

**ROLE OF EDUCATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT & EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN****Dr. M.P Baligar****Assistant professor in Sociology****A W University, Vijayapura****ABSTRACT**

Education is important not only for the full development of one's personality, but also for the sustained growth of the nation. Right to Education, like all human rights is universal and inalienable. Education is a powerful tool by which economically and socially marginalized adults and children can lift themselves out of poverty and participate fully as citizens. My presentation focuses on the role which education is playing in empowerment of Indian women. It attempts to describe the importance of women education in bringing about development of the family, society and nation. It also describes root causes of low literacy among Indian women and possible remedial measures for this purpose. Education is a potent tool in the emancipation and empowerment of women. The greatest single factor which can incredibly improve the status of women in any society is education.

**INTRODUCTION**

*"If you educate a man you educate an individual, however, if you educate a woman you educate a whole family. Women empowered means mother India empowered".---PT. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU*

Women are one of the greatest assets in our society. They are equal to men in all aspects. Women are more perfectionists in the power to create, nurture and transform. The role of women in the world is significant and hence we must give them what they deserve. Empowering women is empowering country. The first and the most effective step towards empowerment of women is education. Education is a potent tool in ensuring empowerment of women in all spheres of society, for without education of comparable quality and content given to boys and men, updated with existing knowledge and relevant to current needs, women will be able to have access to well-paid formal sector jobs and advance with men.

Women constitute almost half of the population in the world. But the hegemonic masculine ideology made them suffer a lot as they were denied equal opportunities in different parts of the world. The rise of feminist ideas has, however, led to the tremendous improvement of women's condition throughout the world in recent times. Access to education has been one of the most pressing demands of these

women's rights movements. Women education in India has also been a major preoccupation of both the government and civil society as educated women can play a very important role in the development of the country.

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.

#### **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. While in 2001 only 54.16% of Indian women were literate, by the end of 2011 65.46% female were literate. The growth of female literacy rate is 11.30% as compared to 6.29 % of that of male literacy rate.

#### **IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN EDUCATION IN INDIA**

Women education in India plays a very important role in the overall development of the country. It not only helps in the development of half of the human resources, but in improving the quality of life at home and outside. Educated women not only tend to promote education of their girl children, but also can provide better guidance to all their children. Moreover educated women can also help in the reduction of infant mortality rate and growth of the population. The importance of the necessity of ensuring women's education has been endorsed in various international agreements like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, Convention on Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women. The UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund), International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) 1994, Millennium Development Goals, etc. The Women's Rights Commission, 1979, (CEDAW) obliges the State parties to take all appropriate measures to eliminate

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discrimination against women in order to ensure them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure , on the basis of equality of men and woman--- the elimination of any stereotyped concept of roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging co-education and other types of education which will help to achieve the aim and in particular, by the revision of text books and school programs and the adaptation of teaching methods.(Article 10)

The Government of India has launched various programs like the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), The National Programme for Education of Girls at an Elementary level 2003 (NPEGEL), The National Policy on Education (1986) which recognized the need to redress traditional gender imbalances in educational access and achievement. The National Scheme of Incentive to Girls for Secondary Education was launched in 2008 by the Government of India which provides incentive to the girl child who passes VIII Std examination and enrolls in a Secondary School. The National Policy for Empowerment of Women 2001 highlights the creation of a gender sensitive educational system.

One of the recommendations of National Policy on Education (1986) by the Government of India is to promote empowerment of women through the agency of education and it is considered to be a landmark in the approach to women's education of illiterate. The National Literacy Mission is another positive step towards eradication of illiteracy in the age group of 15-35 years. Women' education has assumed special significance in the context of India's planned development, as it is incorporated in every Five-year plans as the major programme for the development of women. Universalization of elementary education, enrolment and retention of girls in the schools, promotion of balwadies and crèches, raising number of schools and colleges of arts , science, and professional for girls , polytechnics, girls hostels, multipurpose institutions and adult education programs are some of the steps being taken by both Central and State governments in India to boost-up women's education.

#### **WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EDUCATION**

Women Empowerment is a global issue and discussion on women political right are at the fore front of many formal and informal campaigns worldwide. The concept of women empowerment was introduced at the international women conference at NAROIBI in 1985. Education is milestone of women empowerment because it enables them to responds to the challenges, to confront their traditional role and change their life. So that we can't neglect the importance of education in reference to women empowerment India is poised to becoming superpower, a developed country by 2020. The year 2020 is fast approaching; it is just 7 year away. This can became reality only when the women of this nation became empowerment. India presently account for the largest number no of illiterates in the world.

Literacy rate in India have risen sharply from 18.3% in 1951 to 74.04% in 2011 in which enrolment of women in education have also risen sharply 7% to 65.46%. Within the framework of a democratic polity, our laws, development policies, plan and programmes have aimed at women's advancement in difference spheres. From the fifth five year plan (1974–78) onwards has been a marked shift in the approach to women's issues from welfare to development. In recent years, the empowerment of women has been recognized as the central issue in determining the status of women. The National Commission of Women was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the right and legal entitlements of women. The 73rd and 74th Amendments (1993) to the constitution of India have provided for reservation of seats in the local bodies of panchayats and Municipalities for women, laying a strong foundation for their participation in decision making at the local level.

#### **STATEGIES ADOPTED BY GOVERNMENT**

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Education's importance has been emphasized by a number of international conventions, including the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** and the **Programme of Action** of the 1994, International Conference on Population and Development. The Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, recognized that women's literacy is key to empowering women's participation in decision making in society and to improving families' well-being.

In addition, the United Nations has articulated the **Millennium Development Goals** (MDGs), which include goals for improved education, gender equality, and women's empowerment

**CONCLUSION**

Only through education, we can prepare a woman for ability and potential to meet society's challenges, effect positive change and become thoughtful ethical leaders. Ensuring access to education is a precondition for full realization of the right to education. Without proper access, it is not possible to guarantee the right to education.

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. To encourage the education of women at all levels and for dilution of gender bias in providing knowledge and education, established schools, colleges and universities even exclusively for women in the state. To bring more girls, especially from marginalized families of BPL, in mainstream education, the government is providing a package of concessions in the form of providing free books, uniform, boarding and lodging, clothing for the hostilities midday meals, scholarships, free circles and so on.

At last, we must say that women are one of the greatest assets in our society. They are equal to men in all aspects. Women are more perfectionist in the power to create, nurture and transform and Education is a potent tool in ensuring empowerment of women in all spheres of society, for without education of comparable quality and content given to boys and men, updated with existing knowledge and relevant to current needs, women will be able to have access to well-paid formal sector jobs and advance with men. . So, the best gift parents today can give to their daughters is education.

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