

# Discrimination Against The Girl Child With Respect to Education

By

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## Introduction

## INTRODUCTION

Children constitute the most important assets of any nation. Each child is an asset to the society, and the future welfare of society is closely related to the welfare of the child (Prasad,1990).

"Children cannot wait until our economic mistakes and commissions have been rectified. It is now that their minds and bodies are being formed and it is now that they need adequate food, health care and education-- what is required is a new commitment to a style of development which gives priority to the poor and particularly in the health, nutrition and education of their children in good economic times and in bad" (UNICEF,1990).

The condition of children in India - three basic aspects stand out, first about a third of the 300 million children may not have actual access to an essential minimum of nutrition, health care and early opportunities. Second, an equal access arises from the maternal poverty of the family deepened by the accompanying effects of ignorance, ill health and isolation prolonged by the rigid structure of the

society. And third, it has been proved that the quality of life can be improved "here and now" through the cluster of community based services addressed specifically and on priority to the needs of the children (Neel, 1988).

According to the 1981 census, India's population was 684 million growing at an average rate of about 25 percent. Of this, 263 million were children( Sharda, 1988).

Nearly half of India's children are girls. Their condition, and their prospects of equitable growth and development, are far worse than those of their brothers. The word, 'nearly' hides within the six letters, a tradition of injustice, neglect and death by denial. The female of the human species is better equipped by nature to survive, especially in the first months of life; yet in India, daughters are more likely to die (Ismail, 1990).

"When a female is born no anxious inquiries await the mother, no greetings welcome the new comer".

"On the birth of a girl there is very little rejoicing for daughters cannot carry on the ceremony necessary for their ancestors. They are regarded as expensive luxuries" (Gupta, 1988).

The girl child is considered to be a lesser child in our society, she continues to be neglected at all levels and discrimination against her is rampant in all strata of society irrespective of class, caste and economic conditions (Kaur,1991).

The female babies were killed immediately after birth by resorting to such practices and techniques as deliberate delay in feeding, non feeding, less feeding and at lower stages in providing heavy work etc. Majority of the women wanted, to adopt a decent and modern technique to practice female infanticide (Guruswamy, 1990). Girls are born carrying the burden of patriarchy carrying the burden of a history of subordination. They are born in a world which is often hostile to them, which does not treat them as equals, which considers them less valuable and less able than men (Kamatabhasin,1990).

A son is looked upon as an investment for future, the one on whom depends the continuity of the family line, as well as security and help of old age, disease and infirmity (Bhagyalakshmi,1990).

A girl is after all to be married any way. She has to go elsewhere. And then there is another evil called dowry.

So they are forced to neglect their daughter. Even otherwise a daughter is considered as a liability. Her security is a problem. So she always has to remain under restraints, restraints and restraints. Her freedom is circumscribed. She is to be house bound doing routine chores(Lakshmi, 1990).

The status of the girl child anticipates the status of women in society. Women are denied the best and sadly denial begins early in the case of a girl, is an expendable option, and her low social status is reflected in her lesser entitlement to care and attention (SAARC,1990).

The girl child at home shares the responsibilities of the household i.e. looking after siblings taking cattle for grazing, sweeping, cleaning, cooking, fetching water, collecting fodder, fuel and water. She contributes substantially to the substance and growth of the household economy. Her contribution is neither being acknowledged nor being compensated (Kaur, 1991).

Large number of little girls are allowed to die because of malnutrition and disease which are either not treated inadequately (Dube, 1988).

Early marriage enlarges girls fertility span, malnourishment combined with early pregnancy results in physical wastage, birth complications and delivery of underweight babies, who have a reduced chance of survival. The resultant high infant mortality rate provides the impulse for further pregnancies which result in even further physical depletion (UNESCO, 1988).

Education is the major tool for the upward mobility of families. Education of girls will help to increase women's power and self respect. But parents are usually inclined to spend less on education of their daughters than on their sons, due to the prevailing systems of inheritance through the males and the parental expectation of oldage support from their male children.

The enrolment of the girls in schools is much lower and drop out much higher. The investment on her education and personality development is considered as a wastage, she is a liability to be transferred after marriage (Bhatnagar, 1990).

Education also makes girls more conscious of health and hygienic aspects better equipped prenatal and post natal

responsibilities including child rearing which in turn, helps to reduce infant child mortality (Devadas, 1986).

The girl children of today will achieve better status as women in the society and bring about a better future for the women of India by 2000 A.D. if they are given education and parents encouraged to send their girls to school. With this in mind the following objectives were framed for the present study.

- i. To understand the educational level of the girl child.
- ii. To know the views of the parents towards the education of girls and boys.
- iii. To find out the reasons of drop outs.
- iv. To understand the relationship between education and social status.

# Review of Literature

## II REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature pertaining to the study is discussed under the following headings:

- A. Importance of Women's Education
- B. Women's education during pre-independence and post independence period
- C. New educational policy
- D. Perspective plan for women's education upto 2000 A.D.
- E. Related studies

### A. Importance of women's education:

"Education of boys is education of one person but education of girl is the education of entire family"

- Nehru

Education should develop particular knowledge and skills associated with various activities and useful in working a living. The youth must be given meaningful work opportunities was identified as the major task before developing countries like ours (Swaminathan,1991).

Education of women as an instrument change and development of women, there is need for conscious restructuring of curricular choices of women at the secondary level to enable them to have a wider educational and economic opportunities (Nayar,1986).

Education provides strength resilience to people to respond the changing situation. Education is the mainstay of all national endeavours. Development of human resources in the main function of education (Gopalan,1991).

There is a need for transformation of its character through the introduction of the modern scientific outlook to suit our national needs (Rao, 1991).

Identifying and establishing the appropriate programmes based on local need at the right time the finding resources at the appropriate time, enriching the environment through effective leadership based on creative insight, vision and versality are the various means of helping womenhood (Gosavi, 1991).

Over the past three or four decades, women in our country have been gradually entering the portals of higher education and as logical follow-up, some of them have also taken up careers. However the present economic situation with high cost of living is making it necessary for women also to take up careers (Narayan,1988).

Women are capable of playing significant role in family, society and professional spheres. The Indian constitution provides equal rights and privileges for men and women and makes equal provision to improve the status of women in society. In setting targets concerning women, special exercises are undertaken in each of the relevant sectors like education,health and rural development (Mishra, 1991).

The revolutionary programmes of all nations in which fundamental transformations of the society are imposed have aimed at improving the condition of women and family (Rossi, 1991). Women are tempted by the new opportunities of the modern world, but they do not feel compelled to seize them (Beruard, 1971).

Nehru discovered that women's education is an important as men's. He has always been strongly of the opinion that while it would be possible to neglect men's education it is not possible or desirable to neglect women's education (Nair, 1989).

The removal of women's illiteracy and obstacles inhibiting their access to and retention in; elementary education will receive over riding through provisions of special support services, setting of time targets and effective monitoring major emphasis will be laid on women's participation in vocational, technical and professional education at different levels (Aram, 1988).

