

Education as a potent tool to Empowerment of Women- A study

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ABSTRACT

Educate one man, you educate one person, but a women and you educate a whole civilization” – Mahatma Gandhi

Education is a key factor to human development as well as economic development in any economy. A significant milestone reached in Census 2011, is that the total number of illiterates has come down 304,146,862 in 2001 to 272,950,015 in 2011 persons. Women constitute almost half of the human population and thus social analysts cannot afford to ignore this huge chunk of the population as it would be almost impossible to complete the scheme of things without any role for the 50% of humanity. Women education in India has a major preoccupation of both the government and civil society as educated women can play a very important role in the development of the country. Education as a potent tool of women empowerment because it enables them to responds to the challenges, to confront their traditional position and change their life. Education of women is the key source to change the position in society. Women Education in India has been a need of the hour, as education is a basic requirement to empower the women in the society. Education leads various developments to women personally, economically, socially and so on. Education also brings a reduction in inequalities and increase inclusiveness. The empowerment strengthens the innate ability by way of acquiring knowledge, power, efficiency in work, and experience in the field. Women discovered their own potential and played an equal part in India's struggle for freedom (Barua, 2003). The relation between female literacy rates and socio-economic development is obvious and has received much attention in the development history. The main objective of the study is to describe the role of education as a key tool to empower women in the economy. The author will be used to both primary and secondary data for analysis. The major finding of the research is education is a key parameter to empower women in the country.

Key words: Education, Empowerment, Development, Inequalities

Introduction: The concept of women empowerment was introduced at Nairobi in 1985. Education as a fundamental right for the citizens of any country in the world. It is a basic requirement to development of every human being in the society. Education is a power to success anything in the life. Women constitute almost half of the population in the world. An educated women can play a key role in development of the country. Education is considered as an important milestone of women empowerment because it enables them to face the challenges, to confront their traditional role and change their life. Education of women is the most powerful tool of change their position in the society as well as in economy. Still some women are illiterate

in the country. So the government introducing many programs to reduce illiterate in the nation. Education leads to improve knowledge, skills, understanding capacity of polices, problems of society etc. Education also reduces inequalities and social problems as a means of improving their status within the family. Women empowerment is a universal issue and discussion on women political right are at the fore front of many formal and informal campaigns worldwide.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To study the brief review of Women Education in India
2. To identify the factors responsible to Women Empowerment with reference to education
3. To find out the reasons behind the backwardness of Women Empowerment
4. To study the Government initiatives to enhance women empowerment in the country.

Methodology: The author used the primary and secondary data to analyze the topic. An Official details of 2011 census of India has been used in this study. The author randomly selected 40 women from 4 areas in city and collected opinion survey about the importance of education in their lives, and how they are empower.

I-Women Education in India: According to our Constitution, directive principles of state policy to provide free and compulsory education for all children up to the age 14 irrespective of gender has remained unfulfilled till now. Educational levels are increasing for Indian women still there is gap between male and female literacy rate which can be proved by Census survey figures during 1901-2011. The key to women empowerment is to educated them and make them employable. The main pillars of women empowerment: Education, Skill and Employment, Radical temperamental change, Government's policies and initiatives.

The importance of women as an important human resource was recognized by the constitution of India which not only accorded equality to women, but also empowered the State. A number of Articles of the constitution repeated towards the socio-economic development of women and participation decision making.

The Constitutional support to Women Empowerment in India

1. Article 14 Men and Women to have equal rights and opportunities in the political, economic and social spheres.
2. Article 15 (1) Prohibits discrimination against any citizens on the grounds of religion, race, sex, caste etc..
3. Article 16 Equality of opportunities in matter of public appointments for all citizens.
4. Article 39 (d) Equal play for equal work for both men and women
5. Article 42 the state make provision for ensuring first and humane conditions of work and maternity relief. The Government has also enacted specific laws to safeguard the interests of women and for up gradation of their status, these are
6. 1956, The Hindu Succession Act
7. 1961, The Dowry Prohibition Act
8. 1976, Equal Remuneration Act
9. 1971, The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act
10. 1983 The Criminal Law Amendment Act

11. 2005, The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act

12. 2016, National Policy for Women

Table-1 Male-Female Literacy Rates during 1901-2011

Year	Persons	Male	Female
1901	5.3	9.8	0.7
1911	5.9	10.6	1.1
1921	7.2	12.2	1.8
1931	9.5	15.6	2.9
1941	16.1	24.9	7.3
1951	16.7	24.9	7.3
1961	24.0	34.4	13.0
1971	29.5	39.5	18.7
1981	36.2	46.9	24.8
1991	52.1	63.9	39.2
2001	65.4	76.0	54.0
2011	74.0	82.1	65.5

Source: Census of India, 2011

The above table show that the percentage of educated persons increased from 1981 36.2. Percentage to 74.0 percentage in 2011 during 30 years it was doubled, whereas female percentage increased more than double. Female literacy was at a national average of 65.46% whereas the male literacy was 82.14

