

# Women Development through Education: A Comparative Study of Two Himalayan States based on Survey

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“Education by which character is formed, Strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded and by which one can stand on one’s own feet”

**Swami Vivekananda**

The above quoted words of Swami Vivekananda reveal that education is one of the important factors for improvement in the status of women, their empowerment and social mobility. Women education is the backbone of social development and the essence of civilization. In fact women’s participation in work is not a new phenomenon. From the ancient times, from medieval age till now, they have been working in the fields and domestic industries, shoulder to shoulder with their fathers, brothers, husbands and sons. While underlying the importance of women’s education Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru had very rightly said that “Education of a boy is education of one person, but education of a girl is the education of the entire family”. Mother’s education influences her children more than father’s in terms of securing resources. With higher level of education, women tend to have lower fertility rates, improved nutrition, and increased use of health services for themselves and their children. Additionally, education serves as a predictor of better employment opportunities because educated women participated more in the labour force and earn higher income. Among education indicator, enrollment and literacy rates are most commonly used to measure women’s status and progress of women’s empowerment. Socio- economic impact of female education constitutes a significant area of research. Increase in the amount of female education in regions tends to correlate with levels of development. Hence women’s education is one of the major explanatory variables behind the rates of social and economic development, and has been shown to have a positive correlation with both. So this is an important and unavoidable objective of the present research paper.

The need to bring women into the mainstream of development had been a national concern since independence. Article 15 of the Indian Constitution prohibits any discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex etc and article 15 (3) however clarifies that this provision will not prevent the state from making any special provision for women and children. Soon after independence when planned economic development became a necessity for increased production, employment and for abolition of poverty, the Third and Fourth year plans accorded a high priority to education of women. The Fifth year plan supported the economic development, employment and

training for women as the principal focus for the overall socio-economic development of the society at large. Immediately after independence, the Government of India forms a major national commission focusing on higher education known as the University Education Commission. This Commission was headed by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. The major contribution of the commission was that it recommended that the number of women’s colleges in the country should be increased. There were less than a hundred women’s colleges in the country when the commission submitted its report. Today there are more than fifteen hundred. In 1958- 59 the government of India appointed a National Commission for Women. The commission recommended special hostels, syllabus for women and specified that these syllabus should focus on creating the right attitude among them. The recommendations of the commission led to the establishment of the National Council for Girls, the establishment of a comprehensive Department Plan for Women to the allocation of special funds for women in the Central and State Ministries of Education and the establishment of separate unit for the educational needs of women. It looked carefully into the needs for the occupation in which women were preferred and pointed out that qualified women were needed in large numbers to function as pre- primary school teachers, nurses, midwives, women doctors and social workers. On this basis, it recommended the promotion of education for women in these fields.

However, since the seventies onwards, there is a visible change. The National Policy on Education (1986) made a strong commitment to a well conceived edge in favour of women as an act of faith and social engineering. The Eighth Five Year Plan of the country launched in 1991 categorically stated that education of women is imperative in order to improve health and nutrition levels in the country and to succeed with the country’s efforts to control its population explosion. The impact of this can be seen in 1991 Census with women’s literacy rate of 9.54 per cent against 7.76 percent of men.

**Initiatives of educational development in the state of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand:**

## Elementary Education

Article 21-A of the constitution of India and its consequent legislation, the right of children to free and Compulsory education (RTE) Act, 2009/ SSA (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan) became operative in the country on first April 2010. This

Volume 8 Issue 5, May 2019

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development implies that every child has a right to elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality in a formal school which satisfies certain essential norms and standards. The reform processes initiated in 2010-2011, pursuant to this important development, were continued during the year 2011-2012, 2012-13, 2013-14, & 2014-15. All States/UTs have notified their State RTE Rules.

The programmes for universalisation of elementary education will be specially directed towards higher enrolment and retention of girls in schools. The second five year plan provided free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years. Allocation for elementary education in the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007) at Rs. 28,750 crore is 75 per cent higher than the allocation in the Ninth Plan. Resources for elementary education have been augmented through imposition of the education at the rate of 2 per cent on direct and indirect Central Taxes imposed through Finance Act, 2004. With the imposition of the education, budgeted outlay for elementary and adult education more than doubled from Rs. 6000 crore in 2004-05 to Rs.12,535 crore in 2005-2006. Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) indicates the proportion of children in the 6-14 years age group actually enrolled in elementary schools.

