

Women's Education in Western Ghats Regions of Karnataka

Women's education in the Western Ghats region in Karnataka has a long history. The region has seen several efforts in this direction by the local rulers as far back as 1854 and later the state governments. While Wood's Despatch of 1854 brought many reforms in education in India this was followed by various commissions and committees which gave a fillip to women's education. After 1956 and up to 1976 these initiatives were part of development programmes implemented with the active participation of NGOs to empower women, especially tribal women. After 1976 mass literacy campaigns, environmental and women's movements have contributed extensively to the progress of women's education. This region of Karnataka has also seen considerable private investment in women's education.

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I Introduction

The Western Ghats in Karnataka cover an area of 52,949.6 sq km, occupying 27.8 per cent of the area of the state inhabited by 23.4 per cent of its population. The region is spread across seven districts, namely, Dhakshin Kannada, Uttara Kannada, Kodagu, Hassan, Shimoga, Chickmagalur and Mysore and covers 49 taluks.

This paper traces the history of women's education in the Western Ghats regions in Karnataka over one-and-a-half centuries since 1854. We have chosen such a long period because there have been several efforts by the rulers as well as the state governments coupled with political and women's movements which have resulted in considerable progress in women's education in these parts.

The period between 1854-2000 has been divided into three parts, 1854-1955 (before reorganisation of the state), 1956-1976 (after reorganisation of the state) and 1976-2000. Wood's Despatch of 1854 brought in many reforms in education in India. This was followed by many revisions based on recommendations made by various commissions and committees, which gave a fillip to women's education before the reorganisations of the states. After 1956 up to 1976 several initiatives taken up by the state government and developmental programmes implemented by the central government and NGOs' active participation to empower women in general and tribal women in particular have contributed to furthering of women's education. The period after 1976 has been

interesting because of people's will and political will to improve the status of women, especially in the education and social sectors. This coupled with mass literacy campaigns, environmental movements and women's movements has contributed extensively to the progress of women's education. Private investments made by the philanthropers and community members have made women's education march ahead. The role of decentralisation of educational administration is significant.

Women's Education, 1854-1955

In 1854, Wood's Despatch was the turning point in the history of education in the coastal areas in south India. During 1855-56 a normal school (training school for teachers) was started and schools established earlier were continued. Missionary schools were encouraged and schools were started in 1838. In 1844, in Mangalore, a Jesuit mission was established and it opened a school. At the same time the department of education specified the curriculum, textbooks and set the standards of education to be imparted in government school in 1867 by raising funds and donations from public. University of Madras was established in 1857. This catered to matriculation and degree examinations. After 1855, introduction of Grant-in-Aid to schools paved way for further establishment of schools. The Madras Elementary Education Act and Local Funds Act followed this in 1857. This raised the number of schools from 73 to 148 in 1870-71 and 1881 respectively. In all these the collector of the region had the vital role as a decision-maker.

Another interesting feature was that the schools for girls were started separately. Missionaries and the Catholic institutions started more schools for girls. But the need was felt to train teachers and recruit female teachers. Thus Sisters of convents started schools for girls and teacher training schools where fee concessions and scholarships were given to deserving students. They also started St Agnes College. Normally girls were taught music, tailoring, and needlework and hand embroidery.

Primary education in South Kanara consisted of standards I to V in lower elementary schools. The higher elementary schools consisted of standards I to VIII. According to a survey made by department of public instruction in 1957-58, there were 115 primary and 67 middle schools in urban areas and 1,096 primary and 224 middle schools in rural areas, the total number of elementary schools being 1,502. In Shimoga district during 1943-44, the number of primary schools was 872 with a pupil strength of 24,674 boys and 11,424 girls giving a total of 30,098 pupils. In Coorg district, it was the first move by Colavandra Carriappa to open a boarding school for girls in his own house. This was later on shifted to a new building during 1870-71.

