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Higher Education In India:

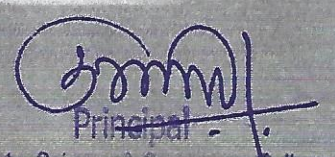
Issues, Opportunities and Challenges

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Editors

Dr. Vinayak A. Jadhav

Dr. Arvind M. Nawale


Principal

Jawahar Arts, Science & Commerce College,
Andur Tal. Tuljapur Dist, Osmanabad

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GENDER INEQUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION: BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES

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Education is the effective way to make the life progressive and changeable. It is like a strong weapon to overcome the calamities which impact upon our life. It helps us to improve our life in a better way. Education certainly determines the quality of an individual's life. Education improves our skill, knowledge, personality and attitude. It helps us to find out the needs and limitations of our life. It enables to express our thoughts and views. It also increases our innovative thoughts. According to Swami Vivekanand, "*Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man*" (Advaita 1985)

All knowledge is within the human mind only, education is the way to recovers it. But gender inequality finds in all sectors. Gender is a social construct that impacts attitude, roles, responsibilities and behavior patterns of girls and boys, men and women in all societies. Education sector is one of the affected area where we see inequality. In present scenario gender inequality in higher education is one of the problem that is not negligible. Female participation in higher education is less progressive particularly in rural area in the present era. Somehow the literacy rate shows progressive form but what's the reality? Still now girls have been facing barriers while taking the education. It's because poverty, social, cultural norms and practices, poor infrastructure, violence and fragility. She is constructed by the society needs. Her image, her life is not her own but it's designed by male dominated society. Gender Discrimination, Child marriage, Dowry system, feeling of insecurity and Parents psychology are the major reasons that throws her out from the educational system.

But Swami Vivekanand believed that to develop the society and Nation, educating girls and women is the need of culture. He said that,

"To educate your women first and leave them to themselves, they will tell you what reforms are necessary."

But what we see, that's the different condition of women related to her education. The urban female literacy rate is 64 percent and rural women literacy rate is half of it, i.e., 31 percent. As with India as a whole, many states have large rural-urban differences in female literacy. In six of the 24 states, 25 percent or less of the women in rural areas are literate. This low level of literacy not only has a negative impact on women's lives but also on their families' and

country's economic development. Gender inequality in education is a persistent problem in Indian society, especially for girls from rural areas and lower socioeconomic backgrounds. During the past several decades, India has achieved success in moving toward universal school enrollment and in enacting policies to address educational inequalities such as those based on gender. However, education gaps still exist. This paper seeks to identify the factors through which educational gender inequality operates and the social contexts that are associated with those girls who may be left behind academically. Using data from the 2005 India Human Development Survey (IHDS), this study analyzes how social background factors, access to learning resources, time devoted to formal learning activities, and cultural attitudes regarding the education of girls may contribute to ongoing gender gaps in learning. This study is an attempt to go beyond more commonly found descriptive studies of country-wide achievement and attainment patterns by measuring a more diverse set of indicators newly available through the IHDS. A primary aim of this study is to identify statistical interactions among key variables. We hope the results will provide increased insight into the current status of educational inequality in India, offer useful information to policymakers as they develop targeted policies to address persistent gender inequality, and identify areas for further study using more fine-grained analyses among a narrower range of variables.

There is a fairly robust research literature that establishes the link between cultural attitudes and academic achievement. Weiner (1985) finds that achievement motivation, or the striving and persistence to learn, is related to both an individual's own belief, as well as the beliefs and attributions of others, that one can be a successful learner. According to the expectancy value model, girls' achievement-related decisions are also influenced by whether learning is consistent with self-image, and whether it learning fits with other interests and the perceived utility and cost of engaging in learning activities (Eccles 2005). In addition, Steele (1997) finds that expectations of gender roles and gender stereotypes can have an effect on an individual's educational achievement. And finally, the beliefs and aspirations of parents and teachers in particular are found to influence perceived self-efficacy, and the perception of inequity can reduce girls' self-confidence in their capabilities as learners (Bandura et al. 1996; Bussey and Bandura

But what we still observed is that the situation of women in higher education is not satisfactory. After the independence of India the statistical data shows the raising rate of male is better than female. Particularly when we see the primary and secondary school girls' ratio may be in progressive form but it's not to be found at graduation level. The dropout problem is pervasive in the Indian education system. Many girl children, who enter school, are unable to complete secondary education and multiple factors are responsible for children dropping out of school and colleges. Risk factors begin to add up even before girls enroll in school, colleges that includes: poverty, uneducated or low educational level of

the weak family support, pattern of schooling of sibling, and lack of school experiences. Family background and domestic problems create an environment which negatively affects the value of education. Further, students will drop out as a result of a multitude of school factors such as unfriendly atmosphere, poor comprehension, absenteeism, attitude and behavior of the teachers and failure or repetition in the same class, etc. When student experience school failure, they become disturbed with lack of achievement and end up alienated and experience exclusion leading to eventual dropout. It is essential to carefully design preventive measures and intervention strategies that could be adopted in order to help all adolescent dropouts. Certain precautionary measures can be implemented throughout the target population, while others must take into account the variety of dropout profiles.