The main vehicle for providing elementary education to all children is the ongoing comprehensive programme called Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) launched in 2001-02. The National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level provides additional support by way of girl-child friendly schools, stationary, uniforms, etc. for girl's education in Educationally Backward Blocks and in other areas for elementary education of under privileged and disadvantaged sections. EBBs are block with female literacy below and the gender gap above the national average. Apart from EBBs, NPEGEL is also implemented in blocks of districts which are not covered under EBBs but gave at least 5 per cent SC/ST female literacy is below 10 per cent and also in select urban slum areas. In the Tenth Five Year Plan, an amount of Rs. 1064.80 crore has been earmarked for this programme. Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) Scheme was launched in August 2004 to set up 750 residential schools at elementary level for girls belonging predominantly to the SC, ST, OBC and minorities in EBBs. All 750 KGBVS have been sanctioned by the government to India. Free education for girls is introduced in Navodaya Vidyalaya and Kendriya Vidyalayas up to Twelfth standard. The National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) is an important component of SSA.

#### **Organization of Women International Day**

Women Empowerment through education is an important agenda of SSA. Women empowerment is important for social development of any society. International women day is being celebrated on 8<sup>th</sup> March every year. This event has shown its worth and as such this is being organized with more focused manner. The day is being celebrated in the right earnest at state level wherein community leaders, mainly women, SMC members participated and discussed development and other issues related to women. Interactive

sessions are being organized so that leaders from different walks of life shared their views and understand different women related issues. Selected groups of empowered women from different districts are being invited to share their experiences among all the participants.

#### **Orientation/ Activation of women groups (Shakti)**

A state resource group was constituted for organization of women empowerment related activities, Selected members of gender resource group were got oriented by experts drawn from national level. The services of state Resource group so oriented were utilized to orient district/ block level functionaries in organization of different programmes especially for girls. The members of the different shakti groups at school level were also oriented on the following issues:

- Female foeticide and decreasing sex ratio
- Health and hygiene
- Monitoring of Midday Meals programme at school level.
- Active partnership in organization of Bal Melas at cluster level.

#### **Skill Education**

To improve the skill of girl child and make them confident and self reliant vocational training and life skill education for selected girls of all upper primary school was imparted. This activity was organized as per need and availability of instructors. Education of different life skills have been introduced in districts based on the local needs namely, Karate, yoga training, electrification, horticulture, floriculture handicraft, mushroom production knitting and embroidery cutting and tailoring, book binding, candle making, training in health and hygiene, production of soft toys, embroidery in chamba rumaal, firstaie, yoga, painting, cutting and tailoring, carpet weaving, sewing, computer education and pickle and jam making, judo, karate etc.

#### **Meena Initiatives**

Girl child is being provided with enough opportunities at different levels for her personality development through Meena Manche. Meena Utsav at state level and Meena week/ Balika Saptah at block and cluster level were celebrated once in year. It has resulted in better understanding of girls related issues and also more participate in of girls in different co-curricular activities in schools. Meena Manch at cluster level were activated. Meena Weeks were celebrated in the entire state every year. As a culmination of it. One day state level Meena Utsavs were celebrated. Hundreds of girls from all corners of the state were involved in this event. Children, Parents, members of Mahila Mandal participated in this campaign. Meena booklet was also developed and distributed for effective implementation of Meena initiatives.

Girls' Resource Room and career Counseling Camps: The resource rooms were established in the year 2011-12 in the GSSS of block headquarter where we could use existing infrastructure. This room was equipped with items useful for girls viz. Library books, sports items, first aid/ dispensary items. For specifically women related biological and psychological issues girls room will provide them an opportunity to interact amongst themselves and lady teachers. It will also be a sort of counseling apartments,

giving stress- free environment. Girl’s room will provide girls with a feeling of personal space. It will give them an opportunity to share their problems and confusion with each other. An environment of caring, sharing and growing together will develop them into wholesome personalities. Career Counseling Camps were organized in collaboration with NIIT, ITI and Doctors other departments.

**Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV)**

Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya provides for setting up residential schools at the upper primary level for girls belonging predominantly to the SC, ST, OBS and minority communities. KGBVs are set up in educationally backward blocks, where the female rural literacy was 67.4 per cent as per census 2001 and after a decade (2011) It was increase up to 76.6 per cent clearly indicates the effects of SSA. There are 10 Kasturba Gandhi balika Vidyalaya functioning in Himachal Pradesh. Eight are in district Chamba, one each in district Shimla and **Sirmour**, KGBVs are functioning under model-iii, in which hostel facility is provided in the existing Government schools.

