



A Comprehensive Literature Review of the effect of Education on Women's Empowerment in India

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ABSTRACT

Through systematic education, freedom for development may be attained. It is the key to unlocking the door to self-reliance, autonomy, and development. However, this liberty has been accompanied by ongoing struggles for women. Women are subjected to discrimination from the moment they are born until their last breath. Inequality and oppression exist in all areas of life, including the economic, social, political, health care, legal, etc. To navigate the socially structured, gender-biased system requires considerable effort and struggle. Empowerment, which will be attained through education, will provide the fortitude necessary to overcome these oppressions. Education will assure justice and equity and, by extension, contribute to entrepreneurial growth. This paper examines the significance of education on women's empowerment through a comprehensive literature review. This qualitative study investigates the role of education in uplifting and including the status of women and female children in Indian society in light of the New Education Policy 2020. Through a systematic Literature Review, this paper contributes to the academic community and policymakers by shedding light on important development areas and opportunities for further improvement to

facilitate the implementation of the New Education Policy 2020.

Introduction

Education is an essential prerequisite that will shape the future generations of society. The primary factor that is expected to enhance and cultivate individuals, thereby contributing to the overall enhancement of credibility in the contemporary society we inhabit.

India is a nation characterised by a profound and diverse cultural, social, and philosophical heritage. Our nation is characterised by the perception of women as being synonymous with Goddess Shakti, the deity associated with knowledge and learning. The birth of a daughter is commonly regarded as a stroke of luck within a familial context. The arrival of Goddess Laxmi is seen as an auspicious occurrence. The active and essential role played by women is instrumental in empowering future endeavours.

Although the picture we are presented with may appear quite progressive, the actual reality is quite the reverse. The empowerment of women is impeded by various issues, including the enduring effect of patriarchy.

When women are provided with equitable educational opportunities, they demonstrate exceptional abilities and achievements. Not only do they emit light, but they also transmit it to those who require it along their path. Individuals possess the ability to enhance their own personal agency, as well as positively influence the individuals in their immediate vicinity. Therefore, it is imperative to dismantle the constraints imposed by gender bias in order to achieve the objective of empowering women.

Objective of the Study

The aim of this study is to investigate and analyse the specific objectives and goals that are to be achieved through the research conducted.

1. The researcher conducted the study with the aim of comprehending the extent to which education contributes to the empowerment of women in India.

2. This paper examines the obstacles that hinder the achievement of women's empowerment, with a specific focus on the realm of education.

Research Methodology

This paper adopts a descriptive and analytical approach, conducting a comprehensive literature review on the topics of Education, Girl Child, India, NEP 2020, and Women Empowerment.

Data Analysis

The process of examining and interpreting data in order to uncover meaningful patterns, relationships, and insights. The collection of literature presented below elucidates the importance of the research problem from several vantage points. The review has been organised under various thematic categories, including:

The Influence of Education on Employment

When someone acquires education, the knowledge they obtain renders them vulnerable and receptive to other ideologies and perspectives. This phenomenon facilitates the emergence of enhanced prospects and comprehension of societal dynamics. Individuals who do not occupy the position of recipient often encounter greater difficulty in perceiving phenomena. According to Singh (2016), education is regarded as a significant achievement for women, since it empowers them to effectively address challenges and transcend societal expectations imposed upon them. This technology has the potential to significantly impact and transform individuals' lives. They further discussed the discrepancy in literacy rates between genders within our nation and referenced the words of Eileen Malone Beech, who asserted that education, healthcare, and income comprise a revered trinity. The paper proceeds to examine the influence of education on the empowerment of women, as well as the obstacles encountered in this process. Additionally, it highlights potential transformations that can be implemented. It is noted that the notion of women empowerment is a relatively recent development, originating from its introduction at the International Women Conference held in Nairobi in 1985. Furthermore, the challenges and

modifications necessary for the realisation of empowerment are discussed. This report highlights several obstacles to women's education, beginning with the perception of girls in rural regions as primary carers and their subsequent responsibility for all domestic tasks. Additionally, the issue of bonded labour persists, followed by the dowry system, which remains a significant social taboo in many regions due to the substantial financial contributions expected upon a daughter's marriage. Lastly, gender bias continues to be a prevailing concern.

