

স্মৃতি গ্রন্থ



হীৰক জয়ন্তী অধিবেশন
অসম কলেজ শিক্ষক সংস্থা
১১-১৫ জুন, ২০০৯ চন

SOUVENIR



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উপভাষাত 'কটি' শব্দৰ অৰ্থ হ'ল গুহ্যদ্বাৰ। কিন্তু দৰঙী উপভাষাত পৰিস্থিতি বা প্ৰসংগ অনুসৰি 'কটি' শব্দটোৱে 'পিছ' অৰ্থও প্ৰকাশ কৰে। যেনে : সি মোৰ কটিত লাগি থাকে কিয়া ? (সি মোৰ পিছত লাগি থাকে কিয় ?)।

প্ৰত্যেক ভাষাতে কথা কওঁতে আপেক্ষিক সুৰৰ প্ৰয়োগ লক্ষ্য কৰা যায়। কিছুমান ভাষাৰ শব্দৰ প্ৰতিটো অক্ষৰৰ সুৰ নিৰ্দিষ্টকৈ বন্ধা থাকে। অক্ষৰৰ এই নিৰ্দিষ্ট সুৰৰ পৰিৱৰ্তনে শব্দৰ অৰ্থৰ পৰিৱৰ্তনো ঘটায়। এনে ভাষাক সুৰীয়া ভাষা বোলে। কিন্তু কিছুমান ভাষাত প্ৰত্যেক শব্দৰ অক্ষৰৰ সুৰলৈ লক্ষ্য নাৰাখি সমস্ত বাক্যটোৰ সুৰৰ প্ৰতিহে লক্ষ্য ৰখা হয়। সমগ্ৰ বাক্যৰ যি সুৰ সমষ্টি তাক সুৰলহৰ (Intonation) বোলা হয়। "সুৰ লহৰেও ভাষা এটাৰ বাক্য বা শব্দৰ অৰ্থৰ সলনি কৰিব পাৰে। বাক্যৰ বিৰামৰ কাৰণেও দৰঙী উপভাষাত অৰ্থান্তৰ ঘটা দেখা যায়। যেনে :

সি খাবালেগি আইছি। (সি খাবলৈ আহিছে।)

সি খাবালেগি আইছি। (শিকাবলৈ আহিছে।)

[ইয়াত 'সি খাবালেগি' শব্দত 'শ' ধ্বনি হ'ব লাগিছিল। যিহেতু এই উপভাষাত মাত্ৰ এটা শিশ্ ধ্বনিহে উচ্চাৰণ হয়, সেয়েহে ইয়াত 'স' আৰু 'শ' ধ্বনিৰ পাৰ্থক্য দেখুওৱা হোৱা নাই।]

আকৌ

সি কি ল'বো/ল'বু ? (সি কি ল'ব ?)

সি কিল'বো/কিল'বু। (সি কিলাব।)

সেইদৰে-

সি ঘৰ পালাযাই। (সি ঘৰ পালেগৈ।)

সিঘৰ পালাযাই। (সিঘৰ পালেগৈ।)

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সভ্যতাৰ জন্ম হয় শৃঙ্খলতাৰ মাজত,
বিকাশ হয় স্বাধীনতাৰ মাজত,
মৃত্যু হয় অৰাজকতাৰ মাজত।

- উইল ডুবাণ্ট

WOMEN'S EDUCATION IN INDIA THROUGH AGES

□ Dr. Parimal Kumar Datta

pre-Vedic period is an index of the exalted position of women.

