

Role of Women in Promotion of Education in Post-Independence India

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Abstract:

Education is very important for each and every human being. Education is identified as one of the important requirements for attaining qualitative change in the life of an individual. Women need an education which will not only help them in the search and acquisition of new skills and knowledge, but also help them to acquire and strengthen values like justice, equality, honesty, truthfulness and solidarity. After Independence the Government has taken different measures for increasing women literacy. Women who fought for women's education in India. For centuries women were constrained in the four walls of the house and education was reserved for the upper caste men. So many wondrous women play a vital role for increasing women literacy after independence in India. Women play an imperative role in making a nation progressive and guide it towards development. They are essential possessions of a lively humanity required for national improvement, so if we have to see a bright future of women in our country.

Keywords: Education, Educationist, Qualitative, Socio-Economic, Empowerment, Prosperity, Development, Welfare, Literacy, Phenomenal, Freedom, Salvation, Manifestation, Knowledge.

Introduction:

"Education is something which makes a man self reliant and self less."

- Rig veda

Education is very important for each and every human being. By education we can differentiate between right and wrong, good and bad, animals and human beings. Only education tells us that how a person can live in a society, it humanize humanity. So education is very important for everyone, both for women and men.

Women education is an essential need to change their status in the society. Educated women can play a very important role in the society for socio-economic development. Education eliminates inequalities and disparities as the means of recovering their status within and out of families. It is the key factor for women empowerment, prosperity, development and welfare.

During the post-independence India, improvements were made in terms of various areas that led to well-being of women within the society. There were formulation of many programs and schemes that had the main objective of bringing about progressive among women. Encouraging them towards acquisition of education and participation in the employment settings are the main aspects that promote women empowerment.

After India became independent the first governmental act to organise the education system in the light of independence was the setting up of the University Education Commission, headed by Prof. S.

Radhakrishnan to 'suggest improvements and extensions that may be desirable to suit the requirements of the country'. The Commission covered the problems of admission, length and contact of courses, the relation between teaching and research, examination, student discipline, teachers' service conditions etc. Widely acclaimed, the report of the Commission on the issue of women's education referred that:

"The modern educated Indian woman is neither happy nor contented nor socially useful. She is a misfit in life. She is highly suppressed, and needs opportunities for self-expression. The new education must provide this opportunity".

After Independence many educationists did great work regarding woman literacy in our country. Meghna Ghai, Vimla Kol, Durgabai Deshmukh, Roshni Mukharjee, Mukti Dagli, Radha Goenka, Sangeeta Rao, Seema Mahajan, Geeta Dharmrajan, Amudhavalli Rangnathan, Begam Zafar Ali, Uma Pathak, Kumari Shibulal, Indumati Katdare, Nivedita Raghunath Bhide and Mirra Alfassa (Sri Maa) are some of the great educationists whose works increase woman literacy in our country.

The work of these educators and activists form the backbone for a more equitable world for women. A wider prevalence of women's education didn't just mean more women being educated, but it meant women entered the public sphere. It paved the way for women to be leaders, women in science, and a life of independence and dignity for them.

The contribution of women in the areas of technology, politics, human welfare and most importantly, education has been phenomenal. Female educators across the globe have educated, uplifted and influenced millions of souls. Some of the most influential female educators from Indian history who contributed to the education, freedom and growth of the society.

The Education:

The word 'EDUCATION' is derived from the Latin words-"Educare, Educere, Educo and Educatum" 'Educare' means 'to bring up' or to 'nourish', 'Educere' means To draw out or to 'manifest' 'Educo' means 'to lead out of' 'Educatum' means 'Act of teaching or instruction' 'Educere' means To draw out or to manifest. The term Educare or Educere mainly indicates development of the latent faculties of the child. But child does not know these possibilities. It is the educator or the teacher who can know these and take appropriate methods to develop those powers. In Hindi, the term "Siksha" has come from the Sanskrit word "Shash". "Shash" means to discipline, to control, to order, to direct, to rule etc. Education in the traditional sense means controlling or disciplining the behaviour of an individual. In Sanskrit "Shiksha" is a particular branch of the Sutra literature, which has six branches -Shiksh, Chhanda, Byakarana, Nirukta, Jyotisha and Kalpa. The Sutra literature was designed to learn the Vedas. Siksha denotes rules of pronunciation. There is another term in Sanskrit, which throws light on the nature of education. It is "Vidya" which means knowledge. The term "Vidya" has originated from "Bid" meaning knowledge. If we mention certain definitions of education of great educators of the East and the West, we may have a clear picture of the nature and meaning of the term education.

Education is very important for each and every human being. By education we can differentiate between right and wrong, good and bad, animals and human beings. Only education tells us that how person can live in a society, it humanize humanity. So education is very important for everyone, both for women and men. In 21st century there is no difference between male and female. So it is important to be given education to both male and female. Female covers half of the total population of the world.

Education is identified as one of the important requirements for attaining qualitative change in the life of an individual. According to various aspects and persons we can define education as follow :-

"Education is that whose end product is salvation."

- *Upanishada*

"Education means training for the country and love for the nation."

- *Koutilya*

"Education is the manifestation of perfection already in man. Like fire in a piece of flint, knowledge exists in the mind. Suggestion is the friction; which brings it out."

- *Swami Vivekananda*

"By education I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man's body, mind and spirit."

- *Mahatma Gandhi*

"The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence."

- *Rabindranath Tagore*

"Education according to Indian tradition is not merely a means of earning a living; nor it is only a nursery of thought or a school for citizenship. It is initiation into the life of spirit and training of human souls in the pursuit of truth and the practice of virtue."

- *Radhakrishnan*

"Education develops in the body and soul of the pupil all the beauty and all the perfection he is capable of."

- *Plato*

"Education is the creation of sound mind in a sound body. It develops man's faculty specially his mind so that he may be able to enjoy the contemplation of supreme truth, goodness and beauty."

- *Aristotle*

"Education is not a preparation for life, rather it is the living. Education is the process of living through a continuous reconstruction of experiences. It is the development of all those capacities in the individual which will enable him to control his environment and fulfil his possibilities."

- *John Dewey*

Thus, education becomes the sum-total of all experiences that the child receives either in the school or outside. In wider sense, life is education and education is life. Education is the process whereby a human being gradually adopts himself in various ways to his physical, social, and spiritual environments. It is the development of all those capacities in the individual, which will enable him to control his environment and fulfill his possibilities. Education, in the broader sense, is transmission of life by the living, to the living, through living and for living". Education is a means for the development of balanced all- round harmonious development of personality.

Women Education:-

Women's education can be regarded as a kind of knowledge given to women for enhancing their self-respect and self-dignity. This knowledge can be in form of formal, non-formal and informal education, it can also be in form of Adult Education, Community Development, Workshops, Seminars, Conferences and Training. Women's education is for making women to become economically independent and self-reliant, Women as mothers, are educators within their families, what they learn, they pass on to their children and their future generations.

Women need an education which will not only help them in the search and acquisition of new skills and knowledge, but also help them to acquire and strengthen values like justice, equality, honesty, truthfulness

and solidarity. It should also create or release energies in women to act with conviction and courage in their various struggles at different levels. Education should help women to develop an analytical and questioning mind and a scientific approach in understanding the realities around them.

Women Education in India after Independence :-

After Independence the Government has taken different measures for increasing women literacy. As a result women literacy rate has increased over the six decades (1951 census to 2011 census) and the growth rate of women literacy has in fact higher than that of male literacy rate. But the gender gap is still exists as the women literacy rate is less than the male literacy.

