

IMPACT OF WOMEN EDUCATION ON POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA

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Abstract

This current study is an attempt to ascertain the impact of women education in women empowerment. Also, to discover whether the influence of women education has profound effect on political empowerment through previous literatures. The research here had adopted conceptual research design for the study. In any society and country, education has long been recognised as a critical agent of social change and development. Education is viewed as a powerful tool for bringing about modernization and social change. People are exposed to new ideas and thoughts through education, which also provides them with the necessary skills. As a result, it is impossible to think about peaceful development without first educating women, so education is a critical factor in women's empowerment, prosperity, development, and welfare. Education and employment, according to studies, can be effective tools for increasing awareness and empowerment. In addition, studies looked at education as a key tool for societal change. This awareness is being raised in order to increase the number of women who participate in politics. A well-informed citizenry is a sign of a politically active and participatory populace.

Keywords: Women Education, Political Empowerment, Women Empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

Women make up nearly half of the human population. Education has been recognised as an essential agent of social change and development in any society and in any country. Education is regarded as a powerful instrument through which the processes of modernization and social change come into being. Education exposes people to new ideas and thoughts while also providing them with the necessary skills (Bhuyan, D. K. S., 2020). As a result, thinking about harmonious development without educating women is impossible, so education is a critical factor in women's empowerment, prosperity, development, and welfare. Furthermore, it has been correctly stated that educating a woman is educating the entire family. As a result, the emphasis in women's education should be on preparing them for their multiple roles as citizens, housewives, mothers, and contributors to the family income, builders

of new societies, and builders of the nation. Such strength comes from the empowerment process, and empowerment will come from education (Sundaram, M. S., Sekar, M., & Subburaj, A., 2014).

Antiquity of Women Education in context with India

Women's empowerment in India has been hampered for centuries due to a variety of factors, the first of which was depriving women of basic educational opportunities. Since the Rig Vedic period, Indian women have been denied many basic rights. During the eighteenth century, women faced a number of disadvantages, including female infanticide, sati, puradha, child marriage, illiteracy, and, later, forced child widowhood in the ninth century. Women were treated in the same way as domestic animals. Great social reformers such

as Raja Ram Mohanroy, Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar, Sri Rama Krishna Paramahansa, Swami Vivekanand, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, and Mahatma Gandhi were moved by this extreme plight and fought against social atrocities against women and emphasised women's education in India (Sharma, E., 2020). Women's education, on the other hand, received a boost after the country gained independence in 1947, when the government took a variety of steps to provide education to Indian women. Despite government efforts to improve education, women continue to lag behind men. Though female literacy has risen steadily from 8.86 percent in 1951 to 15.34 percent in 1961 to 21.97 percent in 1971 to 29.75 percent in 1981 to 39.42 percent in 1991 to 54.16 percent in 2001, and then to around 74.04 percent in 2011, female literacy has risen steadily from 8.86 percent in 1951 to 15.34 percent in 1961 to 21.97 percent in 1971 to 29.75 percent in 1981 to 29.75 percent in 1981 to 39.42 percent in 1991 to 54.16 percent in It has not yet reached the desired level. Illiteracy plays a larger role in rural areas than in urban areas (Sonowal, M. K., 2013).

Interconnection between women education and women empowerment

Education is essential for everyone, but it is particularly important for women. "A boy's education is one person's education, but a woman's education is the education of the entire family," Jawaharlal Nehru said, emphasising the importance of women's education. Women who are well educated contribute to the culture of the family and society as a whole. Women's empowerment is a global issue, and many formal and informal campaigns around the world focus on women's political rights (Priebe, J., 2017). The concept of women's empowerment was first introduced in 1985 at the NAROIBI International Women's Conference. Education is a critical component of women's empowerment, development, and well-being. Women continue to be oppressed in all spheres of life, including economic, social, political, educational, health care, nutrition, right and legal, and so on. To combat the socially constructed gender divide (Mokta, M., 2014). Women must swim against the current, which favours men. Such strength is derived from the empowerment process, which is facilitated by education. Women's empowerment has become

a focal point in determining women's status in recent years. One of the most important ways to empower and educate women is through education. To be a full partner in the development process, one must have the skills and confidence to do so (Sandhya, S. J., 2015).

Political involvement of Indian Women's

Women had been visibly active as nationalists in India during the independence struggle, and it was only after feminist leaders' protests against the initially women-exclusive historic salt march at Dandi that Gandhi recognised the power of local political participation by women. Women's participation in the Indian independence movement was necessary for projecting the unity and strength of a new India, as well as debunking the British colonial image of "poor and vulnerable Indian women (Jha, J., et., al., 2019)." Despite this, women's empowerment took a backseat to the glorification of strong male leaders of Indian political freedom in the first Lok Sabha election after independence, with a dismal 4.4 percent female representation (Deininger, et., al., 2020).

Even Indira Gandhi's rise was seen as a continuation of the dynastic rule of the Indian National Congress, rather than a victory for women's rights, because of her relationship with India's first Prime Minister, Dr. Jawaharlal Nehru. With the passage of the "Panchayati Raj" constitutional amendments regarding a 33 percent women reservation, which brought more than 1 million women into political life, the focus on empowering women to play a contributing role in Indian politics gained traction after the 1980s. Women also took part in politically charged local movements such as the Narmada Bachao Andolan, the Chipko movement, and other similar agitations during this time.

Impact of women education on political empowerment – A Myth

Their contributions, however, were not widely recognised. So, why is the current level of political empowerment among Indian women so low, despite various efforts towards achieving greater political equality? In India, there are several factors that obstruct women's political

empowerment and political equality. These include a lack of understanding of or participation in electoral activities, a lack of ambition and political thought and leadership, and even restrictions based on safety concerns. The answers to the massive gender gap in electoral political participation are a combination of these numerous factors, as well as social realities regarding education (Shetty, S., & Hans, V., 2015). Even those women who manage to navigate these choppy waters are relegated to second-tier leadership positions in political parties, and are rarely given key policy-making responsibilities in Indian politics.

Findings and Conclusion

There are several factors in India that impede women's political empowerment and equality. Lack of understanding or participation in electoral activities, a lack of ambition and political thought and leadership, and even restrictions based on safety concerns are among them. A combination of these numerous factors, as well as social realities regarding education, are the answers to the massive gender gap in electoral political participation.

It is critical to disseminate accurate information in order to raise public awareness. Because it lacks adequate knowledge of available rights and policies in its favour, the majority of the population remains ignorant. Furthermore, some studies mentioned this in her study with age, economic privilege, and other parameters; it identified the reasons why the female population lacks political awareness. According to studies, education and employment can be effective tools for increasing awareness and empowerment. Furthermore, studies looked at education as a key tool for changing societal structures. This awareness is being raised in order to get more women involved in politics. A politically active and participative populace is marked by a well-informed citizenry.

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