

Importance of Women Education in 21st Century Indian Society

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www.ijrah.com || Vol. 5 No. 2 (2025): March Issue

Date of Submission: 16-03-2025

Date of Acceptance: 24-03-2025

Date of Publication: 31-03-2025

ABSTRACT

In ancient India, women had the right to special status and education and she in medieval India were deprived of their social status and right to education and the missionaries first realized the need for women's education in the first of half of the nineteenth century after the arrival of the English in this century towards promoting women's education. At this time the upper caste Hindus of India were full of various superstitions and them against women's education. Women in Muslim society had no freedom to go out in public. In addition to this, Child marriage, Satidah and other social prejudices at this time completely reduced women in society. In view of the above background, the present situation of the women in India needs to be discussed in the present study. In patriarchal societies where women are economically dependent on men, women naturally have to live a subservient life however, there is no doubt that the status of women has improved a lot as compared to the past as education spread among women and their employment opportunities increased. In order to describe the current situation of the women in India, the situation of upper class, middle class and Dalit women needs to be discussed and the western life currently having a significant impact on the family life of the affluent community as a result, the excess of luxury among the women of the 21st century society.

Keywords- Background, Concept, Importance, Society, Women Education.

I. INTRODUCTION

Women's education is critical to individual as well as country's development and education has been playing vital role in the life of an individual and has a major role in social, cultural, political and economic life of an individual as well as of a country. Thus, irrespective gender questions education playing a vital role in the cultural, social, political and economic life of a women and acts as a most viable instrument of social, cultural, political and economic change of Individual life. Hence, women's education is equally important like men for their social, cultural, economic and political change. Education is essential and basis for women's wellbeing and development. In this 21st Century and can't confine women to home and assign them with the

domestic's tasks such as cleaning of their house and take care of their children etc. they can play a major role in social development as well as in the country's developments through their officials works, services a skill. Since women's have the equal rights to education as men, because they are individual entities. Women's should not keep in a secondary position in our society as a result of gender discrimination and after reaching the civilization in the 21st Century there is still existing the gender discrimination which is often preventing the social mobilization process and women's upliftment which almost comprises of 50% of our society. Most of them are lagging behind due to the lack of proper education, learning, etc. They have been facing several problems and challenges in pursuing their education such as poverty, conservation, illiteracy etc. Since they

comprise almost 50% of world population, their education, advancement and empowerment are very vital for Individual, social and country's development.

II. EDUCATION

Education is an umbrella term which has different meaning and connotation and the concept of education is dynamic and it is a basic to civilization, to social survival and essential to biological evolution. According to John Dewey, "education is the development of all those capacities in the individual which will enable him to control his environment and fulfill his responsibilities". Thus, it acts as an instrument of social, cultural, political and economic change of individual life. It has been playing vital role to the all-round development of individual life. Education has individual, social and national aims and a well educated individual person besides fulfilling his/her goals and can also positively contribute to the country, to the society as well.

Women Education

The provisions of all facilities and opportunities to women for education are called women's education and constitution under articles 15(3) and 15(4) creates special provisions and arrangements for protecting the interests of women and children. State shall not discriminate with any citizens on the grounds of caste, religion, sex or place of birth. Thus, irrespective of male or female every person has the rights to get equal opportunity facilities of education. Women education is very essential for overall development society and country even a civilization and a well-educated woman provides the skills, knowledge and self-assurance necessary to be a better mom, worker and citizen. A well-educated woman will also be more productive and well paid at work. Indeed, the return on investment in education is often higher for women than for males. According to Brigham Young, "You educate a man; you educate a man. You educate a woman; you educate a generation." and the needs and importance of women education is so essential as they can bring a huge change in 21st century society.

Objectives

- ❖ Concept of education and women education
- ❖ The problems and challenges of women education
- ❖ Importance of women's education in 21st century society

III. METHODOLOGY

The study has been conducted based on the method of document review in accordance with the qualitative approach of research and has been done on the basis of the secondary sources of data like books, research journals, etc.

IV. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF WOMEN EDUCATION IN INDIA

