



## WOMEN AND EDUCATION IN PUDUCHERRY REGION: PROBLEMS, STATUS AND PERSPECTIVES

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### ABSTRACT :

*This paper is an attempt to analyse the position of women in puducherry region in terms of education and labour force participation. This paper also discuss about the present status of women in puducherry region followed by the various problems faced by the women of Pondicherry region. This paper also throws lights on various policies and programs undertaken by puducherry government to enhance girl children. For the study secondary data were used and in order to interpret the secondary data simple statistical techniques were used. The finding of the study reveals that there is a huge difference in the participation ratio of male and female labour force in Pondicherry region especially in the field of industry and other works. In terms of women and education it was found that still the girl children are denied from educational opportunity. This paper also suggests few remedies in order to minimize the problems faced by women.*

**KEYWORDS :** Education and Women, Problems, Status and Perspectives, Puducherry Region.

### INTRODUCTION

Education is the basic requirement for human development and right to education is a fundamental human right. Educated girls had benefits at the personal, community and social levels that make it one of the most important investments that any developing country can make. Several decades of research have demonstrated that educated girls become more effective, mothers who have higher survival rates among their children, because they have better nutrition and health practices. The gender gap in education can be understood only in the wider context of female disadvantage in India. Puducherry has made impressive strides in girl's education. However, girl's educational access is still limited and the problems of illiteracy, non-enrolment, low level of educational attainment, high dropout rates low and staggering progress of the enrolled though school and differential access to educations by gender, caste, etc. To conclude, most of the Indian studies on sex show parents preferences is highlighted in majority on sons that daughters. Education is a fundamental right of every human being but the gender bias pervades all spheres of life and society and informs political decision-making as well as intra-familial attitudes and values. The nature and intensity of this bias varies across economic systems and religious and over the life cycle of individuals within households. This bias has been variously explained by culture and religious factors as also by the position occupied by women in the labour market. Whatever the particular combinations of causes may be the cycle of disadvantages tarts before birth and continues from neglect of female children through to widow hood. The problem in exacerbated further when gender disadvantages are compounded by class, caste and religious discrimination. Women have much lower literacy rate, compared to boys, far fewer girls are enrolled in schools and many of them dropout. The gender gap in education can be understood only in the wider

context of female disadvantage in India.

### PROBLEMS RELATED TO WOMEN IN PUDUCHERRY REGION

Many empirical studies have been conducted to assess the problems faced by women in and outside family and to know the quality of change in the status of women in India. Almost all studies reveal that sexism still prevails everywhere. Women often encounter prejudice, discrimination and abuse from both men and women both in the family and at workplace. Almost daily we come across some or the other incident of dowry death, domestic violence, exploitation, rape cases, harassment, etc., reported in newspapers or magazines. Most of these incidents or accidents are reflection of the problems still faced by women in India. Apparently, women are now fully emancipated and free to choose their profession, life partner and the way of life. But, the fundamentally deep-rooted feeling of inequality and discrimination still persists due to domineering attitudes of males and the age-old customs and traditions. A few urban educated women may look upon themselves as emancipated, enlightened and progressive. They may ape the western way of life but the deep-rooted inhibitions and age-old restraints always cram their mind. In public women might get a lot of lip respect, especially on 'women's day' or 'mother's day,' but at home their equal rights and privileges are a mere myth. Most husbands and fathers took upon their wives and daughters as their own possessions. Obedience to her husband is still expected from a good Hindu wife even in the so-called well-educated families. True and full expression of her individuality, unfettered by restraints, is unheard of. The normal Puducherry wife's thinking is conditioned in such a manner that she cheerfully accepts any amount of domination. She takes it for granted that her likes and dislikes, her wishes and ideas will never be placed on the same level as her husband. Working wives are however treated with a little more respect and consideration. Economic dependence of Indian women on her husband's has kept them in a state of perpetual bondage. This is the crux of the whole problem of Indian women.

