



Women empowerment a dream

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Abstract

The position of women started deteriorating after the first millennia. Though our constitution and many other legislative acts have promoted gender equality, their status continues to be low. The empowerment of women concerns women gaining control and power over their own lives. It involves awareness raising, building self-confidence, and expansion of choices, increased access to and control over resources. Inputs to promote the empowerment of women should facilitate the articulation of their needs and priorities and more active role in promoting these needs and priorities. But the reality is horrible still the discrimination is going on against women. Women are fifty per cent of the total population, but are they respected? Are they enjoyed with their rights?. Based on secondary data this paper has been discussed about the barriers for the women empowerment.

Keywords: discrimination, literacy, poverty, nutrition

1. Introduction

"Making women equal partners in the national development processes and equipping them to make informed choices in order to actualise their self-worth through empowerment are goals to which the government is rural development varies from one area to another, depending on a range of factors including natural resources".

India country report, fourth world conference on women, Beijing. 1995.

Among all the cataclysmic changes have taken place in recent times, the growing status of women has been a significant one. Many factors have combined to free women from the shackles of outworn, tradition prejudices and ignorance. In every Indian women dreams of an India. She can walk confidently anywhere any time without fear. Freely live their life with a sense of self-worth, respect and dignity. But unfortunately they have no right to walk freely or decide themselves. Literacy is traditionally understood as the ability to read and write it leads to greater development in the life of a person. Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women. It brings social transformation. But girls are receiving only traditional education, not to professional education. In that also they are lag behind than men. Education has empowered woman to a large extent and where women are educated they are able to take decisions about their marriage, parenthood and careers. And it creates awareness about outside of marriage giving her financial independence and reducing dependence on others. But according to 2011 censuses women's literacy rate is only 65.66 it means there is a big gap between men and women in literacy. Number of schemes has been made by government regarding women education but the paucity of will in the implementation these schemes are is failure.

According to the World Bank in 2010 India had the third highest number of out of school girls in the world. The bank

reiterates that getting these girls into school is crucial to India's social and economic development. It is said further that educated girls are more productive both at and home work place. Moreover they are able to participate in social and economic decision making in the right direction.

Today violence against women is most common in India. In India more than two- third (68%) of married women have experienced spousal violence, and it impacts on women's health and wellbeing. Female foeticide, female infanticide, selling of a girl child, girl child prostitution and sexual abuse of a girl child. Indian girls grow up with a deep rooted sense for fear and insecurity which not only restricts their social mobility but also their whole life. Rape has become a widespread evil, especially it reflects on social life. Dowry as far violence in the family this too has reportedly been on the increase. The cruelty against a women by her husband or relative. Bride burning, sexual harassment at work place, immoral traffic among women etc. these are all effects on her social, psychological and economic life.

Health is another area where the women suffer. Most women have neither the time nor the mind set or facilities to go for health care. Several studies have recorded a gender asymmetry In the utilisation of health services during illness, fewer women than men seek and receive treatment. Health is a function not only of medical care but also of economic and cultural factors. She takes food after family members. The UNIFEM (UN development Fund for Women) estimated that 50 per cent of the women in Asia and Africa are malnourished.

Women play a significant and crucial role in agricultural development and allied fields including in the main crop production, livestock production, horticulture post-harvest operation, agro/ social forestry, fisheries etc. it is a fact long taken for granted but also long ignored, they are invisible. Recognition of their crucial role in agriculture should not obscure the fact that farm women continue to be concerned

with their primary functions as wives, mothers and home makers. The patriarchal system of family life which has seen in vogue since time immemorial has relegated women to the background.

The concept of Women entrepreneurship is becoming global phenomena today. All over the world women are playing a vital role in the business. Women owned business have the potential to make significant contributions to job creation and economic growth. But they are facing so many problems, financial problems, scarcity of raw materials, stiff competition, high cost of production low mobility, responsibility of family, lack of training, influential connections, lack of education, lack of skill etc.

Lack of access to gainful employment is another important issue. While much stress is laid on who brings in the cash, women are denied opportunities of learning and developing skills to bring in cash and to be gainfully employed. Women's household work is not valued and if they not bring in cash they are devalued considered a burden, a liability.

Gender equality and women empowerment are the buzzwords, interested with different interpretations to suit varied socio economic and political perspectives. Rhetoric of gender equity and women's empowerment has acquired an important place in government policy, on-governmental advocacy, media and academic research. The term women empowerment and gender equality determine the direction of diverse discourses on women locally. Nationally and internationally.

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