

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA

Abstract

Over the course of documented Indian history, there have been several changes to the position of women. Their social standing began to decline throughout India's ancient era, notably in the Indo-Aryan spoken areas, and their subjection persisted long into the country's early modern era. Particularly in India, the woman is the centre of the family. She has a key part in maintaining the culture, raising the kids, and determining their future in addition to gathering water, fuelwood, fodder, and food. Therefore, our founder, late Dr. Manibhai Desai, constantly highlighted that while women make up just 50% of the population overall, they contribute 75% to the advancement of our society, compared to men's contribution of only 25%. Unfortunately, despite playing important and vulnerable roles that neither machines nor men can fill, women have been ignored for years. This is taking place despite the fact that our ancient saints and culture viewed a woman as more than just a mother but as a better scholastic institution. In this essay, we throw light on women empowerment in modern society. A secondary source of information was used to construct this work and specially confined the area only to health and education.

Keywords: Women empowerment, education, health etc..

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I. INTRODUCTION

Increasing women's self-worth is a key component of empowerment. This entails encouraging and assisting them in deciding how to recognise and deal with their inadequacies. Women who are empowered by society move forward in society on their own. Women of all castes, creeds, and colours should have equal access to all opportunities, and this is what is meant by "woman empowerment." The idea of women's empowerment is to give them the capacity to make moral judgments for themselves.

There formerly was a belief that men were the most significant members of society. The guy would be the sole breadwinner and decision-maker for the household. It was believed that women should take care of the home and raise the children. Women were not allowed to work or even study after a certain age. They would marry young and have to raise their husband's family afterward. Instead of using skill sets to divide the labor, gender was used in the past.

Women's empowerment has received a lot of attention recently and is a hot topic of conversation everywhere. Women's empowerment is becoming more of a must in contemporary culture than a discussion point. In contrast to former times, women were confined to the home, required to concentrate only on domestic tasks and the welfare of the family. Now, the situation has shifted. Women nowadays are tearing down the four walls that have kept them within and looking for chances. To empower women, it is equally necessary for them to have access to education and to participate in political and economic issues. It is a waste of human resource potential to prevent women from searching out new possibilities and to keep them out of social, economic, and political life. In addition, they have a separate function in society and require the same care as males. Another significant concern in our culture is unemployment, which has decreased as a result. The importance of recognizing and educating women about their rights cannot be overstated. The empowerment of women is the primary factor influencing the overall growth of a nation. If only one person makes money in one household but both men and women do in another, who will lead a better life? The simple answer is in the household where both men and women work. Consequently, countries with a balanced labor force see faster economic growth.

In numerous nations, both in ancient times and more recent history, women were denied the right to vote. Over time, increasing numbers of women came together and advocated for their voices to be heard. The advancement of women's status in society was significantly influenced by the attainment of voting rights. Various suffrage groups worked tirelessly to secure women's right to vote. In the United States, individuals like Elizabeth Stanton and organizations such as the National American Woman Suffrage Association and National Woman's Party played pivotal roles in achieving women's suffrage. In the United Kingdom, the Women's Social and Political Union conducted a vigorous campaign to secure women's voting rights. The fact that many nations only granted women the right to vote relatively recently is unfortunate for society as a whole. Countries such as Kuwait, Qatar, Zaire, Bahrain, Andorra, and the Central African Republic granted women the right to vote after the turn of the 20th century.

If she is not financially independent, no woman can be powerful. Women no longer need to rely on their spouses or dads to fulfil their desires. Women began to have more employment possibilities around the turn of the 20th century. Many women in England were,

however, compelled to work in both the home and the workplace at the same time in order to support their families. The decision to enter the employment by women following World War II was made independently. The number of employment available to women today is increasing. The classifications given to women are being proven to be appropriate for them. Women now have a lot more influence over decisions in the home as well. Today, both men and women may choose whether or not to become parents. Further enhancing women's empowerment was the adoption of contraceptive pills. The employment and educational lives of women are increasingly free from restrictions.

The success of women empowerment hinges on the empowerment of women in the lower echelons of society. In the twenty-first century, women from economically disadvantaged backgrounds have ventured into occupations that were traditionally male-dominated. Today, you can find many women working as farmers, bus drivers, gas station attendants, and masons, and they are excelling in their respective roles.

II. NEED OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA

Giving women the ability to make important decisions is referred to as empowering women. It entails empowering women by removing all barriers to their ability to educate, work, and dress whatever they like. Education is the only thing we as a culture can do to empower them. No matter where a woman is born—in a rural or metropolitan area—she should have a basic education before being granted the freedom to make her own life decisions. Education is the only way to empower women since it teaches them how to tell what is proper from what isn't.

Empowering women is essential for the community as a whole as well as for the individual. Only by being independent can a woman show others how even a small shift in perspective may have a profound impact on society. Women's education not only strengthens her, but also her family. Today, we frequently discover that women hold the highest positions in the majority of IT corporations and prestigious corporate organisations. They encourage the less fortunate to work hard and succeed in life.

III. HOW TO PROVIDE WOMEN EMPOWERMENT?

From kindergarten through graduation, girls' education should be required. A more literate community will arise from a girl who can educate her neighbours' children. When it comes to right and wrong, she will be able to tell the difference. Her subsequent generation will be able to carry on the heritage.

They should be given equal opportunity in all fields. Few industries still believe that males should occupy all of the top positions, as is the case now. Even the Indian Army now allows female candidates to attend SSB interviews, which were previously solely open to male applicants. Inspiring examples may be found in the Indian Army.