Women to day, throng in to colleges and universities alike. They are taking careers and professions which call for qualities contrary to her traditional disposition. They are invading the offices, schools, hospitals and even the bar and other professions (Khanna, 1989).

Education is far long dissociated from the idea of nation building women have to empower themselves. Education should help in training of skills such as overcoming fear of failure, coping with stress, developing resistance to criticism and willingness to take risk (Pillai, 1990).

The education of women was sharply distinguished from that for men; their role and status in society being different (Gulati,1985).

Women have a number of constitutional provisions regarding equality. They have women rights, social rights and economic rights (Dayal,1987).

Education with value orientation, will help women to realise themselves as constructive, independent individuals, and not be helpless dependents on their parents and husbands. Therefore strategies for universalising primary and elementary education together with increased intake of women students at higher levels acquire importance and priority. All adult women illiterates must be made literate within a time bound frame, say 1992. This Herculean task can be performed only by concerted and joint action by government and non-governmental agencies working together at all levels in close-cooperation and coordination. The time, has come for women to pull themselves together pool their own strength and free themselves to their task. They have both the greatest opportunity and the greatest obligation (Devadas; 1990). Literacy for women is the single most important factor for reducing infant mortality (UNICEF,1990).

Sinha,(1984) viewed that the position of women-reflects the cultural attainment of a society. In the vedic age, women enjoyed relatively high position in Indian society. They enjoyed freedom for spritual progress and intellectual development. During the periods of Islam and Mughal rule, the position of women

and appointment of women inspectors, etc.(Reddy, 1986).

The period of 1922-47 is one of the significant progress in the sphere of women's education. There was a burst of enthusiasm in favour of women's education. After Independence the enrolment of girls in primary, middle and high school stages are improvement.(Government of India 1981).

The nature of education in India during the ancient period was sacred and informal. Its doors were closed for women of common families. Social reformers also emphasised the crucial importance of female education to improve their status in society. However, the main purpose of women's education was not to make them more efficient and active units in the process of socio-economic and political development but to make them more capable of fulfilling their traditional roles in society as wives and mothers. In other words, education for women was regarded as means to improve their status within the family and not to equip them to play any role in the wider social context. But in the post independence period with the changing pattern of socio economic and political conditions of the country, women were given equal status and importance of their education was realised.

The census Report (1981) shows slow growth of female education in the country. The general literacy rate which was 29.74 percent in 1971 went upto 36.23 percent in 1981. Male 46.89 percent

and female 24.82 percent which was 18.70 percent in 1971. (Government of India, 1982).

Reasons for slow growth of female education:

Report of the committee on the status of women in India 1974.

1) A large number of girls by the time they reach the age of 8 are required at home to do various domestic chores eg., collecting firewood, cow dung, fetching water from long distance, cleaning, cooking, taking food and water to parents in their places of work etc.

2) Majority of girls of this age group have to look after of their siblings especially when their mothers are engaged in earning a livelihood.

3) A substantial number of girls are engaged in contributing to the family income by their own labour. The prevalence of child labour has been admitted as the greatest deterrent to the spread of education among children of the poor.

4) Several difficulties in the way of providing facilities for girl's education, lack of adequate transport arrangements and toilet facilities.

5) Adverse effect on parents attitude towards the education of the girls.

6) Education in the rural areas often results in alienation of girls from their habitant.

7) Early marriage/betrothal, the greatest deterrent to the progress of girl's education.

According to a World Bank Report in 2000 A.D. there was 50 million illiterates in India, constituting 54 percentage of the world's population of illiterates. As per the 7th Plan, the total number of adult illiterates is about 900 lakhs, of whom 580 lakhs are women (Hindustan Times, 1988).

The Ministry of Education, recognising that women consisted the major part of illiterates, facilitated the appointed of non-government committee to eradicate illiteracy among women.

According to Mazumdar, 1991 during the earlier years of the International women's decades, Government of both developed and developing countries were very keen to offer the rising number of women in higher education as an indicator of women status in their countries.

The National Literary Mission aims at eradicating illiteracy in the 15 - 35 age group by the year 1995. The

15

participation of women, who constitute 54 percent of the illiterate population, in the adult education programme has increased. The number of adult literary centres for women increased from 30,739 in 1980-81 to 98,151 in 1984-85. The total enrolment of women in all centres has gone up from 999,000 in 1980-81 to 32,32,000 (India, 1983).

The National Committee on Women's education organised in 1958 stated, that the problem of women's education is vital and of such great national importance, that it was absolutely necessary for the centre to assume responsibility for the development (Pinto, 1988).

National policy on education envisages that education should be used as a strategy for achieving a basic change in the status of women in recognition of importance of education of girls and women in accelerating socio-economic development. Government has formulated a variety of measures from time to time in this direction. The national education system would

i) Play a positive interventionist role in empowerment of women.

ii) Contribute towards development of new values through redesigned curricula and text books and

iii) Promote women's studies as part of various course.

Main feature of targets and implementation strategy will to be:

a) gear entire education system to plan a positive interventionist role in empowerment of women;

b) promote women's studies as a part of various courses and encouragement of educational institution on take up active programmes to further women's development;

c) widen access of women in progress of vocational, technical and professional education and

iv) Create dynamic managerial structure do cope up with targets envisaged. Education up to class VIII is free for girls in the country up to class X in most of the states/Union territories. At present there are 824 women colleges and women share of enrolment standards, at 32 percent (India, 1991).

#### C. New Educational Policy:

Education is both an important instrument for increasing and bettering the chances of women's employment ability and for empowering women as they learn to think for themselves, becomes confident and also develop the capability of recognising more actually the areas of exploitation. This fact has also been recognised and accepted in national policy on Education 1986 by the Government. It has been mentioned in National Policy on Education that "Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women". The National Education system will play a possible, interventionist role in the empowerment of women; it will faster the development of new value through designed curricula, text

book, the training and orientation of teachers, decision makers and administrators and the active involvement of educational institutions.(Kumar 1990)

Although the principle the fact of empowering women through education has been recognised in the National Policy and the programme of action, the commission suggests the following steps to be taken by which the working women themselves and their children especially the girl child may benefit. (Krishna Iyer,1989)

1) There should be benefits for the girls at suitable times. So that they can assist their mothers in work and go to school.

2) To encourage parents that a women helper is provided on an honorarium basis for accompanying the children from the house and back to ensure their enrolment and safety.

3) The same helpers services could be utilised for looking after the siblings in the premises of the school itself.

4) A regular creche attached to the primary school where the younger children could be taken care of so that the other child can attend the school.

5) Incentives for sending the girls to schools will have to be given to promote their education.

6) The syllabi need to be more relevant for the children of rural areas.

7) Condensed courses organised and girls be permitted to write examinations.

8) Women teachers are recruited.

9) Primers for adult education programmes do not have sufficient material related to women workers.

10) The revision of the text books and primers needs to be carried out keeping the objective of bringing of greater focus.

11) Vocational aspect of education to be given various alternatives of education need to be developed.

