

## A Literature Review on Gender Disparities in School Education System



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*The research paper attempts to examine the factors or constructs which adversely affects the girl's child enrollment in primary and secondary education. The researchers collected various secondary data, research papers and reports for the extensive review of the literatures on the disparities among the girls education in West Bengal. According to the report of MHRD, GoI report says that out of every 10 girls enrolled in Primary section only 7 girls complete their Secondary education and 5 girls complete their Senior Secondary education. High drop-out rate among girls is the root cause for gender disparities and government has implemented various schemes like SSA, NPEGL, KGBV, Kishori Shakti Yojana etc. to resolve these issues but still problems is existing in school education. The research paper is divided in to four phases. The first section mentioned about the various inputs of report, policies and research paper in girl's education system. The second phase covered different variables or factors which were found during literature regarding gender disparities in school education. The third section covered the methodology used for secondary data analysis the and last section mentioned the concluding remarks of the paper.*

**Keywords:** Gender, Disparities, Girls, School, Education, Community Participation

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### Introduction

National Education Policy (NEP), Right to Education (RTE) Act and Sarva Siksha Aviyani (SSA) always envisaged various collective measures to ensure greater enrollment to a large extent but retention has always been a major issue caused gender gaps. As per UNDP Human Development report (1990-2017) India is among the top ten countries in differences in average years of schooling for male (8.2 yrs) and female (4.8 yrs). As per census 2011 there is a gender gap of 16.30% in literacy rate. Deep rooted cultural beliefs, prejudice and male domination are the reasons for gender discrimination in our society. The other reasons are attitude towards spending for girl child education, accessibility, poverty, sanitation and basic safety. Equal participation of girls in school education results in better socio-economic development by ensuring better job opportunities for women, better self-care and active participation in political and economic activities. Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) refers

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to universal access, enrollment, retention, and quality education up to the age of 14 and has been accepted as a national goal since 1950. As per MHRD (2000), Universalization of Elementary Education means “100percent enrolment and retention of children with schooling facilities in all habitations”. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) -5 also talks about gender equality and gender parity in primary education. As per UNDP two thirds of developing countries have achieved gender parity in primary education.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), an umbrella scheme launched by MHRD to support Universalization of Elementary Education by giving special focus on girls’ education to minimize gender gap in school education. MHRD also launched various other programs to promote girls’ education such as National Programme of Education for Girls at the Elementary Level (NPEGEL), Kasturba Gandhi Bailka Vidyalaya (KGBV), and Mahila Samakhya. The Ministry of Women and Child Development also launched schemes like Balika Samriddhi Yojana and Kishori Shakti Yojana. Despite all these institutional supports, policy thrust and availability of financial resources out of 100 students on an average only 70 finish school in India. According to the Children in India Report, Ministry of Statistics and Programme drop outs rates in class IX and XI for girls are respectively 30% and 57%. The problem lies with implementation of all these schemes at ground level. Eleventh Five years Plan (2007–2012) talks about decentralization of scheme implementation and involvement of community at a large scale as core members for achieving overall objectives.

### **Literature Review**

According to the (Dutta and Sen, 2020), that those girls who completed secondary or higher secondary schooling were less exposed to child marriage. Meanwhile they also found that few districts in the west Bengal, had great awareness about the negative impact of early child marriage but there were 26.17% girls dropped out between the age group of 14-18 years. All the girls who dropped out were got married of the same age group. Schultz, T.P (2002), discuss the importance of education for girls and its implication on self, child health care, job related skill development and overall well beings. The researcher also tried to find out the relationship between early marriage and dropout girls at secondary and higher secondary education. Sen and Modak (2017) found interesting facts that families with low income or poor financial condition are not the reasons for the early child marriage in West Bengal.

Nayan (2015) depicted in his study that, poverty is one of the main determinants of girl’s early marriage because poor families think of girls as an economic burden for families. He also said that, lack of education; enlightenment and awareness among the people promote child marriages in our society. According to the (ICRW, 2012) study said that the, girls with secondary and higher secondary education achievement will have a tendency to postpone their marriages in sort of to look up their prospect of better economic livelihood and independence. Indian society is a patriarchal society; the husband educational qualification is likely to matter in so far as that of the wife (Srinivasan et al., 2015)

A study conducted in Howrah district on schedule tribe student’s drop-outs and found that the average 40.79% girls students leaving schools at Secondary level. According to the teacher’s of the schools perpetual poverty is the main reason for girl’s high dropout rate and other major factors came out from the parent’s end that perception of girls about schools, low performance of students, social discrimination inside classrooms and lack of educational environment inside home (Biswas and Krishnan, 2017).