Women's education in the ages of the Vedas-

অয়মাত্মা ব্ৰহ্মা - The Atman is Brahman.
সৰ্বং খল্বিদং ব্ৰহ্মা - Verily all this is Brahman. There is no distinction between man and man. These noble ideas are the bases of women's education in the Vedic period. Home was the main centre of education of girls. The Atharvaveda Says, "ব্ৰহ্মাচৰ্য্যেণ কন্যা, যুৱান্ বিন্দতে পতিম্". Girls should observe Brahmacharya. Women received highest education and were called Brahmavadinis and Sadyovadhush. The Brahmavadinis were given Brahmasutras and were allowed to study the Vedas and utter Savitri Mantra -

পূৰ্বকালে কুমাৰীণাং মৌজীবন্ধনম্ ইয্যতে
অধ্যাপনং চ ৰেদানাং সারিত্ৰীৰচনং তথা ॥
Sadyovadhush were given the Brahmasutras and married -

সদ্যোবধূনাং তু উপস্থিতে বিবাহে কথঞ্চিৎ উপনয়নং
কৃৎৱা বিবাহঃ কাৰ্য্যঃ
They took part in sacrifices along with their husbands and were called Patni.

Curriculum for women consisted of the Vedas, Dance, Music, Fine Arts, Embroidery, Dyeing, Weaving, Doll and Basket making and Military training.

This period produced a good number of women personalities like Vishwavara, Romasha, Lopamudra, Ambhrini Vak, Juhu, Paulomi,

INTRODUCTION :

বিদ্যা সমস্তান্তৰ দেৱি ভেদাঃ।

স্ত্ৰিয়ঃ সমস্তাঃ সকলা জগৎসু ॥

All the various knowledges, O Goddess, are portions of you, as is each and every woman in the various worlds.

The present position of women in India reminds us of this hymn of Durgasaptasati. The irresistible journey of Indian women into all directions makes everyone astonished - "If a person who died a hundred years ago came to life today, the first and most important change that would strike him is the revolution in the position of women." It is education which has made Indian women all-pervading and all-conquering. Women education in India began its glorious journey at the very dawn of civilization, passed through the low points of the medieval period, created an eddying flow in the British period and is now about to reach the zenith of excellence. Let us have only glimpses into the long history of women's education of the religio-philosophical and historical periods of India.

Women's education in the Pre-Vedic ages-

We have little knowledge about the system of women's education in the Mahenjodaro and the Harappa civilizations. The cult of the Mother Goddess that existed in the

Ghosh, Jarita, Kokshivati, Shraddha etc. The Rgveda contains hymns by as many as twenty-nine women seers.

During the later part of the Vedic period, women could not enjoy all the privileges that they got earlier. "Women were taught some of the fine arts like dancing and singing, which were regarded as accomplishments unfit for men." Gargi and Maitreyi were the most learned personalities of that period.

Women's education in the ages of Jainism and Buddhism -

Rishabhadeva, the first Tirthankara, stressed on much importance on women's education in his advice to his daughters Brahmi and Sundari. Women flocked to the Bhikshus and the Acharyas during the Chaturmasas and received education. Pataliputra, Udayagiri, Giriner and Khandigiri were famous for higher centres of learning of the Jaina period. Famous women scholars of the Jain period were - Brahmi, Sundari, Rajimati, Chandanabala, Mrigavati, Puspachula, Prabhavati, Sulasa, Shiva and Padmavati.

Buddha was not in favour of the entry of women into monasteries at the initial stage. Due to the insistence of Ananda, he permitted about 500 women along with his step mother for admission into the Viharas. But strict rules were enforced on them. Though Buddhist literature does not speak much of the system of education of Bhikshunis, there are some references to the education of new-comer Bhikshunis. Dormitories for female students were also prevalent. Higher education was reserved only for women of higher social order. Highly educated women undertook teaching work and were known as Upadhyayas. Besides Buddhist scriptures, they were taught criticism

(Mimamsa), Vedanta, Ayurveda, Literature and Political Science. It could not reach the doors of the women of common people like the peasants, labourers, artisans, craftsmen and ordinary traders. The Vedic system of Upanayana was abolished and early marriage gave a serious blow to the women's education.

Women's education in this period gave birth to a large number of women philosophers, administrators, religious missionaries and poetesses. Sanghamitra, sister of Ashoka the Great, went to Ceylon to spread Buddhism. Shubha, Anupama and Sumedha took the vow of life long celibacy. Shilabhatarika, Prabhudevi and Vijayanka were of high poetic talents. Nayanika, Prabhavati Gupta and Badami are famous in the history of India for their efficient administration.

