



Women and Education

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Abstract:

Female education is a catch-all term for a complex set of issues and debates surrounding education (primary education, secondary education, tertiary education, and health education in particular) for girls and women. It includes areas of gender equality and access to education, and its connection to the alleviation of poverty. Also involved are the issues of single-sex education and religious education in that the division of education along gender lines as well as religious teachings on education have been traditionally dominant and are still highly relevant in contemporary discussions of educating females as a global consideration.

Improving girls' educational levels has been demonstrated to have clear impacts on the health and economic future of young women, which in turn improves the prospects of their entire community. Infant mortality rate of babies whose mothers have received primary education is half that of children whose mothers are illiterate. In the poorest countries of the world, 50% of girls do not attend secondary school. Yet, research shows that every extra year of school for girls increases their lifetime income by 15%. Improving female education, and thus the earning potential of women, improves the standard of living for their own children, as women invest more of their income in their families than men do. Yet, many barriers to education for girls remain. Higher attendance rates of high schools and university education among women, particularly in developing countries, have helped them make inroads to professional careers with better-paying salaries and wages. Education increases a woman's (and her partner and the family's) level of health and health awareness.

In simple words – getting education is the fundamental human right of every individual irrespective of gender. But some people in our society do not understand this and make such a simple thing extremely complicated. We must be aware of the fact that if she is uneducated then close to half of the population is uneducated. Educating a woman means educating the family and the nation.

Women must be educated for a healthy and a happy life. An educated woman can be a better human being, successful mother and a responsible citizen. Educating women will definitely increase the living standard both at and outside home. An educated woman will force her kids to study further and wish them to live a better life than hers.

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Educating women results in promoting self-respect and also helps in raising the status of women. An educated woman will be aware of her rights. She can fight against social evils such as domestic violence, dowry demand, low wages etc.

In terms of population, India is the second largest country of the world due to the low level women education. If a woman is uneducated, the future of country would also be uneducated. Women education was the matter of concern in India in the middle age however; it has been now solved to a great extent. Women education has been given a lot of priority in India just like men to bring some positive changes in the social and economic status of the country. In the past women were not allowed to go out of the door of their houses. They were only limited to the domestic works as their education.

Raja Ram Mohan Ray and Iswara Chandra Vidyasagar were some famous social reformers during the British rule in India who paid their attention towards the women education. Both man and woman cover the half population of the country. They are like two sides of the coin so need equal opportunity to participate in the country development. One cannot exist without other because women are everything as they give birth to the future generation. If they would be well educated they would give rise educated future generation and thus healthy social and economic condition in India.

For the betterment of the women education in India following programs have been run:

- Sarwa Shiksha Abhiyan
- Indira Mahila Yojana
- Balika Samridhi Yojana
- Rashtriya Mahila Kosh
- Mahila Samridhi Yojana
- Employment and Income Generating Training-cum-Production Centers
- Program of Development of Women and Children in rural areas
- Short Stay Home for Women and Girls

Here are some factors affecting the women education in India:

- Undernourishment and malnutrition of the girl child
- Sexual harassment and abuse at early age
- Lower socio-economic status of parents
- Infections and low immunity power at childhood
- So many social restrictions and taboo in their life
- Forced to follow orders of elders in family whether at home of parents or parents-in-law
- Allowed to get only limited education

Importance of Women education

The importance of women education is briefly summarized below:

- **Economic development and prosperity:** Education will empower



women to come forward and contribute towards the development and prosperity of the country.

- **Economic empowerment:** So long as women remain backward and economically dependent on men, the helpless condition of them cannot be changed. Economic empowerment and independence will only come through proper education and employment of women.
- **Improved life:** In our country, girls wait for marriage and after marriage they lost their entities. Their rights are trodden down, sometimes situation becomes insulting. If we do not take a broad outlook in the field of female education, the situation will be worse.
- **Dignity and honor:** Educated women are now looked upon with dignity and honor. They become a source of inspiration for millions of young girls who make them their role-models.
- **Justice:** Educated women are more informed of their rights for justice. It would eventually lead to decline in instances of violence and injustice against women such as dowry, forced-prostitution, child-marriage, female foeticide, etc.
- **Choice to choose a profession of her choice:** Educated women can prove be highly successful in the fields of life. A girl-

child should get equal opportunity for education, so that, she can plan to become a successful doctors, engineers, nurses, air-hostesses, cook, or choose a profession of her choice.

- **Alleviate poverty:** Women education is a pre-requisite to alleviate poverty. Women need to take equal burden of the massive task of eliminating poverty. This would demand massive contribution from educated women. There cannot be many social and economic changes unless girls and women are given their rights for education.

Until the middle of nineteenth century, girls and women were educated only for traditional household works. Now, the society is witnessing changes in the role-status of women. There is greater emphasis on education girls and women in the same way as we educate boys and men. The modern day parents want to fulfill the aspiration of their children without gender parity. The educated women should insist on exercising their civil, social, political and economic rights. This will help improve the overall condition of women in the society. We can hope for better days while all women of our country will be enlightened and educated.