



WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EDUCATION IN INDIA

Sarita Kumari Singh

Student

Commerce

B. H. College, Howly Barpeta Assam (India)

Abstract : The concept of "women's empowerment" has been discussed and contested all over the world. Women make up half of the world's population; they stretch to the stars, but only talking about women's empowerment right now. Women's empowerment entails empowering them to be self-sufficient, confident, and financially self-sufficient, as well as having a positive self-esteem and the ability to make decisions in order to participate in the developmental process and social change. Gender inequality is not only prevalent in our society, but it is also a key concern facing the international community. Education is a vital human right for all people, men and women, wherever. Every individual benefits from educational possibilities that are tailored to their individual needs. Education may play a significant part in empowering women; education is empowerment. India continues to have one of the lowest female literacy rates in the world; this has a severe influence on women's lives, as well as their families and the country's economic and social growth. The article discusses women's empowerment through education, as well as issues and recommendations.

Keywords - Women empowerment, women education, female harassment, women entrepreneurship, empowering self-esteem etc.

I. INTRODUCTION

Women's empowerment refers to expanding and developing women's social, economic, political, and legal authority in order to ensure that women have equal rights. Women's empowerment enables them to have more control over their resources, assets, income, and time as well as the ability to manage risk and improve their economic standing and well-being. Cultural norms are at the root of many of the hurdles to women's empowerment and equity. Many women are subjected to these pressures, while others have grown accustomed to being viewed as second-class citizens to men. Empowering women to fully engage in all aspects of the economy is critical for strengthening economies, achieving internationally agreed development and sustainability goals, and improving the quality of life for women, men, families and communities.

Women's empowerment and autonomy, as well as improvements in their political, social, economic, and health status, are all essential goals in and of themselves. Additionally, it is necessary for achieving long-term development. In productive and reproductive life, both women and men must fully participate and partner, including shared responsibility for child care and nurturing, as well as household maintenance. Women's lives, health, and well-being are being compromised all across the world as a result of their overworked status and lack of authority and influence. Women in most parts of the world receive less formal education than men, and their own knowledge, abilities, and coping techniques are frequently overlooked. Women's access to healthy and satisfying lives is hampered by power dynamics that exist at all levels of society, from the most personal to the most public. To effect change, policy and program actions must be taken to improve women's access to secure livelihoods and economic resources, reduce their extreme domestic responsibilities, remove legal barriers to their participation in public life, and raise social awareness through effective education and mass communication initiatives. Also, boosting women's standing improves their ability to make decisions at all levels in all aspects of life, particularly in the areas of sexuality and reproduction.

I.1 Women's Empowerment in the Twenty-First Century

Empowerment is a multi-dimensional process that aims to help individuals or groups of people fulfill their full potential in all areas of life. The word empowerment, according to Webster's dictionary, denotes a position of authority, authorization, or power. Empowerment is a process that allows a person to make their own decisions. The term "women's empowerment" has become a well-known topic in the twenty-first century. The vast majority of politicians, despite their so-called public goodwill, never took the time to discuss their concern and duty for prioritizing women's empowerment.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Lilis, Ansori and Dinno(2018) Women's empowerment activities organized by government or community institutions have been found to have problems implementing them, indicating that while the number of women is large enough, their full potential for development is not being realized because women are unable to enjoy life more freely due to cultural sanctions. One of the reasons for empowering women to be able to create entrepreneurship chances is the theoretical research conducted related to strengthening women through entrepreneurship programs. The research was carried out using research and development methods, as well as data collection approaches such as literature review, observation, interview, documentation, questionnaires, and tests.

The information was studied in three ways: descriptive, qualitative, and quantitative. The findings revealed that implementing entrepreneurial activities as a means of empowering women can raise the level of family economic prosperity. Based on the findings of this activity, it can be stated that the model of entrepreneurial women's empowerment is very beneficial in increasing self-reliance.

