

The Woeful Plight of Women to Success

Shaik Shaheen Taj

Abstract: My paper throws light on the importance of education in women's life and her struggle to achieve successful career overcoming different obstacles in life. Various problems women face due to gender discrimination are highlighted. Women were held high in ancient India but these days inspite of much progress and technological development women are harassed and their position is deteriorating day by day. This paper is actually a plea from women to gain recognition and to regain their powerful position which they enjoyed in past. I have concluded my paper with a view that women as mothers can do wonders. If we are respected and are given equal opportunities and rights then we can create wonderful citizens.

Keywords: *Women Education, Women discrimination, Equal Rights for women.*

1. INTRODUCTION

“But reason and religion teach that we too are primary existences...the companions, not the satellites of men,...Education should seek to bring its subject to the perfection of their moral, intellectual, and physical nature ... in order that they may be the means of the greatest possible happiness of which they are capable, both as to what they enjoy and what they communicate.” -- Emma Willard

This statement of Emma Willard, a leader in women's education very clearly depicts the aspect that education which removes darkness and brings illumination in women's life is a ladder of Women's progress. Until recently, women had been excluded from the educational system. In past during Vedic periods women's position was good but later after 1000 A.D. Dark Age started in women's life. Because of so many different historic reasons, women's social position began to deteriorate and the effect fell on her education too. In India girl's education was promoted only in 1870. In 1915 the only Women's University SNDT came into existence through the efforts of Maharishi Karve. Later Mahatma Gandhi involved women in Freedom struggle which brought them outside their houses and encouraged them to acquired political knowledge along with scope for education.

In England the first college to admit woman was Harvard. Many women had to protest a lot to get the right to education. Few women in past who were able to achieve little education often believed that they were not capable of things like participating in politics, having a career or even owning property. On the other hand women who were lucky enough to have received a quality education were more likely to be pioneers in civic activism and made history. In spite of copious progress and development even today in this contemporary era women are not totally independent. Women typically approach adulthood with the understanding that the care and empowerment of others is central to their life. Even to this day, violence, poverty, economics and gender stereotypes are some of the problems that affect women. Man is able to achieve laurels only because he

is totally free of double responsibilities as a woman has. A woman has to take care of her home along with her work outside her home. Thus women's contributions to society are more significant than men's. It is woman who has to overcome more obstacles before she becomes successful. A diamond which is a chunk of coal gets its original shining and shape only after great pressure; similarly women too have become successful to some extent after great effort and pressure in their protest after fighting for centuries.

2. CHANGING ROLES OF WOMEN

In ancient days, there was no scope of education for girls. Women were confined to their home and were forced to stick to the taboos of the society. Deprived of education girls were supposed to fulfill domestic duties. The people of rural areas considered girls to be a curse and they didn't want to waste money on girl's education. They thought that women should be wedded off as soon as possible and hence education was unnecessary. This view shows the stereotyped roles of women being groomed just for marriage, reproduction and nurturance. This case was seen even in colonial America where women's education was to become skilled at household duties and chores in order to find a suitable husband. Men failed to understand that lack of education is the root cause of many problems. Large percentages of women in India have no power to take decisions independently not even the decision related to their own life. As progress began an important step was the struggle of women to enter acknowledged professions such as law, medicine, and science. Among the most notable early women who became successful were, Elizabeth Blackwell of the United States and Florence Nightingale of England, who both broke barriers for women in medicine. Lucy Stone, the first American woman to attend college, is known for her leadership in the suffrage movement as well as for her strong advocacy of education of girls and women. After Revolutionary war its founders came to know that it was essential for educating women through whom future citizens for success could be moulded. Motherhood thus offered woman a chance to seek education. Women were even allowed to participate in politics as she was raising a patriotic son. This period was known as Republican Mother Movement. Judith Sargent Murray was one of the women associated with this Movement whose aim was to provide women an education equal to that of men with the same high standards. In 1670, Aphra Behn, the first English woman writer's source of livelihood was her writing. Female writers wrote from women's perspective. They needed no sources to depend their own lives provided them great source of issues to be discussed and explored.

