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A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF EDUCATION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

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A Study on the Impact of Education on the Status of Women

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Abstract – The reality of women's lives remains invisible to men and women alike and this invisibility persist at all levels beginning with the family to the nation. The mere fact that "women hold up half the sky" does not appear to give them a position of dignity and equality. True, that over the years women have made great strides to many areas with notable progress in reducing some gender gaps. Yet "afflicted world in which we live is characterized by deeply unequal sharing of the burden of adversities between women and men".

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INTRODUCTION

The Indian Government has expressed a strong commitment towards education and stated in its constitution with an article promising "free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen (World Bank 1997 b) and RTE act was implemented in the year 2012.

Education is an instrument of social and economic change and it should be reoriented to enable women to take to the path of progress and reformation. Education, Lenin said "is a long and difficult matter. It is a long matter because such a complicated task as changing the human psychology cannot be done in a rush, right away it is a difficult matter because in the process of education the new men or women numerous survivals of the past have to be overcome". Emphasizing the general education of women, Archer said "without female education progress can be transmitted to each generation either not at all or very slowly. This may seem exaggerated and over-emphatic, but the case cannot be made too strongly". UNESCO realizes the overwhelming importance of basic education for women as well as men. Without this, the world of tomorrow will be over populated and will suffer more poverty, malnutrition and illiteracy than ever before.

Explaining the importance of general education Mehta remarks "education is not a luxury, it is a necessity. Studies must be directed toward getting a good training that has some potential". Khanna and Varghes have explained as "history has established beyond doubt that education forms a basis for the development of the human society". However, development of women education can be studied in

two phases, in pre-independence period and post-independence period.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:

Universal Declaration of Human Rights regards education as one of the basic rights of every human being. The movement for improving women status all over the world has always emphasized education as the most significant instruments for changing women's subjugated position in the society. According to Runciman "class, status and power are the manifestation of economic, social and political inequalities. Dubey (1975), said that the "inequalities in case of class indicates the economic inequalities, i.e. lower, middle and upper classes. Inequalities of status in terms of class expresses the difference in the living standard, in the style of life according to the higher or lower status or according higher or lower class. This situation is particularly being creative by occupational mobility. This occupational mobility is the result of higher education. Higher education among women has so far being confined to higher castes. Among the lower castes it has not gained much significant".

India is a multifaceted and extremely hierarchical society where no generalization could apply to all the nation's various regional, religious, social and economic groups. Dubey and Palriwala(1990) "women are expected to be chaste and especially modest in all actions which may constrain their ability to perform in the workplace on an equal basis with men. Cultural rules such as purdah place some Indian women in paradoxical situation, even when family suffer economically. Women participation in employment outside the home is viewed as slightly

inappropriate, subtly, wrong and definitely dangerous to their chastity and womanly value”.

Maria Mies (1980), states that there has been no structural or quantitative change in the conditions of educated Indian women. In other words, if education has to help in realizing the goals, the educational system must change structurally, quantitatively and methodologically. Education of women has achieved significance progress but this has not helped to change the attitude or values of men and women in the direction of real equality.

Women's position has worsened considerably in every sphere with the exception of some gains for middle class women in terms of education and employment. They are the more visible section of the society and their advancement generated a myth that unlike some of the Asian Societies, women's status in India is very good and is able to perform their dual roles adequately and they get considerable support from their men. The constitution of India also provides equality to women. Thus, the myth was not only entrenched but it developed a complacency and acquiescence among women.

Education is the best means to elevate the status of an individual in the existing social system. The higher education, greater the chances of employability. The same holds true for women, which is also linked with economic structure of the family. As a result, social status of women also changes. Women being educated develop awareness about the equality and would reject submitting to the norms of subjugation. This may especially be so in the cities where women form a greater workforce in fact in all the spheres of activity. Such women participate in the family's economic system and in all activities. It is in this context that various questions have been raised in the studies in this field.

