



NPE (1986): IMPACT ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Dr. Abhishek Bhattacharyya

Assistant Professor of B.Ed. Department
Kalna College, The University of Burdwan

Abstract

21st century has been facing so many social changes. Amongst women empowerment is the key area which is acute in the Third World Developing countries like India. Empowerment of any section of a society is a myth until they are conferred equality before law. Encouraging women towards acquisition of education and participation in the employment settings are the main aspects that promote women empowerment. The National Policy of Education (NPE), 1986 is called for special emphasis on the removal of disparities and to equalize educational opportunity first time in all educational level especially for Indian women. One of the basic objectives of the National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 is education must play a positive interventionist role in empowering women. The present study was conducted on the impact of NPE (1986) on empowering women through education and its future progress.

Keywords: NPE (1986), Women Education, Women Empowerment.

Introduction

The National Policy of Education (NPE), 1986 is called for special emphasis on the removal of disparities and to equalize educational opportunity first time in all educational level especially for Indian women. After India's Independence lots of efforts have been seen for provision of educational opportunities for women. Parliament passed the first education policy in 1968. A new NEP usually comes along every few decades. India has had three to date. The first came in 1968 and the second in 1986, under Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi respectively; the NEP of 1986 was revised in 1992 when P V Narasimha Rao was Prime Minister. The third is the NEP released in 2020 under the Prime Ministership of Narendra Modi. Through these efforts government has got some significant results but gender disparity still is persisting in the rural areas and among the disadvantaged communities which is a matter of great national concern. Although we have not yet reached the satisfactory level, there is hope that with a great expansion of educational opportunities in India the female literacy rate is increasing in comparison to male literacy. The female literacy rate was 7.3% in 1951. While in 1971 only 18.7 of Indian women were literate, at the end of 2011 we have achieved 65.46% female literacy. The growth of female literacy rate is 14.87% as compared to 11.72 % of that of male literacy rate.

Empowerment: Concept and Its Meaning

Empowerment can be viewed as means of creating a social environment in which one can make decisions and make choices either individually or collectively for social transformation. It strengthens the innate ability by way of acquiring knowledge, power and experience (Hashemi Schuler and Riley, 1996). Empowerment is the process of enabling or authorizing individual to think, take action and control work in an autonomous way. It is the process by which one can gain control over one's destiny and the circumstances of one's lives. Empowerment includes control over resources (physical, human, intellectual and financial) and over ideology (beliefs, values and attitudes) (Baltiwala, 1994). As per the United National Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the term women's empowerment means

- 1) Acquiring knowledge and understanding of gender relations and the ways in which these relations may be changed.
- 2) Developing a sense of self-worth, a belief in one's ability to secure desired changes and the right to control one's life.
- 3) Gaining the ability to generate choices exercise bargaining power.
- 4) Developing the ability to organize and influence the direction of social change.
- 5) To create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally.
- 6) Critical reflection, caring and group participation, through which people lacking an equal.
- 7) Share of valued resources gain greater access to the control over these resources.

Empowerment and Education

Education as means of empowerment of women can bring about a positive attitudinal change. It is therefore, crucial for the socio-economic and political progress of India. The Constitution of India empowers the state to adopt affirmative measures for prompting ways and means to empower women. Education significantly makes difference in the lives of women. Education is important because literacy has become a tool of evaluating a person-whether one can read or write. Illiteracy has become a very pejorative word in our society. Today we find that literacy itself gives you status. If one can read or write is educated, he/she may get access to so much of information. Information about what you can access for others and for yourself, whether it is educational facilities, health, employment opportunity, legal literacy and so forth. These are very extrinsic reasons, but intrinsically education is



important for individual development and confidence. True empowerment is achieved only if women themselves realize that it is important for them to be empowered to enjoy a just, fair and happy life.

NPE (1986) on Women Education

The National Policy of Education (NPE), 1986 and also the Programme of Action (POA), 1992 act as the guiding force of influence both the qualitative and quantitative indicators regarding the need for empowerment of women. The N.P.E. and POA laid stress on the problems of universalization of elementary education as, in essence, the problem of the girl child and on the increasing participation of girls at all stages of education, particularly in streams like sciences, vocational, technical and commerce education. The POA also stressed the need for reorienting the education system to promote the women's equality in education. It advocated the need for institutional mechanism to ensure that gender sensitivity be reflected in the implementation of all national programmes. It will foster the development of new values through redesigned curricula, textbooks, the training and orientation of teachers, decision makers and administrators, and the active involvement of educational institutions. The National Education System will play a positive, interventional role in the empowerment of women. Followings were the main strategies to promote women education by the NPE and POA as:

- to gear the entire education system to plan a positive interventionist role in the empowerment of women,
- to promote women's studies as a part of various courses and to encourage the educational institutions to take up active programme to further women's development.
- To create dynamic managerial structure to cope with the targets envisaged.

