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Role of Human Rights in Education and Empowerment of Women in India

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Abstract

India is a democratic country where the liberty of thoughts and expression, equality of status and opportunity are constitutional obligations. Despite of this, discrimination based on caste, gender, race or any other identity remain is big challenge to the country. Women constitute almost half of the population and have equal rights but their participation in economy, society, and politics is negligible. The stereotype thinking and masculine ideology are the major factors in reduction of status of women in society. Women play an imperative and important role in making our nation progressive. For that, it is necessary to empower women on providing proper quality education to them. According to the Indian Census 2011, average literacy rate is 74.04% in which male literacy rate is 82.14% and female literacy rate is 65.46%. This data explains the differential status of women's education in India. Education is the only key for the empowering of women. Human rights play major role in strengthening and empowerment of women in society. It provides the opportunity to gain knowledge and facilities to enhance their abilities for the development of status and hence whole society. This paper explores the idea of human rights as an important intervention to women empowerment in India and also gives a light on its challenges.

Introduction

Human rights are rights we have simply because we exist as human beings - they are not granted by any state. These universal rights are inherent to us all, regardless of nationality, sex, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, language, or any other status. They range from the most fundamental - the right to life - to those that make life worth living, such as the rights to food, education, work, health, and liberty. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948, was the first legal document

to set out the fundamental human rights to be universally protected. The UDHR continues to be the foundation of all international human rights law. Its 30 articles provide the principles and building blocks of current and future human rights conventions, treaties and other legal instruments. These 30 human rights are foundation to the agenda of education and empowerment of women in the world. Though, in India after its independence gave equal space of women education and empowerment, various law and government programme have been launched with the purpose to enhance educational status and empowerment. The reservation policy to ensure participation in democratic politics and Panchayati Raj syaystem for democratic decentralization of power and to the women has been ensured. But there are lots of work needs to be done in order to achieve expected goal.

Women's rights to education and empowerment

As discussed earlier in this article that, all human rights are rooted to the UN declaration on human rights which have total 30 universal rights for human being, it has been adopted by several countries of the world including India. The list of all 30 articles is given below in the Table-01. It has been taken from the original source of UN. In order to understand the role of human rights in education and empowerment of women, it is very important to understand the human rights which have been ensured by world community. It is also very important to understand human rights ensured in India especially for the education and empowerment of women. List of the fundamental rights given in constitution of India is given below in the Table:02

List of Human Rights Universal declaration on human rights (UN)

Article 1 Free and equal	All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.
Article 2 Freedom from discrimination	Everyone can claim their rights regardless of sex, race, language, religion, social standing, etc.
Article 3 Right to life	Everyone has the right to life and to live in freedom and safety.
Article 4	No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the

Freedom from slavery	slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.
Article 5 Freedom from torture	No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
Article 6 Right to recognition before the law	Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.
Article 7 Right to equality before the law	All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.
Article 8 Access to justice	Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.
Article 9 Freedom from arbitrary detention	No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.
Article 10 Right to a fair trial	Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.
Article 1 Presumption of innocence	You are considered innocent until it can be proved you are guilty according to law. If accused of a crime you have the right to a defence.
Article 12 Right to privacy	No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13 Freedom of movement	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State.2. Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.
Article 14 Right to asylum	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.2. This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.
Article 15 Right to nationality	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Everyone has the right to a nationality.2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.
Article 16 Right to marriage and to found a family	Men and women have the right to marry when they are legally able without limits due to race, nationality or religion. Families should be protected by the Government and the justice system.
Article 17 Right to own property	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.
Article 18 Freedom of religion or belief	Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.
Article 19 Freedom of Expression	Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.
Article 20	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and

Freedom of assembly	association. 2. No one may be compelled to belong to an association.
Article 21 Right to partake in public affairs	Everyone has the right to take part in their country's political affairs and equal access to public service. Governments should be voted for regularly.
Article 22 Right to social security	Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international cooperation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.
Article 23 Right to work	Everyone has the right to work in just and favourable conditions and be free to choose your work with a salary that allows you to live and support family. Everyone should receive equal pay for equal work.
Article 24 Right to leisure and rest	Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.
Article 25 Right to adequate standard of living	You have the right to have what you need so that you and your family do not go hungry, homeless or fall ill.
Article 26 Right to education	You have the right to go to school, continue your studies as far as you wish and learn regardless of race, religion or country of origin.
Article 27 Right to take part in cultural, artistic and scientific life	You have the right to share the benefits of your community's culture, arts and sciences
Article 28 Right to a free and	Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can

fair world	be fully realized.
Article 29	You have duties toward the community within which your personality can fully develop. The law should guarantee human rights. It should allow everyone to respect others and to be respected.
Duty to your community	
Article 30	Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.
Rights are inalienable	

