literacy is lower than male literacy in every corner of India as per the census of 2011 the gap is 17%. First, any effective programme for girl–child education requires a lot more to do than just providing free education and financial initiatives. As compared to boys, girls face a lot of social as well as personal problems even during primary education. As shown by the different studies the burden of caring for the siblings always becomes a hurdle in the way of young girls because a mother prefers to give the responsibility of the young kids to young girls rather than to send them to school.

The second is of the non recoganisation of the socio-economic and political role of women under the patriarchal set-up. Women education has always been a matter of serious concern for policy makers as well as for the concerned citizens and civil society groups in India. Lot of initiatives has been taken by government and non-government organisations to educate women in India for more than a hundered years. The special initiatives of government and the collaboration of non- government institutions have helped to increase the number of women literates.

A casual glance at the literacy rate of the Census presents the ten years growth of above 7 years age group of both boys and girls.

Table 2 : Literate and illiterate population of male and female (aged 7 above)

Literates/illiterates	Persons	Males	Females
Population (aged 7 above)			
2001	86,49,00,041	44,72,41,823	41,76,85,218
2011	1,05,14,04,135	54,07,72,113	51,06,32,022
Increase in 2011 over 2001	18,65,04,094	9,35,57,290	9,29,46,804
Literates			
2001	56,07,53,179	33,65,71,822	27,41,81,357
2011	77,84,54,120	44,42,03,762	33,42,50,358
Increase in 2011 over 2001	21,77,00,941	10,76,31,940	11,00,69,001
Illiterates			
2001	30,41,46,862	11,06,43,001	19,35,03,861
2011	27,29,50,015	9,65,68,351	17,63,81,664
Increase in 2011 over 2001	-3,11,96,847	-1,40,74,650	-1,71,22,197

Sources: Government of India, Census of India, 2001 and 2011, Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi.

As per the provisional population census of 2011, out of the provisional total population of 1,210,193,422, the number of persons aged seven years and above is 1,051,404,135. Out of this, 778,454,120 are literate and 272,950,015 are illiterate. There has been an increase of

186,504,094 persons in the age group seven years and above during 2001-2011, while 217,700,941 additional persons have become literate during this decade.

A significant improvement is noted in the Census of 2011, the total number of illiterates has come down from 304,146,862 in 2001 to 272,950,015 in 2011, showing a decline of 31,196,847 persons. One of the interesting features of Census 2011 is that out of total of 217,700,941 literates added during the decade, females (110,069,001) outnumber the males (107,631,940). A reverse trend was noticed during 1991-2001. The decadal increase in number of literates among males is of 31.98 percentage points while the corresponding increase in case of females is of 49.10 percentage points.

Literacy rate trends :

The effective literacy rate for India in Census 2011, works out to 74.04%. The corresponding figures for male and female children are 82.14 and 65.46 %, respectively. Thus three-fourths of the population of children aged 7 years and above are literate in the country. Four out of every five males and two out of every three females in the country are literate now. The country has continued its march in improving literacy rate by recording a jump of 9.21 % during 2001-2011. The increase in literacy rates in male and female children are in the order of 6.88 and 11.79%, respectively. However, efforts are still required to achieve the target of 85 % set by the planning commission was to be achieved by the years 2011-12. An extremely positive development in the present decade is that the gap of 21.59 percentage points recorded between male and female literacy rates in 2001 Census has been reduced to 16.68% in 2011. Though the target set for the year 2011-2012 by the planning commission of reducing the gap to 10% has been not achieved, it is heartening that the reduction has been to the order of almost 5%.

Table 3 : The effective literacy rate for the country by persons, males, females and the male-female gap since 1951

Census Year	Persons (%)	Males (%)	Females (%)	Male-female gap in literacy rate (%)
1951	18.33	27.16	8.86	18.30
1961	28.3	40.4	15.35	25.05
1971	34.45	45.96	21.97	23.98
1981	43.57	56.38	29.76	26.62
1991	52.21	64.13	39.29	24.84
2001	64.83	75.26	53.67	21.59
2011	74.04	82.14	65.46	16.68

Sources: Government of India, Census of India 1951-2011, Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi.

