

Women Rights Work as a Catalyst to Words Change and Empowerment

Vibha Singh Kushwaha* and Swati Singh

Matushri Ahilya Devi Teachers' Education Institute, Indore, India

Corresponding author: vibhavishnusingh@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Empowerment of women donates acquiring the power to think acting freely, developing a sense of self worth, a belief is one is ability to make desired changes and the right to control one is life exercise choice, and fulfilling their potentiality as equal members of society.

An empowered woman is one who is vested with the power to think and is imbued with the consciousness of self worth. The women rights geared to create awareness to infuse self respect among women. The women may further be educated to resist encroachment on and avoid compromising their self respect, self-esteem and that they should be proud at being women. The task of women empowerment is not to cut down Jungles but to irrigate deserts.

If you educate a man you educate an individual, however, if you educate a woman you educate a whole family. 'Woman empowered means Mother India empowered' has rightly been said by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru on the eve of Independence. We are now living in a democratic country and all the citizens, male or female, in such a country have the right of equality according to constitutional provisions. The same is also applicable in concerning the education of a girl. Today in India there are many Schemes and Acts in practice which is for the all-around development of girls. Education is the major issue. All Acts and schemes are useless if the beneficiary is not literate and not able to know. Only an educated girl can fight for her rights. Before making so many other schemes and providing facilities, we have to make sure that the girls, for whom schemes/programmes are made, can access the existing provisions. It is possible and easier for a well aware and educated girl to access her rights. Education should be a priority for girls. Recently Central Government as well State Governments have introduced many schemes for the improvement of girl's education. Some of them are: 'Dhanlakshmi scheme', 'Bhagyalakshmi scheme', 'tadli scheme', 'Rajlakshmi scheme', 'Rakshak scheme' etc. After RTE Act, 2009 a positive attitude has been noticed in the Indian society, particularly in Rural areas regarding girls education. The role of media and information technology cannot be ignored in this regard to promote and popularize the expanded outlook of people. It is the right of a child (girl or boy) to get education. Between the age group of 6 and 14 years the elementary education is completely free for each child. There are also some special schemes for the single girl child. For the girls in higher education, there are some other schemes too. In this paper the focus is on how girls can be empowered by education and to analyse the role and impact of RTE to enhance girls education after the execution of Children's Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009. This paper also analyses the impact of various means for communication, Films, Television and Information Technology to enhance the empowerment of Girls through Education in India in post-RTE era.

Keywords: Information technology, empowerment, children's right, rural areas, compulsory education act

Women Empowerment and Human Rights

It is universally accepted that the development of nation cannot only be assured through the 4. Technological and materialistic advents, but through the quality of life of the people live though women are physically weaker than men. No one

can deny that woman and man are two pi are of the society. There rights, duties and responsibilities are complementary and supplementary to each other. But in our society social behavior shows that a woman is treated as inferior to man. There are number of violation of women's right. The religious view is wrong that woman is weaker than man.

History shows that women have been given full responsibilities in the society. All this is resulted into violation of women's right which they are to entitle since birth. Like child marriage, widow remarriage and polygamy. In day to day life women are facing violence in the society. Changing the mentality of people is not an easy task but quality education, awareness and constitutional provisions can bring a drastic change in status of women in the society'.

Constitutional Provisions

The Constitution of India not only grants equality to women ...-' but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women for neutralizing the cumulative socio economic, education and political disadvantages faced by them. Fundamental Rights, among others, ensure equality before the law and equal protection of law, prohibits discrimination against any citizen on grounds of religion, race caste sex or place of birth and guarantee quality of opportunity to all citizens in matters relating to employment. Article 14, 15, 15(3), 16, 39(a), 39(b), 39(c), and 42 of the Constitution are of specific importance in this regard. LEGAL PROVISIONS: To uphold the Constitutional mandate, the State has enacted various legislative measures intended to ensure equal rights, to counter social discrimination and various forms of violence and atrocities and to provide support services especially to working women.

