

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN INDIA

Shiv Prasad Thakur

Assistant Teacher, Upgraded Middle School Tangtangi, Kishanganj, Bihar.

Abstract : In present time, women empowerment is a topic of discussion, especially in backward and progressive countries because they came to know much later that without women promotion and empowerment, the country's progress is not possible. In fact, empowerment is a mental state dependent on internal and external conditions. For this, fearlessness, economic self-reliance, decision making, and proper education is an essential condition to make them eligible for all. Accessibility and strength are the real hallmarks of women empowerment. The process of empowerment brings so much awareness in the woman that she gets control over social and economic resources through education and by directing her life herself and increasing her participation in decisions at home and outside. After the independence our government formulated many educational schemes regarding women's education which solely aims their empowerment. Women make up 50 percent of the world's population, so they have the right to be treated as men in every sphere of life. The importance of this is underlined by the fact that 'Empowerment of Women' has been included as a major goal in the Eighth Millennium Development Goals. The present paper deals with educational policies and programmes for women empowerment in India.

Keywords : Women empowerment, Education, Female education, Educational policies, Development.

INTRODUCTION

The tradition and culture of any nation is reflected by the women of that nation, it is written in the ancient scriptures of India, "Yatra Narayastu Pujyate, Ramante Tatra Devta". In the words of Swami Vivekananda, "The welfare of the world is not possible without improving the condition of women. A bird cannot fly with a feather." Gandhiji also said in 1925, "The country cannot be saved unless women take part in the public life of India". In fact, the strong and dignified position of women signifies an advanced, prosperous and strong society / nation. He has been dubbed as *Adradhagini* due to his recognition for his great role in the development of human life from the beginning to the present day. It is a wheel in the chariot of human life. Just as the human body is considered fully healthy and developed only when all the organs are healthy and mature, similarly human society will be considered healthy and developed only when half of the whole society (woman) is also healthy like the other part (man), be strong and developed.

There are only two remedies for the process of women development - education and empowerment. Education is a tool that elevates the standard of human life. Education is the process of realizing one's potential. Education leads to development of the talent, abilities and possibilities of human beings. Education provides the ability to understand the written and printed culture of the society and to establish an active dialogue with it. It also refines the oral expression and understanding of a person, education makes the human intellect intelligent and makes him a conscious citizen and consumer. Education develops a sense of self-reliance, autonomy and right, self-realization, spiritual energy and realization of its existence. . Education is a priceless weapon of knowledge and knowledge is a symbol of power.

On the other hand, empowerment is a mental state dependent on internal and external conditions. For this, fearlessness, economic self-reliance, decision making, and proper education is an essential condition to make them eligible for all. Accessibility and strength are the real hallmarks of women empowerment. The process of empowerment brings so much awareness in the woman that she gets control over social and economic resources through education and by directing her life herself and increasing her participation in decisions at home and outside.

Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan placed greater emphasis on women's education and considered education as an important measure of women's development. Radhakrishnan Ji said that if a man is educated, he develops himself, but if a woman is educated, she educates the whole family. A future member of the society stands in the world in the shadow of the same, learns to laugh, speak, walk and behave in mother's motherhood, she gets education and *sanskars* from her mother. If the mother is educated then there is a positive effect on the child.

The analysis of various aspects related to women's education and empowerment emerges from the fact that education and women empowerment are complementary to each other and there is an interdependent relationship between the two. Education is the only means that can bring about the expected development in the personality of women, ensure their participation in society, the mindset and attitude of the society can change, make women aware and aware of their rights and instill confidence in them. This can eventually achieve the goal of women empowerment. In Indian society, due to many historical cultural and social reasons, the status of women has become of the weaker class. In the current Indian social system, there is widespread discussion in empowering women in educational, social and economic terms. In fact, empowerment is an inter-social process. Empowerment challenges discriminatory and prejudiced social beliefs, ideologies, religious beliefs and legislations that declare educational, social and economic inequality and establishes social and community-based relationships. For women empowerment, it is absolutely necessary that the base of education in women is broad and it is of high quality and quality. In women empowerment, education is the only weapon that makes a person skillful and knowledgeable, and it creates the ability to think, understand and make decisions.

NEED FOR FEMALE EDUCATION

- Educating women can prove to be the key to overcome many social evils in India such as dowry practice, female feticide and workplace harassment.
- It will definitely be helpful in the economic development of the country, as more and more educated women will be able to take part in the labor force of the country.
- Recently a survey has been released by the Ministry of Health, which showed a direct relationship between the nutritional status of children and the education of their mothers.
- This survey has revealed that the more educated women are, the more nutritional base their children get.
- Also many development economists have studied the subject for a long time to see how girls' education enables them to emerge as agents of change.