12) Vocational training is stereo-typed and sex biased.

13) Scholarships to bear the cost the training and hostel facilities provided which they can reimburse after they get suitable jobs.

14) Convince the parents of poor girls regarding the relevance to education to lives of their daughters.

15) Any attempt to eradicate poverty lead the women to deal with questions of equality, social justice and development (Government of India, 1990).

#### D. Perspective plan for women's education upto 2000 A.D.

The programme for women's education will have to be implemented as a priority. So that women attain a comparable level of education by 2000 A.D. The strategy to be adopted for raising literary levels and education among women has to keep in view the vast cultural, geographical and ecological variations as also the problems relating to poverty and ignorance. The cultural and geographical variations call for decentralization (Manorama, 1991).

The objectives to be achieved by 2000 A.D. in regard to women's education are:

i. Ensuring opportunities to all women for access to appropriate level, nature and quality of education and also the where-with-all for success comparable with men.

ii) Elimination of illiteracy, universalisation of elementary education and minimization of the dropout rate in age group 6 - 14 years and stagnation to negligible proportions.

iii) Substantial vocationalization and diversification of secondary education so as to provide a wide scope for employment and economic independence of women.

iv) Making education an effective means for women's equality by a) addressing ourselves to the constraints that prevent women from participating in the educational process.

b) Eliminating the existing sexist bias in the system.

c) Making necessary intervention in the content and process of education to inculcate positive and egalitarian attitudes, and

d) Ensuring the teachers perceive this is one of their essential roles.

v) Providing non formal and part time courses to enable them to acquire knowledge and skills for their social, cultural, economic advancement.

vi) Impetus to enrolment in various professional, degree courses, so as to increase their number in medicine, teaching, engineering and other fields substantially.

vii) Creating a new system of accountability, particularly in respect of the local community, by active involvement of women (N.P.P.1986).

#### E. Related studies:

NCERT (1971) conducted a study on "Dropouts at primary and Middle school level", the findings of the studies are:

- i) The requirements for older girls to study at home to take care of siblings when mothers are away at work.
- ii) Need for girls to work in order to help in augmenting family income

iii) Early marriage of girls

iv) Lack of facilities in the form of school buildings, hostels and women teachers etc.

Basvakumariah (1980) conducted a study on "The spread of education among women in rural areas", which revealed that education has improved women's status not only in family but also social economic, political and religious spheres. However, by and large rural areas have still remained backward in female education because of the negative parental attitude, a strong belief in the traditional role of women and poverty.

Dr. Anupama Shah and Sunita Nagia (1983) conducted a study on "Rural mothers on Girl's Education" in Haryana state in the year 1983. The findings are the following:

1. Majority of the rural mothers had favourable attitude towards the primary education of their daughters. But they are not willing to continue their studies after primary level.

Joshi (1983) conducted a study on "Why girls Received Higher Education" in Bihar state, their study reveals that,

- a. the age of girls marriage has increased

- b. educated boys want to marry an educated girl.
- c. For becoming self-support in life and as for status assurance and economic independence.

R.Das (1986) in his study on "Women education in Assam in the post-independence period (1947-87) and its impact on the social life of the status" revealed the following:

1. Compared to the increase in the number of men's college, the women's colleges did not increase proportionately.
2. There was a wide gap between the educational opportunities and facilities available to men in comparison to women.
3. Women's education brought about positive changes in the economic, cultural, political and religious spheres of the social life in the state.
4. A greater percentage of the course attending co-education Institutions.
5. The majority of the women studied male oriented curriculum, and
6. The shortage of women teachers affected the healthy growth of women's education.

B.V. Shah(1990) conducted a study on "Women Education", in Madras City. The findings are as follows: urban parents were found to have a better attitude towards female education than the rural parents. A majority of educated women perceive household responsibilities and bringing up children as barriers to learning.

Marikutti, Juli (1990) conducted a study on sex discrimination in parent child relationship in Kerala state. The study revealed that:

1. The parent in general shared slight differences in their relationships to boys and girls of preschool age, but in giving guidance equal care was given.
2. The parents of high income families are more permissive towards boys than girls in general where as they are given equal treatment in middle income families.
3. Parents of both high middle income families show no discrimination in meeting the material needs of boys and girls.
4. Parents of high income facilities are more alert in meeting the psychological needs, and render help to boys in their routine activities in comparison to those of girls. In middle group no difference is shown in meeting the psychological needs and rendering help to boys and girls.

A study on "Why Girls Receive Higher Education" in Chanhari (1990) in Bhopal gives the important reasons for going in for Higher education. In order to seek employment and economic independence, to have a sound and smooth domestic life, to adjust with any adverse and new social situations, to face any problems boldly and skillfully, to cope with the demands of modern changing society, for proper personality development, to provide new and better direction to society and country by doing research and socialisation of children to fight against social evils and women's rights to become administrators for proper implementation of laws related to women's rights, to seek good husbands with good family backgrounds, to do social work, and to appear at competitive examinations.

Mandal (1991) conducted a survey of primary school selected under operations Block Board from 120 blocks and in urban areas conducted by the Department of education of Bihar shows that the dropout between class I and Class V (1981-82 to 1986-87) was 64.8 percent for boys and 72.3 percent for girls.

P. Copinathan Pillai (1991) a survey conducted in Kotayam Municipality in January 1989, revealed that there was only 2209 illiterates including 650 dropout and 1550 who had not gone to school.



## Methodology

### III METHODOLOGY

The procedure pertaining to this study involves the following aspects:

- A. Selection of the Topic
- B. Selection of the Area
- C. Selection of the Sample
- D. Selection of the Method
- E. Collection of the Data and
- F. Analysis and Interpretation of the Results

