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INSTITUTIONALISATION OF FEMALE EDUCATION: A POLICY FRAMEWORK IN INDIA

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Abstract

The "Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals," established by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation on 25 September 2015, outlines a series of international objectives aimed at promoting gender equality. The Sustainable Development Goals of 2015 highlighted the issues of gender inequality and the disparities in access to resources, participation, opportunities, the exercise of rights, and access to positions of power, among other factors. Education is identified as one of the critical areas that can significantly advance gender equality.

Kofi Annan, the 7th UN Secretary-General and a strong advocate for human rights, aptly stated, "Study after study has taught us that there is no tool for development more effective than the education of girls and the empowerment of women". Hence, female education, which is regarded by the world over as a benchmark to measure the progress of a community, is still progressing gradually or developing incrementally in India.

This work seeks to summarise the history of the institutionalisation of female education in India. It examines the major provisions enumerated on female education in the National Policy on Education 1986, 1992 and 2020.

This paper has undertaken a significant study of the education policies and strategies adopted in the Sustainable Development Goals by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, 2015. The study analyses the extent to which the National Education Policy, 2020 incorporates the Sustainable Development Goals and how far it contributes to fostering female education in India.

Keywords: Female, Education, Policy, Sustainable, Development, Goals, Gender, Gap Equity.

Introduction

The world leaders on 25 September 2015 adopted a series of international objectives aiming at sustainability through Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs focus on eradicating poverty, safeguarding the planet, and fostering prosperity for everyone as part of a fresh sustainable development initiative. Each objective outlines definite targets to be achieved within the following 15 years. Objectives 4 and 5 of the SDGs strive to ensure inclusive, equitable, and quality education to boost gender equality and enhance women and girls universally (Mora et al., 2024).

Gender inequality has been identified as a global issue. The gender gap index shows the social standing of males and females. It indicates the diversity in autonomy, access to resources, participation, opportunities, exercise of rights, and access to spaces of power, among others. They are a consequence of the gender discrimination present in society (Mora et al., 2024).

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), hence, strives towards ‘Gender Equity’ as a key objective. It endeavours to strategically plan programs, means, and processes that aim to attain gender equality. Furthermore, the SDG goals aim to include women and other social groups in the social structure, irrespective of any differences. While significant progress has been made over the years towards gender equality and provisions for female education, inequalities still exist due to socio-cultural norms, economic constraints, and systemic barriers (UNESCO, 2021).

Inspired by the global education development “Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals” (SDG), by UNESCO, India adopted the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015, ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education enabling lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030 (NEP, Ministry of Education, 2020).

India’s Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) was recorded at 47.8 per cent in 2021-22 (Fig 1.1). As presented in the Census 2011, persistent gaps in the literacy rate for males and females are indicated. Male literacy rate stood at 84.7% and female literacy rate was 70.3% (Census India, 2011).

