

Women Empowerment Through Higher Education In India**Dr Ravi S Dalawai**Assistant Professor
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Women empowerment is a debatable subject. At earlier time they were getting equal status with men. Women are found to be economically very poor all over the India. A few women are engaged in services and other activities. So, they need economic power to stand on their own legs on par with men. From early twenty century (national movement) their statuses have been changed slowly and gradually. After then, independence of India, the constitutional makers and national leaders strongly demand equal social position of women with men.

Potentials deposited in individuals are explored through higher education so that individuals can acquire training and knowledge in a profession. Today we have seen the women occupied the respectable positions in all walks of the fields. Women empowerment cannot be possible unless women come with and help to self-empower themselves. There is a need to formulate reducing feminized poverty, promoting education of women, and prevention and elimination of violence against women. Therefore, each and every should be careful to promote the women statuses.

Introduction

Women power has been given top most place in our Indian culture and society since Vedic period. Degradation in cultural and moral values in recent time, women are now victim of many social and economic evils. They are being exploited in all spheres of life. The gender disparities in all walks of life is on increase, say- education, economic, social, health care and decision making process. This widening gap is the sole reason behind backwardness of women and subordination. Till 1950, her role in economic development was not recognized fully and entirely neglected. After that she was given due importance as major contributor of economic development. Pt Jawaharlal Nehru rightly points out that "If you educate a man you educate an individual, however if you, educate a women you educate family. Women empowered means, mother India empowered. There is no need of giving any evidence to mention that women power is crucial to play a vital role in contributing to the countries development. Women power in India has also been a major preoccupation of both the government and civil society as educated women can play very important role in the development of economy. Education plays a critical role in empowering the women. It is only possible by eliminating all kinds of discriminations, which the women have been facing in our country today. Equality, development and

peace can only be attained through creating more employment opportunities, health care facilities, and imparting quality education in general and higher education in particular and their larger involvement in decision making process and representation in parliamentary democracy of nation. Imparting quality higher education of it's all segments (general, medical, engineering, legal and contemporary skills related courses) is essential for their empowerment. Unfortunately, today an Indian woman is lagging behind in all spheres of life. Female literacy in India is only (65.46%), enrolment ration in higher education is (44%), IMR(49 per 1000 person) and MMR (254) are also very high and also not adequate representation of women in our parliament (Loksabha) is only 11%. These are major concerns, which are needed to be tackled.

Reasons For The Empowerment Of Women

Today, we, have noticed different Acts and Schemes of the central government as well as state government to empower the women of India. But in India women are discriminated and marginalized at every level of the society whether it is social participation, political participation, economic participation, access to education, and also reproductive healthcare. Women are found to be economically very poor all over the India. A few

women are engaged in services and other activities. So, they need economic power to stand on their own legs on par with men.

According to 2001 census, rate of literacy among men in India is found to be 76% whereas it is only 54% among women. Thus, increasing education among women is of very important in empowering them. It has also noticed that some of women are too weak to work.

They consume less food but work more. Therefore, from the health point of view, women folk who are to be weaker are to be made stronger. Another problem is that workplace harassment of women. There are so many cases of rape, kidnapping of girl, dowry harassment, and so on. For these reasons, they require empowerment of all kinds in order to protect themselves and to secure their purity and dignity.

Higher Education And Women Empowerment :

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Higher education plays a catalytic role in mpowering the women, can be enlisted as below :

1. Higher education enables women to fix themselves up in society into which they are found themselves.
2. Explore the world , manipulate it for their survival and establishment of themselves.
3. Potentials deposited in individuals are explored through higher education so that individuals can acquire training and knowledge in a profession.
4. Enable them to cultivate confidence and habits and develop right attitude to work and life as good citizens.

5. Empowering women with knowledge , skills and self confidence necessary to participate fully in development process.

6. Provide opportunities to women to fulfill their needs. These needs comprise with special learning tools(such as literacy ,oral expression, numeracy and problem solving) and basic learning contents such as knowledge, skills, values and attitudes

Measures For Women's Empowerment Initiated In India

□ **The Constitution of India - Provisions Relating to Women:** The Constitution of India not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women for removing the cumulative socio-economic, educational and political disadvantages faced by them.

□ **Advancement of Women through Five Year Plans-** There has been a progressive increase in the plan outlays over the last six decades of planned development to meet the needs of women and children. The outlay of Rs. 4 crores in the First Plan (1951-56) has increased to Rs. 7,810.42 crores in the Ninth FiveYear Plan, and Rs. 13,780 crores in the Tenth Five Year Plan. There has been a shift from“welfare” oriented approach in the First Five Year Plan to “development” and “empowerment” of women in the consecutive Five Year Plans.

Conclusion And Suggestions :

In conclusion, Realizing the necessities for higher education in poverty alleviation and women empowerment, gender mainstreaming of higher education is the need of hour . The attitude of man dominant society should change and try to be very cooperative with women and encourage her greater participation in decision making process at household level, local, state, national and international level. There is a pressing need to take in hand the challenges hampering the access of higher education to women in India .It is also necessary to identify and resolve barriers such as male attitude to women's role and capabilities can help to open up more involvement for women in higher education.

To sum up, women empowerment cannot be possible unless women come with and help to self-empower

themselves. There is a need to formulate reducing feminized poverty, promoting education of women, and prevention and elimination of violence against women.

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