

GENDER AND EDUCATION: GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Women are vital and productive worker in India's national economy. They make up one third of labour force. Development is human centred process. People are both the ends and the means in this process. Women play an equal role even in the sustainability of development throughout the world. Gender difference is biological. The concept of gender in development is abstract. It can be used in developing women's productive potentials for advancement. Marginalisation of women as a particular species has put women on a footing with inherited handicaps and this reason why the concept of gender in development has become a burning topic for discussion in various conference and seminars. The following article tries to bring about why the people are needed to be educated regarding gender disparity. What are the hindrances of today's women in development in the growth of entrepreneur?

Keywords: *Human Centred, Biological. Marginalisation, Inherited Handicap, Educated.*

Introduction

A feminist model of power would draw on the thinking of Foucault, but would incorporate a gender analysis of power relations that includes an understanding of how internalized oppression places internal barriers women's exercise of power, thereby contributing to the maintenance of inequality between men and women. There is also power from within, the spiritual strength and uniqueness that resides in each one of us and makes us truly human. It's basis is self acceptance and self respect which extend, in turn, to respect for and acceptance of others as equals. Rapid economic, technological and social change has a profound impact upon the nature and organization of work. These offer unique opportunities to women to enrich their working lives by entering into the labour market and starting their own businesses in a variety of fields, leading to entrepreneurship .women are now more cognizant about their existence, roles and right. The emergence of women on the economic scene as entrepreneurs is a significant development in the emancipation of women and securing them a place in the society, which they deserved for a long period. Women are becoming increasingly more conscious of their existence, their rights and their work situation.

In the late 1970s and 1980s a new gender and development analysis emerged which tackled not just the nature of women's various roles with those of men, gender and development is an approach concerned not simply with women's role ,but with that dynamic and structures of gender relation. Gender relations are seen as central to social processes and social organization. It is defined as a complex process involving the social, economic, political and cultural betterment of individuals and of society itself. Gender analysis which takes account of the variety of women and the diversity of their circumstances necessitates a move away from the simple dichotomies of public private, formal informal, urban rural and production reproduction. It also requires the inclusion of all aspects of women's lives within the ambit of relevant issues- their physical situation, intra household relation, health, sexuality, education, means of livelihood and so on, since gender inequalities touch all aspects of women's lives. Gender analysis also enables a critique of the many supposedly neutral institutions, and the many manifestations of male bias in the development process. These gender issues affect women's lives just, as surely as limited access to credit or training opportunities. A gender analysis also highlights the needs of women who are not household heads, who are otherwise rendered invisible within male - headed households.

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Gender Needs

The focus on women's empowerment has been strengthened by the theoretical advance which enabled a distinction to be drawn between women's practical and strategic gender interests. Women's condition, the material situation of her life mean that she has practical needs, resulting from her gender position in society. That gendered position means that she also has strategic needs, needs that challenge the gender hierarchies and other mechanisms of subordination.

Development through Equality

The constitution of India has explicitly conferred on women equal rights and opportunities - political, social, and educational and of employment with men. Because of oppressive traditions, superstitions, exploitation and corruptions, a great majority of Indian are not allowed to enjoy the rights and opportunities bestowed upon them.

Our constitution rather than leaving the women at the mercy of law of nature imposes upon the state a heavy responsibility to assure a dignified life to each individual irrespective of what she deserves on meritarian consideration. The rationale of this assumption depends on the belief that the state is obliged to perform the paternal role of looking after the interest of the weak and traditionally vulnerable members of the society. Such benign discrimination policy must be beneficial to women. The self actualization, realization of freedom, availability of opportunities and satisfaction of primary needs to each individual in the society is imperative especially for women. Education is generally recognized as a key ingredient for all form of development, including economic. Educated women increase opportunities for their families and children. ITCs are an important tool for education delivery as well as a series of products about which one needs education. In other words ,individual needs to be educated about the use of ITCs to use them, and once this education takes place ,additional literacy and education can follow. In other words, by engaging more girls and women in the development of ICTS ,the world can better ensure there is quality content, products, and services that meet the needs of girls and women as well as their families, communities and countries. The good news is that lack of data has not kept advocates around the world from working on the issues. Programmers like Microsofts diggirlztm programme gives high school girls the Microsoft employees as role models and participate in hands on activities. The programme which started in the United States has recently been hosted in Dubai, United Arab Emirates ,which over 200 girls participating and more interest developing for next years expansion.

The Kofi Annan centre in Accra, Ghana hosts a number of technology courses including the Cisco Learning Academy classes for youth ,which has equal numbers of girls and boys enjoying the course and preparing themselves with twenty first century workforce skill.

Liberation of Women in the Indian Context

The origin of female subordinate and how women were neglected to a lower status have been analyzed by various theories have been analyzed by various approaches and various theories have been formulated. The three major approaches are radical feminism, socialist feminism and moderate feminism. The radical feminists believe that society is primarily divided on the basis of sex and women's subjugation is due to sexual oppression by men. According to them male supremacy is the oldest, most basic form of domination. Women should be freed from biological limitations by technological development such as reliable birth control measures, artificial reproduction etc. The end goal, according to this school is not just. The elimination of male privilege but of sex distinction itself. Gandhiji wanted women to be educated in domestic affairs and child rearing . These views influenced the policy maker of post independent India and the national committee on women's education also confirmed that the main purpose of women's education is to train them to be modern educated, conscious and skilled housewives and mothers.

But even today, the concept of equality is being defined within the framework of India. Educated women and men still believe that women may take gainful occupation outside the home but independent careers should not disturb family life. Faithful and uncomplaining wives in the Indian demand.

In spite of more women taking advantages of higher education, there is discrimination in social, economic and political spheres. The number of women in decision making bodies such as parliament and state assemblies is negligible. The participation of women in labour force has been declining through the years. The rate of suicide among female is more than among the males. Instances of rape and bride burning have increased. Single women are not safe in Indian society. Women's inferior status is legitimized by the state in school textbooks and media. Her sufferings are glorified under the pretext of strengthening traditional values.

Approaches to Women's Development

There can be two major approaches to women's development:

- Governmental
- Non- governmental

The nongovernmental approach can further have involvement of the voluntary organization or involvement of the local people. In India we find both the approaches being used in the development of women. Government programmes for women's development began as early as 1954 in India. Although the beginning was made in 1954 the actual participation of women in mainstream economic activities began only in 1974 with the report of the committee on the status of women in India. In the eighties an increasing role was played by the non governmental agencies NGOs in women's development programmes. They helped in forming grass root women's organization and dwcra groups. Working with the central and the state government and the commercial banks their participation was highly appreciable. While retaining their independence, flexibility and grass root orientation, these NGOs collaborated very well with the government, functionaries and agencies. In the year 1990 the national commissioner for women came into existence by the national commission for women act 1990. Investigation and examination of all matters relating to the safeguard provided for women under the constitution and other laws are some of the main function of the commission.

Women's development has another angle, based on population distribution in the rural and the urban areas. Several regional factors influence the participation of women in the development process, but among them the placing of a person in a rural or a urban area cannot be ignored.

Suggestions

Education should develop consciousness among women for their right and the necessity to raise their status. More and more women should be trained in media management, as editor, columnist reporter producer etc. Courses for both gender should include employment oriented subjects as well as family life, nutrition and responsible parenthood. Diversified vocational programme of all type should be offered at the collegiate stage. There should be no age restriction for women either for continuing studies or coming back to work. Co education and mixed training group should be actively encouraged. Popularization of family planning courses, organisation of child welfare and day care centre, working women's hostel, inexpensive labour saving device, central food facilities etc would enhance women's participation in social processes.

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