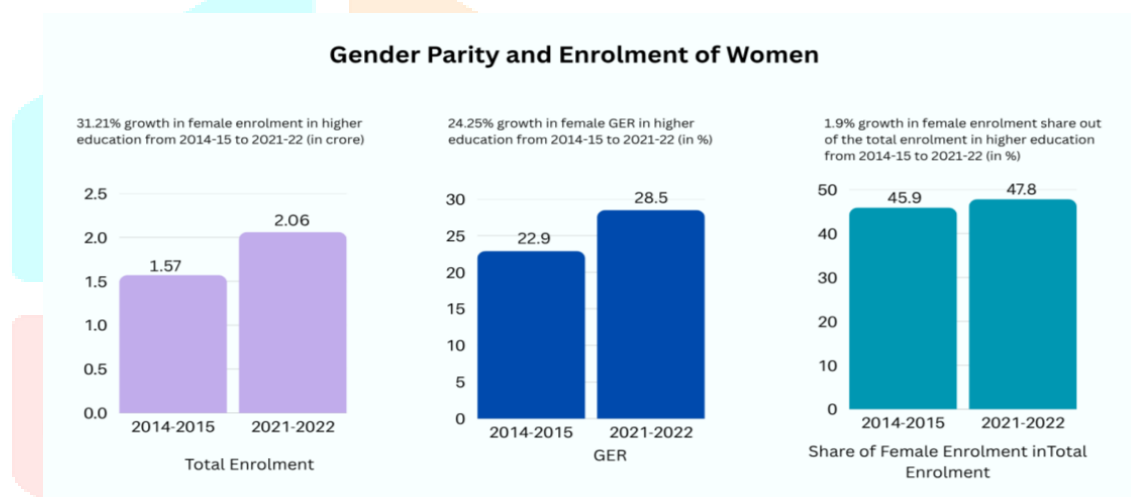


Fig 1.1. Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)

Source: Higher Education under NEP 2020: Reimagining India’s Academic Landscape. Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 28 July 2025.

Although the previous NPEs 1986 and 1992 had focused largely on issues of accessibility and equity, it was unable to bridge the gap in learning outcomes, especially towards female education. Hence, major reforms were to be undertaken that fostered quality, equity, and integrity in the education system. It is seen that reforms were required from early education through higher education. To fill the void, NEP 2020 with gender equity policies and strategies has assured to significantly improve female education in the country.

Brief History of Female Education in India

Woods Dispatch by the court of directors of the English East India Company on the 19th of July 1854 is regarded as a document of great significance, since the Dispatch imposed upon the government the task of formulating a comprehensive scheme of modern education in India. With respect to female education in India, this Dispatch is even more momentous since, for the very first time in the history of India, the dispatch in its 9th or last proposal stated that “the education of girls would be supported”. In other words, it emphasised government responsibility for promoting female education and recommended financial assistance for girls' schools. However, brief reference to women's education in the report laid the foundation on which the future of female education in India was to be established. This, however, should not be misinterpreted as meaning that prior to this dispatch, girls in India did not have access to education.

The existence of terms like Brahmavadini (women having attained the knowledge of the supreme being) or Mantravid (having the knowledge of mantras) or Pandita (learned woman)ⁱ in the early Vedic texts points to the fact that women in ancient India did have access to traditional educational opportunities. Interestingly, Kaushalya, the mother of Rama, was referred to as Mantravid and Draupadi, in the Mahabharata, was known as Pandita. Also, the rule prevalent at that time, whereby a girl student was not allowed to marry until she had completed her brahmacharya for student life, corroborates the notion of girls being provided educational opportunities.

Setbacks in their educational rights were, however, witnessed from the later half of the Vedic age to the medieval period due to the establishment of a more patriarchal social order, limiting a woman's role mainly to domestic responsibilities. However, historical sources of the medieval period do make a mention that girls from the aristocratic Muslim families, for instance, Razia Begum, Noor Jahan, Mumtaz Mahal, Zebunisa, etc., did receive traditional education within the confines of their homes. Hence, in the pre-colonial era, education for girls was not altogether absent, but it was limited to the upper sections of society, as it was a belief that education would help them protect their propertiesⁱⁱ.

Female Education in Colonial India

The early colonial period also did not witness any major initiative undertaken by the English East India Company to institutionalise female education, as was done for the Indian male by the Charter Act of 1813 and the Macaulay minute on education in 1853. Nevertheless, acclaim for the spreading of awareness and promotion of female education goes to the Christian missionaries. The very first organisation established by them to spread female education was the Female Juvenile Society in 1819 in Calcutta. The Native Society for native female education in Calcutta founded the Calcutta Female School in 1828 and established girl schools from Calcutta to Allahabadⁱⁱⁱ. The Church Missionary Society was successful in opening its first school for girls in Tirunelveli, South India, in 1821. Similarly, missionaries in Madras did the same. Further, the American missionary society opened its first girls' school in Bombay in 1824, and by 1826, it had established 9 schools with an average attendance of 340 pupils. Together with the Scottish missionary society, in the next 10 years, girls' schools were opened not only in Bombay, but also in Nasik, Ahmednagar, Thane and Bassein. The pioneering initiatives of the missionaries in their private capacity thus contested societal standards and set the ball rolling for the propagation of female education.

