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Impact of Women Education on Population and Health

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Abstract:

Economic growth is clearly salter in such a society, where education of a girl child is neglected. A society that does not have preference for investing in girls, pays a price for it, in terms of high population growth rate, high child, Maternal & crude death rates and low expectancy of life as well. These factors affect the growth of a country. Women have a direct impact on economic growth by affecting the quality of human capital. Understanding the importance of female education, many countries having even low income has been invested a growing proportion of the national income on education of women in recent past. The main cause of this has been the exceptionally rapid growth of population and wide spread of belief that “human – capital” is one of the most effective means of stimulating economic growth. The main aim of this paper is to examine the effect of women education on population growth and health issues. Two states Kerala with maximum female literacy and Rajasthan which have minimum female literacy have been taken for this study.

Secondary data have been taken for comparative analysis. These data have been collected from various government departments & reports. Data clearly shows that due to the high female literacy rate in Kerala, the population growth in Kerala is low in comparison to Rajasthan. The general pattern shows the positive effect of women education on population and health. It will confirm that in every society better educated women have lower fertility, lower infant mortality rate and higher expectancy of life, compared to less educated women. If a society effort to educate women than the impact on the general level of education, health and population growth can be substantial.

Keywords: *Women, education, population, development, health.*

“Societies that discriminates on the basis of gender pay a significant price ...in terms of higher poverty, lower quality of life, slower economic growth and weaker governance...educating girls is strategic for achieving development.

Elizabeth King

1. Introduction

Jawaharlal Nehru rightly said that “In order to awaken the people, it is the women who have to be awoken. Once she is on the move, the household moves, the country moves and thus... We build the India of tomorrow”. Education has been seen as a magic wand for curing the ills of society. Education is a force capable of generating new opportunities for women. Education has bought some changes in the attitudes and beliefs of women in terms of equality of status, educational and marital aspirations etc. According to Raka Saran, “the direct reflection of education can be seen on their attitudes, ideas and way of life”.

Education is the most important instrument for human resource development. Education of women therefore occupies top priority amongst various measures taken to improve the status of women in India. Women’s education has assumed special significance in the context of the country’s development plan. This is because women constitute nearly half the nation’s population.

According to census of India 2011, India’s population is 121.08 crore in which 51.51% are male and 48.49% are female. Women represent a valuable human resource and play an important role in the development of the community and the national economy. Education enables women to acquire basic skills and abilities and foster a value system which is conducive to raising their status in society. Recognizing this fact, great – emphasis has been laid on women’s education. In recent years the focus of planning has shifted from equipping women from their traditional roles of house wives and mothers to recognizing their worth as producers, making a major contribution to family and national economy.

In recent past a growing proportion of the national income of many low income, industrializing countries have been invested on education. The main reasons of this has been the exceptionally rapid growth of population and the wide-spread belief that “Human investment” is one of the most effective means of stimulating economic growth. However, in this process the education of women lagged considerably behind that of man.

The same way lower education deprives them to take part in labour force. In essence it is vicious circle.

Year	Literacy %		Difference %
	Male	Female	
2001	63.24	45.15	18.09
2011	82.04	65.64	16.5

Table 1: Status of women education in India

Source: Census of India 2001, 2011

According to census 2011 total literacy rate in India is 74.04% in which male literacy rate is 82.14% and female literacy is 65.64%. The gap between Male and Female literacy is 16.5%. In spite this gap there are disturbing regional variation in the level of female literacy in the country. The literacy rate for women varies from 91.98% in Kerala as per 2011 census to 52.66% for Rajasthan. The gap between female & male literacy rates in Kerala is 4.04% and in Rajasthan is 27.85%.

Year	Kerala		Rajasthan	
	M	F	M	F
2001	94.24	87.72	75.70	43.85
2011	96.02	91.98	80.51	52.66

Table 2: Comparative study of literacy in Kerala & Rajasthan.

1.1. Objectives

The objectives of the present study are as under.

1. To know the status of women education and gap between Male & Female literacy in India.
2. To compare women education in Kerala & Rajasthan.
3. To study the impact of women education on demographic feature and health.
4. To access the existing problems in the way of education women in Rajasthan.
5. To suggest the measures for enhancing women education in Rajasthan.

1.2. Methodology

For this research secondary data has been used. Which was collected from various departments of government of India, Indian census reports, Rajasthan development Report & Kerala development report, besides, some relevant journals, magazines, books have been extensively consulted. The calculated data has been tabulated according to the need of study.

1.3. Impact of Women Education on Population

For the development of a state as well as country some demographic goals have been fixed. Because main constrain in developing or backward states and countries is population therefore if population is controlled than all targets can be achieved and nation can move on progress. The priorities are following.

1. Reduction in TFR & CBR.
2. Reduction in IMR & MMR.
3. Sex Ratio should be high.
4. Life expectancy must be increased.

For the development of a nation these goals must be achieved. All these goals only can achieve by education women. Because educated women willing to acquire modern practices in child care and rearing. Educated mothers are supposed to give informal education to their children in a better way. By comparative analysis of women education in Kerala & Rajasthan we can prove that these all can be achieved only by increasing female literacy.

