

A STUDY OF WOMEN, S EDUCATION IN RURAL AREAS OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO RAMBAN DISTRICT.

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Abstract

Education is considered as one of the most powerful instruments of social change and control. Education can remove darkness of ignorance and narrow-mindedness of human mind and infuse new ideas, new light and new direction for change and development. Due to conservative traditionalism, the standing of women has always been viewed next to that of men in our nation. Because of the reliance of women on males for financial support (families did not think it is important to provide education to girls), they were mostly seen as subservient to men. In Indian society, well known for its cultural diversity, we can see sharp multiple inequalities and disparities in education and economic development in terms of caste, creed, tribe, religion and gender despite prolonged struggle and affirmative action by the state to reduce social inequalities in independent India. But in spite of constitutional provisions, policies, and programmes in favour of women, increase of literacy rate and promotion of girl's education, many social evils practices and customs still exist in our society which prevents girl from availing opportunities available for them. girls in general, constitute the most deprived and disadvantaged section of Indian society who have always faced multiple barriers in getting educational opportunities. In independent India, however, girls have made significant strides by entering in every field of education. Even then, a large number of women especially who reside in rural area remain restricted to vicious circles of family expectations, gender discrimination and stigma. Available literature reveals an increase in women literacy rate in the last few decades but still there is a wide gap between boys' and girls' literacy rate. The rural girl's literacy rate in J&K as per 2011 census report is 53.36 percent and for urban females is 70.19 percent when compared to earlier in the Census of 2001 was 36.7% at rural and 61.9% at the urban level, respectively. Within Jammu and Kashmir rural- urban differentials in terms of literacy rate are quite wide. Literacy rate is quite high in districts with higher urban population which are concentrated mostly in plain areas as compared to those districts which are primarily mountainous and have low level of urbanisation. The present study attempt to analysed the educational status of girls in rural areas of ramban district.

Keywords: *-education, women's, rural, Ramban*

Introduction

Education for girls means ensuring that they have the same access to education as boys. Its goal is to address gender inequality and enhance the quality of life for females. Education empowers girls, leading to better health, economic growth, and reduced poverty rates. Despite progress made in recent years, obstacles remain in India that impede girls' access to education. The Right to Education Act, 2009, guarantees all Indian girls the right to education as a fundamental right. This makes India the second most populated country in the world with 48.5% of female population. Providing education for girls aims at promoting gender parity that leads to prosperity. Educated girls are likely to make informed decisions concerning child marriage, hygiene, nutrition, and sanitation. Enabling young women with life skills such as critical thinking prepares them for future workforce participation. The importance of girl child education has become a fundamental right globally recognized by UNESCO as a human right. Despite India's progress in enrolment levels of primary school age girls within the last decade; many barriers remain that prevent secondary school enrolment resulting in an exclusion rate of out-of-school girls mostly from rural areas. Governance plays a critical role in terms of access to educational opportunities; hence

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policies must ensure inclusion regardless of caste or ethnicity. Providing financial support through CSR initiatives or central government-funded programs like Beti Bachao Beti Paho scheme can encourage families from low-income backgrounds to prioritize their girl child's schooling. Emerging evidence suggests that educating girls results in higher wages; hence educated women are likely to provide better nutrition, healthcare for their children leading to better outcomes reducing malnutrition rates within India. The Right to Education Act, 2009, guarantees all Indian girls the right to education as a fundamental right. This makes India the second most populated country in the world with 48.5% of female population. Providing education for girls aims at promoting gender parity that leads to prosperity. An official Census 2011 detail of Ramban, a district of Jammu and Kashmir has been released by Directorate of Census Operations in Jammu and Kashmir. Enumeration of key persons was also done by census officials in Ramban District of Jammu and Kashmir.

Literacy Rate - Ramban district
The total literacy rate of Ramban district was 54.27% in 2011 which is less than average literacy rate 67.16% of Jammu and Kashmir. Population-wise, out of total 124,065 literates, males were 82,938 while females were 41,127. Also, the male literacy rate was 68.82% and the female literacy rate was 38.04% in Ramban district

Table 1 Number of literates and illiterates, percentage of literates by blocks (rural)

| Sr.No. | Name of CD Block | Number of literates and illiterates | | | | | | Percentage of literates | | | Gap in male-female literacy rate |
|--------|------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|---------|-----------------------|-------|---------|-------------------------|-------|---------|----------------------------------|
| | | Number of literates | | | Number of illiterates | | | | | | |
| | | Persons | Males | Females | Persons | Males | Females | Persons | Males | Females | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 1 | 0109-Banihal | 22630 | 14529 | 8101 | 30571 | 12837 | 17734 | 52.28 | 65.28 | 38.52 | 26.76 |
| 2 | 0110-Ramsoo | 31799 | 22303 | 9496 | 50552 | 20351 | 30201 | 49.36 | 66.80 | 30.60 | 36.20 |
| 3 | 0111-Ramban | 41795 | 28310 | 13485 | 49885 | 20603 | 29282 | 55.97 | 70.68 | 38.96 | 31.72 |
| 4 | 0112-Gool | 18970 | 12210 | 6760 | 25700 | 11174 | 14526 | 53.12 | 65.33 | 39.72 | 25.61 |
| | Total | 115194 | 77352 | 37842 | 156708 | 64965 | 91743 | 52.82 | 67.62 | 36.49 | 31.13 |

