



A Study of status and role of rural and urban girls in Educational Empowerment

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Abstract:

Educational Empowerment of girls are essential for improving the social, economic and other status issue of girls, mainly the traditional underprivileged one. In Rewa many girls face different kind of physical, mental abuse, exploitation which is overcome by education. Education provides empower for improving society and environment. Recognizing the importance of girl in the growth of the nation, the Government of India along with State Governments has been taking several efforts since post-independence period to uplift girl from their conditions in general. Educational Empowerment of girls helps the participation of Rural and urban girls to improving the economic and development activities. The outcome of survey and study is that educational empowerment initiatives are boosting self-confidence, growing the decision making power, leading to their urban and Rural girls empowerment. The study has been conducted in five selected educational institute of Rewa, M.P. Data was collected from office and employee of that institution. The Mixed method approach has been adopted for analysis of this research. Primary data was collected from personal interviews with well-structured questionnaires and focus group discussions in both the areas.

Key words: *Girls Education, Women Empowerment, Government Schemes, Rural girls, urban girls, women welfare*

1. Introduction

Girls education is a significant study in the modern era of Women empowerment. United Nations organs (UNICEF, UNESCO, etc...) and experts quote in different occasion for girl's education. Once Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said, "To awaken the people, it is women who must be awakened; once she is on the move, the family moves, the village moves and the nation moves"¹. It's a fundamental step in girls/women's empowerment. Education is a milestone for improving the status or living hood of girls and also education is one of the most important means of empowering women with knowledge, skills and self confidence required to participate fully in the development process. This study focuses on the status of educational empowerment and the initiatives taken by the Government and the Private schools/college/ university for empowerment of rural and urban girl students². Girl's education means giving powers and other capabilities to girls. Importance of education and empowerment for rural and urban girl students, status of women over history, need for the study, objectives and hypotheses are discussed here.

1.1. Educational Empowerment

Education plays an important role to consciously transmit accumulated knowledge, skills and values from one generation to another in society. The main purpose of education includes the improvements in individual as well as social issues, with emphasis of social transformation aiming at reconstructing the society to make it restructured, fruitful, participative, value oriented and nation committed to its justifiable obligations³. In Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia define education as, *education in the largest sense* is any act or experience that has a formative effect on the mind, character, or physical ability of an individual. There are numerous advantages of educational empowerment some of them are mentioned below:

- Individual Development
- To Acquire Knowledge
- Vocational Aim
- Moral Aim
- Improve Living Standard
- Harmonious Development Aim
- Leisure Aim
- Social Transformation
- Modernization
- Productivity
- Community Participation etc...

The national education system will play a positive role in the empowerment of girls. It will foster the development of new values through redesigned curricula, textbooks, training and orientation of teachers, decision-makers and administrators.^{4,5} Educational empowerment is a procedure to improve the capability and trend of systemic forces of marginalize girls. "It is giving lawful power or authority to live. Business Dictionary defines empowerment, "A management practice of sharing information, Rewards, and power with employees so that they can take initiative and make decisions to solve problems and improve service and performance. Education and Empowerment helps to improve employees' skills, resources, authority, opportunity, motivation, as well asset them responsible and accountable for outcomes of their actions, will contribute to their competence and satisfaction". Educated girls/women realize their identity and powers in all spheres of life. Power has to be acquired and once acquired it needs to be exercised, sustained and preserved, so educational empowerment is in need of society^{6,7}. The reason of poverty and harassment is removed by educational empowerment. Some of the expected outcome are identified as follows:⁵

- Literacy school/higher Education
- Better health care for herself and her children
- Higher age at marriage
- Greater work participation in modernized sector
- Necessary financial and service support for self employment
- Opportunities for higher positions of power
- Complete knowledge of her rights and above all
- Self-reliance, self respect and dignity of being a woman.