Special Initiatives for Women

- (i). *National commission for Women* : In January 1992 The government set-up this statutory body with a specific mandate to study and monitor all matters relating to the constitutional and legal safeguards provided for women, review the existing legislation to suggest amendments wherever necessary etc.
- (ii) *Reservation for Women in Local self-Government*: The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act passed in 1992 by parliament ensure one third of the total seats for women in all elected offices in local bodies whether in rural areas or urban areas.
- (iii) *The National Plan of Action for the Girl Child (1991-2000)*: The plan of Action is to ensure

survival, protection and development of the girl child with the ultimate objective of building up a better future for the girl child.

- (iv) The Department of Women and Child Development in the Ministry of Human Resource Development has prepared a 'National Policy for the Empowerment of Women' in the year 2001. The goal of this policy is to bring about the advancement, development and empowerment of women. It may be concluded that Women will have to empower themselves. Women have shifted traditional assumptions about their roles and capabilities. There has been a marked change, and for the better. Many of its benefits however yet to touch the majority and all of us continue to experience various forms of gender discriminations. If laws designed to address the concern of women's are to have a dramatic and positive impact on women's lives they must be sensitive to the social, economic and political disempowerment of women throughout the world, The most important measure of their success should be extent to which they enable woman to interpret, apply and enforce laws of their own making incorporating their own voices, values and concerns.

The efforts done till now though have bettered the position of women however we have reached the stage of fully protecting the human rights of women. There are still many instances 44. The issue of gender equality has been enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles of State Policy also. The Constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. Empowerment is a multi-dimensional process which enables women to realize their identity and power in all spheres of life. Liberation of women revolves around focusing on argumentation on their cognitive, psychological, political, economic and physical facets for their wholesome development. Mr. Kofi Annan rightly said, "There is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of the women." It encompasses better access to knowledge and resources, greater autonomy in decision making,

in order to allow them to have enhanced ability for planning their lives and to have requisite control over circumstances that influence their lives. Emancipation of women aims at growing them to be more active individuals, who are politically active, economically productive and independent and are competent to hit upon intelligent solutions in matters that concern them. This is an agenda which has been on top of the lists of most of the government's plans and programmes.

Efforts are being made on a regular basis all over the world to address this issue and enhance the socio economic status of women. Eradication of discrimination against women's participation in the areas of access to food, equal wages, property rights, family resources, freedom of travel, control over saving, earnings and resources, guardianship and custody of their children and their maintenance has been a part of the agenda. As does the 'two sides, same coin' theory relates to 'the pros and cons' theory. Every system has its own pros and cons. Though we have been able to devise a lot many strategies to achieve our mission of empowering women of our nation, we lag far behind our dreams. India's performance regarding women's empowerment and gender equality is reflected through varied indicators. India has performed poorly in removing gender based disparities.

Again, let us take into consideration the Women's Reservation Bill. It intends for 33% reservation to women in parliament which will definitely be a step further in changing the patriarchal mindsets and boost Pro-women Legislation. An increased representation of women in parliament will enhance the self-confidence of Indian women. Likewise, the loophole in our judicial system to let free the convicts in cases of heinous crimes against women like rape, molestation and other forms of physical and psychological harassment in work and social factors serves as a moral boosting for the criminals. So, here comes the responsibility of every Indian to stride forward to ensure the dignity of women and further, of the nation, on a broader perspective.

After all, women should also take some initiatives to empower themselves. A boat cannot reach cannot reach the shore if it surrenders to the tempest. Likely and obviously, a student cannot pass an examination without writing on the examination paper. Thus, the surest way to turn destiny according to our

wish is to determine to achieve and work hard with sincerity. Peace and empowerment shall only come with walking the right road that grows the trees. Alongside, of able efforts, boldness, consistency, optimism and stand tall, breathe large, courage.

