

EMPOWERED WOMEN: LONG WAY TO GO

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Abstract

For three decades gender has been accepted as a category in the formulation of policy and curricula frameworks in India. Gender, Equality, and Empowerment of girls are the key concepts in educational documents for long. The important question to be raised is-what have been limitations of our approach and efforts in formulating curricula policy, and practices. (i) Gender as concerns only girls and women as isolated category. (ii) Equality as concerns increasing representation of these notions of gender in educational material, sensitive portrayals of discrimination which girls face, portraying positive role models and enacting role reversals of stereotypes and neutralizing texts of any gendered references.(iii) Empowerment concerns for effective implementation of better hygiene, population control, informed mothering of future citizens of the nation, upholding tradition and spiritual values and improving social cohesion with supplementary income generation. This approach effaces their very identity and rights as autonomous human being.

Keywords: Gender, Equality, Empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history in many societies including India, gender inequality was part and parcel of an accepted male dominated culture. The two major problems were Atrocities and discrimination from past present civilised society. The traditional mentalities assume that the place of women is mainly concentrated to the household activities like kitchen work and upbringing of the children and considered as sex object and inferior to men in different spheres of knowledge. According to *Manusmiriti* the women are under subjection of her father, brother, husband and son.

Empowering women means to increase their ability and decision making so that they can stand equal to men and can play positive role in growth of society by growing own self-confidence, self belief and economic contribution at one end and knowledge information and law of right at other end for this there is need of :

- Environment for their growth.

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- Use of their rights and independence in all areas.
- Economic equality, health care.
- Fast justice against discrimination.

Over the past decade, gender equality and women empowerment have been explicitly recognised as a key note only to the health of notions, but also to social and economic development. According to Cambridge English dictionary, empowerment means “to authorize” authorization in terms of control over their lives. when applied in context of development the particular segment of population, the poor the women, the vulnerable , the weak and discriminated to be empowered to have control over their lives for better SES & political conditions. Empowerment is multidimensional and social process.

If we focus Indian scenario the NPE 1986 suggested certain strategies to empower women. I2001 was celebrated Women Empowerment year human resource and empowerment of women unlocks the door for modernization but half of world’s malnourished children live in India. In all the critical stages many women suffer malnutrition purely due to discrimination and narrow mindsets of the society. Empowering of any section of society is a myth until they are conferred equality before law. However principle of gender equality is enshrined in the constitution in its Preamble, Fundamenal rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive principles. 73rd amendment is for the reservation of seats for women in local bodies. Apart from this much legislation were passed as Hindu marriage act, Dowry protection, Medical terminations of pregnancy Equal Remunerations and Pre natal diagnostic techniques etc. to safeguard the rights of women.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA NEEDS AN ACTION RESEARCH

Addressing the malice of gender discrimination and women empowerment in India is long drawn battle against powerful structural forces of the society which are against women growth with fewer exceptions that hide the realities of dismal access to health and education. Formulating laws and policies are no enough. The fact is that most of the things are not going o change overnight but for this we cannot stop talking action. It needs to take ground level actions focussing towards social attitude and practices prevalent in the society which are highly biased against women. In our country discrimination is at every level. Gender disparity is high, crimes and violence against women is increasing and even unreported several times,

workplace harassment is another rising phenomenon, high dropout rates at puberty for marriage, Female feticide are some main social crises.

For this there is a need to change the basic social attitude which cultivates gender inequality and biasness. Even after many constitutional provisions nothing happened upto the mark. The need of hour is Self empowerment i.e. women should come together and decide to self empowerment themselves .it should be all round in nature only then we can think about galvanizing the system towards the direction better health facilities, nutrition and educational facilities for women at very large scale. Vivekanand “That country and that nation which does not respect women will never become great now and nor will ever in future.” For the sake of humanity and credit of society let us work collectively to provide the desired rights and status to women by adopting and execution of laws under constitutional framework strictly.

CURRENT SCENARIO

Due to the deep roots of discrimination since thousands of years the half hearted attempts will not work as all laws and policies are just remain on paper. The ground situation on the other hand just remains the same and in many instances worsens further. The key findings of National Family health survey data in the areas of interest are:

- Son preference
- Education
- Age at the marriage
- Spousal difference
- Employment
- Female house hold headship
- Access to resources
- Gender relationship
- Decision making
- Spousal Violence etc.

These all are due to lot of difference in educational sector in villages and. The educational gap needed to be buried down for overcoming the problems. 10% women’s of Madhya Pradesh are educated in comparison of 91 from Kerala.

Education is one of basic need. It provides healthy independent and happy life to us by collaborating with active organization; govt also helped starting primary education and industrial training organization. The three important things for the empowerment as

- ❖ Independence(Freedom)
- ❖ Health
- ❖ Education

Some industrial training organization is playing an important role in their empowerments. There are lot of opportunities provided too in terms of facilities and loan etc in some places. Although women organizations are doing good work in the country by propagating information regarding various schemes and also few training centres.

Estimation of women position in society is quite different task. Mostly their position is quite bad in society. There were lot of boundaries on them in cultural form. Equal status is provided to them only on papers. The fact is that women are not independent to take any decisive decision for their life. They are also not safe anywhere they are facing many problems at workplaces it all needs to be improved

CONCLUSION

The concept of sustainable development is defined by world commission of environment as “the development which meets the need of present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs”. It therefore encapsulates the needs of both men and women. Intra-generational equity cannot be achieved without addressing the gender relations which underline prevailing inequity nor can Inter-generational equity be achieved if inequalities continue to be perpetuated. It is crucial to train and give real power to the women leaders, so that they can bring a catalytic change in the society regarding women.

The process of gender equality and women empowerment still has a long way to go.

Gender is not just a women issue.....

It is a people issue

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