In 1871 the government of India took keen interest in the development of education in Coorg. Anglo vernacular schools and Kannada village schools were encouraged. The girls freely attended the boys' schools in Coorg till they completed 12th year. In 1869, there were 12 girls as against 164 boys in those schools. Even English school for girls (boarding school) was established in 1872 in Mercara. But it did

not attract many girls. Hence a few students were sent to central school.

In 1881, Basel Mission Society in Mercara started admitting girls to their school. Only six girls attended the same. By 1882, 23 girls joined the school. Owing to certain reasons the strength of the school was reduced. This paved way for a move setting up of a government day school for girls in Mercara. But this did not work. However the Basel Mission continued its effort to attract girls belonging to poorer sections to the school run by the society. Frequent attempts were made by the government to start the school with full cooperation from the local municipalities and raising funds from public. But the project did not materialise. Even then about 519 girls attended schools conducted by various agencies and government.

During 1921 a private girls' school was started in Mercara. This school was later taken over by the government in 1894. In the early 19th century there were more girls' schools in Coorg in order to encourage female education as per the policy of government of India during 1904-1910 and 1922 girls were benefited by this policy. In Coorg by 1921 there were 110 schools, which were attended by girls. In 1938, nine schools run for girls by the government were closed as an economy measure. But the students were made to attend boys' schools. By 1947, there were 4,986 girls as compared to 9,011 boys in primary and middle schools.

In Chickmagalur district, it is interesting to trace the development of primary education in the last few decades. It was found that in 1924-25, there were 459 primary schools (with classes I to IV) with a total student-strength of 9,758 boys and 2,374 girls in this district. Besides, there were three special schools with 115 boys, and 85 indigenous village schools with 1,304 boys and 87 girls. In that year, the number of middle schools (now called higher primary schools) was 33 with standards V to VIII, having pupil strength of 1,456 boys and 104 girls. Later, there was a setback in the progress of education owing to cuts in expenditure because of the economic depression, resulting in a marked decrease in the number of private schools. In 1940-41, there were 422 primary schools including 21 girls' schools, with a pupil-strength of 10,231 boys and 4,245 girls. In Hassan district, there were 646 primary schools in 1936-37. Nearly 930 girls were enrolled in primary schools as against 1,867 boys.

In South Kanara within a period of 10 years from 1946-47, there was a marked increase in the number of high schools in the district. The position just after the integration in 1956 was that the South Kanara District Board was managing 20 high schools (called the Board High School) located at Coondapur, Udupi, Karkal, Puttur, Hiriadka, Baimdoor, Bailur, Hejmady, Koteswara, Admar, Sullia Bellare, Panja, Shankaranarayana, Venoor, Hebri, Uppinangadi, Belthangady, Belman and Basrur. In 1957-58, there were, in all, 70 high schools in the district managed by the government, local bodies and private agencies. Of these 70 high schools, 46 were situated within the jurisdiction of the District Board, which excluded municipal and major panchayat areas. The total number of pupils studying in all the high schools in that period in the district (Form-IV, V and VI) was 28,445 (18,425 boys and 10,020 girls). Of the total number of pupils attending the high schools in the district, 20.4 per cent were on the rolls of the board high schools.

In the early 1960s, the college made efforts to run a few centres of cottage industries such as bee keeping and paper-making. From time to time, the students have been given part-time training under an 'Earn and Learn' scheme. The college conducts also diploma and certificate courses in German and a diploma course in Kannada. A centre for training in Yakshagana, a unique folk-art of the Malnad region is also being run here.

With a view to making available vocational training for women, a 'Grihini Vidyalaya' was started in 1958 at Udupi under the auspices of the Academy of General Education, Manipal. Course of six months' duration in tailoring and cutting was conducted in this institution. A sum of Rs 2 was being collected per month from each trainee and the vidyalaya was run on no-profit and no-loss basis. Classes were held for two days in a week to suit the convenience of students as well as housewives.