Table No 2 number of literates and illiterates' percentage of literates in towns

| Sr. No. | Name of town | Number of literates and illiterates | | | | | | Percentage of literates | | | Gap in male-female literacy rate |
|---------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------|----------------------------------|
| | | Number of literates | | | Number of illiterates | | | | | | |
| | | Person s | Male s | Female s | Person s | Male s | Female s | Person s | Male s | Female s | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 1 | 800051-Banihal (MC) | 2942 | 2054 | 888 | 958 | 399 | 559 | 83.77 | 91.33 | 70.31 | 21.02 |
| 2 | 800052-Ramban (MC) | 2582 | 1463 | 1119 | 1014 | 410 | 604 | 82.23 | 90.42 | 73.52 | 16.90 |
| 3 | 800053-Batote (MC) | 3347 | 2069 | 1278 | 968 | 420 | 548 | 86.22 | 92.00 | 78.26 | 13.74 |
| | District (Urban): Ramban(017) | 8871 | 5586 | 3285 | 2940 | 1229 | 1711 | 84.21 | 91.33 | 74.35 | 16.98 |

STUDY AREA: Ramban district is an administrative district in the Jammu division of Jammu and kashmir. It is located in a valley surrounded the pir Panjal. It was carved out as a separate district from erstwhile Doda district in 2007. It is located in the Jammu division. The district headquarters are at Ramban town, which is located midway between Jammu and kashmir along the Chenab river in the Chenab valley on National Highway-44, approximately 151 km from Jammu and Srinagar. Ramban district has an average elevation of 747 metres (3792 feet). The boundary lines of Ramban district have come to be drawn from Patni top on its south, Assar on its east, Gool on its west and Banihal on its north. Ramban district comprises seven Tehsils, namely Banihal, Khari, Pongal Paristan, Ramban, Ramgarh and Gool, and four community development blocks, namely Banihal, Gool, Ramban and Rasmu. The district consisted of 116 census villages and 127 Revenue villages in 2001. Total panchayat Halaqas in District Ramban are 142.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the education status of women in rural areas of the ramban district.
2. To study the factors responsible for the low women's enrolment and high drop-out rate.
3. To recommend the measures that needs to be taken at different levels for improving educational status of women.

EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF WOMEN IN RAMBAN DISTRICT

The data depicts that literate's number 124,065 comprising 54.27 per cent of the total population of the district. (excluding population in the age group 0-6). The proportion of male literates (68.82 per cent) is higher than those of females (38.04 per cent), indicating a gap of 30.78 per cent in male/female literacy rate. While rural sector of the district accounts for 52.82 per cent literate, its urban 54 areas have recorded, as high as 84.21 per cent of literates. The gap in male/female literacy rates in rural and urban areas of the district are of the order of 31.13 per cent and 16.98 per cent respectively. From amongst the sub-districts, Ramban has registered the highest literacy rate at 55.33 per cent than that of the district average. Lowest literacy has been recorded in Banihal sub-district. at 52.9 per cent. In case of male literacy rate Banihal is slightly higher having 68.95 percent than that of Ramban of 68.73 percent. In case of females, it is vice-versa Ramban is

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having 40.07 per cent of females' literates whereas Banihal is having 35.48 percent. Banihal sub-district has recorded the largest gap in male/female literary rate, standing at 33.47 per cent. This is followed by Ramban sub-district with a corresponding gap of 28.66 per cent.

PROBLEMS OF EDUCATION IN STUDY AREA

About half of the population of ramban district is living below poverty line. In rural areas majority of the people is not in a position to give proper education to their children. They are compelled for child labour, such as collecting fire wood, fetching water from far furlong areas, caring their young siblings, cooking. the parents are unable to provide education to their children due to heavy expensive on education. The education department is providing free education facilities but due to geographical areas, rugged mountains and unfavourable climatic conditions, unawareness about education are the main causes of low literacy rate in district ramban. The state government has introduced Reber-e-Taleem (RET) Scheme and posted local staff in rural areas to meet this challenge. However, this scheme has degraded the education standard because these staffs were raw and untrained. Increase of education in the district has been made immense strides during the past few years of planned development and significant educational facilities are being made available in remote, backward, and hilly areas.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

It can be concluded from the above analysis that literacy rate in rural areas is lower than the urban areas. Women in the district were generally subjected to discrimination, exploitation, oppression and inequality. Their role remained confined to household activities and they were also excluded from education. Although women and men literacy has improved over a period time, the gender divide remains quite widen both rural as well as urban areas. In the rural areas the gender disparity is more accentuated in comparison to urban areas. The foregoing discussion makes it evident that the causes of non-enrolment in school as well as dropping out early from the system of education are largely rooted in the local traditional and customary practices pertaining to gender roles, socio-cultural norms, economy, lack of proper infrastructure. Various policies and programmes made by the Indian government for the enhancement of women's education, inspite of these rural women have been ignored. Within the framework of democratic polity, National policies and plans for women's advancement in different spheres, there has been gradual improvement in several areas of women's lives but much need to be done especially in the lives of rural women. Remedy to this challenge is grass root initiatives that focus attention on the problems of women education. To make effort to generate educational awareness and attitudinal changes among the masses regarding women education, the role of women's families, community leaders and media deserves special attention here.

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