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A STUDY OF POVERTY AND WOMEN'S EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT:

Poverty can be defined as a social phenomenon in which a section of the society is unable to fulfil even its basic necessities of life. Attempts have been made in all societies to define poverty, but all of them are conditioned by the vision of minimum or good life obtaining in society. Poverty entails lack of empowerment, lack of knowledge and lack of opportunities as well as lack of income and capital. Human Capital Theory asserts that education creates skills which facilitate higher levels of productivity amongst those who possess them in comparison with those who do not. Education, then, is costly but it brings associated benefits which can be compared with its costs in much the same way as happens with any investment project. India ranks 132 out of187 countries on the gender inequality index, lower than Pakistan (123) according to the United Nations Development Program's Human Development Report 2013. The purpose of this study is, first, to study the literacy status of women in Kadapa District of Andhra Pradesh. Kadapa is Drought Prone Area, the total district population living in rural areas constitutes 1,903,337, of which males and females represent 959,693 and 943,644 respectively. The sex ratio is 983 females per 1000 males. Literacy rate is 63.15 % as per 2011 Census. Gender wise, male and female literacy stood at 74.72 and 51.49 per cent respectively. Poverty can be defined as a social phenomenon in which a section of the society is unable to fulfil even its basic necessities of life. Poverty is thus both a cause and an effect of insufficient access to completion of quality education.

Key Words Poverty, Women, Education and Drought

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1.0. Introduction:

Human Capital Theory draws links between education and poverty in terms of education as a means of poverty reduction; another significant linkage runs the other way - i.e. the effect of macro- and micro-level poverty on levels of education. At the macro-level, it is generally the case that levels of enrolment correlate with GNP. At the household level evidence suggests that children of poorer households are generally likely to receive less education. According to Human Development Report 1996, the introduction of the Capability Poverty Measure (CPM) which includes female education (in the form of female literacy levels) as part of a composite poverty measurement. In this context, education is seen not just as an 'input' to poverty reduction (in the sense of increasing productivity and incomes) but as an asset which can be realised in terms of 'entitlements' (e.g. to labour, capital, social welfare support). Education - especially basic (primary and lower-secondary) education - helps reduce poverty by increasing the productivity of the poor, by reducing fertility and improving health, and by equipping people with the skills they need to participate fully in economy and society **(World Bank 1995: 1)**.

The 2014 Human Development Report (HDR) presents the Human Development Index (HDI) values and ranks for 187 countries in terms of three basic parameters: to live a long and healthy life, to be educated and knowledgeable, and to enjoy a decent standard of living. India's HDI value for 2013 is 0.586, positioning the country at 135 out of 187 countries and territories—the lowest among the BRICS countries, with Russia at 57, Brazil at 79, China at 91, and South Africa at118, and slightly ahead of Bangladesh and Pakistan. Significantly, while China improved its ranking by ten places between 2008 and 2013, India's position improved by just one rank. Thus a lot remains to be done to bridge the gap.

In this paper, an attempt is made to study Status of women Literacy in Kadapa District, Rayalaseema Region of Andhra Pradesh. Kadapa is Drought Prone Area, cultivation depends on monsoon which is erratic and the average annual rainfall in the district is 696.6 mm which is insufficient for cultivation. Out of 51 Mandals, nearly 38 Mandals considered as Drought Mandals. The data is collected from secondary sources ie., Census of India, Sample Registration System, NSSO Data, Hand Book of Statistics, Kadapa.

The work of Amartya Sen (1992, 2001) has broadened our understanding of poverty by defining it as a condition that results in an absence of the freedom to choose arising from a lack of what he refers to as the *capability* to function effectively in society. This multidimensional interpretation moves far beyond the notion of poverty as being solely related to a lack of financial resources. For example, Sen's viewpoint would suggest that inadequate education could, in itself, be considered as a form of poverty in many societies.

Both absolute and relative poverty are relevant for education. Lack of financial resources may limit school attendance among the absolutely poor in developing countries.

