

CONTENTS

INDEX

TITLE	Page(s)
NEP 2020 & MOOCs in Higher Education: Integration, Potential and Limitations - Juli Saikia, Dr. R.D. Padmavathy	02
Study on New Education Policy 2020: The Importance of Technology and Artificial Intelligence - Er. Akash Kumar Jain	13
Replenishing Indian Knowledge System (IKS) of Sustainable tribal farming practices for Inclusive conservation through National Educational Policy (NEP) 2020 - Dr. Swagatam Das	17
WOMEN'S LIFE AND HER EDUCATION IN MODERN INDIA - Dr. Pankaj Kumar, Ms. Preeti Tyagi	27
NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020 AND VOCATIONALISATION – Dr. Shivpal Singh, Dr. Suja George Stanley	35

WOMEN'S LIFE AND HER EDUCATION IN MODERN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

The status of women in India has faced many major changes in the last few centuries. From a position of equal status with men in ancient times to a low standard of living in the medieval period as well as the promotion of equal rights by several reformers, the history of women in India has been quite dynamic. In modern India, women have occupied top positions like President, Prime Minister, Speaker of Lok Sabha, Leader of Opposition etc.

INTRODUCTION

Scholars believe that in ancient India, women enjoyed equal status with men in all walks of life. However, some other scholars have the opposite view. Ancient Indian grammarians like Patanjali and Katyayana say that women were given education in the early Vedic period. The Rigvedic texts suggest that women were married at a mature age and possibly had the freedom to choose their own husbands. Texts such as the Rigveda and the Upanishads speak of many female sages and sages, notable among whom are Gargi and Maitreyi.

Traditions such as the nagarvadhu ("city bride") existed in some kingdoms of ancient India. Women used to compete for the prestigious honor of Nagarvadhu. Amrapali has been the most famous example of Nagarvadhu. According to studies, women enjoyed equal status and rights in the early Vedic period. However, later (around 500 BCE) the status of women began to decline with the Smritis (especially the Manusmriti) and with the Islamic invasions of Babur and the Mughal Empire, and later Christianity limited women's freedom and rights.

Although women have been allowed to participate in religious rituals in reformist movements such as Jainism, women in India have more or less faced

slavery and restrictions. The practice of child marriage is believed to have started around the 6th century.

The status of Indian women in society declined further during the medieval period when the practice of sati, prohibition of child marriage and widow remarriage became a part of social life in some communities of India. The conquest of the Muslims in the Indian subcontinent brought the purdah system into Indian society. Jauhar was practiced among the Rajputs of Rajasthan. Devadasis or temple women were subjected to sexual abuse in some parts of India. The practice of polygamy was widely prevalent among the Hindu Kshatriya rulers. In many Muslim families, women were confined to the zenana areas. In South India many women ruled villages, towns and districts and started social and religious institutions. The Bhakti movement tried to regain a better status for women and questioned the forms of domination. Bhakti sects within Hinduism such as Mahanubhava, Varkari and many others were major movements openly advocating social justice and equality between men and women in the Hindu community. Shortly after the Bhakti movement, the first Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Nanak, also preached the message of equality between men and women. He encouraged women to lead religious institutions; singing and leading kirtans or bhajans that are sung as congregational prayers; becoming members of religious management committees; to lead the army on the battlefield; Advocated for allowing equal rights in marriage and equality in Amrit (initiation).

Historical practices

Traditions such as sati, jauhar and devadasi were banned in some communities and have largely died out in modern India. However, some cases of these practices are still observed in rural areas of India. The Purdah system is still kept alive by Indian women in some communities, and especially the practice of child marriage, despite it being an illegal act under the current law of India.

Sati- The practice of Sati is an ancient and largely extinct custom, in some communities the widow had to immolate herself alive on the funeral pyre of her husband. Although this act was expected to be done voluntarily on the part of the widow, it is believed that sometimes it was forced upon the widow. It was

abolished by the British in 1829. About forty cases of sati have come to light since independence. In 1987, the Roopkanwar case of Rajasthan led to the Sati Pratha (Prohibition) Act.