II-Women empowerment through education

Women empowerment is the pivotal part in any society, state or country. It is a woman who plays a dominant role in the basic life of a child. Women are an important section of our society. Education as means of empowerment of women can bring about a positive attitudinal change. It is therefore, crucial for the socioeconomic and political progress of India Education significantly makes difference in the lives of women. Women Empowerment is a global issue and discussion on women political right are at the fore front of many formal and informal campaigns worldwide. The concept of women empowerment was introduced at the international women conference at NAROI in 1985. Education is milestone of women empowerment because it enables them to responds to the challenges, to confront their traditional role and change their life. So we can't neglect the importance of education in reference to women empowerment. To see the development in women education India is supposed to upcoming super power of the world in recent years. The increasing change in women education, the empowerment of women has been recognized as the central issue in determining the status of women.4 for becoming super power we have mostly to concentrate upon the women's education. By which it will force on women's empowerment.

As per united national development fund for women (UNIFEM) the term women's empowerment means:

- Acquiring knowledge and understanding of gender relations and the ways in which these relations may be changed.

- Developing a sense of self-worth, a belief in one's ability to secure desired changes and the right to control one's life.
- Gaining the ability to generate choices exercise bargaining power.
- Developing the ability to organize and influence the direction of social change, to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally.

Thus, empowerment means a psychological sense of personal control or influence and a concern with actual social influence, political power and legal rights. It is a multi level construct referring to individuals, organizations and community. It is an international, ongoing process centred in the local community, involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring and group participation, through which people lacking an equal share of valued resources gain greater access to the control over this resources. The above said qualities and efficiencies are able to get through Education can only possible. Education acquires Empowerment. The famous quote "Educate Elevate Empower"

Types of Empowerment: The concept of Empowerment can be identified in various ways. The author personally interviewed 40 families in the city, They have given response in various achievement's in their lives like Personal empowerment, Social achievement, Economic empowerment, Educational Empowerment, Psychological achievement, Technical achievement, Political achievement etc. Out of all these Economic empowerment achieved by large number women in the city through getting good and high salaried jobs in their lives.

Table-2 Impact of Education qualifications on various types of Empowerment

Types of Empowerment	North (10)	South (10)	East (10)	West (10)
Personal Empowerment	7	4	6	4
Social Empowerment	6	8	4	6
Economic Empowerment	8	6	8	8
Educational Empowerment	6	9	7	7
Technical Empowerment	9	5	2	3
Political Empowerment	2	4	1	3
Overall Empowerment	5	3	5	7

Source: Personal Interview

The concept of Women Empowerment is a modern concept introduced recently nearly one decade before. Educated girls and young women are more likely to know their rights and to have the confidence to claim them. Education helps people to understand democracy, promotes the tolerance and trust, and motivates people to participate in the political life of their societies.

Factors responsible to empower: There are various factors responsible to women empowerment in the society. Education holds the power to transform fortunes within the human lifespan. Education is progressively seen with an inclusive perspective, symbolizing a strong emphasis on integrated learning-especially in the context of Right to Education guidelines in place. All educational Institutions must recognize and respond to the diverse health needs of the students accommodating both different styles and rates of learning there by ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curriculum, teaching strategies and resource support. There

are social factors, economic factors, personal factors, political factors Technical factors and environmental factors are play key role in empowerment of women.

III- Reasons behind the backwardness of Women Empowerment:

“It is not possible for a bird to fly on one wing” said Swami Vivekananda emphasizing that the world would progress only when the condition of women improved. Confirming this, experience over the years shows that women, despite facing many socio-economic barriers have been making invaluable contributions to the society.

Illiteracy: In India still illiteracy existed, especially in rural areas some women are unable to empower due to lack of literacy.

Family Customs: India has followed rich heritage and culture. Due to these reason women are unable to come out from them.

Social Evils: Day to day social evils are increasing at a higher level, parents are not accepting to their children to go far areas for study or job purpose. Ragging increasing at a higher rate. So government has been taking lot of precautions to control it.

Financial problem; Income inequality is a basic feature of developing economies. It is also an important reason to low level of women empowerment in India

IV- Government Initiatives to improve Women Empowerment: Government taking more care about women development. And creating conditions for gender empowerment demands that empowerment policies and programmes including women's voice and agency as fundamental conditions. Government taking as a challenge is to empower women in the construction of a new India.

Some of the important initiatives of the government are mentioned here:

- Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan
- Village Health & Nutrition Day
- Mother and Child Cards
- Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakaram
- Skill Development Training Program
- Health and wellness centers
- Accredited Social Health Activity
- Start-up India
- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana
- Support to Training and Employment Program for Women
- Mudra Yojana Scheme for Women

Conclusion: Women empowerment has been recognized as an important strength of economic growth. Women empowerment create new jobs for themselves and others and also provide society with different solutions to management of organization, home, society and economy. However, they still represent a low power in the society. Women empowerment can make a particularly strong contribution to the economic well-being of the family and

communities, poverty reduction and women's future. Thus, government across the world as well as various developmental organizations are actively undertaking promotion of women entrepreneurship and empowerment through various schemes, incentives and promotional measures.

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