OBSTACLES IN THE PATH OF WOMEN'S EDUCATION

- Indian society is male dominated. Women are not given equal social status as men and are confined to the home walls. Although the situation is better in urban areas than in rural areas, the fact cannot be denied that even today majority of the country's population lives in rural areas.
- We are making rapid progress to become the super power of the world, but the challenge of gender inequality still stands before us as a harsh reality. Even many educated and working urban women in the country experience gender inequality.
- The myth is quite prevalent in the society that the efficiency of women for a particular task or project is less than their male counterparts and that is why there is a big difference in the average salary of women and men in the country.
- Women's safety remains a major issue in the country, due to which many parents hesitate to send girls to school. Although much work has been done by the government in this area, all those efforts have failed to address this issue fully.

STATUS OF FEMALE EDUCATION IN INDIA

The uneducated person is often indifferent to changes. He is confident of his conservative beliefs. 100% literacy is necessary for social and economic progress and national integration. Modern lifestyle, sense of duty, national character building, preservation of moral values, etc. It is necessary to be educated for all. All-round development is the key to education. It is necessary to educate everyone in a democratic system because every person is important, but even today illiteracy remains a curse for our country. The situation of female illiteracy is even more frightening. In 1901, the female literacy in our country was 0.6 percent, which increased to only 8.9 percent in 1951 after independence. The constitution of independent India called for compulsory and free education for all boys and girls up to the age of 14 years. It is our misfortune that even after entering the new century, we have not been able to achieve this goal till date.

Table : Women literacy growth from 1901 to 2011 in India

Year	Total Growth	Male	Female	Difference in growth
1901	5.35	9.83	0.60	9.23
1911	5.92	10.56	1.05	9.57
1921	7.16	12.21	1.81	10.40
1931	9.50	15.59	2.93	12.60
1941	16.10	24.90	7.30	17.60
1951	18.33	27.16	8.86	18.30
1961	28.30	40.40	15.35	25.05
1971	34.45	45.96	21.97	23.98
1981	43.56	56.38	29.76	26.62
1991	52.21	64.13	39.29	24.84
2001	64.8	75.26	53.67	21.59
2011	74.04	82.14	65.46	16.68

Source: Census of India 2011

The final report of Census 2011 shows that India has made significant progress in the field of literacy during the decade following the 2001 Census. The 2011 census showed a literacy rate of 74.04 percent, compared to 64.84 percent in 2001. Meanwhile, the rate of female literacy increased by 11.8 percent. It was 53.7 percent in 2001, which increased to 65.5 percent in 2011. During the period 2001-2011, the female literacy rate increased by 11.79 percent, while the male literacy rate increased by 6.88 percent. The female literacy rate of the following states and union territories in 2011 (per cent) is higher than the national average - Kerala, Mizoram, Goa, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Tripura, Tamil Nadu, Uttaranchal, Gujarat, Punjab, Sikkim, Pt. Bengal, Manipur, Haryana, Nagaland, Karnataka, Assam, Meghalaya, Lakshadweep, Delhi, Chandigarh, Puducherry, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Daman and Islands; Most of these states are small states and federal territories in terms of population and area.

In terms of female literacy in 2011, large and important states like Bihar, Jharkhand, Jammu and Kashmir, Arunachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and the Union Territories of Dadra and Nagar Haveli have been lagging behind. Revolutionary change can be brought from the point of view of education in India only with the development of women's education in these big and important states. From various data related to literacy and enrollment, it can be concluded that gender-based discrimination in education is gradually decreasing.

According to the published report of UNICEF on the status of children, India has the highest number of children in the world. Around 120 million children worldwide do not attend school, of which more than half are girls only. These girls, deprived of education, are comparatively unfortunate in that they are easily caught in the vicious cycle of poverty, hunger, violence, exploitation and trafficking. In this way, the girl child has to suffer the most due to illiteracy. It is particularly noteworthy that whether it is for children or for the education of girls, the number of uneducated children is also high due to the total number of children in our country.

According to a report, about 25 million children are born here every year. In India, the number of children below 14 years is 37.5 crores and the number of children below 6 years is 15.8 crores but the truth is that after conducting billions and trillions of rupees annually for education, after conducting many schemes and programs Also, proper progress has not been made in this

direction. The reality is that out of about 22 crore children in the age group of 6 to 14 in the current country, only 19 crore children are able to attend primary schools. The remaining 30 million children are still unable to see the school.