Jauhar- Jauhar refers to the practice of voluntary immolation of the wives and daughters of all defeated (only Rajput) warriors to escape captivity by the enemy and subsequent persecution. This practice was followed by the wives of the defeated Rajput rulers who died for their honour. This evil practice was limited only to the Indian Rajputs ruling class in the beginning and the Rajputs or perhaps half of any other caste women practiced sati (burning alive in the funeral pyre of the husband/father) which was considered a section of the society of that time. Punet had started accepting religious work. This evil practice could never find any place in India's second fighter como or those who were considered as "martial como" in English. The women of the Jats used to get martyred in the war field by rubbing the teeth of their enemies shoulder to shoulder with their husbands. Maratha women have also been giving full support to their warrior husbands in the battlefield.

Purdah- Purdah is the practice in which in some communities women are required to cover their body in such a way that no one can guess their skin and appearance. It limits the activities of women; It limits their right to mingle freely and is a symbol of women's subordination. Contrary to popular belief, it does not reflect the religious teachings of neither Hindus nor Muslims, although misunderstandings have arisen due to the carelessness and prejudices of religious leaders of both sects.

Devadasi- Devadasi is a religious practice in some parts of South India in which women are "married" to a deity or a temple. This tradition dates back to the tenth century A.D. Till then it was well established. Illicit sexual exploitation of devadasis became a custom in some parts of India in the later period.

Women's education is essentially a concept linking women and education. One form of this is related to the inclusion of women in education on a par with men. In another form, it refers to the special education system created for women. During the medieval and renaissance periods in India, the notion of giving women a different kind of education from men had developed. In the present era, it is

universally accepted that a woman should be as educated as a man. It is a proven truth that if the mother is not educated then the children of the country can never be well.

Education plays a particularly important role as a foundation for women's development towards adult life. Education plays an important role in enabling girls and women to secure other rights. Women keep facing difficulties due to not being able to tell many problems to men. If women are educated then they can solve all the problems of their homes. Women's education helps in national and international development. Women education helps in building a good society.

This saying is famous in Sanskrit - 'Nasti Vidyasam Chakshurnasti Matri Samoguru:'. It means that there is no eye like Vidya in this world and no teacher like a mother.' This is absolutely true. The first and foremost influence on the development of a child is that of the mother. It is the mother who teaches her child a lesson. This initial knowledge of the child becomes the permanent basis of life like an indelible line made on a stone. But today, so many anti-social elements have emerged in the whole of India, who have ended the relationship between mother and sisters and who have started thinking it more useful to live a life of luxury. This is the reason why mothers and sisters from towns to cities are insecure.

Due to insecurity, the life of women has become hell by getting trapped in many incidents like rape and gang rape. In fact it is said that the education of women is no less important than the education of any man. Women's education is hundred times more useful than men's in preparing a new outline of the society. That's why the government should make efforts for women's education. Only then incidents like atrocities can be controlled.

Role of new education policy 2020 in women education

In July 2020, a new education policy was announced by the central government. This policy of space scientist K. Based on the report of the committee headed by Kasturirangan. This education policy is the third education policy of independent India. Earlier, education policies were implemented in 1968 and 1986. Our education policy has been running since 1986. There was no change in our education policy since 34 years. It really needed a change.

New Education Policy 2020 assumes great importance in order to meet the requirements of knowledge-based economy in the changing global environment and to ensure the reach of Indian education system globally. In this, many important changes have been made at the school level which includes pre-school, primary, secondary and higher level. This education policy aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all by 2030 and promote lifelong learning opportunities. This is the first education policy of the 21st century which aims to meet the needs of our country. The policy lays special emphasis on the development of the creative potential inherent in each individual.

A civilized society is built by the educated citizens of that country and women are an important part of this link, although education is equally important for everyone, be it a woman or a man. Being a citizen of any country, getting education is the basic right of every woman, which is very important for the progress, progress and development of the country. If we discuss the present situation, then today women have gone far ahead in the field of education and have made their debut in all the fields. Today women have come forward in every field but this situation does not apply to women of all classes.

Still rural and backward areas, socio-economically and minority backward women need empowerment and the best means of empowerment is education. Education is even more important for women because she not only educates herself but also educates her entire family and children, whether at home or outside, she fulfils the responsibilities of both. Many efforts have been made from time to time for women's education, plans have been made and they have also been successful. Despite that, women who are considered to be half of our total population are still illiterate.

