

Women Empowerment and Education

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Abstract- Women empowerment irrespective of cast, creed, religion and gender is a constitutional mandate, a basic human right and a decisive force of national development. “Empowerment means moving from a weak position to execute a power” The widespread discrimination and exploitation upon women evoke the need of empowerment of women and education can be used as an effective instrument for achieving it. This paper mainly focuses on women empowerment in education, government schemes for women and education.

Keywords: Women Empowerment, government schemes for women and women education

INTRODUCTION

Education empowers women more effectively which would help to abolish gender inequality, develop their potentials, increase social and economic return, improve the quality of life, produce educated and healthy children and reduce fertility and mortality rates. Education is key to empowering women’s participation in decision making in democracy, dynamic transformation of society and shaping the destiny of future generations. Swami Vivekananda said “There is no chance for the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved.” It is education which can do so by empowering women.

The National Policy of Education (1986) has emphasized the need of women education for their effective participation in social and economic activities. The NPE, 1986 has stated, “Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women.

The National Educational system will play a positive interventionist role in the empowerment of women. “The National Policy of Empowerment of Women (1990) has emphasized on education for

1. Creating an environment to enable women to realize their full potential,

2. Providing all human rights and fundamental freedom to women on equal basis with men,
3. Participation of women in decision-making in every spheres of life,
4. Equal access to health care, quality education, guidance, employment, remuneration and social security,
5. Elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girl children

STATUS OF WOMEN IN INDIA

Traditionally, an Indian woman had four-fold status. These were daughter, wife, home maker and mother. The woman status was fixed in the society. But in modern times, women status is changing. They are actively participating in social, economic and political activities. They received higher education, employment, higher salary and they achieved higher status also. Several social, economic and cultural factors are associated with the women’s contribution to the development of health and education sectors. The progressive social movements, government policies and a historically conducive climate are some of the key factors responsible for the success of women. The reduction in gender disparities during economic growth happens due to the variables such as female literacy and labour force participation rates that are closely aligned to women’s empowerment. These require supplementation by public action in education, women’s ownership and political participation. Access to education played a crucial role in providing job opportunities to women or it even empowered the unemployed housewives.

IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

- 1) A large number of women around the world are unemployed. The world economy suffers a lot because of unequal opportunity for women at work places.
- 2) Women are equally competent

- 3) Women are as talented as men
- 4) Women empowerment helps to develop the society
- 5) It helps women to know their rights and duties and it can stop corruption
- 6) It helps to reduce poverty
- 7) Women are increasingly participating the national development process

Women Empowerment: In Present Scenario: Women empowerment and gender equality in India is an alarming issue. Some problems such as dowry, domestic violence, sex selective abortion, female infanticide are still prevalent. India is ranked as the 135th country in the World in imparting free and compulsory education between the age group of 6 to 14 years (Right to Education, 2010). In Indian society, preference is still continuing for a son over the birth of a girl and biased attitude of the parents is seen in favour of male child in respect of education, nutrition and other opportunities.

Government Efforts: The government has taken initiatives for women empowerment through enacting laws and implementing several schemes operated by different departments and ministries. The National Commission of Women was set up by an act of parliament in 1990 for safeguarding the constitutional right and legal provisions for women. The reservation of seats in the local bodies of Panchayats and Municipalities for women has been provided by the 73th and 74th Amendments (1993) to the Constitution which is needed for socio-political empowerment. The Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD) under the MHRD was established to implement various schemes relating to women advancement. The National Mission for Empowerment of Women (NMEW) 2010 has emphasized to facilitate the process of integrating all programmes for welfare and upliftment of women undertaken by the ministries and department. The National Resource Centre for Women acts as a national convergence centre for all programmes for women. The National Literacy Mission is being set up towards eradication of literacy in the age group of 15-35 years. The Functional Literacy for Audit Women (FLAW) was started in 1975-76 to provide illiterate adult women to gain functional skills and to awaken desired awareness for health, hygiene and children practices.

Government Schemes: The Government of India has undertaken different schemes for welfare upliftment and security of the women. Some of these may be noted here— „Rastriya Mahila Kosh” (RMK) 1992-93, „Mahila Samridhi yojana” (MSY) 1993, „Indira Mahila Yojana” (IMY) 1995, „Swa Shakti Group”, „Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women” (STEP), „Creches/Day-care Centre for the Children of working and ailing mother”, „Hostels for working women”, „National Mission for Empowerment of Women”, „Integrated Child Development Services” (ICDS), „Rajib Gandhi Scheme for Employment of Adolescence Girls” (RGSEAG), 2010, „Women’s Development Corporation Scheme” (WDCS), „Working Women’s Forum”, „Indira Priyadarshini Yojana”, „NGO’s Credit Schemes. The present Prime Minister Modi Government has launched the programmes of „Beti bachao, beti padhao” aims at tackling the low child sex ratio of 918 girl’s child in resources and savings of a family which is helpful to meet the expenses of higher education and marriage. The first year of New Millennium (2001) was declared as “Women Empowerment Year”. It is necessary to supplement Government efforts by nongovernment organizations for facilitating women empowerment. Yet India has not achieved the expected goals, hence comprehensive programme for empowering women is still demanding.

Barriers of Women Empowerment: The main obstacles that go against the way of women empowerment in India may be summed up as follows:

- Gender discrimination.
- Lack of proper educational programme.
- Female infanticide.
- Atrocities on women.
- Child marriage and dowry system.
- Financial constraints.
- Patriarchal order and the subordinate status of women.
- Lack of health care and safety.
- Professional inequality, particularly workplace harassment.
- Inequality in sharing the burden of house hold work
- It is also noted that the gender inequality is related to social and economic structure, traditional

attitude towards women, economic insecurity and negligence of men and lack of sincere efforts of all concerned.

METHODOLOGY

Data sources

The present study is based on secondary data gathered from the Ministry of Rural Development's Management Information System (MIS) (FY 2015–2016 to 2021–2022). A cross-sectional study is done to gather data on the effectiveness of MGNREGA for every financial year. The report includes all the necessary information, such as beneficiary details, worker account details, planning of the work, demand and allocation of the work, muster roll and wage list, physical progress, financial progress, Direct Bank Transfer (DBT) reports, social audit, Geographical Information System (GIS) planning modules, etc. In order to get the desired outcomes, the authors of the present study demonstrated four variables, including the annual average number of working days per woman, the percentage of women working-days to the total working-days, the gross annual income produced by women, and the per capita income of women for the each financial year

CONCLUSIONS

Women empowerment is a debatable subject. At earlier time they were getting equal status with men. But they had faced some difficulties during post-Vedic and epic ages. Many a time they were treated as slave. From early twenty century(national movement) their statuses have been changed slowly and gradually. In this regard, we my mentioned the name of the British people. After then, independence of India, the constitutional makers and national leaders strongly demand equal social position of women with men. Today we have seen the women occupied the respectable positions in all walks of the fields. Yet, they have not absolutely free some discrimination and harassment of the society. A few numbers of women have been able to establish their potentialities. Therefore, each and every should be careful to promote the women statuses.

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