**Educational Infrastructure**

Education is the main role instrument for developing human ability. Education brings number of changes in attitude to works, family size, traditions etc. It is also affects the process of capital formulation through its effect on consumption preference and expenditure on social infrastructure, which helps an economy in achieving rapid economic development and technological progress. Government is committed to provide education for all. So the government has introduced the various programmes such as to encourage the enrolment, reduced the dropout rate and enhance retention rates of the children also various scholarships and other incentives. Therefore, the number of educational institutions in Himachal Pradesh increased considerably from 13,860 in 2000-01 to 18309 in 2010-11. The number of educational institutions per 100 sq. km. of area increased from 25.42 in 2000-01 to 28.9 in 2010-11 and number of educational institutions per lakh of population increased from 232.9 in 2000-10 to 234.0 in 2010-11.

**Educational Institutions (General) in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand (in No.)**

Sr. No.	Institutions*	Himachal Pradesh		Uttarakhand	
		2000-01	2010-11	2000-01	2010-11
1	Primary schools	10633	10767	13845	15746
2	Middle Schools	1673	2303	3341	4379
3	High/Sr. Secondary School	1514	2094	1534	2740
4	Colleges	40	67	74	107
5	Educational institution per100 sq. km. of area	25.42	28.9	35.27	43.57
6	Educational institution per lakh of population	232.9	234.0	222.09	230.34

\*Govt. Institution only

Source:

1. Statistical outline & Abstract of Himachal Pradesh (various issues)
2. State & District level Statistical Diary of Uttarakhand (various issues)

In Uttarakhand the number of educational institutions increases considerably from 18794 in 2000-01 to 22972 in 2010-11. The number of educational institutions per 100 sq. km. of area increased from 35.27 in 2000-10 to 43.57 in 2010-11 and number of educational institutions per lakh of population increased from 222.09 in 2000-01 to 230.34 in 2010-11.

The quantitative expansion of educational facilities is reflected in the improvement in literacy rates as is seen from the following table.

**Literacy Rates in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand**

	Himachal Pradesh		Uttarakhand	
	2001	2011	2001	2011
Male (in %)	86.13	90.83	83.29	88.33
Female (in %)	68.08	76.60	59.63	70.70
Total (in%)	77.13	83.78	71.62	79.63

Source:

1. Statistical Outline & Abstract of Himachal Pradesh (various issues)
2. State & District level Statistical Diary of Uttarakhand (various issues).

In Himachal Pradesh literacy rate increased from 77.13 in 2001 to 83.768 in 2011 and in Uttarakhand literacy rate increased from 71.62 in 2001 to 79.63 in 2011. Literacy rate in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand is more than the all – India figure of 74.04 per cent.

According to 2011 census Himachal Pradesh is having literacy rate 83.78 which is slightly higher than 79.63 of Uttarakhand. According to geographical area the number of educational institutions is slightly higher (43.57) in Uttarakhand as compare to 28.9 in case of Himachal Pradesh during 2010-11. With regard to population the number of educational institution are more (234) in Himachal Pradesh than (230.94) in Uttarakhand.

**District-wise Educational Institutions (general) in Himachal Pradesh**

Sr. No.	Educational Institutions per100 sq.km. of area		%age change	Educational Institutions per lakh of population		%age change
	2001-02	2010-11		2001-02	2010-11	
1 Bilaspur	67.69	73.5	8.59	231.74	224.4	-3.17
2 Chamba	20.97	23.7	13.01	297.25	297.2	0.02
3 Hmirpur	72.09	70.49	-2.22	195.29	173.45	-11.19
4 Kangra	45.35	45.1	-0.56	194.39	171.7	-11.68

5 Kinnour	4.17	4.3	3.12	340.85	326.3	-4.27
6 Kullu	16.03	17.9	11.67	291.63	225.2	22.68
7 Lhaul Spiti	1.92	2.1	9.38	797.62	888.1	-11.33
8 Mandi	58.07	60.8	4.71	295.47	244	-17.42
9 Shimla	42.85	44.7	4.32	356.16	281.8	-20.88
<b>10 Sirmour</b>	<b>35.96</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>33.49</b>	<b>221.5</b>	<b>255.8</b>	<b>15.49</b>
1 Solan	54.28	55.8	2.81	209.96	187.2	-10.85
12 Una	48.24	50.3	4.28	165.74	148.6	-10.35
H.P.	25.42	28.9	13.70	232.9	234.0	0.48

Sources: 1. Statistical Outline & Abstract of Himachal Pradesh (various issues)

