

A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EDUCATION IN DIST BARAMULLA JAMMU AND KASHMIR:

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ABSTRACT

Historically, women have been regarded as constituting a weaker section. They have often been treated as “second grade citizens”. They have been pictured and presented as home makers” that are good in house hold chores. This image of women has been changing everywhere. Extension of the voting right to women in Britain and America in the beginning of the 20th century brought about a series of changes in the status of women especially in the western world. Many of their disabilities and inequalities came to an end in due course. The quest for equality was pursued consistently by the western women. The term empowerment of women has become popular especially after 1980s. It refers to the process of strengthening the hands of women who have been suffering from various disabilities, inequalities and gender discrimination. It refers to the process of providing power to women to become free from the control of others that is to assume power to control her own life and to determine her own conditions. Women’s empowerment could also be understood as the process of providing equal rights, opportunities, responsibilities and power positions to women so that they are able to play a role on par with men in society.

Key words: Economic development, women empowerment.

History of Women’s Education in Jammu and Kashmir in Pre-Independent India:

The educational status of women in Kashmir like their counter part elsewhere in the country is also depressing and quite dismal. Women in traditional Kashmiri society were generally subjected to discrimination, inequality and oppression. The role of women remained confined to

domestic affairs and so they were also de barred from education (Dabble, 2007). People were highly conservative and the realization that women need to be educated was totally lacking.

The first effort to educate Kashmiri women came from the missionaries. It was sometime between 1893 and 1895 that a missionary school for girls was started by the Church Missionary Society. There was a strong opposition to this school as it aroused suspicion in the minds of people who were conservative in their outlook. They feared that in the school the minds or their women would be polluted by the impure ideas from foreign lands which would lead them astray (Bazaz, 1959). Only a few girls attended the school and their parents were somewhat on the shake, as the public opinion was very much against them (Biscoe, 1998). The dedication and personal efforts of the missionary ladies who laid the foundation of this school, encouraged parents to enroll their daughters in this school (Khan, 2005).

Empowerment: According to Business Dictionary, empowerment means, “A management practice of sharing information, rewards, and power with employees’ skills, resources, authority, opportunity, motivation, as well as holding them responsible and accountable for outcomes of their actions, will contribute to their competence and satisfaction.”

There are other definitions of empowerment as: “The term empowerment refers to a range of activities from individual self-assertion to collective resistance, protest and mobilization that challenge basic power relations. For individuals and groups where class, caste, ethnicity and gender determine their access to resources and power, their empowerment begins when they not only recognize the systemic forces that oppress them, but act to change existing power relationships. Empowerment, therefore, is a process aimed at changing the nature and direction of systemic forces that marginalize women and other disadvantaged sectors in a given context. “It is giving lawful power or authority to act. If people were empowered they would be able to participate in the planning, execution and implementation of developmental schemes. Apart from Political Empowerment, Economic and Social Empowerment are crucial. Empowerment and development are closely related. Empowerment leads to development, which further leads to greater empowerment.”

Strategies of Empowerment:

Empowerment Strategies are varied and refer to those strategies which enable women to realize their full potentials. They consist of greater access to knowledge and resources, greater autonomy in decision making, greater ability to plan their lives, greater control over the circumstances that influence their lives and finally factors which would free them from the shackles of custom beliefs and practices. Unless they themselves become conscious of the oppression meted out to

them and show initiative to push forward it would not be possible to change their status much.

Some of the empowerment mechanisms could be identified as follows:

- Literacy higher Education
- Better health care for herself and her children
- Higher age at marriage
- Greater work participation in modernized sector
- Necessary financial and service support for self employment
- Opportunities for higher positions of power
- Complete knowledge of her rights and above all
- Self-reliance, self respect and dignity of being a woman

Governmental Policies/Programmes for Promoting Gender Equality in Education in Jammu and Kashmir:

State government realized that for bringing the holistic development of women, elimination of gender disparity in education is a prerequisite and therefore launched various schemes/programmes to improve the educational conditions of women. These include Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) and Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV). In order to bridge the gender gap and remove or minimize the disparities in educational attainment, various policies and programmes that have been initiated by the central government for education of women and implemented in Jammu and Kashmir are given below:

➤ **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA):**

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) promotes girls education through equalization of educational opportunities and elimination gender disparities. The State of Jammu and Kashmir joined Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan a little late in 2003 owing to its circumstances particularly disturbance due to militancy and typical topography- (sparsely populated habitations). During 2006-07, 148 primary schools were upgraded to upper primary schools. There were 108560 out of school children, out of which 20702 children have been provided educational opportunity through Non-Residential Bridge Course (NRBC). The gender gap appears to be closed as 804837 girls get enrolled against 930476 boys therefore constituting about 46.62 per cent of the total enrolment (J&K State Report, 2008).

