

# GLOBALIZATION, WOMEN EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

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*Cultural perceptions of woman as the keepers of the domestic realm are so strong that it gets reflected in several aspects of the organizational procedures and functioning. Now the deepest impulse of the process of social change due to globalization and privatization have made learning a part of social change itself. The present paper analyzes that how status of woman due to globalization through education is initiated or prohibited.*

During the past decade and a half, like other concept, with perhaps the solitary exception of 'gender' has stirred a major discourse in social sciences as the term 'globalization' did. It is not just an accident that the term came speedily into academic parlance following almost on the heels of the Dunkul Agreement that finally led to the formation of the World Trade Organization. This synchronization of the said science discourse on globalization and the institutionalization of WTO is a stricken instance of how developments in the world economy keep impinging on societal processes and one institution, induce new patterns of change, and necessitate reassessment of the adequacy -of concepts and approaches, for understanding complex social reality.

The origin of the concept of globalization is usually traced to Marshal McLuhan (1960), who first introduced the idea of what is today called global — a notion that implied a sort of compression of the world and intensification of consciousness of the world as a single entity . Globalization involves a process of change that is too simple and yet paradoxically too complicated to grapple with (Dhanagare 2003: 4-6). It is commonly understood as a process that rapidly transforms an otherwise disparate and heterogeneous world into a compressed, but not necessarily homogeneous entity and yet as the same time, it intensifies consciousness of the world as a whole (Robertson (1992: 8).

Anitat (2002:4) has talked of globalization as the process through which an increasingly free flow of ideas, people, goods and capital leads to the integration of economies and societies. Our attempt is to analyze the status of educated women in perspective of globalization. As regards effect of globalization on women status in Indian studies have come out with diverse, at times even conflicting findings. According to some researches, liberalization and opening avenues for international trade can offer opportunities and bring a remarkable change in the traditional status of educated women. However, during the last decade or so, increasingly feminist educational perspective are concerned with the impact of liberalization and globalization the two processes that are impacting world economies , market and all other instructions including education).

As a result of privatization, the state is withdrawing from higher education. Simultaneously, the state is assuming a less interventionist role in gender equity. Meanwhile, the focus upon 'women' as the problem has also deflected attention away from the role of the state in promoting, gender equity in education. Sociology of women's education is under pressure to give its traditional concern with the social justice due to the impact of globalization (Channe 2001; 31-32). Cultural perceptions of women as the keepers of the domestic real are so strong that they get reflected in several aspects of the organizational procedures and its

functioning. They believe the expectations of Raymond Williams that “the deepest impulse of the problem of social change was to make learning a part of social change itself.” (1989, quoted in Giroux 1992; 201).

### **Education: Instrument of Social Change**

There is a belief that education is by itself supportive of social change. This need not be so. Much depends upon what the content of the educational message is and who the educators are. Most leaders of public opinion whether of the right or of the left, whether progressive or reactionary, whether pro-women’s movement or against are all drawn from among the educated, *i.e.* from among those who have had formal college education. (Gore, 1995: 105). Education, for a long time was dissociated from the idea of nation building. main aim was considered to be transmission of the accumulated wealth of knowledge, imparting of classical values, and building the character of the individual. Education is a value in itself, as it develops personality as well as the rationality of individuals. The acquired knowledge by serving a social purpose raises the status in society. Education provides an essential qualification to fulfil certain economies, political and cultural functions. It broadly perceived as an endless continental of life long learning is essential for human resource development.

Patel (1995: 35-36) said: In rural areas of developing countries, women are not always acquainted with technical subjects. It might be appropriate to separate groups of participants who are functionally literate from those who are not. Evidence has shown that, even when there is no functional literacy, women are able to handle technologically advanced machines and equipments. Depending on the type of technology used, the maintenance of machinery and equipment would be part of any curriculum. For example, if agricultural extension workers are included among trainees, it is also necessary for them to learn how to repair a tractor, not only how to use it. As for hand pumps, or flow rice or coffee mills, women’s training should include technical know how on repairing the hand pumps and the mills. when ever any emergency arises. In this, way women could become technically self reliant in a village setting. According to A.J. Abdul Kalam (2006), empowering women is a prerequisite for creating a good nation, when women are empowered, society with stability is assured. Empowering the women is essential as their thoughts value systems leads to the development of a good family, good society and ultimately a good nation.

### **Government Policies**

The Policy of the Government of India for empowering the women lays emphasis on removal of women illiteracy and obstacles inhibiting their access to elementary education, women’s participation in vocational, technical and professional education at different levels. The Government also lays stress on non discrimination, thus seeking to elements sex stereotyping in vocational and professional courses. On the other hand Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, the flagship programmed for universalization of elementary education has special focus on disadvantage groups including the girl child. In addition, the mid day meal scheme has also improved girls enrolment and retention in primary schools. Mahila Samakhya, a women’s education and empowerment programmes being implemented in about 9.000 Villages in six states mobilizes and organizes women in groups called Sanghas and through education makes them aware of their rights. Ministry of social justice and Empowerment is also implementing schemes of residential schools for scheduled caste girls in area of very low literacy, and award of scholarship to SC/ST students with special emphasis on girls. The proposed scheme of Kasturba Gandhi Swatantrav Vidhyalaya of residential schools for girls would support universalisation of elementary education girls. The education of women continues to be an area of major emphasis in the programmes and projects of Indira Gandhi Open University. For example, the women’s enrolment in Universities / Colleges is currently 39.9 percent. Besides there are five exclusive women’s Universities and 1,578 women’s Colleges, of which 219 were opened during the last three years.