Why there is Less Emphasis on Girls' Education in India

Indian society feels that a girl is a liability who gets married and will not contribute to the economic and social development of the family. It perceives a girl as somebody who has to do duties of cooking and housekeeping. As a result, Indian society considers home training more important for girls as compared to formal education. In this instance, marriage is taken more seriously as compared to education hence a number of Indian girls are married at a younger age. This becomes as an impediment in the education of the Indian girl. Some of the important Committees and Institutes established by Indian Government after the Independence to improve the status of girls' education:

1. In 1904, Annie Besant established Central Hindu Girls' School at Banaras.
2. Prof. Karue established SNDT Women's University at Poona for the promotion of women education.
3. Radhakrishnan Commission or University Education Commission (1948).
4. Smt. Durgabai Deshmukh Committee (1959).
5. Smt. Hansa Mehta Committee (1962).
6. M. Bhaktvatsalam Committee to look into the causes of Public Support particularly in Rural Area for girls Education and to public Corporation.
7. Kothari Commission (1964-66).
8. Resolution on the National policy on Education (1968).
9. Report of the Committee on the status of women in India (1974).
10. Challenge of Education (1985).
11. National Policy on Education (1986).
12. Programme of Action (1986) and (1992) etc.

To develop the primary education and to achieve the aim of universalisation of primary education up to

age level 6-14 years, some schemes or programmes like, Operation Blackboard (OBB), District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), National Literacy Mission (NLM), National Programme of Nutritional Support of Primary Education (NPNSPE) or (Mid-Day Meals), RTE Act, 2009 etc., were introduced. Despite these government efforts to educate girls, women are still lagging behind in literacy. The following are some of the reasons for a girl child to get education:

1. To educate the future generation;
2. To decrease the infant mortality;
3. To decrease the maternal mortality;
4. To decrease the population explosion;
5. To increase involvement of women in political process;
6. To decrease domestic and sexual violence;
7. To decrease the support for militancy;
8. To improve socio-economic growth;

Women’s Participation in Education

For women is the best way to improve the health, nutrition and economic status of a household that constitute a micro unit of a national economy. The trend of literacy reflects some positive and astonishing changes if we look at the scene behind the curtain. In table, we can see a wide gap between the literacy rate of the male and female but the same is decreasing after 1981.

This will have far reaching consequences on the development of society. Women constitute half the human race. Education has been recognized as an essential agent of social change and development in any society of any country. Education is considered as a potent instrument through which processes like modernization and social change come to existence. Education exposes people to new thoughts and ideas and provides necessary skills.

Hence to think harmonious development without educating girls is impossible. Moreover it has been rightly said that to educate a girl is to educate the whole family. Therefore, the emphasis with regard to girl education should be to equip her multiple role as citizen, homemaker and contributor to family income, builders of new society and builder of the nation. Education is the most important factor

for girl empowerment, prosperity, development and welfare. Discrimination of girl from womb to tomb is well known to all of us. There is continued inequality and vulnerability of girls in all sectors - Economic,

Table 1: Trend in Women Education (Literacy Rate during Decades)

Year	Persons (Total)	Males	Females	Literacy Gap
1951	18.33	27.16	08.96	18.30
1961	28.30	40.40	15.75	25.05
1971	34.45	45.96	21.98	23.98
1981	43.56	56.38	29.76	26.62
1991	02.21	64.13	39.29	24.84
2001	64.88	75.26	53.67	21.59
2011	74.04	82.14	65.46	16.68

Education, Social, Political, Health Care, Nutrition, Rights and Legal etc. Girls are oppressed in all spheres of life, they need to be empowered in all walks of life. In order to fight against the socially constructed gender biases, girls have to swim against the system that requires more strength. Such strength comes from the process of empowerment and empowerment will come from the education. More importantly, an educated woman in a society like India will contribute to reducing the infant mortality rate.

