

ROLE OF WOMEN EDUCATION IN EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON- RURAL AREAS OF GUJARAT

By Siddharth Chechani³⁶⁸ & Aishwarya Pande³⁶⁹

Education is the true alchemy that can bring India its next golden age. Our motto is unambiguous: All for knowledge, and knowledge for all.

-The President of India: Shri Pranab Mukherjee

INTRODUCTION:

From uniting the family to transforming the society, hopping all day long around the office doing jobs she's burdened with, to coming back home tired yet energetic enough to take care of her family and children and also follow the different traditions this society wants her to do, that's the definition of an average working Indian woman. They say men are the pillars of the society but women are those stones that make that pillar stronger because as they say, "behind every successful man, there is a woman." But as we can see even with the changing world and modernisation women in Indian society is still lagging behind. When we talk about the role of women in the present world, no doubt that she is having a position of respect but the primordial misogyny that still haunts her has become the reason for which she is still thought to be a burdensome appendage. She is still subordinated to men. The time has come for empowering women for enhancing the common interest of nation building and for that education is the key factor. When we think about education and women in India, we find that women are not exposed to education rather higher education, when we compare them with their better halves.

Literacy is an important tool for empowerment³⁷⁰. Today when India is on the verge of empowering her daughters in every field, it is necessary that we concentrate more on providing quality education to women. To accomplish this, good government with good governance is required. In India, there are many laws made for women security and development but due to the red tapism, lack of support both social and economic which leads to lack of awareness of such

³⁶⁸ 2nd Year Student, Institute of Law, Nirma University

³⁶⁹ 2nd Year Student, Institute of Law, Nirma University

³⁷⁰Visaria, Leela.,(2004). Literacy and Educational Scenario in Gujarat.

laws, women remain in the dark which is why their education and activeness has become a necessity. When women are able to know and comprehend their rights, it will certainly decrease the crimes and atrocities against them which will lead to the smooth functioning of the laws in public resulting in good governance.

Education is one of the most powerful instruments for reducing poverty and inequality and lays a foundation for sustained economic growth³⁷¹. Shifting focus towards the Gujarat model of development and the quality of education that it provides to women, we may come to a surprising finding, that the Right to Education Act, 2009, has made a very impressive impact on the country's education system, no doubt, but initially Gujarat was one of the states which failed to properly implement it and directly turns out to be a catastrophe to the Gujarat model of governance. Through this research the researchers will try to analyse educational scenario in Gujarat specially emphasizing on women education and its impact on good governance. During this entire research, the researchers will analyse the role of good governance, its implementation in providing education to girls in Gujarat and its benefits.

ROLE OF QUALITY EDUCATION IN GOOD GOVERNANCE:

“Quality education and good governance are concepts needed to bring about healthy development of a nation.”³⁷² According to the World Bank, good governance is, “the manner in which public officials and institutions acquire and exercise the authority to shape public policy and provide public goods and services.”³⁷³ The basic features of good governance in higher education should be collective participations, accountability, transparency, and integrity and Gujarat shows a little contrast to these when we talk about providing education to girls. When we talk about quality education, it is necessary to know about on what parameters quality education is defined? It is also necessary to set the level of quality education which is necessary for the upliftment of women. The contention that quality education could usher in good governance needs to be seriously looked

³⁷¹Gupta, Anju. (2013). Education Status Report-Gujarat Primary, Middle and Secondary Education. Prepared for Centre for Education Innovations. Retrieved from <http://www.educationinnovations.org/sites/default/files/Status%20of%20Elementary%20Education%20in%20Gujarat.pdf>

³⁷²Amanchukwu, Rose, N., (2011). The Challenges of Quality Education and Good Governance in Developing Economy. *African Journal of Education and Technology*, Volume 1 Number 3, pp.103-110. Retrieved from <http://www.sachajournals.com/user/image/amanchukwu002.pdf>

³⁷³ Kaufmann, Daniel., (2010). The World Wide Governance Indicator: Methodology and Analytical Issues. *Daily Policy Research Working Paper*. Retrieved from <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/pdf/WGI.pdf>

into, because a knowledgeable, skilled, well-articulated woman has more to offer to the nation than half baked individuals who do not have much to offer to the nation other than to satisfy their selfish interests³⁷⁴.

