CHAPTER 5

PROBLEMS IN THE GROWTH OF WOMEN AND CHILD EDUCATION IN SHEKHAWATI REGION (RAJASTHAN)
Problems in the Growth of Women and child Education in shekhawati Region (Rajasthan)

5.1 Introduction:-

The Rajasthan state is situated in the northwest side of India. The Rajasthan state border connected with the Punjab State in the north side and Haryana state and Utter Pradesh state also in the northeast and Madhya Pradesh state in the east and Gujarat state in the south side. In the west, it shares a long stretch of border with the neighboring country Pakistan. Situated on the Thar Desert Rajasthan protects the western border of the country. The state of Rajasthan has an area of 3, 42,239 sq. km. It is the largest State in India by area constituting 10.4 percent of the total geographical area of India and it accounts for 5.67 percent of population of India. Topographically, deserts in the State constitute a large chunk of the land mass, where the settlements are scattered and the density of population is quite low. It is administratively divided into 7 divisions, 33 districts, 244 Tehsils, 249 Panchayat Samities, 9,177 Gram Panchayats, inhabited villages and 184 urban local bodies as of Census 2011. The State has a population of 6.86 crore according to the provisional totals of Census 2011.

The Populations, state of Rajasthan according to the 2011 censuses stands at about 68 millions, making it the viii (8th) most populated state in India. The state of Rajasthan makes up about 5.7% of the country's population a figure which was about 5.4% during the last census in 2001. The state of Rajasthan is spread over an area of about 340000 sq. km. making it the largest state in the country according to areas. The density of population per sq. Km. is about 200 & a lot below the national average. The state of Rajasthan has a growth rate of about 21% percent which is the eleventh highest growth rate in the country. The population of the state of Rajasthan is rising considerably due to rapid efforts towards development & progress. The literacy rate in Rajasthan near about 67% which is a cause for concern and a statistic the authorities must take notice of and look to correct in the years to come. The sex ratio in the state also leaves a lot to be desired as it lags behind the national average by 10 points. The statistics in the Rajasthan Census 2011 reveal facts that can be taken into consideration by the government in a bid to further its development.
The state of Rajasthan, total population growth in this decade was 21.31 percent while in previous decade it was 28.33 percent. The population of the state forms 5.66 percent of India in 2011. In 2001, the figure was 5.49 percent.

Literacy rate in Rajasthan state has seen upward trend and is 66.11 percent as per 2011 population census. In Rajasthan state male literacy stands at 79.19 percent while female literacy is at 47.76 percent. In 2001, literacy rate in state of Rajasthan stood at 60.41 percent of which male & female were 70.32 percent and 43.85 percent literate respectively. In actual numbers, total literates in Rajasthan state stands at 38,275,282 of which males were 23,688,412 and females were 14,586,870.

Sex Ratio in state of Rajasthan is 928 i.e. for each 1000 male, which is below national average of 940 as per census 2011. According to census 2001, the sex ratio of female was 922 per 1000 males in Rajasthan.

5.2 Rajasthan Urban Population:-

Out of total population state of Rajasthan, 24.87% people live in urban regions. The total figure of population living in urban areas is 17,048,085 of which 8,909,250 are males & while remaining 8,138,835 are females. The urban population in the last 10 years has increased by 24.87 percent.

The state of Rajasthan Sex Ratio in urban regions was 914 females per 1000 males. For child (0-6) sex ratio the figure for urban region stood at 874 girls per 1000 boys. Total children (0-6 age) living in urban areas in state of Rajasthan were 2,234,621. Of total population in urban region, 13.11 % were children (0-6).Average Literacy rate in Rajasthan state for Urban regions was 79.68 percent in which males were 87.91% literate while female literacy stood at 63.81%. Total literates in urban region in state of Rajasthan were 11,803,496.

5.3 Rajasthan Rural Population:-

The total population of Rajasthan state, around 75.13 percent live in the villages of rural areas. In actual numbers, males and females were 26,641,747 and 24,858,605 respectively. The total population of rural areas was 51,500,352. The population growth rate recorded for this decade (2001-2011) was 75.13%.
In shekhawati included three Districts Sikar, Churu & Jhunjhunu. These are located as per:-

The Sikar district is located in the north-eastern part of the state of Rajasthan. It is bounded on the north by Jhunjhunu district, in the north-west by Churu district, in the south-west by Nagaur district and in the south-east by Jaipur district. It also touches Mahendragarh district of Haryana on its north-east corner. The Sikar district has an area of 7742.44 km² and a population of 26,77,737 (2011 census). Sikar, Churu district and Jhunjhunu district's comprise the Shekhawati region of Rajasthan. The old name of Sikar was ‘Veer Bhan Ka Bas’.

The Churu District Rajasthan state of India. It is known as gateway to the Thar Desert of Rajasthan. It is the administrative headquarters of Churu District. It lies in the Thar Desert on the National Highway-65 connecting Pali to Ambala and is a junction station on the railway line to Bikaner.

Jhunjhunu District is in the state of Rajasthan, India and the administrative headquarters of Jhunjhunu District. It is located a 180 km away from Jaipur, 220 km from Bikaner and 245 km from Delhi.

5.4 Sikar District Population:-

In shekhawati region, the Sikar district population according to 2011 census. The population of district according to gender wise, the male population is 1,374,990 and female population is 1,302,343 and the total population of district is 2,677,333 if we compare this strength of population with 2001 census than the male population were 1,172,753 and female population were 1,115,035 and total population become 2,287,788.

