

Education and Women Empowerment

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Abstract

The present paper is an attempt to analyze the status and importance of education in women empowerment in India using various indicators like women's household decision making power, financial autonomy, political participation, acceptance of unequal gender role, access to education etc. Economic empowerment and independence will only come through proper education and employment of women. Educated girls and women are aware of the importance of health and hygiene. The study reveals that women of India are relatively disempowered and they enjoy somewhat lower status than that of men in spite of many efforts undertaken by government. Household decision making power and freedom of movement of women vary considerably with their age, education and employment status. A large gender gap exists in political participation. The study concludes by an observation that how to empower women: Women can be empowered through the creation of safe working environment. Involvement of educated women in various activities helps the country to move towards economic and social development. More part-time and flexible jobs should be created so that more and more women get engaged into commercial activities.

Women Education

India is poised to emerge as one of the most developed nations by 2020, more literate, knowledgeable and economically at the forefront. No doubt, women will play a vital role in contributing to the country's development. Women power is crucial to the economic growth of any country. In India this is yet to meet the requirements despite reforms. Little has been achieved in the area of women empowerment, but for this to happen, this sector must experience a chain of reforms. Though India could well become one of the largest economies in the world, it is being hindered due to a lack of women's participation.

Educated women are capable of bringing socio-economic changes. The constitution of almost all democratic countries, including India, grants equal rights to both men and women.

Primary education is now a fundamental right. When a woman (or a girl) is ensured of her rights, the society at large is ensured of its sustainability.

Realizing the importance of women education, the government and many non-government organizations took a lot of projects to spread women education.

Importance of Education in Women Empowerment

The importance of women education are briefly summarized below:

1. Education will empower women to come forward and contribute towards the development and prosperity of the country. So long as women remain backward and economically dependent on men, the helpless condition of them cannot be changed. Economic empowerment and independence will only come through proper education and employment of women.
2. Education helps a woman to live a good life. Her identity as an individual would never get lost. She can read and learn about her rights. Her rights would not get trodden down. The life or condition of women would improve a lot, if we take a broad outlook in the field of female education.
3. Educated girls and women are aware of the importance of health and hygiene. Through health education, they are empowered to lead a healthy life-style. Educated mothers can take better care of both herself and her baby.
4. Educated women are now looked upon with dignity and honor. They become a source of inspiration for millions of young girls who make them their role-models.
5. Educated women can prove be highly successful in the fields of life. A girl-child should get equal opportunity for education, so that, she can plan to become a successful doctors, engineers, nurses, air-hostesses, cook, or choose a profession of her choice.

History of Women Education in India

Although in the Vedic period women had access to education in India, they had gradually lost this right. However, in the British period there was revival of interest in women's education in India. During this period, various socio religious movements led by eminent persons like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar emphasized on women's education in India. Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, Periyar and Baba Saheb Ambedkar were leaders of the lower castes in India who took various initiatives to make education available to the women of India. However women's education got a fillip after the country got independence in 1947 and the government has taken various measures to provide education to all Indian women. As a result women's literacy rate has grown over the six decades and the growth of female literacy has in fact been higher than that of male literacy rate.

Women Empowerment

“Women Empowerment” is a burning issue all over the world. “Women empowerment” and “women equality with men” is a universal issue.

Women Empowerment refers to the creation of an environment for women where they can make decisions of their own for their personal benefits as well as for the society.

Women Empowerment refers to increasing and improving the social, economic, political and legal strength of the women, to ensure equal-right to women, and to make them confident enough to claim their rights.

Why Women Empowerment is Important?

1. Women population constitutes around 50% of the world population. A large number of women around the world are unemployed. The world economy suffers a lot because of the unequal opportunity for women at workplaces.
2. Women are equally competent. Nowadays, women are even ahead of men in many socio-economic activities

3. Women are as talented as men. Previously, women were not allowed higher education like men and hence their talents were wasted. But now a day, they are also allowed to go for higher studies and it encourages women to show their talents which will not only benefit her individually but to the whole world at large.
4. The main advantage of Women Empowerment is that there will be an overall development of the society. The money that women earn does not only help them and or their family, but it also help develop the society.
5. Women Empowerment also leads to more economic benefits not to the individuals but to the society as well. Unlike earlier days when they stayed at home only and do only kitchen stuffs, nowadays, they roam outside and also earn money like the male members of the society. Women empowerment helps women to stand on their own legs, become independent and also to earn for their family which grows country's economy.
6. Women Empowerment leads to decrease in domestic violence. Uneducated women are at higher risk for domestic violence than an educated woman.
7. Women Empowerment is also advantageous in case of corruption. Women empowerment helps women to get educated and know their rights and duties and hence can stop corruption.
8. Women are increasingly participating in the national development process. They are making the nation proud by their outstanding performances almost every spheres including medical science, social service, engineering, etc.

How to Empower Women?

To “empower women” means to authorize power or increase the overall position, status and condition of women in every spheres of life. Empowerment of Women would result in better and more developed society. When women contribute equally along with men for the benefit of society, the world would surely become a better place to live. Today more and more females is studying in schools and colleges and also go abroad for higher studies. Women are increasing commanding better position in the society.

There are several ways to empower women; some of them are discussed below:

1. Women can be empowered through the creation of safe working environment. The workplaces should be safe for the female members of the society. People will like to send their daughters and wives to work if they are assured of safe environment at workplaces.
2. By educating women, economy of the country increases. It has been seen from the last few decades that involvement of educated women in various activities helps the country to move towards economic and social development.

3. Women can be empowered by decreasing the gender inequalities or disparities in all sectors of the society especially in education sectors.
4. Proper training should be provided to women's for better results.
5. There should be greater number of part-time job opportunities. In India, mostly women are housewives so they do not get any opportunity for full-time work. Hence, more part-time and flexible jobs should be created so that more and more women get engaged into commercial activities.

Conclusion:

According to the Country Report of the Government of India, "Empowerment means moving from a weak position to execute a power." Education of women in the education of women is the most powerful tool of change of position in society. Education also brings a reduction in inequalities and functions as a means of improving their status within the family. Until the middle of nineteenth century, girls and women were educated only for traditional household works. Now, the society is witnessing changes in the role-status of women. There is greater emphasis on education girls and women in the same way as we educate boys and men. The modern day parents want to fulfill the aspiration of their children without gender parity.

The educated women should insist on exercising their civil, social, political and economic rights. This will help improve the overall condition of women in the society. We can hope for better days while all women of our country will be enlightened and educated.

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