



IMPACT OF EDUCATION ON IMPROVING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STATUS OF WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

Education of women is the most powerful tool to change the position in society. Women education in India has been a need of the hour, as education is a foundation stone for the empowerment of woman. Education also brings a reduction in inequalities and functions as a means of improving their status within the family and develops the concept of participation. Education is the best means to elevate the status of an individual in the existing social system. Higher the education, greater the chances of employability. The same may hold true in case of women. Women, which are educated may be contributing more to the economic structure of the family. As a result, social status of the women also changes. Further, the women being educated develop awareness about the equality and would reject submitting to the norms of subjugation. Perhaps it is this equality principle which enables the Indian parliament to bring the women reservation bill. It is in this context that various questions have been raised and need to be answered on empirical basis. It is in this context that the present study has been planned.

KEYWORDS: Education, Improving, Economic and Social Status, Women, society, India.

INTRODUCTION

The reality of women's lives remains invisible to men and women alike and this invisibility persist at all levels beginning with the family to the nation. The mere fact that "women hold up half the sky" does not appear to give them a position of dignity and equality. True, that over the years women have made great strives to many areas with

notable progress in reducing some gender gaps. Yet "afflicted world in which we live is characterized by deeply unequal sharing of the burden of adversities between women and men". Although efforts have been made to improve the status of the women, the constitutional dream of gender equality is miles away from becoming a reality. Even

today “the mainstream remains very much the male stream.” The dominate tendency has always being to confine women and women’s issues in the private domain. The National Crime Records Bureau “crime in India-2002” predicted that growth rate of crime against women would be higher than the population growth rate by 2012. The Indian Government has expressed a strong commitment towards education and stated in its constitution with an article promising “free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen (World Bank 1997 b) and RTE act was implemented in the year 2012.

Education is an instrument of social and economic change and it should be reoriented to enable women to take to the path of progress and reformation. Education, Lenin said “is a long and difficult matter. It is a long matter because such a complicated task as changing the human psychology cannot we done in a rush, right away it is a difficult matter because in the process of education the new men or women numerous survivals of the past have to be overcome”. Emphasizing the general education of women, Archer said “without female education progress can be transmitted to each generation either not at all or very slowly. This may seem exaggerated and over-emphatic, but the case cannot be made too strongly”. UNESCO realizes the overwhelming importance of basis education for women as well as men. Without this, the world of tomorrow will be over populated and will suffer more poverty, malnutrition and illiteracy than ever before.

Explaining the importance of general education Mehta remarks “education is not a luxury, it is a necessity. Studies must be directed toward getting a good training that has some potential”. Khanna and Varghes have explained as “history has established beyond doubt that education forms a basis for the development of the human society”. However, development of women education can be studied in two phases, in pre-independence period and post-independence period.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Before independence, the goal of women education was linked to the concept of marriage as the only career for women. After, independence, women education received a fresh impetus. The new rulers decided to take up the path of social changes based on three major axes, v i z, constitutional and legal reform, plan development based on a mixed economy and state support to social welfare activity.

Universal Deceleration of Human Rights regards education as one of the basic rights of every human being. The movement for improving women status all over the world has always emphasized education as the most significant instruments for changing women’s subjugated position in the society. According to Runcimam “class, status and power are the manifestation of economic, social and political inequalities. Dubey (1975), said that the “inequalities in case of class indicates the economic inequalities, i.e. lower, middle and upper classes. Inequalities of status in terms of class expresses the

difference in the living standard, in the style of life according to the higher or lower status or according higher or lower class. This situation is particularly being creative by occupational mobility. This occupational mobility is the result of higher education. Higher education among women has so far being confined to higher castes. Among the lower castes it has not gained much significant”.

India is a multifaceted and extremely hierarchical society where no generalization could apply to all the nation’s various regional, religious, social and economic groups. Dubey and Palriwala(1990) “women are expected to be chaste and especially modest in all actions which may constrain their ability to perform in the workplace on an equal basis with men. Cultural rules such as purdah place some Indian women in paradoxical situation, even when family suffer economically. Women participation in employment outside the home is viewed as slightly inappropriate, subtly, wrong and definitely dangerous to their chastity and womanly value”.

Maria Mies (1980), states that there has been no structural or quantitative change in the conditions of educated Indian women. In other words, if education has to help in realizing the goals, the educational system must change structurally, quantitatively and methodologically. Education of women has achieved significance progress but this has not helped to change the attitude or values of men and women in the direction of real equality.

Women’s position has worsened considerably in every sphere with the exception of some gains for middle class women in terms of education and employment. They are the more visible section of the society and their advancement generated a myth that unlike some of the Asian Societies, women’s status in India is very good and is able to perform their dual roles adequately and they get considerable support from their men. The constitution of India also provides equality to women. Thus, the myth was not only entrenched but it developed a complacency and acquiescence among women.

Education is the best means to elevate the status of an individual in the existing social system. The higher education, greater the chances of employability. The same holds true for women, which is also linked with economic structure of the family. As a result, social status of women also changes. Women being educated develop awareness about the equality and would reject submitting to the norms of subjugation. This may especially be so in the cities where women form a greater workforce in fact in all the spheres of activity. Such women participate in the family’s economic system and in all activities. It is in this context that various questions have been raised in the studies in this field.

Throughout the economy women tend to hold lower level positions than men even when they have sufficient skills to perform higher levels jobs .Researchers have estimated that female agricultural laborers were usually paid 40 to 60 % of male wages

(Kishwar and Vanita 1985). Even when women occupy similar positions and have similar educational levels, they earn just 80% of what men do (Madheswaran and Lakshmanasamy ,1996) .

