

Impact of Education on Women Empowerment :A Study of Lucknow District UP

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Abstract

Women's empowerment is not limited only for the Indian society. If we deliberate the global aspect in this regard, we see that women are being given equal treatment in developed nations. In fact, if we take a recollection of history, we come to know that women have always been given secondary position in society, but the difference between men and women created by the Nature is but natural. It is education through which we realize this fact Education is the key factor for women empowerment, prosperity, development and welfare. Discrimination of women from womb to tomb is well known. There is continued inequality and vulnerability of women in all sectors and women oppressed in all spheres of life, they need to be empowered in all walk of life. In order to fight against the socially constructed gender biases, women have to swim against the system that requires more strength. Such strength comes from the process of empowerment and empowerment will come from the education. And rural development will come from women empowerment. This paper aim to create the awareness among the women's about different empowerment and identifying the impact of education in women overall empowerment in Lucknow district. Totally 320 women respondents between 20-45 age group were selected for the study. Findings of the study shows that educational qualification play significant role in women empowerment and it concludes that if women's empowerment is to be effected, it can be carried out only through the medium of education. Hence, it is of foremost importance to raise the level of education amongst women.

Key words: Impact of Education, Women, Empowerment, Inequality, Gender, Patriarchy

Introduction

Women empowerment means their capacity to participate as equal partners in cultural, social, economic and political systems of a society. Even though the world economy has developed into global economy, in both developed and developing countries women have been suppressed in all walks of life for generations. Women empowerment is far easier said than done. This in a certain respect demands a revolutionary change in the socio cultural values of the society. In USA and western countries the education and health of a woman is much higher comparatively with developing countries. Still gender bias and beliefs are playing as chief obstacles for the growth of women empowerment worldwide. In India also, in spite of various laws that protect women's rights, the gender inequalities are one of the highest in the world. Coming back to women empowerment, in the simple words it is the creation of an environment where women can make independent decisions on their personal development as well as shine as equals in society. Women want to be treated as equals so much so that if a woman rises to the top of her field it should be a commonplace occurrence that draws nothing more than a raised eyebrow at the gender. This can only happen if there is a channelized route for the empowerment of women. Thus it is no real surprise that women empowerment in India is a hotly discussed topic with no real solution looming in the horizon except to doubly redouble our efforts and continue to target the sources of all the violence and ill-will towards women.

There are always a number of components in the society which are underprivileged of their basic rights in every

society, state and nation, but these components lack in the awareness of their rights. If we enlist such components from the society, then women would top this list. In fact, women are the most important factor of every society. Even though everybody is aware of this fact, yet nobody is ready to accept this fact. As a result, the importance which used to be given to women is declining in today's society. As a significance of this growing tendency of underestimating women such as to make them occupy a secondary position in society and to deny them of their basic rights, the need for empowering women was felt. Today we enjoy the benefits of being citizens of a free nation, but we really need to think whether each of the citizens of our country is really free or enjoying freedom, in the true sense of the term. If we consider our country, each Indian citizen is given certain basic rights. The Structure of our nation doesn't discriminate between men and women, but our society has destitute women of certain basic rights, which were bestowed upon them by our Constitution. Due to such current situation, it was needed to make women free from all the fetters and to empower them as well. This is nothing but empowerment of women.

Women's empowerment is not limited only for the Indian society. If we deliberate the global aspect in this regard, we see that women are being given equal treatment in developed nations. In fact, if we take a recollection of history, we come to know that women have always been given secondary position in society, but the difference between men and women created by the Nature is but natural. It is education through which we realize this fact. When American women realized this, they opposed this unfairness which was meted out to them by way of a huge movement, through which they asked for equal rights. For eliminating this injustice, the UNO (United Nations' Organization) framed an agreement which is called 'The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women' (CEDAW), which further led to the formation of Women's Commission.

Taking an account of this background, we come to know that women's empowerment has now become a topic of global discussion. Seeing all the aspects of this discussion, we will realize that education is the only means for empowerment of women. Therefore, literacy should spread amongst women. The literacy rate amongst the women in the post- Independent Era is not as per the expectations. We, as a nation, dream of becoming a Super Power by 2020. For becoming a Super Power, each element of our society/ nation should contribute in the nation building process. But women, who are a major factor of this society, aren't literate then we can't expect to become a Super Power. Therefore, it is urgent for us to know the importance of women's education, which would, in turn, give a motivation to the process of women's empowerment. This paper aim to create the awareness among the women's about different empowerment and identifying the impact of education in women overall empowerment.