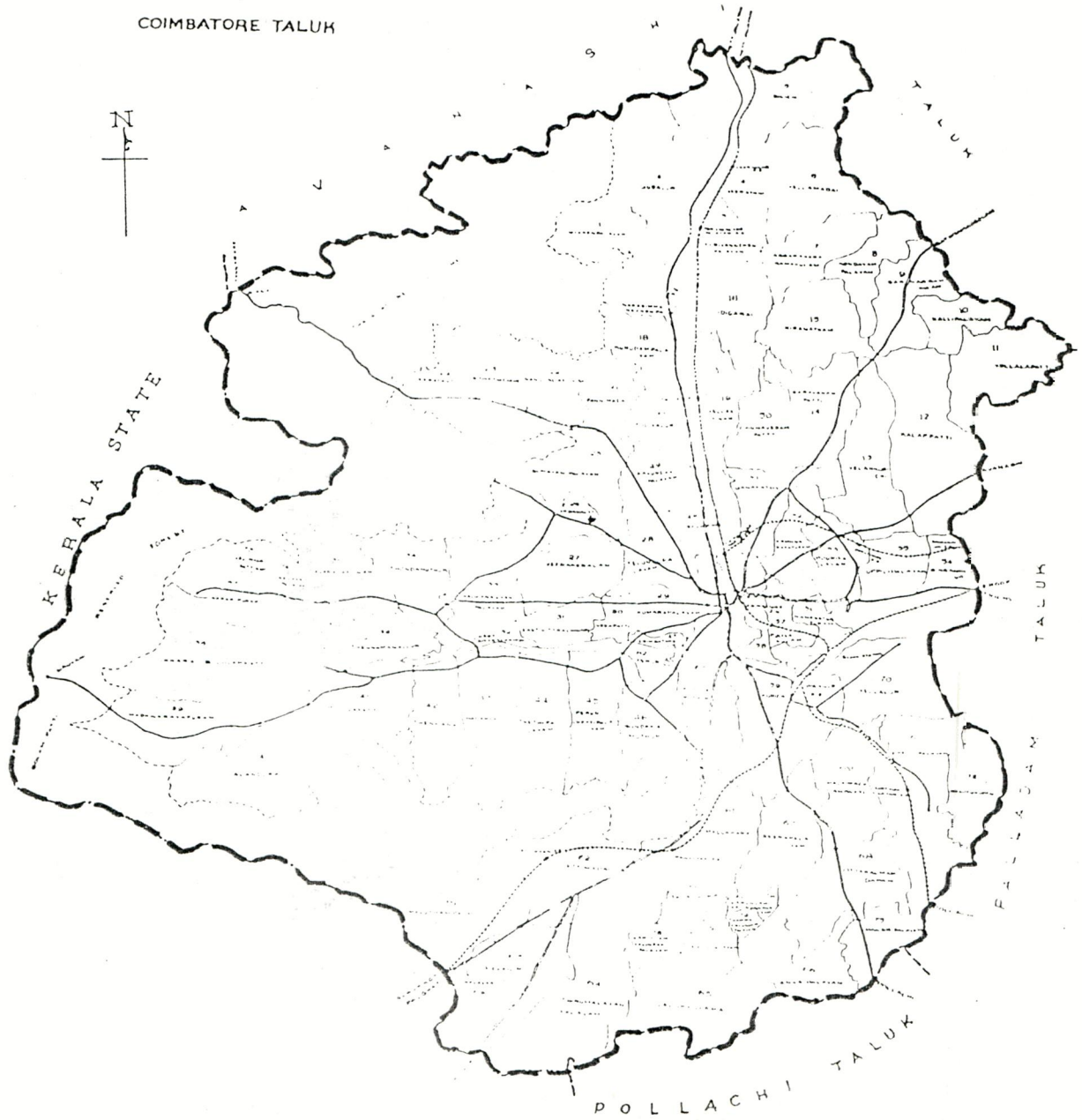
#### A. Selection of the Topic:

The topic "Discrimination against the girl child with respect to education" was selected to understand the educational status of the girl child. Thus an attempt is made to analyse the present educational status of girl child in rural and urban area.

#### B. Selection of the Area:

The areas selected for the study were Press Colony and Kalveerampalayam situated 15 kilometers and 10 kilometers away from the University (Figure 1). These areas were selected due to the availability of the following features.

- a) Easy approachability
- b) Good rapport
- c) Cooperation of the people and
- d) Easy accessibility



LOCATION OF THE AREA

Figure.1

### **C. Selection of the sample:**

Sample is that part of the universe which is selected for the purpose of investigation (Cupta,1990).

Random sampling methods are those in which every item in the universe has a known chance or probability, of being chosen for the sample (Cupta,1991).

For selecting the sample units a source list was collected to compile information about the number of households and total population of the selected rural and urban areas from the statistical office in Coimbatore, Vadavalli Panchayat Union office and Periyanaickenpalayam Panchayat Union office. Based on this preliminary information 75 samples (25 males 50 females) from rural households and 75 samples (15 males and 60 females) from urban households were selected by adopting random sampling method. The variation in the sample with regard to male and female number is due to the availability of that particular person at the time of interview.

### **D. Selection of the method:**

Schedule is the name given to a list of questions to which responses are obtained from the respondent by the investigator in a face to face contact (Kurber,1985).

Interview may be defined as a systematic conversation initiated for a specific purpose and focused on certain planned content areas(Thanulingam,1985).

Accordingly an interview schedule was prepared to be administered on the sample selected for the study. A pilot study

was carried out in these areas having a sample of 10 respondents. Based on the experiences of the pilot study the schedule was restructured and utilised for the purpose of collecting data from the sample. An interview schedule is evolved and presented in Appendix.

#### **E. Collection of Data:**

Since the investigator was particular on households with children of the age group 1 to 16 years, the investigator surveyed the area and selected the sample accordingly. After establishing a rapport, the investigator met the respondents and collected the required information.

#### **F. Analysis and interpretation of the results:**

The collected data were analysed and interpreted in the following chapter.

- A. Background information about the sample.
- B. Views of parents towards the Male and Female children
- C. Views of parents towards the education of their children
- D. Views of parents towards the Employment of their children and
- F. Parents comments on Dowry System



## Results and Discussion

#### IV RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study are discussed under the following heads:

- A. Background information about the Sample.
- B. Views of parents towards the Male and Female children
- C. Views of Parents towards the Education of their children
- D. Views of Parents towards the Employment of their Children and
- E. Parents' comments on Dowry System.

##### **A. Background Information about the Sample:**

The background information about the selected sample includes the following:

- 1. Age-wise distribution
- 2. Caste status
- 3. Educational status
- 4. Occupational pattern
- 5. Income distribution
- 6. Type of family and
- 7. Size of family

### 1. Age-wise distribution:

Table I indicates the age wise distribution of the selected sample.

**TABLE I**  
**AGE WISE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SELECTED SAMPLE**

S.No.	Age in years			Percentage			
				Rural		Urban	
				M	F	M	F
				n:25	n:50	n:15	n:60
1.	21	-	25	7	14	-	12
2.	26	-	30	7	16	7	20
3.	31	-	35	16	30	11	40
4.	36	-	40	4	6	3	7

F = Female

M = Male

It was clear from the above table that majority of the parents both in urban and rural area belonged to the age group of 31-35 years. Only a meagre percentage belonged to the age group of 36-40 years.

## 2. Caste Status:

Table II indicates the caste status of the selected sample:

**TABLE II**  
**CASTE WISE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SELECTED SAMPLE**

S.No.	Caste	Percentage	
		Rural n: 75	Urban n: 75
1.	Forward	5	4
2.	Backward	92	92
3.	Scheduled	3	4

Out of 150 respondents (rural and urban) 92 per cent belonged to Backward Class. Only five percent respondents in rural and four per cent respondents in urban are belonged to Forward Caste and the remaining three per cent respondents in rural and four percent respondents in urban belonged to the scheduled caste.

### 3. Educational status:

Table III gives the educational status of the selected sample.