Women's education in the ages of Sutras, Smritis, Puranas, Epics, Bhakti Cult, Sikhism and Tantra-

Manu says,

যত্র নার্যাস্তু পূজ্যন্তে, বমন্তে তত্র দেবতা:।
যত্রৈতাস্তু ন পূজ্যন্তে সর্বাস্তত্রাফলা: ক্রিয়া: ॥

Where women are honoured, there the gods revel; where they are not honoured, all religious acts become futile.

Vashistha says,

'The teacher is ten times more venerable than a tutor; the father, a hundred times more than the teacher; but the mother is a thousand times more than the father'

Here we also are happily reminded of another dictum of Manu -

উপাধ্যায়ান্ দশাচার্য্য আচার্য্যানাং শতং পিতা।
সহস্রস্তু পিতৃন্মাতা গৌৰবেনাতিবচ্যতে ॥

An Acharya excels ten Upadhyayas in glory, a father excels a hundred Acharyas, but a

mother excels a thousand fathers.

In spite of these views of the Smritikaras, the condition of women's education in this period was gloomy. During the period of the Sutras and Smritis, women were bracketed with the Shudras and denied the right to study the Vedas. They were only taught subjects connected with household affairs.

In the ages of the Ramayana, women were taught in royal palaces under the guidance of Acharyas. Kaushalya, Sita, Anasuya and Shramani Shabari were highly educated.

In the ages of the Mahabharata, the celebrated Brahmavadinis were Sulabha, Brahmani, daughter of Sandilya and Shiva. Far more numerous are the instances of learned women who were taught various subjects by renowned Acharyas. Mention may be made only of Gandhari, Kunti, Draupadi, Savitri, Damayanti, Shakuntala and Satyabhama.

In the Puranic period, India produced many illustrious women scholars like Madalasa and Devahuti.

The Bhakti Cult inspired women to drink the nectar of knowledge. This cult produced great scholars and saint poetesses Mira Bai in the Bhakti cult period.

Soon after the Bhakti movement, Guru Nanak, founder of Sikhism, stressed on women's education and allowed women to lead religious assemblies.

The ideals of Tantra philosophy speak of the exalted position of women in the Tantric period. Srividyanava Tantra says.

স্ত্রিয়ো দেবা: স্ত্রিয়: প্রাণা: স্ত্রিয় এর হি জীৱিতম্

Women are gods and goddesses, souls and lives.

Kaulavalinirnaya Tantra says -

স্ত্রীময়ঞ্চ জগৎসৰ্বম্

Women are parts of Devi.

Education was given much importance in this period as Tantric cult allows women's free entry to all the Tantric rituals. Women were imparted almost all kinds of education existed in that period.

Mahanirvana Tantra Says -

কন্যাপোষং পালনীয়া শিক্ষণীয়াতিবহুত:

Girls should also be properly educated.

The entire Gupta period falls under the flourishing period of Tantra when the mother cult of Tantra spread throughout the country. During this period, some of the women became accomplished poetesses and authorities on belles - letters. Four vedas, Puranas, Upa-Vedas, Philososhies, Kamashashtras, Political Science and Literature were included in the education of women. Detailed accounts of women's education as well as of the prostitutes are given in Vatsyayana's Kamasutra.

'The story of Princess Kadambari and Mahashweta in Bana's prose romance and that of Kamandaki in Bhavabhuti's great drama seem to suggest the existence of regular institutions where girls received their training, sometimes in the company of male students.'

Women's education in the ages of Islamic rule-

(a) Pre - Mughal Period

During the reigns of Slave, Khilji, Tughalaq, Saiyad and Lodi dynasties, princesses and girls of aristocratic families were educated at their own homes. Sultana Razia who was a learned woman became the first woman ruler in Delhi.

(b) Mughal Period

There were no separate educational institutions for girls during this period. Girls had

to go to the boy's schools if they at all wished to get education. They were allowed to go to Makhtab for primary education. Strict Purdah system stood in the way of Muslim women's education. The royal Muslim ladies were imparted education at their homes. No special attention was paid to the education of common women of general masses. Hindu kings and nobles paid attention to the education of their women. Among the rulers of the Mughal period, only Akbar tried to arrange education on a systematic basis. Monserrate writes,

"Akbar paid great care and attention to the education of princesses. They were taught to read and write and were trained in other ways by matrons." The curriculum for girls was mainly the study of religious books and Home Science.