The above table shows that the growth rate of male literacy has always remained higher than the female literacy in India. The gap between the male and female literacy has been increased as the efforts of the government to spread the modern education has started. As shown by the census of 1951, the gap between the male and female literacy rate started with 18.3% in Independent India and increased to 25.05% within one decade of Independence as reported in the census of 1961. The rising gap between the male and female literacy in

India despite the government efforts to spread education among all citizens and providing constitutional equality to women proved that the development of women in India required a lot to be done both at the government as well as societal level. The gap became slightly low in 1971 to 23%, but it again touched its highest level of 26.62% in 1981. Though it came down to 24.84% in 1991. The special initiatives for literacy including the adult literacy were initiated in 1980's and they have showed their results in 2001 and 2011 census, respectively and the gap between the male and female education has been lowered down to 16.68 %. It is important to note that it is not only the women literacy rate which has been increasing at a rapid pace especially after 2001, but the enrolment of women in higher and professional educational institution has also been increasing day by day.

Table 4 : Enrollment of boys and girls from Primary to Senior Secondary Education (In Millions)

Academic Year	Primary (Classes I–V)			Upper Primary (Classes VI–VIII)			High/Hr.Sec (ix-xii)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1950-1951	13.8	5.4	19.2	2.6	0.5	3.1	1.3	0.2	1.5
1955-1956	17.1	7.5	24.6	3.8	1.0	4.8	2.2	0.4	2.6
1960-1961	23.6	11.4	35.0	5.1	1.6	6.7	2.7	0.7	3.4
1965-1966	32.2	18.3	50.5	7.7	2.8	10.5	4.4	1.3	5.7
1970-1971	35.7	21.3	57.0	9.4	3.9	13.3	5.7	1.9	7.6
1975-1976	40.6	25.0	65.6	11.0	5.0	16.0	6.5	2.4	8.9
1980-1981	45.3	28.5	73.8	13.9	6.8	20.7	7.6	3.4	11.0
1985-1986	52.2	35.2	87.4	17.7	9.6	27.1	11.5	5.0	16.5
1990-91	57.0	40.4	97.4	21.5	12.53	4.0	12.8	6.3	19.1
1991-92	58.6	42.3	100.9	22.0	13.63	5.6	13.5	6.9	20.4
1992-93	57.9	41.7	99.6	21.2	12.93	4.1	13.6	6.9	20.5
1993-94	55.1	41.9	97.0	20.6	13.53	4.1	13.2	7.5	20.7
1994-95	60.0	45.1	105.1	22.1	14.33	6.4	14.2	7.9	22.1
1995-96	60.9	46.2	107.1	22.7	14.83	7.5	14.6	8.3	22.9
1996-97	61.4	46.8	108.2	22.9	15.23	8.1	15.3	8.7	24.0
1997-98	62.3	48.0	110.3	23.6	15.93	9.5	16.1	9.3	25.4
1998-99	62.7	48.2	110.9	24.0	16.34	0.3	17.3	10.5	27.8
1999-2000	62.7	49.5	113.6	25.1	17.04	2.1	17.2	11.0	28.2
2000-01	64.0	49.8	113.8	25.3	17.54	2.8	16.9	10.7	27.6
2001-02	63.6	50.3	113.9	26.1	18.74	4.8	18.4	12.1	30.5
2005-06	70.4	61.5	132.0	28.8	23.35	2.1	22.2	16.0	38.3
2006–07	68.4	63.4	131.8	25.4	22.1	47.5	93.8	85.5	179.3
2007–08	69.5	64.7	134.2	27	23.9	50.9	96.4	88.6	185.0
2008–09	69.4	65.0	134.4	28.0	25.4	53.4	97.3	90.4	187.7
2009–10	68.8	64.7	133.5	28.3	26.2	54.5	97.1	90.9	188.0
2010–11	69.8	65.5	135.3	29.9	28.0	57.9	99.6	93.4	193.0

Source: Government of India, Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development, (Various Year Reports), New Delhi.

