



EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH SKILL DEVELOPMENT

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Article History: Received 18th October, 2016 Received in revised form 19th November, 2016 Accepted 24th December, 2016 Published online 28th January, 2017</p> <p>Keywords: Women , Vocational education, skilled knowledge</p>	<p>Education is instrumental in making the remarkable contribution to economic growth of the developing countries by way of suitable manpower production according to the needs of the Industry, Society and the Global World as a whole. To produce fully skilled manpower in the present era of science and technology, is the need of the hour. Youth and women are the most vibrant and dynamic segment as well as potentially most valuable human resources. ' In India, the emphasis has been on general education, with vocational education at the receiving end. This has resulted in large number of educated people remaining unemployed. The greatest challenge in Indian education system today is to provide skill based education to the Women . General and academic education is seen as that which builds analytical skills, knowledge and critical thinking, while vocational education develops craftsmanship, practical experience and problem solving attitude.</p>

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INTRODUCTION

Women empowerment has now become a buzzword in India. The last decade witnessed very active and multifaceted efforts in various national and international forums for achieving principles of equality, sustainability and empowerment with a special focus on women. The issue of empowerment of women moved center-stage with the global paradigm shift from a growth- oriented to a human development approach. In the Indian context, the concern for women's Empowerment was very visible in the thoughts and writings of social reformers of the 19th and 20th centuries and this rich legacy of women empowerment was once again reemphasized by our constitutional framers which later on was translated by the government into policies Initiatives, schemes and programs for promoting women empowerment. The growing concern for bringing an attitudinal change in society for empowering women got ulminated in the declaration of 2001 as the empowerment year for the women. India is a democratic country apart from this; it is a fact that there is a deep ignorance in the society about the values of women. Nowadays our government is trying to give pECIAL attention to the participation of women in society and to their education, socio economic and political awareness. Today women are the most sufferers in the Indian society due to drudgery, ill health, illiteracy, deprivation and humanization. Backwardness of women is a sign of poverty and women are the worst sufferers. No wonder, India hosts over one-third of the poor in be world, as lack of empowerment of women is a major cause of poverty.

Although women represent only 50% of the total population, they contribute 75% to the development of our society while men contribute only 25%. Unfortunately, in spite of their laudable and vulnerable roles, which cannot be substituted by machine or men, women have been neglected since generations. This is happening in spite of a woman being recognized by our ancient saints and culture as not merely a mother but as a superior scholarly Institution. Today women are the worst sufferers in the Indain society due to drudgery, ill health, illiteracy, deprivation and humiliation. Backwardness of women is a sign of poverty and women are the worst sufferers. No wonder, India hosts over one-third of the poor in be world, as lack of empowerment of women is a major cause of poverty. Although women represent only 50% of the total population, they contribute 75% to the development of our society while men contribute only 25%. Unfortunately, in spite of their laudable and vulnerable roles, which cannot be substituted by machine or men, women have been neglected since generations. This is happening in spite of a woman being recognized by our ancient saints and culture as not merely a mother but as a superior scholarly Institution.

Status of Women and Skill Development in Modern India

Women in India consistently lag behind the men in terms of access to education, health care, jobs etc. Apart from the economic and social inequality, women in India are victims of heinous crimes such as, dowry death, rape, molestation and immoral trafficking.

As per statistics available

The female child sex ratio (0-6 yrs.) is 914 per 1000 Rural female literacy rate is only 58% while rural male is 78%.

A woman employment in urban areas is only 13.9% while in rural areas is 29.9%. With the rise in poverty, many women are forced to work at low wage rates.

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Employment of women in organised sector is less than 8% Women especially in the child bearing age often deficient in nutrition due to poverty. As a result the number maternal death in India is one of the highest in the world and 87% of all pregnant women in India are anemic.

Current Scenario

The 11th five year plan (2007-12) has recognized India's massive need to skill millions of formal and informal workers in the next ten years. In response, the government developed an ambitious scheme "of increasing the proportion of formal and informal skilled workers in its total workforce from a mere 2% now to 50% by 2022, thus creating 'a 500 million strong resource pool.'" Women form a significant proportion of this work force in India, however, they are largely concentrated in the informal sector, engaged in vocations characterized by low earning, low productivity, poor working conditions and lack of social protection

Female Workforce in India (Nos. in Million)

Female Workforce in India	148
Female Workforce in Informal Sector	135
Female Workforce in Formal Sector	13
Fresh women Workforce added to Labour Market every year in informal Sector	3.5
Fresh Women Workforce added to Labour market in formal sector	0.2

Benefits of Skill Development

It is observed, that the concept of training and skill development needs to move beyond the conventional goal of imparting technical and managerial competencies, to play a broader role of even including basic literacy, critical social and political awareness, awareness about gender, and enhancing life skills.

- Such interventions by their nature will encourage higher self-esteem among women and overall personality development. For the success of skill development, training needs to be towards developing the kind of skills women and men already know.
- It is vital to end poverty and boosting shared prosperity-the World Banks Groups twin corporate goals.
- Resources in the hands of women boost household spending in areas that benefit children.
- Building of capabilities to create awareness, improve their skills, develop leadership and link with technologies, trade, financial institutions and local governments can empower them to take active part in socio-economic development at par with others.
- Such steps have led the community towards a literate and progressive society, directly benefiting every family and helped to bring the women as key players, into mainstream development.
- With various women empowerment activities and training, there has been a significant increase in the confidence of women. They have developed mutual trust, social security, skills and access to technology and credit through their Self Help Groups and various People's

Organisations.

