
THE STUDY OF SOCIAL CHANGES OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE PROGRESS OF SOCIETY

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Higher Education and employment are considered the most important components of women's empowerment in modern India. One of the major recommendations of the recent National Policy of Higher Education (1986) is promote empowerment of women through the agency of Higher Education. Higher Education is one of the most important determinants of social developments. Many of the key processes of socialization now occur in and through schools and colleges. Greater exposure of women to Higher Education may result in an increased sharing of responsibility within the family, more continuous employment in outside jobs, lower fertility patterns, and greater participation in social and political activities.

Higher Education is a major force in redefining women's roles and status (Sapru, 1989:268). Literacy, the primary form of Higher Education, understood as the ability to read and write in one's language, identified as an important instrument of social change. For example, elementary literacy enables women, working in unorganized sectors both in rural and urban areas, and also housewives to read signboards, prices mentioned on packets of consumer goods such as soap, salt, oil etc. Thus literacy helps women in getting their day-to-day transactions done with greater understanding and efficiency.

A document of the union Govt. rightly points out that literacy is the only pass-port for an illiterate or semi-literate for independent learning for gaining knowledge, bettering one's understanding and relying more and more upon one's capacity to take one's own decisions. An individual's development depends on the different levels of Higher Education he/she receives.

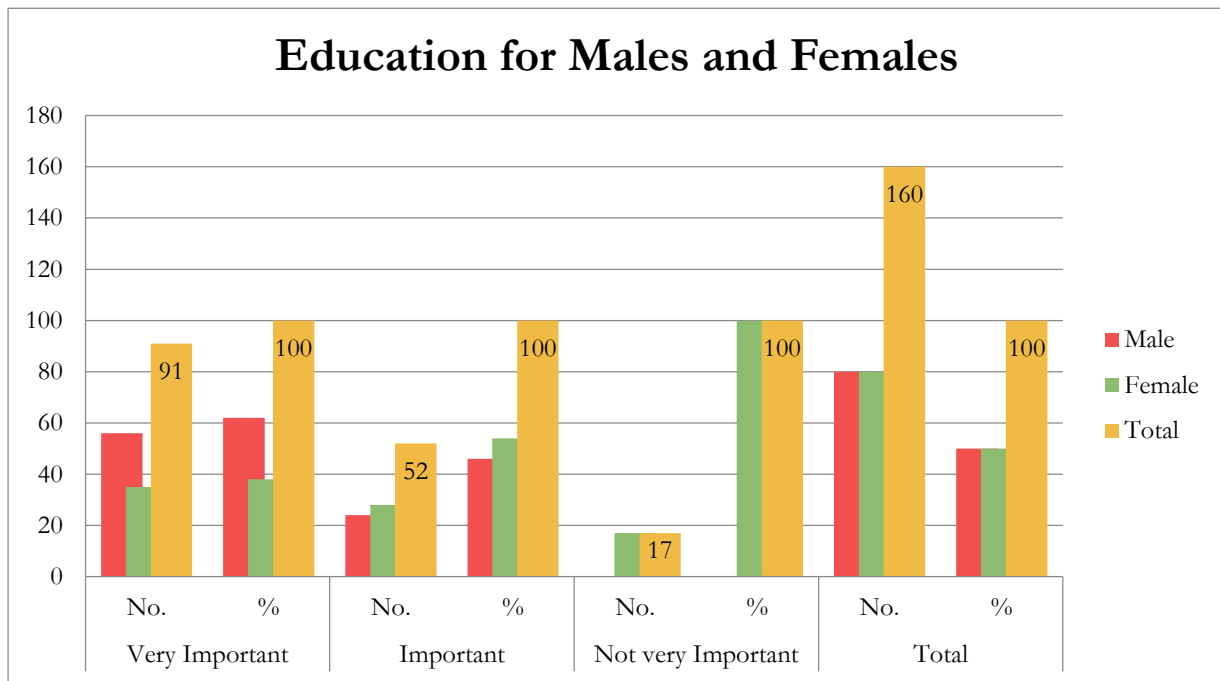
Primary education provides the ability to read and write. But its impact on one's reasoning, outlook and world view is limited. Secondary education lays a broader base for the development of skills and reasoning capacity, It also qualifies one for white-collar jobs. College and University Higher Education not only prepares one for white collar jobs but also develops a wider perspective of life, society and the universe. Let us examine the attitudes of the respondents towards Higher Education for women.

