

PROBLEMS FACED BY FEMALE COLLEGE STUDENTS

Bhavana K. Bendre

Ph.D. Research Scholar

Dept. of Sociology, Sardar Patel University

Vallabh Vidyanagar-388120

Ananad, Gujarat, India

Abstract

Higher education is the education beyond the level of secondary education and it is often imparted by the colleges or universities. Women's education play a significant role in building the nation, socio-cultural, human capital, economic development of a nation. It makes women capable to understand the societal norms; provide individuals self-reliance, and discourages discrimination based on gender, beliefs, religion and social class. Female can be empowered through higher education as a qualified leader in society and it make them role models for younger girls. Educated woman have control over her live and resources within the family. Women get social recognition and can get insight of and can make aware of about undesirable and unfavorable things related to their current situation. In present scenario, female students and teachers are facing many problems that obstruct their potential and disturb their professional and personal development. The present study was aimed to highlight the problems faced by female students in higher education and measures to minimize and overcome from this problem.

Keywords:

Problems, Girl, Higher Education, discrimination

Introduction:

Man and women are like the two sides of a coin. Without one, the other cannot exist. Education women can not only give an educated family but the Education of women can also be helpful in eradicating many social evils such as dowry problems, unemployment problems, etc. Social peace can easily be established. A woman has to play three distinct parts in the course of her life in each of which certain duties are expected of her. The first duty of a woman is to be a good daughter. The second is to be a good wife. And the third is to be a good mother. Education teaches a mother what she should be. It also teaches her how she would do

it to be a good daughter, a good wife, and a good mother. Only With the help of education women can know their rights. Women belong to a weaker section of society because she suffers from many handicaps due to rigid, outdated social customs, and religious practices. But an educated woman cannot be exploited easily. She is aware of her rights and will go any length to defend them.

To spread the importance and improve the level of women's education all over the country, countrywide national propaganda and awareness programs are very necessary. An educated woman can educate her whole family and thus the whole country. Also, one of the mother's highest duties is the education of her children at the time when their mind is not amenable to instruction. A child's whole future life, to a large extent, depends on the teaching it receives in early childhood and it is needless to say that this first foundation of education cannot be well laid by an ignorant mother. Thus education will enable women to make their children, husbands, and parents truly happy. Consequently, it is very important that women should be educated. On all these grounds female education is a vital necessity. Education is an essential instrument to bring social revolution. It is the only remedy to bring about the desired social change in the society, at all levels and ages of children. Higher education is the third stage of education, which is acquired by the learners through the learning process. Sex biases are very common everywhere whether it is in educational institution, society in general and in home. Girls face the sex-bias in curriculum transaction, books, allocation of subjects, participation in activities etc. Poor family status and care of siblings and household chores at home are also considered the factors affecting education of girls. Minimizing the above mentioned problems, girls in rural area may achieve success in their higher education. Proper guidance and counseling to illiterate parents, fees concessions and other facilities offered for the rural girls regarding higher education and career

development may also be key stone in carrier of girl and their higher education. In present study the sex biases reported as major problem in maximum girls at home and society level followed by early age marriage and financial problem. The household chores at home are also considered the factors affecting education of girls. The girl students are highly motivated to avoid higher education. At college level, financial problem is major factor affecting girls' education followed by transportation, co-educational problem; gender discrimination and physical harassment at college level were reported as factors affecting girl's higher education. In present scenario, female students and teachers are facing many problems that obstruct their potential and disturb their professional and personal development. The present study was aimed to highlight the problems faced by female students in higher education and measures to minimize and overcome from this problem.

Importance of women education:

Basic Right: First of all, education is the basic right for everyone and when we say everyone we should not forget that women are also a part of this lot. Society has a large population of women and we cannot have such a large population as illiterate, it will be our huge loss. All the girls and women whether they are rich, poor, young, old, married, unmarried, widow or with any social status have their basic right of education. Education is not a privilege but a fundamental right.

Increased Literacy: Of the 163 million illiterate youth across the globe, nearly 63 percent are female. Offering all children education will prop up literacy rates, pushing forward development in struggling regions.

Human Trafficking: Women are most vulnerable to trafficking when they are undereducated and poor, according to the United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking. Through providing young girls with opportunities and fundamental skills, this billion-dollar industry can be significantly undermined.

Political Representation: Across the globe, women are underrepresented as voters and restricted from political involvement. The United Nations Women's programs on leadership and participation suggest that civic education, training, and all-around empowerment will ease this gap.

Equality in society: Inequality and discrimination always start from the root level. When a boy goes to school and his sister stays back just because she's a girl this sows a seed of discrimination in the mind of the boy. He feels that he is superior just because he is a boy and with no sensible logic to prove it.

When women participate in education by going to schools and colleges with boys, the boys realize the basic rights of education and don't develop a superiority complex. So, educating women along with men promotes the idea of equality and democracy.

