

## **Part – VI: Women & Education**

Education is single most important instrument for social and economic transformation. It is precondition for growth to be inclusive. It increases the efficiency of individual and augments the overall quality of life. It is the instrument of social change and eliminates gender disparity and ensures equal opportunities.

In any society, education has two basic functions:

- Preserving and transferring the values of the society.
- Creating new values for changing existing ones to keep in times with times.

These preservation, transfer and creation of new values make the society develop, and progress and prosper.

As per the 2011 census, the total literacy rate in India stands close to 75% and rate of literacy among women is 65.46%.

Factors responsible for poor and low rate of literacy among women are:

- Persistence of gender based inequality which leads to discrimination against women in all spheres of activities.
- Non-availability of educational institutions in close vicinity and lack of regular and safe means to travel, lack of proper toilets/means of sanitation and hygiene.
- Social discrimination and economic exploitations.
- Atleast 23% of girls drop out of school when they hit puberty. Still coping to the circumstances, where girls remain in school, lack of facilities cause widespread absenteeism each month.

The discrimination, which in many cases starts even before a girl child is born, continues all along her life. Spending on her education is considered to be a waste of resources. If resources are limited, then it is usually invested for educating the boys who perceived as support in old age.

The need of the hour is to create proper learning environment and creating awareness in parents about importance of education of girls.

Women's education leads to rise in their ability and capacity to control their lives and

surroundings. This leads to greater control over their lives and choices and improvement in quality of life at home and outside.

Mahatma Gandhi said, - Educate a one man, you educate a person, but educate a woman and you educate a whole civilization.

### **Government's Initiatives:**

- 12<sup>th</sup> FYP lays emphasis on expansion of secondary education to facilitate enhanced access.
- National Policy on Education 1986 (Revised in 1992): emphasis the need to use education as an agent of basic change in the status of women.  
Proposes national education system to play a positive interventionist role in the empowerment of women.
- Nation wide sub-provision – Padhe Bharat, Badhe Bharat.

### **Schemes for Elementary Education:**

- Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA): launched in 11<sup>th</sup> FYP, for universalization of elementary education.
- Mahila Samakhya Scheme: National program for education of girls at elementary level.
- Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya
- Vidyanjali Scheme: to enhance community and private sector involvement in Government run elementary schools.
- National Program for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL): focuses on hardest to reach girls.
- ECCE centres.

### **Schemes for Secondary Education:**

- Incentives to girls for secondary education.
- Girls Hostel Scheme.
- Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan.

### **Vocationalization of Secondary Education:**

- Implemented in 1988.
- To enhance individual employability and reduce mismatch between the demand and supply of skilled man power and provide alternative for those pursuing higher education.

### **Schemes for Adult Education:**

#### **Sakhshar Bharat**

- Is continuity of earlier National literacy Mission.

- Its principal focus is on women and excluded groups like SCs, STs and Minorities, etc.

### **Jan Shiksha Sansthan**

- established to promote vocational training to disadvantaged group of adults. Majority of beneficiaries are women.

### **Shiksha Ka Haq Abhiyan**

- a country wide campaign for RTE.

### **Schemes for Higher and Technical Education:**

- Rashtriya Uchchattar Shiksha Abhiyan
- Women's Hostel in Higher Educational Institutions
- Women Studies Centre in Universities and Colleges.
- Women Polytechnic.
- Women's Hostel in Polytechnic.
- Capacity building of Women Managers in Higher Education.
- Residential Coaching academy for minorities/ SC/ST/OBC and Women.
- Vidyalaxmi Scheme
- Udaan Scheme.
- Merit Scholarship Scheme
- Indira Gandhi Scholarship for Single Girl Child for pursuing Higher and Technical Education.
- Tuition fee waiver for Girl students.
- Post-Doctoral fellowship for Women.

### **State's Initiatives for Promoting Girl's Education:**

#### **1. Assam**

- Self defence training is imparted under Mahila Samakhya Program.

#### **2. Uttarakhand**

- Remedial teaching and Early Childhood Care Education (ECCE) were functional where ICDS centres were not present.
- Supporting Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) with teaching learning materials (TLM), capacity building, constructing rooms in primary schools for running ECCE centres.

#### **3. Haryana**

- Summer camps on life skills for upper primary school girls.

- Bicycle given to girls joining class VI in Government schools to check on dropouts after VI<sup>th</sup> class.

#### **4. Tripura**

- Vocational training and cycles were given to check on dropouts and ensure enrollment of out-of-school girls.

#### **5. Uttar Pradesh**

- Meena Manch – forum for adolescent girls to discuss their own issues and motivate girls to attend school.

#### **6. Madhya Pradesh**

- Decentralised provisioning of additional incentives such as school uniforms, by the local bodies, to motivate girl's retention in school.
- Open learning for many girls who are unable to complete elementary education due to poor access.

#### **7. Bihar**

- Summer camps for Remedial teaching, provided to girls.

#### **8. Orissa**

- Kalasi Dhara (carrying earthen vessel): an initiative to mobilize the community and mother teacher associations to monitor the attendance of teachers and children, cleanliness of the school, etc.

### **Way Ahead:**

- Optimum utilization of infrastructure is required.
- Special vocational education programs to reach the untouched/hardest to touch layer of society.
- More attention on enrollment of women in higher education mainly science and technology.
- Remedial programs needed for girls who have not cleared the NIOS exam.

Education is a very important tool that can help in changing the society and to empower the women. Thus, more measures are required to provide education to the women.

### **(For Women & Health visit Part - VII)**