



COMPARATIVE STUDY OF WOMEN EDUCATIONAL AND AWARENESS INDEX IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

This discrimination is a result of the gender bias which forms an inherent part of the Indian society. There exists inequality and vulnerability of women in all sectors-social, economic, political, health care and educational etc. Education is milestone of women empowerment because it enables them to responds to the challenges, to confront their traditional role and redefine their life. Education is one of the most significant factors which can contribute in removing the inhibiting factors and institutional biases against women. The capacity to influence the decision making or to participate in the decision making process at the various level from households to the community can be enhanced among women through the education.

KEY WORDS: Education, Capacity, Drop Out,

OBJECTIVE, METHODS AND SOURCES

The basic objective of this paper is to analyses the different policies and programmes about the education of women in India. The Composite Women educational and awareness Index will be constructed through the help of the various variables. The paper will further investigate the role of the women awareness and education in the process of women empowerment. Secondary data collected from internet, newspapers, published papers, books government report and publication like NFHS -3 and various economic survey and paper published by various intellectuals academician in various conferences and seminars at the national and international level. This paper used various statistical techniques to empirically analyse the relationship between the predictor and response variables. The statistical methods have been analysed by the statistical computer programme as Microsoft Excel and the Statistical Programme for the Social Science (SPSS-18).

INTRODUCTION

Education of women is the most powerful tool to change the position in society. Women education in India has been a need of the hour, as education is a foundation stone for the empowerment of woman. . Education also brings a reduction in inequalities and functions as a means of improving their status within the family and develops the concept of participation. Education has great role in the process of women empowerment. Our first Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru had said “If you educate a man you educate an individual, however, if you educate a woman you educate a whole family”.

World Economic Forum in its report “women’s empowerment: measuring the global gender gap” highlighted important dimensions of female empowerment and opportunity actually based mainly on the findings of United National International Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), concerning global patterns of inequality between men and women. According to their report Educational attainment level of women is major cause of concern for the all global society and there is a high need of raising educational level among the women for their empowerment.

NEED FOR WOMEN EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

As earlier said the status of women in modern India is a sort of a paradox. If on one hand she is at the peak of ladder of success, on the other hand she is mutely suffering the violence afflicted on her by her own family members. As compared with past women in modern times have achieved a lot but in reality they have to still travel a long way. On one hand she has become Chief Minister, Prime minister or even President in our country on the other hand she has been victimised by barbarous Khap panchayat, Talibani Fatwa’s, infanticide, foeticide rape, sexual harassments, owner killing or even acid attacks cases are very common in our society. Cases of Female foeticide and Female infanticide are so rampant in India. The gap in the male-female literacy rate is just a simple indicator. While the male literary rate is more than 82.14% and the female literacy rate is just 65.46%. With women accounting for nearly 48 per cent of India’s population (Census 2011), there is need to ensure and safeguard their place in the socio-economic milieu. Gender discrimination still persists in India and lot more needs to be done in the field of women's education in India.

Indian women suffered from the various kinds of biases and prejudices throughout the history and still the record of our country is very dismal as far as the women based development indicators shows. So Government has been taken several initiatives in this regard like Right of children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 (RTE act) Due to which free and compulsory for all children between the age of 6 and 14 years has been made a fundamental right.

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is being implemented in partnership of the states for enrolment all children between the age of 6 and 14 years in primary school. Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) was launched in 2009 with the objective of enhancing access to secondary education and improving its quality. Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) is launched for setting up residential schools at upper primary level for girls belonging predominantly to the SC/ST, OBC and minority communities. National programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) is a focused intervention of the government of India to reach the 'Hardest to reach girl.

VARIABLES FOR EDUCATION AND AWARENESS INDEX

Education serves as an important instrument for gender-based development and poverty reduction. It increases overall social welfare by improving life expectancy, lowering crime rates, and promoting social cohesion. Investment in female education is critical for breaking the cycle of poverty and equalizing wealth distribution, which in turn reinforces social stability. With increased education, women have greater access to resources, enhanced opportunity for employment, and improved abilities to make informed decisions about health, marriage, and parenting. Other social benefits (e.g., decline in infant mortality and HIV/AIDS infections and greater education opportunities for children) are positively affected by female education, particularly secondary education. As macroeconomic studies indicate, marginal returns on education of girls are consistently higher than those of boys and are even greater when educational attainment of the next generation is considered (World Bank 2001). Education also enhances the awareness among the women's. The variables related to the Education and awareness index have been discussed as below:

- **Female literacy Rate:** Among the educational indicators literacy rates are most commonly used to measure women's status and progress of women empowerment.
- **Gross enrolment ratios:** Gross enrolment ratios measure the school system's capacity relative to the population's eligibility to attend. Targeting the School enrolment ratios has been the basic objective of the Universalization for the primary and secondary education in India. Gross enrolment ratio is defined as a total number of student has been enrol in the school and divided by the Total number of children in that particular age group. In these paper Gross enrolment ratios of Girl's from one to class eight is considered as a dependent variable.
- **Drop out ratio:** Each education indicator serves different purposes. Higher drop out ratio among the girl's explains their low retention in the higher classes and also there is a bias persists in our society as far as girl's education is concern.
- **Exposure to mass media:** Access to media is an important variable to explore as far as the women empowerment is concern. The media is an important source of information and exposure to new

ways of thinking and doing things. In addition, radio listening, television viewing, and reading newspapers or magazines are important leisure activities. Both of these characteristics of the media make access to media an important indicator of women's empowerment—by providing information and exposure to worlds outside the home, media exposure has the potential for enabling empowerment; further, time spent enjoying the media reflects access to leisure time, typically available to the more empowered who have greater control over their own time. In the present researcher has taken Percentage of women age 15-49 who usually read a newspaper or magazine, watch television, or listen to the radio at least once a week, who usually visit the cinema or theatre at least once a month as a variable for measurement of the exposure to the media.

- **Awareness:** For empowerment efforts to be successful, women must be able to exercise their rights in the same manner and to the same extent as their male counterparts. Awareness about their Social-Political rights and developmental programmes of the Government for the women can help women in the process of empowerment. The percentage of women who are aware about their rights and welfare programmes as a study variable.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE AGGREGATE INDEX

The Index is constructed using a four-step process, outlined below:

- Conversion of Negative Variable in to Positive variable;
- Conversion into standard scale;
- Calculating the weighted average of the variables within each index ;
- Average of the all index.

CONVERSION OF NEGATIVE VARIABLE IN TO POSITIVE VARIABLE

For the Construction of an Empowerment Index There is need of positive variable in this study. Positive variable are those which Has a positive relationship with the women empowerment or are enhance the enabling factors in the process of empowerment like female literacy rate, women awareness and their decision making capacity. Whereas negative variable are those which can affect the enabling factor for the women's empowerment in a negative direction. These negative variables are subtracted from "Hundred" and then we gets the positive orientation from these variables. In this paper the "Drop out ratio" is considered as negative variables.

CONVERSION INTO STANDARD SCALE

The variable chosen for working out composite Indices are measured in different units and in general, not directly additive and comparable. So it is necessary to convert them to some standard 'units' so that the initial scale chosen for measuring the variables do not bias the results. It is; however, true that any method of scale conversion involves implicit weighting and the selection of a

standard scale is never a value free judgement. Standardization methods can improve the indicator and increase comparability of results across the state. Standardization makes variables scale free and remove the biasness. Standard scale conversion can be done by Ranking method, Standardization, Division by mean, standard deviation or by any ideal number. For the construction of the Women Empowerment Index ‘National Average’ is chosen for the purpose of making variables scale free. This method not only convert the variable into the standard scale but also very useful in doing comparable analysis of each state’s Index in terms of National Average.