The quality education should not only develop a person by providing a better life but should also encourage him/her to be more creative and sensitive towards the social problems prevailing in society which will directly help us in uplifting the status of women in our society. Generally, the quality of education is measured upon different aspects but – access to school, good infrastructure, quality teachers, and outcome are major determinants to be worked upon. Gujarat has made many reforms in providing quality education in urban areas but the education level of girls in rural areas is in alarming condition and the government needs to take immediate actions in introducing proper policies,, so that women in rural areas can access quality education. When we efficiently implement the policies made by the government in the field of providing proper education to the other halves of our society i.e. women, it will directly help our nation to grow at high rate by utilising these skilled women in making society more balanced and established.

When quality education comes in place, the better access to schooling is a primary need to be taken care of. The quality education has major role in contributing to good governance because there is direct relationship between quality education and good governance. Better the standard of a state, better will be its development and this will only happen when we start taking care of our women, who are the major contributors in our nation's building and without them a nation cannot grow. Good governance demands that the facilities which are provided are utilised properly, special attention should be given to these areas (education sector) so that women of rural Gujarat will get the proper access to education and will be able to break the barriers of conservatism in our society and will ultimately help in growth of the nation³⁷⁵. Whenever we mention Gujarat's overall development, the only bleak remark where Gujarat is lacking is the issue of social development. Gujarat has to travel a way ahead in transforming the economic development to social development. Social development is one of those factors which are essential for the overall development of society. Here, the role of providing quality education to women is very important

³⁷⁴Amanchukwu, Rose,N., (2011). The Challenges of Quality Education and Good Governance in Developing Economy.*African Journal of Education and Technology*, Volume 1 Number 3, pp.103-110. Retrieved from <http://www.sachajournals.com/user/image/amanchukwu002.pdf>

³⁷⁵The, Nation,. (2011, Friday 11). Pp.57.

with regards to the issue of social development in boosting Gujarat's overall development. When there will be schools equipped with better teachers, better equipments and infrastructure the products of that school will definitely help us to grow. Government needs to take care that they need to equip these schools with the resources they want, which will certainly help our women to grow. This is how quality education and good governance will together help in developing our rural women.

STATUS OF EDUCATION AND WOMEN IN GUJARAT:

Gujarat – the land of the legends, which is known to be the fastest growing state of the country and is famous for the goodwill, it has earned because of its proper and effective governance, which everyone understands as the **Gujarat Model of Governance**.

Gujarat, one of the fastest developing states in India, has seen a lot many changes in the last few years. The state has performed impressively well on the economic front giving the largest share in the national GDP. The state has its immense contribution to the economic growth of the country, no doubt, but when it comes to the education, Gujarat is lagging behind.

In the latest rankings, for 2012-13, Gujarat's slide is most evident at the primary (classes 1-5) level, where the state ranked 28th compared with 12th in the previous year. At the upper primary (classes 6-8) level, the state fell six spots, from 8th to 14th.³⁷⁶The all India female literacy rate was 63.46% in 2011; an approx. 9.79% increase is seen from the previous census i.e. of 2001 when the literacy rate was recorded to be 53.67%. Gujarat has contributed 70.73% to this national index in 2011. Kerala topped the female literacy index with a literacy rate for girls of 91.98% in 2011. When we compare female literacy level in Gujarat, we find an average increase of 12.93% from the previous census where the rate was recorded to be 57.80%. When we compare female literacy rates in Gujarat, Surat tops the literacy index with the female literacy rate of 81.02% in 2011, whereas according to the 2001 census the literacy rate in Surat was 69.87%. The lowest female literacy rate was seen in Dohad district of Gujarat which came out to be 49.02% in 2011. Though there is a substantial increase in the literacy rate of women in Dohad as it was 31.28% in 2001³⁷⁷, yet

³⁷⁶Goswami, Umi, (2014, January 15). The Economic Times. Retrieved from http://www.articles.economicstimes.indiatimes.com/2014-01-15/news/46224545_1_pupil-teacher-ratio-education-development-index-pupilteacher-ratio

³⁷⁷Parmar, Tejal., Report on Socio-Economic and Demographic Status of Women in Gujarat. (2012, July).Gujarat Social Infrastructure Development Board Society (GSIDBS).Directorate of Human Development.General

considerable policies need to be implemented to increase the literacy level of females in rural region of Gujarat. There are certain barriers which are hampering women education, traditionalism and security is one of the main causes. Government has made major policies, reforms for providing better access to schooling to girls but the major reform needed in policies ensuring better opportunities to girls at higher level of education. It is very necessary to provide quality education to girls because ultimately it will help the state to run the government more smoothly. When we reach the scent percent literacy level of female population, by effective measures, then the outcome will ultimately help us in good governance.

