

ROLE OF EDUCATION IN OVERALL DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

Education is an important tool for the development of humans and women are no exceptions. There are so many examples where education has changed the life of women for better tomorrow. Educated women has been considered asset for society. She represents half of world's population if she is out of development process we cannot imagine development in society or nation. Women faces hurdle in a way of lack of facility in education system, lack of money and stereotypic society. Support from family and government can overcome these hurdles and we can think of better future. An educated woman can take better care of her family and work. She can contribute to the economic need of family and nation. We must encourage women to get education and help in the progress of nation. Otherwise this half population will become liability. The main objective of this research paper is to narrate situation of women education in India and barriers of women education. The research is mainly descriptive in nature and discusses about the significance ad impact of women education in this paper.

Keywords: *Education, Women, Empowerment, Social, Economical.*

Introduction

Human development is relative term but it need to be bring under framework so it would be ease to access and quantify the concept. There are many agencies all over the world working on it. United Nation Human Development is one of the renowned and global bodies which is conceptualising this and working to improve the human condition. The human development approach to develop nation and growth in its all sector is widely accepted concept across the nations.

Countries who believed that high GNP is important factor to determine the status of its population has failed in many countries. We have a very good example Bhutan which has low GNP but high HDI (Human Development Index). This is possible due to government's effort to promote the interest of people, such as improved education system, good health system and good natural environment around them.

Human development can be expressed as the people's freedom to live long in healthy condition, to achieve goals that they have value and to engage them in development activity for sustainable development of future. Even highly industrialised countries with good national income cannot protect its citizens from problems like drugs, alcoholism, homelessness, violence, family breakdown, and many more problems. All these problems can bring down the reputation of society and nation.

There are many way to tackle these problems, such as effective law and order, better infrastructure to support people. But the foremost step to encounter problem is to educate the people in society, make them self reliant. In educating the society women must focused a lot. It is rightly said, "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".

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Empowerment means creating a social environment where one can make decisions and make choices from the available alternatives either individually or collectively for social transformation of self or the group from which individual belong. The empowerment strengthens the ability of an individual by acquiring knowledge, decision making power and creating rich experiences (Hashemi, Schuler and Riley, 1996).

Empowerment is a process of giving authority to individual to steer own life, assume responsibility, chose alternative best suited, execute work and control entire working in autonomous way. Empowerment is the process by which one can have control over one's fortune and minimal to no interference of others for achieving personal goals. But, there are social or political interference which deprive individual to access basic rights. All the nations are based on idealism which empower individual with certain rights and duties and lack of awareness bring interference from society. If we analyse the society then we find that women (all age) be most deprived section of this society.

Women are equally important section of society as men. Everybody is aware of this fact, but nobody is respects this fact. As a result, the privilege women should get to improve their condition doesn't get these privileges and the position of women is declining in today's society. The women have lot of hardships to survive. In underdeveloped or developing countries women have first challenge of survival (girl child mortality), good nutritive food, education, equal respect (as men in society), social status, financial independence and many more. The women are underestimated and always felt that they are physically-mentally weak. They are considered second option in all work and deprive their basic rights. Empowering women has become the focus of considerable discussion and attention all over the world. We enjoy all benefits of being citizens of a free nation. We really need to think whether all citizens of our country are really free and enjoy freedom in the true sense. The inequalities between men and women have grown a lot. Discrimination against women based on gender is issue all over the world. Thus women seek for equality with man should be considered strongly. Women should be equal with men in matters of employment, inheritance, education, marriage, and politics etc. Struggle of women for equality is age old and now they must be regarded same for all privileges. The Constitution of any nation doesn't discriminate between men and women, but our society has deprived women of certain basic rights. Now, this is responsibility of law enforcing bodies to make arrangement for all disposals of all rights made for women. Empowerment allows individuals to reach their goals, to improve their political and social participation, and to believe in their own capabilities.

Significance of Women Education

Women education plays a very important role in the overall development of the nation. It not only facilitate in the development of half of the population, but in improving the quality of life at home and outside. It is said that education is the key to resolve many problems in society or country it won't be exaggeration of this point. "If you educate a man you educate an individual, however, if you educate a woman you educate a whole family".