Nagaraja (2018) studied that even in today's male-dominated culture, there are women who are taking the lead in a variety of sectors, including education, from education to astronomy, and in all fields where women have made their mark. As a result, the history of women and their quest for identity is extraordinary; in fact, their path can be viewed as an individual's quest for perfection. Women establish their identities through higher education, which provides them with all of the required creative talents. In India, the proportion of women pursuing higher education is rising in comparison to previous years. When women can find their identity and contribute to the national economy as a result of their empowerment, the government will undoubtedly need to develop additional higher education schemes, scholarships, and awareness campaigns.

K.A.Rama (2019) studied women in India play a critical part in the country's socioeconomic development. The world is ruled by the hand that rocks the cradle. Women must be empowered in order for India to achieve greatness. Our female entrepreneurs, social workers, scientists, legislators, and economists are paving the route to a more prosperous future. Women in both urban and rural areas should be provided good chances so that they can effect constructive social change and contribute to the country's development.

Nagappa(2019) studied that the topic of women's empowerment has become a major topic all across the world. Women's empowerment has been a contentious topic in recent decades; but in the Vedic period, they were granted equal status as males. However, they have experienced certain hardships in the past, and they have been treated as slaves on numerous occasions since mediaeval times in modern culture. However, in the twenty-first century, their role as women has slowly and progressively altered in society. The Indian constitution provides Indians with equal, liberal, political, social, economic, cultural, educational, and other rights. Women's leaders have pushed for equal social status for women and men. In the current scenario, we see women in respectable positions. That's all there is to it: politics, social issues, education, business, and great leaders. However, women are not completely free in society because of gender discrimination, caste, class, sexual harassment, society hierarchy, and labour discrimination. As a result, fewer women are able to realize their full potential.

III. OBJECTIVES:

1. The purpose of this study is to look into the relationship between women's empowerment and education in India.
2. To investigate the importance of education in the lives of women.

IV. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:

The research is based on secondary sources of information. The relevant information about the Importance of Education in Women Empowerment in India and its many components was gathered from a variety of publications and internet sources on related issues.

V. EDUCATION'S IMPACT ON WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT:

Women's empowerment will become more relevant if they are educated, well-informed, and capable of effectively participating in decision-making. Women's empowerment will not become a reality unless girls' education is prioritized, as only an educated mother can raise an educated nation.

"Education is a fundamental right for all people, women and men all around the world," says the United Nations. Education is essential for the growth of democracy. Having access to education is beneficial to everyone. Education is the light that dispels ignorance's darkness. Education is the key to progress, and improving female literacy is a pressing issue. Women in India require education to improve their current situation. Despite the government's various efforts to promote girls' education today, the situation remains far from adequate. It is also believed that women's empowerment can make a significant contribution to the success or universalization of primary education. Such empowerment not only encourages girls to attend school, but it also boosts their morale by promoting liberty and gender equality. Women's empowerment begins with education, which allows them to respond to opportunities, challenge their traditional positions, and transform their life. It was widely acknowledged that education is one of the most effective ways of providing women with the knowledge, skills, and self-confidence they need to fully participate in the development process. Women's education benefits the entire society. Education for women has a greater influence on poverty and development than education for men. It's also one of the most important aspects in boosting children's health and lowering infant mortality. A well-educated woman can be a huge asset to her family in a variety of ways. True, a woman must play an important role in the formation of family life. Women can play an important role in the country's social and economic regeneration.

VI. WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IS FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS:

Today, we have seen various Acts and Schemes of the central and state governments aimed at empowering Indian women. In India, however, women are discriminated against and disenfranchised at every level of society, including social involvement, political participation, economic participation, educational access, and reproductive healthcare. All around India, women are observed to be economically impoverished. A few women participate in volunteer work and other activities. As a result, they require economic strength to stand on their own in comparison to men. Women, on the other hand, have been proven to be less literate than men. According to the 2001 census, men in India have a literacy rate of 76 percent, while women have a literacy rate of only 54 percent. As a result, improving women's education is critical to their empowerment. It has also been noted that some women are unable to work due to their physical limitations.

