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Parvaiz Yousuf
M.Phil. Scholar,
Jiwaji University Gwalior

Nasir Ahmad Wani
M.Phil. Scholar,
Jiwaji University Gwalior

Role of education in women empowerment a sociological study of the women Professors of Gwalior city M.P. India

Parvaiz Yousuf, Nasir Ahmad Wani

Abstract

Women empowerment means to give power or authority to women. It does not only mean to empower their economic status but social, political and cultural status as well. From centuries women were discriminated and deprived of from their basic facilities like education, health, family matters, etc. Education is the remedial tool to eradicate all these barriers and enhance the status of women by empowering them in all spheres of life. Education brings positive change in the life of women by changing the attitude and the ideology of the society. Giving education to women is the best medicine for their development. This paper is based on the objective analysis of the role of education in women empowerment.

Keywords: Empowerment, education, women, status.

1. Introduction

“That country and that nation which did not respect women have never become great nor will ever in future.”

Swami Vivekananda.

By virtue of the efforts, specially after independence, the status of women got uplifted not only morally but educationally, socially and economically as well. Many articles, acts, laws and legislations were framed in our constitution to maintain gender equality and empowering women in each and every sphere of life and to safeguard their status in the society. The Women were given status of minority and provided with special facility of reservation in education, employment and politics in order to empower them educationally and provide them attractive opportunities to pursue education so that women should not lag behind. New policies like liberalization, globalization, privatization were introduced by these policies women got opportunities for employment so they became self reliant.

The term Empowerment of women has become popular especially after 1980s. It refers to the process of strengthening the hands of women who have been suffering from various disabilities, inequalities and gender discrimination. The empowerment of women refers to the process equal rights opportunities, responsibilities and power positions to women so that they are able to play a role in the society and control her own life and to determine her own conditions ^[1].

After Independence, the government of India undertook a number of legislative measures to safeguard the interest of women. Some of them may be noted as the Hindu Marriage Act 1955, The Hindu Succession Act 1956, the Special Marriage Act 1954, the Dowry Prohibition Act 1961, the Suppression of Immoral Traffic of Women and Girls Act-1956, The medical termination of Pregnancy Act-1971, The criminal Law Amendment Act-1983, the Family Court Act-1984, the Indecent Representation of women Act-1986, The 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendment Acts-1993. These all are the Acts for women to equally entitle Individual freedom, fundamental rights including social, cultural, religious, educational, economic and political activity participation. The constitution makers and the national leaders realized the equal social status of men and women for the better development of the society. Hence, bringing about more and more legislations to ensure better opportunities to grant more right and concession is of no benefit unless there is a basic change in the people's attitude towards women and women's role in society.

Correspondence
Parvaiz Yousuf
M.Phil. Scholar,
Jiwaji University Gwalior

The year 1975 was observed as “International year of Women “as per the call of the UNO. From 1975 onwards, the 8th day of March is being observed as “International women’s Day.” The year 1990 was observed as “SAARC year of The Girl Child.” The Government of India declared the year 2001 as the “Year of women’s empowerment.” These declarations prescribed for all-round development of women in India as well as in the world [2].

Education is milestone of women empowerment because it enables them to responds to the challenges, to confront their traditional role and change their life. It helps in reducing inequalities and functions as a means for improving their status within the family. Education of women in India has also been a major issue for both the government and civil society as the educational women play a very important role in the development of the country. So we cannot neglect the importance of education in the reference to women empowerment in India [3].

Review of literature:

Srivastava, (2014). Empowering the women means creating such an environment in which they can take independent decisions for their personal development and the development of society in general. Empowerment is the process by which the women achieve increased control and participation in decision making which in turn helps to achieve equal basis with men in various spheres – political, economic, social, cultural and civil. Education is truly the key to empower women and also provide for all round economic growth of countries. Education is an essential means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to fully participate in the development process [4].

Jahan Aijaz and Shashikal A.D.J. (2013) corroborated that the most potent weapon related to women's empowerment is education. Education plays an important role in changing women's attitude towards empowerment and their status in family and society. A healthy well educated informed and well employed woman will definitely be able to assert her rights and make concrete contributions to the development process. Thus education does lead to women development and creates awareness about women's rights and is thus empowering at the all level [5]. 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 [6].

Objective of the study

To study how education changes the status and position of women in the community.

