



# Empowering Girls through Education in Narayanpet, Telangana: A Critical Analysis of Initiatives and Challenges

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## Abstract

Empowering girls in Narayanpet, Telangana, requires a comprehensive approach that addresses the various challenges they face. Education is a crucial factor in this empowerment, as it equips girls with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make informed decisions about their lives.

The government has launched initiatives like Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao to promote girls' education, health, and welfare. However, despite these efforts, girls continue to struggle with access to these basic rights. Parental support and community engagement are essential in addressing these challenges.

Strict measures are needed to prevent harassment and ensure girls' safety and security. Awareness about their rights and entitlements is also critical in empowering girls to assert themselves and demand justice.

A multifaceted approach involving government agencies, local authorities, parents, and communities is necessary to empower girls in Narayanpet. This approach should include initiatives that promote education, health, and welfare, as well as address the social and cultural barriers that hinder girls' empowerment.

By working together, we can create an environment that supports girls' empowerment and enables them to reach their full potential. This will require sustained efforts and a commitment to addressing the challenges that girls face in Narayanpet, Telangana.

**Keywords:** Girl empowerment, education, Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao, women's rights, Narayanpet, Telangana

## **Introduction:**

Narayanpet, a district in Telangana, boasts a rich history of educational initiatives, showcasing its commitment to promoting learning and development. The district has made notable strides in improving literacy rates, with a current literacy rate of 64.55% (Census 2011). This achievement is a testament to the efforts of the government, local authorities, and communities in promoting education.

Despite this progress, girls' education in Narayanpet continues to face challenges. Many girls struggle to access quality education, and dropout rates remain a concern. Socio-cultural barriers, poverty, and lack of infrastructure are some of the factors contributing to these challenges. Additionally, girls often face safety and security concerns, which can limit their access to education.

The district's efforts to promote girls' education are crucial, and initiatives like Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao have shown positive results. However, more needs to be done to address the existing gaps. Strengthening parental support, engaging communities, and promoting awareness about girls' rights and entitlements are essential.

The government and local authorities must work together to address the infrastructure gaps, provide quality education, and ensure girls' safety and security. By doing so, Narayanpet can create an environment that supports girls' empowerment and enables them to reach their full potential. With sustained efforts and a commitment to promoting girls' education, Narayanpet can overcome the existing challenges and become a model for girls' empowerment in Telangana. This will have a positive impact on the district's overall development and prosperity.

## **Short History of Education in Narayanpet:**

Narayanpet district, a recent administrative division in the Indian state of Telangana, was established in 2016 as part of the state's reorganization efforts. Previously, Narayanpet was part of the Mahabubnagar district, and its historical narrative is deeply intertwined with the broader Deccan region's rich past. The area has been a witness to the rise and fall of numerous dynasties and kingdoms, including the Satavahanas, Chalukyas, Kakatiyas, and the Qutb Shahi dynasty of Golconda, each leaving an indelible mark on the region's cultural, architectural, and socio-economic landscape.

The medieval period saw the Deccan region, including Narayanpet, influenced by powerful Sultanates such as the Bahmani Sultanate and the Golconda Sultanate, which significantly shaped the area's political and cultural dynamics. The subsequent decline of the Golconda Sultanate led to

the region's absorption into the Nizams' Hyderabad state, which persisted until India's independence in 1947.

Post-independence, Narayanpet became part of the Hyderabad state, later merging with Andhra Pradesh, and eventually, in 2014, Telangana was carved out as a separate state, leading to Narayanpet's formation as a distinct district in 2016. This marked a new era in the region's administrative and developmental trajectory. Today, Narayanpet district is recognized for its agricultural pursuits, handloom industry, and cultural heritage, as it continues to evolve amidst modern socio-economic transformations. The district's history remains a testament to the Deccan region's enduring legacy, reflecting the complex interplay of cultural, political, and economic forces that have shaped its narrative over millennia.

