



Women Empowerment through Higher Education in India

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ABSTRACT

The present paper is an attempt to analyze the “Women Empowerment through Higher Education in India”. Women in India have been experiencing different status since the inception of the civilization. Though women form half of the population, yet the masculine principles made the women suffer a lot. They were denied equal opportunities and importance as men. India was no different from the rest of the world. Indian women have been struggling for equal rights over the past millennium. Hence, the history of women in India has been very eventful. The uprising of various female reform movements all over the country resolved the condition of women India gradually. However, in India women were assigned to certain rights in the ancient days. Interestingly, Women Education in Ancient India augmented. India's higher education system is the third largest in the world, next to the United States and China. The higher education system in India has grown in a remarkable way, particularly in the post-independence period, to become one of the largest systems of its kind in the world. However, the system has many issues of concern at present, like financing and management including access, equity and relevance, reorientation of programmes by laying emphasis on health consciousness, values and ethics and quality of higher education together with the assessment of institutions and their accreditation. These issues are important for the country, as it is now engaged in the use of higher education as a powerful tool to build a knowledge-based information society of the 21st Century. In India the female education has its roots in the British Regime. In 1854 the East India Company acknowledged women's education and employment. Initially this education was limited only to primary school level education and only the richer section of the society enjoyed this facility. There is a possibility of revolutionary change in India's higher education system and this is women participation. In some elite institutions we find that number of female students is more than male students and there is a possibility to increase this trend. It is true that number of males is outnumbered in comparison with female. India is country where man dominance in the society prevails. It is very essential for the harmonious development of the country that women should go hand by hand and shoulder to shoulder with men. And for empowering the women, higher education will play a vital role

Key words: Women Empowerment, Higher Education . Introduction Dr. S. Radhakrishnan (1948). He says “there cannot be educated people without educated women. If general education has to be limited to men or women, the opportunity should be given to women. From them it would most surely be passed on to the next generation.” Higher education (also called post-secondary education, third level or tertiary education) is an optional final stage of formal learning that occurs after completion of secondary education. Often delivered at universities, academies, colleges, seminaries, conservatories, and institutes of technology, higher education is also available through certain college-level institutions, including vocational schools, trade schools, and other

career colleges that award academic degrees or professional certifications. Tertiary education at non-degree level is sometimes referred to as further education or continuing education as distinct from higher education. The right of access to higher education is mentioned in a number of international human rights instruments. that "higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every The UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966 declares, in Article Higher education includes teaching, research, exacting applied work (e.g. in medical schools and dental schools), and social services activities of universities. Within the realm of teaching, it includes both the undergraduate level, and beyond that, graduatelevel (or postgraduate level). The latter level of education is often referred to as graduate school, especially in North America. In addition to the skills that are specific to any particular degree,. Tertiary-educated individuals were earning twice as much as median workers. In contrast to historical trends in education, young women were more likely to complete upper secondary education than young men. Additionally, access to education was expanding and growth in the number of people receiving university education was rising sharply. By 2014, close to 40 percent of people aged 25–34 (and around 25 percent of those aged 55–64), were being educated at university

I. INTRODUCTION

Higher Education in India includes Universities that are affiliated to the state governments or central government. Universities in India are engineering education and business schools that are monitored and accredited by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). Various professional courses are offered by these universities and institutions. The students interested in technology and engineering can enroll in the prestigious IITs in India. The higher education in the country also produces trained business administrators. They get their training in the premier institutions of management and most esteemed among the management institutes are the IIMs in India. Admission to all these professional education colleges is done through all-India common admission tests such as IIT-JEE, AIEEE, CAT and CPMT. Dependent women are not empowered women. If women think just that being highly educated and employed they are empowered, it is a myth. Women have to awake from deep slumber and understand the true meaning of empowerment. Everyone must understand that empowering women doesn't mean empowering them in technical area only. Women should remember that they are also rational, intelligent and thinking human beings. For centuries, women were treated as less-than-equal to men in many ways. Women were not allowed to vote, own property, or work in many jobs. This situation is due to strong addiction to culture and tradition. Such patience is exercised not only for the sake of society and children, but also due to lack of confidence to live as a single woman and face the challenges of life. Women have to awake from deep slumber and understand the true meaning of empowerment. Now that we are out of those dark ages, women are more EMPOWERED to do whatever they want. This means that they have the ability to choose their own destiny, job, vote, and do anything a man can do. The Oxford American Dictionary defines "empowerment" as "to make (someone) stronger and more confident, esp. in controlling their life and claiming their rights."