National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Education (NPEGEL):

The National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) is a focused intervention of Government of India, to reach the 'Hardest to Reach' girls, especially those not in school through the development of a 'model school' in every cluster with more intense community mobilization and supervision of girls enrollment in schools. The National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) was sanctioned for the State of Jammu and Kashmir in 2003-2004; National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level had been initiated in 104 blocks in the 12 districts of Jammu and Kashmir.

➤ **Kasturbagam Gandhi Baikal Vidalia (KGBV)**

The Kasturbagam Gandhi Baikal Vidalia scheme was launched in July 2004 for setting up residential schools at upper primary level for girls belonging predominantly to the Schedule Castes, Schedule Tribes, Other Backward Classes and minority communities. It was designed to encourage greater participation of girls in education at the upper primary level (Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, MOHRD, GOI).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- **Radhakrishan (2008);** in his study “Empowerment of Women through Entrepreneurship” analyses the status of women, women entrepreneurship and problems and prospects in women entrepreneurship. According to him women are still treated as second rate citizens or subordinate to men. In spite of many efforts by the successive governments they remain in backward positions. Women take advantage of the efforts and support taken by.
- **Reema Mukherjee,** Rural women Empowerment, Adhyayan publishers and distributors, New Delhi, 2008, PP. 297. Section of the rural population and especially to the poor has been eroded severely over the past two decades by two parallel and inter related process; their growing degradation both in quantity and quality and their increasing satiation and privatization. These two processes, both independently and interactively, under many of the class-gender effects of environmental degradation. Independently,
- **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research methodology means scientific methods of investigation and analyses the phenomenon. No research work can be undertaken unless. We adopt a proper research methodology for the present research work, the scientific method will be followed which consists various stages such the formulation of the research problems, allocation of data analyses of data interpretation and present of data findings.

- **Sample Size of the Survey**

I am trying to study the women empowerment to education in Jammu and Kashmir with special reference to district Baramulla of the Jammu and Kashmir state. For the proper understanding and for the better result, we have selected (90) Respondents in district Baramulla.

- **Source of Data**

Keeping the view the objectives of study, the data collection was carried out at both primary as well as secondary data, the primary data was collected through interview schedule in-depth interview and questions survey methods, focus group discussion, we can simply collect data through case study, observation. The secondary data was collect from various secondary sources, such as journals, magazines, papers and internet, books etc.

- **Study Area**

The present study is being made towards the “A sociological study of women empowerment through education in Jammu and Kashmir with special references to district Baramulla, the city was found by(Raja Bhimsina,” it was 22nd district of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. It is divided into 8 Tehsils, and 16 Blocks. It has 652 villages out of which 537 are revenue, the district is spread our area of (4,243.sq km) according to the census of 2011 the total population of Baramulla district was 1,008, 039 with male population of 534, 733 and female population of 473,

306. The district has a population density of 250 inhabitants per square kilometer it has 18 educational zones has a literate rate of 64.33% with male literacy 77.53% and female literacy 52.38% total literate in dist. Baramulla were 554,149 of which males and females were 337, 170 and 207, 979 respectively

- **Objectives of the Research Work**

- To study the nature of educative women in a society.
- To study the role of women in decision making in an outside family.

- **Hypothesis of the Study**

- Education enhance status is a major step for empowerment of women.
- Economic empowerment helps women to take their own decision.