In Shimoga district, during the year 1924-25, there were only two high schools (one English and one Kannada) in the district with pupil-strength of 438 boys. By the year 1940-41, the number of high schools had increased to five including one high school for girls, having a total pupil-strength of 801 boys and 74 girls. In 1934-44, the student-strength of these five high schools was 1,085 boys and 140 girls. In the next decade, there was a fast increase both in

the number of high schools and in the strength of pupils. The number of high schools (including the higher secondary schools and multipurpose high schools) had risen to 24 by 1956-57 and to 29 by 1960-61.

In Hassan district, there were only four girls studying in a high school along with 248 boys during 1924-25. By 1940-41, there were two high schools where 37 girls and 536 boys studied. In 1943-44, a separate high school for girls was started. Similarly a separate high school was started for boys during the same year. In both the schools about 117 girls and 826 boys studied. By 1951-52, there were three high schools for girls and 19 high schools for boys. In these schools 749 girls as against 3,208 boys were studying.

In Chickmagalur district during the year 1924-25, the district had only one high school with a pupil-strength of 177 boys and one girl. By the year 1943-44, there were three high schools (including one high school for girls), with a total student-strength of 364 boys and 62 girls.

In the Western Ghats regions in Karnataka, the years between 1921-47 was a period of further expansion of schooling facilities for both boys and girls. Girls were

Table 1: Enrolment of Girls in Primary Schools

Districts	1977-78	1986-87	1997-98
DK	169825	213831	258475
UK	67234	83742	97720
Mysore	129463	159051	242693
Shimoga	105664	126588	162419
Hassan	83065	98946	127087
Kodagu	27997	34121	34659
Chickmagalur	57806	67006	78100
WGHT	641054	783285	1001153
Karnataka	2004952	2607237	3902866

Table 2: Enrolment of Girls in High Schools

Districts	1977-78	1990-91	1997-98
DK	23586	47283	53670
UK	9581	20031	17611
Mysore	14061	29760	37992
Shimoga	11775	3238	25034
Hassan	9543	21603	28471
Kodagu	5786	7827	9965
Chickmagalur	6942	13748	16216

Table 3: Pass Percentage of Girls in VII Examinations in Western Ghats Districts

Districts	1997	1998	1999
DK	91.16	89.33	87.64
UK	90.23	86.48	90.63
Mysore	88.58	90.04	89.35
Shimoga	85.50	86.86	86.17
Hassan	82.51	84.68	85.70
Kodagu	92.40	87.66	92.47
Chickmagalur	80.05	83.51	86.87

encouraged to study in schools meant for boys. Considerable changes and reforms were made to provide education for girls.

Not only was special attention given to the curriculum for female students but they were taught music, home science and tailoring compulsorily. So also more female teachers taught girls and women school inspectors were appointed. Provision was made to start Home schools and night schools also. Special attention was paid to educate 'Mappillas' in South Canara region. So also schools teaching Muslim girls were started in the region (nearly 11 schools were available).

In Coorg, the Girls' Lower Secondary School in Mercara and the Government English School at Virajpet were upgraded into secondary schools. Further the subjects taught at secondary school level had vocational bias and languages such as Sanskrit and Kannada were taught along with Urdu for those who were Muslims. Students were encouraged to appear for SSLC examinations. But, there were no colleges established in Coorg to enable females to attend higher education programmes.

During 1953, the scheme of basic education was introduced in Coorg. During 1954-55 there were 49 schools (Higher Elementary including Senior Basic Schools) with an enrolment of 6,337 girls as against 9,556 boys. There were 11 high schools in 1956. Multipurpose high schools were also started with technical, science, commerce and agriculture subjects in Coorg. The Catholic Missionaries started St Anne's School for Girls. This later on becomes a school for boys also.

At the same time special provisions were made for Tribal Education, Special Education and Education for the Handicapped children.

Women's Education after the Reorganisation

The Compulsory Primary Education Act was introduced during 1961. The following are some of the important provisions of the act: (a) The establishment of primary schools within a walking distance from the home of every child. (b) Making it the responsibility of every parent to see to the regular attendance of his children at an approved school. (c) Prevention of employment of children, so that they may be enabled to attend schools regularly. (d) Constitution of primary school panchayat courts to try offences under the act.

