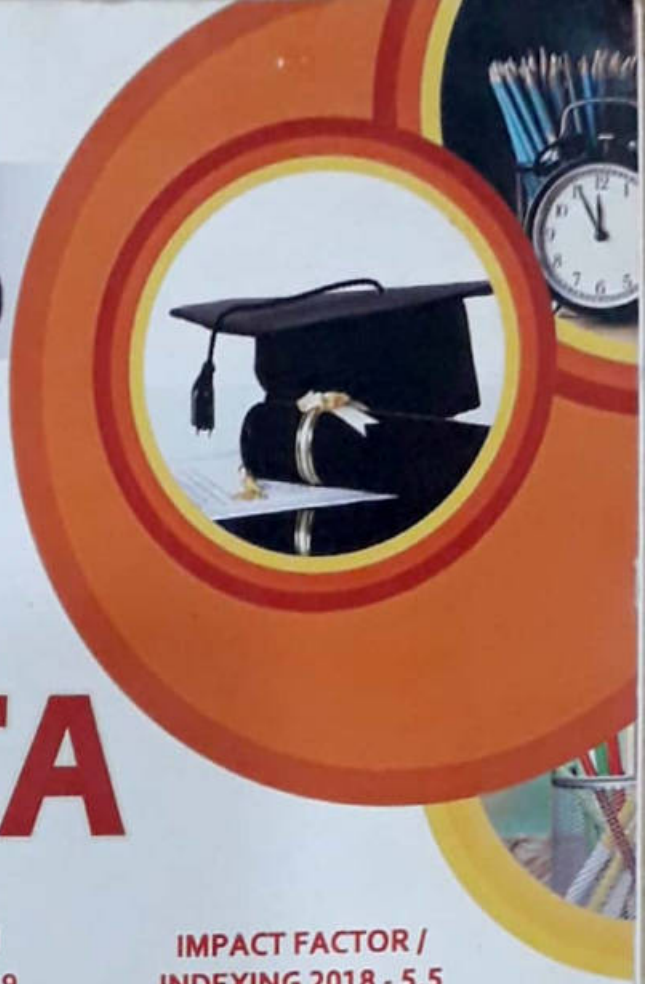




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## 5. Kranti Jyoti Savitribai Phule and Women Education in India

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### Introduction

Savitribai Phule's contribution in the field of women education is evergreen in India. Savitribai Phule is the India's first female teacher worked for upliftment of women education and literacy. Savitribai Phule was born in a poor family in Naigaon, district Sarara in Maharashtra on January 3, 1831. At that time the Hindu society was male dominated who treated the women as their slaves who had to strictly follow the instructions of the male members of the family. Savitribai was married with social reformer 12 years old Jyotirao Phule at the age of 9 years. Jyotirao Phule's support and motivation she learned read and write. Savitribai Phule started first girl's school in Bhide Wada at Pune. Savitribai Phule is India's first modern feminist and a well known social reformer who along with her husband, Jyotirao Phule played a vital role in increasing the women's Rights in India during the British Rule.

Savitribai Phule was the first female teacher of the first women's school in India and also considered as a pioneer of modern Marathi Poetry. She writes about the importance of education in the following poem.

### Go, Get Education

Be self-reliant, be industrious  
Work, gather wisdom and riches,  
All gets lost without knowledge  
We become animal without knowledge  
We become animal without wisdom,  
Sit idle no more, go, get education  
End misery of the oppressed and forsaken,  
You've got a golden chance to learn  
So learn and break the chains of caste.  
Throw away the Brahman's Scriptures fast.

Two books of Savitribai Phule poems were published posthumously Kavya Phule in 1934 & Bavan Kashi Subodh Ratnakar in 1982. She wrote many poems against discrimination & advised to get educated. Being a poet & a philosopher & wrote on the importance of education and knowledge and removal of caste discrimination. In 1852 Savitribai Phule started school for untouchable girls which were a great challenge to take at that time. Specially, the upper castes strongly opposed to Dalit education. They threw cow dung and mud while she walks towards school for to discourage her. But still she can't discourage and her work was going on. Savitribai Phule emphasized on secular education. Savitribai Phule continuously takes struggle and raised her voice against society's ignorant, Ancient & Barbaric views with regards to women.

### **Objectives**

1. To study the role of Savitribai Phule in women education.
2. To study women educational status in India.

### **Methodology**

Secondary data is used for collection of data.

Savitribai Phule fought for women's education from the cultural patterns of the male dominated society as a mission of her life. She worked on major social issues like women's liberation, removal of untouchability and widow remarriages. After suffering so much she once decided to give up but Jyotiba Phule given fully support & encouraged to continue her aim. Savitribai Phule & Jyotiba Phule socially isolated at the time of educational work. In 1852, Jyotirao Phule & Savitribai Phule felicitated by the government for their efforts in the field of educational & other social work.

Savitribai Phule opened 18 schools and taught children from different castes. Savitribai & Fatima Sheikh were threatened by the locals and were also harassed and humiliated socially. Savitribai & Fatima Sheikh were later joined by Sagunabai who also eventually became a leader in the education movement. Meanwhile, a night school was also opened by the phule couple in 1855 for agriculturist and labourers so that they can work in daytime and attend school at night.

Savitribai Phule started the practice of giving stipends to children for attending school for to decrease school dropout rate. She encouraged them to take up activities like writing and painting. She conducted parent teacher meeting at regular intervals to create awareness among parents on the significance of education so that they send their children to school regularly. In India celebrated Savitribai Phule birthday on third January. In 2015 the University of Pune was



honoured as Savitribai Phule Pune University to her honor deeds. The Government & many Non-Government organizations took a lot of project to spread women education. Literacy programmes are being taken in favour of women.

Now a day's women education aims at improving the knowledge and skill of women & girl's. It includes education at school, college, vocational, technical, Professional & health education etc. Women education encompasses both literary & non-literary education. Primary education is a fundamental Right for girls. Educating girl's & women is very important for the world as a whole. Education will empower women and contribute towards the development and prosperity of the country. Economic empowerment & independence will only come through proper education & employment of women.

Education helps women to live a good life. Educated girls and women are aware of the importance of health & hygiene. Educated mothers can take better care of both herself and her baby. Educated women become a source of inspiration for millions of young girls who make them their role models. Educated women can prove be highly successful in the fields of life. A girls child get equal opportunity for education so that she can plan to become a successful doctors, engineers, nurses, air-hostesses, cook or choose a profession of her choice.

Today the women in India are not behind men in any respect. They have excelled in every field that is education, governance, politics, science, judiciary, sports and in almost all other fields. There are big names of Indian women like Indira Gandhi the first Female Prime Minister in 1966 to 1977, Reita Faria Powell the first female Miss World in 1966, Durgabai Kumat the first female actress in 1913, Kiran Bedi the first IPS officer in 1972, Kalpana Chavala the first Indian astronaut in space, Sarla Thakral the first woman pilot in India, Mrs. Pratibha Devisingh Patil the first female president in 2007 to 2012, Anandi Gopal Joshi was the first female doctor in India and the first Indian woman to obtain a medical degree in the United States, Mother Teresa dedicated her life to helping the poor and was the first woman to win the Nobel peace prize in 1979. etc women were successful in all fields. The educated women should insist on exercising their civil, social, political and economic rights. This will help improve the overall condition of women in the society. We can hope for better days while all women of our country will be enlightened and educated.

### **Conclusion**

Savitribai Phule started education for women. So that now a day's women were working in all fields. Educated women are capable to bringing socio-economic changes. Educated women increased status of children & family. Women education helps to improve the overall condition of our country.

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