VARIOUS EDUCATIONAL POLICIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN'S EDUCATION IN INDIA

The efforts made in the development of women education and making them an integral part in the mainstream of the country are briefly as follows:

- The University Education Commission (1948-49), in its report, said, "To increase educational opportunities for half-women; generally do not give uniform education to men and women; and instead of imitating sudden men, give such education which is found Women can become a good woman.
- Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) was mainly indifferent to women's education but the Commission suggested providing special facilities for home science education to girls and opening of separate schools for girls on demand.
- The Durgabai Deshmukh Committee (1957), constituted by the Government of India, suggested to fill the gap between male and female education in the shortest period.
- The Bhaktavatsalam committee, constituted to find out the reasons for the lack of public support towards women's education, in its report in 1963, in addition to other suggestions, stated that one primary school on every 300 population, one junior high school every 3 miles. And a secondary school should be provided at a distance of 5 miles.
- The Hansa Mehta Committee (1964) in its report opposed the curriculum on the basis of gender and suggested to arrange uniform courses for boys and girls at primary level and different courses at monthly level.
- The Kothari Commission (1964-66), in its report, supported all the recommendations made for the development of women education so far and said that the state and central governments should be guided to the path of women's education by arranging special schemes, motivators and adequate values. There should be a definite effort to remove all obstacles.
- In order to accelerate the pace of social reconstruction in the first education policy of the country (1968), the importance and importance of education of girls was emphasized by equal educational opportunities for boys and girls.
- The Fulrenu Guha Committee (1971-74), constituted to know the condition of women, emphasized "co-education" at all levels of education.
- In the National Policy on Education (1986), the importance of 'education' for 'equality of women' was accepted. This policy talked about removing all obstacles in the path of female literacy and increasing the participation of women in various technical and professional courses.
- The Review Committee for National Education Policy (Acharya Ramamurthy Committee) in its report in 1990 spoke of taking several steps for "education and women equality". In its suggestions, the committee asked for the appointment of women teachers in at least 50 percent of the posts in schools of secondary level.
- In the present ten-year-old program called 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan'; through the mass educational program 2001-2010, by the end of the year 2010, the target of completing the education of all children up to the age of 14 years of the country up to the eighth level has gone. The 86th constitution amendment in the year 2002 has included education in fundamental rights.

VARIOUS PROGRAMS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN'S EDUCATION IN INDIA

- The central government is running the following major programs for the development of women education - Special Residential School Scheme, Girl Child Incentive Scheme, New Scholarship Scheme for Minorities, Rajiv Gandhi National Palanaghar Scheme, Employment Oriented Training Scheme for Disabled Children, Post Graduate Talent Scholarship Scheme, National Talent Promotion Scheme, Single Girl Child Free Education Scheme, Indira Gandhi Single Girl Scholarship Scheme.
- Uttar Pradesh, Balikashree Yojana, Free Text Book Scheme, Free School Dance Scheme for Girls, Ladli Beti Scheme by Haryana, Village Beti Scheme by Madhya Pradesh, Eklavya Vidyalaya Scheme by Chhattisgarh, Free Scooter Scheme for meritorious girls, etc. are prominent.
- The National Literacy Mission is paying special attention to 47 districts where the level of female literacy is less than 30 percent as per 2001 census. Most of these districts are in Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and Orissa.
- This Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has started well. About 94 percent of the country's population is benefiting from it. Along with improving enrollment and admission process in Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, more emphasis is being laid on the education of girls.
- Right to Education: Under the Ammanium 2009, all children between 6 and 14 years of age have been given the right to free and compulsory education. It is seen that parents do not want to spend financially on girls' education. The Right to Education Act 2009, due to free education, there has been a rapid increase in enrollment and retention of girls.
- In order to encourage the education of parents who have only one daughter, the Ministry of Human Resource Development and University Grants Commission operated the Single Girl Incentive Scheme in 2005.

CONCLUSION

Efforts are being made to remove gender differences between men and women all over the country through educational process and meaningful steps are being taken in the direction of 'women's problem'. This is why today we find women working shoulder to shoulder in all areas. Today there is no area of life where women have not attained supremacy in that area. It is a matter of joy that now a large part of the women's world is presented for its participation in the creation of a strong society, free from its communication, sensitivity, vulnerability and hesitancy.

Various constitutional provisions and laws have created a consciousness and confidence in women, but this is not a matter of satisfaction and sitting silent. Much more remains to be done and women will have to come forward for this. Women have to do their own self-observation, find out their shortcomings, overcome them, demand rights as well as fulfill duties and responsibilities, educate the illiterate, become equal in place of equality demands to prove worthy, the conventional, edictions and malpractices prevalent in the society have to be eliminated. The evidence of women related to all social contexts is now accepted not only by men but also by family, society and nation.

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