A Study on women education in India

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Abstract

The basic unit of society is a woman. As women makes a family, family makes a home and homes make a society. So we should never think that a society would come into existence without the contribution of women. The complete responsibility lies on the shoulders of the male to educate and encourage the females to step forward and to play their role in developmental processes of the family. It is also crucial for women access to the legal system. Education is a critical input in human resource development and is essential for the country’s economic growth. This study conducts a study on women education in India.

Keywords: Society; education; responsibility; development; knowledge

1. Introduction

Women are the inherent part of our society and cannot be neglected due to their less power and authority. They are created as a companion for men and men have to make her walk with them in the course of life. The Indian female’s role and behaviors are defined by laws and as such are given divine sanction. She plays roles as a mother, a sister, a daughter, a wife. They play their roles with great responsibilities in upbringing of a healthy solid society, but she is in our so called modern world, still living in chains.

The basic unit of society is a woman. As woman makes a family, family makes a home and homes make a society. So we should never think that a society would come into existence without the contribution of women. We all know that without education, no development is possible. Here we have forgotten that the very first and best school of a child is its mother’s lap. A good healthy society doesn’t automatically emerge on its own and stands firm but it needs to be emerged and for its emergence women play a pivotal role.

The role of Indian women in their families revolves around well-established conventions of male supremacy and female sub-ordinance. Here the complete responsibility lies on the shoulders of the male to educate and encourage the females to step forward and to play their role in developmental processes of the family. Women are not only for home-making and child-rearing but they must also be given chance to put their hands a little forward in building up of a good solid society.

2. Women’s Education

Women education in India plays a key role in the social and economic development of the country. Educating a woman uplifts her life as well as the quality
of her life and her entire family. It is a fact that any educated woman will definitely support the education of her children especially a girl child and provide a better guidance to her children. An educated woman will easily imbibe an independent and progressive outlook in her children. More importantly, an educated woman in a society like India will assist in reducing the infant mortality rate and control the blossoming of the population. empowerment. Because of the negative perception of women in India, this article examines reasons behind the neglecting of women education, importance of women education, importance of women education in India and what the Indian government is doing to reverse the situation.

Women have a much lower literacy rate than men. Far fewer girls are enrolled in the colleges and many of them drop out. In the patriarchal setting of the Indian family, girls have lower status and fewer privileges than boy children. A conservative cultural attitude prevents some girls from attending colleges. Recently the Indian government has launched Saakshar Bharat Mission for Female Literacy. This mission aims to bring down female illiteracy by half of its present level.

The education of women in India plays a significant role in improving living standards in the country. A higher women literacy rate improves the quality of life both home and outside of home, by encouraging and promoting education of children, especially female children, and in reducing the infant mortality rate.

3. Objectives of the study

The researcher has framed the following objectives to analyze the study area

1. To study the history of women education.
2. To analyze the problems of women education.
3. To study the importance of women education.
4. History of women education

“Go where no one else will go, do what no one else will do”-Mary Lyon

Before and after Independence, India has been taking active steps towards women’s status and education. The 86th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2002, has been a path breaking step towards the growth of education, especially for females. According to this act, elementary education is a fundamental right for children between the ages of 6 and 14. The government has undertaken to provide this education free of cost and make it compulsory for those in that age group. This undertaking is more widely known as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).

Since then, the SSA has come up with many schemes for inclusive as well as exclusive growth of Indian education as a whole, including schemes to help foster the growth of female education.

The major schemes are the following:

- Mahila Samakhya Programme: This programme was launched in 1988 as a result of the New Education Policy (1968). It was created for the empowerment of women from rural areas especially socially and economically marginalized groups. When the SSA was formed, it initially set up a committee to look into this programme, how it was working and recommends new changes that could be made.

- Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme(KGBV): This scheme was launched in July, 2004, to provide education to girls at primary level. It is primarily for the underprivileged and rural areas where literacy level for females is very low. The schools that were set up have 100% reservation: 75% for backward class and 25% for BPL (below Poverty line) females.

- National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL): This programme was launched in July, 2003. It was an incentive to reach out to the girls who the SSA was not able to reach through other schemes. The SSA called out to the “hardest to reach girls”. This scheme has covered 24 states in India. Under the NPEGEL, “model schools” have been set up to provide better opportunities to girls.

One notable success came in 2013, when the first two girls ever scored in the top 10 ranks of the entrance exam to the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs). Sibbala Leena Madhuri ranked eighth, and Aditi Laddha ranked sixth.
Until recently, women have largely been excluded from the educational system. It may surprise you to know that while Harvard opened in 1636, the first college to admit women did not do so far another 200 years. Women did not begin attending college in equal numbers to men until as recently as 1980. Education is something women today often take for granted and they do not think about all of the hard work it took to attain right to education. In the past, women with little education often believed that they were not capable of things like participating in politics, having a carrier or even owning property. Women who were lucky enough to have received a quality education were more likely to be pioneers in civic activism and make history by understanding the history of women’s education one is able to better appreciate how far we have come and the extraordinary women who got us here.