5.4.1- Sikar District Population growth rate:-

If we compare the population between 2001 and 2011 of the Sikar District in shekhawati region. The male population increase 202237 and female population increase 187308 and if we compare with total population than it is rising 389545. Here if we see the growth rate than we find that male population increases rapidly then the female population.
5.4.2 Sikar District literacy rate:-

The literacy rate of sikar district in 2011 on the basis of gender, than male literacy rate are 85.11% and female literacy rate are 58.23% and the total literacy rate of sikar district are 71.91%. in the 2001 the literacy rate on the basis of gender, than male literacy rate were 84.34% and female literacy rate were 56.11 and the total literacy rate were 70.74%.

Now if we make compare between these two sense literacy rate than the male literacy rate increasing 0.77% and female literacy rate increasing is 2.12% and the total literacy rate increasing is 1.44%.

5.4.3 -Sikar District sex ratio:-

The sex ratio rate of the sikar district in 2011 stood 947 girls per 1000 boys and in 2001 it stood 951 girls pre 1000 boys. The child sex ratio rate in sikar district in 2011 in 848 girls on per 1000 boys and in 2001 child sex ratio is 885 girls per 1000 boys if we compare between both sex ratio than 4 female decreasing on 1000 per male and in child sex ratio we find that the decreasing rate is 37 girals on 1000per boys.

5.4.4- Sikar District Child population:-

The child population of sikar district up to age 0-6 years in 2011 379874 children and in 2001 the child population were 418583. now if we compare between both sense than population decreasing is 38709.

5.4.5- Sikar District urban population:-

In the shakwati region the sikar district total urban population is 633906 in 2011. The male population was 327521 and female urban population is 306385. The total percent of population live in urban area 23.68% in 2011. The child population in urban area between the age group 0-6, the total population is 88142 and male children are 47272 and female child were 40870.Now the child population increasing 14.34% ‘between’ 2001 to 2011.

5.4.6 Sikar District Rural Population:-
The rural population of the sikar district was 76.32% in 2011. The total population in rural area is 2043427. The male population in rural area 1047469 and female population in rural area 995958. The sex ratio in rural areas is 951 females per 1000 males. The child sex ratio is rural area 843 girls per 1000 boys.

The child population in rural area the age between 0-6 the total children were 991732 and male children in rural area 158317 and female were 133415. the literacy structure of sikar District, the total literate people in district according to 2011 is 1240835. In that the male literate population is 754783 and female literacy population is 886052.

5.5.1- Churu District Population:-

In shekwhati region, the churu district population according to 2011 census. The population of Churu district according to gender wise, the male population is 1,051,446 and female population is 988,101 and the total population of district is 2,039,547 if we compare this strength of population with 2001 census than the male population were987,781 and female population were 936,097 and total population become 1,923,878.

5.5.2- Churu District Population Growth Rate:-

If we compare the population between 2001 and 2011 of the Churu District in shekhawati region. The male population increase 63665 and female population increase 52004 and if we compare with total population than it is rising 115669. Here if we see the growth rate than we find that male population increases rapidly then the female population.

5.5.3- Churu District Literacy Rate:-

The literacy rate of Churu district in 2011 on the basis of gender, than male literacy rate are 80.26 % and female literacy rate are 54.36 % and the total literacy rate of Churu district are 67.59 %. In the 2001 the literacy rate on the basis of gender, than male literacy rate were 78.78 % and female literacy rate were 54.04 % and the total literacy rate were 66.75 %.
Now if we make compare between these two census literacy rate than the male literacy rate increasing 1.48% and female literacy rate increasing is 0.32% and the total literacy rate increasing is 0.84%.

4.5.4- Churu District Sex Ratio:-

The sex ratio rate of the Churu district in 2011 stood 940 girls per 1000 boys and in 2001 it stood 948 girls per 1000 boys. The child sex ratio rate in Churu district in 2011 in 902 girls on per 1000 boys and in 2001 child sex ratio is 911 girls per 1000 boys if we compare between both sex ratio than 8 female decreasing on 1000 per male and in child sex ratio we find that the decreasing rate is 9 girls on 1000 per boys.

5.5.5- Churu District Child Population:-

The child population of Churu district up to age 0-6 years in 2011, 317,813 children and in 2001 the child population were 383,914. Now if we compare between both ensue than population decreasing is 66101.

5.5.6- Churu District Urban Population:-

In the shakwati region the churu district total urban population is 576,235 in 2011. The male population was 296,418 and female urban population is 279,817. The total percent of population live in urban area 28.25 % in 2011. The child population in urban area between the age group 0-6, the total population is 83,530 and male children are 43,985 and female child were 39,545. Now the child population increasing ‘between’ 2001 to 2011.

5.5.7- Churu District Rural Population:-

The rural population of the Churu district was 71.75 % in 2011. The total population in rural area is 1,463,312. The male population in rural area 755,028 and female population in rural area 708,284. The sex ratio in rural areas is 938 females per 1000 males. The child sex ratio is rural area 903 girls per 1000 boys.

The child population in rural area the age between 0-6 the total children were 234,283 and male children in rural area 123,099 and female were 111,184. The literacy structure of Churu District, the total literate people in district according to
2011 is 791,499. In that the male literate population is 486,256 and female literacy population is 305,243.

5.6.1- Jhunjhunun District Population:-

In shekwhati region, the Jhunjhunu district population according to 2011 census. The population of district according to gender wise, the male population is 1,095,896 and female population is 1,041,149 and the total population of district is 2,137,045 if we compare this strength of population with 2001 census than the male population were 983,526 and female population were 930,163 and total population become 1,913,689.

