
ABSTRACT:-

Napoleon once said; “ Give me an educated mother, I shall promise you the birth of a civilized nation ”. By educating the women we can educate the whole nation, because a country can never rise without the contribution of 50% of its population. It is impossible to think about the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is impossible for a bird to fly only on one wing. The fortune of a nation depends upon the educational system of that nation. The university education commission 1948-49 observed that there cannot be educated people without educated women. Education is considered as a milestone for women empowerment because it enables them to respond to the challenges, to confront their traditional role and change their lives. Today the idea of empowerment is used in the context of the upliftment of the women, marginalized, unorganized and other disadvantaged section of the society. After all these people are all engaged in a struggle for power and judge the development process for their own experiences. Thus empowerment represents the hopes and dreams of the marginalized groups for a social environment free of inequalities disfavours them in different sphere of life.

The deprived people and their organizations at grassroots level are striving relentlessly to realize their dreams and hopes for a better future and empowered life. Today the female literacy rate levels according to 2011 census are 65.46 % where the male literacy rate is over 80%. Even beyond literacy there is much that education can do for women's rights, dignity and security. This is the key to unlock the golden door of freedom for development. This paper discusses the importance of education on empowerment of women and weaker section as well as the challenges and changes that we must have to deal to achieve desired results.

Keywords – Women, Empowerment, Education.

INTRODUCTION

Delivering multiple roles effortlessly every single day, women are undoubtedly the backbone of any society. Doing daughters, caring mothers, competent colleagues and a wide range of many other roles played by women around us flawlessly and with grace. However they have been an ignored fraction of the society. This in turn has caused women at large to bear the brunt of inequality, oppression, financial dependability and other social evils. For centuries now women have been living under bondage that restricts them from achieving professional as well as personal heights. To restore their rightful and dignified

status women empowerment programme is initiated to provide a solid foundation to nurture the inner strength, creativity and self esteem of women from all walks of life. A well established women are now able to go out into the world, prepare to handle any challenge with skills, confidence and grace. They come to the force front, where they become the agents of peace and positive change for themselves, their families, other women and their society. Female education has been an urgent need of the new era. We cannot hope for the development of nation without proper education of the women of the country. Educated women are the real source of happiness in the family, society and country. It is very necessary to highlight on the importance of female education in the country because women are the first teacher of their children. Future of the child depends on the love and care of the mother means a 'women'. Every child get his very first lesson through the mother thus it is very important for a mother to be educated as only a well educated mother can shape and mould the career of her child. Trained and education mothers may nourish many lives in their life term and give rise to the developed nation. Education gives voice to girls and women in their communities. The educated girls of today become the women leaders of tomorrow. Educating women results in promoting self respect and also helps in raising the status of women. An educated women will be aware of her rights. She can fight against social evils such as domestic violence, dowry demand, low wages etc.

STATUS OF WOMEN IN INDIA TODAY

The position and status of today's women in India is considered high in modern Indian society. The population of women is almost half of the total population in India. A country or community cannot be considered civilized where women are not honoured. Indian laws have been made without discrimination against women. Women today occupy high ranking posts like I.A.S, I.F.S or defense services. Modern Indian women participate in various sports and games like football, hockey, cricket, table tennis, lawn tennis and athletics , boxing etc. The contemporary Indian women serves as M.P, M.L.A, governors and ministers. Women have also achieved high fame in the areas of literature, music and acting. More and more women are joining the field of science and technology. In fact there is no sphere of activity in which women are unsuitable or incompetent. Lets now have a look at the dark side. Though the Indian law does not discriminate between men and women, the status of women of our country today is practically far below the

status of men. Wife burning for failure to pay dowry as demanded also continues unabated all over India. It is a matter of great shock that such cases are increasing every year. The literacy rate of women is also lower than that of male persons almost all over India. According to 2011 the percentage of educated person increased to 70.04% of which male percentage was 82.14% and female percentage was 65.46% respectively. Bonded labour system a quite discouraging phenomenon hinders the girls and women education for unprivileged families of washer man and agricultural labour. Prevalence of dropouts among girls in rural, tribal and slums areas seems to be quite high. In India, the school environment for girls is not really interesting and encouraging. The methods of teaching are most outdated, rigid and uninterested. Schools with poor basic facilities as drinking water, toilet facilities, no good infrastructure and no experience teachers etc.

Though the status of today's women in India is high, the overall picture of women's position in India is not satisfactory.