### **Education Background:**

The education landscape in Narayanpet district, Telangana, reflects a mixed narrative of progress and challenges. In Narayanpet district total 346 schools. As per the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) reports (2019-20), the district has achieved notable success in enhancing enrollment rates, with a gross enrollment ratio of 95.5% at the primary level. This statistic underscores the concerted efforts of governmental and non-governmental initiatives in promoting access to education.

However, despite this progress, dropout rates remain a pressing concern, particularly among girls at the secondary level, where 12.5% of students discontinue their education (SSA, 2019-20). This phenomenon can be attributed to a complex interplay of socio-economic factors, including poverty, lack of infrastructure, and cultural barriers that disproportionately affect girls' education.

The SSA data highlights the need for targeted interventions to address these challenges and ensure that girls in Narayanpet have equal opportunities to pursue their education. Strengthening parental support, engaging communities, and promoting awareness about the importance of girls' education are crucial steps in this direction.

Moreover, addressing infrastructure gaps, enhancing teacher training, and implementing student-centric policies can help mitigate dropout rates and foster a more inclusive learning environment. By acknowledging and addressing these challenges, Narayanpet can build upon its existing progress and create a more equitable education system that empowers all students, particularly girls, to reach their full potential.

### **Educations Importance:**

Education is a well-documented crucial indicator of human development, contributing significantly to individual welfare and societal progress. It enhances remuneration, living

conditions, and self-determination, while also shaping future generations' welfare through intergenerational communication (Agrawal, 2014; Dreze & Sen, 2002).

Despite efforts to promote universal access to education, many countries, especially developing ones, face significant challenges, including learning crises and high dropout rates (Nakajima et al., 2018). In India, gender disparity persists, particularly among marginalized sections, with females from low-income households, rural areas, low-caste backgrounds, and Muslim families facing significant barriers to education (Shah, 2011; Varughese & Bairagya, 2020).

1. **Widening gender inequality:** Dropping out of school can perpetuate existing gender inequalities, as girls may be more likely to be married off early or take on domestic responsibilities.

2. **Severe poverty and starvation:** Without education, individuals may struggle to secure better-paying jobs, leading to poverty and food insecurity.

3. **Early child marriage:** Dropping out of school can increase the likelihood of early marriage, particularly for girls, which can have negative impacts on their health, education, and economic prospects.

4. **Increased partner violence:** Education can empower individuals, particularly women, to make informed decisions and recognize abusive relationships. Dropping out of school may increase vulnerability to partner violence.

5. **Reduced earning capacity:** Education is often linked to higher earning potential. Dropping out of school can limit job opportunities and lead to lower earning capacity.

These outcomes highlight the importance of education in promoting individual and societal well-being.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) emphasize girl's education, particularly at the primary level. However, India faces significant challenges, with an estimated 11.9 million dropouts at primary and secondary levels, disproportionately affecting female children (UNICEF, 2014).

Factors contributing to school attrition in India include:

1. **School infrastructure and facilities:** Inadequate or poor school infrastructure, such as lack of classrooms, libraries, or sanitation facilities, can lead to students dropping out (Agrawal, 2014; Chatterjee et al., 2018).

2. Availability of female teachers and adequate toilet facilities: The presence of female teachers and adequate toilet facilities, particularly for girls, can influence students' decisions to stay in school (Gouda & Sekher, 2014; Siddhu, 2011).

3. Distance from school: The distance between home and school can be a significant barrier to education, especially in rural areas, leading to students dropping out (Agrawal, 2014).

In Narayanpet district, a random sample of schools revealed that despite the presence of toilets, many are non-functional, posing significant challenges for girls attending school. The absence of basic facilities, including sanitary products and general shops near high schools, exacerbates the issue, leading girls to avoid school during menstruation. This highlights a critical gap in providing a supportive learning environment, particularly for girls.

