

Women's Empowerment and Educational - A Study

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Abstract

Women education in India has a major preoccupation of both the government and civil society as educated women can play a very important role in the development of the country. 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 that we can't neglect the importance of education in reference to women empowerment and India poised to becoming superpower in recent years. 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. Women education in India has also been a major preoccupation of both the government and civil society as educated women can play a very important role in the development of the country. 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 that we can't neglect the importance of education in reference to women empowerment India is poised to becoming superpower, a developed country by 2020.

Key words: Education, Pre-occupation, Milestone, Empowerment, Participation Women
Empowerment, Facilitate Factors

Introduction

"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".

Empowerment can be viewed as means of creating a social environment in which one can make decisions and make choices either individually or collectively for social transformation. The empowerment strengthens the innate ability by way of acquiring knowledge, power and experience. Empowerment is the process of enabling or authorizing individual to think, take action and control work in an autonomous way. It is the process by which one can gain control over one's destiny and the circumstances of one's lives. There are always a number of elements in the society which are deprived of their basic rights in every society, state and nation, but these elements lack in the awareness of their rights.

If we enlist such elements from the society, then women would top this list. In fact, women are the most important factor of every society. Even though everybody is aware of this fact, but nobody is ready to accept this fact as a result, the importance which used to be given to women is declining in today's society. Empowerment allows individuals to reach their full potential, to improve their political and social participation, and to believe in their own capabilities.

Importance of Women Education

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. If it is said that education is the key to all problems, then it won't be improper. 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. Gender discrimination still persists in India and lot more needs to be done in the field of women's education in India.

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.

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 increasing change in women education, the empowerment of women has been recognized 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.

Importance of Women Participation

Women's participation may be used both for support by an agency and as a control device by the law-makers. Participation may be direct or indirect, formal or informal it may be political, social or administrative in nature. Women's participation in Panchayat Raj institutions may take many forms. It refers to all those activities which show the women's involvement in the processes and administration, that is, participation in policy formulation and program planning, implementation and evaluation of policies and program meant for development target groups.

Indian women have been associated with politics since the pre-independence period. They were part of the freedom movement both as volunteers and leaders. On independence, Article 15 of the Indian Constitution guaranteed equality to women under the law. Though the Indian Constitution guarantees equal rights to all citizens, women are still marginally represented in the Indian political arena. The fact is that in the hands of women are having lack of power at the centre and state level.

The Concept of Empowerment

There was consensus among the participants that "empowerment" has become one of the most widely used development terms. Women's groups, non-governmental development organizations, activists, politicians, governments and international agencies refer to empowerment as one of their goals. Yet it is one of the least understood in terms of how it is to be measured or observed. It is precisely because this word has now been one of the fashionable concepts to include in policies program projects that there is a need to clarify and come up with tentative definitions. Furthermore, the particular implications of empowerment of women are an area that needs to be discussed.

Indicators of Empowerment

Understanding that empowerment is a complex issue with varying interpretations in different societal, national and cultural contexts, the participants also came out with a tentative listing of indicators.

At the level of the individual woman and her household:

- Participation in crucial decision-making processes
- Extent of sharing of domestic work by men
- Extent to which a woman takes control of her reproductive functions and decides on family size
- Extent to which a woman is able to decide where the income she has earned.
- Feeling and expression of pride and value in her work
- Self-confidence and self-esteem and ability to prevent violence.

Facilitating and Constraining Factors of Empowerment

Empowerment does not take place in a vacuum. In the same way that Ms. Lazo talks about women's state of powerlessness as a result of "a combination and interaction of environmental factors," one can also discuss the conditions/factors that can hasten or hinder empowerment. As above, the listing is a preliminary one based on the discussions.

Facilitating factors

- Existence of women's organizations
- Networking; favorable media coverage
- Availability of funds
- Feminist leadership
- Networking; favorable media coverage
- Availability of women-specific data and other relevant information

- Favorable policy climate.
- Availability of support systems for women

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 percentages of members of parliament in at least one chamber were women.

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 program on gender equality and women empowerment for cementing our commitment to supporting women and girls.

Relationship between Higher Education and Women Empowerment Higher education definitely raises women's status whether she contribute in the income of the family or not. She can be at par with men. Majority of the women in our country are uneducated that is why they are suppressed. It is the duty of school teachers to tell them that becoming a wife is not their ultimate goal. Their standing up on their feet and being something is important. Education can bring phenomenal change in women's life resulting in social transformation in the long run by inculcating following attributes among them:

- Enhancing their confidence
- Raising their status in the family and society
- Bring awareness about their rights
- Boosting their self esteem
- Increasing their self efficacy
- Reducing their dependency
- Better upbringing of their children
- Enhancing their mobility
- Opening career opportunities

Increased knowledge, self-confidence and awareness of gender equity are indicators of empowerment process. There is evidence that these components are usually developed during and as a result of higher education. Women, who are educated and earning, are in much better position in our society as compared to uneducated women worker. This is a commonly understood view about the role of education in transforming women.

Impact of Education on Women

The situation faced by women in India is one of the bleakest in the world of all the discrimination and denial of opportunity that these women suffer the most damaging is the denial of the right and opportunity to education. The word empowerment in the context of women in the Indian policy was used in 1986- Educational Policy which is known as the NPE 1986 and the title of the chapter is Education for Women's Equality and Empowerment it has actually two aspects, empowerment first means self empowerment that is women being able to help themselves through whatever is imparted to them and use them to get strength for themselves.

It may be education, health or so on and the second is that they should be able to help others to become empowered. Education is important because literacy has become a tool of evaluating a person- whether one can read or write. Illiteracy has become a very pejorative word in our society. Today we find that literacy itself gives you status. If

one can read or write is educated he and she may get access to so much of information. Information about what you can access for others and for yourself, whether it is educational facilities, health, employment opportunity, legal literacy and so forth.

These are very extrinsic reasons, but intrinsically education is important for individual development and confidence. But we see today that even where all these conditions exist, women do not come forward to claim their human entitlements. True empowerment is achieved only if women themselves realize that it is important for them to be empowered to enjoy a just, fair and happy life. Then why is it that they hesitate to come forward? A simple answer to this can be that our government is corrupt and the justice system long drawn is expensive. But there is more to this than putting the blame on systems. There is an inherent reluctance to leave the comfort zone of self and societal notions on one hand and the lack of skill to handle such situations in real life on the other.

Conclusion

Empowering women socially, economically, educationally politically and legally is going to be a Herculean task. It is not going to be easy to change the culture of disregard for women which are so deep-rooted in Indian society. But it does not mean that it is implausible. Only revolutions bring changes in a day, but reforms take their time. This one, in particular, will take its time as well. The idea of women empowerment might sound hard by the yard, but by the inch, it is just a cinch. All we need is a concentrated effort focused in the right direction that would rest only with the liberation of women from all forms of evil. The vision behind the Government declaration 2001 as the year of women empowerment is to provide women equal partnership with men and to enable them to exercise their full control over their own actions. 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. Training to prepare educational program for women's empowerment needs to integrate the four components: gender issues, work oriented activities, literacy and numeracy skills and principles of curriculum design.

It is yet too early to discuss the impact of this training program which could only be assessed in terms of how it influences changes at the national level. To bring more girls, especially from marginalized families of BPL, in mainstream education, the government is providing a package of concessions in the form of providing free books, uniform, boarding and lodging, clothing for the hostilities midday meals, scholarships, free circles and so on.

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