



Women Empowerment

Challenges in the 21st Century



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Women Empowerment Challenges in the 21st Century

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Women Empowerment Challenges in the 21st Century

**Dr. Mohan Das
Dr. M. Lingaraju
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A Study on Challenge for Women Empowerment

Dr. P.Palpandi and Anita

Introduction

“To educate your women first and leave them to themselves, they will tell you what reforms are necessary.”

---- *Swami Vivekananda.*

Education of women in India has been a major issue for both the government and civil society, as the educated women play a very important role in the development of the country. India, at present has largest number of illiterates in the world. As we all know that education is must for everyone but unfortunately, in this male dominating society, the education of women has been neglected for a long time. Mostly people think that to spend money on daughters would be vain. Now, we see the change in people's mentality that they are worried about the future of their daughters and they are ready to give the same place to position their daughters as they want for their sons. But in rural areas, we see that there are negligible changes in rural people's thinking. Most of the villagers provide education to their daughters but not as much as they want for their sons. If their daughters learn to read or write the letters or count the money, they think that it is sufficient and feel proud that they have done their duty very well.

A higher women literacy rate improves the quality of life both at home and outside home, by encouraging and promoting education of children, especially female children, and helps in reducing the infant mortality rate. It is true that empowerment can be gained with the help of education because it gives the knowledge of right and wrong, truth and lie.

Women constitute almost half the human race. Education has been recognized as an essential agent of social change and development in any society of any country. Education is considered as a potential instrument through which processes of modernization and social change come to existence. Education exposes people to new thoughts and ideas which provides necessary skills.

According to the Government of India, "Empowerment means moving from a weak position to exercise a power." It is the ability to direct and control one's life. It is a process in which women gain control over their own lives of knowing and claiming their right at all levels of society at the international, local and household levels. Women also bear almost all responsibility for meeting basic needs of the family

Literature Review

Malik and Courtney (2011) studied that how higher education offers empowerment to women. The economic independence and increased standing with the family were the benefits of higher education. It also enabled the women to impact the discriminatory practices. Noreen and Khalid (2012) explored the possibilities and opportunities for women empowerment and how the participants in the study understand the role of higher education in empowerment of women at home and at work. They found out that the women should continue higher education and career by strategizing and acknowledging the support of their family members. Banerjee (2012) studied the empowerment of women through higher education. She concluded that the empowered women challenged the man in their workplace and were seen in the powerful corporate positions. Kandpal et al (2012) studied the participation in community level female empowerment program in India increases participants physical mobility, political participation and access to employment. Murtaza (2012) examined the current status of women in higher education in Gilgit Baltistan. He examined the challenges faced by the women were harassment at work places and work load. The parents didn't spend similar amount in educating their daughters as compare to their sons. Sonowal (2013) studied the effect of the SC and ST women in the rural areas of Sonitpur district. He found that the status of women in the present society, attitude of parents and guardians towards girl education. Taxak (2013) studied the disparity in education across the socio economic spectrum in India.

Objectives

There are two objectives of study:

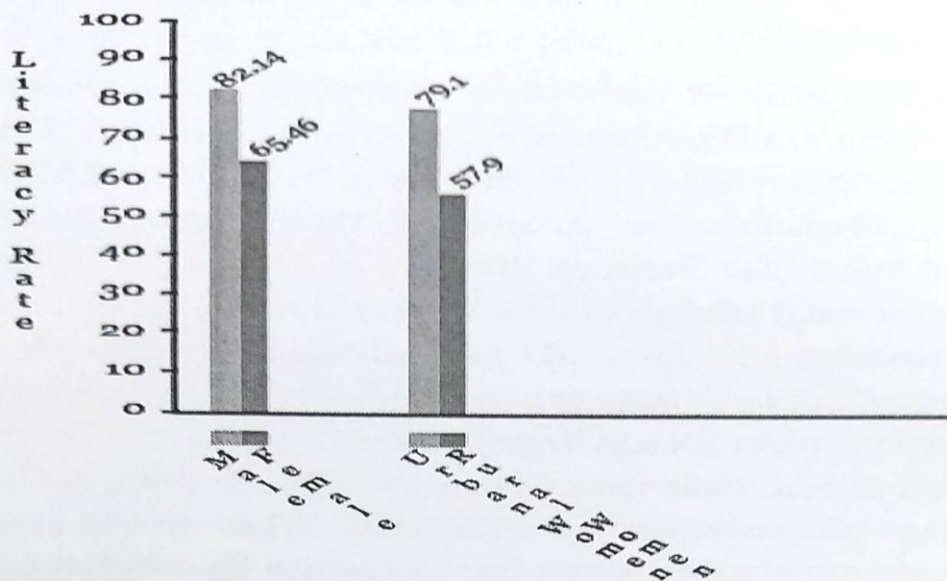
1. To study the role of education as challenge in women empowerment.

