



Women Empowerment towards inclusive growth through Education

A V S Prasanna, Guest faculty, Department of Education, V.S University, Nellore.

Abstract: The topic on “Women Empowerment” is a burning issue all over the world. “Women empowerment” and “women equality with men” is a universal issue. Women Empowerment refers to the creation of an environment for women where they can make decisions of their own for their personal benefits as well as for the society. The abstract aims to explain the inclusive growth of women empowerment through education. The inclusive growth of women empowerment pretentious by some key constitutions , Such as sex ratio, education, health, participation in decision making, work participation etc. The influence of education on women empowerment is going to be discussed in detail as education is the first approach to empower the women towards the new ways of thinking and possibility of unlimited exposure to take decisions for their growth.

Key words: Inclusive growth, women empowerment, education.

Introduction;

The topic on “Women Empowerment” is a burning issue all over the world. “Women empowerment” and “women equality with men” is a universal issue. Women Empowerment refers to the creation of an environment for women where they can make decisions of their own for their personal benefits as well as for the society. Women Empowerment refers to increasing and improving the social, economic, political and legal strength of the women, to ensure equal-right to women, and to make them confident enough to claim their rights.

Significance of Women Empowerment

Women development is not merely important but crucial if development is to be sustainable. Empowerment is the process of, building capacities and creating an atmosphere, which enables people to fully utilize their creative potential in pursuance of quality of life. Empowerment gives women the capacity to influence decision making process, planning, implementation and

evaluation .It also deepens and popularise the democratic process.

Women education in India through education women empowerment is a synonymous with the achievement of quality and equal mindedness in society.Women empowerment will result in traditional female values being more respected in society. Empowerment can serve as a powerful instrument for women to achieve upward social and economic mobility and achieve power and status in society. It is a source of mobility, equqlity, and emancipation, both at the individual and societal level.

History of Women Empowerment Women’s Education in pre-Independence phase Before 2000 B. C:

In this period women were eligible for the study of the Vedas and the performance of scarifies .upanayana, the Vedic initiation of girls had been as common as that of boys. The girls were free to go through the upanayana ceremony they were allowed to study to Vedas. Be treated with patronage and contempt.



Atharvana Veda declared that a woman was not entitled to marry until she had completed their student life. Many of women working in teaching profession. During Vedic period, among the higher sections of society the sacred initiation of girls was common and they send to go through a regular course of education .Women used to take an active part in agriculture, manufacturing cloths, bows arrows, and other war materials. They were useful members in society, could not be treated with patronage and contempt.

200 B .C: During this period female education received a great set back due to the deterioration of the religious status of the women and the lowering marriage age of 12 years for girls. However in rich aristocratic and royal families, girls, continued to receive a family good literacy education.

1200-1800A .D:Percentage of literacy among women went down very rapidly during the Muslims rule. Society as a whole became prejudiced against female education. The paradah system stood in the way of girls beyond a certain age being sent to schools, through very young girls had some schooling where ever possible. However with the entry of Christian missionaries efforts were initiated to impact formal education for girls during the end of the 18th century.

British period :1800-1854A.D. touched by the work done by missionaries and

philanthropic Englishman several great Indian lent their support to the opening of the girls and breaking down the traditional popular resistances against women's education. Among them Raja Ram Mohan Roy and pundit IshwaraChandra vidyasagar played an important role .In 1850, the stage was set for a change in the state policy towards women's education.

Women's Education in post-Independence phase: India gained freedom on 15th of August 1947 and became a Republic on 26th January, 1950.the five year plan periods are used as frames of reference to charter the process of girls education in the light of policy recommendations of various commissions and committees. Set up by the government of India.

Eleventh five year plan (1975-1979) given high priority to Free and Compulsory Education in all states for all children up to the age of 14 years. National Council for Women Education, Committee on state of women in India, National adult programmes of Pre-School Education were recommendations ended the improvement of the education of girls and women.

Indicators of Women Empowerment

If we say a women is empowered she needs to have some indicators, such as qualitative and quantitative.

Qualitative indicators	Quantitative indicators
1.self confidence	1. Increase in age at marriage
2.chaning role & responsibility in home	2.Reduction in fertility rate
3.physical mobility	3.Improvement in literacy level
4.self identity	4.visible changes in physical status
5. Decision making	5. Participation in politics.