Women Education in Vedic Times

In Vedic India, women had the right to education. Since women's freedom was not violated then they had the right to education along with social and religious rights and girls had a place in the society as they had the right to offer sacrifices and offerings. The sage women were called Rishika Brahmabadini. Rama, Lopamudra, Ghosha, Sahu, Yogita, Indrani, Gargi, Maitri, Devjani, Savitri, Bishbara etc. these sages were called Brahmabadini. It was the father's duty to educate his daughter. Foreign virgins were considered a source of pride for the family. The Upanishad mentions a few qualified teachers such as Suvala, Moitri etc. Many changes took place in the Vedic society during the Sutra Yuga and in ancient time women enjoyed war rights. The women were proficient in embroidery and weaving. Besides, women were also skilled in singing and dancing. In addition to dance songs, women were trained in painting, recitation, poetry, side games, beauty treatment etc. The trend of women's education continued till the time of Manu and the girls between the ages of 16 and 17 used to get married. They lived the conventional way of life of the entire ashram. However, they also had to recite a few Vedas. The Brahmabadini mystery was about separate entity. Women have been underestimated in Buddhist philosophy as the ideal of ascetics without lust was adopted. There was no place for women in Bihar life. And because Buddhist monasteries were educational institutions, maiden women did have equal right in education. But the words of the Buddha stirred the hearts of women. So Goutam himself acknowledges the right of the nun to the life of Mahaprajapati and disciple Ananda at the request of Ananda and women also get the right to education. However, their dignity was greatly diminished. Because of the many restrictions placed on their 21st century education.

Women Education in Middle Ages

Women's education in Islamic discipline was not illegal. Hazrat Mahammad mentioned that women's education is essential. So in the early days of Islamic glory, foreign women like Fatima, Hamida, Sophia can be found and with the introduction of the veil, the opportunities for women's education become narrower. In the view environment of India, women's education has not been quantitatively promoted. Ordinary women's education was of course shrunk, the students of Andarmahal continued. Some emperors created girls' school for the purpose of encouraging women's education. But in most cases the education was arranged in the inner court. Special Ulama were appointed to teach fine arts in the harem. Many women in the royal family were only educated themselves but also patrons of education. Sultana Razia was also educated. Sultan Salauddin and Emperor Akbar established the Zenana School. Sultan Ghiyasuddin of Malabar appointed a

teacher for women in hareme. Chand Bibi was one of the notable women of the middle ages.

Current Situation of Women in India

The current situation of middle class women in India is very troubling and in this society education has spread among women more than before and the women of this society have been forced to take up different professions in order to gain financial comfort. But at the same time, the burden of domestic work and child rearing has remained same as a result, working middle class women now have to work extra hard work at home and abroad. But while this change is generally characterized by special forms such as feminism, women's progress, etc, it has not really affected the special status of middle- class women's society. The plight of women in India's poor and working class is even direr. The women of this community have to work hard to support their families. The malnutrition is daily occurrence in their lives due to economic hardship. It is her responsibility to bear and reflect on the child from time to time. Overall, there is no doubt that, the current situation of women in our country is very low as compared to other developing countries.

V. THE PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES OF WOMEN EDUCATION

- ❖ A large portion of the population of India lives in rural areas. Generally farmers in rural areas and people from other communities are not aware of the need for women's education.
- ❖ The girls of these families get married at a very young age. As a result they do not get any opportunity to learn to read.
- ❖ Due to the remoteness of the school in rural areas, it is difficult for girls to travel to school.
- ❖ From an early age, girls in rural areas have to help their mother with households chores in many ways so that, they do not have time to study.
- ❖ In the eyes of most parents in our country, boys are more valuable than girls. That is why parents especially in rural areas are not as keen on educating boys as they are about educating girls.
- ❖ Conservative attitude between Muslims and indigenous people make it difficult for girls to get an education.
- ❖ In India, the child marriage is still prevalent among the undeveloped community. After marriage girls do not get opportunity to study at the in-law's house.
- ❖ They become stars at an early age so raising children becomes their main jobs.
- ❖ Maternal illiteracy is a major obstacle to spread of women's education due to poverty and lack of necessary initiatives by the government and public.

VI. PROVISIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN EDUCATION

- ❖ Make arrangement so that equal status of men and women is established in the society.
- ❖ Self-sufficient, employment opportunities for women need to be increased.
- ❖ Farmers in rural areas and underdeveloped communities need to be made aware of the need for women's education.
- ❖ The superstitious and conservative attitudes of these people need to be eradicated through the spread of adult education.
- ❖ The child rearing should not be prohibited by law alone but rather, illiterate people should be made aware of evils of the child marriage.
- ❖ The arrangement should be made to open more girls' schools for the benefits of girls in rural areas.
- ❖ Parents need to make girls aware of their interest of education.
- ❖ Make arrangement to eradicate poverty and improve the living standard of the poor. As a result children from poor families do not need money as child labor and interest they are attracted to go to school as the government and public welfare organization have to try to develop.
- ❖ If the children of poor families who are not able to eat twice a day in proper get school meal then school attendance rate will naturally increase and their access to education will be easier.
- ❖ Special measures need to be taken to eradicate superstitions and conservatism's from the mind of Muslim and communities.
- ❖ The government and the people must take special initiative to promote women's education.