**Table 1: LITERACY STATUS OF PUDUCHERRY REGION**

State	Literacy Rate (2011 Census)	Male Literacy Rate (2011 Census)	Female Literacy Rate (2011 Census)
Pondicherry	86.5%	92.1%	81.2%

Source: Secondary Data, According to the Census of 2011.

**Table 2: Number of Schools at different levels in Pondicherry**

Level	Co-education	Girls	Total	Average Distance (in kms.)*
Primary	446	9	455	1 to 3
Secondary	158	17	175	1 to 7
Higher Secondary	47	15	62	1 to 10

Source: Secondary Data, According To the Census of 2011.

\*Average distance from habitations within which schools can be accessed.

\*\*National Commission for Women: Data obtained from Government of Pondicherry.

### PUDUCHERRY GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES AND PROGRAMS TO ENHANCE GIRL CHILDREN

Puducherry government is implementing the following policies and services. Compulsory pass for all students up to 8<sup>th</sup> standard, in addition to milk and bread, egg is supplied in daily basis to the students receiving milk and bread, egg is supplied twice in a week to all students consuming mid-day-meals, unnecessary students should not be retained at 9<sup>th</sup> standard to slow the results in 10<sup>th</sup> standard the same will be monitored and decided by the education department, a financial assistance of Rs.200 to boys and Rs.300 to girls will be extended as stipend to their expenses while pursuing higher secondary education, free bicycles/chapels are given to all students, Rs.10000 is given as prize money to meritorious students who come first per subject and per school and who goes for higher education, yoga class are also introduced.

**Table 3: INFORMATION ABOUT THE STATUS OF WOMEN POPULATION AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION IN VARIOUS SECTORS****(Source: Secondary Data, According to the Census of 2011)**

<b>Total Population</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
1,247,953	612,511	635,442
<b>Total Rural Population</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
395,200	194,907	200,293
<b>Urban Persons</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
852,753	417,604	435,149
<b>Literates Persons</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
957,309	497,378	459,931
<b>Main Workers</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Female</b>
	399,689	93,280
<b>Marginal Workers</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Female</b>
	45,279	18,757
<b>Non-workers</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Female</b>
	802,985	523,405

**Table 4: CATEGORY OF WORKERS (Main & Marginal)**

<b>Cultivators</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Female</b>
	12,099	2,066
<b>Agricultural Labourers</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Female</b>
	68,391	25,597
<b>Workers in Household</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Female</b>
	7,892	3,845
<b>Workers in Industry</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Female</b>
	321310	91201
<b>Other Workers</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Female</b>
	356,586	80,529

Table-4 shows that there is a huge difference in the participation ratio of male and female labor force in Pondicherry region especially in the field of industry and other works. Thus to lift the female workers the puducherry government has taken many revolutionary steps and programs.

#### **CONTRIBUTION OF PUDUCHERRY GOVERNMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN IN PUDUCHERRY REGION**

- **Government of Puducherry- Department of Women and Child Development**

The Govt. of Puducherry has introduced the following programs for the development of women in Puducherry region:

- Grant of marriage allowance to the widow's daughter
- Incentive to widow's remarriage
- Grant of financial assistance for performance of marriage of marginalized women.
- Poor brides living below poverty line.
- Kulavilakku.
- Aravanaippu.
- Reimbursement of tuition fees to the children of widows in typewriting & shorthand
- Grant of incentive to the family having one girl/two girl children and parents who have undergone family planning.
- Hostel for working women.
- Grant of financial assistance to the poor parents having only one girl child who is studying 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> std.
- Family counselling Centre.