INTERPATATION OF DATA COLLECTION

The Sample of the survey is composed of the educated women with different marital status, religion and family type living in District Baramulla of Kashmir valley. The sample respondents belonged to the areas in District Baramulla in the following tables:-

Educational Level of Respondents

Table No. 1

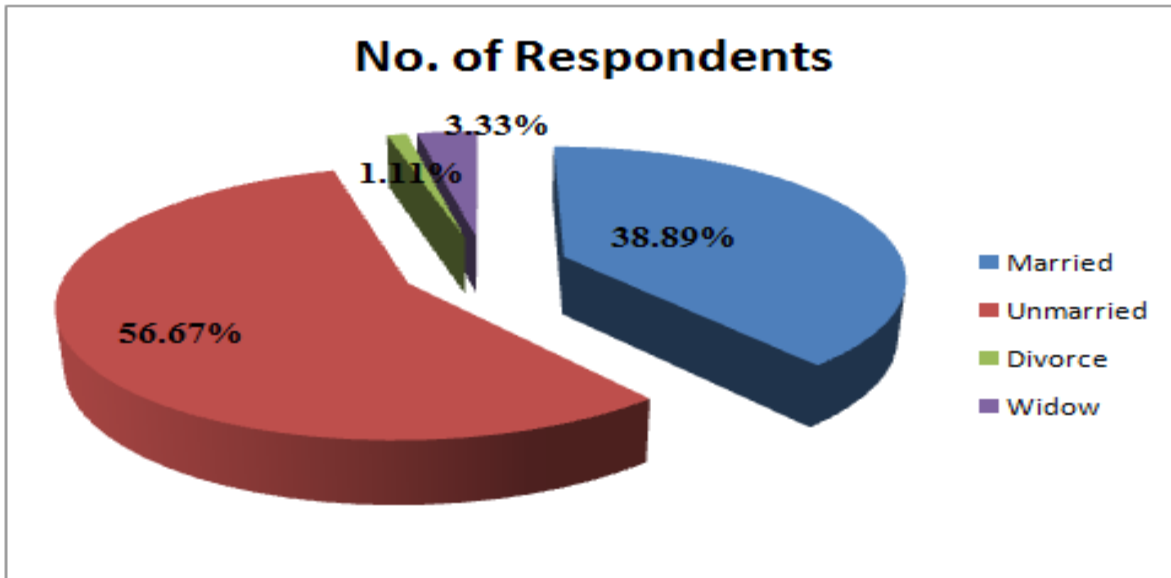
Education Level	No. of Respondents	Percentage
High School	11	12.22%
Higher Secondary	12	13.33%
Graduate	35	38.89%
P.G	32	35.56%
Total	90	100%

The sample of this survey is composed of 11 high School level, 12 Higher Secondary Level, 35 Graduate and 32 Post Graduate women respondents living in District Baramulla.

Marital Status of Respondents

Table No.2

Marital Status	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Married	35	38.89%
Unmarried	51	56.67%
Divorce	1	1.11%
Widow	3	3.33%
Total	90	100%



The Sample of this survey shows that 35 respondents are married, 51 unmarried, and 1, divorced and 3, widow respondents.

Religion of Respondents

Table No. 3

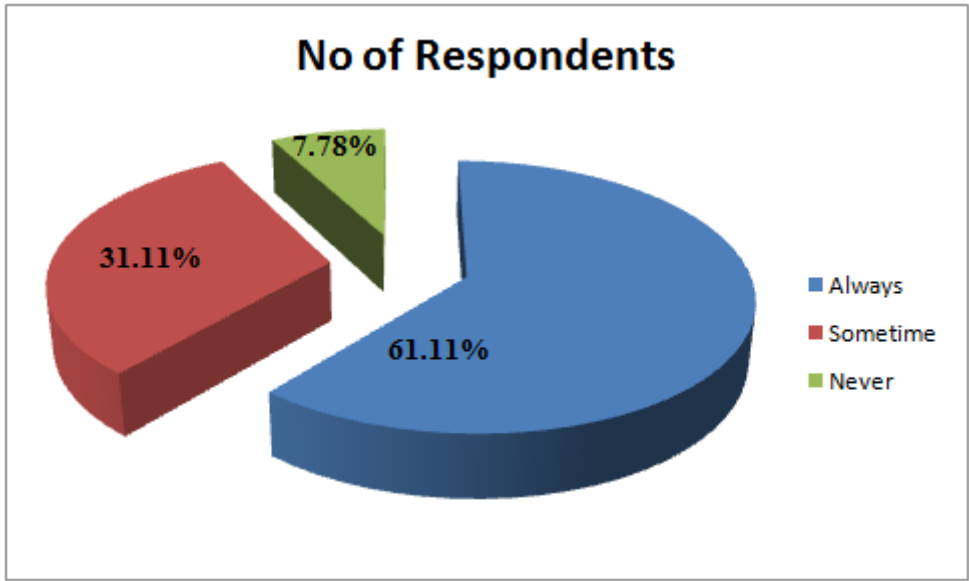
Religion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Muslim	85	94.44%
Hindu	0	-
Sikh	5	5.56%
Christian	0	-
Total	90	100%

This table shows that the 85 (94.44%) respondents are Muslims and 5 (5.56%) are Sikh, because population of Kashmir includes majority of Muslim.