Education-

According to Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, education in the largest sense is any act or experience that has a formative effect on the mind, character, or physical ability of an individual. In its technical sense, education is the process by which society deliberately transmits accumulated knowledge, skills and values from one generation to another.

Aims and Objectives of Education-

The aims and objectives of education include individual as well as social aims, with emphasis of social transformation aiming at reconstructing the society to make it modernized, productive, participative, value oriented and nation committed to its constitutional obligations. There are numerous aims of education as mentioned below:

- Individual Development
- To Acquire Knowledge
- Vocational Aim
- Moral Aim

- Complete Living Aim
- Harmonious Development Aim
- Leisure Aim
- Social and National Development

1.Social Transformation 2.Modernization
3.Productivity 4. Community Participation and
5. Acquisition of Values

Empowerment

According to Business Dictionary, empowerment means, “A management practice of sharing information, rewards, and power with employees so that they can take initiative and make decisions to solve problems and improve service and performance. Empowerment is based on the idea that giving employees skills, resources, authority, opportunity, motivation, as well as holding them responsible and accountable for outcomes of their actions, will contribute to their competence and satisfaction”.

There are other definitions of empowerment as: “The term empowerment refers to a range of activities from individual self-assertion to collective resistance, protest and mobilization that challenge basic power relations. For individuals and groups where class, caste, ethnicity and gender determine their access to resources and power, their empowerment begins when they not only recognize the systemic forces that oppress them, but act to change existing power relationships. Empowerment, therefore, is a process aimed at changing the nature and direction of systemic forces that marginalize women and other disadvantaged sectors in a given context. “It is giving lawful power or authority to act. If people were empowered they would be able to participate in the planning, execution and implementation of developmental schemes. Apart from Political Empowerment, Economic and Social Empowerment are crucial. Empowerment and development are closely related. Empowerment leads to development, which further leads to greater empowerment”.

Empowerment is a word widely used, but seldom defined. Long before the word became popular women were speaking about

gaining control over their lives, and participating in the decisions that affect them in the home and community in government and international development policies. The word ‘empowerment’ captures this sense of gaining control of participating in decision making. More recently the word has entered the vocabulary of development agencies, including international organizations and the United Nations. According to Pillai (1995), “empowerment is an active, multi dimensional process which enables women to realize their full identity and powers in all spheres of life. Power is not a commodity to be transacted; nor can it be given away as aims”. Power has to be acquired and once acquired it needs to be exercised, sustained and preserved.

Types of Empowerment-

There are various types of empowerment initiated by different welfare states during different periods of time. Most of the scholars have agreed the following types as important for women empowerment to uplift their status to achieve gender equality.

- 1 Social Empowerment
2. Economic Empowerment
3. Educational Empowerment
4. Political Empowerment
5. Legal Empowerment

The present study is based on women empowerment through education so it necessary to know what is educational empowerment.

Educational Empowerment-

It is often argued that education is a powerful tool in the emancipation and empowerment of women. Indeed, the different organs of United Nations (e.g. UNICEF) and experts on women’s liberation argue for women’s education as the basic step in women’s equality. Education is a milestone for women empowerment because it enables them to respond to opportunities, to challenge their traditional roles and to change their lives. Education is one of the most important means of empowering women with knowledge, skills and self confidence required to participate fully in

the development process. The role of education is not only learning of three R's, ("Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic") but also includes raising awareness and critical analysis of various structures and acquiring knowledge for empowerment at all levels. Education is often used as an agent of basic change in the status of women. In order to neutralize the accumulated advantages of the past, there will be a well conceived edge in favour of women. The national education system will play a positive, interventionist role in the empowerment of women. It will foster the development of new values through redesigned curricula, textbooks, training and orientation of teachers, decision-makers and administrators.

Women Empowerment-

Women Empowerment According to UNESCO, women empowerment means the following:

- Having decision-making power of their own
- Having access to information and resources for taking proper decision.
- Having a range of options from which you can make choices (not just yes/no, either/or.).
- Ability to exercise assertiveness in collective decision making.
- having positive thinking on the ability to make change.
- Ability to learn skills for improving one's personal or group power.
- Ability to change others' perceptions by democratic means.
- Involving in the growth process and changes that are never ending and self-initiated.
- Increasing one's positive self-image and overcoming stigma.

According to U.N. women Empowerment means, "What, then, is women's empowerment? Women's empowerment has five components: women's sense of self-worth; their right to have and to determine choices; their right to have access to opportunities and resources; their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home; their ability to influence the direction

of social change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally .

Empowerment of women is a complex concept encompassing physical, social, economic and political aspects. Particularly after the declaration of 1976-85 as the decade for women by the United Nations, question of empowering women as equal partner in all walks of life becomes a critical issue throughout the world. Women empowerment means giving powers to women. Giving them importance can be called as women empowerment. The word 'women empowerment' essentially means that the women have the power or capacity to regulate their day to day lives in the social, political and economic terms, a power which enables them to move from the periphery to the centre stage. Self-decision regarding education, participation, mobility, economic independency, public speaking, awareness and exercise of rights, political participation and many more factors ensure women empowerment. In short, women empowerment is the breaking of personal limitation. The women Empowerment frame work reconceptualises the development objectives of gender responsive programming. It views women's equality and women's empowerment as central development objectives in their own rights.⁷ Women empowerment is a bottom up process of transforming gender power relations, developing awareness of women's subordination and building their capacity to challenge the power relation. It encompasses a wide array of things that are common like economic independence, effective communication, discrete thinking etc.

Literature review

Indian cultural history has a very old and long roots, it can be traced back to thousands of years. Sociologists have analyzed the status of women from these early ages to the present day by different methods. Scholars have believed that women of ancient India enjoyed equal status with men in all aspects of life.

The influence of women is marked in every page of Hindu history, right from the most

remote periods. What led to the epic wars? Whether it is the abduction of *Sita* or the insult of *Draupadi* always the causes which overturned kingdoms committed to the scepter and the pilgrim's staff and formed the ground work of all the grand epics, were women.

It is evident from all available accounts that in early Vedic society, women occupied the same position as men. Reference to complete gender equality is found in all parts of Vedic literature. Women reached a very high standard of learning and culture, and made all round progress. They could move freely with their husbands or lover, and were employed in a number of professions. Literary women scholars like *Gargi*, *Maitrayi*, *Godha*, *Vishwashra* were well known and acknowledged for their intellectual and literary abilities. The practice of allowing women to select a husband out of a chosen group ruled out the possibility of child marriages. A man could not undertake any social or religious duty without his wife. Divorce was not permitted infact marriage is considered as "*Saat janmo ka bandhan*".

There are evidences to show that widow marriages prevailed and *Sati Pratha* did not exist in Vedic period. Women had absolute control over their gifts and property received at the time of marriage (it was called "*Parinaya*") and it was considered a sin if relatives took away any sort of property belonging to the wife (*Stridhana*). But the status of women starts declining during the period of *Smritis* (period of codification of social laws). During this period women were denied the right to study the Vedas. Marriage or domestic lives become compulsory for women. The Moguls, during their rule, allowed a sudden fall in the dignified position occupied by Indian women. Education for women was stopped and they became victims of evil practices like early child marriage. The Purdah system came into existence.

Some social scientists have described the Mogul era as the dark age of women. The atmosphere was so vitiated that even the horrid acts like female infanticide had to be performed for self preservation and even a marriage had to be

celebrated secretly to prevent the abduction of new bride. But worst scenario was about to come, Indian women's position in society further deteriorated during the medieval period when *Sati*, child marriages and a ban on remarriage by widows became part of social life in some communities in India. Among the Rajputs of Rajasthan, the *Jauhar* was practiced. In some parts of India, the *Devadasis* or temple women were sexually exploited. Polygamy was widely practiced, especially among Hindu Kshatriya rulers. In many Muslim families, women were restricted to *Zenana* areas of the house. Then Britishers arrived in India they listened to the wise counsel of social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Swami Dayanand and they enacted several laws to improve the position of women, to bring back the dignity and glory of women.

The term empowerment has been overused, misused, and cooped (Stromquist, 2002; Stacki and Monkman, 2003). It is commonly deployed as a synonym for enabling, participating, and speaking out. The notion that education leads to women's empowerment has gained popularity, although we still have much to learn about how education actually empowers women (Stromquist, 2002; DaCosta, 2008; Murphy-Graham, 2008). Nevertheless, in the past 10 years, the goal of women's empowerment (often linked with women's education) has received serious attention, as well as funding by donors and international agencies (Unterhalter, 2007; Mosedale, 2005; Malhotra et al., 2002; Papart et al., 2002; Oxaal and Baden, 1997). Despite its widespread use and occasional abuse, there is some agreement (e.g. Kabear, 1999; Malhotra et al., 2002; Mosedale, 2005) that empowerment:

- Is a multidimensional process of change from a condition of disempowerment?
- Cannot be bestowed by a third party, as individuals are active agents in this process.
- Is shaped by the context, and so indicators of empowerment must be

sensitive to the context in which women live.