Goal of NPE (1986) on Women Education

The goal of NPE on women education is to bring about the advancement, development and empowerment of women. Specifically, the objectives of this Policy include

- 1) Educating the women will empower them to seek gender equality in the society.
- 2) Women will be able to earn that would raise their economic condition and their status in the society.
- 3) Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of woman.
- 4) The removal of women's illiteracy and obstacles inhibiting their access to, and retention in, elementary education will receive overriding priority, through provision of special support services, setting of time targets, and effective monitoring.
- 5) Major emphasis will be laid on women's participation in vocational, technical and professional education at different levels.
- 6) The policy of non-discrimination will be pursued vigorously to eliminate sex stereo-typing in vocational and professional courses and to promote women's participation in non-traditional occupations, as well as in existing and emergent technologies.
- 7) They will be aware about the advantages of small and planned family and this will be a big step towards achieving stabilized population goals.
- 8) Education of women would mean narrowing down of social disparities and inequities. This would automatically lead to sustainable development.

Status of Women after the application of NPE

After NPE, 1986, various commissions, committees, policies and five-year plans over time have been emphasised for the development of status of women in reference to education and employment for empowering women of our society. The Ministry has been administrating 'STEP' (Support to Training and Employment Programme for women) scheme in the year of 1986-87 to provide competencies and skill that enable women to become self-employed or entrepreneurs. Legal Services Authorities Act (1987) provides free legal services to Indian women. Swa-shakti, Sayamsiddha have been implemented to reduce the gender gap in workplace. The ninth, tenth and eleventh five-year plan (1997 to 2012) focused on free education for girls in elementary to higher level and to provide free vocational and professional training for girls, free books, school dress, scholarship to reinforce girl's education. In the year 1999 'Nari-shkti Puraskar' has been announced to recognise women who have exceeded expectations to challenge the status quo and make a lasting contribution to women's empowerment. The Ministry for Women & Child Development was established as a department of the Ministry of Human Resource Development in the year 1985 to drive the holistic development of women and children in the country. In 2006 this department was given the status of a Ministry, with the powers to formulate plans, policies and programs; enacts/amends legislation, guiding and co-coordinating the efforts of both governmental and non-governmental organizations working in the field of Women and Child Development. It delivers such initiatives such as the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) which is a package of services such as supplementary nutrition, health check-ups and immunization. As mentioned earlier, the empowerment of women begins with their safety and health and this Ministry is committed to providing them. National Commission for Women was launched by the government of India on International women's day in 2010 with the aim to strengthen the overall processes that promote all round development of women. It has the mandate to strengthen the inter-sector convergence; facilitate the process of coordinating all the women's welfare and socio-economic development programs across ministries and departments. The Mission



aims to provide a single window service for all programs run by the Government for Women under aegis of various Central Ministries. In light with its mandate, the Mission has been named Mission Poorna Shakti, implying a vision for holistic empowerment of women. Now a days 'Ujjawala', 'Kanyashree', 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' these schemes have been promoted the women empowerment acutely. After the enactment of Right to Education (2009), significant progress has been on enrollment in primary level schooling. Gross Enrollment ratio (GER) at the primary level was only 60% for girls compared to 96% for boys in 1970-71, but after 2010-11, GER for both girls and boys are near about 100%. Girl's dropout rate in 1960-61 was 85% which was very high but after NPE, 1986 it declined at 65% in 1990 and now it has become 30% only. Girl's GER at lower secondary level has been drastically increased after NPE 1986. Women enrollment in higher education increases from 6.7% to 20% since 2001 to 2012.

Conclusion

It is very clear to the above study that women empowerment shows a positive trend after NPE, 1986. Overall participation of women in education and employment has gone up. Education among women is the most powerful tool of attaining power in the society. It helps in lessening inequalities and functions as a means for improving their status within the family. After NPE, 1986 we have many schemes, many programs for the purpose of women empowerment at every stage of administration, all we need is a good system and agencies for the implementation of these policies and programs. And if we can build up that system, if we can implement these programs then the goal of women empowerment can be achieved very easily through these programs.

References

1. Agarwal, S.P., (2001), Women's Education in India(1995-98)Present Status, Perspective, Plan, Statistical Indicators with Global View, Vol III New Delhi: Concept Publications Co
2. Ahmed, N., Siddiqui, A. (2006). Empowerment of Women through Education-Commitments and Challenges, University News Journal, 44 (37), 16-20
3. Arya, A. (2000), Indian Women – Education and Empowerment. Delhi: Gunjan Publishing House.
4. Bhat, R. A. (2015), Role of Education in the Empowerment of Women in India, Journal of Education and Practice, 6(10), 188-192.
5. Guha, D. & Ghosal, D. (2017), Education, Employment and Empowerment of Women in India published in "Different Truths – A Global Participatory Social Journalism Platform".
6. National Policy on Education 1986, (1998), Government of India, Department of Education, MHRD, New Delhi.
7. Nandal, V., & Rajnish, M. (2014), Status of Women through Ages in India, International Research Journal of Social Sciences, 3(1), 21-26.
8. Upadhyay., R. (2020), "Women's Empowerment in India", The Asia Foundation, p. 1. <https://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/womensempowermentindiabriefs.pdf>.

Filename: 13
Directory: C:\Users\DELL\Documents
Template: C:\Users\DELL\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Templates\Normal.dotm
Title:
Subject:
Author: Windows User
Keywords:
Comments:
Creation Date: 4/16/2021 4:41:00 PM
Change Number: 5
Last Saved On: 4/23/2021 10:24:00 AM
Last Saved By: Murali Korada
Total Editing Time: 26 Minutes
Last Printed On: 4/29/2021 4:44:00 PM
As of Last Complete Printing
Number of Pages: 3
Number of Words: 1,980 (approx.)
Number of Characters: 11,290 (approx.)