NEED OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Nobel Laureate Malala Yousafzai famously quoted "I raise up my voice not so I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard. We cannot succeed when half of us are held back and that sentiment precisely outlines the basis of new age women empowerment. Discrimination against women is rampant all over the world even in 21st century. Education of women leads to a better family and ultimately an ideal society to a progressive nation. A progressive nation is one where all the people of the country in respect of sex, religion, caste, creed and colour are economically, socially, culturally, politically and through all thoughts are independent.

There are several ways to empower women. Some of them are discussed below –

Create Safe workplace – Women can be empowered through the creation of safe work environment. The workplace 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 workplace.

Women Education – 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 help the country to move towards economic and social development.

- o Female education contributes towards health and well being of the family.
- o By getting education, women also contribute to the national income of the country.
- o They can afford quality nutrition to their children.
- o Educated women are considered active in politics as well.

o They know their rights and are able to defend themselves better.

Raise voice against gender inequality – Women can be empowered by decreasing the gender inequalities or disparities in all sectors of the society especially in education sector.

Job Skills – Proper training should be provided to women's for better results.

Create more part time job opportunities – There should be greater number of part time job opportunities. In India mostly women are house wives so they do not get any opportunity for full time work. Hence more part time and flexible job should be created so that more and more women get engaged into commercial activities.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT SCHEME

Today government has launched number of schemes to enhance the status of women and weaker section of the society.

- o Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme
- o One stop centre scheme
- o Women helpline scheme
- o Ujjawala: A comprehensive scheme for prevention of trafficking and rescue, rehabilitation and re-integration of victims of the trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation.
- o Working women hostel.
- o Rajiv Gandhi National crèche scheme for the children of working mothers.
- o Swadhar Greh (A scheme for women in difficult circumstances).
- o Support to training and employment programmes for women.
- o Nari shakti purosakar.
- o Awardees of Rajya Mahila Samman & Zila Mahila Samman.
- o Mahila Police Volunteers.
- o Mahila E. Haat

IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN EDUCATION

The development of any nation depends on its educational system and it is proved that education is the key to human progress and social change. Education is powerful tool for empowerment of individual. It helps in developing confidence in individual and community about their own capacities, inherent strengths to shape their lives. The education system must be streamlined or improved according to the present day, the primary promise of justice – social, economic and political equality of status and of opportunity, liberty of thought, faith and worship will ever remain unfulfilled. Education should aim at socialization and democratization in true sense of word.

The importance of women education are briefly summarized below :

Economic development and prosperity – Education will empower women to come forward and contribute towards the development and prosperity of the country.

Economic Empowerment – As 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.

Improved life – Education helps a women to live a good life. Her identity as an individual would never get lost. 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.

Improved Health – 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.

Dignity and honour – Educated women are now looked upon with dignity and honour. They become a source of inspiration for millions of young girls who make them their role models.

Justice – Educated women are more informed of their rights for justice. It would eventually lead to decline in instances of violence and injustice against women such as dowry, forced prostitution, child marriage, female foeticide etc.

Choice to choose a profession of her choice – Educated women can prove to be highly successful in the fields of life. A girl child should get equal opportunity for education, so that she can plan to become successful doctors, engineers, nurses, air hostesses, or choose profession of her choice.

Alleviate poverty – Women educated is a pre – requisite to alleviate poverty. Women need to take equal burden of the massive task to eliminate poverty. This would demand massive contribution from educated women. There cannot be much social and economic changes unless girls and women are given their rights for education.

CONCLUSION

Until the middle of nineteenth century girls and women were educated only for traditional household work. But now the society is witnessing change in the role – status of women. Educated women are just on the threshold of transition from tradition to modernity. The women themselves desire that their status and position in society should rise higher. The traditional status and role sets of women are breaking up and new role sets based on achievement, independence and equality are gradually coming up. Seeing the current perspective it is indeed very important to have a system where the participation of women of different community is appreciated. Empowerment of women and marginalized is at the current agenda of international political and social reforms. According to them empowerment of women and weaker section is a key to inclusive democracy. Women should insist on exercising their civil, social, political and economic rights. This will help to improve overall

condition of women in the society. We can hope for better days while all women of our country will be enlightened. Educating girls is not an option. It is necessary. We all have to eliminate gender disparity in education. While being attracted by modernization and globalization we must be confident to say no to marginalization.

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