**District-wise Educational Institutions (general) in Uttarakhand**

Sr.No.	Educational Institutions per 100 sq.km. of area		%age change	Educational Institutions per lakh of population		%age change
	2001-02	2010-11		2001-02	2010-11	
1 Almora	51.06	52.74	3.30	298.78	313.55	4.95
2 Bageshwar	60.98	72.00	18.08	310.66	352.14	13.36
3 Chamoli	17.75	21.99	23.89	360.46	422.64	17.26
4 Champawat	30.43	34.28	12.66	271.66	264.92	-2.49
5 Degradun	60.23	81.17	34.77	145.06	153.02	5.49
6 Haridwar	61.35	90.47	47.47	100.5	110.8	10.75
7 Nainital	45.06	54.8	21.62	202.12	196.31	-2.88
8 Pithorgarh	21.22	27.7	30.54	331.39	411.33	24.13
<b>9 Pouri Gharwal</b>	<b>48.33</b>	<b>52.85</b>	<b>9.36</b>	<b>362.65</b>	<b>402.61</b>	<b>11.02</b>
10 Rudraprayag	32.26	41.78	29.52	246.02	430.22	74.88
11 TehriGrwal	53.76	66.34	23.41	337.49	408.5	21.05
12 udam Singh Nagar	42.4	50.36	18.78	117.43	104.53	-10.99
13 Uttarkashi	13.18	18.28	38.70	358.28	444.37	24.03
Utatarakhand	35.27	43.57	23.54	222.09	230.34	3.72

Sources:

1. Statistical Outline & Himachal Pradesh (various issues)
2. State and District level Statistical Diary of Uttarakhand.

As above tables reveals that Sirmour district is recording highest (33.49) per cent) increase in educational institutions per 100 sq.km. of area during 2000-02 to 2010-11 and lowest (-2.22 per cent) in district Hamirpur and overall change is estimated to be 13.70 per cent in Himachal Pradesh. During the same period Sirmour district is recording highest increase (15.49 per cent) in educational institutions lakh of population and lowest (-22.78 per cent) increase in district Kullu and overall change is estimated to be 0.48 per cent in Himachal Pradesh.

Similarly, in Uttarakhand Haridwar district is recording highest increase (47.47 per cent) in educational institutions per 100 sq.km. of area during 2000-01 to 2010-11 and lowest (3.30 per cent) in district Almora and overall change is estimated to be 23.54 per cent in Uttarakhand. During the same period Ruder Prayag district is recording highest increase (74.88 per cent) in educational institutions per lakh of population and lowest (-10.9 per cent) in district Udham Singh Nagar and over all change is estimated to be 3.72 per cent in Uttarakhand.

Kangra	80.08	87.54	73.01	14.53	86.49	92.55	80.82	11.73
Kinnaur	72.20	84.30	64.40	19.90	80.77	88.37	71.34	17.03
Kullu	72.90	83.98	60.88	23.10	80.14	88.80	71.01	17.79
L & Spiti	73.10	82.82	60.70	22.12	77.24	86.97	66.50	20.47
Mandi	75.24	85.94	64.82	21.12	82.81	91.51	74.33	17.18
Shimla	79.12	87.19	70.07	17.12	84.55	90.73	77.80	12.93
<b>Sirmaur</b>	<b>70.39</b>	<b>79.36</b>	<b>60.37</b>	<b>18.99</b>	<b>79.98</b>	<b>86.76</b>	<b>72.55</b>	<b>14.21</b>
Solan	76.56	84.75	66.89	17.86	85.02	91.19	78.02	13.17
Una	80.37	87.73	73.18	14.55	87.23	92.75	81.67	11.08
HP total	76.48	85.35	67.42	17.93	83.78	90.83	76.60	14.23

**District wise literacy Rates by Sex and Gender Gap in the State of Uttarakhand (Census 2001)**

**Literacy Rates in Per cent**

Sr. No.	Districts	Persons	Male	Female	Gender Gap
1	Uttarkashi	66.68	84.52	47.48	37.04
2	Chamoli	76.23	89.89	63.00	26.89
3	Ruder Prayag	74.23	90.73	59.98	30.75
4	Tehri	67.04	85.62	49.96	35.66
5	Dehradun	78.96	85.87	71.22	14.65
6	Pauri	77.99	91.47	66.14	25.33
7	Pithoragarh	76.48	90.57	64.14	27.43
8	Champawat	71.11	88.13	54.74	33.38
9	Almora	74.53	90.15	61.43	28.72
10	Bageshwar	71.94	88.56	57.45	31.11
11	Nainital	79.60	87.39	70.98	16.61
12	U.S. Nagar	65.76	76.20	54.16	22.04
13	Haridwar	64.60	75.06	52.60	22.46
	Uttarakhand	71.06	83.3	59.6	23.07