Taking into consideration the sex ratio in India we find that according to 2001 census there were 933 females per 1000 males. However in 2011 the situation changed when it was found that there were 940 females per 1000 males. But Gujarat shows a vast contrast to this scenario. According to the 2001 census the sex ratio in Gujarat was 919 females per 1000 males however what is surprising here is that in 2011 the sex ratio in Gujarat was 918 females per 1000 males, what we find here is that there is a decrease in the number of females in year 2011 as compared to 2001³⁷⁸. Going deeper into the statistics of Gujarat, we also see that in rural Gujarat only a slight change in the sex ratio was seen, it was 945 in 2001 while it became 947 females per 1000 males in 2011.

This is a matter of introspection for the Gujarat government to re-examine their policies. Gujarat government claims that they are one of the fastest growing state in India and their model of governance is best as compared to the rest of India but when a state is not able to safeguard the rights of its female population it always becomes the topic of criticism no matter what and how much progress the state has made in other fields. Women education is one of the important aspects in the growth of the society and Gujarat needs to work very hard in order to universalize literacy among women.

In India, there is high inequality in access to secondary and higher education. Generally, the rich people have an easy access to education, since they are able to pay the hefty fees demanded by the private schools. In the present scenario, where corruption finds deep roots in our country, even the government and government aided institutions ask for donations which the common middle class

Administration Department (Planning), Government of Gujarat, Gandhinagar. Retrieved from http://www.gujhd.gujarat.gov.in/Portal/News/15_1_status_of_women_july.pdf

³⁷⁸*ibid*

families are unable to pay. Apart from this, high gender inequality is also hovering the educational sector in Gujarat. As per the DISE report of 2011-12, Gujarat has 40943 schools, 2.73 lakh teachers for 8.37 million children. The PTR (Pupil Teacher Ratio) is 31, slightly more than the desired level of 30.5, indicating a need to recruit more teachers. The NER (Net Enrolment Ratio) for lower primary is 85.7 (GER is 110.2), while at upper primary is 49 (GER is 69.2), indicating that the state has big challenges in achieving universalization of primary education.³⁷⁹

Apart from this, in the rural areas the typically traditional and backward mentality of the people here, does not allow the girls to go to school. Because according to them, women are not supposed to study, they are born only to work for their husbands and families. There are families with low economic conditions, so they always prefer sending their son to the school instead of their daughter even if she is elder to him because, according to their low and narrow mindedness, they feel that their son is the one and only who can resolve their condition while girl will only worsen it. This lack of access to education by common man and gender biasness, because of the backwardness of the society, has led to many social problems which are the major cause for low social development in Gujarat. One of the many reasons why parents do not send their daughters to school is security issues. Due to the increase in crimes against women, parents are more stressed and worried while sending their child to school. The evil of caste system also plays a role here. The upper caste people in the village do not allow their children to study with the lower castes. There is a huge difference in the status of women in urban areas as compared to that in rural areas. Their education ratio is at par with respect to men. Nowadays women belonging to urban areas are heading the top institutions and businesses. But at the rural level women are still much behind men in all aspects and this can only be ratified when we are able to give proper and quality education to women in the first place.

Despite so many efforts been undertaken to encourage overall empowerment of women there are still lot many issues which the women in the rural areas of Gujarat face in their day to day lives, which are unknown to us. Women are subject to domestic violence, murders, mental and physical harassment etc. not only by their husbands but also by the other family members and society. Due to all such pressures and problems caused by traditionalism and conservativeness, women do not find support in their families. This is the major reason as to why they are not getting education

³⁷⁹Services, Management, Catalyst., (2013, October). Status of Girl Child in Secondary Education in Gujarat Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

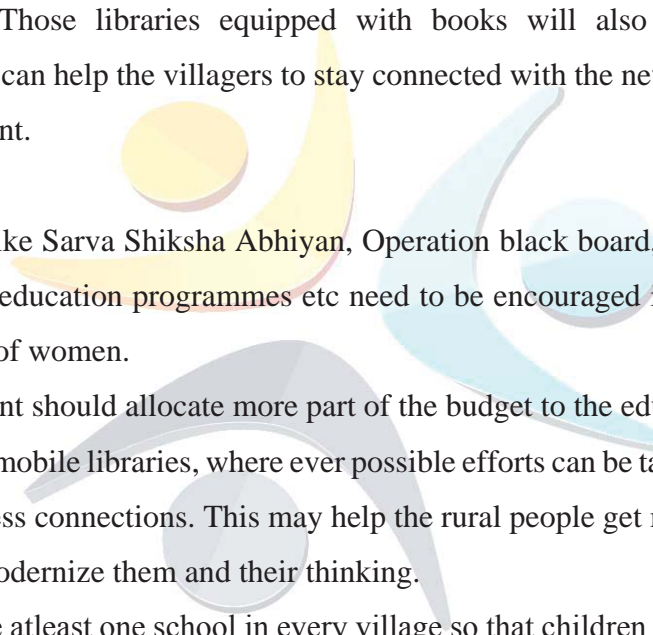
because they are not allowed to. The less number of teachers in school is also one of the main concerns in providing education to girls. Providing better incentives to teachers and student welfare schemes would certainly attract them to join schools. But the village authorities and school authorities do not allow a low caste teacher to even give an interview for the job. Also there is a need of proper sanitation in the schools. Toilets in the schools are supposed to be clean and well maintained. The school infrastructure has to be planned in such a way that they have proper toilets and are cleaned on daily basis so as to prevent any kind of spreading of disease. Along with this it is important that toilets are constructed in safe manner so that girls can have security and no one can invade their private space which would in turn help reducing crimes against girls in schools.