**TABLE III**  
**EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF THE SELECTED SAMPLE**

S.No.	Educational level	Percentage			
		Rural		Urban	
		Male n:25	Female n:50	Male n:15	Female n:60
1.	Primary	40	38	37	36
2.	High school	30	10	38	44
3.	Higher secondary level	2	2	17	13
4.	Degree	5	-	8	3
5.	Illiterate	23	50	-	4

The male and female respondents in the rural area had studied only (40 per cent and 38 per cent) upto primary school. 30 per cent men and 10 per cent women had completed their High School education. Two per cent male and female respondents had studied upto Higher Secondary level and five per cent male respondents were degree holders and among the female respondents none were degree holders. It is discouraging to observe that 23 per cent male respondents and 50 per cent female respondents were illiterate.

In urban area, majority, that is 38 per cent male and 44 per cent female had completed their high school education and 17 per cent male respondents and 13 per cent female respondents had studied upto Higher Secondary level and 8 per cent male respondents and three per cent female respondents were degree holders and only four per cent female respondents were illiterate.

#### 4. Occupational pattern:

Table IV shows occupational pattern of the sample.

**TABLE IV**  
**OCCUPATIONAL PATTERN OF THE SELECTED SAMPLE**

S.No.	Occupation	Percentage			
		Rural		Urban	
		Male n:25	Female n:50	Male n:15	Female n:60
1.	Agricultural activities	79	40	8	-
2.	Government service	10	-	79	-
3.	Business	8	-	13	-
4.	Weavers	3	-	-	-
5.	Teachers	-	-	-	45

The above table illustrates that in rural area 79 per cent were engaged in Agricultural activities, 10 per cent in the

government services and eight per cent doing business and three per cent were weavers.

But in urban area 79 per cent were employed in government services and the remaining eight per cent and 13 per cent doing agricultural activities and business respectively. Among the female respondents 45 per cent were teachers while the rest were housewives.

#### **5. Income distribution:**

Majority of the respondents in rural area belonged to the low income group. But in urban area almost all the respondents fall under the category of middle income group.

## 6. Type of family:

Table V gives the type of family of the respondents.

**TABLE V**  
**TYPE OF FAMILY**

S.No.	Type	Percentage	
		Rural n:75	Urban n:75
1.	Nuclear family	93	98
2.	Joint family	7	2

It is very interesting to note that 93 per cent rural and 98 per cent in urban respondents belonged to the nuclear family and seven per cent in rural and two per cent in urban had joint house holds.

This picture reveals that industrialisation has its influence on family structure.

## 7. Size of family:

Table VI shows the size of the family of selected respondents.

**TABLE VI**  
**SIZE OF FAMILY**

S.No.	Family size	Percentage	
		Rural n:75	Urban n:75
1.	1 - 2	85	93
2.	3 - 4	15	7

It was observed from the above table that out of 150 respondents 85 per cent in rural and 93 per cent in urban were having only 1-2 children and 15 per cent in rural and seven per cent in urban were having 3-4 children in their family.

### B. Views of Parents towards the Male and Female child:

Views of parents towards the male and female child include the following:

∴ Response of parents towards their preference of male and female child.

2. Reasons given by the parents for not preferring the female child.
3. Reasons given by the parents for preferring the male child.
1. **Response of Parents towards their preference of male and female child.**

Table VII illustrates response of parents towards their preference of male and female child.

**TABLE VII**  
**RESPONSE OF PARENTS TOWARDS THEIR PREFERENCE OF MALE AND FEMALE CHILD**

S.No.	Aspects	Percentage			
		Rural		Urban	
		male	female	male	female
1.	Preference of male child	80	80	10	10
2.	Preference of girls	20	20	-	-
3.	Preference of both	-	-	90	90

It was surprising to note that 80 per cent of male and female respondents preferred the boy child in rural areas.



NO DISCRIMINATION OF THE SEX WITH RESPECT TO EDUCATION

FIGURE -2

In Urban the picture is contrary to that of rural, 90 per cent men and women stated that there is no sex discrimination. Only 10 per cent were of the opinion that they prefer only boys.

**2. Reasons given by the parents for not preferring the female child:**

Table VIII explains the reasons given by the parents for not preferring the female child.

**TABLE VIII**

**REASONS GIVEN BY THE PARENTS FOR NOT PREFERRING THE FEMALE CHILD:**

S.No.	Reasons	Percentage *			
		Rural		Urban	
		male	female	male	female
		n:25	n:50	n:15	n:60
1.	Giving dowry	96	86	24	22
2.	To give protection/ security until her marriage	93	74	20	23
3.	Liability	92	48	22	24

\* Multiple response

It is clear from the above table almost all the respondents from rural and urban were of the opinion that they were to give dowry for their girls and hence they preferred boys.

A girl is after all to be married away. She has to go elsewhere. So they are forced to neglect their daughter. Even otherwise a daughter is considered as a liability. Her security is a problem. So she always has to remain under restraints. Her freedom is circumscribed.

### 3. Reasons given by the parents for preferring the male child:

Table IX states the reasons given by the parents for preferring the male child.

TABLE IX

#### REASONS GIVEN BY THE PARENTS FOR PREFERRING THE MALE CHILD

S.No.	Reasons	Percentage *			
		Rural		Urban	
		male n:25	female n:50	male 0:15	female 0:60
1.	As an asset	96	95	21	25
2.	Continuity of family line	86	85	20	20
3.	To perform the ancestral worship	84	90	18	18
4.	They can get security and help in their old age	45	80	10	16

\* multiple response

The above table explains that the parents prefer the boy child because he is looked upon as an investment for the future. The one on whom depends the continuity of the family line, as well as security and help of old age, disease and infirmity. They alone can carry on the ceremony necessary for their ancestors.

**C. Views of parents towards the Education of their children**

Views of parents towards the education of their children includes the following:

1. Educational level of the children
2. Type of school attended by the children
3. Rural urban differentials in decision on schooling
4. Parents attitude towards co-education schools
5. Attitude of parents towards higher education of their children
6. The steps taken by the parents towards the improvement of the education of their children and
7. Reasons for drop outs -

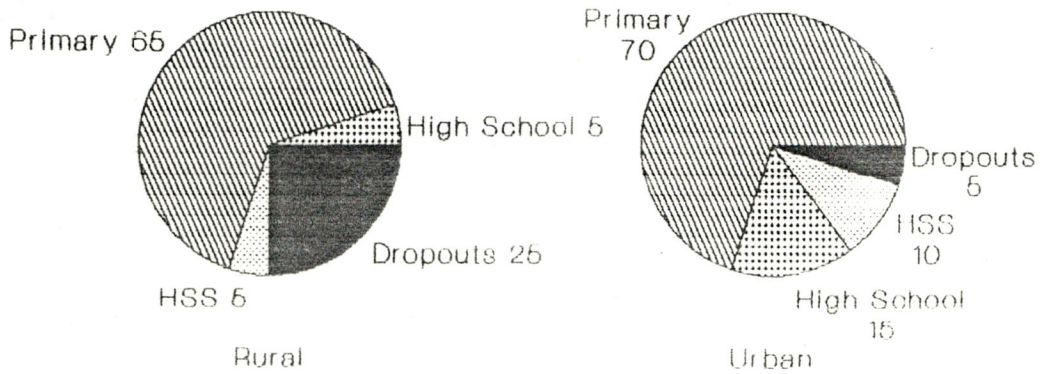
## I. Educational level of the children

Table X reveals the educational level of the children.