CALCULATION OF WEIGHT AND INDEX SCORES

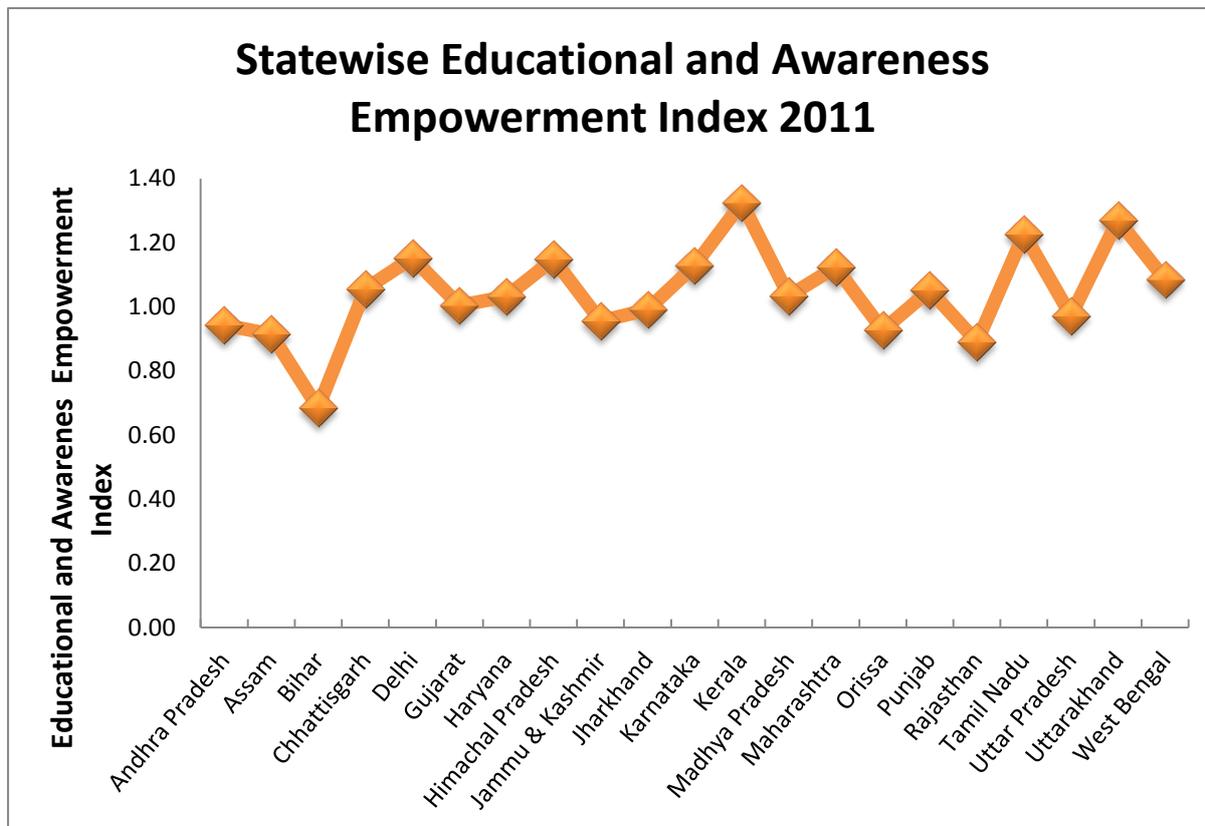
Once the bias of unit of measurement is removed from the observation, the next step in the process involves calculating the weighted average of the variables within each index to create the index scores. There are various methods used in social research for calculation of weight. Selection of These methods depends upon the nature of the variables and the objectives of the study.

This paper has used the method for the calculation of weight similar to the method used by World Economic Forum in the construction of the Global Gender Gap Index in its Global Gender Gap Report in 2011. Averaging the different variables would implicitly give more weight to the measure that exhibits the smallest variability or standard deviation. First step in this paper is to convert the variables in to the standard scale by division of series by the National Average. Then determine what a 1% point change would translate to in terms of standard deviations by dividing 0.01 by the standard deviation for each variable.

Table 1: Calculation of weight for educational and awareness index

Educational and Awareness Index	Standard deviation	Standard deviation per 1% point change	Weight
Female literacy Rate	0.149	0.067	0.305
Female enrolment rate in class I-VIII	0.134	0.074	0.337
no drop out ratio	0.502	0.020	0.090
Awareness	0.532	0.019	0.085
Media coverage	0.247	0.040	0.183
Total	1.564	0.221	1.000

Graph number: 2



In the construction of this index maximum weight has been assigned to the female enrolment rate from class first to the eighth class (33 percent). While the female literacy rate and their media coverage have been assigned second and third highest weight i.e. 30 percent and 18 percent respectively. Kerala, Uttarakhand and Tamil Nadu are the highest ranking states as far as this Index is concern. The values for this index for these states are 1.32, 1.27 and 1.23 respectively. While the Assam, Rajasthan and Bihar are the lowest performing states in terms of this economic empowerment index. The values for this index for these states are 0.91, 0.89 and 0.68 respectively. If we arrange these states according to their respective index score than we can easily divide these states into three different categories as below:

Table number 3: Comparative position of different Indian states

Educational and Awareness Index			
Sr. No.	High index score	Medium index score	Low index score
1	Kerala	West Bengal	Uttar Pradesh
2	Uttarakhand	Chhattisgarh	Jammu & Kashmir
3	Tamil Nadu	Punjab	Andhra Pradesh
4	Delhi	Madhya Pradesh	Orissa
5	Himachal Pradesh	Haryana	Assam
6	Karnataka	Gujarat(national average i.e. one)	Rajasthan
7	Maharashtra	Jharkhand	Bihar

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

On the basis of the findings of this paper it can be concluded that;

- There exists huge disparities among the states as far as the educational development and awareness index is concerns.
- The female literacy and gross enrolment ratio contributing most significantly in the educational development and awareness index.
- Coverage of mass media and awareness contributing insignificantly in the educational development and awareness index.
- There has been significant improvement in the capacity of women through the education.
- Social and household variables have a strong relationship with the education and awareness.

Women in India still are suffering from the various kinds of exploitation and inequalities. The education of women is the most powerful tool to change the position of society. Education also brings a reduction in inequalities and functions as a means of improving their status within the family as well as in the society. For this purpose there is a need to create an enabling environment through adopting various policies and programmes for educational development and enhancing awareness among women.

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