III. Status of Women towards Inclusive Growth in India

The 11th Five Year Plan „Towards Faster and More Inclusive Growth“ aimed to attain „gender inclusive growth“ in terms of benefits flowing through more employment and income to women who have been bypassed by higher rates of economic growth witnessed in recent years. The inclusive approach has been extended in the 12th Five Year Plan also. Now let us see the status of women in India in the age of inclusive growth in terms of some key constituents which ensure women's empowerment such as gender ratio, education, health, economic participation, participation in decision making and the incidence of violence against women.

a). Gender Ratio; The preference for male child is so strong in our society that it is manifested as limiting the birth and survival of girls. Thus, although the sex ratio has increased from 933 in 2001 to 943 in 2011, there has been a continuous decline in the sex ratio for the population age 0-6, from 945 in 1991 to 927 in 2001 and, further, to 918 in 2011 (Census of India).

b). Health; Lack of access of women to proper information and health-care facilities as well as pre-age marriages have translated into high infant mortality rates (IMR), maternal mortality rates (MMR), reproductive diseases and a greater incidence of sexually transmitted diseases. The female IMR has been higher than male IMR. Thus, the female IMR was 42 compared with the male IMR of 39 in 2013 (SRS Bulletin, 2014). Although MMR has gone down, it is still higher. The MMR was 178 in 2010-12 (Women and Men in India, 2014).

Though most of the deaths occurring at pre and post pregnancy stages are preventable, mere negligence

at formal and informal level health care lead to death. Our field study reveals that these primary health centres should provide adequate facilities available to the poor & needy women. Mostly, people go for village medicines, soothe-Sayers or witchcrafts. Lack of basic health education among women is another prime reason for neglecting their basic ailments at preventable stage. The concept of health education is negligible and health counselling is almost not existent in India.

Women are particularly vulnerable to Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD), including AIDS and their bodies are also at risk of being infected with HIV in the womb. In this area statistical information is not available. However, World Health Organization report says that during 1997 there were about 4,100,000 people in India found to be infected with HIV. Out of this total experts are assuming that 50 percent will be women. However, with World Bank/World Health Organization aid several special programs were initiated to create awareness about this dreadful disease the achievement is said to be at below minimum level.

Discrimination against girl children start even in the womb and untold number of female foetuses is aborted in prenatal sex-selection stage. This is, in spite of legislations, prevalent in many parts of India. In many communities the mothers of girl children are some times do not get nutrition nor do they care when they are pregnant.

c). Decision Making; with regard to certain family problems such as marriage, child birth, education, etc., they were asked whether they accept the decisions of the female members. The response was mixed, they accepted that both men and women discuss and decide.



Similarly with regard to decision on economic matters, they felt that they consult women or the women decide, as they are the ones who know more about family needs than men.

Still today a very small percentage of Indian women have the freedom in household decision making, manage their family and her relatives and going outside home. In most of the Indian communities women do not have the right to decide how many children they will have. Moreover, a woman does not have the liberty to expend her spouse's income and even her own earnings as per her preference and need.

As per the details of NSS 68th Round (2011 – 2012), the proportion of female headed household in rural and urban areas were 11.5% and 12.4% respectively. These shows in addition to educational and economic empowerment, changes in women's interaction in social things, decision making ability are also necessary.

d). work participation : On the whole women and girls together carry two-third of the burden of the world's work yet receive only a tenth of the world's income. They form 40% of the paid labour force. Though women constitute half of the world's population yet they own less than one percentage of the world's property.

The condition of women in India is more miserable than the rest of the world in almost every field of social life. They are paid half of three-quarters of the money while their male counterparts earn for the same job. India is predominantly agricultural country. Women do more than half of the total agricultural work. But their work is not valued. On an average a woman works 15 to 16 hours a day unpaid at home and underpaid outside.

According to 1971 census, every one-fourth works in the country is an agricultural labour. One third of the agricultural labour is female. Only 2.5 percent of the central government employees are women.

According to National Committee on Women, the growth in the percentage of women labourer force in the organized sector is minimal in the last sixty years i.e. 3.44 percent in 1911 to 17.35 percent in 1971; besides the work load either in the field or in the factories or offices, the women have to do the household such as cooking, washing, cleaning up the house etc. The younger women besides all these have to carry the burden of early pregnancy, childbirth and breast-feeding. In terms of help offered to people for their various function women seem to receive the least attention from the society.

e) Economic participation: Effective measures should be taken to alleviate poverty as poverty is one of the crucial violations of human rights. Food security, is one of the basic human rights of individual, hence this should be assured at all because, a majority of girl children and women suffer from low nutritional status owing to the presence of intra – house hold gender discrimination in food discrimination, which should be eliminated through a proper sensitization of women on gender equality.

