

Role Of Higher Education In Women Empowerment

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Abstract

Higher Education refers the education at the degree level and above. It also includes Professional Schools in the field of Medicine, Engineering, Business, Law, Music and Art and other institutions like Teachers Training School, Pure Science and Technological Institutions. Literacy alone cannot help women in self dependence but higher education helps women to become more capable. It is only higher education that makes them aware of their rights and duties and use their rights as per need. Higher Education is one of the most important means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence. It brings a reduction in inequalities and helps in improving their status within the family. Higher educational achievements of women can have ripple effects within the family and across generations.

Presently the target of Higher Education is to provide women's access to vocational, technical and professional education. There are many policies and programmes for the betterment of women. For this purpose there is need for identification of skills and occupations suitable for women

Keywords: Higher Education, Empowerment, Rights, Constraints and Implementation

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INTRODUCTION

Education is an art of imparting knowledge to others for betterment of their life and preparing a person to attain the aims in their life. Higher Education means training of highly skilled specialist in the field of economics, science, technology and culture at various types of higher schools, which accept persons who have successfully completed secondary general education. Higher Education of women plays a pivotal role in releasing their energy and creativity and enabling them to meet the complex challenges of the present society. Special emphasis should be given to Research and Development by engaging women in larger population.

In order to collectively evolve as a society, women need to be empowered. However, women's empowerment in India is highly dependent upon various factors such as geographical location (rural/urban), educational status, social status etc. Policies on women empowerment currently exist at both national and local levels in various sectors, including education, economic opportunities, healthcare and political participation but there are substantial gaps between the formulation and

implementation of said policies at the community level.

Education is the master key to unlock the door to women empowerment at the grass root level. As per the 2011 census, the female literacy rate in India is 65.46% in contrast with the male literacy rate of over 80%. We have a long way to go to bridge the gap just in the context of literacy rate and even that is not enough to enhance productivity or obtain high-paying jobs, but is essential for women to pursue higher education. Online Education can do wonders for women's rights, security, dignity and their overall empowerment. The only way through which we, as a society, can move forward and aspire to economic growth is through education among the female citizens.

There are several reasons on role of education in Women Empowerment in India:

Education Liberates: Education liberates the mind and opens it up to places, people and possibilities we would have never thought of otherwise. Whether you're studying language, history, science or literature, you are gaining knowledge and educating yourself about the world. About how nature, people, nations and the world works.

Therefore, an educated woman is a liberated woman.

Education offers Independence: As education opens up the doors to a new enlightened world, it enables women to make their own life choices about anything and everything, whether it is lifestyle, career, sexuality, life-partner, food etc. Education is the key to understanding the difference between right and wrong, standing up against oppression and gender discrimination and making correct choices in life. Education allows women to ignore moronic societal diktats and live life on their own terms.

Eradicating Social Evils: As mentioned earlier, education is the key to understanding the difference between right and wrong and standing up against oppression; it galvanizes women to take a stand against social evils which plague the society. An intellectual and enlightened woman will actively participate in the fight against dowry, sexual harassment, objectification, misogyny and patriarchy.

Financial Independence: Education has enabled women to go beyond generic professions. Today, women are becoming models, actors, architects, engineers, journalists, lawyers, managers, CEO's, scientists, joining the army and police forces, and even running the entire nations. There is no profession left which can be said is the sole domain of man. The 21st century's liberated and emancipated woman is breaking the glass ceiling and finding her own place in society. The educated woman is no longer dependent on a man to provide her shelter and food. She is very much capable of earning her own keep, buying her own house and feeding herself.

Meaning of Women Empowerment

The Oxford American Dictionary defines "empowerment" as "to make (someone) stronger and more confident, esp. in controlling their life and claiming their rights." But when we talk about women we want women taking more of an active participation in family discussions, giving their views in family matters and this is only possible when they are not only allowed to do so but also when their ideas are valued their opinions are heard by others and paid heed. Ideas are valued by others when your suggestions are feasible and implementable and feasibility and implement

ability comes in ideas through education. If you compare women of Urban India with the women of rural India, then the women of urban India go hand-in-hand with men and perform such tasks which were once thought not their cup of tea. Whereas the absence of equality in rural India is contributing the slow progress in women empowerment. We should break the barriers of caste, creed, colour, religion or society in order to elevate the progress of women empowerment in such areas India and provide equal opportunities to the women also. Integrated development approaches started by the government of India have encouraged women's participation in development and social problem resolution and formed specialised activity groups as means of mobilisation of women. Identification of the poorest and most oppressed in a geopolitical area has provided an entry point for action. Women were encouraged to find a separate time and space for themselves. Therefore, the reason for women's powerlessness is the lack of education or the lack of literacy rate in India.