The author went on to explain that the purpose of the National Policy for Empowerment of Women, 2001, was to advance, develop, and empower women. To promote Women's Empowerment, a holistic environment must be created in which policies are designed for the welfare and advancement of women in all sectors.

Kr. Sonowal (2013) discussed the socially constructed biases in which women had to go the extra mile to attain success. He then explained that this resilience, which is a result of education, empowers women. Consideration should also be given to rural education in addition to metropolitan education. He came to this conclusion by conducting a study in the Sontipur District of Assam. The study demonstrates that village girls lack a decent education and, as a result, lack general knowledge, communication skills, familial and health-related aspects. The author continued by stating that the effect of contemporary education is unsatisfactory.

In *Women Empowerment through Higher Education*, Rupali Sharma and Zia Afroz (2014) stated that literacy is not only a primary factor, but the only factor that will sustain the empowerment process. They went on to say that the proper implementation of policies is essential and that policymakers should create more policies with the empowerment of women in mind.

The authors of *Impact of Education and Employment on Women Empowerment* analysed the status of women in Quetta and the effect of education and employment on Women Empowerment. After analysing a substantial quantity of data, it was determined that education and employment have a positive correlation with women's participation in decision-making, control over resources, and ability to be heard. When one woman is empowered, she reaches out and empowers other women, according to the authors. As a result, education enables them to comprehend the fundamental needs and rights they possess and break free from patriarchal views and constructs. And employment makes them financially stable and places them in the lead.

In *Women Empowerment: Education's Role*, the authors sought to raise awareness about various forms of women's empowerment and to assess the impact of education on empowerment in Madurai District. The authors noted that education is the key to understanding the inequalities and discrimination that occur on a regular basis. Once they are educated, they can fight for their rights and, in the process, be inspired by movements occurring around the globe, thereby empowering themselves. The authors concluded from their analysis that there is a great deal of room for improvement, as gender biases still exist in rural areas.

Jamil and Bukhari (2020) present a novel perspective in their study titled "Intergenerational Comparison of Women Empowerment and its Detriments." The authors propose a method to assess empowerment across generations and within the same generation, examining its effects on demographic, social, and economic indicators. The findings of the study revealed noteworthy insights, indicating that logistical factors had a substantial impact on empowerment. Furthermore, it was seen that when one generation had access to basic education, subsequent generations exhibited increased motivation to surpass the achievements of their predecessors. This assertion posits that the act of empowering a single woman has the potential to bestow empowerment upon future generations. This phenomenon promotes economic development, mitigates the prevalence of poverty, and addresses disparities in social well-being.

In *Women Empowerment through Education*, Nabanita Bera (2016) discusses the National Education Policy (1986), as well as legally mandated provisions, constitutional provisions, and United Nations Organisation instructions. The author subsequently presents the literacy situation in our country as reported by the Census (2011) and the Human Development Indicator (UNDP, 2013). These sources reveal that a mere 26% of women in our nation possess the opportunity to receive formal education. Additionally, the author discusses the potential of education as a means to mitigate prevailing stigmas and injustices. States can consider implementing various measures to promote the empowerment of women, such as establishing dedicated educational institutions exclusively for women and offering financial assistance in the form of grants, among other initiatives.

Education plays a vital role in both individual and national development, as the author of *Education and Women Empowerment in India* describes. The authors proceed to elucidate the various forms of gender disparities, namely implicit and explicit. Implicit inequalities pertain to the concept of empowerment, while explicit inequalities encompass statistical measures such as sex ratio, income disparities, literacy rates, and other relevant factors. The author also discussed the measures implemented by the

Government of Andhra Pradesh in collaboration with the Government of India, which involve the introduction of many schemes and programmes spanning across all educational levels, ranging from primary education to postgraduate studies.