**District wise gender population and literacy rate for two censuses of 2001 and 2011 in H.P.**

District	2001 Census literacy percentage				2011 Census literacy percentage			
	Persons	Male	Female	Gender Gap	Persons	Male	Female	Gender Gap
Bilaspur	77.76	86.04	69.55	16.49	85.87	92.39	78.70	13.49
Chamba	62.91	76.41	48.85	27.56	73.19	84.19	62.14	22.05
Hamirpur	82.56	90.15	75.70	15.35	89.01	95.28	83.44	11.84

### District wise literacy Per cent in Uttarakhand, Census, 2011

Sr. No.	District	Total	Male	Female
1	Uttarkashi	75.97	89.26	62.23
2	Chamoli	83.48	94.18	73.20
3	Rudraprayag	82.09	94.77	70.94
4	Tehri Garhwal	75.10	89.91	61.77
5	Dehradun	85.24	90.32	79.61
6	Pauri	82.59	93.18	73.26
7	Pithoragarh	82.93	93.45	72.97
8	Champawat	80.73	92.65	68.81
9	Almora	81.6	93.57	70.44
10	Bageshwar	80.69	93.20	69.59
11	Nainital	84.85	91.09	78.21
12	Udhamsinghnagar	74.44	82.48	65.73
13	Haridwar	74.62	82.26	65.96

Source: <http://censusindia.gov.in>

It was observed that the State of Himachal Pradesh had continued to lead in the field of maintaining the population growth, improvement in the sex ratio and literacy performance with the implementation of SSA. One is aware of the positive correlation between the literacy especially among the female population and the balance of sex ratio in the districts in Himachal Pradesh over the past few decades as given in the table.

Let us begin with the decadal growth rate for different districts. The growth in all the districts for 2001-2011 periods has been lower than the national average of 17.6 per cent. However, four districts, namely Una, **Sirmour**, Solan and Kullu recorded a growth rate higher than the State average. With the exception of Lahaul-Spiti which recorded a decline of 5.1 per cent in its population for 2011 as compared to 2001 and Kinnaur which recorded a growth rate of 7.61 per cent, Hamirpur district recorded the lowest growth rate of 10.08 per cent, followed by Mandi district at 10.89 per cent. Other districts which include Bilaspur, Chamba, Kangra and Shimla grew at about 12 per cent over the decade. It is a good transition in overall population growth for the State as a whole when we have a compound growth rate of about 1.2 per cent per annum.

The second comment on the above data emerges in the shift occurring in the relative shares of the district-wise population due to differential decadal growth rates witnessed during the period 2001-2011. Eight out of twelve districts have had a decline in their relative share in population whereas the four districts which have recorded a higher decadal growth rate than the State have an increase in their relative share for 2011 census as compared to 2001 census. Mandi district has recorded the highest decline in its relative share for 2011 as compared to 2001 followed by Hamirpur district. On to be dis-incentivized in some form for having neglected the need for arresting the population the negative side, the field is led by Una district recording the highest increase in its relative share for 2011 as compared to 2001. Better performing districts of Mandi and Hamirpur need to be incentivized in the resource allocation scheme whereas the laggards like Una, **Sirmour**, Solan and Kullu need growth. Overall literacy levels in general, and that of the female literacy as given in the table no. .Since the rate of population growth is very strongly correlated to the literacy.

Himachal Pradesh is among the leading States in the country in terms of literacy and therefore, all the districts except Chamba have a higher literacy percentage as compared to the all-India average. Even Chamba is a little over 1 per cent behind the national figure. In terms of intra-State scenario, the districts of Bilaspur, Hamirpur, Kangra, Shimla, Solan and Una have a higher literacy percentage as compared to the State figure. Chamba, Lahauli -Spiti and **Sirmaur** are at the bottom of literacy ladder in the State. Talking of female literacy, the gender gap has come down by 3.7 per cent in 2011 as compared to 2001 for the State as a whole and now stands at 14.23 per cent which is better than the all-India figure of 16.68 per cent. In the descending order starting with the worst, Chamba, Lahaul-Spiti, Kullu, Mandi and Kinnaur have an adverse gender gap which is not only worse than the State average but is even worse than the national figure. We need to remember that the special intervention in terms of identifying the low female literacy districts and designing and implementing district-specific programmes like SSA to remedy the imbalance has already been carried through in the past plans. Have we reaped the harvest? According to the 2001 census, the districts of Chamba, **Sirmour**, Lahaul-Spiti and Kullu were the low female literacy districts in the State context. The gain in female literacy in the 2001-2011 periods has been highest in Chamba district which is close to 14 percentage points followed by 12 in **Sirmour**, 11 in Kullu and only 6 in Lahaul-Spiti. The State average is 9. Do we say that programmes of DPEP and SSA format were better implemented in Chamba and **Sirmour** and to a good extent in Kullu as well whereas these suffered from the planning as well as implementation disabilities in the case of Lahaul-Spiti.