Needs of Women Empowerment

The needs of women empowerment in our present society are as follows:

Empowerment enables women to acquire knowledge, skills and techniques for their betterment of life.

- Economic empowerment is essential for improvement of female sex.
- Empowerment helps in gender equity, which every women desire.
- Empowerment give women the decision making power of their own.
- It helps in having positive thinking on the ability to make change.
- It helps in increasing one's positive self- image and overcoming all stigma of our society.
- It also helps to change others perceptions by democratic means.
- Empowerment also helps to access to information for taking proper decision

MEANING OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Education is an art of imparting knowledge to others for the betterment of their life and preparing them for achieving their aim, as a profession. Whereas the term "higher education" means training of highly skilled specialists in the fields of economics, science, technology, and culture at various types of higher schools, which accept persons who have successfully completed secondary general-education schools or secondary specialised education institutions.

Relationship between Higher Education and Women Empowerment

Higher Education can bring remarkable changes in women's life resulting in social transformation by inculcating the following characteristics among them:

1. Enhancing the self confidence within women.
2. Raising their status in the social infrastructure.
3. Increasing self efficacy.
4. Enhancing upward social mobility.
5. Bring awareness among the women, about their rights and duties in the society.
6. Giving career opportunities.
7. Boosting their self esteem.
8. Reducing dependability on others.
9. Changing the mindset of an individual.
10. Bringing awareness of gender equity.
11. Developing ability for critical thinking.
12. Fostering decision making within women.
13. Developing leadership qualities among women.

Barriers of Women Empowerment through Higher Education

Gender inequality is one major obstacle of Women Empowerment Family restrictions to children to get higher education.

- Violence is one prime factor which opposes women empowerment.
- Financial constraints from govt. and also from other organizations.
- Low need of achievement to get higher education among women in rural sector.
- Low mobility.
- Absence of ambition among girls to get higher education.
- Lack of motivation to learn among women
- Social practices that neglect girl child
- Lack of educational programs
- Child marriage
- financial constraints

As discussed above, half of the population is women and for many years they were unable to involve completely in society. As modern period arrived, they started gaining education in such a way that today number of women identified themselves as Business women, Politicians, Bureaucrats, Scientists, Doctors, Engineers and Vice Chancellors. Moreover they are considered as empowered women. Their empowerment is the contribution of higher education which is always inseparable by which the economic growth of a nation is made stable. The very role of higher education can support in two modes as traditional and modern. The traditional mode of higher education make women to be equipped with capacity to exercise the role of wife and mother and the significance of latter kind is very relevant in this globalized era to be strong enough in their lives. Henceforth the necessity of higher education is not only for male rather women too. As the present paper presents the significance of higher education for women to be empowered, the words of famous philosopher, educationist and president of India S. Radhakrishnan are very important. According to him female education is more important than that of male; it is because there is always an educated woman behind the educated man. Thus, education can make women to solve all sorts of familial problems and find individual and personal identity. Being educated they have the capacity to understand the problems of child marriage and fight against it. Thus, society can expect a better society based on higher education for women. Therefore in 1979, the commission on the higher education

observes that higher education is necessary for both men and women for character formation, ability to earn, create self-expression and development of personality.

Education of Women in Modern Scenario:

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earn, create self-expression and development of personality.

Role of Higher Education in Women Empowerment

According to the words of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, an individual is educated by educating a man, but a family can be educated only by making women to get educated. Therefore, according to his words if a woman is empowered means mother India is empowered. These few words of Nehru will elucidate the clear relationship of women empowerment and higher education for women. As half of the population is women and they can strengthen the national economy to move towards progress by being empowered. Higher education represents itself as a milestone for women to empower by facing many challenges to come out of their traditional role of woman. There are taken under Higher education for women various schemes

- Higher education for women through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) Mode imparts distance learning system where teachers and learners can be flexible with respect to place and time.
- Start short term courses for women Universities should offer new short-term courses for women like Yoga Education, Nursing, Cutting and Stitching, etc. These courses will help them to start work at their own for their economic independence. Along with it, university degrees will provide them better opportunities in the job market.
- Developing relationship with industries Universities should start the relationship with different industries. By doing so, the university authorities should apprehend the type of jobs in different areas. Along with it, they can also find out the jobs which are suitable for girls. They can start such courses with the help of different industries. Also, these industries will provide placement to the girl students.
- Introducing new professional courses for women Universities should introduce new professional courses for women, which they can join after completing their senior secondary education.
- Scholarships for girls Universities should start giving scholarships to the outstanding girls in different disciplines. It will also motivate girls from different societies to

come ahead for education and compete with their classmates. These scholarships may be given in those areas where there is a need of girls for the development of society, e.g. nursing, teaching, pathology, pharmacy, etc.