Gender discrimination, preconceived conceptions, little to no representation, and male-dominated jobs are just a few of the persistent barriers that Rouf Ahmad Bhat (2015) discussed in Role of Education in the Empowerment of Women in India. The assertion is substantiated by empirical evidence indicating that the Lok Sabha exhibits a mere 10% female representation, while attaining positions within the armed forces, judiciary, and law enforcement agencies is exceedingly arduous. The author's concluding statement emphasises the necessity of reducing bias and promoting active engagement.

Upon conducting a thorough review of the existing scholarly works, it can be asserted that education plays a pivotal role in fostering a more promising future for society. However, this positive impact can only be realised when women are empowered and provided with the necessary guidance to overcome the societal biases that hinder their progress. Furthermore, the government has implemented policies that prioritise women, signifying the commencement of a new era. Notwithstanding the aforementioned, the pace of progress achieved thus far exhibits a slight delay, necessitating the use of more expeditious measures.

Significance of Women Empowerment and Gender Justice

The author of the article "Concept and Types of Women Empowerment" discusses the concept of social empowerment and its relevance in addressing discrimination based on disability, race, ethnicity, religion, or gender. The concept of social empowerment of women encompasses the pursuit of equal rights, status, and opportunities for self-development in parallel with males.

Educational empowerment is widely recognised as a crucial tool for facilitating socio-political and economic development.

The current imperative is to prioritise Economic Empowerment, as emphasised by the author who cites Elliott's statement that "Wage employment equates to economic power."

Political empowerment refers to the state of being granted representation inside the political sphere. In order for women to liberate themselves from the constraints of patriarchal systems and mistreatment, it is imperative that they assume a prominent role and assert their authentic perspectives and viewpoints.

Psychological empowerment facilitates the transformation of individual subjectivities and challenges preconceived conceptions, enabling personal growth and self-transformation.

The author's concluding statement suggests that while progress has been made, it remains somewhat sluggish and falls short of anticipated levels.

According to Mehra (1997) in her work on "Women, Empowerment and Economic Development," it is observed that women are not perceived as playing a central role in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes aimed at development. The individual proceeded to substantiate the assertion by providing illustrative instances that demonstrate how women employed in the informal sector tend to receive comparatively lower wages in comparison to their male counterparts. During the 1950s, development agencies would frequently allocate modest funds towards income-generating projects. However, these endeavours typically encountered failure due to the predominant focus on welfare rather than development as the primary motivation. Over time, institutions such as SEWA emerged, positing the notion that women play a fundamental role in fostering economic progress. In summary, it has been asserted that achieving success hinges upon addressing established priorities, namely securing job and receiving equitable remuneration, as these factors serve as a gateway to reaching economic empowerment.

The authors of the study on Women Empowerment in Indian Society provide a comprehensive examination of Indian history, highlighting occasions in which women were afforded equal opportunity. Additionally, the authors explore the significant role that women play in guiding cultural development and shaping and nurturing future generations. The writers have also presented several exemplary individuals who have defied societal norms and played a significant contribution in empowering others.

The empowerment of women will only be realised via the establishment of a comprehensive framework. When individuals are provided with equitable opportunities, fair compensation, and equal standing in all domains of existence. Engaging in this behaviour not only benefits individuals personally but also influences the perception of their identity. It is disheartening to observe that women continue to contend for fundamental demands.

In the study titled "Women Empowerment through Skills Development and Vocational Education," the authors assert that the participation and empowerment of women are essential aspects of women's rights. They argue that these aspects are crucial because they provide women with the ability to exert influence over their environment, thereby influencing the trajectory of their life. The report also posited that the combination of skill development initiatives and government interventions such as Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana and National Skills Development Corporation will empower women to assert their influence in all spheres, including both familial and career-related decision-making. The primary lesson to be derived from the discussion is that empowerment can be achieved through attaining economic self-sufficiency, as well as by cultivating social, political, and legal understanding. Additionally, the Government has implemented many measures aimed at empowering women and promoting gender equality. However, in order to ensure the success of these endeavours, it is imperative that all relevant parties collaborate diligently and harmoniously within a well-established framework, in order to effectively realise the intended objectives.