On the literacy front, special female literacy programmes will need to be formulated and put in place for Chamba, Lahaul-Spiti, Kinnaur, Kullu, and **Sirmour**.

Since the school education in the state seems to be in the process of expansion, and every year more and more children are being enrolled in different stages of schooling, it become quite clear that the people of Himachal Pradesh have developed a positive attitude to impart education to their children. However, the figures available indicate that the gap in the educational attainment of the boys and girls still persists, putting women at a disadvantageous position. In this chapter an attempt has been made to evaluate the status of women in terms of their educational attainments.

#### Uttarakhand Basic Education Profile:

Literacy is the first and foremost factor contributing directly to human resource development of the country and shaping the good quality of life. With that direction the State of Uttarakhand stands 14<sup>th</sup> position in the country. Which is mainly due to various interventions adopted by the state Government to steer the progress in the field of education? The State of Uttarakhand has pledged to focus its attention for addressing the quality aspect of education. As per 2001 census, Uttarakhand literacy rate is 71.62 per cent 48.74 per cent as against the national average of male 66.64 per cent, Female 41.90 per cent as against the national average of 601.81 per cent. However, male and female literacy rate are 81.28 per cent and 59.63 percent as against national average

of 75.26 per cent and 53.67 per cent respectively. As per 2001 census, the literacy rate of Schedule Castes in Uttarakhand male 77.26 per cent.

Uttarakhand is comprised of 13 districts. Which include 95 development blocks. 1001 clusters and 7227 village Education Committees (VECs). There are 21 educationally Backward Block (EBB) in the State as per 2001 census. The School Development Management Committees (SDMCs) have been reconstituted under the chairmanship of Headmaster of the school and a teacher as member secretary. Members of the village are represented on the SDMC.

As above table shows, there has been a growth in education in all the districts and this has been due essentially to the higher educational growth rate among the girls. This is evidenced by the fact that growth rate among the girls is more than the average growth rate for boys and girls.

This remarkable increase may be due to the increasing awareness of the value and need for girls education among the people. It may also be due to the fact that the Government of Uttarakhand has made the education of children from the age of 6 to 14 free and compulsory.

However, the midday meal schemes are running into problems due to lack of enough food grains in the ration shops, the high price to be paid by way of labour charges to lift the grains and the difficulty in getting and lifting the gas supply or other fuels, drinking water, etc. It is also doubtful whether the midday meal and other incentives have been able to attract or sustain the children in the schools. One needs to wait for a few more years to see the impact of the midday meal scheme.

**Drop Out:**

Despite the heavy emphasis on girls' education, the dropout rate of girls is quite high. It is 17 percent at the primary school stage and 35 percent at the secondary level. This is indeed a very high rate, and has to be attributed to the load of domestic chores and work on the land that the girls of Uttarakhand are expected to do. They share the burden of mothers in collection of fuel and fodder. Above all they stay back to look after the younger siblings particularly because the mothers and older women leave home early in the morning for cultivation, and collection of fodder and fuel, and animal care.

Technical / Professional Education: The same bright picture of girls' enrolment however is not obtained when it comes to technical and vocational education. The number of polytechnics and vocational institutes is very few and far between, located mainly in the four big cities. Though the state claims to have 66 ITIs and 51 vocational institutes, not even one is dedicated to girls separately. There is no law school, or medical college or courses in journalism. There is one B.Ed College, meant for girls only, possibly on the assumption that girls prefer to be teachers.

The participation of girls in vocational education is very low. It is significant that Uttarakhand does not have a single girls hostel nor any non-formal educational centre. The universities do not run any correspondence courses. The

boys and girls, however, avail 8 IGNOU study centres for correspondence courses.