3. WOMEN EDUCATION IN INDIA

Mahatma Buddha allowed ladies to become monks in Vihara which resulted in the progress of women education. In 1906, Sarojini Naidu said in a speech to Indian Social Conference in Calcutta, "Therefore, I charge you, restore to your women their ancient rights, for, as I have said, it is we, and not you, who are the real nation builders, and without our active co-operation at all points of progress all your Congresses and Conferences are in vain. Educate your women and the nation will take care of itself, for it is as true today as it was yesterday and will be to the end of human life that the hand that rocks the cradle

rules the world". Indian National Congress played a major role in emancipating women. Within a year of its formation in 1885, a Ladies Association was formed. By 1890s more and more highly educated women were visible in public sphere. Later prominent Indian women like Mother Teresa, Indira Gandhi, Ramabai Ranade, Sarojini Naidu, Annie Besant, Rameshwari Nehru, Rajkumari Amritkaur, Aruna Asif Ali, Sucheta Kriplani, Usha Mehta, and Vilasini Devi Shenai played an important political and social role. Lady Hardinge College established in 1916 in Delhi was the first Women's Medical College. From 1917 onwards women education developed rapidly and women were given vocational, technical and professional education.

Slowly education had spread across the globe and women were seen working in myriad fields. Women got an opportunity to participate in public life outside their homes. But again we find gender discrimination which exists at all levels. At the workplace, where gender inequalities are brushed under the carpet, women workers are often subjected to sexual objectification, harassment, and molestation. Women employees are discouraged from seeking higher positions in management as they are considered as liabilities. United States of America was the first country where women began protest against discrimination. Many organizations are formed where women try to highlight the social inequality of women as a public problem and raise their voices against such inequalities demanding for equal position with men. This struggle has forced the government to change patriarchal stereo typed position of women and establish new legal, political, institutional, economical modifications supporting the position of women in all the spheres of life. Protests resulted in helping women to gain worldwide recognition. It was the violence against women issue, especially domestic violence that finally drew wide international attention to the idea that women's rights are human rights. The issue transcended race, class, and cultures, united women worldwide in a common cause.

Being women we should fight all the odds and enjoy life to the full as we have our own talent, hobbies, desires, aspirations and dreams. Mahatma Gandhi expressing his views on women liberation said that "responsibilities of household are important for women, but it should not be the only one. She should come forward to share the responsibilities of nation." This entire struggle has finally given success to woman. India has the world's largest number of professionally qualified women. It has the largest population of working women in the world. India has a large number of female doctors, surgeons, scientist, and professors than the United States. Social reformers of India have helped the women break barriers and earn a respectable position in the world. Today Indian women are seen in every arena which includes politics, sports, entertainment, literature or technology. Indian women have come a long way since the medieval times but still we have a long way to go. Even today many girls are married early, to a man who might be double of her age and are deprived of education and as a result they are unaware of the outside world. They are unable to move freely with educated ladies and are afraid to travel independently. They are not allowed to mingle with others or to gain worldly knowledge and they are not supposed to exchange their experiences with others. Such women who are deprived of education, exploration to outer world, lack familial support, totally support their children to get good education so that their daughters too should not face the same fate as they have faced in their life. This view of uneducated women in a way has enhanced the opportunities of education to girl child and brave girls like Malala a symbol of hope are born to raise their voices to acquire the right for education

4. CONCLUSION

Thus we very clearly get an idea that to develop the position of women in this Society, the first and foremost thing needed is education. This will definitely help women to explore the world outside their home and community. Education thus helps women to make a living beyond the specific role assigned to them by the society. An educated mother can look after her children properly providing them good health, and molding perfect citizens of the country. JawaharLal Nehru's quotation "You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women" very aptly highlights the necessity of education to women.

Few questions remain unanswered and struggle is going on to find answer and to become successful in achieving equality in the society. Why do women still earn less than men for the same job? Why are women still happy with the part-time jobs? Why are women even now recipients of physical, sexual and psychological abuse? As mothers we all can contribute from our side to bring changes in our society. Truthful universal fact is that Education begins at home and mother is the first teacher of a child. So first of all, we have to train our children perfectly spending enough time with and showing them the right path to tread. Make them God fearing because one who has the fear of God in mind will never do anything wrong in life. Teach them the religions or basic principles of life and encourage them to respect and take care of the well being of all women in the same way as they do in case of their mothers, sisters and family members. If we women plan something definitely we will be successful one day or the other. Together we can do wonders.

5. REFERENCES

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*¹Assistant Professor & HoD, S&H, Nimra Institute of Science & Technology, Vijayawada-1,
Mail ID: taj.mam@gmail.com*