According to the research conducted by Dr. Madhu Mathur and Ms. Beena in 2012, it is also acknowledged that employment plays a crucial role in facilitating comprehensive development. In their scholarly article titled "The Role of ICT Education in Women's Empowerment," the authors discuss the potential of Information Communication Technology (ICT) as a rapidly growing sector. Through their analysis of data, they assert that providing women with foundational knowledge of ICT and its operations has the capacity to transform it into a formidable force. Ultimately, this initiative would yield advantages for women across multiple domains, including social education, personal concerns, psychological well-being, and economic circumstances, among other areas.

In the article titled "The Role of Education in Women's Empowerment and Development: Considerations and Consequences," the authors argue that education serves as a mechanism to reduce inequality and promote the advancement of women's position within the familial context. The writers provided an explanation of the Gender Gap Index, which encompasses four key categories: economic participation and opportunity, educational achievement, political empowerment, and health and survival. They noted that India's ranking on this index is 101 out of a total of 136 positions. The authors proceeded to assert that the numerical representation reflects the status of women inside our nation. However, it is worth noting that positive developments have been observed in our pursuit of empowerment, thanks to the implementation of revisions in the National Education Policy and the introduction of initiatives like as Beti Padhao, Beti Bachao.

According to Khan (2018) in her work on "Women Empowerment: Key to Socio-Economic Development," it is acknowledged that there exists a strong connection between women's empowerment and economic growth. However, despite its significance as an integral component, the level of active engagement in economic activities by women remains relatively low. In the context of rural civilizations, achieving a harmonious equilibrium between male and female participants is vital, necessitating equitable opportunities for all genders.

The article "Empowering Women through Financial Inclusion" discusses the significance of financial inclusion as a crucial indicator for societal well-being and global progress. Additionally, it was noted that the G20 nations have emphasised the importance of inclusion in finance as a crucial element. The researchers conducted an analysis of data collected from the urban slums of Ludhiana, Punjab. Their findings indicate that initiatives such as the Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana have had favourable outcomes for women, empowering them to assume greater financial autonomy.

In his study titled "Women Empowerment and Development in New India," Mishra (2017) examined the concept of women empowerment in relation to education. Mishra focused on education as a crucial factor in enabling individuals to respond to unfavourable circumstances and question existing societal

norms. The author noted that the level of empowerment in rural areas is average at best. The analysis suggests that despite the progression into the 21st century, the attainment of optimal levels of women's empowerment remains elusive. The occurrence of such a phenomenon will only materialise when there is parity across all domains, encompassing schooling and the professional sphere.

In their study titled "Life Skill Education: Enhancing Empowerment among Rural Primary School Children in Gujarat, India," Thomas and Rajdeep (2021) emphasise the importance of integrating primary life skills education alongside basic academic education. They argue that acquiring these skills is crucial for students to navigate the complexities of the social system and effectively manage their daily lives.

The acquisition of talents serves as an additional asset to our repertoire. When exploited effectively, it has the potential to provide more income for an individual. Upon doing a comprehensive analysis of the existing literature, it is evident that the current situation does not meet the expected standards. The absence of adequate training opportunities for women may result in their dependence rather than empowerment. The answer to increasing our GDPs lies in the empowerment of women. The transmission of values from one generation to the next is a significant aspect to consider.

Conclusion

Upon doing a comprehensive examination of the existing body of literature, it becomes evident that the dismantling of patriarchal structures remains incomplete, necessitating more progress in fully embracing the principles of women's empowerment. During the process of paper evaluation, the researcher has identified a deficiency in the existing body of study. The majority of scholarly articles mostly focus on rural locations, leaving a noticeable gap in study pertaining to women residing in metropolitan areas. There is a significant amount of progress to be made, which can be achieved by the effective application of policies and the dissemination of knowledge to both ourselves and our communities. By doing so, we can successfully attain the desired objective.

This study aims to present the contemporary challenges experienced by women. There exists a pressing imperative to revise our rules, expand avenues for advancement, and perceive women as valuable contributors and leaders rather than burdensome liabilities.

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