



An Analysis of Gender Women Education in the Light of National Education Policy: 2020

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ABSTRACT

The National Policy on Education 1986 recognizes 'Education' as the major tool that can help liberate the country from backwardness and lead it onwards to a developed nation. "Free and Compulsory Education for All" was initiated but the implementation aspect is yet to be realized in practice. After 34 years, there is a change in the education policy in India with the introduction of the New Education Policy 2020 (NEP). The formation of a Gender Inclusion Fund toward equitable education for girls who are underprivileged and creating Special Education Zones is included in the provision.

The constituent of sex education needs to be carefully added and be made a mandatory part of the teaching-learning process. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 envisages equitable and inclusive education for all, with special focus on children and youth, especially girls, from socially and economically disadvantaged groups.

The Government should Focus on the Education policy to increase women's education at any ages, decrease the dropout rate for girls which seems to be higher after secondary education. The enrolment ratio of women education between secondary and higher secondary levels are leading downward. The onset of menstruation and unavailability of hygienic toilets are the main reason for girls leaving school without completing education. Through Education, it also intends to improve women leadership capacity through positive civil dialogues with women positive thinking and high leadership involved in the education system.

Economic empowerment of women through development of skills in educational institutions will surely be progressive and attract girl students to go to school or for higher education which may lead to, hopefully, change the way that traditionally families distinguish between male and female educations, seeing the former as a more rewarding proposition.



If implemented, this will bring a record participation rate in higher education, decrease gender gaps at all levels and ensure the practice of gender equity and inclusion in society. In this study, an attempt has been made to study women education through the National Education Policy 2020.

Key word: NEP 2020, Women Education, Gender, Gender inclusion fund, Special Education Zone

INTRODUCTION

Women play a vital role in a nation's development. They play a very significant role in society- as a wife, a mother, a sister, a caretaker, a nurse, etc. Education is a weapon that carves a progressive path for women and their families in a society. An educated woman can signify the importance of female education to that of male counterpart. Education is a powerful tool that builds confidence and ambition in women through which they become aware of their rights and raise their voice against exploitation, discrimination or any form of injustice meted out to them. It is found that there is a gender gap of around 16% between male and female literacy rate. This gender split is found higher in rural areas. The rural female literacy rate is only 57% while the rural male literacy rate is higher at 77%. Educated women can contribute to the family's economy, social advancement of society and raise the standard of living. This increases the workforce participation which in turn can contribute and reflect on the country's economy. Empowering women helps in the development of the nation. Thus, the government, over the years has introduced many schemes to promote women's education in India such as Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Yojana, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya MahilaKosh, Mahila Shakti Kendra, etc. However, for higher level achievement the central and the state governments should join hands simultaneously seeking the cooperation from various organizations for the expansion of girls' education which should be considered on priority in education programmes. The right to education is granted to every Indian Citizen. The New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is a framework designed by the Kasturirangan Committee. After 34 long years, there is a change in the education policy in India which aims at universalization of education in India and also to make 'India a global superpower in knowledge'. The objectives of NEP for equitable and quality education for girl children are being met through specific provisions under Samagra Shiksha 2.0 by allocating dedicated resources for Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs). Under Samagra Shiksha, various interventions have been targeted for providing quality education to girls, which include opening of schools in the neighborhood to make access to education easier for girls. Free uniform and text-books to girls up to class VIII, additional teachers and residential quarters for teachers in remote/hilly areas,



appointment of additional teachers including women teachers, stipend to CWSN girls from class I to class XII, separate toilets for girls, teachers' sensitization programmes to promote girls participation, gender-sensitive teaching-learning materials including text books etc are provisions provided under Samagra Shiksha. This broader goal has been broken down and visualized in term of ensuring 100% enrolment for girls in schooling by 2030 and 50% enrolment in higher education by 2035, decrease gender gaps at all levels, practice gender equity and inclusion in society, and improve the leadership capacity of girls through positive civil dialogues.

Objective:

1. To see the present scenario of the Female Gross Enrollment Ratio.
2. To increase the Women education with free and compulsory education policy act.
3. Suggest remedial measures for attaining the goal of NEP 2020 of 100 percent participation of female students.