**TABLE X**  
**EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF THE CHILDREN**

S.No.	Educational level	Percentage	
		Rural	Urban
1.	Primary school	65	70
2.	High school	5	15
3.	Higher secondary school	5	10
4.	Dropouts	25	5

The presented data reveals that majority of the children were only in primary level and it was worth noting that 25 per cent were dropouts in rural area.



**EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF THE CHILDREN**

**FIGURE - 3**

## 2. Type of school attended by the children:

Table XI reveals the Type of school attended by the children.

**TABLE XI**  
**TYPE OF SCHOOL ATTENDED BY THE CHILDREN**

S.No.	Type of school	Percentage			
		Rural		Urban	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
1.	Government school	70	70	12	13
2.	Private school	3	4	61	55
3.	Matriculation school	2	1	12	12

The majority of the children belonging to rural households were studying in government schools and only few in number studying in private and matriculation schools. They give preference to boys in sending them to good schools. On the contrary the parents of urban area send their children to private and matriculation schools and they treat both boys and girls as equals. They do not want to discriminate them on the basis of sex.

### 3. Rural urban differentials in decision on schooling:

Table XII explains the rural urban differentials in decision on schooling.

**TABLE XII**  
**RURAL URBAN DIFFERENTIALS IN DECISION ON SCHOOLING**

S.No.	Decision makers	Percentage	
		Rural n:75	Urban n:75
1.	Father	87	54
2.	Mother	7	8
3.	Elder children	6	34
4.	Others	-	4

The presented data reveals that who will be sent to school from the family is decided by the patriarch and the decision as usual goes in favour of the male children. In the urban area elder children (34 percent) also contribute on deciding the school for younger ones.

#### 4. Parents attitude towards co-education school:

Table XIII indicates parents attitude towards co-education school.

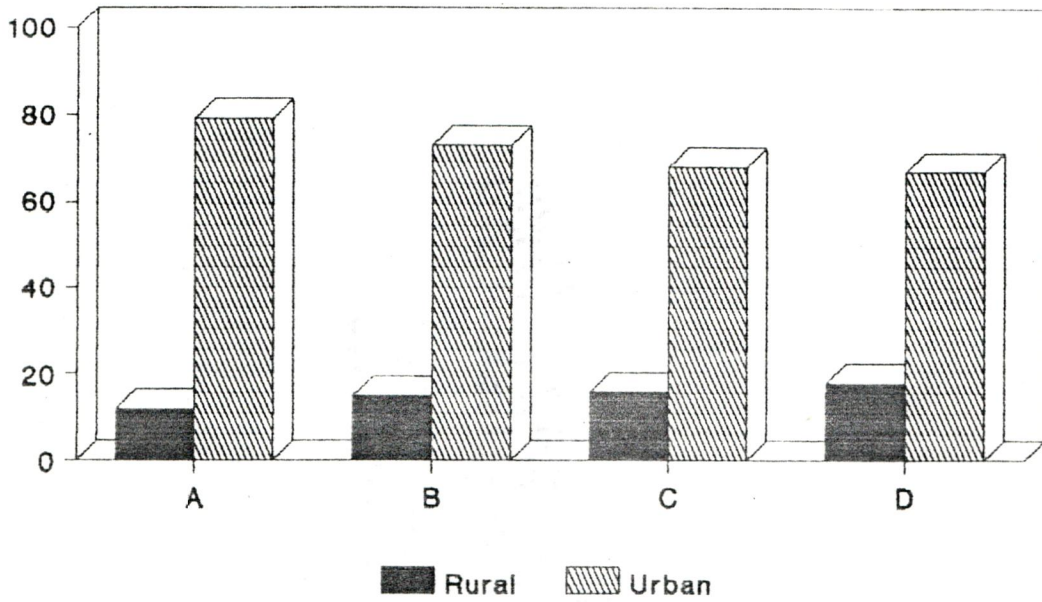
**TABLE XIII**  
**PARENTS ATTITUDE TOWARDS CO-EDUCATION SCHOOL**

S.No.	Reasons	Percentage		*
		Urban n:75	Rural n:75	
1.	Better standard of the school	79	12	
2.	Develop equality	73	15	
3.	Develop self confidence	68	16	
4.	Develop ability	67	18	

\* Multiple response.

The above table illustrates that their choice of co-education for schooling of their children enables the child to develop equality, self confidence and ability, and also prefer these schools for their reputations. Above all the parents were of the opinion that the children will develop positive attitudes towards opposite sex and later resulting in happy marital adjustment.

### PARENTS ATTITUDE TOWARDS CO-EDUCATION SCHOOL



A: Better standard; B: Develop equality  
C: Develop selfconfidence  
D: Develop ability

FIGURE -4

5. Attitude of parents towards higher education of their children:

Table XIV states that attitudes of parents towards higher education of their children.

**TABLE XIV**  
**ATTITUDES OF PARENTS TOWARDS HIGHER EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN**

S.No.	Level of Education	Percentage			
		Rural		Urban	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
1.	Degree	60	15	55	60
2.	Post graduate	20	2	30	25
3.	Professional	10	1	15	5
4.	No higher education	10	82	0	10

Since the traditional belief still continues in rural area, the parents are not coming forward to send their girls for higher education. 60 per cent were willing to send the boys for degree course as seen in the above table.

6. The steps taken by the parents towards the improvement of Education of their children.

Table XV presents the steps taken by the parents towards the improvement of education of their children.

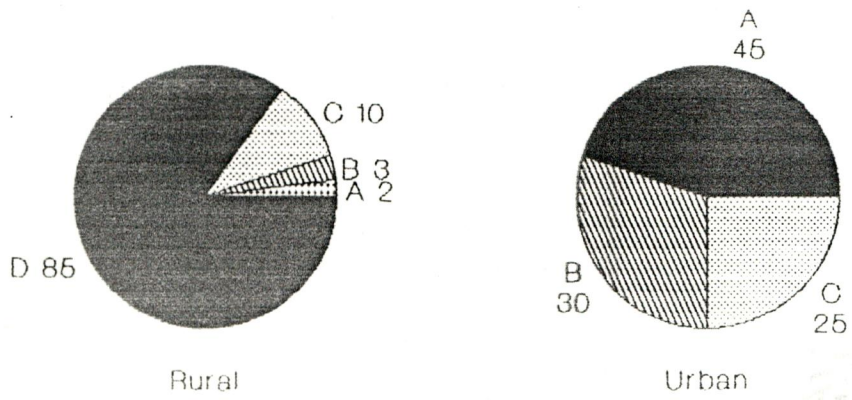
**TABLE XV**  
**THE STEPS TAKEN BY THE PARENTS TOWARDS THE IMPROVEMENT OF**  
**EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN**

S.No.	Steps taken	Percentage Parents	
		Rural n:75	Urban n:75
1.	Every day care	2	45
2.	Arranging tuition class	3	30
3.	Put them in the Hostel	10	25
4.	No care was taken	85	-

The computed data give the picture of parental attitude towards the improvement of their child's education. In the urban area 45 per cent of the parents give daily care to their children and they consult often the teachers also to note the improvement and development of the child 30 percent respondents arranged tuitions and the remaining 25 per cent respondents had put their child in the hostel. So that they will get more time for

their studies. All the urban respondents say that education will improve their economic and social status. So whether they have boy or girl child, their main aim was to show them a good path. They felt that education is a vehicle by which their children can reach the higher strata of society.

