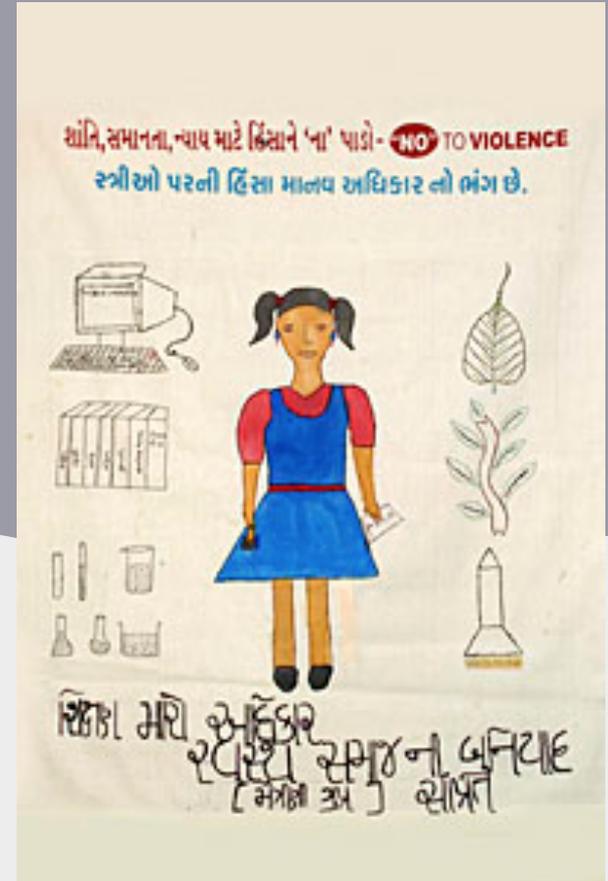


Access to Education

Understanding the Struggles of Women & Girls in India



Group Questions

- What would you do if you didn't go to school?
- What opportunities does an education give us?
- What factors prevent some people from being able to go to school?

Examples of Feminist Posters in India



Title: “World free from gender bias”
Publisher: Vadodara: Sahiyar



Title: “I want to study. Because I am a girl, I want to study”
Publisher: Vadodara: Sahiyar

Context for Women's Education in India

- Women's experiences with India's educational systems have varied from pre-colonial India, to British rule, to national movements, and in response to political and economic forces throughout those time periods.
- India's contemporary government has shown a commitment to women's education, iterated through the constitutional promise of "free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14."

Women's Education in India Today

- Despite large improvements in India's educational system, gender gaps in literacy still exist. As of 2001, the average literacy rate for the whole country was 75.96% for males and 54.28% for females (Nelasco 38).
- Also, there is a significant disparity between rural and urban literacy rates, with rural women being the most illiterate.

Barriers and Improvements

- Women's education is important as illiterate women are more likely to have higher infant and maternal mortality rates, poor nutrition, higher risk of violence, and decreased autonomy in the household (Valkoff).
- Because of the work of the women's movement, in states like Gujarat, girls have increased educational access and tuition fees are waived from primary school, all the way to college.

Assignment

Using the South Asian Feminist Activism Archive, research specific ways women have helped educate one another (either formally through classes, or informally through consciousness raising circles, for example).

In a one-page essay, describe how these teaching strategies both compare and contrast to the traditional ways we receive education at a young age here in the U.S. school system.

For more information please visit the South Asian Feminist Activism Archive at:
<http://uwdc.library.wisc.edu/collections/GenderStudies>

Thank you!