Objectives The main objectives of this research paper are:-

1. To study the relevance of higher education in women's life. 2. To analyse the economic benefit of women empowerment through Education. 3. To study the need of women empowerment. 4. To study the role of higher education in the empowerment of women. 5. To examine the impact of women empowerment on the growth of the country.
2. Research Methodology This research paper is basically descriptive and analytical in nature. In this paper attempt has been taken to analyse the Women Empowerment through Higher Education in India. The data used in it is purely from secondary sources according to the need of this study
3. Literature Review 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 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.

II. WOMEN EDUCATION IN INDIA

Women comprise approximately half of the population in the world. But the hegemonic masculine ideology made them bear a lot as they were denied equivalent opportunities in different parts of the world. The augment of feminist ideas has, however, led to the marvelous development of women's condition in the society throughout the world in recent times. Access to education has been one of the most urgent and important demands of these women's rights movements. Women education in India has also been a chief preoccupation of both the government and social or civil society as educated women can play a very important role in the development of the country. In the present era, the Indian society has established a number of institutions for the educational development of women and girls. These educational institutions aim for immense help and are concerned with the development of women. In the modern society, women in India have come a long way. Indian women is at par with men in all kinds of tasks like reaching the moon, conquering Mount Everest, and participating in all fields. All this is possible just because of education and the profound impact it has had on women.

Women Education in Ancient period Indian Women during the ancient times was said to be superior to men. The women in ancient India were given significance and they held a prominent position in the Indian society during that time. Access to education was easy for the women in ancient times. Through the massive Women

Education in Ancient India several women seers and thinkers originated in ancient times such as Gargi and Maitreyi. Women enjoyed the tremendous right to education and teaching. The women intellectuals in ancient India gathered eminence by participating in educational debates and discussions in the assemblies of erudite persons. Gargi was a prominent participant in the ancient society beside men such as Uddalaka Arni. In Vedic period, educational system was very developed and the main subject taught was the Veda. The Veda or the six Vedangas were taught including the performance of sacrifice, correct pronunciation, knowledge of prosody, etymology, grammar, and jyotisha or the science of calendar. Women Education in Ancient India produced women with significant authority. Ancient Indian texts describe the influence of the women in the society. Mahabharata by Veda Vyasa sketch the persuasion of Draupadi on the husbands to overthrow the Kauravas. Valmiki's Ramayana also depict the influence of Sita that resulted in the wiping away of Ravana

B. Women's Education in Medieval India Women education in medieval India further weakened and declined with the introduction of Purdah system . Different customs and conventions of diverse religions like Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity further deteriorated and depreciated the state of women in the country. A range of socio religious movements contributed to the development of women literacy in the country. Many leaders took several initiatives to make education available to the women of India. The ordered form of women education in India was incorporated in the early centuries

C. Women's Education in Colonial India position of the women education in India revived with the invasion of the British in the country and with the advent of Bhakti movement. The colonial period also introduced the institutional form of imparting learning. Women education in Colonial India witnessed an essential expansion. Various movements were launched to make women of the country literate. Furthermore, this progress journeyed through the years and influenced the modern Indian education system.

D. Women Education in Modern India Modern age was the time of reformation in India as well as in the whole world. After the Mughals invaded India, the British entered the country with an aim to spread their statute in the whole subcontinent. The British brought with them many new ideas and enlightened the Indians. The status of women in modern India is subjected to inconsistency. The Indian women in modern period outshine in certain areas whereas on the other hand she has to suffer the violence of the men dominated society. The condition of Indian women developed in the colonial period. After independence the scope for women increased and Women Education in Modern India widened. At present, Women Education in Modern India has achieved a new height. Currently, entrance of women in engineering, medical and other professional colleges is overwhelmingly elevated. Most of the professional colleges in the country keep thirty percent of the seats reserved for females. In urban India, girls are opened to a far wider scope than the rural girls. "Higher Education is one of the most important means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to participate fully in the development process." Higher Education is important for everyone, but it is especially significant for girls and women. This is true not only because Higher education is an entry point to other opportunities, but also because the higher educational achievements of women can have ripple effects within the family and across generations. Investing in girls' education is one of the most effective ways to reduce poverty

III. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA

1. Women Empowerment The concept of “empowerment” traces its history in the mid-17th century with the legalistic meaning “to invest with authority”. Thereafter, this concept was modernized to mean “to

enable or permit". The United Nations has shown concern for women empowerment evident in "Millennium Development Goals" to trace the progress of women empowerment across the world. Empowerment means moving from enforced powerlessness to a position of power. Education is an essential means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to fully participate in the development process. Sustainable development is only possible when women and men enjoy equal opportunities to reach their potential. Women's empowerment has become a significant topic of discussion in development and economics. It can also point to the approaches regarding other trivialized genders in a particular political or social context. Women's economic empowerment refers to the ability for women to enjoy their right to control and benefit from resources, assets, income and their own time, as well as the ability to manage risk and improve their economic status and well being. While often interchangeably used, the more comprehensive concept of gender empowerment refers to people of any gender, stressing the distinction between biological and gender as a role. It thereby also refers to other marginalized genders in a particular political or social context. The Oxford American Dictionary defines "empowerment" as to make (someone) stronger and more confident, esp. in controlling their life and claiming their rights

2. Women Empowerment through Higher Education Improving education for women helps raise their levels of health and nutrition and reduces fertility rates. Education increases "people's self-confidence and enables them to find better jobs and they can work shoulder to shoulder with men. They engage in public debate and make demands on government for health care, social security and other entitlements". In particular, education empowers women to make choices that improve their own and their children's health and chances of survival. Education helps to prevent and contain disease, and is an essential element of efforts to reduce malnutrition. Further, education empowers women to make choices that improve their welfare, including marrying later and having fewer children. Crucially, education also increases women's awareness of their human rights their confidence and their actual ability to assert those rights. Despite significant improvements in recent decades, education is not universally available and gender inequalities persist. A major concern in many countries is not only limited numbers of girls going to school, but also limited educational pathways for those that step into the classroom. This includes, more specifically, how to address the lower participation and learning achievement of girls in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education. is therefore, crucial for the socioeconomic and political progress of India. The Constitution of India empowers the state to adopt affirmative measures for prompting ways and means to empower women. Education significantly makes difference in the lives of women.³ Women Empowerment is a global issue and discussion on women political right are at the fore front of many formal and informal campaigns worldwide. The concept of women empowerment was introduced at the international women conference at NAROIBI in 1985. Education is milestone of women empowerment because it enables them to responds to the challenges, to confront their traditional role and change their life. So we can't neglect the importance of education in reference to women empowerment. To see the development in women education India is supposed to upcoming super power of the world in recent years. The increasing change in women education, the empowerment of women has been recognized as the central issue in determining the status of women.⁴ for becoming super power we have mostly to concentrate upon the women's education

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion the basis of above detailed analysis it could be concluded that there is no doubt about the essential need of empowering women through higher education. Now it is cleared that only literacy is not the ultimate solution but women should be highly educated to know their rights and duties. The education has brought a lot of advantages to women. It has made them better wives and mothers. There are women politicians, doctors, administrators, scientists, educationists, and so on. There are equally many skilled women engineers to design and install new and improved equipment and technically skilled personnel to plan and manage production, etc and women are as hard working as men and there are qualified women in various fields, who can compete successfully with men in developing the nation. There is no doubt about the essential need of empowering women through higher education. Now it is cleared that only literacy is not the ultimate solution but women should be highly educated to know their rights and duties. And should be able to use their rights as per the need, but it is also mandatory that there should proper implementations what policies are made and what government of India has made different programmes regarding women empowerment. Reasons for the empowerment of women today we have noticed different Acts and Schemes of the central government as well as state government to empower the women of India. But in India women are discriminated and marginalized at every level of the society whether it is social participation, political participation, economic participation, access to education, and also reproductive healthcare. To sum up, women empowerment cannot be possible unless women come with and help to self-empower themselves. There is a need to formulate reducing feminized poverty, promoting education of women, and prevention and elimination of violence against women. 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.

V. REFERENCES

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