Thereafter, several progressive Indians and individuals firmly believing that true emancipation of women could be achieved only through education began tirelessly advocating and spreading awareness on female education. Notable figures were Jyoti Rao Phule and Savitribai Phule of Pune, who are regarded as the first Indians to have not only advocated for female education but also opened the first school for girls in 1848 in Pune. Interestingly, Savitribai Phule has also earned the laurel of being the first Indian female teacher who penned her views on the importance of education for girls in her book of poems called Kavya Phule, published in 1854. Other progressive Indians were Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Keshab Chandra Sen, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, and John Elliott Drinkwater Bethune of Bengal. While Drinkwater founded the Bethune School in Calcutta in 1849, promoting girls' education, which was later upgraded into the first women's college in Asia in 1879. Vidyasagar, a close friend of Bethune, opened 20 girls' schools in four districts of Bengal in 1855. Thus, through the attempts of the Christian missionaries and the notable progressive Indians, a change was visible in the rigid social norms and the attitude of the colonial government^{iv}.

By the latter half of the 19th century, public opinion had conceded that girls might be permitted to receive primary education. Also during the governor generalship of Lord Dalhousie (1848 - 1856), Sir Charles Wood, president of the Board of Control, issued his famous dispatch in 1854, which, in terms of female education, is crucial, as this dispatch was the first official policy to mandate state-sponsored education for girls in India. It laid the foundation for government-funded girls' schools as well as paved the way for a rise in the number of girls to have access to education, thus allowing a glimmer of hope for them to access higher education. Thirty years after the publication of the Woods Dispatch in 1882, during the Viceroyalty of Lord Ripon, a Commission was appointed under the chairmanship of Sir William Hunter to review the progress of education since 1813. Hence, the Indian Education Commission of 1882 or the Hunter Commission, in its many recommendations, acknowledged that female education was still backward, and hence recommended that provincial governments should provide greater support for female education, as well as liberal grants in aid for girls' schools and special scholarships for girls. Thus, towards the end of

the nineteenth century, there were 288 girls' schools with 6869 pupils in Bengal, 65 girls' schools with 3500 pupils in Bombay and 256 girls' schools with about 8000 pupils in Madras^v.

Along with the colonial government, during the advanced stage of the freedom struggle, various patriotic nationalist individuals, namely Mahadev Govind Ranade and Dr Ramakrishnan Gopal Bhandarkar, founded the Maharashtra Girls' Education Society in October 1884. This society popularised higher education for girls by establishing the Huzur Paga Girls' High School in Pune in 1885. Pandita Ramabai, a rebellious champion of women's emancipation and egalitarianism, established in Maharashtra in 1889 the Sharadha Sadan in Bombay. Besides her, Mahatma Gandhi, Swami Vivekananda, Annie Besant, and Sarojini Naidu campaigned in support of female education to achieve societal progress. However, the most significant milestone during the freedom struggle was the All India Women's Conference on Education reform held in Pune in 1927. Initiated by an Irish feminist, Margaret Cousins, who collaborated with Indian figures like Maharani Chimnabai Gaekwad of Baroda and Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, this conference was the first national women's gathering in India. It stressed on improving educational opportunities for girls by supporting the establishment of primary schools up to colleges as well as adult education. In this conference, it was reiterated that the main impediment in the education of girls was early marriage. The second conference, which was held in Delhi in 1928, was of immense importance. The Begum, mother of Bhopal, was the president. In this conference, it was resolved to make compulsory primary education for girls. The conference also marked the origin of the All India Women's Education Fund.

The last two important committee reports which included female education were the Zakir Hussain Committee report of 1938 or the Wardha Scheme. The Wardha Scheme was the outcome of the educational philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, popularly known as Nai Talim or basic education- this scheme is the first study of elementary or primary education on a national level^{vi}. The committee advocated for eight years of free and compulsory education for all children irrespective of gender.