The idea of seeing poverty in terms of poor living is not— emphatically not—new. Indeed, the Aristotelian account of the richness of human life was explicitly linked to the necessity to "first ascertain the function of man," followed by exploring "life in the sense of activity." In this Aristotelian perspective, an impoverished life is one without the freedom to undertake important activities that a person has reason to choose (**D. Rose (1980).** Adam Smith too felt impelled to define "necessaries" in terms of their effects on the freedom to live non impoverished lives (such as "the ability to appear in public without shame").

Because educational quality differs so greatly between countries, recent research that shows the effect of *quality adjusted education* is particularly important **(Barro & Lee, 2001; Hanushek & Kimko, 2000; Hanushek & Zhang, 2006; Hanushek & Wößmann, 2007)**. Such research demonstrates quite conclusively that education of a good quality promotes economic growth. The impact of high and sustained levels of economic growth on a society and on general development can in turn be very large. An increase in the economic growth rate of developing countries can reduce poverty dramatically, as has recently been seen in countries such as China and India. In this way, better education can translate into sustained growth which can reduce poverty drastically.

Londoño (1996) argues that inadequate education has been the most important factor holding back Latin American economic growth and thereby sustaining high levels of inequality and poverty.

The benefits of education result in changes in people's behaviour as a consequence of the knowledge gained. A long list of such benefits can be identified **(Wolfe & Haveman, 2002),** but not all of these changes in behaviour necessarily have an impact on poverty.

Frequently, these benefits to a society are particularly large when female education improves. It is well known, for instance, that lower fertility is strongly linked to higher female education. Mothers' education is also an important determinant of health care and sanitation in a household. This is reflected in, among other things, infant and child mortality levels that are much lower for the children of better educated mothers **(Schultz, 1999).** Better health status (for instance, lower levels of stunting) is in turn translated into greater success at school, thereby bringing positive feedback to education itself in the next generation. Similarly, parental education – and again, particularly that of the mother – also influences the support that parents can give to children, improving the quality and success of education in the next generation.

The education of girls has a further strong and very important effect on the role of women in society. It tends to draw more women into the labour market. This increase in female labour force participation expands income-earning opportunities for many households and better utilises the labour, skills, and talents of women.

The study is here organised into three sections: first section presents the literacy status of women in India , second is focus on the state of Andhra Pradesh and rest of the section reveals that Kadapa District women's literacy status and its impact on poverty.

Hence, women not only earn less than men, but they also have more limited means of changing their conditions. **[Ending Poverty and Bringing Peace through Sustainable Human Development, 1997].** Women also face much gender-stereotypic discrimination as well, such as being prevented by statute from working night shifts and being perceived of needing protection from heavy and dangerous work, low expectations of commitment to long-term employment, and lower levels of basic education **[Joekes, 1995].**

The latest estimates of poverty are available for the year 2011-12. These estimates have been made following Tendulkar Committee methodology using household consumption expenditure survey data collected by the NSSO in its sixty-eighth round (2011-12). Over a span of seven years the incidence of poverty declined from 37.2 per cent to 21.9 per cent in 2011-12 for the country as a whole, with a sharper decline in the number of rural poor (Table 1.1).

Table1.1: Number and Percentage of Poor

Year	Poverty line (in `		No. Of poor (million)			Poverty ratio (per ceent)		
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
2004-05	446.68	578.80	326.3	80.8	407.1	41.8	25.7	37.2
2011-12	816.00	1000.00	216.5	52.8	269.3	25.7	13.7	21.9

***Source*:** Neeti Aayog, * Estimated by Tendulkar Method

POVERTY ESTIMATES:

- The Planning commission has periodically estimated poverty lines and poverty ratios for each of the years for which large sample surveys on Household Consumer Expenditure have been conducted by the NSSO
- These surveys are normally conducted on quinquennial basis
- The last quinquennial survey in this series was conducted in 2009-10 (66th round). Since 2009-10 was not a normal year because of a severe drought the NSSO repeated the large scale survey in 2011-12 NSS 68th round.
- The Planning Commission has updated the poverty estimates for the year 2011-12 as per the methodology recommended by Tendulkar Committee.
- To decide the Poverty line, bundle of goods and services in the consumption pattern observed in the 2011-12 NSS survey (68th round)
- During NSS 68the round (2011-12) data has been collected for 133 food items like cereals, pulses, edible oil, vegetables, milk etc. and 212 non-food items like clothing, footwear, medical expenditure, educational expenditure, durable items, services etc.
- The Poverty lines would vary from state to state because of inter – state price differentials.

