



Continuous issue-21 | April - May 2016

Education: A Liberating Force of the Women

Education serves many purposes and one among them is empowering the women. History witnesses that all the major changes have been brought by education. An illiterate woman is hardly conscious of her status in the society and hence vulnerable to many injustices and humiliations. Education imparts a sense of consciousness and dignity to women. An educated women, with all the consciousness of her rights, will be able to face all the oddities with courage. The present research paper aims at analyzing how education can liberate 'The chained section of the society.

It has been said by the first prime minister of India Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru "If you educate a man you educate an individual, however, if you educate a woman you educate a whole family. Women empowered means mother India empowered". Because of their being illiterate, women had been at receiving end so far. They have been exploited, humiliated, even beaten for apparently no fault of their own. Life has nothing less than a hell for them. They have remained silent sufferer for decades together. There had been sporadic efforts to bring some change in their lot, but with little result. How can a society develop in the phase of such injustice and inequality? Even after six decades of independence, we are not in position to take pride in this regard. Women continue to be dominated by their male counterparts. They have been even deprived of their basic rights to live life according to their hopes and aspirations. It has been rightly commented:

Negative values that have posed severe challenges to women's development have been operating in this society for too long. In fact our society has a history of denying opportunities for women to seek knowledge. The denial of access to education kept women in a state of perpetual ignorance and prevented them from seeking or utilizing opportunities for empowerment. The values which were in vogue were that women do not deserve freedom; their primary goals in life are marriage and motherhood; they should be educated to perform these roles to the satisfaction of all other members of the family and that a woman should sacrifice all her aspirations for the sake of her family. Self-sacrifice, tolerance and subservience are among the values that have been handed over to women from one generation to another as 'ideal'. Even though educational policies and programmes have been emphasizing on the need for promoting such values as 'equality', 'self-respect' and 'freedom', in reality education continues to perpetuate gender prejudices.(R. Indira)

Thanks to the spread of education that women have begun to understand the importance of formal education in their day to day lives. They have to fight against many odds as conservative society cannot digest such revolutions. But things are changing for better. Women have proved their merits and there is hardly any field where women have not entered. In fact, they have outshone men in some areas. A woman need not always be a teacher or nurse. More challenging tasks await her and happily she is at ease in any role she is destined to perform. It has been attributed:

Empowered women challenge men in their workplace and are visible in all forms of powerful corporate positions. Politically and economically women are now in a more commanding situation than fifty years ago. Indian women have made their presence felt in industry, technology, literature, art, banking, insurance and pharmaceutical centers. Educated women are also there in international business and administrative roles. Women's instinctive approach, which encompasses humane concerns, finds its reflection in their ability to combine justice with compassion, concern with rationality. Our vision of a better India free from multiple maladies can only be achieved when educated empowered women take up the mantle of responsibility and commit themselves to restructuring and advancing the development of India. (Banerjee)

Proper education can go a long way to help her solve her own problems. It frees her from physical and mental slavery, and gives immense strength to chart her course of progress. None would dare take an educated woman for granted. Education opens new horizons for her and enables her to judge what is in her best interest. The recent gang rape in Delhi and the aftermath resentment in the girls show that women, now, are not in mood to bear with any kind of physical, mental or verbal harassment.

Having felt the need of education in the lives of women, our central and state governments have started taking concrete steps to create awareness and extend financial help to girls in the form of loan and scholarships. It is common knowledge that girls are more sincere and dedicated to the studies than the boys. It is our duty to encourage girls in our families and those who live around us to join school from the very beginning. Let us create favourable environment in the society so that girls can learn without any fears. Education is the only weapon to wage a non violent war to establish herself and attain lost dignity. It has been noted:

Education is milestone of women empowerment because it enables them to responds to the challenges, to confront their traditional role and change their life. So that we can't neglect the importance of education in reference to women empowerment India is poised to becoming superpower, a developed country by 2020. (Madasu)

What we need today is the spirit of Malala, the brave young Pakistani girl who defied so called religious leaders, even though she had to become a victim of the wrath of fanatics. In spite of such a hostile circumstances, she succeeded in her mission to send budding Pakistani girls to the schools. Her mission has thrown away age old bondages which had limited the growth of women. She shares her views in her speech on the occasion of receiving Nobel Prize for peace:

This award is not just for me. It is for those forgotten children who want education. It is for those frightened children who want peace. It is for those voiceless children who want change.

I am here to stand up for their rights, raise their voice ... it is not time to pity them. It is time to take action so it becomes the last time that we see a child deprived of education.

...I am just a committed and stubborn person who wants to see every child getting quality education, who wants equal rights for women and who wants peace in every corner of the world. (www.ndtv.com)

Education liberates a woman in many ways because an educated woman need not depend on any other person for her livelihood. She can form her own independent opinions without being led by the popular sentiments. She learns to behave rationally and keeps herself away from false beliefs or prejudices. We have experienced in our day to day life that the illiterate women often indulges in all the wrong notions. Education helps her to take a balanced view of life.

Apart from economic freedom, education influences the life of a woman in many ways. She can enjoy life in totality and derive pleasure from various beautiful aspects of life. Education puts an end to many untold miseries in the life of a woman. Just by improving the laws and giving economical independence, we cannot bring drastic changes in the lives of women. It is only through the education that the condition of the women may achieve sustainable growth. Education would help to reduce the generation gap between the mother and the children. She can impart education to her children and win an admiration from them. As shown in the recent movie 'English, Vinglish', Shreedevi feels so dejected due to lack of English knowledge. She even feels insulted by her own daughter. But once she learns English, it gives her immense strength to face all the challenges with self confidence. Knowledge helps her to assert her own rights as a mother and as a wife.

Ours is the century of knowledge and any woman preferring to keep herself confined to the four walls of the house, may do so at her own cost. Indeed, there cannot be any substitute for education. It is a great power. Let us help women to get education which will ultimately result in having better phase of society. It has been rightly commented:

Empowerment of women is empowerment of family/household and in turn development of a nation of a country. Empowerment of women leads to benefit not only to the individual woman and to women groups, but also to the families and community as a whole through collective action for development. (Pandya 5).

References:

Banerjee, Ranjana. "Restructuring Indian Higher Education: Strategies for Women's Empowerment." *Graduate Women International*. Web. 13 March 2014. <<http://www.ifuw.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/banerjee2.pdf>>.

Madasu, Suresh. "Public Service Commission Preparation." : *The Role of Education in the Empowerment of Women*. 2 Jan. 2013. Web. 13 May 2014. <http://pscpreparation1.blogspot.in/2013/01/the-role-of-education-in-empowerment-of_2.html>.

"Malala Yousafzai's Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Speech: Full Text." *NDTV.com*. 10 Dec. 2014. Web. 4 Jan. 2015. <<http://www.ndtv.com/world-news/malala-yousafzais-nobel-peace-prize-acceptance-speech-full-text-711344>>.

Pandya, Rameshwari. "Women in changing India", Delhi : Serials publications, 2008.

R., Indira. "Value Orientation in Teacher Education - Synopsis of the Guest Speakers." *Value Orientation in Teacher Education - Synopsis of the Guest Speakers*. NCTE-INDIA. Web. 4 May 2014. <<http://www.ncte-india.org/pub/rimse/spk15.htm>>.

Dr. RAMESH B.PATEL
I/C Principal
M. A. Parikh Fine Arts & Arts College,
Palanpur, (B.K) Gujarat

Copyright © 2012- 2016 KCG. All Rights Reserved. | Powered By : Knowledge Consortium of Gujarat