1.2. Women Empowerment

Women empowerment is a one of the desired outcome of this study. Many Ph.D. and other research work is done related to women empowerment in Rewa and other region of m.p.. Education gives numerous ability to women to empower self and society. United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) include many ability or quality in women empowerment some of them are mention below^{4,7}:

- Skill to learn new article for improving one's personal or group power.
- Having decision-making power of their own
- Having access to information and resources for taking proper decision.
- Having a numerous option to select one as per self choices (not just yes/no, either/or.).
- Ability to exercise assertiveness in collective decision making.
- having positive thinking on the ability to make change.
- Ability to change others' perceptions by democratic means.
- Involving in the growth process and changes that are never ending and self-initiated.
- Increasing one's positive self-image and overcoming stigma.

Educational empowerment plays important role to improve the ability and skills to achieve the above mention points⁸. Women's empowerment gives right to have access has to opportunities and resources; their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home; and heir ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally^{7,8}. Empowerment of women is a complex concept encompassing physical, social, economic and political aspects. Particularly after the declaration of 1976-85 as the decade for women by the United Nations, question of empowering women as equal partner in all walks of life becomes a critical issue throughout the world.

2. Status of Rural and urban Women: A Historical Perspective

Several studies have been undertaken on girl's education and its assessment at the worldwide level including India. Some researchers have attempted to link the schemes and programmes specifically designed for women with their empowerment. In this study, we understand and consider the important studies related to educational empowerment, and status or girls education in Rewa Madhya Pradesh through school and higher education thus facilitating empowerment of women. During historical period women in India were deprived of different social and economic rights and were brought out under the overall control of the male family members^{4,8}. They became the wounded of various social evils such as Sati, Purdah, child marriage, prostitution, female infanticide etc., However, the following evil practices were practiced and justified because of the prevailing circumstances:

Sati: It is an old, largely defunct custom, in which the widow was immolated on her husband's funeral pyre. Although the act was supposed to be voluntary on the widow's part, it is believed to have been forced on the widow. However, with the help of social reformists like Raja Ram Mohan Roy it was abolished by the British in 1829. Since then also, there are reports of cases in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.³⁴

Jauhar: It refers to the practice of the voluntary immolation of all wives and daughters of defeated warriors in order to avoid capture and consequent molestation by enemy. The practice was followed by the wives of defeated Rajput rulers, who were known to place a high premium on honor.

Purdah: Purdah is the practice of requiring women to cover their bodies so as to cover their skin and conceal their form. It imposes restrictions on the mobility of women. It curtails their right to interact freely and it is a symbol of the subordination of women.

Devadasis: Devadasi literally means God's (Deva) female servant (Dasi), where according to the ancient Indian practice, young pre-pubertal girls are 'married off', 'given away' in matrimony to God or Local religious deity of the temple. These girls are not allowed to marry, as they were supposedly married to the temple. She permanently 'serves' the priests and inmates of the temple, and the Zamindars and the other men of money and power, in the town and the village. The 'service', providing sexual satisfaction given to these men is considered akin to service of God. The Devadasi is dedicated to the service of the temple Deity for life and there is no escape for her. If she wants to escape, the society will not accept it.

The above mentioned problems are cruelly still practiced and imposed on the women of different parts of India.

2.1. Current Status of Women

Indian constitution guarantees equal rights to women with men through various provisions. However, even after seventy plus years of democratic experience the women not getting a equal rights. Today rural and urban girls have been undergoing a lot of sufferings, but most of the rural girls are malnourished and poor in education and health⁹. Further, the rural girls are over working at home –

