

The Impact of Educational Attainment on Women's Empowerment: A Multidisciplinary Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the multiple relationships between the educational attainment and women's empowerment. It also examined how education helps women to get knowledge, critical thinking, and the ability to struggle any complex situations. To empowers them in various aspects of life, including economic independence, social and political participation, and overall well-being. Secondary research methods was employed in this study which engage a multidisciplinary approach, analyzing the link through the eye of Human Capital and Feminist Theory examining how education challenges traditional gender roles and empowers women to advocate for themselves and their communities. The study has limited to current research and proposes a future direction which emphasized the need to consider cultural contexts, quality education and safety measures to maximize education's empowering potential for women across diverse situation.

Keywords: Empowerment, Education, Economic Independence, Social environment, Critical Thinking.

INTRODUCTION:

Education of girls is not just about their right to achieve goals but It's a powerful force for making positive change in the world. Various international organisations highlights that ensuring all girls have access to quality education is a fundamental human right. But it's also crucial for global development and progress. When girls are empowered through education, they gain the skills they need to succeed in life. According to UNICEF, gender-equitable education systems don't just benefit girls. They equip both girls and boys with essential life skills like self-management, communication, negotiation, and critical thinking. These skills are the foundation for a prospering society where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential. The concept of "women's empowerment" is a vital for global development, fostering progress across economy, social and political spheres. Education has been identified as a critical driver in this process, empowering women with the tools and knowledge to understand the situations which is either complex or not and advocate for themselves and their communities. This research delves into the various impact of educational attainment on women's empowerment.

Women Education in India - History

Ancient period:

Vedic Period (1500-600 BC):, It is clear evidence of girls receiving education in India during the Vedic

period by searching religious texts and rituals. References in ancient texts like the Upanishads suggest female scholars and philosophers like Gargi Vachaknavi and They perform crucial role at that times.

Medieval Era:

While the extent of women's education during Islamic rule (7th-18th centuries) remains debated, it likely existed for some aristocratic Muslim women who received instruction in religious subjects within the confines of their homes.

The rise of the Bhakti movement (15th-17th centuries) offers glimpses of women like Mirabai and Andal participating in devotional poetry and singing, suggesting some level of literacy.

Colonial Era:

The British Raj initially showed resistance to girl's education. However, the 19th century saw a shift with social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) pioneer for women's education and empowerment acts as a weapon for social changes.

Savitribai Phule (1821-1897) - A remarkable figure, she was the first woman reformer in India. Savitribai Phule and her husband Jyotirao Phule opened the first school for girls in Pune in 1848, defying societal norms. Savitribai herself, despite facing social restrictions due to caste, learned to read and write from her husband.

Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar (1772-1859) - A highlighting figure of women's education, Vidyasagar was kind hearted man and he campaigned against child marriage and advancing the education for women. His efforts led to the legalization of The Hindu widow's remarriage act in 1856.

Modern Era:

Post-independence India, with its constitution guaranteeing gender equality and the right to education, saw a significant increase in girls' enrollment in schools and universities.

However, the journey hasn't been smooth. Socioeconomic factors, location, and even religion continue to create inconsistency in access to quality education, particularly in rural areas.

Theoretical Framework:

Human Capital Theory: Adam Smith (18th century): The father of modern economics alluded to the importance of human capital in his work, "The Wealth of Nations." Gary Becker (1960s): An American economist, considered the "father" of human capital theory. He formalized the concept and applied economic models to examine human behavior, including investment in education and training. The theory may oversimplify the link between education and productivity. Other factors like social background and access to opportunities also play a significant role. The theory can neglect the role of societal factors (e.g., infrastructure, social safety nets) in influencing human capital development. Skills and talents can be intangible and difficult to measure objectively.

This theory present a positive correlation between education and economic productivity. Educated women have greater earning potential, contributing to their financial independence and societal influence.

Feminist Theory: This theory briefly describe about education's role in dismantling gendered power structures. By acquiring knowledge and skills, women achieve the confidence and agency to challenge traditional gender roles and rise voice or equality.

Importance aspects of the both frameworks.