5. Review of literature

“When 10% more girls go to school, a country’s GDP increases on average by 3% -Ayni Education International

The Oxford Dictionary defines women problem solving technique as “Efforts to make life worth living for women students”. Their efforts have their origin either in some statute formed by the state or in some local custom or in a collective agreement or in the woman student’s own initiative.(1)

According to Mbagwu and Ekwelum (2006), the increased need for women education was first expressed during the oil boom era of the 1970s in Nigeria which led to the establishment of many universities in the country. Interest in continuing education or part time programme is accentuated by the desire to acquire knowledge, skills and values that would enable recipient cope with every day changes in the environment or social milieu in which the individual finds herself.(2)

(Phillips, 2002) says that the influx of the new technologies may also have a detrimental impact on the number of female staff employed to work in distance teaching environments. If women are disadvantaged when it comes to training opportunities in the use of the new technologies, this may result in fewer women being employed as teachers/tutors in institutions that deliver courses through technology. She also summarizes that poor, rural women tend to be very busy, with both housework and family responsibilities, as well as often trying to take out a living, or supplement their family’s income.(3)

6. Importance of women’s education

“To educate a girl is to reduce poverty”- Former UN secretary General Kofi Annan

Education has been of central significance to the development of human society. It can be the beginning, not only of individual knowledge, information and awareness, but also a holistic strategy for development and change. Education is very much connected to women’s ability to form social relationships on the basis of equality with others and to achieve the important social good of self-respect. It is important, as well, to mobility (through access to jobs and the political process), to health and life (through the connection to bodily integrity).Education can allow women to participate in politics so they can ensure that their voices and concerns are heard and addressed in the public policy. It is also crucial for women to have access to the legal system. Education is a critical input in human resource development and is essential for the country’s economic growth.

6.1 Benefits of women’s education

Apart from the acquisition of knowledge and values conductive to social evolution, education also enables development of mind, training in logical and analytical thinking. It allows an individual to acquire organizational, managerial, and administrative skills. Moreover, enhanced self-esteem and improved social and financial status within a community is a direct outcome of education. Therefore, by promoting education among women, India can achieve social and human development, and gender equality. A large number of empirical studies have revealed that increase in women’s education boosts their wages and that returns to education for women are frequently larger than that of men. Increase in the level of female education improves human development outcomes such as child survival, health and schooling. Lower female education has a negative impact on economic growth as it lowers the average level of human capital.
Education has the significant inverse relationship with poverty because it provides employment opportunities and rejects poverty. The inclusion of trained and education women workforce will not only ensure women’s welfare, it will also increase the overall productivity of the workforce due to more competitiveness. Hence, the developmental and feminist economists argue that it is desirable for the government to allocate more resources towards women’s education, as it is going to benefit the whole society. The other hurdles are gender disparity in education in India, socio-economic hurdles, insurgency hurdles.

6.2 Learning and education

“Systematically modify the behavior or attitude” Learning and training effects are fundamental in the development of positive attitude towards learning among individuals. If proper learning and training have been acquired counselors of adults should engage in promoting their interests and inclinations along positive dimensions. In all, there is the need for the counselors to endeavour help the women stimulate and sustain positive attitude towards their learning. Of course, counseling of the learners should not be done in a vacuum. That is, the adult counselors must also appreciate the level of educational achievement of the women so that she can determine appropriate approaches, and techniques that will enhance their learning outcome and the realization of her counseling objectives. Based on the peculiarities or prevailing circumstance, the counselor must seek to achieve a high level of cognitive affective and instrumental relations with the women, so that they can easily understand and appreciate the nature of their circumstances and the influence acquired. It will be very easy to organize programmes that would be used of “systematically modify the behavior or attitude” they have developed towards their learning and education.

7. Data of women education

Census of India, 2001 indicates that only 54% women are literate as compared to 76% men (female literacy was 39% in Census 1991). Female literacy is highest in Kerala (88%) and lowest in Bihar (33%). The Adult Literacy rate of females (aged 15 yrs and above) is 48% in 2001 against 73.4% for adult males. However, 14.6% females and 17.4% males are literate without any formal education.

8. Problems of women education

Problems with family interventions also arise when parents are not interested continue to support women higher education. Other family factors such as child-rearing issues, emotional needs of parents, and family structure size can contribute to the problems of family intervention.