Throughout the economy women tend to hold lower level positions than men even when they have sufficient skills to perform higher levels jobs. Researchers have estimated that female agricultural laborers were usually paid 40 to 60 % of male wages (Kishwar and Vanita 1985). Even when women occupy similar positions and have similar educational levels, they earn just 80% of what men do (Madheswaran and Lakshmanasamy ,1996).

A study on “ Rehabilitation and socio- economic conditions of Special Focus Group -war widows in the state of Rajasthan “ conducted by Humanistic Studies Group during August –November 2001 ,BITS , Pilani, revealed that the socio – economic status of war widows was better than widows in general.

A survey on” Working women: Issues and challenges: a case study Pilani, ,Rajasthan “ conducted by Humanistic Studies Group ,BITS, Pilani during 2002. Analysis revealed that majority of respondents felt that they were economically independent , no gender

discrimination at workplace ,job satisfaction , equally participate in decision making at home and perceived a positive change in perception of society towards women .

Recently Hillary Clinton (March,24,2010) appreciated Indian women leaders for their role in uplifting socio-economic status of Indian women and making concerted efforts to bring education to them.

NEED OF THE STUDY:

Education is the best means to elevate the status of an individual in the existing social system. Higher the education, greater the chances of employability. The same may hold true in case of women .Women, which are educated may be contributing more to the economic structure of the family. As a result, social status of the women also changes. Further, the women being educated develop awareness about the equality and would reject submitting to the norms of subjugation. Perhaps it is this equality principle which enables the Indian parliament to bring the women reservation bill. It is in this context that various questions have been raised and need to be answered on empirical basis. It is in this context that the present study has been planned.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives of the present study to find out the answers to the following questions.

- To what extent the women are conscious about their socio-economic status?
- To what extent the working women have developed the sense of independence in comparison to house wives?
- How far the functions of have changed in the family on being educated?
- How far the status of women changed in the family on account of their, as per indicators mentioned?
- On being educated, how the social relations of women have changed in the existing social system?

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The present study is about the impact of education on improving social and economic status of women in Haryana. In the study, all the women in the Haryana state constitute the population but obviously, it is not possible for the researcher to conduct the study on entire population. In the study the focus is about the impact of education on improving social and economic status of women in Haryana. The study will be conducted qualitatively as well as quantitatively.

Quantitative part will pertain to collecting data from various sources about the social and economic status of women. To assess the impact of education on women, different sets of quantitative data will be gathered. To get a deep insight into the impact of education some case studies will be conducted. Both survey as well as case study methods will be followed to explain the phenomenon of social and economic status.

In any survey of research, covering the entire population is practically an impossible task. What is feasible and generally practiced is to study a sample representative of the population under study. Out of twenty three districts in Haryana, two purposively selected. These districts namely Kurukshetra and Kaithal are selected purposively.

The study will be conducted at quantitative as well as qualitative levels, multiple sampling processes will be followed. Sample will be taken both women and men. The sample of women will be selected from various strata namely educated and uneducated, working and non- working. The process of sampling is purposive i.e. purposefully 200 educated and 200 uneducated women will be selected from each district

In order to find out the mind set of men, a group of 200 men will be selected purposively. All these men will be related to women as brother, father, husband or friend.

TOOLS

In order to collect data as per objectives of the study, following tools will be used.

- Observation technique to study the behavior, attitude and functions of women.
- Questionnaire method to get information about social and economic conditions regarding equality, inequality in social and social conditions.
- Interview will be prepared to interview women regarding change in status of women.
- In-depth case study of five women will be prepared through naturalistic inquiry process.
- A questionnaire of attitude towards women empowerment will be developed.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Sample size of middle class educated and uneducated women of Kurukshetra and Kaithal districts is restricted to 200 each from each district.

- In the case study extreme cases are included. However, affluent women and extremely poor women are not included in the study.
- Nineteen indicators of social and economic status are selected. Other indicators, social and economic, are not included in the study.
- The respondents sometimes may be judgmental in giving the information about themselves.
- Sometimes respondents may consider the investigator to be intruder in their life and despite of repeated persuasion, it may be an arduous task to convince them.

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