The literacy trends of male and female children over the last 60 years present very interesting trends. As mentioned in the table given above, the literacy rate which was just 13.8 million for boys and 5.4 million for girls at primary level and 2.6 million for boys and 0.5 million at Elementary level in 1950-51 has been increased to 69.8 million for boys and 65.5 million for girls in 2010-2011. The trends of elementary to senior secondary education are also notable. The total percentage of both boys and girls was just 3.1 and 2.1 million of boys and 0.5 million of girls, respectively at elementary level and 1.5 million of senior secondary with 1.3 million of boys and 0.2 million girls, respectively in 1950-51. The upper primary education has also improved a lot and reached the 57.7 million with 29.9 million boys and 28.0 million girls at elementary level. Same is true in case of senior secondary education which was just 1.5 million total with 1.3 and 0.2 million of girls have increased to the level of 193.0 million with 99.6 million of boys and 93.4 million of girls, respectively in 2010-2011.

It is true that the development of any country depends on the development of human resources in that country. It is also true that the pace of development of human resources in India has always remained low, particularly in case of women education. It is the fact that due to the social conservatism and poverty government of India has not only faced many challenges at levels of policy initiatives and financial restraints but more at the social level. The 21st century and the census of 2011 have presented a different picture of fast growth of 16% in women education within a short –span of 10 years, which could not happen over the last 50's years. However, the above figures of women education lost their relevance and government and non-government initiatives for women education in India came under question if one sees the education and drop-out level of girls in rural areas as well as in the deprived sections of the Indian society.

During the academic year 2006–07, total enrollment of girls was 85.5 million and about 47.7% of the all children (179.3 million) aged 6–14 years were enrolled in elementary schools. The corresponding figures for rural and urban areas were found to be 47.6% and 47.8%, respectively. These figures approximately match the share of women in the total population of the country. In case of SC and ST children, the shares of elementary school enrollment was 19.85% and 10.70%, respectively, which was more than their share of 16.2% and 8.2%, respectively in the overall Indian population. Even girls of these sections in the relevant age-group shared elementary school enrollment to the extent of 44.7% and 47.4%, respectively of the total enrollment of children coming from these sections. The SC and ST girls enrolled in elementary schools constituted, respectively 18.6% and 10.6% of all girls of the same age-group studying in elementary schools. The OBC girls constituted about 42% of the total enrollment of girls at that stage. Therefore, enrollment of girls belonging to SC, ST, and OBC sections was more than their share in the total population of the country, and thus they were not under represented.

At the secondary education stage (for children ages 14–16 years), enrollment of all girls (2005–06) was 42% of the total enrollment at that stage. While all enrolled SC children constituted about 14.50% of the total enrollment at that stage, SC girls were 39.60% of all SC children and 13.70% of all girls. Similarly, enrolled ST children were 5.70% of all secondary school children and enrolled ST girls were 39.10% of all enrolled ST children. But, enrolled ST girls were only 5.30% of all secondary school girls. The overall situation indicates that

both SC and ST children enrolled in secondary schools are less than the share of these communities in the total population of the country, the situation being more alarming in case of girls belonging to these sections. Moreover, there is about 75–80% dropout and 30–40% examination failure of school children belonging to SC/ST groups up to class 12th.

The percentage of girls out of the total number enrolled at primary and upper primary levels was 48 % and 46.5 %, respectively in the year 2006–07; this increased to 48.4% and 48.3% at primary and upper primary levels, respectively in 2010–11. The annual average growth rate of enrolment for girls was considerably higher as compared to boys.