#### • Dairy Dependent Self -Help Groups in Pondicherry

***WOMEN ARE EMPOWERED WHEN THEY TAKE DAIRYING AS AN INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITY (IGA). THE RELATIVE ADVANTAGE IS OBSERVED MORE FOR THE UNDERPRIVILEGED WOMEN (WIDOWS, WOMEN WHOSE HUSBANDS WERE SICK) AS IT PROVIDES SELF-EMPLOYMENT. CONTRIBUTION FROM DAIRYING IS 36% OF THE TOTAL INCOME FOR THE POOR CATEGORY, WHEREAS IT IS ONLY 29% FOR THE BETTER OFF CATEGORY. THE MEAN VALUE OF HOUSEHOLD ASSETS, MILK PRODUCTION AND SALE, AND ANNUAL INCOME OF THE WOMEN SHG MEMBERS WERE INCREASED IN POST SHG SITUATIONS. THE MEAN VALUE OF THE ASSETS AND THE MEAN ANNUAL INCOME OF THE WOMEN SHG MEMBERS HAD INCREASED BY 68% AND 77% RESPECTIVELY. THE CONTRIBUTION OF DAIRYING TO THE TOTAL ANNUAL INCOME ROSE FROM 20% TO 30% OVER A PERIOD. THIS REFLECTED THE SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE WOMEN SHG MEMBERS THROUGH DAIRYING AS IGA. WHILE THE CONSUMPTION OF MILK, FRUITS AND NON-VEGETARIAN ITEMS REMAINS STATIC WITHOUT MUCH CHANGE.***

#### SUGGESITION

To minimize the problems of girl's education in Puducherry region in primary as well as middle or high and higher secondary school education the government has to put more effort for enhancing women empowerment. Several steps should be taken by the Government; the Govt. Of Puducherry has introduced many schemes for the school students to eradicate the problems of education. In spite of several efforts taken from different angles, the problems of dropouts are still middle and high school education. The following suggestion has emerged from the present study, which need immediate attention to improve the girls educational development of the study area.

- Now in Puducherry government providing bus concession 1 rupee per school student. It may be provide free bus pass for all school going girl children.
- All schools should be provided with the necessary and adequate teaching aids like black boards, globe, maps models, charts etc.
- Maximum level of library books should be maintained at all schools and this item has to be included in the inspectors visit compulsorily.
- Teachers must reward their students with non-material like good smile, gesture of approval, patting on their back instead of beating on back, encouraging verbal remarks etc. So that they open up with them and can express their opinion, thoughts, issues and problems to teachers and take her as a motherly figure and not a thing to be afraid of.
- Free bread, Milk and egg may be supplied to the poor students of private schools also.
- Now-a-days most of the students are carrying water bottles to the school. The school should provide safe drinking water. Safe drinking water is a basic need to be fulfilled in every school. Private schools charge high amount of money from the parents in the name of this and that find

can't they guarantee providing safe drinking water to their students and instruct parents not to give unhygienic plastic water bottles to their wards, which can save students from carrying extra one and two kilometres every day.

- The government schools, there is space but they are neglected and unable to be used as a good play ground. Adequate Physical Education teachers and playthings may be provided.
- Adequate and clean toilets to be constructed and maintained in all schools.
- Strict implementation of ban on child labour has to be enforced.
- Special attention should be paid to the girl children education.
- Students counselling centres for students maybe set up in all schools.
- Gender sensitization programme should be conducted for the Parents.

## CONCLUSION

To conclude, most of the Indian studies on sex show parents preferences is highlighted in majority on sons than daughters. Thus it has been observed from the study that, girl children are facing lot of problems like child marriage, child labour, child abuse and child prostitution, and also they are discriminating in health, education, family functions etc. So the research study on the girl children education in basis of the gender discriminations helped to precede the problems facing the girls children within the school, house and society. Education does not mean the same thing to women as it does to men. Cultural expectations and expectations of the family are that woman will take up the domestic/reproductive roles. Such attitudes create the back drop for poor attendance at school, poor achievement, and dropout rates of girl children being considerably higher in the case of educational efforts. The society has to change in terms of sharing the household responsibilities by both men and women so that women can take time off to educate, and improve their skills. If women's education leads to wage employment, the girl children will have more possibility of getting educated. The research study also found that education and employment are linked deeply in constructing hierarchies of gender and the perception of the society.

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