- The poverty line has been expressed in terms of Monthly Per capita Consumption Expenditure (MPCE) based on Mixed Reference Period (MRP) for Rural and Urban areas separately.
- The Percentage of persons below the poverty line in 2011-12 has been e in estimated **as 25.7 % in Rural areas, 13.7 in Urban areas and 21.9% for the country as whole.**
- The percentage of persons below the poverty line in 2011-12 has been estimated as **10.96% in Rural areas, 5.81% in Urban areas and 9.20 %** for the **Andhra Pradesh** State as a whole.

2.0.Women's literacy status in India:

In terms of gender equality, which is clearly reveals by **Economic Survey, 2014,** the HDR ranks India 127 out of 152 countries with a Gender Inequality Index (GII) of 0.563. The GII for 149 countries reveals the extent to which gender inequality erodes national achievements in reproductive health, empowerment and labour market participation. A comparison with India's developing country peers in the G20 grouping also shows India in poor light on gender equality issues. Unlike the HDI, a higher GII value indicates poor performance. The Gender Development Index (GDI), defined as a ratio of the female to male HDI measures gender inequality according to three basic parameters of human development: health (LEB) education (expected years of schooling for children and mean years for adults aged 25 years and older); and command over economic resources (estimated GNI per capita). Country rankings are based on absolute deviation from gender parity in HDI. The GDI is calculated for 148 countries. The female HDI value for India is 0.52 as compared to 0.63 for males, resulting in a GDI value of 0.828. In comparison, Bangladesh and China are ranked higher with values of 0.908 and 0.939 respectively.

Another concern is the secular decline in the child sex ratio (CSR– girls per 1000 boys aged 0-4 or 0-6) in India from 976 in 1961 to 918 in 2011; the SRS (2013) reports a figure of 909 for 2011-13. Globally CSR is calculated as boys per 100 girls. Comparatively, in Asia and the Pacific, the CSR (boys per 100 girls aged 0-14) was 110 in 2012, much higher than the sex ratio under natural conditions (105). While China's CSR declied from 121 in 2010 to 117 in 2012, India's CSR increased from 109 to 111 over the same period

Literacy is the first step towards formal education. It refers to the ability to read and write. Female literacy has been improving over the years. The proportion of women who are literate has increased by 15 per cent over the last decade from 39 per cent in 1991 to 54 per cent in 2001 and the recent Census reveals that 65.46 percent. The details is as follows:

Table:2.1 Literacy rate in India (%)

Census Year	Person	Male	Female
1951	18.33	27.16	8.86
1961	28.30	40.40	15.36
1971	34.45	45.96	21.97
1981	43.57	56.38	29.76
1991	52.21	64.13	39.29
2001	64.83	75.26	54.16
2011	74.04	82.14	65.46

Source: Census Data, 2011

Table2.2.: India's Sex Ratio (Females 1000 per Males)

Year	Sex ratio
1901	972
1911	964
1921	955
1931	950
1941	945
1951	946
1961	941
1971	930
1981	934
1991	927
2001	933
2011	940

Source: Census Data

3.0. Andhra Pradesh scenario:

Andhra Pradesh State, annually producing about 140.27 Lakh Metric Tons of Foodgrains (2012-13), is an important State in Nation's Food Production. With about 49.38 Million Population, most of who live in rural areas, agriculture is the main stay of their livelihood. 50.6 % of State's Main workforce is engaged in Agriculture & allied activities and Agriculture and allied Sectors accounts for 27.30 % of Gross State domestic product (GSDP) at current price.

