

## ATTITUDE OF RURAL PARENTS TOWARDS GIRLS EDUCATION

MS. RAMAN DEEP\*

### ABSTRACT

*This study is aimed at finding the attitude of rural parents toward girl's education. The investigation finds that there is a negative attitude towards the education of girls even though girl's education is drawing greater attention of our educationists and the government.*

Education makes a man self-reliant and selfless. According to Aristotle, education means "Creation of sound mind in sound body". Education is a science as well as an art. It develops man's mind so that he may be able to enjoy the contemplation of supreme truth, goodness and beauty. There are different views about education from different philosophers, different educationists and different educational theories and practices.

Today, the need of education is largely felt, as there is realization and desire of education among people. In spite of this realization the education of girls is not given its due importance. Men continues to look down upon women. Women have been categorized as the weaker sex and as such they are dependent on men. Despite many social barriers limiting the freedom of women a social life, history has recorded many personalities who were outstanding in their life and society.

In today's society, the modern women will not be prepared to accept the view that marriage is woman's destiny. She would say that women have as much a right to be educated and become established in life as any man. A woman is in no way inferior to man and she has an equal right to be educated.

Women in the past did not deserve to be educated and were always were kept under control. Marriage was her only aim and devotion to her husband and his family was her sacred duty. There was no life for her outside the home. She did not enjoy any status in the society. At the turn of the century the earlier opposition to woman's education has fizzled out. However, a number of obstacles remained in the way of women's education. Most of these obstacles exist only in people's minds in the form of prejudice, traditional beliefs and cultural practices.

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\* Asst. Prof. Babe Ke College of Education, Daudhar, Moga, Punjab

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However, as a result of efforts of social reformers, the upper middle class women of society had some sort of schooling. The rural and urban orthodox families still consider that educating a girl is unnecessary and even dangerous, because education makes her thinking independent. They feel that an educated and status oriented woman would refuse to be submissive. This resulted in the wide illiteracy of women, child marriages and lack of higher education.

The literate parents feel that education is compulsory for children whether they are boys or girls. Though the ultimate aim behind this is getting some job, most of the parents feel that children, both boys and girls, will get knowledge and learn social behavior like adjusting and understanding others, if they attend school. Besides getting knowledge, the children learn good manners. The educated parents also feel that education of girls should be encouraged, as the percentage of results in public examinations is greater in case of woman. There is no field a woman cannot enter equally as man. Therefore education of girls is a must.

The illiterate parents differ in their attitudes. Some are interested in sending the girls schools. Other feel that education for girls is not needed because they have to learn house hold work and help mothers in their work. They feel that if girls are educated, they may become proud and therefore will not be at mercy of their husband and in-laws. Due to this, many problems may arise. Even if girls are educated, dowry is demanded. So, it is a waste to spend money on girl's education.

On the whole, the researchers feel that generally there is negative attitude towards education of girls. In fact, some parents are indifferent towards girls education. Unless attitude among parents changes, the literacy rate of girls cannot be improved.

Girl's education is drawing greater attention of educationists, government, parents and public. According to statistics of the census of India, the graphs reveal to us that the percentage of educated women is very low in our country than men. so there is something fundamentally wrong or there may be some strong causes for uneducated women in our country. These causes should be found and proper solutions should be worked out so that all women receive education. Hence this study based on the attitudes of rural poverty towards girls' education is undertaken.

## REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

A summary of writings of recognized authorities and previous research provides sufficient evidence that the researchers are familiar with what is already known and what is still unknown and it helps to eliminate duplication while fixing useful objectives, forming appropriate hypotheses, drawing meaningful conclusions and making commendable suggestions.

Lakhar , B.(1976) Studied the progress of women's education in Assam from 1874 to 1970 and found that separate school for girls were opened after the advent of the British and missionaries. The missionaries were the first to start the schools for girls in Assam. In the beginning few girls attended these schools. Teachers were given rewards for securing enrolment of girls. Fees were compulsory for girls in primary schools but in upper primary and middle schools fees were abolished. The missionaries took a lead in the training of teachers. Training classes were opened at Nowgang and Silchar for vernacular teachers.

Das, R. (1979) studied the women's education in Assam in the post independence period(1947 to 1971) and its impact on the social life of the state and found that there was increasing trend or positive rate of growth during the period of study. Compared to increase in the number of men's colleges the women's colleges did not increase proportionately. There was a wide gap between the educational opportunities and facilities available to men in comparison to women.