5.6.2- Jhunjhunun District Population Growth Rate:-

If we compare the population between 2001 and 2011 of the Jhunjhunu District in shekhawati region. The male population increase 112370 and female population increase 110986 and if we compare with total population than it is rising 223356. Here if we see the growth rate than we find that male population increases rapidly then the female population.

5.6.3- Jhunjhunun District Literacy Rate:-

The literacy rate of Jhunjhunu district in 2011 on the basis of gender, than male literacy rate are 86.90 % and female literacy rate are 60.95 % and the total literacy rate of Jhunjhunu district are 74.13 %. In the 2001 the literacy rate on the basis of gender, than male literacy rate were 86.09 % and female literacy rate were 59.51 % and the total literacy rate were 73.04 %.

Now if we make compare between these two census literacy rate than the male literacy rate increasing 0.81% and female literacy rate increasing is 1.44% and the total literacy rate increasing is 1.09%.

5.6.4 -Jhunjhunun District Sex Ratio:-

The sex ratio rate of the Jhunjhunu district in 2011 stood 950 girls per 1000 boys and in 2001 it stood 946 girls pre 1000 boys. The child sex ratio rate in Jhunjhunu district in 2011 in 837 girls on per 1000 boys and in 2001 child sex ratio is
863 girls per 1000 boys if we compare between both sex ratio than 4 female decreasing on 1000 per male and in child sex ratio we find that the decreasing rate is 26 girls on 1000 per boys.

5.6.5- Jhunjhunun District Child Population:-

The child population of Jhunjhunu district up to age 0-6 years in 2011, 288,470 children and in 2001 the child population were 335,259. Now if we compares between both census than population decreasing is 46789.

5.6.6- Jhunjhunun District Urban Population:-

In the shekhawati region the Jhunjhunu district total urban population is 489,079 in 2011. The male population was 253,178 and female urban population is 235,901. The total present of population live in urban area 22.89% in 2011. The child population in urban area between the age group 0-6, the total population is 65,951 and male children are 35,579 and female child were 30,372. Now the child population increasing ‘between’ 2001 to 2011.

5.6.7- Jhunjhunun District Rural Population:-

The rural population of the Jhunjhunu district was 77.11 % in 2011. The total population in rural area is 1,647,966. The male population in rural area 842,718 and female population in rural area 805,248. The sex ratio in rural areas is 956 females per 1000 males. The child sex ratio is rural area 832 girls per 1000 boys.

The child population in rural area the age between 0-6 the total children were 222,519 and male children in rural area 121,483 and female were 101,036. The literacy structure of Jhunjhunu District, the total literate people in district according to 2011 is 1,046,549. In that the male literate population is 625,672 and female literacy population is 420,877.

In the State of Rajasthan, Shekhawati region majority of people earn there livelihood by agriculture and rearing animals. There are sharp differences between rural and urban areas livelihood, social structure and diverse patterns of settlement. Industrial and manufacturing sectors do not have significant presence. Income pattern
of the various segments of society are highly uneven. Therefore, to ensure that education is universalized and available to all the segments of society is all the more important. The main challenge in Shekhawati region the State of Rajasthan confronting the formation of strategies for spread of education is the inclusion of girl child in its fold.

Considerable reforms are required for the spread of education to the underprivileged and marginalized groups of the society especially girls, dalits, migrants and nomadic so that they can access the infrastructure created for education in Shekhawati region the state of Rajasthan.

The object and result of reforms in the field of education should be able to provide adequate avenues for livelihood so that they can improve the quality of their living. Despite considerable increase in investment in the infrastructure for expansion of education the success achieved is low which requires higher participation of the common man and decentralization of the system which would mean the direction and control of programmers should have joint participation both by the common man and the Government.

For providing good and successful education strategy lessons should be learned from success stories and examples should be taken of the best practices. In the Shekhawati region state of Rajasthan women education has always been the subject of experimentation. Government should incorporate positive factors from the programmers like Non Formal Education, Shiksha Karmi, Lok Jumbish, & some other good project related to the women education strategies for future should be formed.

Improvement in literacy rate was highest in Rajasthan, as compared to other states in India between 2001 & 2011 during which period literacy rose from 67.06% to 74.04 percent, and literacy rate for males increased from 76.46% to 80.51 % and female literacy rate from44.34 % to 52.66%. Despite high growth during this decade the challenge is still substantial with low improvement especially in rural areas related to women, schedule castes and schedule tribes.

The education scenario is thus constrained on dual fronts – on the one hand achievement level is relatively low in absolute terms on the other hand its distribution across social groups is highly uneven. Therefore, in educational terms the worst sufferers in Shekhawati region in state of Rajasthan are women. Going back in to the history the reasons responsible for lower female education in Shekhawati region in state of Rajasthan are found to be - social discrimination, gender based inequality,
cultural and religious differences, involvement of girls in household occupations, low level of admission of girls to schools, etc.

5.7 Gender Based Inequality:-

Gender inequality takes back the growth of societies, the development of nations and the evolution of societies to the disadvantage of both men and women’. Gender issues are not simply talking about women’s issues. Understanding gender means understanding opportunities, constraints and its impact of change as they affect both men and women.