According to Mahatma Phule, "Education is that which demonstrates the difference between what is good and what is evil". We know that whatever revolts have taken place in our history, education and awareness are the bases of them. Education means modification of behaviour for positive in every facet of individual, such as mentality, outlook, attitude etc. Educated women will be more aware about her right and duties to family, society and nation. She tend to promote education for the children, provide nutritive food, imbibe moral values and find ways of earning for herself also. Moreover educated women can also help in the reduction of infant mortality rate by taking proper care of her during pregnancy and post pregnancy care of child as well. But, there are lot of obstacles to bring women to main stream. Gender discrimination is still prevailing in India. There is lot to be done in India in the field of women's education in India to eliminate this discrimination. The gap in the male-female literacy rate is the indicator of discrimination. While the male literary rate is more than 82.14% and the female literacy rate is just 65.46%.

Women Education in India

- **Basic Education in India**

Government of India has made education free and compulsory for all the children aged between 6-14 years under the Right to Education. If this act is implemented effectively the other half population of children girls will get access to free education. The girl student will get equal opportunity to enrol in primary and secondary education. But, actually this is not the case enrolment of girl student till primary level per 100 boys was around 80% and for secondary level this was even lowers at around

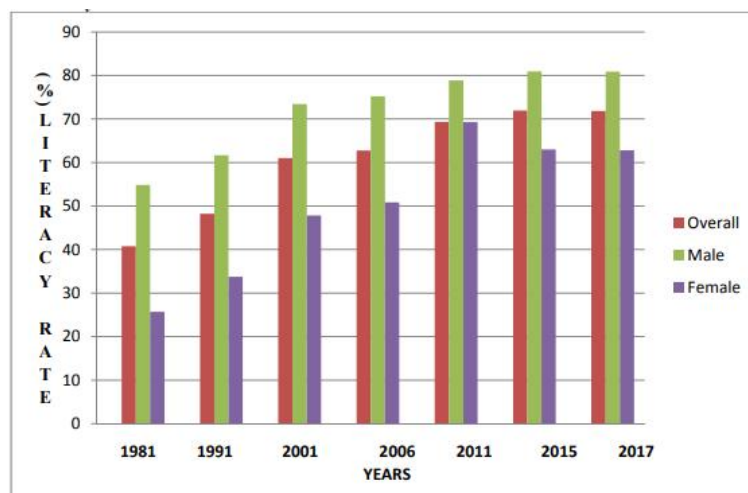
70%. Secondary education covers children in the age group of 14- 18 years, which are roughly 88.5 million people according to the 2001 Census. However, enrolment figures show that only 31 million of these are attending school (Census, 2001). Out of those students attending school it becomes very difficult to retain girl student for secondary education as compared to boy student.

- **Higher Education**

India is having the world's third largest education system the countries ahead of us are China and United States. As of 2020, India has more than 1000 universities, which include 54 central universities, 416 state universities, 125 deemed universities, 361 private universities, 7 Institute under State Legislature Act, and 159 Institutes of National Importance which include IIMs, AIIMS, IITs, IIITs, IISERs and NITs. Other institutions include 52,627 government degree colleges, private colleges, standalone institutes and post-graduate research institutions, functioning under these universities as reported by the MHRD in 2020. Despite these extraordinary numbers and acknowledged quality of institutions, it is surprising that women record a lower attendance across most institutions of higher education. Notable male-female disparities prevail in the enrolment of women in higher education. Male to female enrolment disparity also exist in rural areas.