Both frameworks are important for realising how education helps empowers women. Human Capital Theory shows the economic benefits that come with education, while Feminist Theory highlights the social

and political modification of women's education. By considering both aspects, we get a more complete picture of how education has potential that can empower women.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

A number of studies have explored the link between education and women's empowerment. Schuler et al. (1996) found a woman's social status and they are frequently attacked by domestic violence by men and which spread outside of home due to social cause. Their findings suggest that it is due to lack of education, awareness of women to challenge such societal issues. Jayaweera (1997) examined the impact of higher education on women's socioeconomic empowerment within Asia. This study highlights education as a tool for women's advancement in both the social and economic spheres. Mosedale, S. (2005). Assessing women's empowerment is a conceptual framework. Mitra A. et al. (2007). He found out human capital is a nodal point how it is important for women's empowerment by their skills development. Mehaboob, N. (2020). In his study he established a strong relationship between education and women's empowerment. His research shows that education is the key factor for empowerment of women.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

How does educational attainment contribute to empowering women in various areas like economic independence, social participation, and political engagement?

METHODOLOGY:

This study employs quality research methods, data collected from secondary sources, analyzing existing research on the relationship between educational attainment and women's empowerment from different books, government documents etc. The research also synthesizes findings from scholarly articles, peer-reviewed journals,

DISCUSSION:

Empowering Women Across Various Aspects:

This study has examined the multiple relationship between educational attainment and women's empowerment. While the reviewed literature which supports a positive correlation, it's crucial to delve into the specific scientific ways education empowers women across social, economic, and political spheres. Additionally, realising the influence of cultural context and the quality of education itself is vital for an overall understanding.

Socio-economic Empowerment:

Education equips women with knowledge and skills, catalysing their workforce and earning capability. This influence leads to greater economic independence, allowing them to have financial decision-making power and contribute to household income. Studies like those by Jayaweera (1997) and Mitra et al. (2007) highlight this economic empowerment as a key factor. However, the quality of education plays a significant role. Skills-based training and relevant educational programs are more effective in boosting employability and economic independence compared to generic education.

Social Participation and Voice.

Education fosters critical thinking and communication skills, enabling women to participate more actively in social spheres. They gain confidence to challenge traditional gender roles, advocate for themselves and their communities, and participate in decision-making processes. This aligns with the ideas presented in

Feminist Theory (Thompson, 2003). However, cultural context plays a crucial role here. In societies with rigid gender norms, educational attainment alone may not be enough to ensure a social voice. Further research is needed to explore how education interacts with cultural norms to influence social participation.

Political Engagement and Leadership

Education empowers women to understand their political rights and engage actively in the political process. It equips them with the knowledge and confidence to run for office, advocate for policies that promote gender equality, and hold leadership positions. This aligns with the concept of Human Capital Theory, where education translates to political influence (Wuttaphan, 2017). However, dismantling structural barriers that limit women's political participation remains crucial. Further research could explore successful strategies to encourage women's political leadership across different contexts.

Education of rura women.

we know education is one tool for women's empowerment in rural areas. Educated women have more job opportunities and control over their finances. Many rural women although they are educated but lack awareness for their empowerment.

Sundaram, M. S. et al. (2014)

We also say education is a fundamental right and important for individual development.

Education also reduces inequality, improves health, and catalysing the economy.

Empowers women generally occurred in three ways:

Personally which means self-confidence and self-efficacy.

Relationally which point out by negotiation and decision-making.

Socially which occurred by community involvement.

Everyone, especially women, deserves access to education.

Educated women contribute significantly to society and national growth. CEngida, Y. M. (2021)

A Case Study Of Women's Empowerment In Education And Politics: Indira Priyadarshini Gandhi A Golden Indian Girl.

Background Of Her Education Attainment: Indira Gandhi was born in 1917. Her father Jawaharlal Nehru, a prominent figure in India's freedom struggle and was the first Prime Minister of India. Her mother, Kamala Nehru, was a housewife but she actively supported her husband's political activities. Indira's early education was unusual. She received some home tutoring but also attended schools in India, Switzerland, and England. She pursued higher education at Vishwa Bharati in Santiniketan, India and in 1951 this institute became converted into Vishwa-Bharati University. After that she went to Somerville College, Oxford, England, but she did not complete her degree because her aim was different. According to her family background she involved her to political activities from a very young age.

Political Career:

Indira followed her father's political activities during the independence movement of India. After India gained independence in 1947, she remained involved in politics but did not hold an official position in bargaining. In the 1950s, she became a member of the Indian National Congress (INC) working committee and later served as its president.

After the death of Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1964, Indira Gandhi became the first woman Prime Minister of India. She went on to win three consecutive Lok Sabha elections and served a total of three terms, from 1966 to 1977 and 1980 to 1984. Her crucial Role and Legacy become memorable for every one.