Results and Discussion

The National Education Policy-2020 (NEP 2020) was approved by the Union Cabinet of India on 29 July 2020, which outlines the vision of a new education system of India. The National Education Policy -2020 has been designed by the K Kasturirangan Committee to deal with various issues aggravating educational scenarios across India and to curb the menace of women illiteracy.

The NEP 2020 policy proposes various steps to increase access of women into schools, which includes gender inclusion fund, formula based and discretionary funding of gender inclusionary projects in school levels, creation of special education zone, the targeted scholarships and within the goal. It also intends to improve women leadership capacity through positive civil dialogues with women leading institutions, including principals, teachers, wardens, physical instructors and other staff.

"Gender Inclusion Fund" to build the nation's capacity to provide equitable quality education for girl students. Apart from ensuring 100 percent participation of girls in the schooling system the fund, according to the policy draft, would aim to close gender gaps in educational attainment at all levels. The NEP states that the "Gender Inclusion Fund" will be available to states to implement priorities determined by the Central government critical for assisting female and transgender children in gaining access to education (such as the provisions of sanitation and toilets, bicycles, conditional cash transfers, etc.). The policy further says, "This fund will also enable states to support and scale

effective community-based interventions that address local context- specific barriers to female and transgender children's access to and participation in education".

NEP 2020 recommended "Special Education Zones" to ensure education for the socially and economically disadvantaged groups which include gender, socio-cultural and geographical identities and disabilities. It is recommended that regions of the country with large populations from educationally-disadvantaged should be declared as 'Special Education Zones'.

The policy proposes the 'Targeted Scholarships' to be made available to students from socially and economically disadvantaged groups (SEDGs), inclusive of gender, that will be coordinated and announced by a single agency and website to ensure that all students are aware of, and may apply in a simplified manner on such a 'single window system'. The policy also emphasizes on fostering women's participation and leadership in education and such women could in turn act as strong role models for the girls to attend school regularly.

Impact of Socio cultural Factors Affecting Women Education

1. **Social Discrimination-** For an favourable women education there should not have any barriers at all levels to access the quality education and within the education system, institution, Gender stereotypes and wrongful gender, child marriage and early & unintended pregnancy, gender based violence against women and girls. However, in this 21st era social discrimination against women is found in society.
2. **Gender Equality-** It is a foremost human right that female and male learners should have equal access to learning opportunities benefiting from education ground. Equality may lead to positive discrimination or affirmative action which will be implemented with fair and equal outcome. For example, the scholarship should be given to both boys and girls in the education system which will be considered as an incentive for increasing their access to education.
3. **Inclination towards Domestic Chores-** Domestic chores tasks like cooking, cleaning, washing etc were primarily done by women for which they are not paid for. However, in NEP 2020, women education policy, the women have the provision of getting opportunities to secure better jobs, earn high incomes and support their family financially.
4. **Economic Exploitation-** With the invention and discovery of various aspects of life, the demand for survival also has increased which demands an increase in the income of the women. Women Education will increase their income which would help in economic flourish and will lead to women empowerment.

Apart from the above aspects, several girls child are found to drop their education due the following reasons-

- Seasonal workforce migration :
- Early marriage according to social customs
- Restriction on girls based on social norms
- Household chores managed by young girls
- Gender differences in home, society
- Lack of educational facilities
- Economic conditions of the family
- Division of family responsibilities after the death of the elderly family member
- Government policies
- Female health

Gender Inequality in India

“On the parameter of gender inequality, India’s Gender Inequality Index (GII) value is 0.490 in 2021 and is ranked 122. This score is better than that of the South Asian region (value 0.508) and close to the world average of 0.465. This reflects the government’s initiatives and investments towards more inclusive growth, social protection, and gender-responsive development policies.