Area of the study

In this study married women professors of two girls colleges of Gwalior city namely Kamla Raja girls autonomous P.G. College and Vijayarage govt. P.G. college morar were studied. There are only 114 married women teachers including both contractual and permanent working in these respective colleges. The present study is based on the data collected from 100 respondents. According to aims and objectives of the study interview schedule was used as a tool to collect data from respondents.

Methodology

In the present study the information collected from both primary and secondary sources.

Primary data: The primary data has been prepared through interview schedule in a more systematic manner.

Secondary data: The processing data has been collected from books, journals, reports, etc.

Interpretation and analysis of data

The data, after collection, has to be processed and analyzed in accordance with the objectives and outline laid down for the purpose at the time of developing the research plan. This chapter is the main focus of the research work and is named as Analysis and Interpretation of data. After collection of data and its classification and tabularization, the data are analyzed. The analysis of data refer to breaking down the complex factors of the tabulated material in terms of simple parts and putting the parts together in arrangement in order to determine inherent facts or meanings. In the present research work after collecting data the classification was done according to the characteristics, homogeneity and heterogeneity of the data. Then after coding, editing and tabulation was done on the basis of the general variables and specific questions justifying the objectives of the study. The analysis of the collected data is as follows:-

Table 1: Do you agree that educated women have equal participation in their family decisions / affairs?

S. no.	Alternatives	No.	%
1	Yes	81	81
2	No	19	19
Total		100	100

From the above mentioned table among 100 respondents more than three-fourth are of the view that educated women have equal participation in family decisions and affairs. However about one fifth of them are not agreed with this view. The study reveals that education empowers women by giving proper honour to their views in the family matters and decisions.

Table 2: Do you agree that the poor parental educational background affects the status of women adversely?

S. no.	Alternatives	No.	%
1	Agree	75	75
2	Disagree	25	25
Total		100	100

From the above table out of 100 respondents, three- fourth of the respondents agree to this view that poor parental educational background affects the status of women adversely. However one- fourth are disagreed to this view

Table 3: Are you of the view that educated women have more respect than uneducated women in the community?

S. no.	Alternatives	No.	%
1	Agree	82	82
2	Disagree	18	18
Total		100	100

From the above table among 100 respondents, more than three-fourth are of the view that educated women have more respect than uneducated women in the community. While about one fifth are disagreed to this view. The study shows that most of the respondents are of the view that educated women can take better decisions in the community as compared to uneducated women.

Table 4: Are you agree that education reduces gender discrimination?

S. No.	Alternatives	No.	%
1	Yes	94	94
2	NO	6	6
Total		100	100

From the above table among 100 respondents almost all respondents are of the view that education reduces the gender discrimination. However only few respondents are opposed to this view. The study reveals that most of the respondents are of the view that education reduces the gender discrimination and gender inequity.

Table 5: Do you feel that higher education gives women a higher position in society?

S. No.	Alternatives	No.	%
1	Yes	77	77
2	NO	23	23
Total		100	100

From the above table among 100 respondents more than three- fourth are of the view that the higher education gives women higher positions in the society. However about one fourth of them are not satisfied with this view.

Table 6: Do you feel that lifestyle of women has been changed by women empowerment?

S. No.	Alternatives	NO.	%
1	Yes	88	88
2	NO	12	12
Total		100	100

From the above table out of 100 respondents more than three-fourth are of the view that life style of women has changed due to the women empowerment. However few respondents are dissatisfied.

Conclusion

On the basis of classification, tabulation, interpretation and analysis of the data collected, it was found that Empowerment of women is directly linked with education. Education is considered as a key instrument for the change which is ultimately responsible for national development. Educated empowered women transform families, communities, and finally the nation. The study reveals that there is a high degree of positive correlation between education and status and position of women in the society. It was found in the study area that more than three-fourth respondents are of the view that education is vital instrument for the change in life style of women. It also brings improvement in their position and status. Most of the respondents stated that by achieving higher education women got great respect in the society and also agree that education is vehicle to change the conservativeness and narrow-mindedness. Most of the respondents agree that educated women have more respect than uneducated women. They can take better decisions about family and society for their betterment. The study highlights the fact that education is the main tool to reduce gender discrimination; almost all respondents supported this view. The educated women can be more empowered than uneducated women in the politics. It is worth to mention here that after independence lot of

efforts were made to improve the status and empowerment of women but still there is a need to be done a lot.

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