1. Empowering Women: Indira Gandhi's rise to power as Prime Minister shattered a glass ceiling and inspired women in India and also around the world. She promoted women's education and participation in politics.
2. Economic Policies: Her tenure as Prime Minister was marked by significant economic growth and focus on self-reliance. She nationalized major banks and industries, advancing social welfare programs aimed at poverty reduction.
3. Foreign Policy: She followed an independent foreign policy, maintaining close ties with the Soviet Union while also establishing good relations with other nations. She played a key role in the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971.

Her rule was not without controversy. She faced criticism for her handling of internal conflicts and the imposition of a state of emergency in 1975, which limited civil liberties.

Indira Gandhi's story is one of the example for latent power of educated women. Her rise to the highest office in India not only empowered her personally but also sent a powerful message to women across the country and globally.

Role of government to prompting girls education in India:

Education acts as a stimulant for empowerment of women.

Providing equal opportunities for personal and professional growth. Empowering women to fight for their rights. Government play a significant role to ensure girls education.

Legal Framework for Education In India:

The Indian Constitution guarantees the right to education, including:

1. Right of free and compulsory education article 45
2. Right to education article 21A
3. Education for women article 15(3)
4. Promotion of education and economic interests of SC, ST, and other weaker sections article 46
5. Religious education article 25, 28(1)(2)(3)
6. Education of minorities, protection of interests of minorities article 29.
7. Right of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions article 30.
8. Instruction in the mother tongue at the primary stage article 350-A.
9. Promotion of Hindi article 35.
10. Education in Union territories article 239.
11. Fundamental duty to provide the opportunity for education article 51(A).

Also various schemes to promote girls' education, including,

1. Sukanya Samridhi Yojna: Provides financial support for girls' education and future expenses.
2. Balika Samridhi Yojna: Encourages enrollment, retention, and education of girls until legal marriage age.
3. CBSE Scholarship Scheme: Offers scholarships to support school tuition costs for girls.
4. National Scheme of Incentive to Girls for Secondary Education: Promotes girls' enrollment in secondary education.

Challenges and Concerns:

Despite these initiatives, concerns remain:

Ensuring equal education for girls and transgender students.

Increasing public spending on education to reach the 6% GDP target.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH:

While the reviewed literature confirms a positive link between education and women's empowerment, limitations still exist. These are

Cultural Context, quality of Education, safety measures:

Here is briefly describe various limitations of girls education

Cultural Context:

Barriers: Cultural norms can create significant resistance for girls' education.

Gender roles: for a long time we view that prioritize domestic work for girls over schooling can limit their educational opportunities.

Early marriage: Pressures to marry young can pull girls out of school before they complete their education.

Cost: In some cultures, families may be unwilling to invest in girls' education if they believe they will eventually marry into another family and benefit that family.

Facilitators: Culture can also play a positive role:

Value of education: Cultures that emphasize the importance of education for all genders are more likely to see girls in school.

Female role models: Seeing successful women who have benefited from education can inspire girls to pursue their own learning.

Community support: Communities that prioritize girls' education can create a supportive environment where they can thrive.

Quality of Education:

The type of education girls receive is just as important as access. Here's why:

Empowering Potential: Education that provides girls with critical thinking skills, knowledge relevant to their lives, and opportunities to develop their talents empowers them to make informed choices about their futures.

Rote memorization vs. Skill development: Education focused solely on memorization limits its usefulness. When girls develop skills like problem-solving, communication, and collaboration, they are better prepared for future careers and leadership roles.

Safety Measures:

A safe learning environment is essential for girls' education:

Violence and harassment-free: Girls who feel unsafe in school are less likely to attend regularly or focus on their studies. This includes addressing issues like bullying and sexual harassment.

Sanitation facilities: Lack of proper sanitation facilities, particularly for girls during menstruation, can be a major barrier to attendance.

These are the main limitations of this research. so further research is necessary to find out link between women empowerment and education.

Future research should explore these limitations in greater depth. Studies that delve into the specific ways cultural contexts influence the relationship between education and women's empowerment would be valuable. Additionally, research on the most effective educational models and interventions for promoting women's empowerment in different settings is necessary.

By acknowledging these nuances and pursuing further research on contextual factors, we can work towards maximizing the empowering potential of education for women across the globe.

***KEY FINDINGS OF THIS RESEARCH:** Education Empowers: Higher education is only way to achieve economic independence, social participation, and political engagement.

CONCLUSION:

Education attachment Empire women's in different fields, like social, economic, politics. So there is strong relationship between education and women empowerment. However, acknowledging the limitations and pursuing further research are essential. A comprehensive understanding of the interplay between education, cultural context, and safety measures is vital to maximizing education's empowering potential for women across diverse settings. Future research could explore specific educational interventions and policy changes most effective in promoting women's empowerment in various contexts.

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