India: Literacy Rate from 1991 to 2001

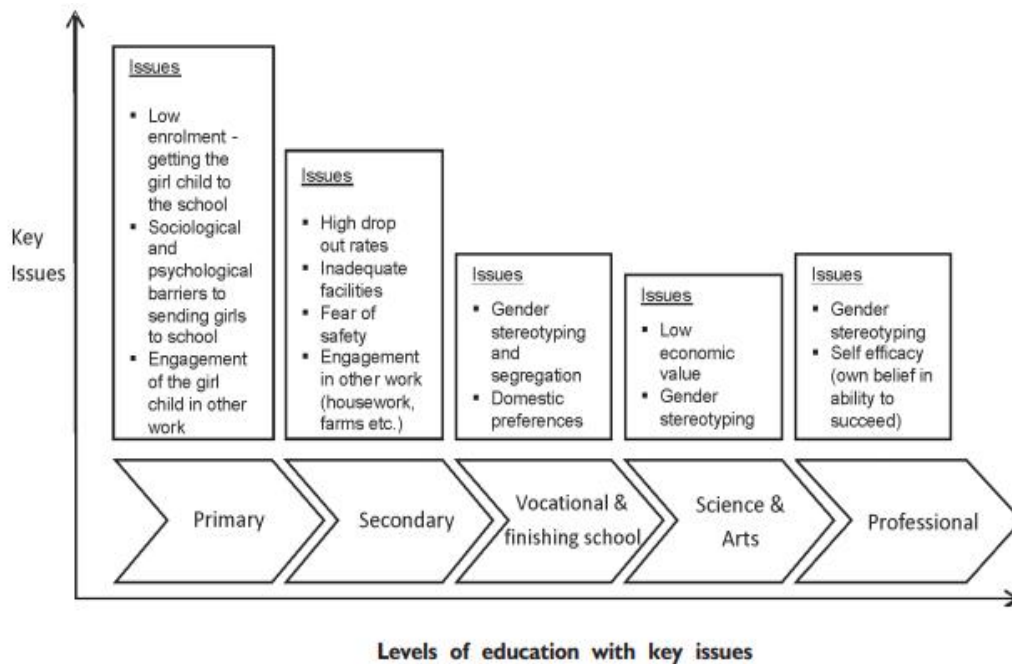
- **Skill Based or Technical Education**



Skill based education has evolved over the years in India and now it is gaining momentum among students. These streams aimed at providing opportunities to students to choose courses for studying towards gainful employment. The total enrolment in over 8000 institutions spread across the country catering to technical and skill education such as the Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and the Arts and Crafts schools is of the order of 1.4 million, of which women constitute less than 28% (UNESCO report, 1991). Out of 950 or so ITIs including both government and private, 104 were set up exclusively for women giving training in areas such as receptionists, beautician, electronics, book binding and the like courses. Even considering technical education imparted through polytechnics, 35 of the 450 recognised ones have been exclusively set up for women, providing training in areas such as pharmacy, food technology, textile design, commercial art etc. Although the rate of participation is gradually increasing, women constitute, on an average, only about 10 percent of total enrolment in technical and skill based education at post secondary level, and about 28 percent at secondary and post secondary levels, taken together.

- **Barriers to Women's Education**

Lack of facility at schools serves as major restraint for the girl child to go to formal school. A report by the International Programs Centre for the U.S. Department of Commerce (Velkoff, 1998) lists the major barriers to women's education in India as not enough sanitary facilities, lack of female teachers and gender prejudice in curriculum. Another major problem in government run primary schools found that schools had no drinking water and toilets facility at their premises. Lack of toilets can be considered a serious problem for girl students and causes drop in enrolment or no enrolment. Lack of toilets poses physical as well as a psychological barrier to parents and girl child mind.



Gender stereotyping has been another major barrier for girl child education in India. As a result women are restricted to domestic role. Women in higher education choose or consider traditional courses arts and education over science and technology due to stereotyping.

Society especially in rural or backward areas pull girl child from schooling either to take care of household work or to take care of younger siblings. In all this parents are reluctant to educate girls as they consider women primary job as child bearers and rearer or assist ageing parents or in-laws after marriage. Education for them is considered secondary or tertiary activity.

Economical condition of family is another barrier for education of women. Male child is considered as bread winner for family as a result education is considered as investment on hm. Whereas girl child will one day get married and look after family and home so education is not considered important for her.

Women Development through Education

Women are half of the population of human species on this planet. Human race development will not be completed ignoring the development of women. The society, state or country will be deprived woman who plays a dominant role life of a child remain uneducated. Women are an important section of our society. Education is crucial for the socio-economic, cultural and political development of country. The Constitution of India empowers every citizen irrespective of gender, cast, colour, creed and religion to access education. It becomes the nation responsibility to adopt affirmative measures for prompting ways and means to empower women with education. Women development has a global issue and discussion on women rights are at the fore front of many formal and informal campaigns worldwide.

