

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Socio-economic development is the process of social and economic development in a society and is measured in terms of income, life expectancy, literacy and levels of employment. Among other indicators of socio-economic development, women education being the most powerful tool of attaining power in the society. The gross enrolment ratio in elementary education of girls has improved much which shows that the awareness level of parents in the country has certainly increased for elementary education of female child. While gross enrolment of girls in senior secondary level, it increased to 53.2% in 2014-15 from 25.2% during 2005-06, more than two times increased during this period, still more is to be done. However women are still lagging behind in higher education. Gender discrimination still persists in India and lot more needs to be done in the field of women's education. During the last few years atrocities against women have increased. There are many episodes of rape, murder, dowry, wife beating and discrimination in the socio-economic status of women. The main causes of violence against women in our country are unequal power-relations, gender discrimination, and economic dependence of women, dowry and lack of participation of women in decision-making process. Women in our country are far behind than men as far as work participation is concerned. The main female workers are mostly engages as cultivators and agricultural labours. These women are lagging far behind than men and their work participation is below average (39.79) person. It also indicates that women are less likely to work because they earn less per day wages than men for similar work. The ratio of female to male population in India has been low for a long time and by and large is declined since 1951. Census data for year 2001 and 2011 on child sex ratio also depicts the same trend. Census data show a decline in child sex ratio in past two decades in India. Maternal Mortality Ratio in India is also very high. The higher death of pregnant women in the country depict either the poor medical and health facilities available to these mothers or some of the women living in rural and urban parts of the country are not availing medical facilities during pregnancy period. India has also recorded much progress in women life expectancy in the country, it was just 41.3 in 1960 which increased to 67.3 in 2011 and is projected 69.5 for the period 2011-15. Women in our country have very less representation in parliament right from independence and over the years not improved significantly. During the last 65 years 7.65% participation of women in parliament could increase. In this paper an attempt has been made to study the socio-economic development of women in India and to make conclusion and suggestion.

Keywords: Development, Life expectancy, Literacy, Enrolment, Discrimination, Representation,

Objective of Study

- To study the social- economic development of women in India.
- To draw inferences and make suggestions.

Research methodology

The study is based on secondary sources and the data for the study has been collected from the published records, books, newspaper, magazines, existing literature, web portals and other scholarly work and various reports of National University of educational planning and administration, New Delhi, different publications statistics of school education and statistics of higher education and technical education, Office of the Registrar General census India, Labour Bureau Ministry of Labour and employment government of India, office of registrar general of India, ministry of home affairs and statistical reports of the election commission of India.

Introduction

While analysing the Indian Vedic literature we may be able to know that during Vedic period woman occupied high status in our society not only as a mother but as a wife and sister as well. With the passage of time gradually she lost this status due to various social evils and customs. For centuries women have been deliberately denied opportunities of growth in the name of religion and socio-cultural practices. Indian society is pre dominated by men; hence women are a victim of male domination in the respective sphere of life. A woman in Indian society has been victim of humiliation, torture and exploitation. During the last few years atrocities against women have increased. There are many episodes like rape, murder, dowry, wife beating and discrimination in the socio-economic fields.

Socio-economic status of women**Discussion and conclusion**

Socio-economic development is the process of social and economic development in a society and is measured in terms of income, life expectancy, literacy and levels of employment. Women in India are around 48% of the population of the country, but still they are not getting equal status in the society. India accounted for the largest number of people living below international poverty line with 30 % of its population under \$1.90 a day category. Under such circumstances, within the family, the worst sufferers are women and girl children. In the following paragraphs an attempt has been made to study the socio-economic development of women in India while analysing various indicators.

Education

Women education plays important role in the overall development of the country. It not only helps in the development of half of the human resources, but in improving the quality of life. Educated women not only able to promote education of their girl children, but also can provide better guidance to their children. Moreover educated women can also help in the reduction of infant mortality rate and growth of the population. Women literacy rate in the country has grown over the years. In 1971 only 22% of Indian women were literate, by the end of 2001 54.16% female were literate and women literacy rate further increased to 65.46 % in 2011.