The term gender is used by the society to refer to the socially constructed character traits and role expectations which society has defined differently for men and women. It is these socially constructed gender differences that have most often been used to subordinate or oppress women. Generally speaking, the character that is stereotypically used to describe a “man” is largely viewed as positive or neutral, such as big, strong and aggressive, while the character of a “woman” is often define as negatively – timid, weak, shy, small and so on. Gender, Age and Generation are the predominant factors influencing the family structure in Rajasthan. Rules laid down by Manuscript around the period 200 BC define the role, responsibility and female behavior. Few of the rules defining the duties and responsibilities of woman are:-

(i)- A young woman, a young girl, or even an aged woman is not supposed to do anything independently even at their home.

(ii)- Husband must be constantly worshipped as god by a faithful wife despite of his being devoid of good qualities or virtues. (Wadley 1988) According the circumstances the behavioral rules & regulations make a young woman powerless and at a serious disadvantage making them secluded, subservient and deny self esteem resulting into serious implications on woman’s control on their fate and even on their reproductive choice. (Jejeebhoy, 1994)

These norms are deeply rooted in the social setup of the society and their influence occurs on the behavior of the man & woman in the family and society domain, immediate kinship network. Seclusion of a woman is considered a virtue and honour of the family to which she belongs. Large number of restrictions is imposed
like movement outside the home, veiling or partial veiling (ghunghat or prudish) of head and face, a strict code of conduct for interaction with men. There are regional and community based norms for seclusion which are also governed by the economic and social status of the particular family and community. In wealthy and higher caste families in Rajasthan strictest purdah system is being observed. The tradition of village exogamy amongst Hindus puts strict surveillance on a young bride who is required to always keep her head covered and rarely socialise. There is no opportunity to create social network. This makes her stranger in her home as well as in the outside village. (Mandelbaum, 1986 Jeffery and Lyon, 1989).

After twenty first century during past quite some time increase of western influence on the society and lifestyle of the people increase in urbanization and change tendency about girl education and reduced the parental influence of seclusion. However, no data is available to measure the magnitude of this change.

In the Indian constitution Directive principles have laid down that, within 10 years, free and compulsory primary education should be provided to females up to the age of 14 years. However, the 1981 census data suggest that only 1/3rd of the girl population between 5- 14 years age (lower numbers in rural areas) were actually attending school as compared to ½ of all the boys. Question arises why despite such a great concern laid down by the Constitution the rate of female literacy, their enrolment to schools and attendance is so low. Answer lies both in availability of educational opportunities for them and the willingness amongst the various social groups (Jejeebhoy, 1994). The basic cause is reluctance of the parents for educating their daughters via – a – vies the education of their male children which is seen more as an investment towards future financial returns. Education of girls is not seen as an advantage to the family as they are to migrate to other family after marriage whereas male child is seen as a support to the parents in their olden days. The other predominant factor for not educating girl child is that their role is considered to be only reproductive and in rural areas for working in the fields as an agricultural laborers requiring no formal education.

Due to patriarchal norms and exogamy in some of the areas girls are married off in distant districts & are required to remain in seclusion during their reproductive years. Even if they work they are not allowed to control their wages resultantly even
the working women are also not able to support their parents making it a disincentive for the parents to provide them education. Besides, work opportunities for women are limited and even if wherever available their wages are extremely low. As such, comparatively women education rate is higher in areas where work opportunities and wages are higher (Rosenzweig & Evason, 1977). Some better educated boys prefer better and higher educated brides resultantly some parents now prefer to educate their daughters.

As boys go to schools girls replace them in labor besides doing their usual household work responsibilities. It is shocking to note that the percentage of girls of 11 to 13 years of age in rural labor force which was 24 percent in 1981 has gone up to +30 percent. Also less than 2 percent of such girls who were engaged in rural labor our attended school. On the other hand during the same period there is decline in boys in rural labor force by around 8 percent which implies that there is shift in the quantum of rural our force from boys to girls due to increase in the level of education of the boys. The more pathetic part of it is that roughly 40 million nonworking in rural areas girls the age group of 11 to 13 years are not sent to schools and are kept at home for fulfilling household responsibilities. In rural areas although both boys and girls perform household responsibilities girls work for longer hours than boys for performing activities like collecting fuel, procuring water cooking, cleaning, rearing younger siblings and seasonal work on their family farm. Although the earning capacity of these girls is lower than the boys of the similar age group, the opportunity cost for their parents in not sending them to schools is high due to their utility in the maintenance of household functions and hence they are not sent to schools (Jejeebhoy, 1993). Also the utility of spending money on their education being the least of use, parents in rural areas are unwilling to bear the direct cost of educating their daughters.

According to government policy in Government Schools there are no tuition fees for girls, the books and other study materials, like uniforms, transport etc. are given free of costs that is reduce a heavy burden which many poor families in rural areas are not in a capacity to bear. They prefer to incur that amount of expenditure on their boy siblings than daughters.

Besides, the future cost of educated daughters is considered to be higher as
educated girls will be required to be married to better educated boys only, who
demand higher dowry. Another disincentive for sending daughters to schools is
concern for their virginity. Because schools in rural areas are located at longer
distances teachers in these schools are generally males, schools are common for both
boys and girls on account of whom parents are unwilling to expose their daughters to
possible assault of virginity which plays a vital role in removing young girls from
schools.

On account of the above factors there is poor demand for education of the
girls. Supply factors have also failed to counter these obstacles. School timings are
inflexible to the labor demand on young girls, schools are not conveniently located,
almost 10% of the villages do not have primary schools, 15percent do not have a
middle school, and there are no female teachers.