They eat less, but they work harder. As a result, ladies who are weaker are to be strengthened from a health standpoint. Another issue is female harassment in the workplace. There have been several incidences of rape, girl kidnapping, dowry harassment, and so on. As a result, they demand all forms of empowerment in order to protect themselves and maintain their purity and dignity. To sum, women's empowerment will not be feasible until women join in and assist in their own empowerment. It is necessary to develop policies aimed at lowering feminized poverty, boosting women's education, and preventing and eliminating violence against women.

VII. GIRLS' PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS; EDUCATION:

There are numerous issues concerning girls' education. Due to the traditional nature of Indian society, it has been observed that girls' education is consistently disregarded.

Women's greater illiteracy rates surely contribute to their reliance on men, and a lack of education is the primary cause of many forms of exploitation and neglect directed at women. We'll go through some of the issues surrounding women's education below:

(1) We all know that the majority of Indians originate from impoverished families, and their economic situation is dire. As a result, they are unable to consider education because it has become an expensive endeavour in recent years. So, if at all feasible, the guardian sends their sons to school first, then their females.

(2) Another issue is that our parents are unaware of the importance of girls' education. We observed that girls are involved in various home tasks from an early age, and that they spend their time caring for their younger siblings and sisters so that their parents can go out to work. As a result, lack of parental knowledge of the importance of girls' education holds them back at home.

(3) Another issue facing girls' education is our society's conservative attitude toward girls' education. Parents are often uninterested in their daughters' education because they believe they are a burden. They are not aware of modern trends because of their conservatism. The "Pradastystem" and early marriages are major impediments to girls' education.

(4) One of the reasons for women's low literacy rates is a lack of transportation. Some areas do not have such schools, thus girls must go a significant distance for schooling, but they are unable to do so owing to a lack of sufficient transportation and communication facilities.

(5) Another significant issue is the lack of a separate school for girls. Because of our society's traditional nature, some parents are hesitant to send their girl kid to a co-educational institution with boys.

(6) It was also discovered that the school curriculum is not appealing to girls, and that it does not meet the special demands of women. As a result, neither the girls nor their parents are excited to come to school and study.

(7) The poor rate of female education is also due to the state of law and order. Because of their concerns, parents are hesitant to send their daughter to school. The occurrence of incidences of eve-teasing, rape, kidnapping, and molestation of girls dampens their enthusiasm for pursuing education beyond a certain age, when their parents limit them inside the home.

(8) The low attendance of girls in school is also due to fixed schooling hours. Most girls, particularly those from rural areas, need to conduct domestic duties at home as well, thus a regular schooling schedule causes challenges for them. This is one of the reasons why girls are less likely to attend school. Another issue is the absence of physical amenities and pleasant learning environments in schools, particularly in co-educational institutions.

VIII. THE ADVANTAGES OF EDUCATION IN EMPOWERING A WOMAN:

Only a good family can be led by a well-educated woman. Women's empowerment and educational possibilities are mutually exclusive. Women's empowerment is aided by education, while women's empowerment allows them to take advantage of educational opportunities. When women are educated, they get a slew of benefits, and we'll look at a few of them here.

(1) Girls' education aids the following generation's education. When educated girls become mothers, they are significantly more likely to send their children to school, passing on and compounding advantages for both themselves and society through favourable intergenerational effects. The more education the women have, the more likely their children will benefit from it.

(2) Education for girls contributes to women's economic empowerment. The gross domestic product per capita rises in tandem with the primary enrolment rate for girls. Women's education allows them to apply for various government and non-government positions, compete with males for the same, and advance in their careers. Economic development, and hence better family income, can assist in persuading hesitant parents to forego the immediate financial benefit of their daughters' labour in favour of sending them to school. For a country like India, this results in long-term benefits.

(3) Educating women has also benefited them since they become more health conscious, not only for themselves but also for their families. They are aware of the advantages of having a small family. When moms are educated, their children will be healthier and fewer will die because they will have a better understanding of child health and nutrition. Maternal mortality is also reduced when women are educated. Maternal mortality is also lowered by better awareness of health-care practices and the utilization of health services during pregnancy and birth, according to research.