The literacy of women in India is 39% whereas 64% of men. The main problem faces by girls particularly in rural area, we have find that girls are enrolled in colleges but they would not attend the classes. So many girls are married when they are in second year or third year. They are forced to marry because of the poor economic background. Many parents have a wish to give the education to boys rather than girls. It's the psychology where we teaching, I am well aware about these things because I am facing these problems severely. So many parents are saying that girls aren't mean for education they must have to stay at home and help her mother in domestic work, some are go to field and do hard work from their childhood age. It must be compulsory for them otherwise these family haven't get good money to fulfill their needs. Her marriage is the major responsibility for them. Educating the daughter is not only the waste of time but it's useless for them. Sometimes they have stupid assumptions that girls will go to their husband's house and they give their salary to that family, parents haven't the benefit anything. On the contrary if they spent money for son's education then it will increase their incomesource. Another assumption of the parents is that if daughter is highly educated then she will have the higher demands. She wants an educated better half which would mean greater expenses in her marriage. Very often sending the girl away to town alone is considered unsafe. Sometimes these girls have no availability of traveling. It is so inconvenient journey for them.

After dropping out, the children are involved in helping their parents in household work, field work, working to earn money, most of students are also sitting idle and doing nothing more or less the students after dropping out from upper primary classes are helping the parents in earning the money, either by getting them involved in the agriculture and allied activities or directly by doing work to earn money (Rao et al., 2004; Rao and Mohan, 2000; Chatterjee, 1975; Chatterjee and Madhusudan, 1998; Chitnis Suma, 1982).

Now a days parents are so much worried about the security of girls. It's the fact that so many negative issues in newspapers impact on their mind. We can't avoid this bitter truth. Girls are facing many problems, they are emotionally, physically harassed anywhere. They don't know how to solve their problems to their parents sometimes. Now a days we also have a little bit knowledge that

girls are abused in schools, colleges and public places too. We can't avoid it. Sometimes the infrastructure of college in rural area is in worse situation that may be one of the causes behind their dropout issue.

Barriers for female education

- 1) **Gender Inequality and discrimination:** These are root causes of violence against women, influenced by the historical and structural power imbalances between women and men which exist in varying degrees across all communities in the world. Violence against women and girls is related to their lack of power and control, as well as to the social norms that prescribe men and women's roles in society and condone abuse. Inequalities between men and women cut across public and private spheres of life, and across social, economic, cultural, and political rights; and are manifested in restrictions and limitations on women's freedoms, choices and opportunities. These inequalities can increase women's and girls' risks of abuse, violent relationships and exploitation, for example, due to economic dependency and limited survival and income-earning options, or discrimination under the law as it relates to marriage, divorce, and child custody rights. Sex discrimination in high school and college course-taking also results in women not being prepared or qualified to pursue more prestigious, high paying occupations. Sex discrimination in education also results in women being more passive, quiet, and less assertive, due to the effects of the hidden curriculum
- 2) **Feeling of Insecurity:** When a woman is insecure, she will feel threatened if you find any happiness outside your relationship life. Even when you are just hanging out with the guys, she's going to get upset or uncomfortable. Often, she's going to try to interfere and guilt you into canceling your plans. Girls are feeling insecure in public places and in institution too. Many cases in society creates fear in the mind of girl students and parents too. So many sexual harassment cases in all over India impacts on girl education, parents of rural area generally think that marriage is a better way to make their daughters safe.
- 3) **Social and Cultural Background:** The data found that female engaged in school discussion with their parents more frequently than male counterparts, however when controlling for test scores, grades, and educational aspirations there was a reduction in magnitude of the gender effect of school discussions, but still maintaining its significance. It's also been found that parents are more involved with school on behalf of their sons, but involvement was not known to be purely academic, or for behavioral/nonacademic reasons. There was also no difference found in time limits placed on watching television between males/females after school. However, it was noted that females were more likely than males to have less time spent socializing with friends based on parental involvement, reflecting the concept that parents put forth greater efforts to protect their daughters. Data has also shown that parental attendance at school events is greater for daughters than for sons, and when controlling for academic

factors it has been found that over half of the gender differences that had been found were explained by academic factors, meaning that parental involvement in these events were influenced by daughter's academic performance. Cultural norms may also be a factor causing sex discrimination in education. For example, society suggests that women should be mothers and responsible for the bulk of child rearing. Therefore, women feel compelled to pursue educational pathways that lead to occupations that allow for long leaves of absence, so they can be stay-at-home mothers

Economic Condition, poverty: There are many issues of girls who go through in life that can make a negative impact on their education. Students who live in poverty go through more stressful situations at an earlier age. Those situations can keep them from having academic success because they have too many other distractions in their life. The schools that have more low income families are amongst those who have the lowest test scores and the highest dropout rates. For that reason, a girl may not be able to succeed academically based on the negative school environment they must overcome as well. When students attend a school that is dangerous and has been rated as a low rated school academically, it makes it harder for them to be the ones who are able to graduate, it effects more on girl education rather than boys.