There is a close relationship between Higher Education and gender equality. There are differences of opinion about the role of Higher Education in bringing about equality between men and women. It is argued that since the roles and statuses of men and women are entirely different, there cannot be equality at all. Equality is a relative term. Women can be given greater rights, powers,

TABLE-1:

Higher Education for Males and Females

Male Female	Very Important		Important		Not very Important		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	56	62.00	24	46.00	-	-	80	50.00
Female	35	38.00	28	54.00	17	100.00	80	50.00
Total	91	100.00	52	100.00	17	100.00	160	100.00
Percent	57%		33%		10%		100%	



Higher Education and Employment for Gender Equality 111 duties and responsibilities. But they cannot be treated as equal with men. It is our contention that women be considered fit for Higher Education but the degree and type of Higher Education may varies for men and women.

Attitudes of the respondents towards Higher Education for males and females, as presented in Table-1 shows that 57 percent of the sample considered Higher Education for both males and females very important, while 33 percent said it is just important. But 10 percent considered Higher Education not very important.

It is clear that there is a very favorable reaction towards Higher Education. Respondents said Higher Education has become an essential qualification for people in modern society. Higher Education for men helps in acquiring jobs, modernizing traditional values, attitudes and outlook towards changing patterns of life.



Higher Education for women is more important than for men. According to some, Higher Education is a powerful instrument since Higher Education enables women to gain more knowledge about the world outside, higher skills, self image and self-confidence.

Data further show that 62 percent of the males, as against 38 percent of the females, considered Higher Education very important for both males & females. It means more males than females perceived the significance of Higher Education for both sexes. But of those who considered Higher Education important, 54 percent were females. That means 54 percent of the respondents considered Higher Education more important.

It means the respondents considered Higher Education more important for men than for women. Respondents argued that more Higher Education for women is useless. Even some said more Higher Education for women is counterproductive. Of those who considered Higher Education not very important, cent percent were women.

To conclude this section, respondents considered Higher Education as important for both males and females, but they held that Higher Education is more important for men than women.

Conclusion-

It has dealt with gender equality in terms of respondents' attitudes towards employment for males and females. Respondents attitudes towards Higher Education for males and females showed that a majority of the respondents (57%) considered Higher Education for both males and females very important", while 33 percent considered Higher Education just about important. It means there is a very un-favorable to favorable attitude towards Higher Education for males and females.

It was also observed that respondents considered Higher Education more important for males than females. It is clear that although school teachers want Higher Education for women, they think that men to be given preference over women in the matter of Higher Education. Respondents were also asked to show their attitudes towards the type of Higher Education-science or commerce or Arts for males and females.

Analysis of data showed that a majority of the respondents wanted both males and females to go in for science and commerce Higher Education only 23 percent of the respondents expected both males and females to go for Arts courses. The data further showed that more men than women were expected to go in for science Higher Education, while commerce Higher Education was more or less equally favoured for men and women by the respondents.

The Data with regard to respondents' attitudes towards employment for males and females revealed that 63 and 37 percent respondents, respectively, considered employment for both males and females, very important and important. An interesting finding was that respondents wanted both males and females to seek employment equally.

In another attempt to know the attitudes of respondents towards type of employment: whether Govt. job, private job and / or self-employment, it was revealed that 53, 33 and 14 percent respondents wanted both males and females to take up govt., private and self-employment, respectively. It means the respondents preferred govt. and private jobs over self-employment.

Data further showed that respondents more or less equally expected both males and females to take up govt. jobs, while more women were expected to take up private jobs. Self-employment was proposed for more men than for women. To conclude, school teachers have displayed a greater degree of sensitivity to gender equality so far as concerns Higher Education and employment for males and females.



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