MEASUREMENTS:

The government plays an important role in educating women and increasing their status in the society. When the society's conservative mindset will change, we will solve half of our problems in educating women and hence there is an urgent need to change the thinking of the masses and here the role of government comes into picture. The government needs to sensitize the society about the existing problems. Talking about Gujarat model of governance and its effectiveness in solving such problems, Gujarat government needs to work a lot in developing infrastructure, providing sanitation, security to girls, and easy transportation to schools. To achieve this it is important that the government allocates more funds to educational sector. It has been seen that, as compared to other states, Gujarat government spends only 13.4% of the total budget on education. According to the article 45 of the law of the land that is the Constitution of India, "Free and compulsory education of all children upto the age of 14 years within 10 years of promulgation of Indian Constitution"³⁸⁰, this clearly means that it the duty of the government to provide free and compulsory education to the children upto 14 years and also to ensure that they are getting this benefit. But somewhere the government has failed to accomplish this.

The researchers come out with certain measure which can be undertaken by the Gujarat government in order to ensure and improve the condition of women education:

³⁸⁰ Sankaranarayanan, Gopal., (2009). The Constitution of India. Lucknow: Eastern Book Company, 76.

- 
- There is an urgent need to build proper infrastructure for girls so that they could get proper access to education. It is one of those prominent factors which will certainly increase the enrolment ratio in schools.
 - The government must set up mobile libraries in each village so that people in that village, especially women who are not otherwise allowed to go out and study, can take benefit of these libraries. Also, for the families who cannot afford to send their children to schools on account of various reasons cited above, this can play a very prominent role in educating their children. Those libraries equipped with books will also carry magazines and newspapers that can help the villagers to stay connected with the new schemes and policies of the government.
 - More schemes like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Operation black board, Mahila samakhya and district primary education programmes etc need to be encouraged in order to increase the enrolment ratio of women.
 - State government should allocate more part of the budget to the educational sector.
 - Along with the mobile libraries, where ever possible efforts can be taken to put up computer labs with wireless connections. This may help the rural people get more knowledge and in a way it may modernize them and their thinking.
 - There should be atleast one school in every village so that children don't have to travel too much.
 - In order to ensure proper functioning of institutions like schools etc, proper monitoring on the part of government needs to be there.

So, these are just few of the measurements that Gujarat government can undertake to achieve the objectives of efficient governance taking women hand in hand. And it must be ensured that the measurement doesn't end up becoming merely policies, implementation is what can bring change.

CONCLUSION:

Providing quality education to rural women is one measure which will help us to bring out change because it is one of those problems which will certainly help us to run the effective governance.

But there is no particular definition of what is the correct model of good governance but effective governance can only be good when it has efficient human development programmes and policies. So we have come to know that in order to build up a proper functioning society we have to look into the concerns of women education and we have to ensure that women do get what they have as a right. We now know that in our Indian society a major role is played by rural women and thus a major focus needs to be on them. A well educated woman has an important role in the governance of a country and for the effective governance major reforms are to be taken for empowering the women.

In the state of Gujarat we still haven't achieved this. Our rural women are still the untouched sections who are not getting the benefits of education. An educated lady is the only one who can represent their needs and issues of her sisters. She can participate in the governance process and make the deaf government hear the demands. There is a direct link between the good governance and providing education to women because when the women of our society will be educated then they would be able to know about their rights and duties which will ultimately help the government to run smoothly. With proper vision, mission, goals and objectives government with the help of organisations and society we will be able to provide proper education to our better halves. As with the entire organisation, communication is very crucial. Communication need to be there between different agencies and organisations so that we can come up with proper reforms and establish a 100% literate society which will be the landmark of good governance.



THE LAW BRIGADE