Women and Vocational Education

Another extremely vital aspect of social change already suggested to in this discussion concern changes in the role opportunities and instruction for women in contemporary society. Part of this stems from the current patterns of family size and spacing of children in that society. Control of and planning for conception have become a middle class cultural norm. As this kind of control is exercised role prescriptions for women that emerged purely as a product of their parturition functions are rapidly giving way. More women are completing their childbearing in early years of marriage. This coupled with a tendency to marry at earlier ages, has produced a dramatic change in the career patterns and possibilities for married women. For increasing thousands of young women the choice is no longer between family and career, but toward substitute associating complex career patterns which amalgamate marriage and family responsibilities with very real if hindered, commitments to vocational opportunities outside the home. For many women, the enunciation of these kinds of serial career patterns will involve everlasting vocational planning if they are to reach excellent levels of atonement and contribution. Educational planning for such women will involve critical attention to flaccidity and storability of vocational skills and understandings. Perhaps of even greater influence on the role of women than changes in childbearing patterns has been the breakdown of cultural taboos that have long limited the vocational opportunities of women in our society. Factors such as industrialization, urbanization and suburbanization and geographic and social mobility, as well as changes in marriage and family patterns, have finally weakened traditionally arbitrary and irrational attitudes toward roles of women. Rigid sex role differentiations based more on tribal lore than on twentieth century reality are finally disintegrating in ways that are vastly expanding the social, political and vocational opportunity structure available to women. The result for society will be the release of a vast. storage of inaugural human resources. These cultural changes are obviously not occurring without stresses and strains. Militant groups of women are demanding more rapid expedition of changes in opportunities. Other groups of both men and women are admonished by the pace of changes already occurring. A vocational education enterprise truly committed to the optimum achievement of human potential and satisfaction must help to move the society through the transition toward full vocational opportunity and commitment for women. Vocational education must make available help to individual women to develop the kinds of life styles and vocational commitments that will increase their own actualization and development. At same time vocational education must help the society rid itself of fundamental and incoherent attitudes that hamper the utilization of such life styles for both men and women. Throughout the country a number of initiatives are being taken to ameliorate the vocational education and career expectations of women and girls. Examples of good practice can be found in education, local government, industry and

commerce. A large number of schemes were commenced last year under the banner of Women into Science and Engineering. A conference on the vocational education of women was held at Hudders field Polytechnic in May 1984. The conference intended to bring together educationists, employers, careers specialists and trainers who are either entangled or engrossed in flourishing such schemes. Through keynote speeches and workshops, opportunities were provided to illustrate examples of good practice discuss issues related to their wider application and suggest additional ways forward for achieving equality for women in vocational education and training

Steps Taken by the Government

Unless drastic measures are taken to improve female literacy, create skills and capability among women for enabling them to stand on their own feet and care for themselves and family, it will be difficult for India to prosper as nation. Skill and knowledge are the driving forces of economic growth and social development for any country. Countries with higher and better levels of skills adjust more effectively to the challenges and opportunities of world of work.

The National Skill Development Mission, headed by the Prime Minister, was launched in 2008, and a Co-ordinated Action Plan for Skill Development was formulated with a three tier structure that includes,

- (a) The Prime Minister's National Council on Skill Development, as the apex body for advice on policy and interventions,
- (b) The Skill Development Co-ordination Board to device detailed strategies, guidelines and instructions based on the advice of the council, and
- (c) The National Skill Development Corporation (N SDC), a non- profit company registered under the Companies Act of 1956.

Suggestions by Gender and Economic Policy Discussion Forum (GEPD)

There is a dire and urgent need for a paradigm shift in the skill development sector, in favor of innovations, improvements and high quality training, according to discussion done at GEPD Forum II held at New Delhi. Under mentioned are some of the suggestions:

Policy Level Changes

- (a) Gender sensitization
- (b) Skill development programmes to be run by one ministry
- (c) Revisiting the Apprenticeship Act
- (d) Upgradation of craftsmen training scheme
- (e) Expansion of training institutes and provision of basic infrastructure
- (f) Provision of vocational training in schools
- (g) Making the private sector responsible for skill development in the country.

Changes at the Level of Society

Greater efforts are needed in the form of awareness programmes, counseling of families to assuage their fears with regards to training of women, and investment in personality development of women to be able to analyze and challenge discriminatory practices.

Changes at the level of provision of training and skill development

- Gender sensitive training
- Accessible and affordable training
- High quality training that matches the changing needs of the market
- Support services beyond training.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Enrolment in training and providing employment opportunities alone would not be sufficient. It is crucial to evaluate the progress and the quality of training provided in order to check discrepancies, whether it is between the needs of the trainees and the nature of training provided, or between the kind of skill being imparted and the demand from the local industry.

CONCLUSION

To conclude it can be noted that, educating women in India plays a very important role in the overall development of the country. It not only helps in the development of half of the human resources, but in improving the quality of life at home and outside. Educated women not only tend to promote education of their girl children, but also can provide better guidance to all their children. In India creation of awareness among men could enlist greater support for women participation in the various development programmes. Recognition of their- services to the family and society could empower them further and provide equal status in the society

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