

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT FOR EMPOWERMENT OF RURAL WOMEN

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Abstract:

According to the statistics released by the latest census of 2011, India's female literacy rate is 65.46 percent, significantly lower than the world average of 79.7 percent.

Even though India is considered the human capital of the world, the importance of women's education in India is not accepted there widely. There are many reasons for it. Poverty is one reason, patriarchal system and traditions are another.

But whatever the reason may be, it still doesn't mean the importance of women's education becomes less.

It's the 21st century and we think that everything is ok. We think that there aren't any issues regarding education. We think that gender discrimination is gradually deteriorating. We think everything is headed to a brighter sight.

Meanwhile, in India, girls have to fight to go to school. Sex discrimination is still prevalent there. Women workers in India encounter very different conditions from those found in most Western countries. There is no system of universal state welfare benefits for periods of unemployment or for old age. Women without the financial support of a man must rely on the wider family structure if they are unemployed or underemployed

Lets discuss the status of education and employment of Indian women and see how far they are empowered.

Key words: employment, discrimination, patriarchal system, statistics, gender, financial support.

Women's education in India has always been in the public eye. Boys in India are more likely to go to school, mainly because of the mentality and the historical background. The percentage of educated children in India is obviously unequal among boys and girls.

Among lower-class families, sons are more encouraged to receive an education than girls. The issue can be viewed from another perspective: both the son and daughter go to school, but the boy attends a better one. Why are girls discouraged from going to school and what are the reasons behind the discrimination?

Here are some reasons:

Social norms (simply because they are girls)

Unfortunately, social norms, cultural factors make them think that girls don't require education. Over 90 million Indian girls are illiterate. It is believed by the society that girls don't need education. They don't need to work.

Fear of violence

Seeing the stray incidents of violence on girls, a lot of parents are very concerned about sending their girls to school. India is not the safest country, people need to be very careful in order not to be kidnapped, raped or have something stolen from them.

Protection of their virginity

This is a common mentality among parents who have daughters. Parents don't want them to study in a classroom where there are boys and male teachers. This is a social stigma.

A valuable resource for homework (for agriculture, household chores)

Sadly, girls do not do regular homework. Due to poverty, the family has to take their child to work in the fields under very severe circumstances.

Poverty

As we see, the reasons simply follow each other. Poverty is an important reason behind women's education in India. For families, the first and foremost need is not education, but clothing, food, work and survival.

Child marriage

Child marriage is a vulnerable topic in India. This is the major cause of girls missing classes. According to UNICEF's statistics, 18% of girls in India are married by the age of 15, and 47% are married by 18.

Child labour

Another horrible reason why children do not attend school is because they're labourers. They are not only female, but also male. This greatly harms their physical development.

Mentally they are not ready to be educated. They get used to their lifestyle: working in the manufacture, domestic labour, etc. Child labour itself is a problem and there is no need to point out the number of child victims.

Daughters will marry soon (there is no point in educating them)

This might be the most senseless reason that is common not only in India, but in other countries as well. They claim there is no point in spending money on their education. Parents are more focused on teaching them how to cook and do other household chores.

Very few men need a smart, brave, controlling and powerful woman in their house. It is easier to marry a girl who has no knowledge, who can't argue or say her opinion out loud. This is a somewhat sly move to get the men to be in charge.

She needs to be prepared for her wifely duties

A good housewife. This is all that is expected from women. Wasting time in studying will not make her prepared for wifely duties.

What kind of society do we expect to have? Where the influence of cultural terms, violence, and old mentality has more importance than safe and equal opportunities.

Before thinking about the question; why do women need to be educated?

First of all, we have to understand what role women's education in our society has. A woman is the one who has the greatest role in the process of upbringing her child. She is the one that will educate and prepare them for a new life. That woman can be a role model for her children and an invaluable member of the society.

A girl who has no future yet decides to get an education to build her future with a strong foundation. That little girl in the near future will become a wonderful mum, a beloved wife, a clever and a strong businesswoman who will make her family stronger.

She will have an impact not only on her family, but on society as well. Finally, she will be financially independent and happy. Education is the first step to take this road.

Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India from 1947-1964, once said: "You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women."

Educated women have a very important role in the development of their country. They will be ready to serve not only their families, but also society. They can be teachers, doctors, politicians, lawyers, business owners and much more.

The government has made education free for children of 6-14 years. But, as statistics show, free education has nothing to do with the number of girls and boys at primary school. Starting from 2005, the international community promised to have as many girls as boys in schools. Unfortunately, this didn't come true. Female literacy is lower than male

. Girls have the right to education. The excuses society has for not providing women with education has no legitimate reason behind it.