In Shimoga district, the number of primary schools increased to 931 by 1956-57, to 1,260 by 1961-62 and to 1,374 by 1968. As a result of implementation of the Compulsory Primary Education Scheme from 1961, the district made further progress in the field of primary education during about a decade from 1961 to 1970. The student-strength increased rapidly and new primary schools were opened at many places. Consequent on this, the number of teachers also increased proportionately. There were 156 Urdu primary schools as in 1969-70, with 13,125 boys and 5,923 girls studying under the charge of 300 men and 97 women teachers.

In Hassan district, at the time of integration of the state, there were 934 primary schools in which 19,030 girls were attending out of the total 49,315 students. In 1961-62, the number of primary schools increased to 1,136, in which 26,472 girls were studying as compared to 33,120 boys. Due to the strict implementation of the Compulsory Education Act, by 1967-68, 38,467 girls were attending 193 primary schools.

Besides these there were 105 Urdu schools wherein girls were admitted. These schools were located in various taluks in the district. There were 1,313 Kannada medium primary schools in which 33,361 girls were attending. There were 18 junior primary schools for girls with Kannada as medium of instruction. In these schools there were 3,348 girls as compared to 185 boys. In addition to these there were 150 upgraded Kannada medium primary schools in the district, which had classes from I to VIII. In these schools nearly 6,975 girls were studying. The total strength of such schools was 18,277.

There were seven Urdu medium schools where 332 girls attended as well as four Urdu girls Upgraded primary schools where 493 girls and 10 boys attended during 1963. Besides these, there were New Type middle schools (Classes I to VIII) in 1963 in the district. The number of girls attending those schools was 4,615. These schools had Kannada as medium of instructions. There were also seven Urdu boys' and

three Urdu girls' schools with a total strength of 771 boys and 799 girls.

In 1963-64, there were 65 middle schools where 4,896 girls studied. In addition to these there were four Urdu boys' schools, one Urdu girls' middle schools wherein 1,060 girls and 701 boys were studying in 1963. After the integration and introduction of new syllabus in 1962-63, primary education comprised of I to VII standards. Those schools, which had classes from I to VII or V to VII, were named as senior primary schools. By 1969-70, there were only three such schools in the district where nearly 606 girls were studying. There were also seven Urdu senior primary schools in which 1,425 girls were studying. At the same time there were 368 Kannada Senior Primary Boys' schools where 22,452 girls as compared to 37,971 boys were studying. A Tamil medium primary school was also started in the district in 1962-63 in which 40 girls studied as against 59 boys. During 1963-64 Basic Education was introduced in the district. There were 160 Junior Basic Schools, which had classes from I to IV. Out of the total strength of 15,659 in such schools 5,970 girls were attending.

In South Kanara, during 1967-68, there were 1,155 senior or higher primary schools of which 78 were run by government, 606 by local boards and 471 by private bodies, with a total pupil-strength of 50,133 boys and 33,921 girls. For every 10,000 population, 470 pupil were studying in senior or higher primary schools. Thus, in all, there were 1,566 primary schools in South Kanara in 1967-68. The strength of teachers working in primary schools was 7,349,

Table 5: SC and ST Students in High Schools during 2000-01

District	Total SCs	Girls	Total STs	Girls
Chickmagalur	6,562	3,584	1,085	568
Hassan	10,273	4,642	537	1,185
Shimoga	34,925	16,590	3,714	2,007
UK	4,054	2,032	488	272
DK	2,997	1,138	1,857	881
Udupi	2,416	1,222	1,628	613
Mysore	32,255	13,437	14,072	5,674
Chamaraj	10,567	4,897	3,024	1,236

Table 4: Pass Percentage of Girls in SSLC Examinations

Districts	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
DK	63.07	69.82	68.44	78.20	69.63
UK	28.39	51.57	54.60	65.23	53.32
Shimoga	39.33	40.61	46.89	52.75	48.30
Hassan	34.68	36.28	34.95	45.79	44.40
Mysore	42.12	47.47	47.16	49.16	47.72
Chickmagalur	43.88	44.85	52.16	57.36	50.65
Kodagu	38.19	50.67	49.66	61.73	52.02

of whom 4,225 were trained men teachers and 2,724 trained women teachers.