(4) We've observed that children in poor nations like India spend more time with their mothers, and that families are the world's smallest classroom, with mothers serving as the first teachers. As a result, when women are educated, they are more likely to support and advise their children to do the same.

(5) Another essential issue is that when a woman is educated, she is able to make her own decisions without the influence of her family or male counterpart. She has the ability to make decisions not only for her family, but also for her community and country in terms of economics and politics. Political engagement necessitates education.

(6) Girls' education is critical to their protection and has an impact beyond the classroom. Girls' education makes them more aware of their rights and empowers them to defend them. Education aids them in combating exploitation, women trafficking, assaults, and eve-teasing, among other things. The majority of rural women are exploited due to a lack of understanding of their rights.

(7) Educated women possess the knowledge, information, and self-confidence necessary to participate more fully in household and communal decision-making. Women have more opportunity to engage in decision-making when they have a higher degree of education.

(8) Finally, girls' education is critical because knowledge empowers them to combat many societal ills and raises their social awareness. We all know that the majority of societal evils are perpetrated against women and their rights, and that all of this degrades her dignity as a woman in society, thus it is critical to empower her via education.

IX. SUGGESTION FOR WOMEN'S EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT:

We can see the relevance of women's education in women's empowerment from the above. We recognize that the status of girls' education in our society is not ideal, and that it must be addressed. In order to enhance women's empowerment, a well-integrated and holistic approach is required. The advancement of girls' education must be prioritized. Educating women is a high-return investment in a society's socioeconomic progress. By educating women, we are educating society, and by extension, the nation.

(1) The first step is to popularize girls' education; it is the obligation of society and the government to make girls' education more accessible to all, so that everyone understands the importance of girls' education in her life. As a result, everyone's efforts are required to make the campaign a success. Efforts should be made to educate the public about the importance of girls' and women's education.

(2) The government must provide the bare minimum of infrastructure, such as a nice school building, hostel amenities, and toilets, in order to develop girls' education. We discovered that one of the reasons for low enrolment is the lack of a separate educational institution for females; many guardians are unwilling to send their daughters to a co-educational college due to our society's conservative outlook.

(3) Poverty is another concern; many parents are unable to cover the costs of their children's education, so instead of sending them to school, they send them to work. The government must offer economic stability to them, at the very least for their children, such as providing a midday meal and covering school expenses. A sufficient number of scholarships should be made available to encourage ladies to complete their study.

(4) For the development and expansion of women's education, diverse groups—semi-official organizations, for example—should work together. A public awareness campaign about the importance of women's education should be initiated.

(5) The curriculum should be designed in such a way that it would appeal to females and assist them in their future lives. In general, a common course should be offered to both boys and girls, although vocational courses should also be offered. Furthermore, the curriculum must be flexible and adaptable to the changing needs of the moment.

(6) More women should be assigned to teaching positions at all levels of education. The number of female teachers in educational institutions should outnumber the number of male teachers. Parents will feel more confident in sending their daughters to school as a result of this provision.

(7) Preference should be given to women candidates, particularly those from rural areas, when applying for training courses and employment openings. When other women see it, they are more inclined to pursue education. Reservations of seats for girls in various disciplines should be made available; this will undoubtedly encourage parents to take their daughters to school.

(8) Finally, the state government should strictly implement current legislation regarding the age at which females can marry, the dowry system, and compulsory education. Simultaneously, the government should urge social workers, community leaders, and girls' youth leaders to fight social prejudices against girls' education and to overcome parents' apathy regarding presents, particularly in rural areas. People are also willing to embrace reforms in the education of girls. The mindset of society needs to shift in favour of girls' education.

X. CONCLUSION:

Women's education is critical for empowering women and achieving gender equality. There are many barriers in the way of women's education; it is the state's and society's responsibility to offer space and opportunities for girls' education. Women's empowerment will benefit greatly from the maximum mobilization of human and material resources for the qualitative and quantitative growth of women's education through formal and non-formal approaches. The term "gender mainstreaming" is useless without the empowerment of women, thus education is crucial in this regard. We can't improve the country's social and educational standards until women are educated.

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