If we see the ratio of female and male teachers in primary, upper primary and
middle schools are less than one third. Even some of the Government Programmers
exist to cover cost of text books, uniforms, learning material to poor girls, these
programmers are not suitably administered and do not cover the areas where literacy
rate of girl children is extremely low and calls for sensitive strategies.

5.8 Social Customs Related to Women in Shekhawati region in state of Rajasthan

5.8.1 Sati:-

A social custom known as ‘Sati Pratha’ was prevalent in Shekhawati region
state of Rajasthan amongst some communities wherein a woman whose husband
expires was either voluntarily or by force or coercion would be required to immolate
herself along with her deceased husband. It was more prevalent in the then provinces
of Bengal and the Rajputs of Rajputana. One traditional view about Sati Pratha was
that the husband and wife are two bodies but one soul and thus if husband is dead it
results in the death of a wife, it brings fame to her faithfulness and loyalty. Therefore,
in ancient India wife used to join her husband on his funeral pyre. Slowly, it became a
traditional practice in Hinduism. Another view associated with Sati pratha is that
during the Mughal period after the defeat in the battles, the Rajput women used to do
Jauhar (Self-immolation) to protect their dignity from the victorious mughal army. In
the eighteenth and nineteenth century the orthodox and the traditional people of the
society started forcing the wife of a dead man to self-immolate herself and thus accompany her husband’s dead body in the funeral pyre.

In the 19th century as per the traditions of Bengal, “Becoming a sati was an important social custom and hence, must be accepted stoically.” Social reformer Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar pleaded the case of widows and thus said:

“Oh poor India!...you think the woman whose husband dies immediately turns into a stone; she does not have sorrow anymore, cannot feel pain anymore and all her senses of passions and sensualities disappear without trace suddenly! But you well know that such notions are based on false pretences as evidence to the contrary abounds. Just think how these erroneous notions are poisoning this world. How sad! The country, whose male population is unkind, unreligious and unaware of the distinction between the good and the evil and don’t care about justice and fairness and where abiding the rituals is the chief preoccupation of religion, should not give birth to girls!”

Around 1812, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, a social reformer from Bengal, started campaign against this evil practice. For this he started convincing widows not to so die, and wrote articles against Sati Pratha and tried his best to prove that Sati Pratha was not required by the Hindu scriptures. Resultantly, on 4th December, 1829 this practice was banned by the then Governor Lord William Bentinck. The abolition of sati can be seen as a great moment for Indian women and a first step taken towards their freedom.

But in the past six and a half decades at least forty cases of Sati have come in light in the rural areas of Rajasthan and most of these in the district of Sikar, Churu and Jhunjhunu near Jaipur (Capital city of Rajasthan), and possibly many more unpublicised cases. Thus, can we say that the outlook towards the women has changed and they are given the freedom of choice, freedom of life if not the freedom of expression or the right to education as per our constitution?

5.8.2 Purdah:-

Pardha Pratha is a custom where women are supposed to cover their face in front of the male members of the family and outsiders. Gradually Purdah Pratha
along with child marriage became compulsory in the Hindu society pushing women in the darkness of ignorance. There is difference of opinion on the issue whether the Purdah Pratha was prevalent in ancient India or not. Some researchers are of the view that in pre-Muslim era it was not prevalent, whereas some are of the view that Hindu women used to wear veil even before the Muslims came to this land. The available evidence on this point is of a dubious nature and can be interpreted to support either of the two views. However, it is beyond doubt that Purdah was not in vogue before the century 200 B.C. During Indo Iranian times women had liberty of freely moving in the society and of managing their agriculture activity, if required. In Vedic period also education of girls and boys was together. There was a tradition during Vedic period to show the bride to all the assembled guests at the end of the marriage ceremony, the purpose was that the bride should be able to express herself with composure as she grows elder. Presence of females in social and public functions was quite welcome and a normal feature. Rather anything graceful or charming was being compared by Vedic poets with a beautifully attired lady going out for attending a function. In century 500 B.C. ladies used to attend courts of law to establish their inheritance claims. (Nirukta) Neither Rig Vida contains any reference to Purdah system nor there do any reference in the scriptures dating to century 500 B.C.

5.8.3 Child Marriage:-

During vedic period Gender base inequality going on back. During Vedic period woman also played an equal role to that of man in sacrificial rites and upholding “dharma”. With the changing of time there developed a belief, probably a misconception that women are weak, Procter and needed protection. The strategy of protection goes back to the time period of Manu. Manu considered woman as an object to be protected by man. According to Manu;


It means that in childhood the woman must be protected by her father, in youth by her husband and in old age by her sons. Thus a woman is denied independence. The ardent desire to preserve the purity of a girl for upholding the honour of the family is the key factor contributing to early marriage. As per the society norms, virginity and chastity are the precious possessions of a girl. This undue
importance given to the chastity paved the way for the seclusion of girls from interaction with others and early marriage (Child Marriage), to protect the girls from possible sexual abuses. This in turn leads to the withdrawal of the girl students from school on attaining puberty to protect girls from sexual harassments. The high rate of dropout of girls at the secondary level of education in India indicates the attitude of the parents to restrain the girls from education on attaining puberty. Thus they prefer early marriage as a resource to protect the girls from sexual exploitation.