Meanwhile Ramanaik and Bhattacharjee (2018), discussed about the social and gender related norms which are pre-dominantly influencing a parent decision of an adolescent girl out of fear for social rejection and parent generally prefers boys over girls to invest on education and expectation for more involvement in household activities resulting unfavorable condition at home causing lower retention of girls at Secondary level. The most common problems are menstruation, rituals and restriction to stay for a longer period is also one of the reasons for low retention of girls at Secondary level.

As we know that extra household workload and noncompliance with homework followed by fear from teachers also produced dropout among girls. The researchers also highlighted in their study that the, there is no relation

for adolescent girls to continue their studies with their parent's qualification or financial condition and the important factor came out that aspiration of father and mother is the most crucial factor. According to the (Hunt, 2008) explained how collectively various factors resulting in dropout by depicting journey map of girl child and identify the connect points like home, parent, community, school and the time in between home and school.

The noble laureate (Banerjee and Duflo, 2013) said that if there is an arrangement of post schooling sustainable income for girls and visible to the parent, this economic value will help the parent to invest for girl's education. This study also talked that those girls students weak in study than the family surrendered and never tried hard, teachers were never proactive to teach a student who were lagging in studies. Mollah (2018), described overall status of Secondary education of all the district of WB on Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), Net Enrolment Ratio (NER), Gender Parity Index (GPI), Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR), Student Classroom Ratio (SCR). In the same way, he emphasized the need and importance of universalization of Secondary education to improve overall health of the secondary education in WB.

Amina and Alhassan (2015) said that emphasized on school s and teachers' role as a guide and counselor for the girl students and parents to make them understand the value of education. They also highlighted that the, lacking proactive measures from the school, poor households' condition, and early marriage and pregnancy cumulatively forced those girls to quit schools at Secondary level. Benefits of women education is utmost important to build a healthy nation and basic hygiene factor like separate toilet for girls also causing resulting high dropout among adolescent girls. Sometimes access to school with Secondary and Higher Secondary facilities also impacted the high dropout rate among girls (Rani, 2013). According to the (Esther, 2016), major factors for dropout are influence of teachers and school, peer group, wife inheritance and economic factor of the family.

According to the Ramandeep Kaur (2013) the importance of female education has a multifold impact on society as well as nation. Women as a community should participate as an active stakeholder for social, political and economic development and part of any decision making at individual level, household level and society level. Gene Sperling and Rebecca Winthrop mentioned in their book "quality education to girls to increased economic and agricultural growth". As per UNESCO "for each additional year of education that a girl completes, the chances of getting pregnant falls by 10 percent and in the age group of 15-19 years complicated pregnancy is the 2<sup>nd</sup> major reason for girls' death. Early marriage has a direct relation with infant mortality rate. A woman being a mother takes care of their children and knowingly or unknowingly takes decision and an educated mother always can take care of herself, family and children in a better way and that leads to a healthy society.

As per UNICEF among many deep rooted caused cultural beliefs and poverty are the two main reasons for gender discrimination in our society. Importance of girls' education still a far distant reality for a parent who chooses boys over girls based on affordability. Sanitation and separate toilet facilities for girls are important factors for continuing school education. Based on AC Nielson and NGO Pan India study report "23% of girls in India leave school once they hit puberty, while the girls who continue their education miss as many as 50 school days each year as a result of menstruation". Another interesting fact is RTE Act covers till age 14 students and till that age various statistics reflect girl child enrollment is relatively a minor concern for gender disparity. Annual Survey of Education Report (Aser) 2017 mentioned 32% girls are not enrolled post class VIII and in rural India for 100 Primary and Upper Primary (Std I-VII) only 14 schools are available for Secondary (Std IX-X) and only 6 schools are available for Sr. Secondary (Std. XI -XII).

Among various Gov. Initiatives (Annual report 2016-17 MHRD) RTE-SSA has clear thrust of girl education by ensuring accessibility of Primary, Secondary and Higher Secondary school within habitation and providing uniform textbooks free of cost. Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) is a Residential Upper Primary (10+) girls' school for SC/ST/OBC/BPL/Minority communities. KGBV aims at reaching out to those backwards classes/ areas when accessibility and security is a challenge for Elementary education in India. Till date around 3600 KGBVs Are functional and 3.67 lakhs enrolled (as on March 2017). National Curriculum Framework

(NCF), 2005 consciously decided to increase visual representation of girls and women in the textbooks to remove gender biasness. Separate girls' toilet under SSA for favorable school infrastructure.