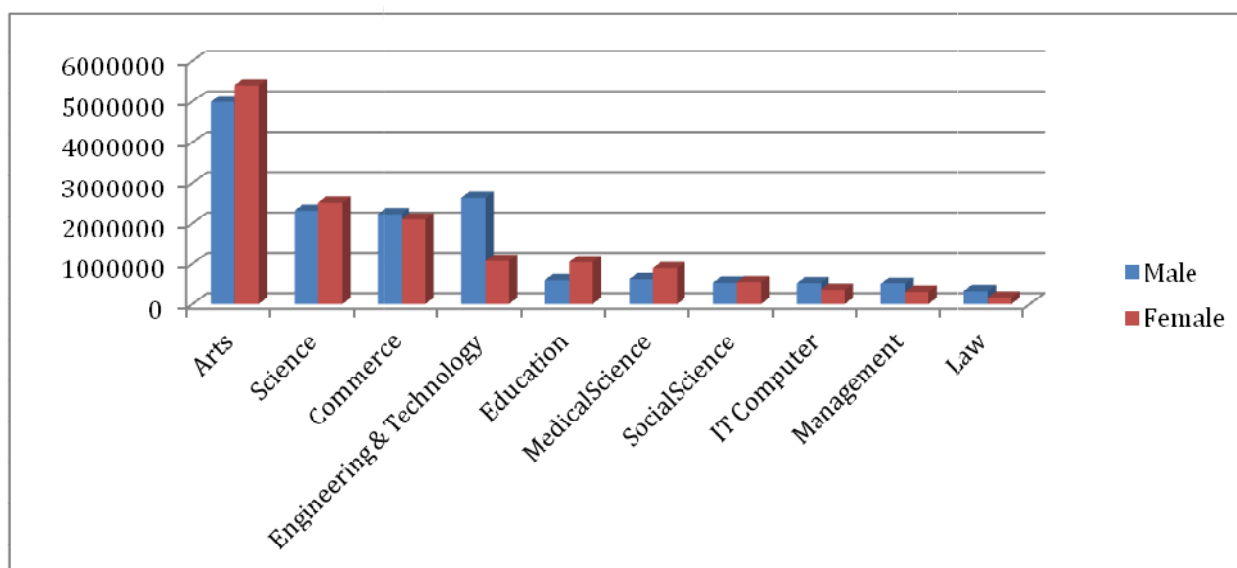
Table No 1.1 Enrolment at Undergraduate Level in Major Disciplines/Subjects

S. No.	Discipline	Male	Female
1	Arts	49,88,246	54,17,424
2	Science	23,12,602	25,05,224
3	Commerce	22,27,036	20,96,418
4	Engineering & Technology	26,17,155	10,69,136
5	Education	6,08,888	10,40,305
6	Medical Science	6,32,069	8,94,178

7	Social Science	5,48,423	5,57,689
8	IT Computer	5,33,445	3,44,492
9	Management	5,16,273	2,98,594
10	Law	3,16,115	1,61,897
11	Others	6,69,319	6,92,057
Total		1,59,69,571	1,50,77,414

Source: All India Survey on Higher Education Report, D/of Higher Education, Ministry of Education

Figure No 1.1 Male and Female enrollments at different levels of Education.



Source: All India Survey on Higher Education Report, D/of Higher Education, Ministry of Education

Steps taken by the Government for Gender Inclusion Fund

Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education has developed Guidelines on School Safety and Security for fixing the accountability of the school management in the matter of safety and security of children studying in Government, Government-aided and Private Schools and circulated the same to all States and UTs. The guidelines detail the accountability of various stakeholders and different departments in ensuring the safety and security of children in schools. The guidelines are based on the three-pronged approach of Accountability framework and legal provisions, Whole School Safety Approach and Multi-sectoral approach for the safety and security of children in schools.



Table No 1.2 Revenue used for facilitating education by Government.

S.N.	Particulars	Amount (for the year 2021-22)
1	Provision of free text-books up to Class VIII to all children	286055.88
2	Uniforms to all girls, SC, ST children and Below Poverty Line (BPL) children up to class VIII	491952.50
3	Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas-	244186.46
4	Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Awasiya Vidyalayas and Hostels	36025.27
5	Rani Laxmi Bai Atmaraksha Prashikshan (Self defense training to Girls)	11657.76
6	Incinerator & Sanitary Pad Vending Machines	5606.07
7	Stipend for CWSN Girls	12257.66

(Source: This information was given by the Union Minister of Education, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha.)