Makes Independent and Builds Confidence: It is absolutely true that education makes a person independent. Education provides us with the skills to make ourselves capable of offering services to others and earning a livelihood. If women become educated and earn for themselves then they don't have to depend on their family for anything. This builds their confidence and makes them take their decision on their own. They realize their worth and their uniqueness. Therefore, education for women is really important in making women independent and confident.

Later Marriage and Smaller Families: As suggested by the United Nations Population Fund, in underdeveloped countries, one in every three girls is married before reaching the age of 18. In a region where a girl receives seven or more years of education, the wedding date is delayed by four years. Increased participation in school reduces fertility rates over time.

Income Potential: Education also empowers a woman's wallet by boosting her earning capabilities. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, also known as UNESCO, a single year of primary education has shown to increase a girl's wages later in life by 20 percent.

Poverty Reduction: When women are provided with equal rights and equal access to education, they go on to participate in business and economic activity. Increased earning power and income combat against current and future poverty through feeding, clothing, and providing for entire families.

Development of the nation: Women make approximately 50% of the total population. If they are left uneducated then a large part of the nation will not be contributing towards its growth which is a major problem. Therefore, educating women will promote the development of a country.

Current Status of Women Education in India: The national female literacy rate when India gained independence was tragically low at 8.6%. Women, who were allowed to take part in freedom struggle, were now confined to the houses, leading to the formation of a male dominated patriarchal society. The female literacy rate of India has increased from 8.6% in 1951 to 64.63%, according to 2011 census. Though, this increase in the female literacy rate is encouraging and promising as well; unfortunately,

there is also a flip side to it. The current female literacy rate of India lags behind the male literacy rate, the former at 65.6% and the latter at 81.3%. The female education rate of India at 65.6% is significantly lower than the world average at 79.7%. The situation is more critical in rural areas, where fewer girls go to schools as compared to boys and the number of dropout rate is alarming among girls. Statistics also reveal that India still has nearly 145 Million women, who are unable to read or write.

Barriers to girl's education in India:

Education is very important for girls. But there are some major problems or barriers to girls' education in India. Let's talk about them.

Poverty: India is a poor country. Many families cannot afford the proper education for their children. The parents in the families are also less educated so they do not give more preference for girls' education. Also, rural areas have fewer support systems so the people just focus on the girls to manage the housework only. It is observed that poor households have multiple children wherein the boy's education is given preference and the girl is asked to help the family with household chores and care for younger siblings and other family members. It is a harsh reality that some people from rural backgrounds still hold the opinion that investment in girls' education is completely futile and a waste of money.

Violence: Violence is one of the biggest hindrances in the path of girls' education. In rural areas, the girls had to travel long distances to reach the schools and in the meanwhile, they become a subject of sexual harassment and other gender-based violence. In such situations, the parents, instead of taking strict action against the offenders, put a restriction on the girl and drop her out of school.

Lack of Safe and Healthy Environment in School for the Girls: In some schools, there is no proper availability of basic requirements such as water, sanitation and hygiene. There is no separate toilet facility for the boys and girls. The girls are also subject to some biological requirements. Menstruation is considered a stigma in our society. There are no proper hygiene and toilet facilities in the school, which causes a lot of trouble for the girls. High dropouts and very low attendance become a hallmark for a girl child.

Child Labour: Many girls in the rural area started working in the childhood age with their parents in agriculture or housework. Due to this, they get fewer opportunities for education and stick to child labour even when they grow up.

Child marriage: Child marriages lead to stop the schools of girls. Most of the girls from rural areas drop out of school due to their marriage at an early age. And, obviously, due to the less education, they get pregnant in the minor age, which leads them to stick in the house and family and unable to continue their schools and colleges.

Legislative Provision of Girl's Education in India:

After the Eighty-seventh amendment to the constitution, Article 21(A) was inserted in the constitution which provides that all the children between the age group of six to fourteen years have a Fundamental Right to receive free and compulsory education in a manner as the State may, by law, determine. For giving the effect the provision of Article 21(A), "The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education" (RTE) Act, 2009, was enacted. This Act envisaged that every girl child has a right to receive full time free elementary education while following some important conditions. The term "Free" means that no child shall be liable to pay any expenses incurred during his course of studies. The basic objective of providing free education is to ensure that financial constraints never become a hindrance in the basic education of girl children.

The steps taken by the government for the girl's education:

The government of India has started numerous programs and policies with a mandate that a girl never miss out on any opportunity of being educated. After independence, a national committee of women's education was set up in 1958 and it recommended that the girl should be educated at par with the boys. The education commission, which was set up in 1964, largely talks about the education of girls. Recently, the new education policy (NEP) launched by the government has laid special emphasis on improving the literacy rate of women and providing them access to quality education. Apart from it, a catena of schemes has been launched by our government to encourage girl education in the country. Some of the schemes are; Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Ladli Scheme of Haryana, Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, Balika Samridhi Yojana, Karnataka Bhagyashree Scheme, CBSE Udaan Scheme, Dhanalakshmi Scheme etc.

Problems Faced By Female College Students:

Gender discrimination at Home: The preference to boy's education is introduced first of all in the family. The girl is considered as uninvited and unwanted child, which is devoid of proper food, love and care in comparison to the male child. Girl's

education is of secondary importance and not allowed to participate in any activity except the household chores. Hence girl's physical, personal, social and emotional development is limited.