In spite of this condition of women's education, this period witnessed the appearance of women scholars and literateurs like Nurjahan, Mumtaz Mahal, Gul Badan, Salima, Jahanera Begum and Zebunnisa.

Women's education in the ages of Pre-East India Company and East India Company rule-

Rabindra Nath Tagore welcomed the exchange of knowledge between the East and the West in his poem 'Bharatatirtha' -

পশ্চিম আজি খুলিয়াছে দ্বাৰ, সেথা হতে সবে আনে উপহাৰ,
দিবে আৰ নিবে, মিলাবে মিলিবে, বাবে না ফিৰে -
এই ভাৰতৰ মহামানৱৰ সাগৰতীৰে ॥

It so happened with the advent of the European nations. A new era began in the education of women in India. The Portuguese may be considered as the originators of the modern system of women's education. The Portuguese missionaries, the Dutch, the Dane

missionaries and the French established educational institutions in the different parts of India.

Private individuals and societies started girls' schools at several places. The establishment of Bethune school, Calcutta in 1849 A.D. gave an impetus to the Indian people to start similar institutions. When the East India Company came to the power after the Battle of Plassey in 1757, it did not pay any attention to women's education perhaps because lady clerks and officers were not required for administrative purposes. "It is surprising to note that not a single pie out of the educational grant of 1813 was spent on girls' education."

It was only in 1854 that Government partially recognised women's education as a branch of state system of education. The Wood's Educational Despatch recommended for grants-in-aid to private girls' schools.

A number of state training centres for lady teachers were established. Calcutta University threw the Matriculation Examination open to girls in 1877 and restrictions for appearing at other university examinations were removed in 1878.

Women's education in the ages of the British rule -

The recommendations of the Indian Education Commission (1882), educational reforms of Lord Curzon (1904), suggestions of the Government of India's resolution on Educational Policy (1913), recommendations of the Calcutta University Commission (1917-19), the suggestions of the Hartog Report (1929) and the Sargent Report (1944) made a tremendous impact on women's education in India. The Educational Department took many active steps and devised new plans for spreading women's

education. There was a sharp rise in private efforts. Separate schools for girls, transport facilities for girls, appointment of lady teachers and school inspectresses, offering incentives, introduction of the subjects suitable for girls, liberal grants to private girls' schools, providing lady teachers with trainings, establishment of professional schools and colleges for girls' etc. made revolutionary changes in women's education during this period.

Moreover, the attempts of noble hearted persons for spreading women's education, the contemporary women's movement in Europe and America, role of religious voluntary organisations and the women's associations, the national movement and woman laws enacted in that period contributed a good deal to the growth of women's education. Tables show the rapid progress of it during 1881-82 to 1901-02 and 1921-22 to 1946-47.

Contributors towards the growth of women's education in India during the pre-independence period

Women's education was patronized and encouraged by many individuals, personalities, private agencies, societies and non-government voluntary organisations. This list includes only a few of those contributors -

Individuals - Rev. May, Miss Cooke, Mrs. Wilson, Lady Amherst, Drinkwater Bethune, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Miss Mary Carpenter, Mrs. Annie Besant, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Sister Nivedita, Jyotirao Phule, Maganbhai Karamchand, Durgaram Mehtaji, Anundoram Boruah, D. K. Karve, Lady Hyderi, Lady Ismail, Jehan Begum, Mrs. Sakhawat Hussain, Khwaja Altaf Hussain Hali, Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah, Radhakanta Handique,

Associations and societies - Indian Women's Association, Bharat Stri Mahamandal, Maharashtra Female Education Society, Anjuman - i - Khwateen - i - Deccan, Young Women's Christian Association,

Non-Government voluntary Organisation- Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj and Ramakrishna Mission.