In South Kanara district, primary schools run by the local boards were taken over by the government in 1971-72; hence there were 419 lower primary schools and 1,160 higher primary schools. Of these six lower primary and 480 higher primary schools were run by private bodies. The enrolment in that year was 1,26,932 boys and 96,594 girls in standards I to IV and 57,944 boys and 39,990 girls in standards V to VII. In that year, 607 teachers were working in lower primary schools, of whom 403 men and 133 women were trained and 61 men and 10 women were untrained. In the higher primary schools, 7,200 teachers were working, of whom 4,018 men and 2,905 women were trained and 169 men and 108 women were untrained. Some 95.5 per cent were trained teachers.

In South Canara district, of the 36 government schools, one was a central school, one was taken over from a municipality and 15 from the taluk development boards. Of the 167 high schools, 33 were girls' high schools, out of which three were government girls' high schools, one was managed by a taluk development board and 29 were aided girls' high schools. Among the 167 high schools, as many as 56 were higher secondary schools having PUC I year class. Later, many of these higher secondary schools were converted into Junior Colleges. The strength of the pupils during 1971-72 in all these secondary schools was 25,595 boys and 16,910 girls, including 2,095 boys and 1,132 girls of PUC I year class. The teaching staff consisted of 2,100 teachers, of whom 1,150 men and 320 women were trained and 331 men and 99 women were untrained; 79.5 per cent of the teachers were thus trained personnel.

In Shimoga district, the number of high schools (including the higher secondary schools and multipurpose high schools) had risen to 24 by 1956-57 and to 29 by 1960-61. The decade from 1961 to 1970 witnessed a tremendous progress in the field of secondary education and the position in 1971-72 was that there were 99 secondary schools of all types in the district.

In Hassan district, during 1960-61, there were five high schools for girls and 27 high schools for boys. In all the high schools there were 1,426 girls as against 4,964 boys. By 1969-70, there were 71 high schools, out of which nine for girls. The number of girls studying in those schools was 4,589 girls as against 11,248 boys.

Besides nine government schools for

boys, there were eight municipal high schools and 30 district and taluk board high schools and 15 private aided and unaided schools wherein 2,275 girls were studying.

In Chickmagalur district, during 1956-57, it was found that the number of high schools had increased to 14, and then by 1960-61 to 17 (including higher secondary schools). From 1961 onwards, there had been a tremendous progress in the field of secondary education, and the position in 1979 was that there were as many as 78 secondary schools (including 10 composite schools) in the district.

In South Canara district, after the integration of the area with the new Mysore state, colleges were at first affiliated to the Karnataka University and later to the Mysore University. In 1959-60, there were seven colleges, three at Mangalore, two at Udipi and one each at Puttur and Karkal, with a student strength of 1,882 boys and 619 girls in PUC classes and 1,844 boys and 633 girls in degree classes.

In general, in Western Ghats regions in Karnataka, the facilities for schools and colleges considerably increased, after the reorganisation of the state. Between 1956-76, there were 1,769 schools with an enrolment of 1.34 lakh girls. In this region there were about 2,300 primary and 345 high schools by 1976. Many kinds of schools were established and running during the period under review. But after the reorganisation of the state in 1956, uniformity was brought in the school system of education.

Women's Education between 1976 and 1999

During this period commendable expansion had taken place in the coverage of schooling facilities for girls and also there had been extension of various incentive schemes. Periodic surveys and MIS have streamlined the data on school education in the region. So also the encouragement by the state government to private agencies start and conduct school education has resulted in not only extending the facilities for girls but also has made female education progress well in the regions under review.