Some of the Constitutional Provisions for the Girls’ Education:

1. The Constitution of India in Article 15(1) on right to equality, provides the basic policy framework that enshrines the vision of girls’ and the spirit in which their education is to be provided.
2. The 86th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2002 has made elementary education a Fundamental Right for children in the age group of 6-14 years by providing that “the State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as State may, by law, determine”.
3. A new thrust was provided to girls’ education in the National Policy on Education 1986, (as modified in 1992) which provided a holistic

vision for the education of girls and women and recognized a cross-cutting issues that inhibited the realization of this goal. It at using Education as an alp of basic change in the status women in society.

Role of ICT for the girl's education

1. Communication has become inexpensive and affordable and has extended to remotest areas (rural and tribal).
2. The broadcasting industry, especially the television and radio, have also grown by leaps and bound and are now easily accessible to rural areas also.
3. The broadcast in television is now in all languages with many channels being aired.
4. The radio broadcast is also freely available to most of the people and has been well integrated with mobile technology.
5. The potential of ICT for girls in developing countries is highly dependent upon their levels of technical skill and education.
6. Government is also imparting the technical education on the use of ICT as a part of both formal and informal educational systems and initiating distant learning and vocational courses. In Indian context, this revolution of ICT has not been passed on to the girl folk primarily due to the social structure, values and beliefs. But now the thinking and attitude of the people regarding education and ICT are changing. They are also sending their girl child to the vocational institutes to get education so that those girls can also come in the mainstream. The Girl ICT Day Was Celebrated on 7 May 2013, in New Delhi.

Girls' Education in RTE act 2009

According to RTE Act, 2009, "child" means a male or female child between the age of six to fourteen years. Some specific recommendations for the girl child education are given below:

1. Every girl child of the age of six to fourteen years shall have the right for the free and compulsory education in a neighborhood school till the completion of elementary education.

2. For the purpose of the sub-section (1), no child would be liable to pay any type of fee or charge or expenses which may prevent her from pursuing and completing the elementary education.
3. As defined in clause 1 of section 2, the person with disability will not be discriminated.
4. For seeking admission in such other school, the head teacher or the principal have to provide the transfer certificate immediately without any delay.
5. For each girl child school will be in the neighborhood area so that the parent can send their daughters to the school without any hesitation and fear.

Schemes Provided by the Government

Both the state and the central governments are providing facilities to empower the girls and improve their status in the society. There are many schemes run at state and centre levels like 'Dhanlakshmi scheme', 'Bhagyalakshmi scheme', 'tadli scheme', 'Rajlakshmi scheme' and 'Rakshak scheme'. But once again the same question comes to our mind that the benefit of these schemes and facilities can be taken by the common people only when their mindset changes and they become ready to send their girl child to school.

Womens Self-image and Media

The facts is that the anxious girls and women experience from feeling unattractive is arguably one of the most pervasive and damaging consequences of advertising. Only one body type is almost and always presented in-terms of media and advertisement, those very tall and thin women who would meet the criteria or parameter for anorexia as 20% below normal weight A.P.A. (1994). In reality this unhealthy body shape is unattainable for 99% of women. Kilburn (1997) says many times, even these beautiful women are teemed not good enough for advertisements. If the ideal of beauty is physically unattainable, then consumer will never be able to attain the image they want and therefore there will be an endless demand for new beauty products. As a result, the millions of women and girls are helpless up to reach this standard of beauty, feel a sense of failure, shame and guilt. This dissatisfaction with

one's body weight as it is portrayed in the media has increased. Wiseman, Gray, Mossman & Ahrens (1992) in their study discloses that women who view the media's image of beauty as ideal are more likely than any other group to have a very negative image. Pinhas, *et al.* (1999) argue that the Harvard eating disorder centre reports that 80% of women wake up every morning feeling depressed about their appearance. The Time magazine has reported that 80% of children have been on a diet by the time they have reached IV grade. National Association of Anorexia Nerves and Associated Disorders estimated that about 13% of Americans with eating disorder are men: Another serious problem is the facts that almost portray women as sex object in order to enhance the appeal of their product.

