

# Emancipation and Empowerment of Women

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**Abstract**—Education is a miraculous baton that dispels darkness and ignorance. Women should equip herself with the power of knowledge and enlighten her ignoble world. Education helps in mitigating inequalities and functions as a means to ameliorate their status within the family. As we all know that education is mandatory for everyone but unfortunately, in this patriarchal dominating society, the education of women has been relegated since long time. Empowering women is very essential and as women acquire equivalent status, opportunities, social, economic and legal rights as men, then definitely well being will be enhanced. The present study explores the role of education in women empowerment and status of the women education in India. It reveals that the education is a part and parcel in the life of every women.

An extensive literature review is done on women entrepreneur. The paper also highlights the major problems faced by Indian Women entrepreneurs and steps and suggestions for upliftment of Indian Women entrepreneurs.

**Keywords:** Women Empowerment; Women Entrepreneur, Women Education, Government Schemes

## 1. INTRODUCTION

"Uneducated society cannot think on rational lines" – Anonymous Medieval period is the testimony of the above stated quote as mindless battles and bloodshed were the repercussion of illiterate and ignorant rulers of the past.

"Society can attain stability only if women are educated and empowered". – Abdul Kalam Education forms an integral part of our lives as first and foremost it improves the status of women in society. Literate women have the capacity and potential to walk hand in hand with men and brushing aside the superstitions percolated and deeply embedded in very fabric of our society.

Not only this education widens the purview and imparts rationale thinking, instead of blindly following the rituals, society starts claiming for logical and scientific justifications for various customs and evils.

Education has metamorphically transformed the outlook of women with broad vision and advancement. They are stepping ahead in the field of IT, aeronautics, forestry and many other non-traditional avenues. Gone are the days when women were confined and restricted to their homes now with the powerful wings of education, they can even fly to distant lands and get

exposure to myriad culture and tradition. They can further enhance their knowledge and make herself a sparkling independent being who is capable of drawing her own lines.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Women network report on Women in Business and in Decision Making emphasized on business women, about their hurdles in initiating and carrying the enterprise, academic skills, expansion of business unit. Interesting facts which revealed from the analysis of above mentioned report are that less educated women entrepreneurs are engaged in small and micro enterprises, have family but deprived of any helping hand at home. Majority of the women setup their enterprises before the age of 32, after enhancing their expertise in the respective areas by working somewhere. The propelling determinants to stand on their own feet is to sought their own decision and have lucrative opportunities. Women entrepreneurs face challenge to maintain balance between family and work.

Malik and Courtney (2011) analyzed that education empowers women. It facilitates economic independence, moreover she can stand with the family work and she can condemn the gender disparities and prejudices that exist in the society.

Banerjee (2012) studied that higher education enables women to procure high and dignified ranks in the organization where they can compete and challenge the male dominated colleagues.

Rani (1996) emphasized that women belonging to high income group prefer to utilize their time by initiating any enterprise on the flip side women from average or below average financial background have to work for sustenance. In the study it was diagnosed that success in any sphere of women's world is highly dependent on the intricate family bond.

Tambunan, (2009), made a study on the progress made by women entrepreneurs in the developing countries. The study focused that although working women involved in small and micro set-ups are clinching respectable position but their contribution is minimal due to various obstacles and cultural constraints.

Cohoon, Wadhwa & Mitchell, (2010), collected the experiences of working men and women. On the basis of data collected it revealed that self motivational factors are the driving force for the success of women. They have high self-esteem and intellectual capital.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The paper is a descriptive study and the secondary data, have been analyzed for preparing the paper. The secondary information have been collected from different researcher's published books, articles published in different journals, periodical, working paper and websites.

### 4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of study are:

- 1) To the study the major constraints faced by women entrepreneurs
- 2) To study the role of education in transforming life
- 3) To the study the impact of women empowerment
- 4) To draw conclusions and suggestions

### 5. CHALLENGES

It is the apathy and a matter of chagrin that even after 70 years of independence women are far from being empowered. They have superficially procured the little of empowerment, they are still not safe and secure at work place. They have to face the challenge of sexual assault, harassment, domestic violence, molestation and many more. Somewhere women are also responsible for this relegated position as they accept their subjugation without opposition. They are proud to flaunt of being pampered by their husbands. From their very childhood, they are taught to submit in front of male members and not to indulge in the decision making and other important matter of the family. In the rural areas the monster of dowry still exists. The cavernous greed of the groom's family is not satiated with the booty that they acquired at marriage. Iterative demands are rampant thereafter. The worst causality is the non-fulfillment of demands sometimes spells death of women.