It is clear from the table-1 that gross enrolment ratio in elementary education of girls has improved much in the country. It was 91.00% during 2005-06 and increased to 99.2% in 2014-15 which is 4.4% higher than boys in 2014-15. It indicates that the awareness level of parents in the country has certainly increased as far as elementary education of female child is concerned. While gross enrolment of girls in senior secondary level increased to 53.2% in 2014-15 from 25.2% during 2005-06, more than two times increased during this period, still more is to be done. However both boys and girls are far lagging behind in higher education in the country. It can be realised from the fact that India has poor gross

enrolment ratio for higher education in the world. It was 24.3 percent for population (18-23years) in 2014-15 but the intensity of enrolment in the rural areas of our country is much low as compared to that of urban areas especially among SC, ST and OBC. It is evidenced from the fact that while 3.7 % of male and 1.6% of females are graduate in rural area, while 15 % of male and 8 % of female have graduation degree in the urban areas. Gender discrimination still persists in India and lot more needs to be done in the field of women's education. Educational deprivation of women in senior secondary and higher education is ultimately associated with poverty and unwillingness of parents in the rural areas to educate their female child.

Table-1
Gross enrolment Rate in India

Years	Elementary(1-V111) 6-13 years			Senior Secondary16-17 years			Higher education 18-23 years		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2005-06	98.5	91.00	94.9	31.4	25.2	28.5	13.5	9.4	11.6
2010-11	104.5	103.3	103.9	42.3	36.2	39.4	20.8	17.9	19.4
2014-15	94.8	99.2	96.9	54.6	53.8	54.2	25.3	23.2	24.3

Source: 1.For school education: National University of educational planning and administration, New Delhi. (Website: <http://dise.in/>).

2. For Higher education: Ministry of Human resource development government of India. (Website: <http://mhrd.gov.in/statist>) Compiled from different publications statistics of school education and statistics of higher education and technical education.

Employment

The economic development of woman depends upon the type of employment, which they are able to procure. India is a predominantly agricultural country; women do more than half of the total agricultural work. But their work is not valued. Women in our country are far behind then its counterpart men as far as work participation is concerned. It is evident from the table-2 that during 1991 work participation of male and female were 51.61 and 22.27 respectively which rose to 39.79 and 25.51 in 2011, which indicates that women are lagging far behind than man and their work participation is below average (39.79) person.

TABLE-2
Work participation of women in India

year	Total/rural/urban	person	males	female
1991	Total	37.5	51.61	22.27
	Rural	40.09	52.58	26.79
	urban	30.16	48.92	9.19
2001	Total	39.10	51.68	25.63
	Rural	41.75	52.11	30.79
	urban	32.25	50.60	11.88
2011	Total	39.79	53.26	25.51
	Rural	41.83	53.03	30.02
	urban	35.31	53.76	15.44

Source: Office of the Registrar General census India.

It also indicates that women are less likely to work because they earn less than men for similar work. As is depicted from the table-3 that women earn far less than man in one day she worked. Trend in wages /salaries and earnings by directly employed workers in India

during 2005-06 for man and women in India were Rs.219.68 and Rs.99.59 respectively which increased to Rs.233.14 and Rs.108.73 in 2007-08 and further increased to Rs.288.14 and Rs.145.63 in 2009-10 respectively. It reveals that women in India are under paid for similar work.

Table-3
Trend in wages /salaries and earnings by directly employed workers in India

year	Wages/salaries per Man day worked(Rs.)	
	men	women
2005-06	219.68	99.59
2006-07	233.14	108.73
2007-08	255.19	122.06
2008-09	258.04	131.23
2009-10	288.14	145.63

Source: Labour bureau. Statistical profile on women Labour 2009-2011, Labour Bureau Ministry of Labour and employment government of India, Chandigarh/ Shimla.

Violence

According to national crimes bureau crimes against women have more than doubled over the period from 2005 to 2014. Around 2.24 million crimes against women were reported during this period. Twenty six crimes against women are reported every hour or one complaint every two minutes. Among the various states in India Andhra Pradesh rank first followed by West Bengal and Utter Pradesh. The main causes of violence are gender discrimination, economic dependence of women, dowry and lack of participation of women in decision-making process. Discrimination and violence against women had also an effect on the sex ratio in India.

Sex Ratio

The ratio of female to male population in India has been low. It is clear from the table-4 that the ratio of female to male population in India has been low for a long time and by and large is declined since 1951. According to 1991 census it declined sharply and touched the lowest level 927. But the 2011 census shows the modest increase (940) but still below in comparison to 946 of 1951 census.

Table-4
SEX RATIO OF WOMEN TO PER THOUSAND MEN

Year	Sex ratio
1951	946
1971	930
1981	934
1991	927
2001	933
2011	940

Source: office of registrar general of India, ministry of home affairs as contained in the statistical year book, 2013, ministry of statistics and programme implementation. Government of India, New Delhi.