As per the World Agriculture Census (WAC) 2010-11, in Andhra Pradesh 7.62 million farmers of which 86.29% are Small and Marginal Farmers. With more than 50% of un irrigated area under cultivation, agriculture continues to be monsoon dependant, primarily on South West Monsoon (SWM) through which State receives 2/3 of its rainfall. The State with 5 chronically drought prone districts (viz., Ananthapur, YSR Kadapa, Chittoor, Kurnool, and Prakasam) out of 13 districts.

With two distinct geographical regions, Rayalaseema and Coastal Andhra, the State covers an area of 160,204 square KMs accounting for 4.87 % of total area in the country, Coastal Andhra 92,906 Sq KMs (58 % of State area) and Rayalaseema covering an area of 67,298 Sq KMs (42 % of State area).

As per Census – 2011 (Provisional), total population of the state is 493.8 lakhs. Of which, population in Coastal Andhra 341.9 lakhs (69.2 % of total population) and Rayalaseema Region 151.85 lakhs (30.8 % of total Population). Population of Scheduled Castes is 17.1 % of total Population and population of Scheduled Tribes is 5.3 % of total population. In Andhra Pradesh, Agriculture Work Force is 50.6 % of total work force as per Population Census –2011.

Total number of farmers in the State are 76,21,118 (Land holdings as per Agriculture Census-2010-11). The highest number of farmers are in Ananthapur (7.28 lakhs) followed by Guntur (7.61 lakhs), East Godavari (6.99lakhs), Prakasam (6.71 lakhs), Chittoor (6.67lakhs), Kurnool (6.33 lakhs), West Godavari (5.66 lakhs), Krishna (5.52 lakhs), Srikakulam (5.26 lakhs), Visakhapatnam (4.75 lakhs), SPS Nellore (4.57 lakhs), Vizianagaram (4.47lakhs) and YSR Kadapa (4.41 lakhs).

Comparison of Poverty in trends of 2011-12 over 2004-05 in respect of Andhra Pradesh show dramatic improvement. The improved performance of AP compared to most of the states and it relative standings (better than advanced states of Punjab and Kerala) deserves additional financial support from the centre.

A person aged 7 years and above who can both read and write with understanding in any language is considered as a Literate. The literacy rate of the State was 67.66 percent in 2011 as against 60.47 percent in 2001. The literacy rate of the State is lower than the All India literacy rate of 74.04 percent. The literacy rate in India increased from 64.84 to 74.04 percent during 2001-2011. The overall literacy rate has gone up from 60.47 percent in 2001 to 67.66 percent in 2011, the male literacy rate has increased from 70.32 percent to 75.56 percent. Female literacy rate has gone up from 50.43 percent in 2001 to 59.74 percent in 2011. Hyderabad is at the top with 80.96 percent and Mahabubnagar is at the lowest with 56.06 percent in 2011 among the districts (AP Economic Survey, 2014).

Table:3.1 Female Literacy Rate in Andhra Pradesh

Census Year	Literacy rate (%)
1951	---
1961	21.19
1971	24.57
1981	35.66
1991	44.08
2001	60.47
2011	65.46

Source: Census Data, 2011.

It is evident from the above data, that the highest gap in literacy rates of males and females are recorded in districts of Kadapa, Kurnool, and Prakasam. Whereas, very low gender gap in literacy rates is found in the districts of West Godavari, East Godavari and Krishna. The literacy rates are significantly varied by gender among the districts in Andhra Pradesh. Moreover, high range of male female gap in literacy rate is exiting in most of the districts. The

highest gap is recorded in top ten district of Kadapa. Therefore, female literacy is a key aspect in the process demographic change thereby lead to socio-economic development in India **(Dharmalingam and Morgan, 1996).**

Table-3.2. District-wise Literacy rates and Gap between Genders in Andhra Pradesh- 2001