Census Year	Total (%)	Males (%)	Females (%)	Gap Rate
1951	18.33	27.16	8.86	18.30
1961	28.33	40.40	15.35	25.05
1971	34.45	45.96	21.97	23.98
1981	43.57	56.38	29.76	26.62
1991	52.21	64.13	39.29	24.84
2001	65.38	75.85	54.16	21.70
2011	74.04	82.14	65.46	16.68

Source : Census of India 1951-2011

According to above data this it is concluded that there is a increasing trend in women literacy rate. But after the efforts of six decades India is not nearing to achieve this goal. Apart from this the status of women literacy is not equal to male literacy.

Women Educationists:

Women who fought for women's education in India. For centuries women were constrained in the four walls of the house and education was reserved for the upper caste men. The work of these educators and activists form the backbone for a more equitable world for women.

So many wondrous women play a vital roll for increacing women literacy after independence in India. for example :- Meghna Ghai, Vimla Kol, Durgabai Deshmukh, Roshni Mukharjee, Mukti Dagli, Radha Goenka, Sangeeta Rao, Seema Mahajan, Geeta Dharmrajan, Amudhavalli Rangnathan, Begam Zafar Ali, Uma Pathak, Kumari Shibulal, Indumati Katdare, Nivedita Raghunath Bhide and Mirra Alfassa (Sri Maa). Other than these women educationists so many unknown womens of the society also play an important roll for the women education in our society. These all womens are concedre as Women Educationists.

Role of Women's in Promotion of Education After Independence :-

Indeed, the number of phenomenal women who have made their contribution in uplifting the Indian society is endless. So many women work day in and day without any expectations. Many names go unheard. These unsung heroics are slowly transforming the face of the country. So I bring you the stories of some of them who plays an Important role of Women's in Promotion of Education After Independence :-

Meghna Ghai, President of Whistling Woods School

Cinema has the power to transform masses. It is the most powerful medium of communication in any society. Also looking at the current world, the transformation of the cinematic platform is very much visible. From big screens to OTT, from mainstream drama to education and intellectual genres, films are taking shape in almost all the spheres of life.

Vimla Kaul

She is an example of the great saying, “Be young at heart and not age.” Vimla Kaul, at the age of 80 years is going all out and providing education to children in a small village Madanpur Khadar, Delhi. For the past 20 years, she has been continuing with this educational endeavour.

She closely noticed a lack of commitment and worked in the education field for underprivileged students. Vimla took responsibility on her shoulder and strove to uplift kids in the capital city. The prominent regions being Sarita Vihar. Despite the lack of infrastructure and proper building, Sarita Kaul is unstoppable and continues with the excellent work.

Durgabai Deshmukh

She is widely known as Iron Lady. An Indian fighter, social worker, lawyer, and a politician, Durgabai Deshmukh was a member of the Constituent Assembly and Planning Commission in India. Born in the state of Andhra Pradesh, Durga was married at an early age when she was 8 years old. However, she left her husband in the pursuit to complete her education. She finished her bachelors in BA degree and Masters in MA in the 1930s. Despite all odds, the iron lady stood tall and unwavering.

Roshini Mukherjee

Do you know the founder of Exam Fear online platform? Do you know that it is the largest study platform for aspiring students studying from class 6 to class 12, in the various subjects along with NEET preparation? The women behind all this transformation is Roshini Mukherjee. When the world is online, why not harness maximum value online only? This young lady based her education model on these lines only. It, not a hidden fact that so many students struggle with studies in their school days. What fears most of them is not about solving a problem but about fear of study itself. This further leads to anxiety of failing or not being able to fit the standards.

Mukti Dagli

“Lack of vision was not able to stop Mukti’s vision.” At the age of 7, young Mukti lost her vision. However, that did not defeat her. She got herself trained in diploma training for the blind students. She pursued her BA degree in arts and passed it with first division. It is often said that struggles bring out polishes one’s life like a diamond. However, for her, the definition of her existence was different as that experience acquainted her to the realities which people otherwise are not. She translated it into her mission and went on to teach blind people, especially women.