Women should have an equal access to institutional credit. Loan facilities for women can be expanded through formation of cooperative credit societies, as this would promote self employment and entrepreneurship among women.

Training and skill development is necessary to enable to liberate themselves from unskilled, low paid works of



agriculture, construction, domestic work etc.,

Women should be ensured equal wages for equal work. Employment laws relating to maternity benefits, prohibition of women in hazardous works, provision of crèche facilities, old age pension etc., should be extended to cover women employed in the informal sectors who are at present deprived of these benefits.

The rights of a child to educate can be achieved only if there is total ban on child labour, which still persists despite all governmental measures aimed at removing child labour.

f) Violence/Crimes against Women; Women are still considered as burden and liabilities. They are also considered as properties. These kinds of attitudes give birth to the evil of violence against women. Crimes against women have been continuously increasing. A total of 3,09,546 cases of crime against women were reported in the country during the year 2013 as compared to 2,44,270 in the year 2012, thus showing an increase of 26.7% during the year 2013. The rate of crime committed against women was 52.2 in 2013. Crime head wise, 38% of the total crimes against women were related to the head „Cruelty by husband and relatives“, followed by „Assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty“ (23%), „Kidnapping & Abduction“ (17%) and „Rape“ (11%). (Crime in India, 2013). From the above discussion, it has become clear that in spite of claim of „gender inclusive growth“ by the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012), the mass of Indian women have been continuously bypassed and marginalised in the growth process.

iv) Inclusive growth through education; On doing some more research on this

topic I have found that education is truly the key to empower women and also provide for all round economic growth of countries. Education has direct impacts plus indirect impacts on societies. First and foremost education will help women with increased job opportunities thus increasing their disposable income. For example in Pakistan, working women with good literacy skills earn 95% more than women with weak literacy skills. Education has been found to increase the bond between communities and societies.

Literacy among women has become to the development and empowerment of women and achieves gender equality. Empowerment has been considered to be the prime means of empowering women. Education creates awareness, helps to acquire knowledge and information, and equips women with ability to analyse and assess their situation and gain courage to change it. It also helps them to challenge oppressive behaviour, to organise them and to educate their children. So the first to empower women is to make them literate and educate them. Literacy and education opens the possibility of unlimited exposure to new education and also new ways of thinking and perspective on existing information. Education is a step toward the empowerment as it improves the health and nutritional status. Enable them to take decisions regarding marriage, number of children education of children and to acquire economic independence. Empowerment through education will leads to greater participation in economic and political fields and even in government and community institutions, increasing their choices and opportunities.

State wise Population of India as per 2011 Census



As of 2011 census India has a total population of 1,210,193,422 people in 35 States and Union Territories. Among them 62, 37, 24,248 are men and 58, 64, 69,174 are women. Uttar Pradesh top the state wise population table with 19, 95,81, 477 (16.49%) people.

Top five States with highest population according to 2011 census

S No	India/State/ Union Territory #	Population	Males	Females	Per cent
1	Uttar Pradesh	199581477	104596415	94985062	16.49
2	Maharashtra	112372972	58361397	54011575	9.29
3	Bihar	103804637	54185347	49619290	8.58
4	West Bengal	91347736	46927389	44420347	7.55
5	Andhra Pradesh	84665533	42509881	42155652	7.00

1. Maharashtra has second highest population with 11, 23, 72,972 (9.29%) people.
2. Bihar the third highest populated state in India with 10, 38, 04,637 (8.58%) population.
3. West Bengal stand at fourth with 9, 13, 47,736 (7.55%) population.
4. Andhra Pradesh is at number five with 8, 46, 65, 533 (7%) population.

Five least populated states in India as of 2011 census are

S No	State	Population	Males	Females	Percent
1	Sikkim	607688	321661	286027	0.05
2	Mizoram	1091014	552339	538675	0.09
3	Arunachal Pradesh	1382611	720232	662379	0.11
4	Goa	1457723	740711	717012	0.12
5	Nagaland	1980602	1025707	954895	0.16

1. Sikkim the lowest populated state in India has a population of 6, 07,688 (0.05%).
 2. Mizoram second lowest state with a population of 10, 91,014 (0.09%).
 3. Arunachal Pradesh has a population of 13, 82,611 people and ranks third on lowest populated states list.
 4. Goa ranks fourth with 14, 577, 23 (0.12%) people.
 5. Nagaland fifth lowest populated state in India with 19, 80,602 (0.16%) people.
- For Union Territories NCT of New Delhi the highest populated Union Territory has a population of 1, 67, 53,235 people. Lakshadweep the lowest populated Union Territory has a population of 64,429 people.