Instead of placing the blame on the women, society's problem with mistreatment of single and divorced women should be recognised and addressed. Women still worry about leaving an unhappy marriage because they are worried about how society would react when they do. If a girl is in a toxic relationship, her parents should reassure her that it is quite fine to return to their home.

We should normalise continuing education after marriage. Women in India frequently get married right after receiving their degrees. The pursuit of education after marriage should be promoted for women. One should constantly seek education to the very end since it has no age restriction.

IV. EDUCATION AND HEALTH FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Our own experience and a plethora of studies have shown that the empowerment of women benefits the entire society. However, the majority of women in India are regrettably denied even the most fundamental rights, such access to health care, education for girls to empower women, jobs, and a respectable social status, far from empowering women in the country.

A new UNDP Human Development Report claims that India has a dangerously unbalanced sex ratio, with widespread female infanticide and sex-selective abortions being the main causes. Realizing that not all variables that are bad for health are bad physical situations is crucial when thinking about the determinants of health. Lack of knowledge, for instance, might make it harder to obtain, comprehend, and apply health information. As a result, both in developed and developing countries, education has a significant role in determining health status.

The substantial health benefits of funding women's education are undeniable. Higher educated people have better health than lower educated people, as evidenced by high levels of self-reported physical functioning and health, low levels of morbidity, mortality, and disability, and so on. In contrast, there is a connection between low levels of education and "high rates of infectious disease, many chronic noninfectious diseases, self-reported poor health, shorter survival when unwell, and lower life expectancy."

Education is a potent instrument for reshaping women's societal roles. It not only diminishes inequality but also elevates women's positions within their families. In the State, educational institutions from schools to universities have been established exclusively for women, aiming to promote education across all levels and eradicate gender bias in the delivery and comprehension of education. To encourage greater enrollment of girls, especially from marginalized BPL families, the government has introduced a range of incentives, including free distribution of books, uniforms, boarding and lodging, hostelry attire, mid-day meals, scholarships, free bicycles, and more. As a result, women's literacy rates have surged over the past three decades, even outpacing the rate of increase among men.

V. FITNESS AND WELLBEING

The idea of health and well-being is linked to the significant disparities between men and women's access to adequate nourishment, healthcare, and reproductive facilities, as well as to concerns about fundamental safety and integrity of person.

Over 1,600 women each day, or 585,000 per year, pass away from pregnancy- and childbirth-related causes, according to the World Health Organization. Since only a tiny number of offences including sexual assault, child abuse, wife beating, and gun violence are ever recorded, reliable data is very difficult to come by due to the complexity of the social and cultural concerns, as well as the shame and fear of exposure.

VI. THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF EDUCATION

- 1. Better Jobs:** A applicant with more education is more likely to get recruited in today's knowledge economy and land a job that offers benefits that promote health, such as retirement, paid time off, and health insurance. Conversely, people with lower levels of education are more likely to hold hazardous positions with little pay.
- 2. Higher Earnings:** Health is strongly influenced by income, and those with greater levels of education usually earn more money. In 2012, college graduates' median wage was more than 1.5 times higher than that of high school graduates, and it was more than twice as high as that of high school dropouts.
- 3. Resources for Good Health:** Families that earn more money can afford to pay for transportation and medical care, buy healthful meals more frequently, and exercise regularly. On the other hand, during hard times, people and families may be more vulnerable due to job instability, low income, and a lack of resources brought on by ignorance. This may lead to inadequate nourishment, unstable housing, and unfulfilled medical needs.

VII. CONCLUSION

Women's contributions to a nation's progress and development are enormous. Since women are essential to a dynamic humanity that is necessary for national success, educating them must be a top priority if we want to see a bright future for them in our nation. One must shift from a vulnerable position in order to exercise authority. Women's education is the most effective means of changing society's perception. Education not only helps people move up the family hierarchy but also reduces inequality. In an effort to minimize gender bias in the distribution of knowledge and education and to promote women's education at all levels, the state currently has schools, colleges, and universities that are exclusively for female students. For the purpose of eradicating gender discrimination, education fosters the notion of involvement in government, panchayats, public affairs, etc. Women have been an oppressed group throughout history even though they make up half of the global population. While some cultures view women as superior in the home and in society, most of them have historically treated them as second-class citizens. Women are compelled to continue being a dominating group all across the world, but notably in the least developed countries, due to religious, cultural, and physical ideals. Women are discriminated against everywhere, as is well-documented. Because to male domination, women's involvement has been severely limited in practically all disciplines, even in the most industrialised countries with the finest human rights record in the world. Because they are forbidden from taking part in many social and political activities, women are viewed as "prisoners" in many nations. Access and empowerment of all sections of society are major issues in a stratified society like ours, and planners, managers, and social scientists from all over the world have started debating and coming up with solutions like anything to solve this. In this regard, gender-related concerns are prevailing over other delicate matters like poverty, racial tensions, community, and ethnic difficulties, among others. Gender equity is still a pressing issue today, as it has been for thousands of years of human civilization, when it comes to guaranteeing an equal development. Other factors including the production relationship, access to education, regional dispersion, vocational requirements, marriage system, and even physical and physiological deficiencies are ingrained in gender issues beyond its epistemological roots.

Women's empowerment is now a complicated, multifaceted subject, and we must pinpoint the areas where they are still a long way from achieving even the most basic rights. For women to feel powerful, self-assured, and integrated into mainstream social processes, among other things, they must have access to institutions, resources, information, and decision-making processes.

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