Let's talk about the New Education Policy 2020, what is so special about it, which promotes women's education. As far as I have understood this policy, the new education policy has paid attention to the problems and obstacles that stand in the way of girls' education. Becomes an obstacle. Special provisions have been made for girls and women at many levels. Education starts from the school level. Two things that are very important in this policy are the safety of girls in schools

and such provisions and schemes that give opportunities to girl students to keep them connected to school.

Provision in New Education Policy 2020 for girls at school level.

- Safe and practical access to girls' hostels will be provided.
- Where the school is at a long distance, rural areas, hilly and inaccessible areas, remote areas, free hostels will be constructed there and suitable arrangements will be made for the safety of the girl child.
- Kasturba Gandhi Vidyalaya which is already a scheme of Government of India will be further strengthened. Schools with quality education for girls belonging to socio-economically backward groups will be expanded up to 12th level so that the enrollment of girl students can increase.
- Half of the socio-economically deprived and underrepresented groups are women and girls. Quality education will be arranged especially for such women. Policies and plans will be made with special focus on these girl students.
- In terms of participation and security of girl students, such measures will be taken, so that they remain attached to schools, such as cycles will be provided to girl students at long distance places, and conditional cash transfers will be made to their parents and guardians in case of non-payment of fees etc. Will go so that they do not have to leave school due to poverty.
- Special care will be taken for positive environment, physical facilities especially cleanliness, toilets etc. in the schools. Where schools are co-educational, separate toilets etc. and other basic facilities and security will be taken care of.
- All teachers will be sensitive towards safety, health, environment at the workplace and an inclusive and sensitive culture should be created in the school.
- It is also clearly written in the New Education Policy 2020 that serious issues faced by all children enrolled in school, especially girls and adolescents, such as many types of discrimination, harassment and any kind of violation against their rights protection, priority with efficient mechanism. Will be given

- The talk of setting up a gender inclusive fund for girl students and transgender students is a new and revolutionary step. This gender inclusive fund will be made available to the states, which will help them to implement such policies, plans, programs etc., so that girls can get more safe and healthy environment in the school premises.
- The open and distance learning program presented by the National Institute of Open Schooling and open schools of the states will be expanded and strengthened, although this provision is for all students, but girls will get special benefits, who cannot go to school, they will also be able to get education.
- Vocational subjects, local languages, indoor outdoor games, painting, puppetry, craft, drama, poetry, story, music based activities etc. will be added in the new education policy, so that students especially girls will develop interest and stay connected with the school.

Provision for girl child education at the highest level

- Talking about higher education, gender balance will be promoted in the admission process of higher educational institutions.
- Faculty members, counselors and students shall be sensitized and inclusive of gender and gender identity by all aspects of higher educational institutions.
- The rules made for discrimination and harassment in the campus should be strictly implemented. All these arrangements will create a favorable environment for women students in higher education institutions.
- Multiple entry and exit system has been adopted in the graduation course, although these facilities are available to all the students, but it will be especially beneficial for women because they have to leave their studies midway due to marriage, family reasons and other reasons. Many options of certificates, diplomas and degrees will be available at different levels. Due to various reasons, this change in the direction of removing the participation of women in the field of higher education and research would be particularly beneficial.
- There is a provision to integrate the vocational education program into the main stream education which will go through higher, primary, secondary

classes to higher education so that every student learns at least one vocational skill. Especially women can become self-reliant through this.

- Higher educational institutions will also be allowed to conduct certificate courses of limited duration in various skills including soft skills and folk arts, so that women in higher education will be able to become self-reliant by acquiring skills according to their interest and convenience.
- In this way, there is a detailed provision in the new National Education Policy to increase the participation of girls and women in education and to make them self-reliant. The policy is conscious and sensitive towards gender balance in all levels of education, quality education of women belonging to socially and economically disadvantaged groups, security of women in educational campuses, more scholarships etc.

Let us hope that this New Education Policy 2020 comes true to our aspirations. Its implementation should be successful and in the right direction. More and more girls and women can be educated and these policies should prove to be a milestone in the direction of women's education.

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