Literacy rate in India



The 15th official census in India was calculated in the year 2011. In a country like India, literacy is the main foundation for social and economic growth. When the British rule ended in India in the year 1947 the literacy rate was just 12%. Over the years, India has changed socially, economically, and globally. After the 2011 census, literacy rate India 2011 was found to be 74.04%. Compared to the adult literacy rate here the youth literacy rate is about 9% higher. Though this seems like a very great accomplishment, it is still a matter of concern that still so many people in India cannot even read and write. The numbers of children who do not get education especially in the rural areas are still high. Though the government has made a law that every child under the age of 14 should get free education, the problem of illiteracy is still at large.

Now, if we consider female literacy rate in India, then it is lower than the male literacy rate as many parents do not allow their female children to go to schools. They get married off at a young age instead. Though child marriage has been lowered to very low levels, it still happens. Many families, especially in rural areas believe that having a male child is better than having a baby girl. So the male child gets all the benefits. Today, the female literacy levels according to the Literacy

Rate 2011 census are 65.46% where the male literacy rate is over 80%. The literacy rate in India has always been a matter of concern but many NGO initiatives and government ads, campaigns and programs are being held to spread awareness amongst people about the importance of literacy. Also the government has made strict rules for female equality rights. India literacy rate has shown significant rise in the past 10 years.

Here are some facts about women literacy rate of different states, Kerala is the only state in India to have 92.07% women literacy rate. It is followed by, Mizoram, Lakshadweep Goa and Tripura The lowest literacy rate in India is seen in the state of Arunachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir Jharkhand ,Rajasthan and Bihar . We also need to think why is the woman literacy rate is low in India compared to other developed countries. Basically the population in India is very high. Being the 7th largest country its population stands 2nd in the world after China. There are over 1 billion people in India. The number of schools and educationa centres especially in rural areas is less. Even today many people are below the poverty line.



The women literacy rate of Andhra Pradesh was found- 67.02

High literacy states in India

Sl. No	Name of the State	Female Literacy
1	Kerala	92.07
2	Mizoram	89.27
3	Lakshadweep	87.95
4	Goa	84.66
5	Tripura	82.73

Low literacy states in India

S.N	Name of the State	Female Literacy
1	Arunachal Pradesh	57.70
2	Jammu and Kashmir	56.43
3	Jharkhand	55.42
4	Rajasthan	52.12
5	Bihar	51.50

As per the details of the above tables the women literacy rate has to be improved, for that the Government of India has taken various steps and formulated plans especially for women in every planning process.

Findings;

- The findings of this study show that there is a need to abolish certain cultural and traditional obstacles in society.
- The society has to be realised that women contribution is very important for the development of the society.
- This findings shows women literacy rate has to be improved.
- Women participation is less in education.
- Women is powerful, she can manage family and outside the home simultaneously.
- Women yet to be strengthen politically, economically and socially.

Conclusion

This study concludes the influence of education towards inclusive growth on women empowerment. Women education leads to development of family as well as society.

The general argument say women's access to employment or income generating activities leads to women empowerment as it increases their decision making and bargaining power thus leading to control over economic resources.

The main advantage of Women Empowerment is to overall development of the society. The money that women earn does not only help them and or their family, but it also help to develop the society

Women are equally competent. Nowadays, women are even ahead of men in many socio-economic activities. Still awareness is needed for the development of the state of women from the nook and



corner of the world. This only happens through education.

References:

1. Empowerment of people by p.venkata ravi, V. Narayana, M Venkata Ramana, Kaniska publishers, Distributers, New Dilhi.
2. Government of India, Five Year Plan Documents, available at: <http://planningcommission.nic.in>
3. Government of India, Primary Census Abstracts, available at: <http://censusindia.gov.in>
4. Government of India, SRS Bulletin, September 2014 (New Delhi: Registrar General & Census Commissioner, Govt. of India, 2014).
5. NSSO, Key Indicators of Employment and Unemployment in India 2011 – 2012, NSS 68th Round (July 2011 – June 2012), (New Delhi: National Sample Survey Office, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India, 2013).