8.1 Woman Suffrage and the Home

It is still not being realized that there is definite connection between education, good motherhood and efficient house management. The management of millions of household and the upbringing of millions of children in thus is the hands of illiterate women. It is here that a change is required if our democratic and socialist intentions are not to remain a mere pretence. People can be motivated to have their children educated only if educational system is directly linked with economic and social development. As long as our education remains oblivious of the felt needs of people to solve their immediate problems and on the contrary, actually alienates them from their natural, social and cultural surroundings, they will rightly resist sending their children to school. It is the area of primary education, especially in rural areas, which should be given maximum attention. Primary education for both girls and boys is what we should be concerned about while planning our policies and allocation funds. It is this sector of our education structure that gets neglected in favor of all sorts of institutes of ‘higher learning’ and ‘research’ of a kind that are neither relevant nor pertinent to our pressing problems. The role of women outside home is becoming an important and even essential feature of our present day reality.

It sets forth the belief that the Suffrage movement strikes a blow squarely at the home and the marriage relation, and that the ballot is demanded by its most representative leaders for the purpose of making woman independent of the present social order. It argues that communism is the natural ally of Suffrage, and that, as homes did not spring out of the ground, they will not remain where men and women alter the mutual relations out of which the institution of home has slowly grown.

8.2 Woman suffrage and sex

It alludes briefly to the social evil, and then
discusses the Suffrage ideas in regard to sex as explained by both their older and more recent writers. It discusses the disabilities of sex in relation to the suffrage-the difficulties in the way of jury duty, police duty, and office-holding -and draws the conclusion that the fulfillment of such necessary work of the voting citizen is practically impossibility for woman, and has been formed to be so in the Western States. Many students start their studies academically unprepared for higher education. Poor basic and secondary education, combined with a lack of selection in the academic system, lie at the root of this problem. Yet rarely does an institution respond by creating remedial programs for inadequately prepared students.

Woman’s relation to the Republic is as important as man’s. Woman deals with the beginnings of life; man, with the product made from those beginnings; and this fact marks the difference in their spheres, and reveals woman’s immense advantage in moral opportunity. It also suggests the incalculable loss in case her work is not done or ill done. In a ruder age the evident value of power that could deal with developed force was most appreciated; but such is not now the case. It lies with us to prove that education, instead of causing us to attempt work that belongs even less to the cultivated woman than to the ignorant, is fitting us to train up statesmen who will be the first to do us honour.

If our ideals are mistaken or unworthy, then there will be ultimately no republic for men to govern or defend. When women are Buddhists, the men build up an empire of India. When women are Mohammedans, the men construct an Empire of Turkey. When women are Christians, men can conceive and bring into being a Republic like the United States.

9. Implications for adult women counseling and education

The challenges women encounter can undoubtedly affect their attitude towards learning since the low achievement of some of them is traceable to these challenges. It is obvious that the individual finds pleasure and meaning of life when they make progress in terms of achieving their goals and desires. The challenges women face demand for a kind of intervention that would enable them maximizes their participation and achieve the desired goal or objectives. From this understanding, it will not be difficult for adult education facilitators and counsellors to make smooth achievement in terms of helping their clients (i.e. the women) achieve their objectives of participating in continuing their education. The counselors and teachers are expected to understand the challenges of women and the prevailing situations which may, influence the attitude of the women towards learning and level of achievement. To facilitate the attainment of this counseling goal, the counselors must organize their activities in the language that is common to their adult women learners.

10. Conclusion

“Marriage can wait, Education cannot” -Khaled Hosseini

In conclusion, education access and participation in Ghana is stratified by four equity concerns: Gender-based disparity, socioeconomic status, spatial disparity, and program-based disparity.

The opportunities of women in many sectors of the Indian economy have been improved by the provision of educational opportunities for girls and the acceptance of women’s rights in the workplace, but female representation in the economy still remains low. The study suggested that women are hindered by both internal and external barriers which keep them from advancing to leadership. Internal barriers included the effects of socialization and sex stereotyping. External barriers derived from the structure of the education system that locked women into low-power, low-visibility, dead-end jobs, and limited their performance and opportunities as a result.

Women educational administrators’ advancement was further impeded by the cultural imperatives of male dominance and suppression. A study of choices for career development made by female student in India confirmed the many barriers women must overcome before assuming leadership roles in the education system, including family commitments, low self-esteem, and lack of opportunity and encouragement within the educational administration system. Nevertheless, the case studies suggest a number of measures for the provision of technical assistance by international organizations in:
• Capacity building in establishing measures to promote women’s opportunities in education

• Training of trainers in promotion of gender equity.

• Preparation of training materials for increasing gender awareness at all levels.

• Facilitating the participation of women education, field staff, scientists, academic personnel and policy makers in conferences, workshops and exchange visits.

• Facilitating information exchange and networking on women and development and gender issues.

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