Accept for this region there is so many, another reason for child marriage is the practice of giving dowry, among the higher classes. Traditionally dowry was not a common practice among the lower caste, and most of them followed the opposite custom of bride price. In the recent years, despite the legislation prohibiting dowry, the custom of dowry has been extended to both the high and the low classes. It is also to be noted that the quantum of dowry increases with the age and educational level of the girls. Thus, parents prefer to keep their daughters uneducated and get them married at the earliest. There is also a custom of mass marriages on the day of Akha Teej in shekhawati region state of Rajasthan to avoid much expenses as well as this day is considered as an auspicious day for marriages. The newspaper reports clearly reveal that during Akha Teej thousands of child marriages takes place in shekhawati region state of Rajasthan. It is always difficult to gather specific data of child marriage in the absence of registration, reports coming from rural areas confirm the open violation of the law against child marriage (The Hindu, 2003).

According to B. S. Nagi, in Rajasthan people are reluctant to depart from this custom, inspite of the work of social action groups, including governmental and non-governmental organisations, people continue to adhere to the traditional custom of child marriage. Early marriage is still a custom.

5.8.4 Female Infanticide and Female Foeticide:-

Near about half of the human population on this earth constitute women but in spite of that they are differentiated, humiliated and exploited inspite of the fact that in which country they live in, whatever religion they propagate and in which era they live in. Everywhere women are facing innumerable and so many other challenges of her survival. The Indian constitution provides ‘right to life’ for all the human beings but women are denied this most basic and fundamental right, ‘the right to life’ due the
the worst forms of violence against her, i.e., ‘Female Foeticide’. Female foeticide prevails in many states of our country. It is the elimination of a female embryo or a foetus after the pre-natal sex determination for the want of a boy. Woman is created equal to man in all the areas.

“Women also have equal rights with men on earth; in religion and in the society women are a very important elements. Divine justice demands that the rights of both sexes should be equally respected since neither is superior to the other in the eyes of Heaven.”

These authoritative statements from the Bahai’s writings are regarded by Bahai’s as expressions of the Divine Will. This practice of female infanticide and female foeticide has created the social imbalance and is leading to serious problems like sexual abuse of woman, sharing of woman within and outside wedlock and insecurity of women in the society. The most surprising fact is that the problem is grave in urban areas rather as compared to rural areas, and among educated rather than uneducated women. The research conducted in the Shekhawati region state of Rajasthan reveals;

1. In prosperous urban areas the ratio of girl kids to boys (between the age of 0 – 6) is comparatively declining fast as compared to 2001.
2. In rural areas where modern ultrasound technology is not available birth rate of girl child is more but due to non availability of public health facilities survival rate is low.
3. Due to lower survival rate in rural areas, selective abortions in urban areas and a trend for smaller families’ aversion to daughters is deepening.
4. Laws relating to pre natal sex determination and selective abortions are being flouted and the sex determination technology is widely being used for avoiding birth of girl children.
5. Ultrasound technology is largely being considered a safe mode to plan a family.
6. Therefore, despite laws and Government policies for protection of girls’ rights and improvement in their literacy rate, education and employment, pressure to have male children is seen increasing.

As stated above the ratio is declining fast in the urban areas despite better literacy level and economic condition, this is due to dowry system and thus birth of a girl child is a burden for educated people and girls being the other man’s property
parents think raising a girl and spending money in her upbringing and education is a sheer waste. If the same money is spend on the upbringing of a boy and his education, the parents are in a position to demand dowry as per their wish.

The crime statistics during 1997-1998 shows an increase of 8.8 percent in female foeticide and 6.5 percent of female infanticide. In some communities of Rajasthan, birth ratio, naturally expected to be that of 100 males for every 103 females are dramatically lowered to 60 females for every 100 males (Jain Sharda, 1999). The declining number of females in sex ratio is the direct consequence of female foeticide and female infanticide.

In relation to female foeticide, I have collected and compiled some of the comments of the eminent people cited after the incident of female foeticide occurred in Navagarh district of Orissa. Magsaysay award winner and India’s first woman IPS officer Kiran Bedi 04.08.2007 (Saturday) in Bhubaneswar said, cases of female foeticide could be prevented only when people changed their mindset. “People should not consider a girl child as a financial burden. There are lots of opportunities for girls now to choose a career option. Take my example, we are four sisters but all of us are well established,” Ms. Bedi said. The senior police officer while addressing hundreds of students and their parents at the 19th Foundation Day celebration of DAV School, Chandrasekharpur, Bhubaneswar, said, “only framing of laws was not a solution to prevent the heinous crime, people should come forward to lodge complaint on these incidents and then only the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act could be properly implemented” (The Hindu, 2007).

The leader of opposition in Parliament and BJP MP Mrs. Sushma Swaraj while addressing a function (in Cuttack on 01.09.2007) by an all India youth organisation to launch its campaign “Jago Maa Jago” to save female foetus has confessed that Legislative action and enforcement of law has failed to put any check on mass scale female foeticide in the country. She has appealed the youth of the country to launch a nationwide campaign by taking the help of the religious priests to save the threatening sex ratio in the country. National Women Commission member Manju Snehlata Hembram who was also present in the function also endorsed the views. Mrs. Swaraj mentioned that as a Union Health Minister several measures were started by her for preventing female foeticide by making tennis player Sania Mirza as
a female role model, none of the plans succeeded because our society is guided by blind belief of having a male child mental block.

She mentioned that rituals like “Shraddh”, “Pind Dan”, performing last rites by a son etc. have made strong belief in the minds of the people that without a son/male child in the family their soul will not rest in peace after death. These beliefs and notions which are not true are needed to be removed from the minds of the society to give a place of pride to the girl child (Article published in The Hindu on 5th August, 2007).