Maternal Mortality Ratio

The Maternal mortality rate is the annual number of female deaths per 100000 live births from any cause related to or aggravated by pregnancy or its management. Maternal Mortality Ratio in India is also very high. The higher death of pregnant women in the country depict either the poor medical and health facilities available to these mothers or some of the women living in rural and urban parts of the country are not availing medical facilities during pregnancy period. However over the years MMR is declining. As is evident from the table that MMR during the period 2007-2009 was 212 and declined to

178 during the period 2010-12 and further declined to 167 during 2011-13 which is a good sign for the country.

Table-5
Maternal Mortality Ratio (Per100000) live births in India

years	Ratio
2007-09	212
2010-12	178
2011-13	167

Source: Press information Bureau, Govt of India, Ministry of health and family welfare, 11th February, 2014.

Life expectancy

While analysing life expectancy it has been evident from the table-6 that during 1960 the life expectancy in India was 42.3 which increased to 65.5 during 2011. The table further depicts that India has also recorded much progress in women life expectancy in the country, it was just 41.3 in 1960 which increased to 67.3 in 2011 and is projected 69.5 for the period 2011-15. It indicates that health and medical facilities are increasing in the country and have a positive impact on the life expectancy of the people.

Table-6
Life expectancy in India

Year	Male	Female	All
1960	43.2	41.3	42.3
1980	55.9	55.5	55.7
1990	59.3	60.0	59.7
2000	61.4	63.6	62.5
2011	63.8	67.3	65.5
2011-15 projected	67.3	69.6	

Source: compendium of India's fertility and mortality indicators, based on SRS, Registrar General of India.

Political representation

As is evident from the table 7 that Indian women have very less representation in parliament right from independence of the country and over the years not improved significantly. In 1951 4.50% of women represented in parliament which rose to 8.29% in 2004 and further rose to 12.15% in 2014 . It indicates that during the last 65 years 7.65% participation of women in parliament could increase in the country. Therefore the political class of the country must come forward to increase and give proper representation to women in the political system of the country, so that women of the country could become part of the political decision making process and could be empowered.

Table-7
Women representation in parliament

year	No of women mp	%
1951	22	4.50
1991	39	7.30
2004	45	8.29
2009	58	10.87
2014	62	12.15

Source: compiled from the statistical reports of the election commission of India.

Conclusion

On the basis of above analysis it is concluded that education is the fundamental tool of attaining power in the society. Improvement is gradually coming up in educational level of women in our country. The gross enrolment ratio in elementary education of girls has improved much which shows that the awareness level of parents in the country has certainly increased for elementary education of female child. While gross enrolment of girls in senior secondary level, it increased to 53.2% in 2014-15 from 25.2% during 2005-06, more than two times increased during this period, still more is to be done. However still girls are far lagging behind in higher education. Gender discrimination still persists in India and lot more needs to be done in the field of women's education in India. Educational deprivation of women in senior secondary and higher education is ultimately associated with poverty and unwillingness of parents in the rural areas to educate their female child. During the last few years atrocities against women have increased. There are many episodes of rape, murder, dowry, wife beating and discrimination in the socio-economic status of women. The main causes of violence against women in our country are unequal power-relations, gender discrimination, and economic dependence of women, dowry and lack of participation of women in decision-making process. Women in our country are far behind than men as far as work participation is concerned. The main female workers are mostly engages as cultivators and agricultural labours. These women are lagging far behind than men and their work participation is below average (39.79) person. It also indicates that women are less likely to work because they earn less per day wages than men for similar work. The ratio of female to male population in India has been low for a long time and by and large is declined since 1951. Census data for year 2001 and 2011 on child sex ratio also depicts the same trend. Census data show a decline in child sex ratio in past two decades in India. Maternal Mortality Ratio in India is also very high. The higher death of pregnant women in the country depict either the poor medical and health facilities available to these mothers or some of the women living in rural and urban parts of the country are not availing medical facilities during pregnancy period. India has also recorded much progress in women life expectancy in the country. Women in our country have very less representation in parliament right from independence and over the years not improved significantly. In nutshell, Indian women are lagging behind in all spheres of socio-economic sphere of life. Less Female literacy ratio, high maternal mortality ratio is the matter of concern for the country. The representation of women in Parliament (Lok sabha) is very low. The attitude of society should change and try to be very cooperative with women and encourage her greater participation in decision making process at all level. The Economic independence of women through employment in various occupations will definitely empower women and will also result in the upliftment of their socio-economic status in the society.

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