2. To study the impact of women empowerment.

Challenge of Education

The vast majority of the world's poor population is women. "Around the world, healthy, educated, employed and empowered women break poverty cycles not only for themselves, but for their families, communities, and countries too." According to United Nations World's Women 2010 Trends and Statistics, two-third of the world's illiterate population is female. The majority of school age children, not in school are girls. Women all over the world are challenged by a number of obstacles that restrict their ability to play significant roles in their communities and the broader society. Today, HIV/AIDS is rapidly becoming a woman's disease. Near about 60 percent of people living in Sub-Saharan Africa were sufferings with HIV/AIDS. When we talk about our country, the country has grown from leaps and bounds since its independence where education is concerned, the gap between women and men is severe. While 82.14% of adult men are educated, only 65.46% of adult women are known to be literate in India. Additionally, the norms of culture that state that the man of the family is the be-all and end-all of family decisions is slowly spoiling the society of the country. Women face many social challenges today whether it be making soaps and incense in order to secure an income for her family to raise children amidst the harsh economic crisis. A woman is dynamic in many roles she plays. In the village of Warwarhere in Maharashtra 400 women stood up and raised their voices to ban alcohol and drugs. Women have withstood perennial health problems due to the lack of toilet facilities and are forced to use fields and open spaces

Literacy Facts of Women in India



*Literacy rates relate to the population aged 7 years & above

Figure 1. Showing the Literacy Facts of Women in India

The current world food price crisis is having a severe impact on women. Around the world, millions of people eat two or three times a day, but a significant percentage of women eat only once. And, now, many women are denying themselves even that one meal to ensure that their children are fed. These women are already suffering the effects of even more severe malnutrition, which inevitably will be their children's fate as well. The impact of this crisis will be with us for many years.

The Ministry for Women & Child Development was established as a department of the Ministry of Human Resource Development in the year 1985 to drive the holistic development of women and children in the country. In 2006 this department was given the status of a Ministry, with the powers to:- Formulate plans, policies and programmes, enacts/amends legislation, guiding and coordinating the efforts of both governmental and non-governmental organisations working in the field of Women and Child Development.

It delivers such initiatives such as the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) which is a package of services such as supplementary nutrition, health check-ups and immunisation. As mentioned

earlier, the empowerment of women begins with their safety and health and this Ministry is committed to providing them.

Suggestion

Women Entrepreneur: According to a 2010 report *Women Entrepreneurs Worldwide* by Global Entrepreneurs Monitor that included interviews with more than 90,000 women across 59 economies—in only one of them did more women participate in entrepreneurship than men. Only eight out of 54 economies -Panama, Venezuela, Jamaica, Guatemala, Brazil, Thailand, Switzerland, and Singapore - have equal participation by men and women in entrepreneurship. The remaining economies show lower female participation, some as low as a 1:10 ratio. Women entrepreneurs made up between 1.5 percent and 45.4 percent of the adult female population in their respective economies. Around 83 million women across those regions ran businesses they had launched at least three and a half years before.

Conclusion

Education among women is the most powerful tool of attaining power in the society. Higher Education of women plays a very important role in releasing their energy and creativity and enabling them to meet the complex challenges of the present world. It helps in lessening inequalities and functions as a means for improving their status within the family. The higher education increases the women to take independent decisions, to reduce violence, women's ability to claim legal rights, participation in civic society, economic independence and many more. The biggest challenge before the Government and NGO's is to create awareness and sensitization among people of all levels, especially in rural areas, about the special needs of women and girls.

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Dr. Mohan Das is HOD of Sociology, Govt. First Grade College, Ramanagara. He holds a Master Degree and PhD in Sociology from Bangalore University. He also holds a Certificate in Career Counseling from the Martin Luther Christian University, Shillong. He proved himself to be a professional career counselor, besides being an academican and social scientist. Having associated with psychologists in counseling services for over a decade and offering guidance and suggestions to students in both their studies and career building, he transformed himself into a unique personality combining professional excellence and expertise. Dr. Das has shared his enriched knowledge and experience with distinction. In 2013, he was awarded of Vocational Excellence from the Bangalore Rotary Club for his outstanding contribution to counseling and guiding students towards fulfilling careers.



Dr. M. Lingaraju is Faculty in the Centre for Human Resource Development (CHRD) at the Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore. He obtained his Ph.D in Development Studies from the Mysore University. He has undertaken several research projects on issues relating to demographic trends and worked on the health status of women as well as children and involved in large scale surveys like National Family Health Surveys, Reproductive and Child Health – District Level Household Surveys, WHO – SAGE – India Project: 'Study on Global Ageing and Adult Health', Monitoring of S.S.A and Mid-day Meal Implementation in Karnataka and Rapid Appraisal of NRHM Implementation (Supported by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India. He has participated in a number of international and national seminars/conferences and presented research papers. Apart from that he has published a number of research papers in referred journals, edited books and conference proceedings. He has published in "International Conference Proceeding of PSRC", Planetary Scientific Research Centre, Dubai (UAE), pp. 112-116, December, 2012, edited by Prof. Parvinder S. Sandhu and Prof. E. Muzenda, (Under SRTT Financial Support). He has also edited a book on Karnataka's development scenario besides contributing papers to the volume. He has also keen interest in the understanding of social, economic and political challenges before the vulnerable sections of society including women.



Mr. Nagesh R is a Library and Information Science post graduate of the Bangalore University and an M.Phil degree holder, and also a Post-Graduation Diploma in Computer Applications (PGDCA) from the National Institute of Information Technology (NICT), Bangalore. He also holds a Certificate in Career Counseling from the Martin Luther Christian University, Shillong. He has cleared his UGC-NET. He has held valuable career guidance and counseling workshops to several students since 2007. He has wide ranging experience in knowledge management in educational institutions, scientific industries, corporate companies and research organizations. At present he is HOD of Library and Information Centre in the Govt. First Grade College, Hirisave, Department of Collegiate Education, Government of Karnataka. In 2013, he was awarded of Vocational Excellence from the Bangalore Rotary Club for his outstanding contribution to counseling and guiding students towards fulfilling careers.

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