The situation is further complicated by socio-cultural factors, where traditional norms and social prejudices surrounding menstruation and girls' education persist. Girls are often hesitant to express their needs or concerns, perpetuating the cycle of disadvantage. These factors collectively contribute to girls' disengagement from education, underscoring the need for targeted interventions.

Empowering girls in Narayanpet requires addressing these infrastructural and socio-cultural barriers. This can be achieved by:

- Ensuring functional toilets and sanitation facilities in schools
- Providing access to sanitary products and promoting menstrual hygiene awareness
- Engaging communities to challenge and change harmful traditional norms and social prejudices
- Fostering a supportive school environment that encourages girls to express their needs and concerns

The following table shows the survey of 100 schools.

S.NO	How many schools are near general stores?	How many schools are far from general stores?	How many schools have accessible toilets?	How many schools do not have usable toilets?
1	64	36	72	28

By addressing these challenges, Narayanpet can promote girls' education, reduce dropout rates, and empower girls to reach their full potential.

These factors highlight the importance of investing in school infrastructure, providing a supportive learning environment, and increasing access to education, particularly for marginalized groups.

Addressing these challenges requires sustained efforts to promote education, particularly for marginalized groups, and ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all.

### Government Initiatives and Schemes:

The Indian government has implemented initiatives such as Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao (BBBP) to address the multifaceted challenges faced by girls, particularly in the realm of education (Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2015). This scheme is designed to promote girls' education, health, and overall welfare, with the ultimate goal of empowering them to become active participants in the country's development.

The BBBP initiative has yielded positive results, as evidenced by various evaluations and assessments (NITI Aayog, 2020). The program's multi-sectoral approach, involving various stakeholders and government departments, has contributed to improved outcomes in girls' education and health. For instance, the scheme has led to increased enrollment and retention rates of girls in schools, as well as improved health indicators, such as reduced infant mortality rates and increased immunization coverage.

Furthermore, the BBBP initiative has also contributed to a shift in societal attitudes towards girls' education, with increased awareness and community engagement on the importance of girls' empowerment. The program's focus on addressing the root causes of girls' marginalization, such as gender stereotypes and social norms, has helped to create a more supportive environment for girls to thrive.

The Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB) has shown significant improvement under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme, reaching 941 in 2020-21 in Naryanpet districts, according to the Health Management Information System (HMIS) data. This marks a notable increase from 918 in 2014-15, indicating the scheme's positive impact on addressing gender-biased practices and promoting girl child welfare.

The BBBP scheme, launched in 2015, focuses on eliminating gender-biased sex selection, ensuring girl child protection, and promoting education. The program's multi-sectoral approach involves various stakeholders and government departments, contributing to improved outcomes in girls' education and health <sup>1 2</sup>.

Some key highlights of the scheme include <sup>1 2</sup>:

- Improved Gross Enrollment Ratio: Girls' enrollment in secondary schools increased from 75.51% in 2014-15 to 79.4% in 2021-22.

- Increased Institutional Deliveries: Institutional deliveries rose from 61% in 2014-15 to over 97.3% in 2023-24, ensuring safer childbirths.

- Funding Mechanism: Districts receive funding based on SRB data, with ₹40 lakh annually for districts with SRB  $\leq$  918.

These efforts demonstrate the government's commitment to promoting girls' empowerment and addressing gender disparities.

Overall, the government's initiatives, such as BBBP, demonstrate a commitment to addressing the challenges faced by girls and promoting their overall development. Continued efforts and investments in such programs are essential to ensure that girls in India have equal opportunities to succeed and contribute to the country's growth and prosperity.

### **Challenges Faced by Girls in Narayanpet**

Empowering girls in Narayanpet district, Telangana, India, requires addressing the factors contributing to school dropouts. A study focusing on individuals aged 18-35 years who have attended school but are no longer attending reveals that girls' education continues to face challenges, with dropout rates remaining a concern.