Following the Wardha Scheme and the Zakir Hussain committee report, the last important report was the Sargent report, named after John Sargent, educational advisor of the Government of India. This was the first comprehensive educational plan formulated by the Central Advisory Board of Education. The plan recommended that a system of universal compulsory and free education for all boys and girls between the ages of 6 to 14 should be introduced. Also, the 23rd recommendation suggested that suitable courses were to be introduced for girls attending senior basic schools, which include subjects like cooking, laundry work, first aid, needlework, home crafts and the care of children, etc.^{vii}.

Post-Independence Female Education

Post Independence, Female education in India began to progress more steadily due to the persistent efforts of women activists, enlightened political leaders and educationists who regarded female education as a powerful tool in the process of overall development to bring about awareness of women's rights and responsibilities as well as help them participate in the development process of the country. The outcome of their relentless efforts resulted in the appointment of the University Education Commission under the chairmanship of Dr S. Radhakrishnan. Under its many recommendations, the Commission also emphasised expanding educational opportunities for women through college programs. Also, standards of courtesy and social responsibility should be emphasised on the path of men in mixed colleges^{viii}.

Another important landmark in this period that strengthened the edifice of female education was the constitutional safeguards, which were fundamental, legally binding rights and protections granted to every Indian girl by the Constitution. Article 14 (provides equality before law), Article 15 (forbids discrimination), Article 21-A (guarantees the right to education), and Article 45 (directs the state to provide early childhood care and education for all children until the age of 6 years). Apart from these, constitutional safeguards providing privileges and security to the girls and women of India, the Government of India appointed the Secondary Education Commission, vide its resolution No. F. 9-5/52-B-1, dated 23rd September 1952, to survey the problems of secondary education. This Commission recommended a diversified curriculum and higher access for girls to secondary education. Even though immediately after independence, many recommendations and proposals were brought to the forefront to improve and prioritise female education, however, according to the selected educational statistics, HRD ministry, Government of India, 1997, and HRD ministry, Government of India (Department of Education),

annual report, 2000 by 1955-56, girls enrollment in the primary upper stage (I-V) was 30.5%, primary stage (VI-VIII) 20.8%, secondary stage (IX-XII) was 15.4% and university 14.6%^{ix}.

Thus, finding the enrollment still not up to the mark, the National Council for Women's Education was established by the Government of India in 1958 with Durgabai Deshmukh, a renowned social reformer, as its first chairperson. This council was constituted to advise the government on issues related to the education of girls and women. Its meeting held in April 1963 sought to look into the causes for the lack of public support, particularly in rural areas, for girl/s education. It tried to enlist public cooperation; therefore, the council appointed a committee known as the Committee on Girls' Education and Public Cooperation (1963-64), to suggest ways and means of achieving substantial progress in female education. The committee submitted its report in 1964, which was later published in 1965. In short, the committee, through its recommendations, emphasised the advancement and expansion of female education. It highlighted the importance of community participation, increasing recruitment of women teachers, providing incentives to reduce economic barriers, promoting social awareness and strengthening government and public partnership. The proposal of the committee was compelling. Nevertheless, towards the end of the third five-year plan, there was a pressing need to get the entire educational system reviewed with a view to initiating a fresh and more determined effort at educational reconstruction.

Hence, an Education Commission or the Kothari Commission (1964- 66), was appointed. This Commission sought to advise the government on "the national pattern of education and on the general principles and policies for the development of education at all stages and in all aspects"^x.

In its report on 'Education and National development', highlighting the importance of female education, it observed "in the modern world, the role of women goes much beyond the home. Women share equal responsibility with men in the overall development of society"^{xi}.

The Commission also suggested that education should be given a statutory basis everywhere and in all sectors, and Education Acts should be passed in all the States and Union territories and that the central government should issue a statement on the national policy on education, which should serve as a guide to the state and local authorities. Following thorough analysis and extensive national deliberations on the report, the Government of India enthusiastically declared its first comprehensive National Policy on Education or NPE, in 1968. This policy laid the foundation for educational planning in the country and introduced the principles of universal elementary education, teacher development, the three-language formula and increased investment in education. Most importantly, it emphasised equity, equality, national integration and modernisation. However, in reference to female education, the NPE 1968 encouraged education for girls as a matter of social justice and also because it accelerates social transformation^{xii}. It introduced a common core curriculum, which helped girls study subjects like science and maths. Due to the programs and initiatives on the part of the government, the disparity between male and female education had decreased between 1965 and 1985. Notwithstanding the initiative, many comprehensive ideas incorporated in the 1968 were not implemented; as a result, problems of access, quality, quantity, utility and financial outlay accumulated over the years and assumed serious proportions^{xiii}.