Educational Institutions: Next to home, school or college affects girl's higher education. Girls face the sex-bias in curriculum transaction, books, allocation of subjects, participation in activities etc. The biases for girl students are to be propagated in institutions, colleges and universities and quality of girl education does not match with that of educational, vocational and personal development.

Economic Problems: Money problem is so challenging and no one to feed the family and to educate the male wanted child. The parent have problem to afford for enrolment the girl child in school. There is problem to take care of siblings, perform household chores, earn and contribute to family income.

Educational Problems: The major educational problem is lack of institutions for higher education in the rural areas. There are no institutions and facilities available to the girl's education. Generally institutions are situated for men and far away from the village. Moreover, institutions do not have hostel facilities for girls. The girls are socially not prepared to join further education or training institution. As the educational status is directly associated to development of career but above mentioned problems affect and restricts the educational development of girl and hinders their career development. The girl students have many roles such as parents, spouses, employees, as compared to male student and experienced more pressure of financial, school responsibilities and child care (Bauer & Mott, 1990). Adult students have responsibilities such as employment, family, and other responsibilities of adult life (Cross, 1980). Both sexes have difficulties juggling the role of student, worker, and family member (Muench, 1978).

Girl Social Problems: Girl students face many social problems as some students found it difficult to merge with the new people studying in their classes. However, some students are lucky enough to find peers in the start. Somehow making new friends and interactions with new classmates is healthier but girl students should take their friendship in a sequence because spending too much time with peers could be destructive and will raise many social issues.

Financial Issues: Many students who desire to study in the best and most reputed institute have to face many financial issues. As, tuition fees of schools, academy fees, daily transport charges, food

charges, examination fees, other activities like parties, trips expenses make it very difficult to study by affording all these expenses. For this purpose, some students starting teaching little kids after college which results in a lack of sleep and lack of time for own study and the amount of responsibility.

Most of the young girls have to face a lot of health issues as some of the students stay away from home. Such students when eats food from the cafeteria and outside meals probably fall sick very quickly. Falling sick means missing important lectures and lessons which can result in poor attendance and loss of lessons. Such students suffer from mental health conditions because of the heightened stress, poor self-care, and lack of sleep in order to cover all the missing lectures.

Girl students also have to face transportation issues while going to school and college. As many of the girls fear harassment during travelling by public transport. Public transports are always crowded by men and women have to struggle a lot for finding their safe spot in the transport and while standing among the crowd.

Depression & Anxiety: While students are growing young they are more likely to have depression and anxiety issues. Studies bring so much stress and so as the peer pressure and pressure coming from family for high grades, high scores, good performance in school and college. Many students spread themselves more than there limitation which is exhausting at the same time and could easily lead to long term depression.

Problem of Time Management: College is academically challenging. For many, college courses require much more effort than high school classes did. Unlike most high schools, colleges often pack two years of content into one year. Many students take a full 15 credit semester, while others try to cram in up to 18 or even 21 credits. At times, it seems impossible to stay on top of it all.

Policy Recommendations:

- The solution to overcome anxiety, stress, and depression is to study according to your limitations. Do not pressurize yourself more than your capability. Studying doesn't mean dragging yourself into depression. For this purpose girl, students should find a healthier friend circle and talk to their parents regarding these issues. As only talking about the problem would lead to further solutions.
- The easiest solution for all girl students is to identify their needs according to the given money by deciding what is more

important and how they can save their money by spending from a provided budget.

- The solution to this problem is to prioritize your time according to your needs. Limit yourself in order to be secure from the arising social conflicts.
- The solution for such girl student's health issues is that each student should eat healthy food and get as much sleep as they can after college or school time. Students should also make a habit of washing their hands so that the chances of falling ill can be reduced.
- Know your limits. If you can't handle 18 credits in one semester, it is worth it in the long run to slow down and take only 15. While the purpose of a college education is to learn as much as you can, that doesn't mean studying all the time. It is important to schedule time for fun and to take breaks to keep your mind fresh and clear. For more ways to manage this kind of academic stress, see this guide of effective study habits.

UNICEF's work to promote girls' education

UNICEF works with communities, Governments and partners to remove barriers to girls' education and promote gender equality in education – even in the most challenging settings. Because investing in girls' secondary education is one of the most transformative development strategies, we prioritize efforts that enable all girls to complete secondary education and develop the knowledge and skills they need for life and work. This will only be achieved when the most disadvantaged girls are supported to enter and complete pre-primary and primary education. Our work:

- Tackles discriminatory gender norms and harmful practices that deny girls access to school and quality learning.
- Supports Governments to ensure that budgets are gender-responsive and that

national education plans and policies prioritize gender equality.

- Helps schools and Governments use assessment data to eliminate gender gaps in learning.
- Promotes social protection measures, including cash transfers, to improve girls' transition to and retention in secondary school.
- Focuses teacher training and professional development on gender-responsive pedagogies.

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