Singh, V.(1988) investigated the extent and causes of dropout among girls in rural schools of Chandigarh. He found that the dropout rate of rural girls was higher at classes I in primary stage compared to other classes; with this rate going down in the higher grades the girls were weak in English and Mathematics. Parents were unwilling to send their daughters because of domestic reasons.

Jain, G. (1990) found that both rural and urban adolescent girls aspire to study science as their first preference and prefer government service at the first choice followed by banking , civil services and clerical work . The aspiration level of both rural and urban girls was found to be average.

Nayer, U. (1991) found that the provision of schooling / educational facilities for girls is low and its utilization is still lower on account of school, economic, attitudinal barriers and sheer physical distance. The curriculum and its transaction remain Sex- Stereotyped and biased. Poverty and hunger were

listed as the chief causes of non-enrolment and non attendances of girls.

Duggal, J. (1992) undertook a micro-study of access of scheduled castes girls to elementary education in rural Haryana and found that physical facilities in sample schools were inadequate and utilization was low.

### Research Design

The problem chosen for this study was: 'An investigation into the attitude of the Rural Parents towards Girl's education' in relation to some variables. The variables considered in this study were sex and type of literacy. The hypotheses were formulated in null form.

A sample of one hundred rural parents was selected as sample of study using stratified random sampling technique. Out of total sample, 50 were literate parents and 50 were illiterate. Out of 50 literate, 25 were male and 25 were female; and out of 50 illiterate parents, 25 were male and 25 were female.

The researcher has constructed a tool and used it to find out the attitude of rural parents towards girls education

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following are the conclusions drawn from the present study and these are followed by necessary discussion and recommendations.

Attitude of rural parents towards girl's education

Table1 Attitude of rural parents towards Girls education

Sample size	Mean	Standard Deviation
100	126.2	12.9

The rural parents have highly favorable attitude toward girl's education.

It is a good sign to see highly favorable attitudes among rural parents toward education, which confirms that they realize the importance of girls education. Though the rural parents have highly favorable attitudes toward girl's education, the educational facilities that are available do not fulfill the ambitions and aspirations of the rural parents. Hence, it is the duty of the government to provide all the facilities and extend the necessary incentive to the concerned to promote girls education to desired level.

Table-2 Comparison of Attitude of Male and Female Rural Parents

Variables	Sample size	Mean	S.D.	Mean difference	C.R.
Male Parents	50	125.2	14.2	2.4	0.93*
Female Parents	50	127.6	11.3		

\*not significant at 0.01 level

The male and female rural parents are having a highly favorable attitude towards girls education without any significant difference between them. This result reflects the importance accorded by both men and women parents to girl's education. As the families are closely knitted, both men and women are highly conscious about the role of education in the life of their girl child. Hence, it is the responsibility of authorities concerned to make the girls reach every level of education with ease.

Table-3 Comparison of Attitude of Literate and Illiterate Rural Parents toward girl's education

Variables	Sample size	Mean	S.D.	Mean difference	C.R.
Male Parents	50	125.6	14.2	1.4	0.53*
Female Parents	50	127	11.3		

ns = non-significant at 0.01 level

The Literate and Illiterate Rural Parents have highly favorable attitude toward girl's education without any significant difference.

Irrespective of the literacy status, both literate and illiterate rural parents are conscious about values that the girls desire from education. Because of this attitude alone, all the rural folks are sending their girls to schools and colleges along with their boys without showing any discrimination between them.

To support the efforts of rural parents, the government and authorities concerned need to extend all support to promote girls education.

More and more facilities should be provided for girls' education so that the position can improve since the attitudes are found favorable.

Parents should be motivated in various ways to send their daughters to school.

Appropriate incentive to attract more and more girls to educational institutions must be given.

Curriculum should be organized in such a way as to suit the girls.

School exclusively for girls should be increased.

Teachers should treat the girl students with due dignity and respect.

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

The following recommendations are worthy of consideration in view of the conclusions

Though the attitudes of people towards girls' education are favorable as is proved by the present study, girls education is still lagging behind boys education for which there may be other strong reasons. Hence, a scientific probe into the other causes for backlog in girls' education should be taken up.

A study may be taken up on girls' education in the tribal areas.

A study may be taken up in urban areas also.

A comparative study at different stages of education may be taken up.

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