S.no.	Name of the District	Literacy Rate (%)			
		Total	Male	Female	Gap
1	Srikakulam	62.30	72.25	52.56	19.69
2	Vizainagaram	54.49	69.04	50.16	18.88
3	Vishakapatnam	67.70	75.47	60.00	15.47
4	East Godavari	71.35	74.91	67.82	7.09
5	West Godavari	74.32	77.63	71.05	6.58
6	Krishna	74.37	79.13	69.62	9.51
7	Guntur	67.99	75.40	60.64	14.76
8	Prakasam	65.53	75.53	53.40	20.13
9	Nellore	69.15	75.93	62.30	13.63
10	Kadapa	67.88	78.41	57.26	21.15
11	Kurnool	61.13	71.36	50.81	20.55
12	Anantapur	64.28	74.09	54.31	19.78
13	Chittoor	72.36	81.15	63.65	17.50
A.P		67.66	75.56	59.74	15.82
INDIA		74.04	82.14	65.46	16.68

Source: Census of India, 2011; Provisional Population Totals.

Table- 3.3Educational facilities during 2010-11

Type of School	No. of Schools	Total Enrolment	Enrolment of Boys	Enrolment of Girls	Teachers	Student teacher ratio
Primary	66,834	54,63,896	27,75,065	26,88,831	1,74,069	31
Upper primary	15,421	23,29,730	12,14,470	11,15,260	93,003	25
High Schools	18,776	53,97,690	27,50,725	26,46,965	83,344	65
Higher Secondary	173	1,26,870	56,601	70,269	4,304	29
Special Education	5	444	444	0	7	63
Oriental Education	61	8,534	4,393	4,141	371	23

Source: Statistical Abstract of Andhra Pradesh 2011, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh.

As far as higher secondary education is concerned, there are 1,26,870 students in that boys are 56,601 and girls are 70,269 who are being imparted education and knowledge by 4,304 teachers in 173 institutions. On an average for every 29 students one teacher is available in high secondary schools. Similarly, 444 students have got enrolled their names in 5 special education schools where 7 teachers are discharging their sincere and honest services to the students in providing good education. With on an average for every 63 students one teacher is available in special education schools. And there are 371 teachers who have been imparting education to 8534 enrolled students out of that boys are 4,393 and girls are 4,141 studying in 61 oriental educational schools. With on an average for every 63 students one teacher is available in oriental education schools.

4.0. Women's educational status of Kadapa:

Rayalaseema region, comprising of Kadapa, Kurnool, Anantapur and Chitoor, lies in the rain shadow zone of Western Ghats. Consequently, this area receives very low rainfall during the South West and the North East monsoons as well. The rainfall of 365.8 mm of the Khariff period in Rayalaseema is still distributed and undependable. It is utterly inadequate even to raise the dry crops like groundnut or jowar. Kadapa District is the extreme south eastern district of Andhra Pradesh rainfall situated within the geographical co-ordinate of 13043'And15014' of

northern latitude and 77055'and 79029' eastern longitude. The latitude varies from 269 to 3787 meters above sea level. The District is bounded on north by Kurnool District, on the south by Chittoor District on the west by Anantapur District and on the east by Nellore District. Total Geographical area of the District is 15,379 Sq.Kms. with 3 Revenue Divisions, 51 mandals, 831 Gram Panchayats, 965 Revenue Villages and 4533 Habitations. As per the 2011 Census the population of the District is 2882469 of which the Rural Population is 1903337 and the Urban Population is 979132. The density of population in the District is 188 per Sq.Km.

The total geographical area of Y.S.R. District is 1535900 hectares which constitutes an extent of forest is 500961 hectares, Barren & Uncultivable land is 221994 hectares, Land put to Non-agricultural uses is 181029 hectares, Cultivable Waste is 46013 hectares, Permanent Pastures and other grazing lands is 9409 hectares, Land under miscellaneous tree crops & groves not included in net area sown is 6831 hectares, Current fallows is 135935 hectares, Other fallow land is 80861 hectares and Net Area Sown is 352762 hectares and Area sown more than once is 80208 hectares during the year 2011-12.

Kadapa district is drained by the Penneru Basin and its tributaries. The chief northern tributaries to Penneru are the Kunderu, Sagileru and the southern tributaries – the Cheyyeru, Papaghni and the Chitravati. The Soils in the district are of two types i.e., Red Ferruginous and Black Soils. Black Clay is the most superior soil in the district, which occupies 23.7% area in the district. The district is rich in Minerals value. The Major Minerals in the district are Barites, Lime Stone and Asbestos.