Higher education and women :

Historically, the higher education of women in comparison to men in India is very low. The grim scenario of the higher education of women in India at the time of Independence can be noted from the fact that there were only 14 women in higher education in comparison to 100 men in 1950-51. In 1994-95 the ratio of female education in comparison to male education improved from the earlier one and it increased to 51 women in comparison to 100 men.[11] The gap between male and female has been enrollment decreasing and in the gross enrollment ratio in higher education of male 21.8 and female 17.9 in 2010-2011. The equal rise in the gross enrollment in the higher education of male and female is noted in 2011-2012 with the increase of 1% that mean 21.6 of male and 18.9 of female in higher education in India.[12]

The basic parameters of the government policies regarding women education at large come under a cloud when a comprehensive analysis of government policies is done along with the socio-economic parameters of Indian society. The concern of Indian government for women education can be easily revealed by the situational data analysis of women education along with per cent of women education in the rural, urban and caste lines.

The pathetic condition of the girl child education in rural India is revealed from the fact that even after 65 years of independence the primary education for girl child is not ensured. The available data present a very grim picture. The drop-out rate at the primary level can shock every conscious individual as only 40 girls from the enrolled 100 girls could complete their primary education in rural areas.

The condition of upper primary elementary education is also not different as only 18 girls could pass the VIII class from the 40 who were lucky enough to complete their primary education. The situation deteriorated more at the high school level as only 9 girls could pass 10th class from the 18 who completed elementary education and the girl child education scenario meets its worst at the Senior Secondary level as only 1 girls could cross the 12th class in the rural areas of India. There are no words to explain the scenario of girl child education in rural India as only 1 girl could receive the 12th class education from the 100 girls who joined the primary education with her in their 1st standard in their childhood. Although the scenario of upper elementary education is not much impressing but it is slightly better in comparison as 82 girls pass the primary stage in urban areas in comparison to 40 girls in rural area and 62 pass elementary education in urban areas in comparison 18 girls in rural areas and 32 girls pass their 10th class in the urban areas in comparison to 9 girls in rural areas and 14 girls pass their 12th in urban areas in comparison to 1 girl in the rural areas of India.

Table 5 : Dropouts rate by stage and gender in 1999-2000 to 2009-10 (%)

	Primary (I-V)			Elementary (I-VIII)		
Year	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1999-00	39.8	41.0	40.3	53.3	57.7	55.1
2000-01	39.7	41.9	40.7	50.3	57.7	53.7
2002-03	38.4	39.9	39.0	52.9	56.9	54.6
2003-04	35.85	33.72	34.89	52.28	53.45	52.79
2004-05	33.74	28.57	31.47	51.85	52.92	52.32
2005-06	31.81	25.42	29.00	50.49	51.28	50.84
2006-07	28.71	21.77	25.67	48.67	48.98	48.80
2009-10	30.25	27.25	28.86	40.59	44.39	42.39

Source: Government of India, Selected Educational Statistics 2007-08, Ministry of Human Resource Development, New Delhi, also see, Government of India, Abstract of Selected Educational Statistics 2009-10; Ministry of Human Resources Development, New Delhi.

In total the figures present that the dropout rate of 60% of girls at primary stage, 82% at elementary stage, 91 at high school level and 99 at the senior secondary stage. Correlating this with increasing poverty in the rural areas, 30 % to 35 % women manage households; increasing work hours for the mother both outside and inside the house and the girl child's responsibility to take care of siblings.

The grim scenario of girl child education is also observed by Reddy and Sinha. In their study on primary education in 2010 they reported that more than 27 million children in India, who joined Class I in 1993, only 10 million of them could reach Class X, which is about 37% of those who entered the school system and in more than half the states, only 30% of children could reach the Class X[13] . While presenting their views on the implementation of Right to Education (RTE) they observed that there has been a gradual decline in the annual average dropout rate from 9.1 in 2009-2010 to 6.9 in 2010-11. However, there have been more children dropout in 2010-11[14] as compared to 2009-2010 in 10 out of the 30 states. It is also to note that the states where the drop-out rate increased were the states at where RTE had been notified, including progressive states like Tamil Nadu and Gujarat had increased dropout ratio from 0.1% to 1.2% and 3.9% to 4.3%, respectively in 2009-10 and 2010-11[15] .