In the rural area 85 per cent respondents were not giving care to their child's education because of their low educational level and low income and also they reveal that their family background did not allow them to spend more on their child's education. Taboos related to puberty prevents the rural folk from sending their girls for higher education or employment.



THE STEPS TAKEN BY THE PARENTS TOWARDS  
THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN  
FIGURE - 5

## 7. Reasons for dropouts:

Table XVI explains reasons for dropouts

TABLE XVI  
REASONS FOR DROP OUTS

S.No.	Reasons	Percentage		*
		Rural n:75	Urban n:75	
1.	Looking after siblings	73	5	
2.	Collecting fodder and fuel	83	-	
3.	Sweeping and cleaning	60	10	
4.	Cooking	20	-	
5.	Working in the field	20	-	

\* Multiple response.

As already seen in Table XVI dropouts were more in the rural area than in urban area.

The presented data shows that the girl child at home shares the responsibilities of the household namely looking after siblings, collecting fodder and fuel, sweeping and cleaning, working in the field and even cooking in some households. So she is not able to cope up with her studies and hence becomes a drop out.



A DROPOUT GRAZING CATTLE

FIGURE-6



A DROPOUT WORKING IN THE FIELD

FIGURE - 7

#### D. Views of parents towards the employment of their children:

Views of parents towards the employment of their children include:

1. Preference of parents on appropriate job for girls and boys
2. Opinion of parents towards the employment of their children

##### 1. Preference of parents on appropriate jobs for girls and boys.

Majority of the urban parents were of the opinion that teaching job is the appropriate job for their daughter and they want their sons to become professionals. Another interesting point is that they consider boys and girls as equals. So 42 per cent want their sons and daughters to become self employed persons, so that they can develop confidence and can have a chance to utilise their skills and above all they can earn more and be an independent person.

The rural parents were of the opinion that their sons should get reputed government jobs so that there will be security for them in the future. But for the girls only limited number of parents like to send them for a job.

## 2. Opinion of parents towards the employment of their children:

Table XVII gives opinion of parents towards the employment of their children.

**TABLE XVII**  
**OPINION OF PARENTS TOWARDS THE EMPLOYMENT OF THEIR CHILDREN**

S.No.	Opinion of parents	Percentage			
		Rural		Urban	
		Boys	girls	Boys	girls
1.	Favourable	80	27	90	80
2.	Unfavourable	20	73	10	20

It is clear from the above table that the rural parents had a favourable attitude towards their sons employment rather than girls. Whereas in the urban area majority of the parents had a favourable attitude towards the employment of their children irrespective of their sex.

### E. Parents commentson Dowry System

The problem of dowry is a dominant one all over India. Though, giving dowry and getting it is punishable, every one in India practiced it, due to the social prestige attached to it. This present study showed us same picture. The computed data of present study revealed that, majority of the rural parents agreed that the practice of dowry is a social evil yet they practised it to avoid dowry deaths.

The rural parents are not giving much importance to their girls education due to the prevailing system of "dowry". They felt that it was a waste of money to educate the girl and can save the same for her marriage. In addition to this, if they educate their girls, they have to select a suitable partner and it will add more burden on them.

In urban area, the parents were of the opinion that if the girls are educated they can get employment. So they need not give high amount as a dowry. The education indirectly reduced the parents burden. And now a days, due to the changing condition, men also prefer educated, employed girls as their wife. So education in one way improves her status.



## Summary and Conclusion

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A study on "Discrimination against the girl child with respect to education", was carried out. The major findings of the study are summarised below:

1. Two areas one representing the rural and the other representing urban were selected for the purpose of the study. The urban being Press Colony and the rural being Kalveerampalayam.
2. A sample consisting of 150 respondents were selected randomly (25 men and 50 women in rural area, 15 men and 60 women were in urban area).
3. Interview schedule was prepared and used as a tool for collecting data.
4. Majority of the parents both in urban area and rural area belonged to the age group of 31-35 years only, very few belonged to the age group of 36-40 years.
5. Out of 150 respondents (Rural and Urban) 90 percent belonged to the Backward Class. Only five percent respondents in rural and four percent respondents in urban area belonged to the forward caste and the remaining three per cent respondents in rural and four percent respondents in urban belonged to the schedule caste.

6. 40 percent men and 38 per cent women in the rural area had studied upto primary school level. 30 per cent men and 10 per cent women respondents had studied upto higher secondary level and five per cent men respondents were degree holders. In urban area majority that is 38 per cent men and 44 per cent women had completed their High school education and 17 per cent men respondents and 13 per cent women respondents had studied upto higher secondary level and eight per cent male respondents and three percent female respondents were degree holders and only four per cent female respondents were illiterate.
7. The occupational pattern of the families in rural area a majority (79 per cent) were engaged in Agricultural activities followed by Government servants (10 per cent) Businessmen (eight per cent) and weavers (three per cent). Among the female 40 per cent engaged in Agricultural activities and the rest were housewives. In the urban area majority were government servants (79 per cent) and eight per cent and 13 per cent were involved in agricultural activities and Business respectively. Among the female respondents 45 per cent were teachers while the rest were house wives.
8. Majority of the respondents in rural area belonged to the low income group. But in urban area almost all the respondents fall under the category of middle income group.

9. 93 per cent rural and 98 per cent in urban respondents belonged to the nuclear family and seven per cent in rural and two per cent in urban respondents had joint households.
10. Out of 150 respondents 85 per cent in rural and 93 per cent in urban were having only 1-2 children and 15 per cent in rural and seven per cent in urban were having 3-4 children in their family.
11. 80 per cent male and female respondents preferred the boy child in rural areas and the remaining 20 per cent respondents preferred girl child. In the urban area 90 per cent men and women respondents stated that there is no sex discrimination only 10 per cent preferred boys.
12. Those parents who preferred the boy child reasoned out that the son is looked upon as an investment for the future. The one on whom depends the continuity of the family line, as well as security and help of old age, disease and infirmity. They alone can carry on the ceremony necessary for their ancestors.
13. Majority of the children were only in primary level and it was worth noting that 25 per cent were dropouts in rural area.