As per National Crime Bureau a crime against women is committed in every 3 minutes, a woman is raped in every 29 minutes, a dowry death occurs in every 77 minutes. Domestic violence and crime is endemic and widespread. Illiteracy is the biggest hurdle that restricts their growth and development.

Undoubtedly our country has grown leaps and bounds since independence but as far as education is concern wide gap exist between men and women. Girl education is languishing in our country. According to census 2011, female literacy rate of the country is 65.46% whereas 82.14% of the male are illiterate; the reason could be early child marriage. In rural India 60% of the girl are married before they come to the ripe age of 18. They are tied in the nuptial bond as girls are susceptible to the

abhorrent case of sexual harassment. No place safe for girls whether it is rural or urban part of India. Delhi as earned the ignoble title of 'Rape Capital' due to recurrence of such mal cases.

The spectrum of challenges is different in urban hive of country. At homes they are the flip side their dignity and respect is at stake at work place and even at their homes. This is particularly true of the unorganised sector specially dealing with manual labour where the Minimum Wage Act norms are often violated. Besides these women are deprived from many facilities such as lack of maternity leave, proper care and transportation facilities etc.

The genesis of the problem lies in the stereotype beliefs and cultural norms of our country where women are compelled to accept her domesticity oppression. Actually they are the 'Reservoir of Power'. They have the potential to knock down the restrictions of confined life. The need is to involve that buried divinity in her.

### 6. ROLE OF EDUCATION

"The best thermometer to the progress of a nation is the treatment to its women".S

Biased and subjugated treatment to women has resultant in the downfall of society. It is mandatory to uplift the status and dignity of women. Women empowerment ensures the women of the right to a dignified wherein she can pursue what pleases her for a wholesome and fulfillment life. To attain empowerment in true sense, first girls should recognize her as an elevated and equal being she should not compel herself to perish under the veil, but anticipates a new dawn for her. This paradigm shift can be brought if girls are intellectually empowered first.

Education would empower women in an authentic way. Women constitute almost half the human race. Education has been recognized as an glowing measurement of social change. Education is considered as a milestone by which the process of modernization and social changes are scaled. Education enables to unlock the existing problems and enhance various skills.

People are now aware and they realize importance of education. The smoke of transformation can be perceived in people's mentality as now they are worried about the future of their daughters. They crave for equal status, opportunities and rights. Now they realize that higher women literacy would ameliorate the quality of life both at home and outside home. This awareness would plummet the infant mortality rate. Not only this the rate of illiteracy and vices that tarnish the society would cave in, as the well informed and educated youth knew what is right and what is wrong.

Educated women would be well acknowledged with equal rights in all spheres of life. It would guarantee equal pay to her for equal work. Not only this education would further

facilitate her to claim for equal property rights. Well informed but suppressed women can blatantly raise her voice to procure justice and equivalent prestige.

Education sharpens the personality and enables women to earn for herself and her family. With better job opportunities and expertise, skill based knowledge she can command respect and contribute in the growth of a nation.

Journey of a thousand mile initiate with a single thought.

## 7. LEADING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA

The new generation women across the world have overcome all negative notions and have proved themselves beyond doubt in all spheres of life including the most intricate and cumbersome world of entrepreneurship. India too has its own asset of a wide collection of bold and fearless group of women :

- 1) Indra Nooyi : CFO, Pepsico
- 2) Naina Lal Kidwai : Group General Manager and Country Head – HSBC, India
- 3) Kiran Mazumdar Shan: CMD, Biocon
- 4) Chanda Kochar : MD & CEO – ICICI Bank
- 5) Indu Jain : Chairperson (former) – Times Group
- 6) Simone Tata: Chairperson (former), Lakme Chairperson (Present), Trent Limited
- 7) Neelam Dhawan : MD, HP India
- 8) Sulajja Firodia Motwani : JMD – Kinetic Motors
- 9) Priyal Paul : Chairperson, Appejay Park Hotels
- 10) Malika Srinivasan : Director, Tractor and Farm Equipment