The Programme of Action (POA) is candid enough to admit that if 10 to 12 years of basic education is the requirement for entrance to technical education and higher education, rural girls hardly have a chance, more so with these facilities located mostly in urban centers. The old socio-economic barriers against the girl child education still continue in the rural area where a majority of the deprived section of society habitates. The fact of gender stereotypes and lack of the infrastructure in rural areas has also been recognised by the Jakarta Document (1994).[16]

Census and NSSO of 2011 presents a detailed picture of the access to education in rural habitations and of a lack of implementation of the government policies on education. The 20% rural areas are still lacking in basic facilities of primary education and primary schools. All India Education Survey of NCERT (1990) through the Ramamurti Committee (1990) also brought out the reality of the lack of basic infrastructure in case of primary education in the remote and rural areas even after 50 years of India's Independence. The

number of teachers and schools per thousand of population were declined in the mid of 1980's from 9.32 schools and 24 teachers per thousand populations in 1965 to 8.05 and 19 in 1986. While population grew at around 2.2 per cent, primary schools grew at the rate of around 1.6% and teachers at a little less. About one-third of schools are single-teacher schools and another one- third has only two teachers. The operation blackboard has had only a mixed success and Navodya Vidyalayas for the poor people are again appropriated by the well off.

As such, the conditions created by earlier liberalisation policy and SAP in general by increasing unemployment and poverty has added to the deprivations already suffered by women. The higher secondary stage again repeats the same scenario. But one point needs to be emphasised that it is the urban middle classes and the rural well- off who have used the opportunity offered by vast expansion of education facilities to the utmost. Secondary and higher education is thus predominated by the strong middle-class of India's population.

Women who go beyond higher secondary or obtain a graduate degree are less than I per cent of the total women population. While the government desists from making cuts in the primary and secondary sector, which is still suffering due to inflation and reduced incomes, the higher education sector is getting the highest cuts. The higher-education institutions are instructed to recover the deficit by increasing fee, by procuring funds from industries in the liberalised and privatised India. The professional courses become a very costly affair and the capitation fee has been increased up to 50% by the private education-institutions which have been also legitimised by the honorable supreme court of India.[17]

The central Government intends to support only the IITs and IIMs, which mainly produce exportable or high tech industry human resources and these institutions are also dominated by the male students.[18] In the grim scenario women will again be sufferers from the government cuts in the higher education under the NEP, as the women are still considered the secondary earner in the family. The more investment in the higher education will force the family to support only male child due to precarious resources and social conservatism. Unfortunately even after 68% years of independence 61% of Indian women are still illiterate. As per Economic Survey, GOI, 1995 only 24% of scheduled caste women and 18% of scheduled tribe women are literate. The states with higher per centage of child labour, child marriages and child prostitution (vicious circle of CL-CM-CP) have higher dropout rate of girl students.

Education is one of the core components of the development of every individual and group. The lack of education and awareness among women has been the major cause for the exploitation and underdevelopment of women in India. The development of modernisation and rationality has opened the new avenues of scientific and rational education and knowledge for women, which were earlier dominated by the religious education and superstitions. Globalisation has provided new horizons, methods and ways of learning and knowledge to every individual and group across the globe. Although women are equally competent and can receive equal and easy knowledge which can be received by their male companions, the age old social barriers and superstitions are still creating many problems in women education. The rapid growth in education and knowledge infrastructure has been proving as a boon for women education for the upliftment of women in India and the numbers of educated women

are also increasing day by day. However, the gains of global education are still limited to a few urban and metropolitan women and the massive majority of women who are living in small towns and rural areas are still untouched from the benefits of global educational development.

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