1.4. Impact of Women Education on Population

The world bank had initialed a popular discourse in 1995, through its statement of priorities in educational policy in which basic education especially, that of girl become the first priority. The Bank's statement argued that investing in the education of girls would field externalities in reduced crude Birth rate, Total ferliuty rate, average annual growth rate & decadal growth rate of population. Because among better educated women the use of contraceptive methods are higher and fertility rates are lower. Education enables them to have access information on modern contraception and their proper use. Data clarify these statements.

Year	Kerala				Rajasthan			
	FL (%)	CBR	TFR	AAGR	FL (%)	CBR	TFR	AAGR
2001	89.7		1.7		43.9	29.7	3.7	
2011	91.98	15.2	1.7		52.66	25.19	3.9	

Table 3: Women education & crude Birth Rate

Source: Ministry of Health & Welfare

State/Year	1980-91 (%)	1991-2001 (%)	2001-2011 (%)
Kerala	1.34	0.90	0.48
Rajasthan	2.50	2.49	1.96

Table 4: Average annual growth Rate of Population
Source: Register general of India

State	1991-2001	2001-2011
Kerala	9.43	4.86
Rajasthan	28.41	21.44

Table 5: Decadal Growth of Population (%)
Source: Registrar general of India

All the three tables show that due to higher female literacy rate in Kerala, crude Birth rate, Total fertility rate and Annual Average growth rate is lower in comparison to Rajasthan. This lowers the stress of population on state resources. In Rajasthan female literacy is minimum this resulted in higher crude birth rate, Total fertility rate and Annual Average growth rate, which increased the population and need to provide wider health cover and educational facilities. However, re-education in CBR, TRR and AAGR will have a slightly positive effect on the resources.

1.5. Women Education & Health

In general, it is perceived that women's primary obligation are focused about family and home, educated mothers can play an important role in socialization and upbringing of their children, because higher educated mother associated with healthier children. In fact, a more educated mother may be more informed about appropriate personal hygiene and a healthy diet, may have greater notice for health care.

State/Year	2008	2009	2010	2011
Kerala	13	12	14	12
Rajasthan	71	65	61	52

Table 6: Infant Mortality Rate:
Source: Rajasthan general of India, Ministry of Family Welfare.

State/Year	1997-98	1999-01	2001-03	2004-06	2007-09
Kerala	150	149	110	95	81
Rajasthan	508	501	445	388	318

Table 7: Maternal Mortality Rate
Source: GOI, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

State / Year	2001	2011
Kerala	12.1	7.0
Rajasthan	24.9	6.7

Table 8: Crude Death Rate
Source: GOI, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

State	Life expectancy in Years.	
	2001	2011
Kerala	73.60	74.80
Rajasthan	64.50	67.50

Table 9: Life – Expectancy

It is quite evident from above four tables that if we can increase female literacy, it will be very good to our society and country as well. A literate female can take care of her children, family and herself in a better way. She can pay more attention to their food, health, hygiene and education. Due to higher literacy rate in Kerala with comparison to Rajasthan, there is lower infant Mortally rate, Lower Maternal Mortally Rate and Lower Crude Death Rate.

Similarly, a literate woman can also increase the life expectancy of their family members by taking care of and health requirements of family members as shown in the table. Table shows higher life expectancy in Kerala due to higher female literacy. In Rajasthan it is lower because of lower female literacy rate.

It is quite clear from all these facts that the education of female is not only important to their family but it is also very important to their role in developing and utilizing human resources in development of our country as well.

1.6. Problems

In Rajasthan there are so many constraints in the way of educating women. Some of them major problems are as follows:

1. A study conducted by the official of the *Rajasthan Lok-Jumbish* council in 2000 shows that 65.5% of the children dropping out of primary schools or never getting enrolled in schools, because they are involved in house hold activities such as farming, baby sitting, caring for livestock etc.
2. Poor condition of parents is also a major reason for girl's dropout.
3. Resistance of the parents towards female education and lack of basic facilities in schools are also a cause for lower female literacy.
4. The Majority of women are engaged in agriculture and other unpaid work. Though they bear a double Burden of domestic chores and work outside the home.

1.7. Suggestion

Education is the key to women realizing their rights and achieving their aspirations. The momentum for women's education has been created but needs to be kept up.

- i. Enrolment in schools, retention of girls should be top priority.
- ii. The government should increase the reach of primary and secondary education to underdeveloped areas.
- iii. More female teachers should be recruited.
- iv. School infrastructure and physical facilities should be improved.
- v. No of separate schools for girls should be increased.
- vi. Quality of education should be improved to make it more practical and employment oriented.
- vii. The needs for adolescent girls call for special attention through special programmes which should be implemented effectively.

2. Conclusion

For empowering women and Nations sustainable development there is need for a radical change in social attitude and values relating to women's role and rights. Interventions at all levels social, cultural, political, economic are required for enhancing women's status. This is possible only if changes take place in the existing social system. This change cannot be brought overnight because women have been subjected to exploitation for ages and cannot break the shackles of illiteracy, poverty and tradition in one stroke. In Rajasthan it seems desirable to develop a holistic and all pervasive master plan which will include strategies for health, education, drinking water and nutrition to facilitate the achievement of the development plan.

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