## 8. MEASURES UNDERTAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT FOR EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

The Ministry of Women and Child Development is administering following schemes for gender equality/socio-economic development/empowerment of women:

- i. Swadhar and Short Stay Homes to provide relief and safe stay for women in distress.
- ii. Working Women Hostels to provide safe accommodation for working class women.
- iii. Support to Training and Employment Program for Women (STEP) to ensure employment and income to poor women across the country.
- iv. Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK) for providing micro finance to poor women for upliftment.

- v. National Mission for Empowerment of Women (NMEW) to strengthen and promote all-round Development of Women
- vi. Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme for providing day care for children of Working Mothers.
- vii. One Stop Centre for providing support and help to those women who are affected by violence.
- viii. Scheme for Universalisation of Women Helpline for providing 24 hours response to women affected by violence.
- ix. Sabla Scheme for overall development of girls in the age group of 11-18 years.
- x. Various Capacity Building Programmes in order to strengthen the process of women and child development.

Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship has been created to improve employability.

Equal Remuneration Act, 1973 provides equal remuneration to men and women workers to ensure social security and equality. Workers' Social Security Act 2008.

The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 regulates that women gets employment in certain establishments for a certain period (before and after childbirth) and ensures maternity and other benefits.

Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY) Scheme is launched as Conditional Maternity Benefit for pregnant and lactating women to improve health and nutrition status .

The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 has been enacted to protect the women against sexual harassment at all work places in public and private sector.

## 9. SUGGESTIONS

Undoubtedly knocking the restricted walls of confinements gender inequality women are coming out and contributing for the progress of nation. A lot is done, yet a lot is still there to be done.

With the collective & concerted efforts of family, media, government & non government organisation the farfetched, goal of women empowerment can be attained.

Media is the most powerful tool to bring about a sea change in the attitude as it reaches to a large audience. Movies showcasing women as the embodiment of courage and power can portray chivalric aspect of feminism: Pink, Mardaani, Kahani are some out of the box times that struck the engraved recesses of women. Such bollywood bonanzas empowers the marginalized women as it aware them of their rights guaranteed by ruling body.

TVS & social networking sites another weapon/further acquaints the privileged section of various projects and schemes launched by Government and NGOs. The official 24 x 7 helpline numbers fast track redressal courts, cells, cyber crime wing all function to empower women & bequeath her with long lost respect & power.

Government schemes Beti Bachao Beti Pado, Shiksha and many more projects are the endeavour in this direction only. In order to promote women entrepreneurs, on March 8, 2016 government launched 'Mahila E-Haat', a first website that would offer women a platform to sell their products.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's imitative of startup friendly environment in the country has proved to be a boon for female and instrument to fight gender inequality in the business community.

Government and media is doing a lot. Now it's the time for girls & women to come out of the cocoon and barrier created by her. She has to accept this empowerment and come out of stereotype beliefs and prejudices. Then only it would be emancipation in a true sense.

She should script newer roles for herself and perform at par with man. Not only this with feminist power she should delve dexterously to the newer dignified rank bestowed on her.

## 10. CONCLUSION

To meet the complex challenges of present world, be it dowry, early child marriage, social discrimination, domestic violence, crimes at work place, property rights, female foeticide, sexual harassment, cyber crimes, child trafficking etc. etc. etc.

Education is powerful baton that empowers women.

It lessens inequalities and functions as catalyst for improving the women status. Higher education heightens women's awareness which enables them to play a more dynamic role in the economic development of the country. Education and women empowerment programs lead to a self esteem and self confidence and opens up new horizons for women enabling them to discover their own potential, to bloom themselves further and increase their resistance to gender discrimination. Educating women also helps them to have positive impact on families-better child care, better communication. Intact educated women can act strong pillars to build a value based and vibrant nation. We can make women entrepreneur a part of mainstream of national economy and can contribute to progress of country.

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