Better Social Status of Respondents Due to Education

Table No.4

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage
Always	55	61.11%
Sometime	28	31.11%
Never	7	7.78%
Total	90	100



This table shows that 55(61.11%) respondents enjoy special status in the society due to education, 28 (31.11%) enjoy sometimes while only 7 (7.78%) never enjoy any special status due to education.

Educational Status of those Women's

Table no.5

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage
Educated	66	73.33%
Uneducated	8	10.81%
Not Response	16	17.77%
Total	90	100%

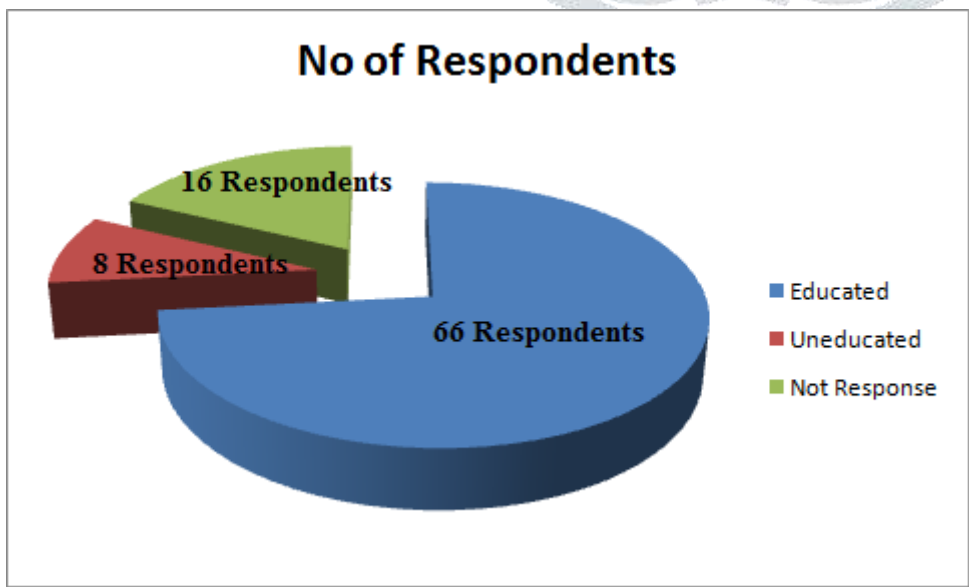


Table 21(b) shows respondents are of the view that 66 (89.19%) of women participating in election are educated while as 8 (10.81%) are uneducated.

Women's Representation in Politics Best Step towards Women-Empowerment

Table No.6

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	57	63.33%
No	33	36.67%
Total	90	100%

This table shows that 57 (63.33%) respondents believe that women's representation in politics is the best step towards women empowerment and 33 (36.67%) do not believe that it is necessary.

Some important recommendations to empower the women are as under.

1. Education facility should be provided to the girl child of remote areas of dist Baramulla. 2. The free education programs provided by the central government should reach every household and poor girl child should be properly benefited from such policies.
2. The government should organize different committees to look after whether the education schemes for girl child are being properly utilized or not.
3. Both elementary and secondary should be made compulsory for the girls and the parents who abstain their girls from school should meet with punishment.
4. Emphasis should be laid on the higher education of the girls which could lead to empowerment of women folk.
5. To implement the education schemes and programmes for girls in dist Baramulla, there is an imperative need to have women representatives all over the dist.

Conclude

There is a contribution inequality and vulnerability of women in all sectors economic, Political right and legal etc. Women oppressed in all fields of life need to be empowered in all walks of life in order to fight against the socially constructed gender basis, women have to swim against the system that requires more strength. Such strength comes from the process of empowerment and empowerment will come from the education. Education is one of the most important of empowering women and giving them knowledge, skills and self confidence to be full partner in the development process.

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