The development of any woman on this planet can be done by empowering them. The women empowerment concept was introduced at the international women conference at Nairobi in 1985. Education can be a milestone for women to enables them to responds to the challenges of day to day life but also prepare them to better the condition of their family gradually. Education can also confront their traditional role and change their life entirely. We can't neglect the significance of education in context to women empowerment. It is very necessary for India to see the development in women education for upcoming super power of the world in coming years. The change in women education in India has shown us good results in recent years. Women have taken up key positions business, politics, research & development, academics, medical & health, even manufacturing sector and all this is due to education lead awareness, confidence and self actualisation. Women empowerment is a resultant of quality education. As per United Nation Development Fund for Women the term women empowerment means:

- Gaining knowledge and understanding of gender relations in a ways these relations may be changed for positively.
- Build a sense of self-worth, a faith in one's ability to secure desired changes and the right to control one's life.
- Acquire the ability to create choices and put into effect negotiating power.
- Developing the ability to influence the course of social transformation.
- To create a social and economic order all across the globe for better results.

Thus, empowerment means a psychological sense of personal control or influence and a concern with actual social influence, political power and legal rights. It is a multi level construct referring to individuals, organizations and community. It is an international, ongoing process centred in the local community, involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring and group participation, through which people lacking an equal share of valued resources gain greater access to the control over these resources.

Education can be tool for women development because it enables them to counter the difficulties in personal, social and professional life. Education enables women to become physically and mentally fit by making her aware about the benefits of good physical health and this would ultimately benefit in making her mental health sound (Agrawal and Salve, 2013). In some field like teaching, nursing care, social work, women proved to be better than men and educated women can do wonders in these fields. Women's power is crucial to economic, political, social, spiritual, moral and aesthetic growth of a nation. Education is a powerful tool for bringing equality among genders as it can give ability to women become independent. Women come across discrimination in every walk of life and to counter these discriminations women need to be well educated to know their rights. Still large numbers of women of our country are illiterate, backward, weak (physically & mentally) and exploited by opposite gender (Alva and Hans, 2013).

Positive Impacts of Education in Women's Life

- **Education Breaks the Shackles:** Education has changed the life of many, it enables thinking, brighten thought process, develop imagination, empower them, evolve the principle in different field for the ease of survival and attain knowledge through education. Education of women brings them equal status, create opportunities and freedom to develop herself. Education makes the women self sufficient in every aspect. She should be independent and not depended on her father, husband, son or brother.
- **Education Removes hurdles:** Education makes women socially, politically, culturally, religiously and gender wise equal in every manner to remove the hurdles of life. It is also necessary for all of us to make them for promoting national and international integration.
- **Education Speed up the Decision making Process:** As education open up the ways and bring many alternatives to the mind of individual. Out of available choices analyse the best alternatives and make decisions. This is only possible through good education. Slowly and gradually women become experience and seasoned and can take quick decisions to change her life style, help her life partner, do job effectively, take progressive steps in career, change her eating style for better, awareness about the issues relating sexuality etc. Education teaches and helps us to understand what is wrong and right.
- **Education Garner:** Education garnishes women ability further and due to her exposure to life she can sense crime against her, social evil, sexual harassment, marital rape and mental stress of society. Educated women can develop a security system of her by the protection from law and awareness.
- **Education Enable Women to Contributes Economically:** A well educated woman with proper qualification and skill help her family to support economically. This will increase the earning member of family and nation which enable to develop the economy status and life style of family and nation. Educated women can help not only economically but can also take care of nutritive need of family. Educated women can get rid of many problems in India like high maternal mortality rate, child malnutrition, high rates of gender violence and other crime against women child, sex abuse, female feticide, implement family planning etc. (Sharma, 2016)

- Education Boost Confidence: Education boosts the confidence of women and this result in the quality of individual's life and she can makes good strategies to grow. It is the entire education system to play positive dominant role in the development of women. Women must be accessed to vocational, technical and professional education to break the stereotypes that men can do all work.

All the above statements show that education plays very crucial role for women development. Women education can change the whole mankind, they are the first teacher of a child, they are expert to manage home affairs and they have kind heart with patient approach at professional and business front to handle situation.

Development of women means moving from a weak position to dominating position in all walks of life. She can execute her work according to her will and wish. Educating women can be a phenomenal tool for changing the condition and position of women in the society. Education reduces the inequality and increase the status of women in her family and place where she works. Education brings confidence, motivate and guide in all level for continuous improvement in quality of her work and life. Government's efforts in women education need social and family support. Schemes like, free schooling, midday meal, hostels facilities, free uniform, bicycle, scholarships, etc. should be availed if faces any barrier for girl child education. Education makes the women not only knowledgeable but very mindful and progressive.

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