List of Fundamental rights of Indian Constitution

Right to Equality (Article 14-18)	Right to equality guarantees equal rights for everyone, irrespective of religion, gender, caste, race or place of birth. It ensures equal employment opportunities in the government and insures against discrimination by the State in matters of employment on the basis of caste, religion, etc. This right also includes the abolition of titles as well as untouchability.
Right to Freedom (Article 19-22)	Freedom is one of the most important ideals cherished by any democratic society. The Indian Constitution guarantees freedom to citizens. The freedom right includes many rights such as: Freedom of speech Freedom of expression Freedom of assembly without arms Freedom of association Freedom to practise any profession Freedom to reside in any part of the country
Right against Exploitation (Article 23-24)	This right implies the prohibition of traffic in human beings, <i>begar</i> , and other forms of forced labour. It also implies the prohibition of children in factories, etc. The Constitution prohibits the employment of children under 14 years in

	hazardous conditions.
Right to Freedom of Religion (Article 25-28)	This indicates the secular nature of Indian polity. There is equal respect given to all religions. There is freedom of conscience, profession, practice and propagation of religion. The State has no official religion. Every person has the right to freely practice his or her faith, establish and maintain religious and charitable institutions.
Cultural and Educational Rights (Article 29-30)	These rights protect the rights of religious, cultural and linguistic minorities, by facilitating them to preserve their heritage and culture. Educational rights are for ensuring education for everyone without any discrimination.
Right to Constitutional Remedies (Article 32)	The Constitution guarantees remedies if citizens' fundamental rights are violated. The government cannot infringe upon or curb anyone's rights. When these rights are violated, the aggrieved party can approach the courts. Citizens can even go directly to the Supreme Court which can issue writs for enforcing fundamental rights.

Role of Human Rights in Education and Empowerment

Various human rights ensured in Universal declaration of human rights UN and fundamental rights ensured in constitution of India are the key to the enhancement of educational status and empowerment of women. As in the India about 35 percent women are illiterate and status of women in respect to social, economic, political and educational life is marginal these human rights empower them in many ways - By giving equal opportunities to access of quality education and employment abilities and life skill for improving their status can be developed. Similarly, human rights help in development of self - confidence, self - worth and dignity in women. It provide opportunity to actively participate in the social life, decision - making for own. Similarly, these rights help in minimizing social inequality, to get safe and comfortable working environment, in reducing the exploitation and crimes, creating awareness for family planning, reducing poverty and active involvement in process of national development.

Challenges to the Implementation of Human Rights

Due to the introduction human rights for everyone including women at world and national level, status of women in education can be marked as growing and participation women in decision making of different aspects of life have increased but still they are lagging behind in respect to the males. It is because of challenges which are in the way of the implementation of Human Rights. There is a social mind set not to provide the equal opportunities and right to education to the women as women are considered as the care takers of the family. Also as this is male dominated country, men rule over the women and do not allow them to gain knowledge and know about their rights. In rural area, huge distance between home and the educational institution, it creates obstacle in access of girl's child to the school. Illiteracy itself a major challenge to the awareness of human rights of the women. The locality is the major obstacle in the way of education as there is fear of exploitation, rape, crime on allowing girls to go outside from the home. In some religion there is a wrong propagated belief that being getting modern education is an act against the religions. Corruption is the social disease which unbalances the whole society. Poverty is other major problem faced by the citizens of India. There is a huge gap between the rich and the poor. It results, failure of fulfillment of daily needs.

Conclusion

To enhance the status of education of women and empower them it is very important to make them familiar with all the human rights available for them. At the same time to ensure equal access to quality education some necessary steps should be taken in priority basis- provision of good infrastructural facilities, adequate human resources, more useful curricula and innovative teaching practices so that everyone can foster learning. Promoting self - help groups, provision of adequate funds, facilities of scholarship poor family, education awareness camp can be very helpful. Similarly the focused should be in reducing the challenges to the successful implementation of human rights, government should act responsibly and seriously in protecting the rights of citizens.

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