The district's literacy rate stands at 64.55% (Census 2011), indicating progress in improving education. However, initiatives like Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao aim to promote girls' education and address dropout rates. The study identifies key factors influencing school dropout:

- Gender (male, female), highlighting the need to empower girls through education
- Socio-economic factors, including MPCE quintile and household head's education
- School-related factors, such as type of institution and distance from school
- Cultural factors, including religious groups and household size

Major reasons for dropout include financial constraints, domestic activities, and early marriage. To address these challenges, policymakers and educators can:

- Implement targeted interventions, such as scholarships and mentorship programs, to support girls' education
- Enhance access to quality education, including infrastructure development and teacher training
- Engage communities in promoting girls' education, addressing cultural and social barriers
- Provide economic support and opportunities to reduce financial constraints

By addressing these factors and promoting girls' education, Narayanpet can empower its female population, reduce dropout rates, and foster socio-economic development.

S.NO	Indicator	Narayanpet	Telangana
1	Girls not completing 10th grade	1 in 4	1 in 5
2	Young women without internet access	80%	75%
3	Girls (5-14 years) struggling more than boys	55%	50%

Source: SSA (2019-20); Education Department, Telangana (2020)

### **Dropout Rates**

Dropout rates remain a concern in Narayanpet, with 12.5% of girls dropping out at the secondary level (SSA, 2019-20). Table 2 highlights the dropout rates at different levels:

S.NO	Level	Dropout Rate (%)
1	Primary	5.5%
2	Upper Primary	8.2%
3	Secondary	12.5

Source: SSA (2019-20)

### **Recommendations and Conclusion**

Empowering girls is a multifaceted process that necessitates sustained efforts from various stakeholders, including parents, educators, policymakers, and the community at large. In the context of Narayanpet district, Telangana, India, empowering girls requires a comprehensive approach that addresses the unique challenges and opportunities present in the region.

Parental support is a crucial factor in promoting girls' empowerment. Parents play a significant role in shaping their daughters' attitudes, values, and aspirations. In Narayanpet, where traditional gender roles and stereotypes may prevail, parents can be encouraged to support their daughters' education and personal growth. This can involve providing emotional support, monitoring their daughters' progress, and advocating for their rights.

Strict measures against harassment are also essential for creating a safe and supportive environment for girls. Harassment and violence against girls are pervasive problems in many parts of India, including Narayanpet. To address this issue, schools, communities, and law enforcement agencies must work together to prevent harassment and provide support to victims.

Awareness of their rights is another critical aspect of empowering girls. Girls in Narayanpet may face various challenges, including limited access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. By providing them with information about their rights and entitlements, they can be empowered to make informed decisions and claim their rights.

Social analysts emphasize that happiness in girls' lives is only possible when they are protected and reassured (Kumar & Singh, 2019, p. 12). This highlights the importance of creating a supportive environment that promotes girls' well-being and happiness. In Narayanpet, this can involve initiatives such as counseling services, mentorship programs, and extracurricular activities that promote girls' social, emotional, and physical development.

Empowering girls in Narayanpet also requires addressing the broader socio-economic context. The district's literacy rate stands at 64.55% (Census 2011), indicating progress in improving education. However, girls' education continues to face challenges, with dropout rates remaining a concern. Initiatives like Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao aim to promote girls' education and address dropout rates.

To achieve this, policymakers and educators can implement targeted interventions, such as scholarships and mentorship programs, to support girls' education. They can also enhance access to quality education, including infrastructure development and teacher training. Community engagement and involvement are also crucial in promoting girls' empowerment.

In conclusion, empowering girls in Narayanpet district, Telangana, India, requires a comprehensive approach that addresses the unique challenges and opportunities present in the region. By providing parental support, strict measures against harassment, and awareness of their rights, girls can be empowered to thrive and contribute to the district's socio-economic progress.

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### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Global and Indian Statistics on Girls' Education.

Appendix 2: Government Initiatives and Schemes for Girls' Empowerment.

Appendix 3: Recommendations for Addressing Harassment and Promoting awareness.