Dowry System: Dowry system is a worse reason behind the dropout rate of girl in higher education. Parents don't want to spend money on education because of dowry system. They save money for her marriage.

As far as women's education is concerned, research shows that monetary transfers from brides and their families to grooms and their families are not decreasing in bride's schooling (see Dalmia et al., 2005).

It seems counter-intuitive that women with more education have to pay a larger net dowry. One possible explanation could be that education of a bride serves as a good proxy of her household wealth, and hence both higher education and higher dowry are effects of household wealth, without necessarily being causally related to one another. And wealthier fathers pay higher dowries. So it seems that higher education of the brides means higher dowry. The most common explanation for why higher education of the groom leads to higher dowry is that competition among brides for a particular groom leads to offers of higher and higher 'groom prices' (read dowries), not unlike bidding in auctions, leading to overall increase in dowry payments.

- 6) **Inconvenient Facilities:** Traveling, school infrastructure is sometimes major problem in rural India. Somehow the girls have no facility of taxis, college bus. Some villages are situated in interior areas so it's highly impossible to attend the college, they have so many difficulties. Rural college infrastructure has not able to provide good facilities such as toilets, which is primary need of girls. University Grants Commission has plan to provide the grant for infrastructure but some technical and institutional

problems have an obstacle to get the grant. The colleges of rural colleges haven't outsource they can't able to share the amount which has to be mentioned in the rules of proposal. So the colleges have not interested in sending the proposal. That has also the reason behind girl's weak attendance.

The 15th official census in India was calculated in the year 2011. After the 2011 census, literacy rate in India was found to be 74.04%. Though this seems like a very great accomplishment but it is still a matter of concern that so many people in India cannot know read and write. The number of children who do not get education in rural areas is still high. Now if we consider female literacy rate in India then it is lower than the man literacy rate. Today the female literacy rate area 65.46% where the male literacy rate is over 80%. The differences in literacy rates among the states are also extreme. What the census report shows is the different matter but how many girls are enrolled in college and having attending the classes is one of the major issue to study in rural area. We have facing so many unsaid problems in rural area. Official data doesn't mean the clear picture. Reality is different that everyone must identify to overcome on these barriers. Social, cultural miss concepts must be changed. Not only the government but every literate citizen should contribute in battling with the demon of illiteracy. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme for universalization of primary education and the Mahila Samakhya programme which has set up alternative learning centers for imparting education and providing empowering skills to girls from disadvantaged communities are among the major initiatives to improve literacy levels. The time for the change is now. There is need to redefine the status and role of women. There is a need to formulate reducing feminized poverty, promoting education of women, and prevention and elimination of violence against women.

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DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVES: EVIDENCES FROM INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS (HEIS)

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Introduction :

Technology has always had a positive impact on improving that quality of education, creating access and knowledge across prevailing demographic opportunities to create a level playing field. The digital transformation of research and higher education is highly dependent on the innovative use of data. "Digitization is about using technology to innovate, simplify and improve. It's about offering new and better services that are easy to use, efficient and reliable. Digital technologies are creating new opportunities and challenges for skills development and recognition globally. As per UGCs latest mandate emphasis and reveals that, ICT integrated learning and new pedagogic approaches in teaching-learning, assessment tools in cutting-edge higher education shall sensitize and motivate the faculty to adopt new learner-centred approaches.

In today's increasingly digitized economies and societies, accessing and understanding data about learning outcomes, skills and credentials is critical to achieving the 2030 Sustainable Agenda, including Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) with its particular focus on quality and inclusive education, recognizing and offering lifelong learning opportunities for all. In this context, different stakeholders have different needs: education and training providers need learning data to build new programmes and learning pathways; employers need the data to understand where to find qualified workers; and learners and workers need data to discern which learning pathways are more likely to lead to career opportunities.

Higher education has undergone a major transformation in recent years which includes increasing internationalization and student mobility; the increasing supply of online and blended learning; and a rise in internet services in all countries. All of these issues bring with them the need to improve and guarantee quality and recognition and call for innovative measures by governments and institutions which also address equity and access.

The wealth of digital educational resources has made new demands on higher education systems and institutions which include developing innovative curricula, study programmes and alternative learning pathways, and routes to higher learning, all facilitated by online, distance, open education, blended learning delivery models and short skills-based courses. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and Open Education Resources (OERs) have the potential

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