National Policy of Education 1986

The progress of education was reviewed in 1985. A status report, 'Challenge of education: A policy perspective' by the Ministry of Education in August 1985 was published. The document contained an overview of the state of education and provided guidelines and relevant data for a new education policy. The document highlighted female education as a critical imperative for social change and advocated that female education was essential for national development rather than merely a moral obligation. It also called for closing gender gaps in literacy, expanding schools and hostels for girls, reforming curricula to remove gender stereotypes, and encouraging women's entry into vocational and technical education. It advocated for removing social and cultural barriers, community participation, and framing women's education as key to social justice and national progress. It is also interesting to note that the document was translated practically into all the regional languages, and also as part of the nationwide debate for the formulation of a new policy on education. 12 national seminars and 17 sponsored workshops were organised by the Ministry of Education and its national organisation. All state governments and union territories also organised seminars, workshops and symposia. After this, a detailed analysis was made of all the communications and recommendations received in the ministry^{xiv}. Thereafter, the Ministry of Human Resource Development brought about a revised document, the National Policy on Education 1986

- A Presentation, “which again was revised after another discussion with the State ministers of education, the National Development Council and the Central Advisory Board of Education. Finally, the national policy on education was adopted by both Houses of Parliament in May 1986. The National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986 contains XII parts and 157 paragraphs on different aspects of education.

NPE 1986 stated:

Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women. In order to neutralize the accumulated distortions of the past, there will be well-conceived edge in favor of women. The national system of education will play a positive, interventionist role in the empowerment of women. It will foster the development of new values through redesigned curricula, textbooks, the training and orientation of teachers, decision-makers and administrators and the active involvement of educational institutions. This will be an act of faith and social engineering. Women’s studies will be promoted as part of various courses and educational institutions encouraged to take up active program to further women’s development..... The removal of women’s illiteracy and obstacles inhibiting their access to and retention in elementary education will receive overriding priority through provisions of special support services, setting of time targets and effective monitoring. Major emphasis will be laid on women’s participation in vocational, technical and professional education at different levels. The policy of non-discrimination will be pursued vigorously to eliminate sex stereotyping in vocational and professional courses and to promote women’s participation in non-traditional occupations, as well as in existing and emergent technologies^{xv}.

Hence, at a glance, the NPE 1986 adopted and promoted an active and interventionist approach, where education was regarded as the sole medium for women's empowerment, which could be achieved by setting targets to remove women’s illiteracy and emphasising a gender-sensitive curriculum and removing sex stereotyping in vocational and technical courses. It also supported mandate-specific support systems like scholarships, hostel facilities, adult education, etc. Lastly, it incentivised female education by aiming to reserve 50% female teacher recruitment in future elementary level appointments and encourage girls' enrollment. Therefore, to implement these proposals of the NPE 1986, the Government of India launched several programs, namely ‘Operation Blackboard’, a program launched in 1987 which aimed to improve the quality of primary education and draw more students, particularly girls. The project also primarily aimed at providing at least 2 classrooms in every primary school and essential restrooms for both girls and boys, and appoint at least 50% of all the instructors to be women. Another program, the Mahila Samakhya, was a Government of India women empowerment initiative in 1988. The program endeavoured to create a learning environment where women could collectively affirm their potential and gain the strength to demand information and knowledge. This would help them move forward to change and take charge of their lives^{xvi}.

Besides the above, there were other programs initiated by the government to implement the proposals of NPE, 1986. The government, therefore, stated in the ‘Text of the Government of India resolution’, No. F1 -6 /90-PN (DI) dated 7th May 1990 that “it accords the highest priority to education, both as a human right and as the means for bringing about a transformation towards a more humane and enlightened society”^{xvii}.