At the core of the word empowerment is power. Therefore in conceptualizing empowerment I draw on previous scholarship on the theme, as well as feminist scholarship that views power as capacity (Karlberg, 2005). Hartstock (1983), commenting on the feminist theory of power, describes how women's stress on power not as domination but as capacity, on power as a capacity of the community as a whole, suggests that women's experience of connection and relation have more consequences for understandings of power and may hold resources for a more laboratory understanding. The idea of power as capacity is at the core of the conceptualization of empowerment in this article, where I view women's empowerment as a process through which women come to recognize their inherent worth, their power within (Kabeer, 1994), and begin to participate on equal terms with minimum efforts to dismantle patriarchy and promote social and economic development. In part, gender equality is manifest through a just and equitable sharing of responsibilities by men and women. Gender equality is not synonymous with gender parity, and does not mean that men and women are the same or need to split work exactly in half. Rather, it characterizes social conditions and relationships in which a vision of mutuality and cooperation shapes interactions and enables men and women to reach their full potential (hooks, 2000).

MATERIALS:

Empowerment is a monolithic word encompassing many things in its fold. If any one is independent in decision making and doing in one's own way, is termed as empowered one. If woman does so, then woman is supposed to be empowered. In the hearing empowerment is an introduction of modernity and a sense of discarding prevalent societal practices. But too much empowerment is not always good for any one. Empowerment must be studied considering

all things surrounding us. In Indian society women have never remained neglected lots. No one can deny the importance of women in the family.

This study based on Lucknow district. An official Census 2011 detail of Lucknow, a district of Uttar Pradesh has been released by Statistical Department U.P. & Directorate Census, Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh. In 2011, Lucknow district of Uttar Pradesh has total population of 4,589,838 as per the Census 2011. Out of which 2,394,476 are males while 2,195,362 are females. In 2011 there were total 860,703 families residing in Lucknow district. The Average Sex Ratio of Lucknow district is 917. As per Census 2011 out of total population, 66.2% people lives in Urban areas while 33.8% lives in the Rural areas. The average literacy rate in urban areas is 81.9% while that in the rural areas is 67.8%. Also the Sex Ratio of Urban areas in Lucknow district is 923 while that of Rural areas is 906. The total literacy rate of Lucknow district is 77.29%. The male literacy rate is 72.77% and the female literacy rate is 63.08% in Lucknow district. According to Census 2001 Total literacy level is 68.7 percent as compared to 56.3 percent in U.P. as a whole. Similarly male and female literacy rates were found to be 76.0 and 60.5 percent respectively as compared to the corresponding figure of 68.8 and 42.2 percent in U.P. However, there has been a marked improvement in the literacy rate in the district as compared to 1991.

This study is basically descriptive in nature. Lucknow district comprises eight revenue blocks, from those 320 women respondents between 20-45 age group were selected for the study. The field survey will be conducted with the help of well-structured questionnaire. The well-structured questionnaire schedules will contain the relevant questions, research points and scales of view perception related to awareness, sensitization, participation, impact etc. of programmes, schemes and projects. The secondary data will be compiled from the records, reports and documents. Besides, previous surveys, reports, studies and

other relevant research work will also be consulted. The filled-in interview schedules will be thoroughly checked and processed with the help of relevant statistical tools and techniques including appropriate software and tabulation.

METHOD:

The present study will be empirical in nature and based mainly on primary data collected through field survey. Besides survey and analysis of primary data, secondary data and pertinent literature will be compiled from published and documented sources for getting insights on the to of the research.

In this present study Researcher used convenient sampling method for data collection and well-structured questionnaire was used data collection tool. Using survey method researcher collects the questionnaires. Respondents were asked to select the options based on their opinions. The research instrument includes questions related with different type of empowerment like personal empowerment, educational empowerment, economic empowerment, social empowerment, psychological empowerment, technical empowerment, political empowerment and demographic characteristics like age, educational qualification, family income, employment type and marital status. The study will focus on national perspective however; the field survey will be confined to the state of Uttar Pradesh. We will select Lucknow district for in-depth study. The study will cover urban and rural area of Lucknow district .The primary and secondary data will be interpreted, discussed and analyzed.. Besides, the pertinent literature will be critically reviewed for insight stimulation on the topic of research. The policy measures and action plan will be based on the analysis of research findings and critical appreciation of pertinent literature.