On the one hand there was expansion of schooling facilities in Western Ghats regions in Karnataka after 1976. At the same time, the female participation rates also considerably increased as evident from the tables.

The number of students belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes

studying in high schools in the districts of Western Ghats regions in Karnataka currently is presented in Table 5.

II Female Literacy

In South Kanara district, which was formerly a part of the Madras state had comprising Mangalore, Coondapur, Udipi, Karkal Puttur, Belthangady and Kasaragod taluks, before integration with the new Mysore state in 1956, when the Kasaragod taluk was transferred to Kerala. By 1921, only 162 per cent of males and 3.8 per cent of females could read and write, or in the words of the census report, "could read a letter written in the ordinary running hand and reply to it".

By 1931, there was a slight increase in literacy, which was 17.1 per cent for men and 4 per cent for women. The increase in regard to women was not marked. During the following decades, there was an increase in the number of educational institutions and also a marked increase in the percentage of literacy. As per the 1951 Census, the percentage of literacy was 33.5 among men and 15.6 among women, giving an average of 23 per cent for the entire population. The increase in the percentage of literacy among women from 4 in 1931 to 15.6 in 1951 showed the rapid strides made in women's education in South Kanara during the period. The following statements give the number of literates in the urban and rural areas of the district as in 1951.

By 1961, the percentage of literacy among men had increased to 41.38 and among women to 23.99, the overall percentage being 32.35. The statements given below show the number of literates in the urban and rural areas of the district in 1961.

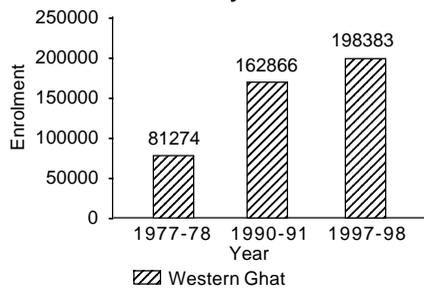
By 1971, the district had registered more than 10 per cent increase over the total percentage of literacy of 32.35 in 1961.

Table 6: Total Literacy Campaign in Districts, Progress and Achievements
(in Lakhs)

District	Target		Achievement	
	Female Target	Total	Female Achievers	Total
DK	1.74	2.44	1.48	2.06
UK	1.01	1.55	0.72	1.09
Chickmagalur	0.92	1.51	0.70	1.21
Shimoga	1.80	3.13	1.38	2.60
Mysore I	1.64	2.88	0.57	1.17
Mysore II	1.74	3.23	0.70	1.29
Kodagu	0.39	0.80	0.19	0.27
Hassan	1.76	2.83	0.86	1.60

Source: Directorate of Mass Education, Bangalore, and GOK.

Figure: Enrolment of Girls in Secondary Schools



As per the final figures of 1971 Census, the percentage of literacy among men was 52.34 while among women it was 35.04, the overall percentage for the district being 43.45. In regard to the percentage of literacy among men, it occupied the first place in the state and in respect of women the second place. This increase was made possible by various government measures and public cooperation.

In Chickmagalur district, in the early decades of this century, there was a very low percentage of literacy in the district. As per the 1921 Census, only about 8 per cent of the people were literate. The percentage had increased to 14.9 by 1941 when there were, in all, 53,442 literates (44,113 males and 9,329 females) for a total population of 3,58,290. During the next two decades, there was a further increase in the growth of literacy with 22.9 per cent in 1951 and 27.5 per cent in 1961. During the latter year, it was highest in the Sringeri taluk with 38.5 per cent and lowest in the Kadur taluk with 24.2 per cent.

By 1971 the percentage of literates had increased to 34.93, and the district held the seventh place among the districts of the state with 3.41 per cent more than the state's percentage of 31.52. For a total population of 7,36,647 in 1971, there were, in all, 2,57,305 literates of whom 1,66,890 were males and 90,415 females with 43.88 per cent and 25.37 per cent respectively. As in 1961, in 1971 also the Sringeri taluk was at the top in literacy with 43.71 per cent. The Koppa taluk recorded the lowest percentage, which were 30.01.