In this context, NPE 1986 was reviewed by two committees, namely the Ramamurthy committee 1990 and the Janardhana committee 1991-92. Both these committees, after reviewing the NPE 1986, recommended their own respective modifications to be made in the NPE. While the Ramamurthy committee recommended that the existing disparities in education could be removed by planning for and implementing educational development programs in terms of disaggregated targets and area, community and gender specific activities. The committee also recommended that, in order to promote participation of girls and women in education at all levels, there was a need for an integrated approach in designing and implementing the schemes that would address all the factors that inhibit their education. In this context, special mention may be made of the interaction of early childhood care and education with primary education. Further, the committee proposed that the right to education should be included amongst the fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution of India, and all the socio-economic measures should be taken into consideration, without which the realisation of this right will not be possible.

The Janadarna committee, in its report, concluded that while very little of the NPE policy required reformulation, the POA (programme of action), however, needed to be revised considerably. In reference to female education, the committee recommended that the universalisation of elementary education could be achieved if the central and state governments prioritise and extend total support, which is financial,

administrative and political, which is commensurate with the priority. Also, it stated that free and compulsory education up to the age of 14 can become a reality only through universal enrollment of all children, including girls. Furthermore, the facility of non-formal education for school dropouts, working children and girls who cannot attend schools, improvement of the ratio of primary schools to upper primary schools from the existing 1: 4 to 1:2, ensures more girl enrolment and participation at upper primary stage, and reduction in dropout rates. Lastly, it suggested the improvement of school facilities by revamping Operation Blackboard to be extended to the upper primary level also^{xviii}.

As enumerated in the previous section, in reference to female education, NEP 1986 highlighted the advocacy of female education being an essential component for national development. The education policy also strived towards lowering gender gaps in education. Efforts towards the removal of social and cultural barriers remained the key features in female education. Thus, taking into account the report of both the committees, the NPE 1986 was revised in 1992, which urged the promotion of girls and women in education at all levels through an integrated approach.

The revised NPE 1992 reasserted and reinforced the 1986 NPE vision of making education a medium for women's empowerment by promoting universal access, improved enrollment and retention, expansion of non-formal and adult education, gender sensitive curricula, recruitment of women teachers, vocational and technical education and community participation. Women's empowerment was a new feature reasserted by the revised NPE 1992 by promoting universal access, improved enrollment and retention.

National Education Policy 2020

The NEP 2020 attempts to further the provisions for women empowerment through the introduction of sustainable educational development programmes for the whole of the country.

Aligning with SDG4, the National Education Policy 2020 appeared to be the first education policy of the 21st century aiming towards total revision and revamping the education structure in the country. Out of all the principles of education laid in the NEP 2020, "full equity and inclusion" remained the cornerstone of the educational decisions to ensure that all students are able to thrive in the education system. Regarding female education, NEP 2020 lays emphasis on the 'Equitable Access to Education', which stresses on increasing access to quality education for girls, especially in rural areas. The policy further stressed on the establishment of gender-inclusive infrastructure and financial assistance to meet the socio-economic and financial barriers of the girl students (NEP, Government of India, 2020).

In accordance with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020's objectives, gender-sensitive curricula, safe and inclusive school environments, and targeted interventions such as scholarships and conditional cash transfers to encourage female participation in education are ensured (NEP, Government of India, 2020).

Aiming towards empowering women through education, the policy also focused on other key reforms like 'Skill Development and Vocational Training', highlighting skill-based learning to enhance employability among women, and reducing economic dependency. To curb socio-economic barriers in pursuance of education, reforms like 'Flexibility in Learning' through the provision of open and distance learning ensure women can pursue their education without any restrictions. Also, NEP 2020 entails 'Gender-Inclusive Curriculum and Supportive Policies and Scholarships' as its core objectives in women's education (Lodhi and Verma, 2025, p. 98).