Radha Goenka

Modern Times problems call for Modern Day solutions. Radha Goenka is one such social entrepreneur who understands the pulse of the situation and is thriving to make an impact in the Indian education system in her unique way. She has pursued higher education from Pennsylvania University. Had she wanted, she

would have got the best offers from all around the world. However, she wanted to work for her own country and started making an effort toward it.

Sangeetha Rao

She is a Special Education educator/ teacher. Her journey didn't start as an educator straightaway. She was a fashion designer before undertaking education full time from 2007 onwards. She pursued her Special education diploma, and after that, there was no turning back. Sangeetha closely studied the USA education model. This helped her bring freshness and creativity in the current Indian education system for specially-abled students.

Seema Mahajan

True education will only come when a person understands the depth of it. It is not just about studying or rote learning. Education provides holistic nurturing to the students to shape their future in a promising direction. Seema understood the importance of entrepreneurship today. Especially in India, which has been a land of local businesses. But the country witnessed a dramatic change wherein very few students would opt for entrepreneurship. This calls for support for the aspiring students in this domain.

Geeta Dharmrajan

Students require creative learning. Geeta Dharmrajan is a teacher, an educator who writes children's books. She is an editor and a social worker. Understanding the need to impart holistic education to the children, Geeta started her initiative, popularly known as Katha school. She published various children's magazines, articles and editions. Katha school was established in 1989. This institute started with 5 students and today it is a family of more than 20,000 women students. In total there are up to 45,000 students in Katha family with up to 43 training labs. More than 2000 slum volunteers support the Katha family. Truly just an igniting mind of this single individual has transformed the lives of many.

Amudhavalli Ranganathan

Daughter of famous entrepreneur CK Ranganathan is leaving no stone unturned to uplift the education in the Indian society. Utilizing her privilege to channelize it in a holistic direction, Amudhavalli started a preschool CK Wonder Kidz in the year 2014. In fact, we all are known to CK groups of Institutions. She plays an active role in improving the education systems at all levels.

Begum Zafar Ali

When a single woman stands up, she paves the way for many others. Begum Zafar Ali is one such woman. She hailed from Kashmir, a place where education would be a remote dream for many, especially for women. Begum was the first woman matriculate in Kashmir. She went on to become inspector of schools in the state. She played many roles to empower women in her lifetime. She worked as Educationist, Deputy Director of Education, Women Liberation Activist, and also a legislature in Jammu and Kashmir state. Her story sets a true example that nothing is impossible. Despite crushing circumstances, Begum became a source of inspiration for many other women in the coming generations.

Uma Pathak -

Only when the underprivileged are educated, can we move forward to an equitable society. Education can bring about true transformation in the quality life of a country. Uma Pathak is working with these notions only. Taking inspiration from her father, Uma decided to start SPS foundation in 2018. In villages in India, it is very often seen that parents do not allow their children, especially daughters to pursue education. Uma understands the depth of such a situation and is working to educate as many as possible by providing a safe environment.

Kumari Shibulal

So many students in the country miss out on their education just because of the lack of financial support. Kumari Shibulal understood this need and so she started Shibulal Family Philanthropic Initiative (SFPI). Under this initiative, they began offering scholarships to the students. At first, the scholarship was offered to only 2 students in the year 1999. The organisation supports the underprivileged students across various education levels. They have various programs for different levels of education. Ankur is a residential scholarship program which is offered to the school going students. Another scholarship program which is called Sathiya, is offered to students aspiring for a career in hospitality. Under the SFPI, students who wish to pursue higher education are offered flagship programs like Vidyadhan.

Conclusion:

Women play an imperative role in making a nation progressive and guide it towards development. They are essential possessions of a lively humanity required for national improvement, so if we have to see a bright future of women in our country.

Women play a very important role in the progress of a family, society and country. In order to make democracy successful in the country women education is necessary together with the men. Educated women are the real source of happiness in the family. Education is one of the milestones for women empowerment because it enables them to respond to the challenges, to confront their traditional role and change their life-style.

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