This significantly affect the way women and girls think about themselves, especially young women, it is during the adolescent stage of life that younger people develop their sense of self and identity. This endorsed the underlying message or information to women and girls that any important aspect about themselves is the way they look, causing majority of women to believe that their worth is dependent upon attention from men. Commoditization of women and girls as a sex object has very serious detrimental effect on them. The constant or serial abuse of women's sexuality to sell products in the bar, sports, film and music industries for a glory example, has completely polluted our understanding of sexuality and gender role.

In present scenario the said commioidification of Women undoubtedly contributes to the high incidents in-terms of rape and physical assault in our society. In western country a women is raped every three minutes and 55% of women report having experienced rape or physical assault in their lifetime. The popular media often depict gender violence in extremely strong incidence such as rape, molestation or murder. But in reality these are not the most frequent and scary crimes committed against Urban middle class women. Intact a persistent show of extreme form of violence against women on T.V. in the name of news has rendered the viewer immune. It hardly pricks the viewer unless one has a personal relation with the said incidence — This is true in context of India in these days to see such type of news on front page in almost every newspapers. This incidence has forced

women and girls to suffer from health problems, low self esteem, expression, anxiety psycho-social and the adoption of subservient roles in society. The most surprising and disturbing fact in this context is an absolute non resistance from the civil society especially women to such media message.

(Socialism play any role : In capitalistic economy, corporations or companies must either create new markets or expand existing ones in order to out complete their rivals, companies are driven to artificially create a demand through deceptive advertising. This is the reason why advertising is such an important part of the capitalist. Although advertising is a -basal' part of capitalist society, it is completely unnecessary or avoidable for the functioning of a healthy society.

Advertising sell product or Brand based or associated with an image, an illusion, rather than the actual use it has. Nike shoes or other items are not simply a shoes or items, but supposedly a gateway into another life. Modern Capitalism, this commodity fetishism to an extreme.

In a rational ek socialistic society product would be rated by their actual utility rather than mystifying images. The profit motive which drives the fashion, clothing and cosmetic industries needs to be wipe out or removed altogether. This can only be ensure by taking these corporations into public ownership. The largest corporations, such as a coca-cola Nike shoe and others spend up to 1/3 of their operating budget on advertising. The pharmaceutical companies also spend almost \$ 2.25 billion on advertising in (2000) (American Medical News 2000). That's up from \$ 300 Million 01097 (Philadelphia Inquirer 1017/00). These corporations must be taken out of private hand and made public property, approximately 7 is conglomerates own 80% of all media outlet, T.V. movies, machines, radio and Hollywood, would run for human need rather than corporate greed. The billions of dollar spent and wasted on advertising Id be used to provide free education and quality health care for common people. The millions of job opportunity in marketing and advertising could be replaced with full jobs such as cleaning up the ornament or building mass transit system. This is surely impossible in capitalism but it would be really possible in the socialistic society where ordinary people were in control instead of a few corporate.

In a democratic socialistic society corporate and companies would no longer need to continually raise profit in order to out complete their rivals or competitors. Consumers would have democratic in nut and high quality products would be bud to last There would be no need to manipulate people's minds and attitude to sell a product The onslaught of advertisement, telemarketers etc could be replaced with a variety of voluntary systems for consumers, from information directories on the internet to published catalogues unlike in the former U.S.S.R. public companies in a genuine socialistic society would be under democratic forces.

Control and management would offer a variety of quality products to meet diversity of consumer tastes. In socialistic society the art and culture would flourish instead of billboard or corporate along with highway suitable spaces would be created where artists could display their art work and art would be properly enriched or forded. Corporate control over the theme and content of T.V. advertisement and news programmed would be ended Socialism would lay the foundation for women liberation. Socializing domestic labor and family function is the only pragmatic way to liberate women from the double burden, healthy standard living and community provision for free health care would bear a huge burden of women's shoulders. Advertising would no longer suffocate and distort women's since of self-efficacy and self-esteem. A society based on equality and mutual respect would finally eliminate the second class status women have held for thousands of years.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The study is theoretically speaking which indicates that changes is not limited to text book and newspaper. Paper and packaging sell products, warm of people hazardous. Now these days advertisement is going to be depict the image of woman for their greed in-terms of profit It also indicates that these issues can't looked at in isolation from the demographic and typical geo-social condition of the nation. The media and corporate have professionally distort the women's natural status and value for their cause. Since this would certainly hinder the development of the women's self Further study throws light that only socialism would lay the foundation of women's liberation.

