



GIRL EDUCATION - GS III MAINS

Q. Indian women are facing a lot of inequalities in terms of educational opportunities as compared to those of men. Examine (15 marks, 250 words)

News: *96 Schools To Get 2cr For Girl Child*

What's in the news?

- The state education department will pay Rs 2.23 crore to 96 schools in Ahmedabad city as grants for girl education.

Key takeaways:

- Sources said that the grants are paid under a scheme implemented from 2017-18 to encourage girl child education in the state.

Status of Women education:

- As per the census of India 2011, an increase in the pace of female literacy in the rural areas has been noticed (from 46.13% in 2001 to 58.75% in 2011) but, still, rural women are facing a **lot of inequalities in terms of educational opportunities as compared to those of men.**
- While the literacy rate of men is 82.14%, the female literacy rate is 65.46%, i.e, a gap of 16.95 between male & female literacy rate.

Causes for Gender Inequality in Education:

1. Social Causes:

- Patriarchy and role segregation forces the girl to limit to household works such as Male as a sole bread winner attitude in the society.
- Gender stereotypes along with prejudiced biological factors such as masculinity.
- Child Marriage
- Son Meta preference
- The free government schools as a preferred choice of education for nearly 70 percent of the girl child in India showing the societal gender bias in exercising school choices.

2. Economic Causes:

- Considering Male child as an asset of the family and female as a liability.
- Issues of poverty forcing girl child to drop out from schools and works as a domestic labour to supplement family income was prevalent in many villages of India.

3. Lack of Infrastructure in Schools:

- Lack of separate toilet facilities for girls in many schools.



- Lack of menstrual hygiene and sanitation facilities in several schools.
- Lower government expenditure on schools, especially girls schools.

4. Safety Issues:

- Unsafe environment across the schools (e.g. many harrasment cases on school girls inside school premises happening across the country).
- Lack of transport facilities and connectivity concerns.

5. Health Issues:

- 23% of girls in India leave school once they hit puberty.
- The girls who continue their education miss as many as 50 school days each year as a result of menstruation.

6. Other Issues:

- Covid-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented challenges in girls education as such over one crore girls are on the verge of dropping out of schools due to the pandemic alone according to a recent report.
- Increasing digital divide among the girl students (lack of penetration of internet and mobile connectivity).

Importance of Education for Women:

1. Poverty Alleviation - Education provides employment skills and opportunities to a women, in a way the education helps in alleviating familial poverty. (Boom of women's participation in IT sector)

2. Social Development - Women's education provide higher social return and empowerment through increased participation in decision making, employment and contribution to the children's education as suggested by various reports. It also reduces the incidence of child marriage as well.

3. Health Status - Female literacy is one of the most powerful levers to improve a society's health and individual well-being of a women especially in menstrual and reproductive health, thereby reducing infant mortality rate, anaemia and malnutrition among children.

4. Gender Equality - Education acts a tool to eliminate gender inequality as it offers Bengaluru higher participation of women in political, economical and social sphere.

5. Development of the Nation - Education improves the economic productivity of the women which leads to overall economic growth and development of the nation.

Government Provisions:

1. Right to Education Act - RTE considers education as a fundamental right which will provide free and compulsory education to every child aged between 6 to 14.



2. **Rahstriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan** - Provides infrastructure for girls hostel for secondary education.
3. **Digital Gender Atlas** - For advancing girl's education in India.
4. **Udaan** - CBSE has launched 'Udaan' to provide free online resources to girl students of Class XI and Class XII for preparation.
5. **Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao Scheme** - Generate awareness and also improve the efficiency of welfare services for the girl child. The initial aim of the campaign was to address the declining child sex ratio but it also include propagating education, survival and protection of the girl child.
6. **Balika Saridhhi Yojana** - Scholarship initiative that provides financial support to young girls and their families who live in poverty.
7. **Kasturba Balika Vidyalaya** - Establishment of residential upper primary schools for girl.

Challenges in Women Education:

- Higher drop outs of girl children in secondary education.
- Inter-state variations in enrollment of girl children in school education.
- Lack of infrastructure for girl children in school.

WAY FORWARD:

- Increasing awareness in society about the importance of female education.
- In order to suit the convenience of the girl student, non-formal education facilities should be provided.
- Increasing the number of competent and eligible female teachers especially in the rural areas.
- The establishment and proper functioning of schools in the villages must be insured.
- Ensuring the safety of girl students & female teachers.
- Mass media should play an active role in creating a conducive environment in the favour of girl's education.
- Special arrangements & provisions must be made for the disabled girl child.