Women's education in the independent India-

India won her freedom in 1947. Then it was realised -

"There can not be an educated people without educated women. If general education had to be limited to men or to women that opportunity should be given to women, for them it would most surely be passed on the next generation."

So the recommendations and reports of the University Education Commission (1948), Secondary Education Commission (1952-54), National Committee on Women's Education (1958), Sri Hamsa Mehta Committee (1962), Sri Bhakta vatsalam Committee (1963), the Education Commission (1964) and the New Education Policy (1986) made significant developments in women's education. Rapid growth of educational institutions for girls, increase in enrolment of girls in co-educational institutions and educational institutions for girls, increase in women literacy and entry of girls into vocational, technical and professional courses indicate the upward trend of progress in women's education. Tables and charts show the unbelievable development of women's education during the post-independence period.

Women's education in Assam- Assam, land of ancient civilization and

Tantric cult, made considerable progress in women's education after 1947. But the Baptist missionaries were the pioneers of modern education of women in Assam. They established the first primary school for girls in 1839. Their educational activities inspired the indigenous people. A large number of educational institutions for girls and co-education institutions were opened in different parts of Assam. The first girls' high school was established in 1916 in Dibrugarh. Lady Keane, the first girls' college in Assam and Radhakanta Handique Girl's College, the first girls' college in the Brahmaputra valley were set up in Shillong in 1933 and in Gauhati (Now Guwahati) in 1939 respectively. The national movement gave a great impetus to the development of women's education in Assam. In the post-independence period, there was a steady and comparatively rapid expansion of the education of women at all levels. Tables show its rapid development.

Darkness under the Lamp-

In spite of healthy development of women's education, gender discrimination still persists in India. The gap in the male-female literacy is just a simple indicator. While the male literacy rate is 75.85% according to 2001 census, the female literacy is just 54.16%. Compared to boys, far fewer girls are enrolled in the schools and many of them drop out.

In urban India, girls are nearly at par with the boys in terms of education. But in rural India girls continue to be less educated than boys. The condition of education among scheduled castes and scheduled tribes women is disheartening. In 1996-97 the all India proportion of SC/ST women students was very low. The SC women constituted only 2.4 percent, while ST women were 0.9 percent of

the total enrolment. Women's education suffers from many ills, faces many problems and passes through many obstacles. Those can be cured of, solved and removed respectively by adopting effective measures as suggested by various well-known committees and commissions set in the country from time to time.

Conclusion-

Of course, the percentage of women in commerce, law, polytechnics, computer courses, information technology and in other job-oriented courses is increasing day by day. Women have crossed all the barriers in order to enter the world of education. We can watch their movements in all the departments of learning. We can hear the sound of their victorious footsteps at each and every faculty. They make others know their presence in arts, science, commerce, agriculture, veterinary, medicine, law, engineering, polytechnic and other job-oriented courses. But the remarkable trend of the blind imitation of the present 'disintegrating West' among the educated women in India has been a growing problem in our traditional society. Indian women may reach the zenith of progress with the help of the knowledge of both the East and the West.

To sum up we may quote a famous scholar - "In the West the status of women was raised after the introduction of the Christian worship of Mary-the Mother. But the prominent role is the worship of youth and beauty. India through ages established the worship of God as Mother in the family and in the society, which evidently is the result of the worship of God as the Mother. The new world order is coming. The barriers of country and culture and race are slowly being obliterated. Swami Vivekananda believed that the contact of the Eastern Motherhood and the Western Wifehood will be

harmoniously developed to the advantage of both."

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All India Progress of Women's Education, 1881-82 to 1901-02

Type	1881-82		1901-02	
	Institute	Enrolment	Institute	Enrolment
Arts & Science College	1	1	12	169
Professional College	-	-	-	-
Secondary Schools	81	82,954	422	90,075
Primary Schools	26,000	84,491	5,305	3,44,712
Training Schools	15	515	45	1,253
All other special schools	-	-	17	1,117

All India Girls under Instruction 1921-22 to 1946-47

Institutions	1921-22	1931-32	1941-42	1946-47
Primary Schools	1,087,131	1,944,070	3,123,643	2,715,230
Secondary Schools	124,954	196,170	410,333	442,503
Arts & Science Colleges	1,207	20,685	11,778	16,284
Professional Colleges	266	521	1725	2468
Professional Schools	19,570	17,568	40,869	38,375

Figure for 1921-22 to 1941-42 relate to former British India while those from 1946-47 are for post partitioned India less former Indian states.