In Shimoga district, during the early decades of this century, the percentage of literacy was very low in the district. For a total population of 5,20,000, there were only 52,000 literates, recording 10 per cent literacy as per the 1931 Census. The Tirthahalli taluk topped the list with a percentage of 13.8, while the percentage in the Shimoga taluk was 13.71. The total percentage of literacy in the district had increased to 14.8 by 1941 from 10 in 1931 and

for a total population of 5,51,149 in 1941, there were, in all, 81,746 literates of whom 67,071 were males and 14,675 females.

By the end of the next decade, i.e., 1941-51, there was an appreciable increase in literacy. By 1951, the number of literate persons had gone up to 1,64,327 of whom 1,24,093 were men and 40,234 women, the total percentage of literates being 24.8. There was better progress of literacy during the later years. The most potent of forces which led to the spread of literacy was the transfer of political power to the representatives of the people. By 1961, literacy had increased further to 28.1 per cent. It was highest in Shimoga taluk, being 35.7 per cent and lowest in Sorab taluk, being 23.8 per cent.

The percentage of literates in the urban areas was 40.1, Shimoga town topping with 48.4 and the Kargal project area having the lowest percentage, i.e., 21.9. There was a reduction in the percentage of urban literates from 41.6 in 1951 to 40.1 in 1961, which was mainly due to the immigration of labourers for the project works. Though Kargal did not present a fully urban look, it had to be classed as urban as more than 75 per cent of population there were following non-agricultural vocations. In 1961, the number of literates in the district was 2,85,375 of whom, 2,05,489 were men and 79,886 women. By 1971, the percentage to literates had gone up to 36.61 (3.61 per cent above the state's average which was 33 per cent) as against 28.1 in 1961. The total number of literates was 4,76,467 of whom 3,07,629 were men and 1,68,838 women.

Literacy during 1981 and 1991

In Hassan district, till 1941, the literacy rates were low. Female literacy was only 2 per cent during 1931 and 4 per cent in 1941. There was sporadic increase in the literacy rates during 1951 and 1961. Female literacy rates increased to 8.7 (31 per cent for males) in 1951 and 12.8 per cent (35.3 per cent for males) in 1961.

Mass Literacy Campaigns were organised in different districts in early 1990s. Zilla Saksharata Samithis with district commissioners as presidents organised total literacy campaigns.

Role of Private Agencies

During British rule in the country, the education system underwent many changes. The impact of this was much in the districts and taluks in Western Ghats region in Karnataka. In the beginning the private

agencies started schools and the rulers appreciated their efforts. Even after one-and-a-half century the role of private agencies is significant as far as expansion of educational facilities. They have greater share in the spread of education for females in the regions considered. In earlier times the missionaries and Catholics, Jesuits played a vital role in enabling women to participate in the school education.

III Concluding Observations

There had been considerable efforts made by private agencies in the spread of school education over the years. Before reorganisation of the state, the regions which formed parts of the provinces and states differed in terms of patterns of education and the curriculum taught differed. It was after the unification of the regions within the state, a uniform system of school education was implemented. There has been considerable expansion in the facilities extended to girls and women over four decades after 1960s. At the same time the role played by Christian missionaries as well as local bodies are commendable. The decentralisation of educational administration has made the spread of education amongst women more intensive and rigorous. Incentive schemes offered by the state government to girls have enabled them to participate in schooling programmes. The vital role played by NGOs in empowering women through literacy campaigns has facilitated the spread of literacy among women. However, regional variations exist in facilities extended to girls education as well as female participation rates in school education. [27]

[The sources of information for this article are books on history of education, state, gazetteers (of Mysore, renamed as Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra), Budget speeches and documents, assembly debates, statistical brochures of the state department of education, narrations by historians and articles from journals and paper clippings as well as state archival data from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.]

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