Demographic characteristics of Women in Lucknow District	Options	Frequency	%
Age	20-30Years	180	56.25
	31-40Years	110	34.37
	Above 40 Years	30	9.37
Educational Qualification	Arts (UG)	110	34.37
	Science (UG)	20	6.25
	Commerce (UG)	60	18.75
	Arts (PG)	24	7.5
	Science (PG)	05	1.56
	Commerce (PG)	15	4.68
	Professional (UG)	30	9.37
	Diploma	26	8.12
	Illiterates	30	9.37
Marital Status	Married	135	42.18
	Unmarried	160	50.0
	Widow	25	7.8
Employment type	House wife	190	59.37
	Employed	130	40.62
Monthly Income	Below Rs.20000	220	68.75
	Rs.20001-Rs.30000	50	15.62
	Rs.30001-Rs.40000	30	9.37
	Above Rs.40000	20	6.25
	Total	320	100

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

From Table no 1 we know that in Lucknow district 56 percent respondents were between 20-30 years old, 61 percent responders were have under graduation level education qualification in the field of art ,science and commerce. 42 percent respondents were married and 50 percent respondents were unmarried. 59 percent respondents were housewives and 40 percent respondents were employed in government, private industries. 69 percent respondents monthly income was less than Rs.20000.

Findings of the study

Analyzing Table no. 1 we find some data by this we explain women status in society- Percentage of women between 23-30 years is approx. 56% . 90% of women is educationally Qualified .Women participation in science subjects is less than Arts. Married and unmarried percentage of women is approx. equal. Only 40% women's are working rest of 60% doing work as house wife.70% women's monthly income is less than 2 lakh.This study is showing that education effect women empowerment in different fields .Now they are free in decision making ,economically independent etc

Women's empowerment is to be effected, it can be carried out only through the medium of education. Hence, it is of foremost importance to raise the level of education amongst women.

Government of India and UP Government had launched a lot of schemes for upliftment of women in their lives.there we have studied some schemes which are which affected women empowerment are-

- National and state Female commission (.1992). It has been enacted to safeguard women at different steps.
- Swayam Sidha Yojna (2001-02) . It is a wide-range female welfare and empowering schemes focusing on all types of economic empowerment of women through short and long term

easy loan facilities for starting businesses. Out of 1950 C.D. B's selected in India three C.D. B's of Samastipur districts namely Bithan, Ujiarpur and Vidyapati nagar have been taken into this category.

- Save daughter and teach daughter scheme (1915). This is a very powerful scheme of the central govt. carried on by the respective state govts. to educate girls.
- Ujjawala Yojana.
- Chief Minister Girl upliftment scheme.
- This scheme provides Rs. 1000/- Rs. 25000/- aid for teaching . This scheme has put favourable impact in enhancing enrollments of girls in higher institutions.
- Beti Padhao, Beti Bachao Scheme
- One Stop Centre Scheme
- Working Women's Hostel (WWH)
- Support to Training and Employment Programme (STEP) for Women
- Mahila e-Haat
- National Mission for Empowerment of Women (NMEW)
- Pradhan Mantri Mahila Shakti Kendra scheme
- Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana
- eSamvad portal
- Nari Web Portal
- She-Box Portal
- New Draft National Policy

Discussion and Conclusion

The above study was carried out in Lucknow, from the state of Uttar Pradesh, one of the fast developing districts in the state. From the above findings, overall empowerment and other related empowerment types are also relatively influenced by the respondents educational qualification. This study shows that educational empowerment, political and psychological empowerments were the significant predictors for overall empowerment. The process of empowering entails much more than awareness of alternative, women's rights

and the nature of the requirements. With more education women have greater access to employment opportunities and increase the ability to secure their own economic resources. This study helps to create the awareness about empowering women among 08 revenue blocks of Lucknow. During the data collection most the respondents don't have any awareness about empowerment, even though they are educated. Since education is the primary avenue for empowerment and there are other dimension that is also have impact on empowerment Present study suggests that General awareness programme should be taken among the women of rural area to sensitizes them about the modern development of science and technology so that they could give up superstitious believes and attitudes. Women of rural areas should be trained up in different vocational courses like handloom and textile, poultry farms, fish farming, piggery, dairy farm, food and nutrition, fashion and designing, beauty parlour etc. Women reservation policy should strictly be maintained in all aspects like appointment in govt. and semi govt. offices, admission in to the educational institutions, participating in the politics etc.

This study concludes that mostly gender barriers still continue particularly on rural area. Research area covers more number of rural areas. Due to current socio economic constrains in rural area, the potential of women have not been fully utilized and further pushed back into the social hierarchy. Most of the educated women feel that, they can able to achieve more than men. But inbuilt idea that women are capable of doing less work than men and less efficient than men. The lack of education becomes the obstacles in getting empowerment. Taking an overview of all the above aspects, we come to know that the transformation is very much needed, accepting at the same time that its pace may be less than the desired pace. For giving this process a momentum, education is indispensable. Hence, if women's empowerment is to be effected, it can be carried out only through the medium of education. Hence, it is of

foremost importance to raise the level of education amongst women.

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