VII. IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN'S EDUCATION IN 21ST CENTURY SOCIETY

Individual development: Education for women is very essential and significant for their all-round individual development. Progress and welfare of a country/society are not attainable unless and until the status of women is improved. Their education helps them to develop other field of life and women's educational upliftment is the most important factor for their individual development which in turn, bring changes in the other aspects of their life. The supporters of the individual aims in education believe that "social institutions exist only to make the individual life better, fuller, richer, happier, more secure and therefore, more fruitful than would otherwise be possible." It is a prepared environment in which the child can blossom to the best of his capacity. It should aim at some good, discover it and find out means to achieve this aim. The practical explanation of individual

aims in education in a wider sense refers to the principle of self realisation of the individual and concept gets support by the psychologists. Researches in psychology prove that each individual is born with certain innate potentialities, which are peculiar to him. No two children are identical in intellectual capacity and emotional disposition. Therefore, education should aim at finding out the innate powers and possibilities of the child and provide him means by which he may be enabled to realise the highest of them. Thus, education should aim at the development of the individual as well as the 21st century society.

Country's development: Women's education is very vital for the progress and prosperity of a country and through the education process women develop their capacities and skills. Being human resource with the faculties and skills and knowledge women contributed a lot to the development of society and nation and women's education and their upliftment and participations are vital and their individual level of development in a sum total leads to holistic social, cultural and economic as well as political development of a country.

Sound family: Women's education has great importance in establishing healthy, happy and sound family and an educated woman makes the home happy and healthy and a well-educated woman as a mother rearing and bearing her children with a care and discipline moreover, she tries to treat politely with every family member and binding everyone in a single-family thread. In this way she socializes and educates every family member. In such a way an educated woman could give sound family.

Economic development: Educated women contributed extensively to the economic development of the country and there is a relationship between education and economic upliftment of women. Educated women increase the production of goods, services and national income and an educated woman knows the need of saving which is the foundation for capital formation and economic development.

Elimination of Crime against women: Education plays a vital weapon in eliminating many social crimes and evils against women prevailing in society. Social customs such as Sati, Dowry, Female infanticide, Flesh Trade, and other harmful customary practices can be eradicated through female education. An educated woman is pivotal in a civilized society and influences the beliefs and thoughts of its members and stands up for the injustice pitted against women in the family or society against other girls/ women.

Improvised Standard of Living: Female education improvises and elevates the standard of living. A family relying on double wages leads to a more satisfied and happy family over a family that relies on a single-parent income and an educated women's family member earns equal pay as the male members and aid and elevates the family's financial needs and the standard of the family. Two incomes under the same roof improve the quality of

living and ensure and facilitate the importance of female education in the family and 21st century society.

Self-Reliance: Education is vital for women as it makes women become self-reliant and eliminates her need to depend on a third person for her and her family's survival and becomes aware of her rights and employment on an equal plank with men and fends her family's needs. Financially independent women raise her voice against prevailing old social customs and injustices.

Prevents Social Exclusion: An uneducated female child or woman is likely to work as domestic help or in extreme cases, become a victim of flesh trade who spend their life as domestic help/any other menial jobs often get secluded from society and the seclusion or exclusion of women by society leads to physical as well as psychological traumas and ailments. An educated woman brews a balanced society.

Promotion of Women Education: In a developing country like India, awareness begins at home and the rural sections of the society. Awareness of the importance of female education in different villages leads to a positive reaction to women's education furthermore, the construction of schools, healthcare centres, and other facilities at shorter distances diminishes the fear among people. Also, proper security, strict actions, and punishment against those who commit crimes against women aid the welfare of the women community.

VIII. CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

A human society consists of men and women and if both men and women are educated, they can play an equal role. It is said that a man and a woman are two wheels of a cart. If one of the wheels is weak, the cart cannot move properly. Normally fifty percent of the total population is occupied with females. If female members of society are uneducated, fifty percent of people of a country will be uneducated and the progress of the nation depends on female education too. Female education plays the principle role to faster conjugal life. Educated women can help their family, society, and country as well. If they are educated, they can look after their children properly. They can teach their children good manners, discipline and lessons. The mother is the first teacher of everyone; similarly, educated women can help her husband to make their life properly, prosperous and can manage her family appropriately. She can support her husband in many ways and should be properly trained. They need various kinds of skills and knowledge. They can learn simple subjects like home science, child care, first aids interior designing etc. Furthermore they can be engineers, doctors, teachers, leaders so on. Appropriate female education enhances freedom, justice and equality in opportunity. We must provide good education for our daughter. Many people

have begun to realize the importance of education for women. If we provide good education for our daughters, they cannot less than our sons. Unless we provide good education for girls, a country will be progress. An educated woman is like a magic wand which brings prosperity, health and pride. We just have to unleash her potential and see the magic happens and have improved a lot on women education since our independence but still a lot remains to be improved. Factors resisting of women education in India are mainly societal and we need to recognize them and eliminate them, if we want to achieve the goals of 21st century socio-economic development.

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