14. Majority of the children belonging to rural households were studying in government schools and only few were in private and matriculation schools. They give preference to boys in sending them to good schools. On the contrary the parents of urban area send their children to private and matriculation schools and they treat the boys and girls as equals, since they show no discrimination against sex. In the rural area most of the families, the decision on school for the children was made by the father (34 per cent). In the urban area elder children (34 percent) also contributed on deciding the school for younger ones.
15. Their choice of co-education for schooling of their children enables the child to develop equality, self confidence and ability and prefer these schools for their reputations. And also the parents felt that the children will develop positive attitudes towards opposite sex and later resulting in happy marital adjustment.
16. The higher the education of parents the greater the desire to give higher education to their children. Since the traditional practice attached to girls in rural area, the parents are not coming forward to send their girls for higher education 60 percent respondents willing to send their sons for degree course.

17. Drop outs were more in the rural area than urban area. It was surprising to note that 25 percent were girls in the rural area and only five percent in the urban area. It is seen that the girl child at home shares the responsibilities of the household that is looking after siblings, collecting fodder and fuel, sweeping and cleaning and even cooking in some households. So she is not able to cope up with her studies and hence becomes a drop out.
18. Majority of the urban parents were of the opinion of that teaching job is the appropriate job for their daughters and they want their sons to become professionals. Another interesting point is, they consider boys and girls as equals so 42 percent want their sons and daughters to become self employed persons. The self employment help them to develop confidence, can have a chance to utilise their skills and above all they can earn more and be an independent person.
19. In the urban area, 45 per cent of the parents give daily care to their children, and they consult often, the teachers to note the improvement and also the development of the child's education. 30 per cent respondents arranged tuitions and the remaining 25 per cent respondents had put their children in the hostel, so that

they will get more time for their studies. All the urban respondents say that education will improve their economic and social status.

In the rural area 85 percent respondents were not giving care to their children's education because of their low educational level and low income and also they reveal that their family background did not allow them to spend more on their children's education. Taboos related to puberty prevents the rural folk from sending their girls out for higher education or employment.

The rural parents were of the opinion that their sons should get a job in Government. So that there will be security for their future. But very few parents wanted to send their girls for a job.

20. The parents of rural area are favourable towards son's employment, whereas in the urban area it was not so.

21. Majority of the rural parents agreed that the practice of dowry is a social evil yet they practised it to avoid dowry deaths. The rural parents are not giving much importance to their girls education due to the prevailing system of "dowry". They felt that it was a waste of money to educate the girl, can save the same for her marriage. In addition to this, if they educate their girls, they have to select a suitable partner and it will add more burden on them.

In urban area, the parents were of the opinion that if the girls are educated they can get employment. So they need not give high amount as a dowry. The education indirectly reduced the parents burden. And now a days, due to the changing condition, men also prefer educated, employed girl as their wife. So education in one way improves her status.

Based on the findings on the study the investigator wants to recommend the following for future consideration.

1. Provide equal opportunity for both sexes in Education and training at all levels.
2. Formulate policies and action programmes that will promote equality in work.
3. Real development would mean ending a system which increases the gap between the girl and the boy.
4. Education should remove traditional discrimination and sex stereotyping by diversifying school curricula and promoting the access of girls to vocational and professional courses.
5. Parents should have an integrated and holistic approach to the girl child's development is essential for the creation of a new environment in which she can be valued and nurtured.

6. The family, the community as well as Government and Voluntary Agencies should involve a process of social mobilisation that will make her 'Everyones Concern'

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## Appendix

APPENDIX

AVINASHILINGAM INSTITUTE FOR HOME SCIENCE AND HIGHER  
EDUCATION FOR WOMEN, (DEEMED UNIVERSITY) COIMBATORE-641043

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AN INTERVIEW SCHEDULE TO ELICIT INFORMATION ON THE  
~~DISCRIMINATION~~ AGAINST THE GIRL CHILD WITH RESPECT THE  
EDUCATION

I. General Information

1. Name of the Interviewer:

2. Name of the Interviewee:

3. Address :

4. Age :

5. Sex :

6. Caste :

II. Details of the family background:

1. Type of family

Nuclear

Joint

2.

S.No.	Name of the family	Relation -ship	Age	Sex	Educational qualifications	Occu- pation	Monthly income
					Up to 5th	High schl to UG PG	

8. How many children are there in your family?

Male

Female

9. Which child do you like most?

Male

Female

10. If yes, what are the reasons?

If no what are the reasons

11. Whether your children are studying in school or not?

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Educational level	Male	Female
Nursery school		
Primary school		
High school		
Higher Secondary school		
Degree		

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Give reasons?



17. In which fields do you want your children to study?

1. Doctor Male Female

2. Engineer

3. Nurse

4. Teacher

5. Bank Officer

6. Lawyer

7. Auditor

8. I.A.S.

9. I.P.S.

10. Any other field

18. Who will take the decision while planning education of your children?

Father

Mother

Children

Others

19. Do you permit your girl child to go for higher education if she likes?

Yes

No

Give reasons

20. Will you send your girl child to study in schools for away from your place?

Yes

No

Give reasons

21. Will you send your male child to study in schools for away from your place?

Yes

No

22. While spending money for education, To whom do you give preference?

Male

Female

23. What kind of work will you give to your children during their school days?

Male

Female

24. Will you take any steps to increase the marks of your children low marks in the progress Report?

Male

Female

25. Which child do you like to send for tuition?

Male

Female

26. Will you permit your girl child to go away from your place for higher education?

Yes

No

Give reasons

27. Will you permit your male child to go away from your place for higher education?

Yes

No

28. Will you permit your girl child to stay in Hostel?

Yes

No

29. Will you permit your boy child to stay in Hostel?

Yes

No

30. Will you send your girl child to study under male teacher?

Yes

No

Give reasons

31. Do you feel that there is no security/safety in sending your girl child to school?

Yes

No

Give reasons?

32. Do you give time for your child to study every day?

Yes

No

33. Do you help your child to do their home work?

Male

Female

Yes

No

34. Will you give any encouragements for their improvement in studies?

Yes

No

35. Will you consult the teachers to increase the efficiency of your children in studies?

Yes

No

Male

Female

36. Do you give money to your children for their personal expenditure?

Yes

No

Male

Female

37. Will you permit your children to go for employment after their studies?

Yes

No

Male

Female

38. Will you permit your male children to go for self employment after,their studies?

Yes

No

Give reasons

39. Will you permit your girls children to go for self employment after their studies?

Yes

No

40. What type of job is suitable for your children?

Male

Female

Teacher

Engineer

Nurse

Typist

Doctor

Lawyer

I.A.S.

I.P.S.

Bank Officer

Telephone Operator

Police

41. If others specify do you think that your children should go for job and support the family?

Yes

No

Male

Female

If yes, reasons

42. Will you recommended for the employment of your children?

Yes

No

Male

Female

43. Do you think that the educational status will improve the standarc of living?

Yes

No

Male

Female

44. Will you permit your children to enter politics after their studies?

Male

Female

45. Will you find any difficulty in choosing life partners for your daughter if she gets higher education?

Yes

No

Male

Female

46. Will you give less amount as dowry if your daughter gets higher education?

Yes

No

47. Will you demand more amount as dowry if your son gets higher education?

Yes

no

Give reasons