In the both states, sex discrimination became more obvious when imparting education to their daughters so that they become literate and were able to read and write letters, manage their household property, make them aware about different happenings and developments in the society, increasing the marriage prospects and they perceived that the educated girls would also be able to help their children in their studies. Very few respondents perceived that education would help them to get jobs in the formal organization. In contrast with these, the respondent were of the opinion that education is must for the sons so that they became economically independent and got jobs in the formal organization which would in turn enhance the status of the family, The different reasons advanced by the respondents clearly indicate the prevalence of sex discrimination even though most of the children, irrespective of the sex, were attending the schools. Based on the educational indicators used in the present chapter, it can be concluded that women's education suffered because of the prevalence of values against imparting education to the women as well as a lack of educational facilities. With an improvement in educational facilities, the rate of literacy among the women of the younger generation is fast catching up with their male counterparts. Nevertheless, they are still discriminated against with regard to going outside a village for getting education, as is evident from the rate of drop outs. Though changes are taking place in the attitudes of the respondents, yet sex discrimination is quite evident from their attitude to the reasons which prompted them to send their female children to schools for getting formal education. Awareness Regarding the Education of Surveyed Rural Women in the both States.

**Education Position of Surveyed Rural Women**

**Level of education**

	Himachal Pradesh	%	Uttarakhand	%
Illetrate	75	25	46	15.3
Upto Middle	77	25.6	88	29.3
Upto Matric	80	26.6	78	26
Upto Plus Two	33	11	63	21
Upto Graduation	29	9.6	15	5
Above Graduation	6	2	10	3.3
Total	300	100.0	300	100.0

**Education of the Respondents**

The education of women has a direct link with employment. The level of education determines their job prospects. It is also related to women's aspirations, acceptability, adjustments, attitude values etc. Having acquired the preferred education, they cannot sit at home as an economic obligation on their husbands. Women too want to utilize their education and talent by way of gainful employment as the most important of the influence moving men from traditionalism to modernity in developing countries (Sethi, 1969).

**Attitude towards essential of girl's education**

	Himachal Pradesh	%	Uttarakhand	%
Yes	286	95.3	289	96
No	14	4.6	11	4
Total	300	100.0	300	100.0

As above table shows that 95.3 per cent respondents are in favour of girl's education in case of Sirmour district and 96 per cent rural women respondents from Pouri District are in favour of girl's education, that is very positive step towards women empowerment

#### If school category for any child is two why do they prefer pvt. School

	H.P.	%	Uttarakhand	%
1) Quality education	186	62	202	67.3
2) Infrastructure	86	28.65	88	29.3
3) Distance from home	17	5.6	06	2
4) Any other	11	3.7	4	1.3
Total	300	100.0	300	100.0

The picture of vision to deem son's and daughter's present and future becomes very clear from the above tables where parents think differently about the upbringing of their ward. Responses of rural women regarding their children's educational facilities are interestingly very practical and clear. If one has two children and there is a choice to send one out of two to good school, maximum of the respondent prefer their boy child to that one, but though minimum but essentially good stock of parents prefer to send their girl child to good school reason quoted by them was that son would inherit whatever there was at home so daughter should be equipped with her educational achievements so as to get secure in future. Regarding quality education, infrastructure and other conveniences, around 70 per cent of both surveyed sampled areas choose to send their children to private schools. In accordance with these responses, proud predictions and boasting made by govt. machineries somehow sounds empty vessels. As government is conferring vast amount of budget to primate good educational accomplishments in government school, despite this fact, private schools are gaining people's concern and appraisal. This is amazingly subtle explanation that many choices tune same outpouring about the irresponsible nature and lethargic pertinacious outlook of government school teachers. Though private schools charge more, and government institutions provide more if there is a point of Khichri" and Vardi" only but in terms with mains objective i.e. to provide significant education and knowledge, government schools give less as compared to the good stock provided by private institutions. There is no denying the fact that government is undoubtedly assimilating tremendously handsome plans to enhance educational scenario of education in government schools but availing factors are not receiving that blessing in positive manner.

#### If you can afford education of one child to whom will you prefer?

	Himachal Pradesh	%	Uttarakhand	%
Boy	227	75.6	248	82.6
Girl	73	24.3	52	17.3
Total	300	100.0	300	100.0

Though centre/ State government initiated so many concepts to promote girls' education upliftment, but above table demonstrating their traditional perceptions and situation exhibit startling and pathetic repercussions. There was a question. If they can afford education of one child to whom will they prefer? Girl or Boy. In Sirmour District, 82.6 per cent women would prefer the education for their male child.