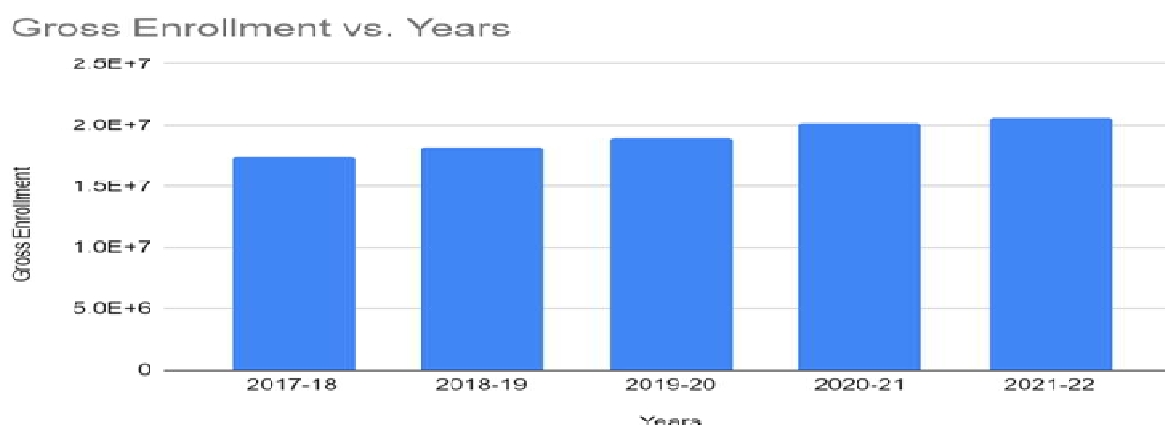
Female Enrolment:

There is a steady increasing trend in female enrolment over years. The female enrolment has been increased to 2.07 crore in 2021-22 from 2.01 crore in 2020-21 and 1.74 crore in 2017-18, i.e. 18.7% increase in enrolment during 5 years. Since 2014-15, the female enrolment has increased by around 50 lakh. In 2014-15, the female enrolment was. The share of female enrolment is 55% of the increase in overall enrolment (91 lakh), since 2014-15. There has been a higher increase in female enrolment as compared to male.

Enrolment at Ph.D. level: Total Ph.D. enrolment has increased by 81.2% to 2.12 lakh in 2021-22 compared to 1.17 lakh in 2014-15. Female Ph.D. has doubled since 2014-15 (to 98,636 in 2021-22 from 47,717 in 2014-15). The trend of Ph.D. enrolment during 2014-15 and 2021-22

Enrolment at University Level: At University level, there is an increase of 32.7% in enrolment from 2017-18 to 2021- 22. Considering the Type of the University, there is an increase of 14.8% in State Public Universities and 60.3% in Institutes of National Importance (INIs).

Figure No. 1.2 The Trend of Female enrollment since 2017



Source: All India Survey on Higher Education 2021-22.

Conclusion

The policy has underlined the necessity for teachers and facilitators like anganwadi workers to undergo proper training to counsel the families of girl students. This inclusion of the family for counseling is significant as the gap between an educated girl child and her uneducated family leads to a different set of problems.

Economic empowerment of women through skilling in educational institutions will surely be progressive and attract girl students to educational institutions as well as, hopefully, change the way that traditionally families distinguish between male/female educations, seeing the former as a more rewarding proposition.

While the policy does lay emphasis on gender sensitisation, what needs more attention is the curriculum. The component of sex education needs to be carefully added and be made a mandatory part of the teaching-learning process. This should include instruction on menstrual health and hygiene. Another important aspect that should be included as compulsory education is legal literacy. The girl student must be aware of her legal rights. Framers of curriculum under NEP 2020 must ensure that these two essential domains are properly factored into the curriculum and not done as tokenism with mere cosmetic value.



Welfare schemes launched by the Government for women education in India are Beti Bachao, Beti Padho, Balika Samridhi Yojana, National Scheme of Incentives to Girls for Secondary Education and many more, but even though women education is not a pleasant sight in India. Still there are women who stay back at home for many domestic reasons.

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