All India Girl's enrolment in Primary Middle & High Schools 1946-47 to 1986-87

	<u>Primary</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>High</u>
1946-47	34,75,195	321,509	280,772
1901-02	3,45,397	34,386	10,309
1980-81	2,85,00000	88,00000	35,000
1986-87	3,61,00,000	1,02,00,000	54,00,000

All India Enrolment of Women in University Education (All levels included)

	<u>1960-61</u>	<u>1970-71</u>
Arts	1,19,687	4,21,850
Science	31,696	1,68,540
Commerce	831	12,675
Education	6,230	20,799
Eng/Tech	403	910
Medicine	7,714	22,296
Agriculture	124	169
Veternary Science	38	44
Law	815	2,626
Others	2,917	5,913

All India Women teachers in in Schools (Primary, Middle, High/Higher)

1950-51 to 1980-81

	Primary	Middle	High/Higher
1950-51	82,281	12,887	19,982
1960-61	126,788	83,532	62,347
1970-71	224,610	174,506	155,424
1980-81	339,793	256,786	249,288

Percentage of literacy in India

	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
Male	27.16	40.40	45.96	56.38	64.13	75.85
Female	8.86	15.35	21.97	29.76	39.29	54.16

ENROLMENT OF FEMALE STUDENTS BY STAGE IN ASSAM, 2004-05

Pre-Primary	Primary	Middle	High School	Higher Secondary	Jr. College
316272	1716626	652661	275000	49604	14970

NUMBER OF FEMALE TEACHERS IN ASSAM, 2004-05

Pre-Primary	Primary	Middle	High School	Higher Secondary	Jr. College
199	28878	17328	14267	6002	523

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Contemporary Challenges to Higher Education in India

□ Dr. Akhil Ranjan Dutta

Introduction

Higher education in India today is at the cross-road. On the one hand the Indian government is committed to convert India into a knowledge economy; on the other hand the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in the country is miserably low i.e. around 11 percent. Indian government talks about ensuring access to higher education to each and every aspirant of its citizens, however, higher education is becoming more and more inaccessible due to reduction in public investment in higher education as well as increasing poverty under the neo-liberal development paradigm. India government also asserts to link up higher education with human development, but at the same time the critical social discourses having implications on creative debates on democracy and development are not getting due patronage from the government. The government now declares to increase investment in education in general and higher education in particular, but there is growing disparity in terms of distribution of resources among the central universities and institutions and that of state universities, its affiliated colleges and also its institutions of higher learning and research.

All these constitute a challenge towards quantitative and qualitative expansion of higher education in India today. This paper attempts to highlight on some of those challenges.

Eleventh Five Year Plan Vision of Higher Education-

The Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-12) of India

prioritize higher education as one of the important challenges for the country and so it declares that long-term goal of India today "is to set India as a nation in which all those who aspire good quality higher education can access it, irrespective of their paying capacity." Accordingly the Plan document states that "expansion, inclusion, and rapid improvement in quality throughout the higher and technical education system by enhancing public spending, encouraging private initiatives, and initiating the long overdue major institutional and policy reforms will form the core of the Eleventh Five Year Plan." (*Eleventh Five Year Plan, Volume II, p 22*)

Such a statement comes in the backdrop of the miserable achievement of higher education in India which is worse in comparison not only with the high developed countries but even among the middle and low developed countries. Available information reveals that the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education in India is as low as 11 percent. Besides, the higher education is not inclusive in its nature as the representation of marginalized categories like STs and SCs and also women in higher education is lower compared to their proportion in population.

Acknowledging this miserable failure the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-12) points out that India's GER in higher education is very low compared to the world average of 23.2%, 36.5% for the countries in transition, 54.6% for

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