Only 17.3 per cent women would take pains to educate their girl child. It seems horrifying that despite all the efforts done by government for the upliftment of girls and mother, the so called well-wishers of the family would not take any interest to educate their girl child. In Pouri Garhwal though women are more educated but only 24 per cent women would prefer for the education of their girl child if there is a question for affordability for the education of one child. 75 per cent women would prefer for the education of their son.

#### Perception or Attitude of surveyed women respondents from both states regarding women's education:

On the basis of above tables an attempt has also been made to find out the level of education which the parents intend to impart to their daughters. The respondent's perceptions pertaining to the reasons for imparting education to the children by sex of the child has also been taken into consideration and it was found that they did not practice any discrimination so far as imparting education to the children is concerned. They did, however, confirm that their daughter's education was adversely affected because they were required to assist them in their daily household chores. The boy, on the other hand, was free from such responsibilities and hence, they could pursue their education uninterrupted. The respondents realized the importance of education in the modern period, and it is for this reason that most of their children and grand children, irrespective of their sex, in the age group of 6 to 16 years were studying in the school. Despite this fact, sex discrimination became evident when the respondents contended that the girls should get education up to the level of intermediate or Plus Two level. Further, they could get this education only if the educational facilities are available in the village. The respondents perceived the problem of providing physical security to young girls if they had to travel on their own to the places outside the villages. They also felt that it was not customary in the region to impart higher education to the daughters. Moreover, they would face a lot of problems in finding out suitable marriage partners for them if they were highly educated.

In the both states, sex discrimination became more obvious when imparting education to their daughters so that they became literate and were able to read and write letters, manage their household property, make them aware about different happenings and developments in the society, increasing the marriage prospects and they perceived that the educated girls would also be able to help their children in their studies. Very few respondents perceived that education would help them to get jobs in the formal organization. In contrast with these, the respondent were of the opinion that education is must for the sons so that they became economically independent and got jobs in the formal organization which would in turn enhance the status of the family. The different reasons advanced by the respondents clearly indicate the prevalence of sex discrimination even though most of the children, irrespective of the sex, were attending the schools. Based on the educational indicators used in the present chapter, it can be concluded that women's education suffered because of the prevalence of values against imparting education to the women as well as a lack of educational facilities. With an improvement in educational facilities, the rate of literacy among the women

of the younger generation is fast catching up with their male counterparts. Nevertheless, they are still discriminated against with regard to going outside a village for getting education, as is evident from the rate of drop outs. Though changes are taking place in the attitudes of the respondents, yet sex discrimination is quite evident from their attitude to the reasons which prompted them to send their female children to schools for getting formal education.

Almost all the respondents in both the state contended that they did not practice any discrimination so far as imparting education to the children is concerned. They did, however, confirm that their daughter's education was adversely affected because they were required to assist them in their daily household chores. The boy, on the other hand, was free from such responsibilities and hence, they could pursue their education uninterrupted. The respondents realized the importance of education in the modern period, and it is for this reason that most of their children and grand children, irrespective of their sex, in the age group of 6 to 16 years were studying in the school. Despite this fact, sex discrimination became evident when the respondents contended that the girls should get education up to the middle level, at the most, to a high school level. Further, they could get this education only if the educational facilities are available in the village. The respondents perceived the problem of providing physical security to young girls if they had to travel on their own to places outside the villages. They also felt that it was not customary in the region to impart higher education to the daughters. Moreover, they would face a lot of problems in finding out suitable marriage partners for them if they were highly educated. So here, in this biased case, education for a girl is deemed as sarcastic and stigmatic.

## Conclusion

The most critical component of women's empowerment is found to be education. It leads to improved economic growth, low fertility rate, health and sanitation and an awareness of factors that disempowered women. Work participation rate and political participation also grows in women's education. The expansion of the market economy and industrialization and globalization brought increased inequalities, resulting in loss of livelihoods, erosion of natural resources and with it decreased women's access to water, fuel, fodder and traditional survival resources.

It may be concluded that though education plays a vital and pivotal role in the development of any nation as a whole and in the empowerment of a woman in general. But this tool can only be spread if economic and social security revolves around in tuning form. As "food is more important than identity. So first of all, Government should take beneficial steps so that poverty eradication may be get and feminization of poverty be totally rooted out. There is no denying the fact that if any family is facing for want of basic needs, its adverse effects are thrashed upon the female elements at home and the total trauma folks over her brittle shoulders. Under these darkling situations, women empowerment can be a far sounding phenomenon. So in order to strengthen her, the social decrepensis and poverty should be hit with good governance and lucrative and

fruitful policies. Only then, education will play a required role and have its repercussion on the women empowerment.