Objectives like 'Supportive Policies and Scholarships to girls' aim towards reducing dropout rates among girls and ensuring continued education at all levels. The focus remained on all stages of education, starting from an early developmental age (Ministry of Education, 2020). The key highlights of the NEP 2020 on the need for vocational training and skill development programs for women also open doors for better access in employment and enable overall economic growth. The NEP 2020 also includes focused areas like the introduction of adaptable and flexible competency-based learning, inclusion of digital education, and the incorporation of gender specific training programs for teachers. These strategies further strengthen its commitment to reducing gender disparities in education (Nanda, 2021).

Nath and Saikia (2021) in their study on 'Educational Provisions of NEP 2020 related to Women and their development' mentions that education, as one of the prime necessities of each individual, should reach the remotest places. In addition to this provision quality education to be ensured for all socio-economically

disadvantaged groups (SEDGs), which includes all female students.

In this context, it can be seen that the education system in India has incorporated certain female-related educational schemes like 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, CBSE scholarship scheme, National scheme of incentives to girls for secondary education- especially for Sc/ST students, Girl child protection scheme, Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana, and Balika Samriddhi Yojana '. Further, in NEP 2020, suitable educational arrangements in Kasturba Balika Vidyalaya, Jawaharlal Navodaya Vidyalaya, and Kendriya Vidyalaya are stated for the girls from socio-economically backward areas (Nath and Saikia, 2021).

In addition to the above objectives, the NEP 2020 assure to constitute a 'Gender-Inclusion Fund'. The main aim of this is to make the country competent to dispense equitable quality education for all girls as well as transgender students. Gender-Inclusion Fund' will be generated through the States as determined by the Central government. This fund aids female and transgender children in obtaining facilities such as proper sanitation and toilets, bicycles, conditional cash transfers, etc. in education. Furthermore, the funds allow the state authority to assist in scaling up the community-based interventions that support in suppressing specific barriers to female and transgender children's access to education (NEP, Government of India, 2020).

NEP 2020, as a policy of the 21st century, tries to address the gender gap in total. Consequently, the provisions and strategies developed through the NEP 2020 have nationwide applicability, especially in all government educational institutions and organisations.

Conclusion

The discourse surrounding Female Education in India has been extensive, showcasing a multitude of initiatives driven by various committees, commissions, and education policies over the years. An essential conclusion from this analysis is the urgent need to eliminate the gender gap in education through decisive strategies. Educational policies have actively sought to confront the gender gap at all levels, implementing a range of gender equality measures. These initiatives prioritize the establishment of centres of excellence for gender equality and enforce affirmative strategies to eradicate disparities in education. In alignment with the global education agenda, the "Agenda for Sustainable Development" by UNESCO, India has implemented the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020). This transformative policy redefines the entire education system, rigorously addressing female education, tackling the gender gap, and advancing gender equity policies. Through these assertive measures, NEP 2020 is poised to significantly enhance female education across the nation.

Endnotes

ⁱ C.P.S Chauhan, Modern Indian Education: Policies, Progress and Problems, pp. 250 (Kanishka Publishers, New Delhi 110002, 2007).

ⁱⁱ Provatansu Maiti and Prabhat Kumar Saha, Modern India 1707 AD- 1947 AD, p .490 (Sreedhar Publishers, Kolkata 7 00006, September 2012).

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.,p. 490.

^{iv} The 19th-century industrial revolution in Europe had its impact on Indian society also. Because of economic reasons, women had to work in factories along with men, which in turn generated and strengthened the need of educating women.

^v C.P.S Chauhan, Modern Indian Education: Policies, Progress and Problems, p. 251 (Kanishka Publishers, New Delhi 110002, 2007).

^{vi} J. C. Aggarwal, Landmarks in the History of Modern Indian Education, 6th Edition, p. 51 (Vikash Publishing House Private Limited, Noida 201 301, UP 2007).

^{vii} Ibid.,p.62.

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- x Jagannath Mohanty, Modern Trends in Indian Education, 2nd revised and enlarged edition, p.3 (Deep and Deep Publication Private Limited, Daryaganj, New Delhi 11 0002, 2004).
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- xiv Ibid.pp.347.
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