- Interaction of universities with girl's school Universities should arrange seminars and extra time lectures by the experts in girls' school in different areas. These experts will share with girl students the possibilities of new areas where they can seek admission. Not only this, they will also make aware the girl students about the future need of the different subjects
- UGCs and AICTEs-initiatives for women education
- Post Graduate Indira Gandhi scholarship for single girl child for pursuing higher and technical education
- Construction of women's hostels for colleges, etc
- Introduction of women's studies in universities and colleges
- Post-Doctoral fellowships for women

Women Empowerment: Prospects and Challenges

Higher level of literacy and development leads to greater awareness on one hand and help people in acquiring skills in the other hand. During these days women faced many problems like child marriage, sati, and death during early child birth. Now a days in 21st century, women began to get educated and take part in social and political field. Now women are not in boundaries, they are awake and moving towards progress. The census 2011 indicates that literacy rate of women in India is only 64% i.e. below average which is 74%. Lack of education is the root base of women's exploitation and ignorance. Only education can help women to know about rights and duties in Indian constitution. Thus, encouraging education amongst women is important for empowering them to accomplish their goals in life. Education of Women in Modern Scenario: Education leads to women empowerment because it helps them to responds the social change in their life. Government of India has undertaken different schemes for upliftment & security of women some of there...

- SwaymSidha Scheme
- BEB (BachaoBetiBachao)
- SSA (SarvaShikshaAbhiyan)

- STEP (Support to training and employment programme for women)
- RMK (RashijaMahila Kush)
- Kishore Shakti Yojana
- MahilaSamridhiYojana

Suggestions for promotion of higher education for women

Encouraging women for higher education through scholarships for poor and meritorious students in order to assist them financially and to create encouragement both among students and parents, and to make them free from economic burden. Designing education policies and imparting skilloriented education. Meanwhile facilitating by counselling to know the importance of higher education. Establishing educational organisations in every places like remote, urban and rural areas to access education easily by women from the pint of security 66114 Nagaraja, Empowerment of women through higher education Arrangement of bank loan with less or no interest for women and establishment of colleges and universities for women and also appointment of women teachers comparing to men teachers Launch of other special schemes for welfare of women like Pradhan Manthri Sukanya Samridhi (PMSSY)

Conclusion

In the present male dominated society also there are women who are taking lead role in various disciplines including education that too from education to astronomy, all the fields wherein women have made their own mark. Hence in the history of women and their move towards identity is remarkable one, in fact their journey can be considered as a journey of individuals towards perfection. Through higher education women find their identity with all creative skills which are necessary. In India the ratio of women towards higher education is increasing comparing to earlier years. When women can find their identity and contribute to national economy through their empowerment then certainly the government need to implement more schemes and scholarships and awareness programmes related to higher education.

The emphasis of this study is to know about the role of higher education in women empowerment. Higher education was recognized as a powerful instrument of social- economic advancement of the society in general and a vehicle for upward social mobility for deprived and marginalized sections in

particular. The role of higher education in bringing out the importance of women and their position in Indian society. It is especially more concern when talks in the sense of women from marginalized section of society, their empowerment, status, position in the society and the role of education in the higher and other strata of educational fields. The grant or financial support and the support of the family are like a catalyst in bringing the change in the status and position of women in society through the promotion of education. The study also discussed the obstacles such as social norms, workplace sexual harassment, gender discrimination, child marriage, etc. in the path of women empowerment.

In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, "If you educate the man, you educate the person but if you educate the woman, you educate the nation". One of the most significant transformations in education in India over the past several decades is the drastic increase in women's access to colleges and universities. Formulating and implementing stringent and powerful laws and policies have addressed the malice of gender discrimination of Higher Education. Most Indian women, with the possibility of economic independence, through respectable employment, have becomes an important earning member of the family. An educated woman has the skills, the self-confidence and the power to be a better citizen. Women have all the power and capacity as that of men and they are manifesting themselves amongst different opportunities provided through higher education.

CONCLUSION

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