The entry of women into job oriented courses, such as Commerce, Law, Engineering and Technical fields, suggests that, though the liberal stance of education may prevail for a majority of students, the trend of the employment orientation of women is also visible. The enlargement of choices and the advent of careerism in urban middle class women can be linked with the forces generated during last four decades, which have accelerated in the post-liberalization phase. Better skills, wider information and knowledge and professionalisation are considered essential for administration, improvement in productivity and market orientation and computer savvy have. Today the technically trained, management-trained, better marketability, these requirements, on the one side, emphasize efficiency and a professional approach to

work, and on the other side, they generate keen competition among aspirants (Desai and Thakkar, 2001, 58-59).

### **Role or Non Government Organization (NGOs)**

The discontinuation rate after primary school is particularly high in rural area, more so among girls, children from socially and economically disadvantaged communities and those living in remote areas. It is now widely recognized that these sections of Indian society have not been able to access educational facilities, or even if they do worth they drop out due to a wide range of demand side and supply related factors (Ramachandran, 1999:20). In Rural India only 32.6 percent girls in the 15-19 age group have gone beyond middle school, which the percentage for boys is 53-6. Similarly, more than 65 percent girls in urban areas are in secondary school. When this data is looked at in relation with the income level, it becomes clear that many families in the lower income group are constrained not to educate their daughters. The gender difference is quite notable. Where resources are limited, the first causality is girls education.

### **Indian Education**

History is resplendent with the contribution of various social reforms and community organization. In the late 70s, while introducing the National Adult Education Programme, a space was created for the collaboration of NGOs in this programme. As Ramchandran observes, "The post-emergency euphoria of the restoration of democracy, coupled with the recognition that the state alone cannot deliver the goods in an intuitions market oriented society, led to the emergence of movements new organizations new activities and actors with issues.

The involvement of NGOs with education is not recent. In fact, for many NGOs education was their entry point for development work in the community. Indias many NGOs work on a variety of programmes. Kishore Bhasti & Eklavya in Madhya Pradesh, propel in Maharashtra, Research centre at Tilonia in Rajasthan, Break through, Sahyog etc are some of the NGOs which took on the educational needs of women both in terms of skills as well as an innovative approach to learning (Desai and Thakkar, 2001 : 62-64). Malvika has tried to categorise NGOs into pedagogic innovations, institutional innovation and familial innovators (Karleker, 2000 : 96-107) PROPEL, Lok Jumbesh, Education Guarantee scheme, Bode Shiksha Samiti, PRATHAM fall in first category : They involve the community, the teachers familiarize themselves with the duties, songs artifacts of the group and non-tradition took. Palmyra workers Development society and AVEHI comes in the second category: realize to persuade girls to come to the organization, their mothers support is necessary. Therefore all these programmes are flexible in timings, courses, attendance and environment. Child case becomes one of the important inputs to enable girls to attain those educational facilities. Finally, there is a familial component, where in programmes such as the Mahila Samakhya if adequately operated have been very meaningful in attracting girls by providing familial support in terms of child Case, building contacts with the mothers and make them sensitive to other issues such as gender violence. With the background of widespread illiteracy and limited reach out of elementary education, when the state itself has not been able to improve the situation, NGOs have at least shown the path along which efforts could be made to achieve goals.

### **The Present Scene**

During the last decade or so, increasingly feminist educational perspectives are concerned with the impact of liberalization and globalization — the two processes that are impacting world economies, markets and all other institutions, including education. Globalization has pushed back social justice and equality from the agenda of the state the world over. Neo-conservatism, corporatisation and privatization dominate the restructuring of the economy and the higher educational system (Apple 1997; Shukla and Kaul 1998: Tilak 1998). The emphasis is on efficiency, accountability and outcomes. Educational restructuring privileges hard management discourses of leadership over feminized leadership discourses which are less instrumental, more holistic and softer (Blakemore 1999: 3-4)

As a result of privatization, the state is withdrawing from higher education "Simultaneously, the state is assuming a less interventionist role in gender equality. Global changes are viewed as gendered, radicalized and classed (Brine 1999). Moreover, privatization is shaping emerging higher education markets which influence the daily practices of schooling in highly gendered ways (Black more 1996). Universities are affected by the idea of profit, economic efficiency and returns, market choice and competition. Profit is the central parameter defining educational priorities and choices. In such a scenario, considerations of gender,

marginality, race, caste, class and ethnicity are lost. Yet these parameters are central to the power equation within education and to the process of exclusion. In addition to education, global and local labor markets are becoming feminized, casualised and deprofessionalised (Black more 1997: 1999: Milligan, 1994).

## Conclusion

Globalization has presented new challenges for the realization of the goal of women's empowerment, the gender impact of which has not been systematically evaluated. The further trend seems to be that while there will be a growing demand for women's education, the high cost of living will force families to turn their daughters towards short-term courses or correspondence courses which in long run may deprive the girl of vital interaction available in educational institutions. It is indeed a situation when a mother would like her daughter to go to school/college but is unable to send her because the child must help in the house work. In the 19th century, we pleaded for the education of women to make her a better partner for her husband; in the last century. Education was for her empowerment, and today we are pleading for her right to education as a citizen.

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