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## Hurdles Faced By Women in Pursuing Higher Education



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### A B S T R A C T

*Education system is the only institution, which can uproot the deep roots of inequality between man and woman. Women's role in directing, influencing and shaping the nation is crucial. But the backwardness of women- educational, social, economic or political makes them the largest single group, hindering the process of rapid social change. The dream of higher education of many women remain unfulfilled due to different socio-cultural constrains. This paper makes an attempt to find out the different types of hurdles confronted by women in pursuing higher education.*

**Key-words:** *civilization, higher education, women, progress, constraints*

### Introduction

Education is the root cause of civilization and there is no denial of the fact that society cannot progress, if half of its population is not exposed to the chances of proper education. The constitution of India guarantees equality of status and opportunities to all its citizens, yet it has been observed that lack of sufficient educational access among women is the greatest barrier to the implementation of their constitutional rights and status. Education not only makes the woman more capable to perform their traditional duties of mother and wife but it also makes them more efficient members of society. The backwardness of women- educational, social, economic or political makes them the largest single group, hindering the process of rapid social change. Many women are compelled to stop their study just after completion of their high school or higher secondary school. Their dream of higher education remains unfulfilled due to different socio-cultural constrains. This paper makes an attempt to find out the different types of hurdles confronted by women in pursuing higher education.

### Objectives Of The Study

The objectives of the study are-

1. to find out the different types of hurdles confronted by women in pursuing higher education.
2. to find out the attitude of women towards higher education.
3. to see, how the women are motivated to participate in higher education.

The study will be confined to the Dhalpur Mouza of Lakhimpur district of Assam.

### Methodology

The study is based on both primary and secondary

data. The secondary data required for the study was collected from various books, magazines, journals, news papers etc. The primary data was collected from total thirty undergraduate women, randomly selected from different corners of Dhalpur Mouza of Lakhimpur district of Assam. A questionnaire was prepared for collection of data.

### Findings Of The Study

Almost all respondents have a very positive attitude towards higher education. They realize that education creates awareness at individual, family as well as social level. They think that higher education will help them to run their family smoothly. They have also felt that for the mental growth of their children higher education of women is essential. Yet there are some women who think that they do not need higher education. They give emphasis on looking after their household activities rather than pursuing their study. According to them, since women can carry out their traditional duties without higher education, it is not necessary to pursue higher education. Most of the women who are continuing their study do not have any definite goal behind continuing it. Majority of them say that they will continue their study only till they get married. Some women are ready to give up their study when they will become mother. Again the pursuance of higher education of women depends on the convenience of place of study. Only a few women are ready to continue their study at any cost in order to become self dependent. But most of the respondents do not want to continue their study if it becomes a burden for their. It indicates that they are not sure, up to what level they are going to continue

their study. Most of the women, who could not continue their study, are found to be the victim of unpaid labour. Moreover, women are more concerned with social norms rather than individual empowerment. They are ready to stop their study in order to help their siblings' study. They also feel that boys get more chances of higher education than the girls for various reasons.

Thus the study reveals that women are motivated to pursue their higher education for different reasons. Some of them think that higher education can help them in getting married. Some of them feel that only higher education may be an instrument for women empowerment. They realize that only higher education can uplift their position in the society. They have also come to realize that along with man, woman should shoulder the responsibility of the family. Hence most of the women express interest in adopting a profession which can make them financially stronger. Therefore, many women prefer job oriented courses to technical courses and general degree courses. They think that general degree courses cannot meet the need of the women as it cannot ensure a job.

The study also discloses that the major obstacles of women's education are related to poverty, traditional values and customs, feeling of dependency and lack of need based educational courses. Existing values of our society act as major hurdle on the way of women's higher education. A woman is normally expected to keep house and look after her husband and children. Feeling of dependency prevents women from gaining confidence. Women have to depend on their parents/guardians in order to take any decision regarding their educational career. Financial difficulty is another major hurdle of women's education. The raising expense of education shatter the dream of many girls and their education becomes easy-prey, as the girls are not traditionally accepted as an earner for the family.

### Suggestions

On the basis of the findings of the study the following suggestions can be put forwarded to overcome the obstacles confronted by women in pursuing higher education.

1. The government as well different NGOs should come forward to bring an attitudinal change in parents and community towards higher education of women.
2. Gender discrimination of any type at any stage of a woman's life should be considered as an offence and stern legal action should be taken against any of violation of the same.
3. A woman's contribution to her family must not be restricted only to the 'unpaid labour'; instead, she should be encouraged to earn for herself and her family. Similarly household works- such as child-caring, preparing food for the family should be done by both man and woman by sharing them mutually.
4. Proper awareness should be created among the women, so that they become well aware of their rights and various policies which are especially meant for women.
5. Institutions of higher education should be opened for girls in rural areas.
6. The education should be made need-based. An educational approach which will solve the economic problem is necessary.
7. Separate colleges and universities for women should be established wherever needed.
8. Educational institutions should arrange Parent Teacher Meet and scope of such type of meetings should be widened and extended beyond academic discussion to gender related issues, value conflicts etc.
9. Achievements of women in different walks of life and their contribution to different fields of society should be included in text books which may motivate the students.

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