5.8.5 Dowry:-

As per the definition of dowry as given in the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 (section 3) and as amended in 1980 gifts of jewellery, clothes and cash traditionally given by groom’s family are also covered by the law and declared illegal. The Act provides “any property or valuable security given or agreed to be given either directly or indirectly by one party to a marriage to the other party to the marriage or by the parents of either party to a marriage or by any other person, to either party to the marriage or to any other person at or before (or any other time after the marriage) in connection with the marriage of the said parties.”

5.9 Human Trafficking in Rajasthan:-

The largest source of profit for organized crime is identified as Human Trafficking besides weapons and drugs which generate Millions of dollars yearly. The labour used in trafficking works under exploitative conditions and is gross violation of human rights and labour standards. The victims work under the fear of no option. In this business children and more particularly girl children are at greater risk than adults who are held under the control of the perpetrator.

Rajasthan is one of a State where trafficking of women and girls is done for commercial sexual exploitation along with Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. Out of 32 districts in Rajasthan, 27 districts (Alwar, Tonk, Dholpur, Sawaimadhopur, Bharatpur, Jaipur, Pali, Bundi, Chittorgarh, Udaipur, Jalore, Jodhpur, Hanumangarh, Dausa, Dungarpur, Bhilwara, Barmer, Rajsmand, Ajmer, Jhalawar, Nagaur, Banswara, Baran, Shriganganagar, Sirohi, Jaisalmer and Sikar) are infested with some
or other form of prostitution, where women are traditionally or circumstantially forced to undertake Commercial Sexual Activities for the survival of their children and families.

Brothel based organised commercial sexual activities are rampant in the eastern districts of Rajasthan, along highways and main roads. It is mostly rife among the Scheduled castes such as Nat, Kanjar, Bediya, Santiya, Sansi, Banchchada. The major districts involved are Alwar, Tonk, Dhaulpur, Bharatpur, Bhilwara, Chittorgarh, Bundi, Jhalara and Sawaimadhopur. In the western districts of the State of Rajasthan, i.e. Sikar, Nagaur, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Barmer, Churu, Jhunjhunun, Bikaner, Hanumangarh and Ganganagar, women belonging to various castes such as Navak, Od, Baori, Damami, Sikhlinagar and Mazhabi are involved in prostitution individually or in its unorganised form. In Hanumangarh and Ganganagar traditional organised forms of prostitution is also prevalent. In some districts of southern Rajasthan commercial sex activities are being done by various tribal woman for their living.

To make a mention some such communities generally found in Baran, Dungarpur, Udaipur, Banswara and Jhalawar districts are Bhil, Garasiva, Akmor, Kalbelia, Banjara, Jogi etc.

In the recent developments, trafficking to Mumbai and Pune in Maharashtra for bar girls has emerged as new phenomena and maximum numbers of girls are taken up from Rajasthan directly or indirectly. 17% women in Delhi brothels come from Rajasthan. Rural Female Sex Worker in Rajasthan: A Mapping Study by Human Environment Action Research Society, Jaipur 2002, undertaken as the India-Canada Collaborative HIV/AIDS Project had identified 62,204 rural females, 7570 households, and 220 villages engaged in commercial sexual activities in Rajasthan. Out of total number of women trafficked and engaged in commercial sexual activities 25 to 30 percent are minors. Girls forced into sexual activity are generally at the age of puberty. Besides, trafficking of minor girls into commercial sex, a very large number of children are sexually abused and exploited by trafficking them for various economic activities like gem and diamond industry in Jaipur in Rajasthan in which out of 2, 00,000 gem workers around 20,000 are children (source ICFTU, “Union investigation reveals dirty end of the diamond and precious stone business” 1997). Similarly a study of US Department of Labour, 1997 has cited the status and problems of leather workers has reported the involvement of children in leather and tanning
industry in Rajasthan. This prevalent traditional sanction along with the lacklustre response to this problem by the State Government is responsible for its magnitude. A recent study undertaken by the India/Canada Collaborative HIV/AIDS Project in Jaipur 2002 have revealed that since independence none have enacted a law similar to that in Andhra Pradesh or Madhya Pradesh against religious or traditional sexual exploitation or came out with a plan to remove or deal with the problem even after 5 years of National Plan of Action 1998. State Government’s response to this Union Government Plan is not encouraging and is limited to doing away with the administrative and legal formalities. Despite a large number of women affected by this there is no scheme to rehabilitate the victims and reintegrate them to the mainstream of society even within the existing Central Government Plan. In pursuance to the Supreme Court directive in Vishal Jeet Case in 1994 and amendment to ITPA Advisory Committee was formed in 1994. However, formation of State or District level committees is yet to be completed. Similarly as per directions of the Supreme Court in Gaurav Jain case in 1997 as per provisions contained in National Plan of Action 1998 for Anti-Trafficking and Prevention Cells in Red Light Areas/High Supply Areas have not been formed as directed under ITPA.

Advisory bodies of social workers as required to be formed under section 13.2(b) of the ITPA for helping the Special Police officers have not been formed despite lapse of 5 years since the formation of the National Plan of Action. Similarly, no action has been taken for establishing training cum employment projects in red light areas have been made nor any centre for HIV infected victims established as provided in this plan. Only one Women Counselling and Protection Centre was set up in Mahila Thana, Gandhi Nagar, Jaipur in the year 2002 and orders for establishment of 6 such police stations in range headquarters were issued on 01.03.2003. Although Zila Sahayta Samities for care and protection to woman in need have been formed but there is no data to reflect their functioning status. In the entire state there is only one help line run by Rajasthan University Women Association.

