

Gender Question in Education

Literacy rate: 74.04% male – 82.14%,
female – 65.46%

Reasons for the gender gap

- Historical
- Scriptural/religious/sanctions
- Gender division of labour – roles
- Socialisation pattern
- Economic reasons

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Reasons specific to the education system

- Discrimination by teachers – agency
- Subject discrimination – sex role stereotypes
- Contents of the study material – gender biased
- Exploitation
- Sanitation infrastructure

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Demand Constraints – factors operating at the HH and community level (norms, ideologies and stereotypes)

Supply Constraints – quality of state-provided services, location, safety

All these reasons perpetuate and sustain gender discrimination in education – varies among different castes, class and ethnic communities

What is the value of women's education?

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Interventions

- Colonial
- After independence
- Early policy initiatives were segregative in their approach – women and men should perform according to their ascribed roles and thus should obtain certain type of education
- 1970s – Committee on the Status of Women (CSWI) – “Towards Equality” – gender biases in the education system helps maintain gender inequality

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- Mid 1980s – women were viewed as a critical human resource, hence need to educate them – lot of transformation in content, standards and relevance
- 1986 – National Policy on Education – to ensure gender equality
 - Quality
 - Training of teachers
 - Special support
 - Programme of action – elementary and adult education, distance education

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Pro-active Government Commitments

- Incentives – scholarships/Stipends till high school
- Free education
- Increasing the number of female school teachers
- Removing gender bias and sex role stereotyping from school curricula
- Non-formal education programmes for school drop outs
- Promoting the value of education of the girl child

Relevant Issues

- Private vs Public systems
- Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (2000)
- Right to Education Act (2009)
- Emphasis on ‘Higher Education’ – number and quality
- Special incentives for girls in both primary and higher education
- Public-Private-Partnership – its relevance today