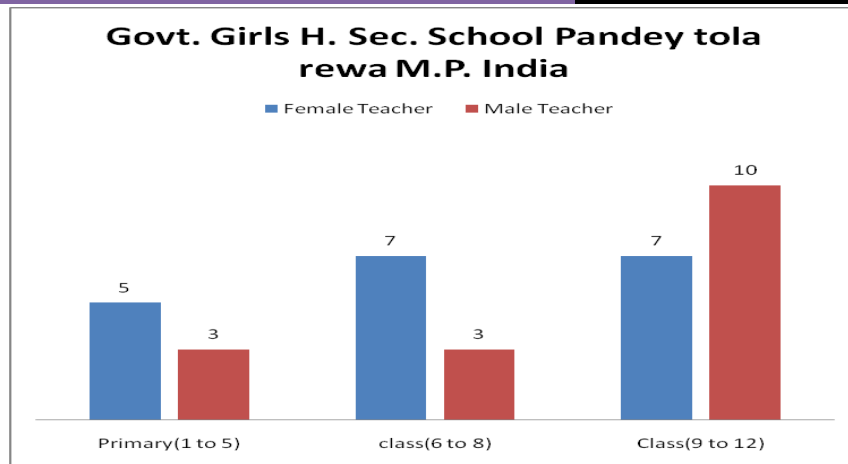
looking after the siblings, preparing food for all at home, cleaning the home and vessels apart from working in the field or in the land lord's house as part time laborer. In some region of our country the girl babies are getting breast feeding only for a shorter period than the boys. By denying adequate feeding knowingly or unknowingly the mothers are discriminating the girl children. Of course there is legal guarantee for female education in India but in practice only approve around forty per cent girls attend the primary schools. The basic reason behind this situation is lack of knowledge, illiterate guardians and the negative opinion of the society, some as follows.

- Most of the uneducated, daily wage and dirty mind people feel that they will get nothing by educating their daughters.
- Poverty is another reason; they think girls alone do the household related routine works for both the parents have to attend other outside works.
- Some parents feel school is unsafe for girls children they are worried about the chastity of their daughters and they feel that home is a safer place than the school.
- The large distance and lack of free transport facilities is also discourage the parents to send their girls to schools.
- Limit of our education system and govt. policies is also discouraging the girl's education. Such as after completing the schooling there is no guarantee of job or getting free admission in higher educational institutions.
- Dowry is another reason to discourage the parents for girl's education. Guardian also feels arranging a marriage for educated daughters is too difficult.
- Poor families prefer to educate their sons than their daughters.
- Lack of basic facilities and good environment in the schools is also discouraging the guardians to send their girls etc...

In Rewa picture is slight different. The school, college teachers of Rewa region motivates the society and girls for pursuing their education. The motivation from the school they are studying plays a very important role than any other factor. And the result helps to change and improve the view of society. Private & Government sector helps in motivating the rural and urban girls for pursuing their education and job.

For the quantitative study¹⁰, sampling technique is employed. The researcher has working on random sampling technique to select the school and colleges to study the attitude towards girl's education & empowerment factors initiated by Government and Private schools and college located in Rewa. In order to maintain uniformity the researcher has chosen three school one college department and one university department and 2000 rural and urban girl students from 1st to 12th standard, UG and PG Students from Rewa constituencies. The statistical data related to male and female teaching faculty are shown below:

Govt. Girls H. Sec. School Pandey tola Rewa M.P. India			
Class	Female Teacher	Male Teacher	Total Students
1-5	5	3	173
6-8	7	3	280
9-12	7	10	593
Total	19	16	946
	19+16=35		



In Govt. Girls H. Sec. School Pandey tola Rewa M.P. India the ratio of female teacher is more than male teacher. Approx 55% women are working which belongs to Rural and urban region of Rewa constitutions.

BAL BHART SCHOOL, Rewa M.P. India		
Male Teacher	Female Teacher	Total
45	65	110
Total Student	3000	

In Bal Bharti School Rewa M.P. India the ratio of female teacher is more than male teacher. Approx 60% women are working which belongs to Rural and urban region of Rewa constitutions.

Secret Heart Hr. Sec. School Rewa M. P. India		
Male Teacher	Female Teacher	Total
15	80	95

In Secret Heart School Rewa M.P. India the ratio of female teacher is more than male teacher. Approx 85% women are working which belongs to Rural and urban region of Rewa constitutions.

Commerce Department, Govt. Girls P.G. College Rewa M.P.		
Male Teacher	Female Teacher	Total
2	10	12

In Commerce Department, Govt. Girls P.G. College Rewa M.P. India the ratio of female teacher is also more than male teacher. Which is Approx 84%?