Four children home for boys, one for girls, 32 destitute homes run through NGOs and 1 rescue cum rehabilitation home viz. Rajya Mahila Sadan is located at Jaipur. One mahila sadan for rehabilitation of destitute woman and victims of CSE is under construction at Sanganer township in Jaipur in the proposed name of Bharat
Ratna Mother Teresa Mahila Sadan. A rescue cum rehabilitation home viz. Balika Grah is being run by the Government for girls of 16-18 years of age. 12 counselling centres are functioning in Rajasthan – five in Jaipur town, two in Kota and one each at Ajmer, Jhalawar, Parat, Mawalpur and Udaipur. Out of these 12, eight are being run through Central Social welfare Board and 4 through State Social Welfare Board.

High supply areas are being targeted for economic empowerment through Kishori Balika Yojana, Kishori Shakti Yojana, and Swayamsidha Yojana. Though as per the policy, priority is given for admission of girl child of victims in hostel/boarding homes of education department but there is no clear picture regarding the number of beneficiaries. Conclusion may be drawn from the above facts that there exist serious gaps in the State policy and priority. The Supreme Court directives in 1990 (Vishal Jeet) and in 1997 (Gaurav Jain) Case and the National Plan of Action has made little difference to the State government. The State government seems out rightly unconcerned with the violation of the constitutional rights of the SC, ST and backward sections of the society and the human rights of the victims. It is totally insensitive to the State obligations to protect the citizens. (Source: Trafficking in India Report 2004, by Shaktivahini)

5.10. Right to Education:-

The important of educations have been recognized in Indian policy making from the very beginning. Under Art. 45 of our Constitution stipulated that all State would Endeavour to provide, within 10 years, free and compulsory education for all the children below 14 years of age. As per the 93 Constitutional Amendment 2001, article 21 will be followed by article 21 A, stating that the State shall provide free and compulsory education for all children between the age of six to fourteen years. Rajasthan is facing lot of problems for girls in the area of educational access, their enrolment and achievement in primary education. These problems are; (i) availability of schools in the rural areas which are non-functional, (ii) absenteeism of teachers, (iii) lack of female teachers, (iv) poor quality of education, (v) poor infrastructure, (vi) distance between the village and the school, (vii) poor quality of education, (viii) single teacher schools, (ix) lack of basic amenities like chalk, blackboard, etc., (x) unwillingness of female teachers to be posted in the villages due to which parents become reluctant to send their girl child to the school.
5.11 Discrimination against Girls in Rajasthan:-

Due to various social, religious and cultural prohibitions girls in Rajasthan are deprived of education. In this chapter I have tried to focus on the factors responsible for the deprivation of education for the girls like gender discrimination sati, child marriages, dowry, widowhood, purdah pratha, female infanticide and foeticide etc. One more belief associated with higher level of education of the girls is that if girls are highly educated they take their own decisions, disobey their parents and there is problem of finding a proper match for them and therefore, their marriage becomes a problem. Once girls attain puberty parents like to withdraw their girls from the school because they are worried for their sexual vulnerability. Child marriages in Rajasthan are associated with the dropout rate of girls from school. All the above mentioned social factors are the cause of poor literacy ratio (Census 2011);

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<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>MALE</th>
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<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>52.66%</td>
<td>80.51%</td>
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The above mentioned ratio as per the Census 2011 clearly reflects that due to the gender disparity throughout the State of Rajasthan the male literacy ratio is at par with the national ratio, but female literacy ration is lagging far behind the national ratio. Therefore, it can be stated that ‘gender bias’ is the main cause of high levels of illiteracy among girls in the State and there is an urgent need to sensitize parents, families and society towards educating their girls.

ii. Inculcation of patriotism.

iii. Disregard of western education.

Coupled with non-cooperation movement, the concept of “national system of education” led to the establishment of several institutions on national lines. The notable among them were: Banaras Hindu University (1916), Aligarh Muslim University (1920), Gujarat Vidyapeeth, Kashi Vidyapeeth, Jamia Millia Islamia and Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth.

In 1919, the government of India Act was introduced which, in effect, developed considerable responsibility to the provinces. The Act created “Diarchy” or “Rule of Two” leading to greater representation of elected members. In 1912, the Department of Education was transferred to an Indian Minister responsible to
Legislature. Being unable to receive sufficient funds from the government, these ministries could not provide the expected results. The continuous pressure for educational improvement resulted in the appointment of Hartog Committee (1928), which made wide-ranging proposals for development of both, general and professional education.

5.12 Position of Women:-
Women have better opportunities today for their development. They have freedom to study and work out of their home. In 19th Century life for majority of women was much harder. As discussed in the first chapter, social practices like female infanticide, child marriages, polygamy, purdah pratha, sati pratha etc. were prevalent in many sections of the Indian Society. Killing of a girl child (infanticide) was a very common practice. Polygamy was an accepted practice among many castes and religions. Sati Pratha, in which a widowed woman was compelled to burn herself on the funeral pyre of her husband, was in practice in many parts of the country. Woman who escape were made to live a very miserable life. Woman had no access to education. Women had no right to property. Thus in general women had a subordinate position in the society. Fear of invader and loss of family honor, dowry, sharing of family’s ancestral property further deteriorated their status. Thus certain practices and superstitions were preventing Indian society from progressing and reforms were needed to bring change in the social and religious life of the people.

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