A study on “ Rehabilitation and socio-economic conditions of Special Focus Group -war widows in the state of Rajasthan “ conducted by Humanistic Studies Group during August –November 2001 ,BITS , Pilani, revealed that the socio – economic status of war widows was better than widows in general.

A survey on” Working women: Issues and challenges: a case study Pilani, ,Rajasthan “ conducted by Humanistic Studies Group ,BITS, Pilani during 2002. Analysis revealed that majority of respondents felt that they were economically independent , no gender discrimination at workplace ,job satisfaction , equally participate in decision making at home and perceived a positive change in perception of society towards women .

Recently Hillary Clinton (March,24,2010) appreciated Indian women leaders for their role in uplifting socio-economic status of Indian women and making concerted efforts to bring education to them.

IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN EDUCATION

“If you educate a man you educate an individual, however, if you educate a woman you educate a whole family. Women empowered means mother India empowered”. PT. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU. Women education in India plays a

very important role in the overall development of the country. It not only helps in the development of half of the human resources, but in improving the quality of life at home and outside.1 If it is said that education is the key to all problems, then it won't be improper. Thinkers have given a number of definitions of education but out of these definitions, the most important definition is that which was put forth by M. Phule. According to M. Phule, "Education is that which demonstrates the difference between what is good and what is evil". If we consider the above definition, we come to know that whatever revolutions that have taken place in our history, education is at the base of them. Education means modification of behaviour in every aspect, such as mentality, outlook, attitude etc. Educated women not only tend to promote education of their girl children, but also can provide better guidance to all their children. Moreover educated women can also help in the reduction of infant mortality rate and growth of the population. Obstacles: Gender discrimination still persists in India and lot more needs to be done in the field of women's education in India. The gap in the male-female literacy rate is just a simple indicator. While the male literary rate is more than 82.14% and the female literacy rate is just 65.46%. (b). the women were consider only house wife and better to be live in the house.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EDUCATION

Women empowerment is the pivotal part in any society, state or country. It is a woman who plays a dominant role in the basic life of a child. Women are an important section of our society. Education as means of empowerment of women can bring about a positive attitudinal change. It is therefore, crucial for the socioeconomic and political progress of India. The Constitution of India empowers the state to adopt affirmative measures for prompting ways and means to empower women. Education significantly makes difference in the lives of women.³ Women Empowerment is a global issue and discussion on women political right are at the fore front of many formal and informal campaigns worldwide. The concept of women empowerment was introduced at the international women conference at NAROIBI in 1985. Education is milestone of women empowerment because it enables them to responds to the challenges, to confront their traditional role and change their life. So we can't neglect the importance of education in reference to women empowerment. To see the development in women education India is supposed to upcoming super power of the world in recent years. The increasing change in women education, the empowerment of women has been recognised as the central issue in determining the status of women. for becoming super power we have mostly to concentrate upon the women's education. By which it will force on women's empowerment. As per united national

development fund for women (UNIFEM) the term women's empowerment means:

- Acquiring knowledge and understanding of gender relations and the ways in which these relations may be changed.
- Developing a sense of self-worth, a belief in one's ability to secure desired changes and the right to control one's life.
- Gaining the ability to generate choices exercise bargaining power.
- Developing the ability to organize and influence the direction of social change, to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally.

EDUCATIONAL EQUALITY

Another area in which women's equality has shown a major improvement as a result of adult literacy programs is the area of enrolment of boys and girls in schools. As a result of higher participation of women in literacy campaigns, the gender gap in literacy levels is gradually getting reduced. Even more significant is the fact that disparity in enrolment of boys and girls in neo-literate households is much lowered compared to the non-literate householders. The world has achieved equality in primary education between girls and boys. But few countries have achieved that target at all levels of education. The political participation of women keeps increasing. In January 2014, in 46 countries more than 30% of members of parliament in at least one chamber were women. In many

countries, gender in equality persists and women continue to face discrimination in access to education, work and economic assets, and participation in government. Women and girls face barriers and disadvantages in every sector in which we work. Around the world 62 million girls are not in school. Globally, 1 in 3 women will experience gender-based violence in her lifetime. In the developing world, 1 in 7 girls is married before her 15th birthday, with some child brides as young as 8 or 9. Each year more than 287,000 women, 99 percent of them in developing countries, die from pregnancy and childbirth-related complications. While women make up more than 40 percent of the agriculture labour force only 3 to 20 percent are landholders. In Africa, women owned enterprises make up as little as 10 percent of all businesses. In South Asia, that number is only 3 percent. And despite representing half the global population, women compromise less than 20 percent of the world's legislators. .Putting women and girls on equal footing with men and boys have the power to transform every sector in which we work. The gender equality and women's empowerment isn't a part of development but at the core of development. To get rid of this we have to make some educational awareness programmes on gender equality and women empowerment for cementing our commitment to supporting women and girls.

CONCLUSION

Women play an imperative role in making a nation progressive and guide it towards development. They are essential possessions

of a lively humanity required for national improvement, so if we have to see a bright future of women in our country, giving education to them must be a pre-occupation. Empowerment means moving from a weak position to execute a power. The education of women is the most powerful tool to change the position of society. Education also brings a reduction in inequalities and functions as a means of improving their status within the family. To encourage the education of women at all levels and for dilution of gender bias in providing knowledge and education, established schools, colleges and universities even exclusively for women in the state. The education develops the idea of participation in government, panchayats, public matters etc. for elimination of gender discrimination.

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