From the start of the British Raj till the independence, only 2-6% of females were literate. The percentage went up to 15.3% in 1961 and 28.5% in 1981.

By 2011 the female literacy rate in India stood at 65.46%. There is an obvious increase in the female literacy rate, but India stills falls behind compared to other countries.

We have many women who proved themselves capable I various fields. Their words tell us what a woman is.

Indra Nooyi CEO, PepsiCo, said, "At the end of the day, don't forget that you are a person, don't forget that you're a mother; a wife, and a daughter."

Chanda Kochhar, the chief executive officer of ICICI Bank, said, "I urge all women to believe in themselves and in the fact that they are capable of running a successful professional life as well as family life."

Preity Zinta, a Bollywood actor, said, "Violence and aggression against women is wrong, yet people try to point fingers at the woman who comes out with it trying to make her sound frivolous and with an ulterior motive."

India has experienced rapid growth and development in the past years in many spheres. Gender equity is not one of them. This is deplorable considering the important role played by women in the socio-economic growth of the country.

The Indian development model has yet to fully incorporate the important role played by women for propelling the socio-economic growth of the country. Current governments at state and central level must understand that no nation can progress unless its women are given equal access to opportunities and adequate safety and security.

Women have faced a range of structural and social barriers in fully participating in the Indian economy, which not only hinders their individual agency but also limits India's ability to continue to modernize.

The threat of gender-based violence discourages girls and women from leaving their homes and is used by some parents to justify marrying off daughters before the legal age of 18; however, marriage provides girls little protection from violence—over 50% of both male and female adolescents justify wife beating, and 6 in 10 men admit physically abusing their wives. The Women's Reservation Bill of 2013 is being vociferously opposed on the grounds that it will deny opportunities to persons of other groups. When it comes to legislations which aim to reduce gender inequity, India has a long way to go.

Women icons in India's rural areas are few and far in between. While most are aware of the high profile lady entrepreneurs and corporate heads in urban India, women in rural areas continue to face exploitation. If women are allowed to gain access to education, they can make a huge impact in enhancing the productivity of the economy. As per recent report by ILO, India and Pakistan have the lowest rates of women's labour force participation in Asia. In India, the worrying cause is further declining of labour force participation. According to National Sample Survey, in 1999-2000, 25.9% of all women worked and by 2011-12 this proportion had dropped to 21.9%. As per recent report by ILO, India and Pakistan have the

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Women tend to hold lower-level positions than men even when they have sufficient skills to perform higher-level jobs. Researchers have estimated that female agricultural laborers were usually paid 40 to 60 percent of the male wage. Even when women occupy similar positions and have similar educational levels, they earn just 80 percent of what men do, though this is better than in most developing countries. The public sector hires a greater share of women than does the private sector, but wages in the public sector are less egalitarian despite laws requiring equal pay for equal work. There is evidence that suggests that technological progress sometimes has a negative impact on women's employment opportunities.

When a new technology is introduced to automate specific manual labor, women may lose their jobs because they are often responsible for the manual duties. For instance, one village irrigated its fields through a bucket system in which women were very active. When the village replaced the manual irrigation system with a tube well irrigation system, women lost their jobs. Many other examples exist where manual tasks such as wheat grinding and weeding are replaced by wheat grinding machines, herbicides, and other modern technologies.

The female labour force participation (FLFP) rate in India has fallen from 36 percent in 2005-06 to 24 percent in 2015-16, as per the Economic Survey of India 2017-18. Female workers are highly disadvantaged in the labour market—they are in large part low-skilled informal workers, engaged in low-productivity, low-paying work.

India's gender gap in median earnings of full-time employees is larger than in South Africa, Brazil and Chile, meaning most women earn far less than men in India than in these countries.

Conclusion:

The education and employment situation of women is better now a days. Dr Raja Sekhar Reddy the former Chief minister introduced fee reimbursement scheme to all sections of the society and this propelled the rate of education among women. We see mostly girls in the class rooms. Most of the IT companies are ready to hire without any gender bias. So many women are employed now. The Modi Govt also introduced Skill development in the colleges and so ordinary degree holders also are getting jobs based on their skills.

But will the society change its attitude towards women is the million dollar question. Will man change his attitude towards women? Even today though the women are highly educated and employed and becoming earning member she has to take care of the house work other domestic cores. But on the whole the situation is looking up.

The women are on the way to empowerment in urban areas but this education and employment should reach the rural women too which empower them and this may not be far from reality..

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