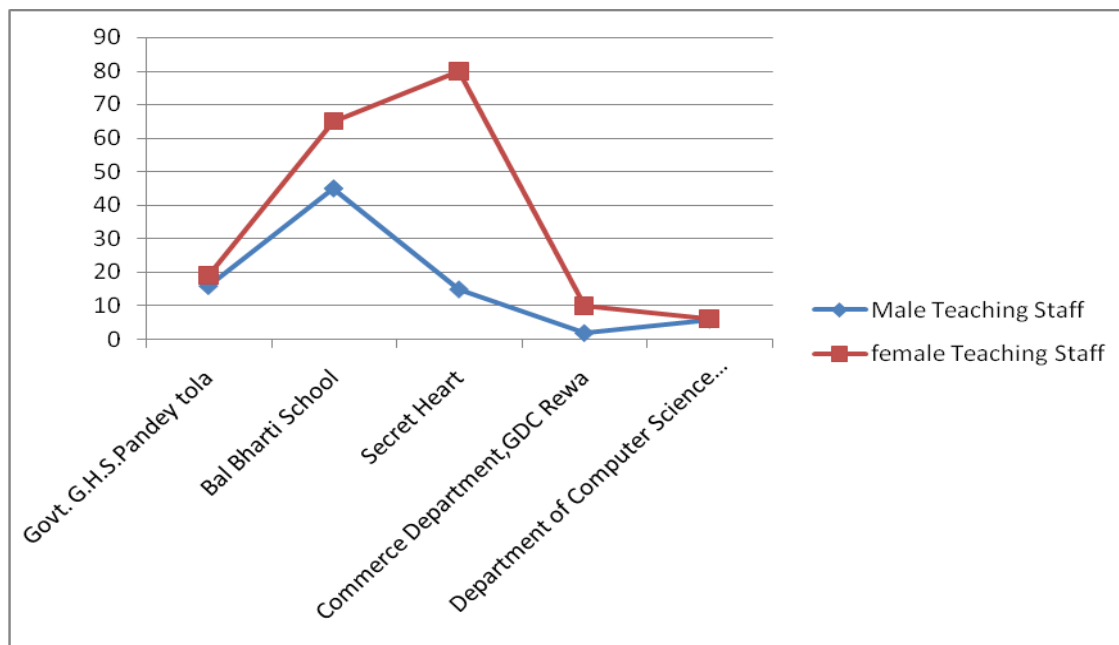
Department of Computer Science, A. P. S. University, Rewa M.P. India.		
Male Teacher	Female Teacher	Total
6	6	12

Ratio of male and female teacher in department of computer Science is equal.

The summary of Rewa constitution

School/Department	Male Teaching Staff	Female Teaching Staff
Govt. G.H.S.Pandey tola	16	19
Bal Bharti School	45	65
Secret Heart	15	80

Commerce Department, GDC Rewa	2	10
Department of Computer Science A.P.S. University	6	6
Total	84	180



The researchers used computer- based application 11, 14 software that analyze and produce graph to estimate and calculate the ratio, average and other statistical analysis of girls education and empowerment 12, 13. According to the study Rewa constitutions is in better position in girl’s education and empowerment, but some improvement is also required. Some suggestions are given below: Encourage the uneducated and unemployed women for education.

- Empowering the educated, unemployed and underemployed women from rural and urban regions Provide Education & Empowering the rural and urban girl children, who belong to first generation and living below poverty line. Etc...

Conclusion

Girl’s education is vital for improving society, city, state and country in different aspect. To awaken the people, it is women who must be awakened; once she is on the move, the family moves, the village moves and the nation moves. The school is the best catalyst for the children who belong to the poor and uneducated families from the rural and urban areas. Keeping this reason in mind, the researcher realizes that the positive attitude created by the schools in the minds of the children can alone assist the rural and urban children to go for a paradigm shift about their future. Women empowerment in Rewa is in satisfactory situation. The study gives the information about ratio of working women in school and college is quite satisfactory, but the main problem is getting admission in school and college. Some society in Rewa does not accept girl’s education. They say learn household activity is more important than school education. Due to such kind of thinking some girls student leave school and college before complete the class. Girl’s education in Rewa can make a particularly strong contribution to the economic wellbeing of the family and district, state and country, poverty reduction. In future we will study different scheme and programs initiative and action by governments to educate and empower girls.

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