The situation and status of girl child is improving in India. Women are the backbone of the family and the foundation of a nation man and woman both play an equal and vital role in the creation of the society. India is the second most populous country in the World. As per census 2011, the current population if India is 1210.57 million comprising 587.45 million (48.5) Woman and 623.12 million (5.5) Men. The discrimination against women based on the sex is known as gender in equality. Gender in equality directly or indirectly affects the Sex ratio Women's health, Education and economic status of women. So Empowering the Women are becoming Most Important as peat of our Society of the same Time women should also think that they are the past of society and they can do anything and everything like men.

The government of India is making umpteen efforts to uplift the girl child. Education also brings reduction in inequalities and functions as a means of improving their status within the family. To encourage the education of girls at all levels and for dilution of gender bias in providing knowledge and education, the Government has established schools, colleges and universities exclusively for girls. To bring more girls, especially from marginalized families of Below Poverty Line (BPL), in mainstream of education, the government is providing a package of concessions in the form of free books, uniform, boarding and lodging, mid-day meals, scholarships, free cycles and so on.

Yet one cannot speak of women empowerment when cases of violence against women are rampant. Society needs to change itself and the way it thinks. What needs to begin is a movement to empower the girl child right from the womb, means before her birth to her existence. Her upbringing needs to be changed. She cannot be brought up in an environment where girls are taught to remain subdued. Their aspirations cannot be curbed because they are females, they cannot be ignored. The girl child needs to grow learning that she is not less than her brother. She needs to know that a wide range of avenues wait for her to be explored in this world of hi-tech lifestyle. The urban India is adopting these changes, but the situation has to be improved in rural parts where the major part of our population lives. The government and NGOs are doing their best to bring out changes in these areas.

Women empowerment drives and initiatives will continue and some will do wonders in achieving their goals. But the real difference will come only once the foundation of our society undergoes dramatic transformation.

REFERENCES

- American India Foundation, New Delhi. Col. 2005.
- Child Protection-A Handbook for Teachers: Ministry of Women and Child Development, New Delhi, 2007.
- Dayaram, 2009. School Development Man Under the RTE Act, 2009
- Hendriks, A. and Burgoon, M. 2003. The relationship between fashion magazine consumption and body satisfaction in women. Who is most at risk of influenza? Paper presented at the meeting of the international Communication Association. San Diego.
- Kilbourne, J. 1999. Deadly Persuasion Why women and girls Must Fight the Addictive power of advertisement : New York Free Press.
- Mohammad Shahzer. 2013, Changing Scenario of Women Development: Emerging Partnership in Economic Development and Challenges Ahead, pp 434-435 in Challenges of Livelihood and Inclusive Rural Development in the Era of Globalization, New Delhi Publishers, New Delhi.
- National Curriculum Framework for School Education. NCERT, New Delhi.
- NCPCR. Eliminating Corporal Punishment in Schools. Govt. of India. Lt no, R.K. 2001.
- Study on Child Abuse: India: Ministry of Women and Child Development, New Delhi, 2009.
- The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act-2009: The Gazette of India, New Delhi. GUM% N.L. 2003.
- Women and Education, Calpaz Publications, Delhi.
- Women's Education Through Ages, Concept Publications Co, New Delhi. NCERT. 2005.
- Ritzer, G. 2000. The McDonatd, sation of Society. Thousand Oaks Pine Forge Press Sister Global Institute (1998) Justice 29 March 2002.