The average annual rainfall in the district is 696.6 mm. The rainfall generally increases from the North-West to the South-East in the district. The rainy season starts from June and lasts till November. October is the month with the highest normal rainfall. The rainfall in South-west monsoon period is most important for the sowings of dry crops in the district which covers 75% of the total cropped area.

The Majority of the people here are depend on Agriculture only. The major crops in the District are Paddy, Groundnut, Sunflower, Cotton, Betel leaves and Horticultural crops like Mango,

Papaya, Banana, Lemon and Oranges. The Major Source of Irrigation is under K.C. Cannal. There is a Major Irrigation Project on Penna at Mylavaram. Pincha Project, Lower Sagileru Project, Upper Sagileru Project, Annamay Project, Brahma Sagar Project and Pulivendula Branch Canal are Medium Irrigation Projects in the District.

The district has been served by 3312 primary schools, 537 upper primary schools, 730 high schools, 126 junior colleges, 46 Degree Colleges and Yogi Vemana University offering P.G. courses for general education. For Technical education the District has 9 polytechnics and 26 Engineering colleges, Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Medical sciences, 1. Dental college, 1 Homoeopathic Medical college, 1 Veterinary college and 1 IIIT centre at Rajiv Knowledge Vally.

Table:4.1 Literacy trends in Kadapa

Year	Literacy Rate
1951	15.5
1961	21.75
1971	24.73
1981	31.16
1991	48.12
2001	64.02
2011	67.88

Source: Census of India, 1991, 2001 & 2011

The following table 1.5 clearly reveals that female literacy rate needs to be improved.

Table 4.2: Literacy Rate among Men and Women in Kadapa since 1971

Census Year	Men	Women
1971	36.2	12.7
1981	43.8	17.7
1991	65.8	33.9
2001	76.98	50.76
2011	78.41	57.26

Source: Census of India, 1991, 2001 & 2011

Kadapa district consists of 51 mandals , there are 17 mandals comes under less than 50 per cent of female literacy, where as 28 mandals are less than 60 per cent and rest of the mandals i.e. only 6 mandals.

Conclusions:

The status of women in all the countries of the world today is very important as they are fundamental to the process of economic development since women constitute half of the population and one third of labour force. But, with regard to their position in society there are many differences between developed and developing countries. In industrialized countries women are placed on par with men with some variations in their position. In developing countries, the situation of women is different. Evidence of gender inequality and exploitation of women exist in most societies, yet some of the worst cases are found in the developing countries. More than one billion in the world today, the great majority of whom are women, live in unacceptable conditions of poverty in developing countries. Multiplicity of causes results in poverty. Poverty is a complex, multidimensional problem, with its origin in both the national and international level. Poverty entails more than the lack of income and productive resources to ensure sustainable livelihood. Its manifestations include hunger and malnutrition, limited access to education and other basic services, social discrimination and exclusion as well as the lack of participation in decision-making.

India being the second most populous country occupies only 2.4 per cent of the world's land area but supports 17.5 per cent of the world's population. About two-thirds of the India's population confined to live in rural areas as per the 2011 census. As per the 2011 census in India, out of the total population of 121 crores there are 58.6 crores women and they constituting 48.5 per cent. Out of the only 65.5 per cent of women are literates. About 77 per cent of them belong to the rural areas and rooted predominantly in agriculture and other related activities. Traditional artisanship and craftsmanship and services are the lifeline for the large majority of poor. Poverty has been a pervasive problem in India. Around one-third of Indians do not have the basic resources for survival. The 73rd Amendment of the Indian Constitution is an important in the history of gender empowerment in India. **Universal primary education is therefore crucially important to reduce poverty.** It is essential for everyone but in case of women it is particularly

significant. Education plays an important role in bringing about awareness on women's rights. Educating women is one of the most effective means to counter gender discrimination and enhance status of women and higher education would contribute much more effectively in abolishing gender inequality.

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