The major factors were seasonal labor for extra earning, unfavorable home conditions, taking care of their siblings, and pressure of household works (Mishra, 2015). In his study (Shadreck, 2013) found a very important factor which directly influence the dropout of girls students from the school were distance from home to school and poor infrastructure in rural Secondary schools at last teachers were failed to connect with students.

**Research Methods**

The prime objective of the paper is to explore the existing factors which adversely influence the gender disparities in the school education in India. The researcher collected different sources of information such as research paper, scheme documents and reports to investigate the construct which adversely affects the gender disparities in school. Secondary data were collected for the analysis and interpretation for paper.

**Analysis and Interpretation**

**Gender Disparity and Importance of Female Education**

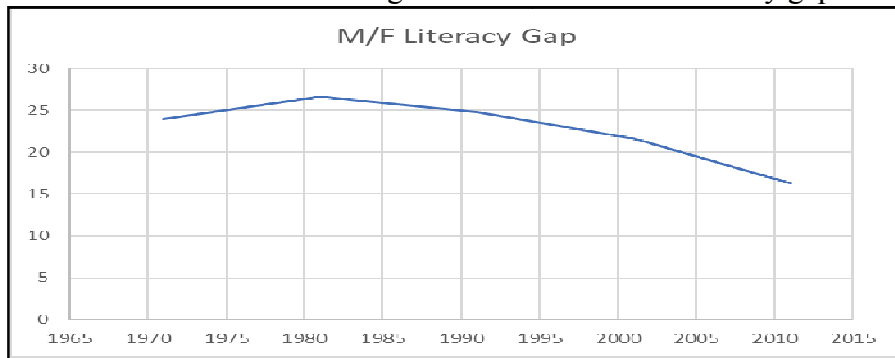
If we go through the journey of female literacy movement for last 40 years, we can find out despite incremental progress current (Census Report 2011) gender gap is still 16.30 percent.

Table -1: Female literacy trend in last 40 years

Year	% literate	Male	Female	M/F Literacy Gap
1971	34.45	45.96	21.98	23.98
1981	43.57	56.37	29.75	26.62
1991	52.21	64.13	39.29	24.84
2001	65.38	75.85	54.16	21.69
2011	73	80.90	64.60	16.30

**Interpretation:** The above table depicted that, from 1971 to 2011 the male and female literacy gap has remained almost constant or has reduced at 7.68 % only. We can say that over 40 years the change is not significant changes into the gender disparities in our school education.

Figure -1: Male/Female Literacy gap trend in last 40 years



**Interpretation:** In the above figures shown that, the gender disparities decrease from the 1970 to 2011 but we could not fulfill the gap.

Table-2: Level wise enrollment of students from primary to Senior Secondary

Level	All Categories		Scheduled Cast		Scheduled Tribe	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Primary (I-V)	67609	62892	13427	12585	7309	6824
Upper Primary (VI-VIII)	34501	32664	6731	6399	3371	3181
Secondary (IX-X)	20121	18180	3747	3403	1678	1574

Sr. Secondary (XI-XII)	12440	11061	2170	1964	802	715
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Source: MHRD Report: Educational Statistics at a Glance, 2018), Figures are in thousand

**Interpretation:** The above table exhibited that, the enrollment rate of the students decreasing from the primary education to the senior secondary education in our school but the rate of decreasing the female enrollment is more than male students.

### Conclusion

As we know the importance of education for growth and development of country. Since post-independence a conscious effort has been made by central government through various Acts and policies with different schemes and initiatives to bring gender equality in education. A consistent growth in female literacy is also visible but still current gender gap is almost 16% according to the census report 2011. Parents, teachers and students were three phases which directly influence the female enrollment in school education. The economical condition of the parents such as no crop land, daily wages earners, fear to feed, no place to live, unable to pay additional expenses during education and sociological factors like illiteracy, fear to marriage, safety, partiality between boy and girls education, no culture and tradition of girls education, lack of awareness about the importance of education in their societies etc., which created hurdles in front of the girls education. The teachers playing a significant role in the student's life but normally teachers were failed to connect the dots with students. They never encouraged, motivate and made a healthy conversion with students because they were doing their work for the sake of duty only but not responsibility towards students and societies. They also never make a healthy conversion with the parents of the students regarding the continuity of the student's education. The girls were unable to share their problems with their parents and teachers due to shy nature which adversely affect the education. They were also facing problems in schools like lack of boundary in school, no separate toilets, safety, school distance from home, pressure of household works, poor economical condition and peer pressure negatively affects the continuity of education. The culture and tradition of our society also unfavorably influence the girl's child education in school. We need combined efforts to reduce the gender disparities in coming future.

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