

A STEP TOWARDS LEARNING TO LIVE TOGETHER : IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON WOMEN'S EDUCATION FOR THE UPLIFTMENT OF THEIR SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

Article

ABSTRACT

'Globalization' has now become a buzz word in every society. The current trends towards globalization will create the necessary infrastructure for individuals and nations to interact with each other and mutually benefit from such a process. A globalised world is one in which political, economic, cultural, social and educational events become more and more multidirectional but yet interconnected. Globalization has been described as the concrete structure of the world. The most concise definition suggests that globalization is a social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede, and in which, people are becoming increasingly aware that they are in fact receding. As a process, globalization has its own impact on women development. Education can only meet the challenges of social change if it gives all pupils access to appropriate cultural resources in a form that enables them to take responsibility for actively shaping the economic and social conditions of their existence. So in the case of women development as a process of social change, globalization has some positive effect. Educated women can bring changes in social process and may give light on the principle of learning to live together.

Women hold a significant position of distinct character in every social structure. The pursuit of women's issues took its birth along with the Industrial Revolution in England at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century. Thereafter women began to gain gradual access to their rights, first in the household and later in the political, social and economic spheres of life outside the home. As a gradual process women the world over got their right to vote. Their appearance in political and social spheres was an unchallenging claim to their right as human individuals and living beings.

Today they have emerged shoulder to shoulder with men and claim equal rights in every sphere of life, but their number has not reached the hallmark of the height of its glory.

Women in India constitute about 52% of the population. In studying Indian women, some historians have attempted to link the economic development of the society with the position of women. In a third world country like India education of women is considered to be the most sensitive index of development. It is

undoubtedly education which has emancipated women from within the four walls of the home. But the position or status, the restrictions on their role in society, and the gender stereotypes, the level of empowerment, the level of gender sensitivity, and the amount of emancipation from within and without due to modernization differ from country to country, from state to state, from region to region, and from one religious group to another that leads to problems of varied dimensions. Women as a whole face a large number of conflicting situations in their life. The present day society demands dual or more roles for women. The challenges for the present and future generations are more taxing. There would be inconsistency, contradiction, paradoxes in achieving the targets. At the one end in our society there are trends of modernization, westernization, urbanization and globalization and at the other there are

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traditions, conflicting values, gender stereotypes and differing levels of empowerment.

Women's education immensely influences fertility rate, infant mortality, population growth, the age of marriage, life expectancy, national productivity and also self esteem, confidence and equal partnership in all walks of life. For the full development of human resources and the improvement of family health and happiness and also for sustaining economic prosperity and national solidarity, for moulding the character of children during the impressive years of infancy, education of women is of great importance. The position of women reflects the cultural attainment of a society. Women's development is directly related with national development as well social change. So we can say that on the one hand, the future prospects of women depend on educational, social, economic, political and legal changes and that on the other, women in every society may be the change agent.

Urbanization, industrialization, modernization, globalization which are the contributors of socio-economic evolution have provided women with new avenues to express and assert themselves. Among the social processes, globalization has a positive impact on women's education and their upliftment. The current trend towards globalization will create the necessary infrastructure for individuals and nations to interact with each other and mutually benefit from such cultural, social and educational events. Globalization demands a strong social unity, a sense of purpose, high levels of political organization and management and high cultural levels of the population, along with a minimum human standard of living. Globalization has presented new challenges for the realization of the goal of women's equality. The impact has not been systematically evaluated fully. However from the micro-level studies that were commissioned by the Department of Child Development, it is evident that there is a need for reframing policies. Strategies will be designed to enhance the capacity of women.

The United Nations 4th World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) and The World Education Forum

(Dakar, April 2000) reaffirmed the vision of the World Declaration on Education for All (CEFA) which marked a turning point for women. It also creates a pressure to take new policies in the concerned fields. In general, globalization has contributed to a perception change or paradigm shift regarding the potential role women can play in development. These are as follows:

- Educating a woman benefits the human society as a whole since an educated woman breeds education to the whole family and a tempo for education is set.
- Better educated women have fewer and healthier children since an educated woman can take care of her family in a better way.
- Better educated women postpone marriage and have better access to employment, resulting in financial independence which means being able to take decisions with freedom.
- Better educated women are better able to manage life in a changing social, economic and cultural environment, since education enables them to adjust to life in a changing environment.
- Better educated women are less vulnerable to economic discrimination because of their financial independence.
- Better educated women start with better educated girls.

World Education Forum collectively committed itself to attaining the following goals for women expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children and ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girl children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

- Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women.

- Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.

The WEF goals underline the long existing and prevailing concerns of international community that have been expressed in numerous declarations and conventions since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 stipulated free education for all – a goal reaffirmed in the convention on the rights of the child in 1989. Two of EFA goals, universal primary education by 2015 and elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005 also form part of the recognized international development targets that aim at global poverty reduction through strategies for health and the environment in addition to those for education.

According to Delor committee, among all the four pillars of education, one is 'learning to live together' – a very important dimension of social citizenship and another notion of globalization. Learning to live together is today a necessity at many levels. The ability to live together in the family, the local community, the nation or globally is closely connected to the skills of being a citizen to be part of the community. The globalization implies a growing demand for women that they will be able to participate as active citizens in the activities of a community. For that they must be aware of their own stand points and affiliations. Only education shall provide learners with the capacity to take charge of themselves and their lives, as well as equipping them with the will and determination to stand by others.

Among all other social changes globalization opens up new possibilities for women. In these circumstances the responsibility for shaping the condition of women in society should start from the women themselves. Apart from this global consciousness, till the date women of different societies have faced various types of discrimination. They are overworked, mistreated, unskilled, and powerless. Therefore globalization in

education should mean that there is one ultimate goal to be supported by general education in all countries: how to make every citizen able to understand both the local and global societies well enough to learn to live together and act as responsible citizens in local and global terms. Apart from women the other members of society also have to accept that challenge and must give support to women.

So globalization offers extensive opportunities for truly worldwide development but it is not progressing evenly. It is an irony that with globalization women of Indian society is facing a challenge from within and outside. This was created not only a deformed society and a socio-political-economic crisis but also an identity crisis. On the one hand social change and other social consequences create a new environment for women upliftment and demand more contribution from them, on the other the society is not ready to accept the active role of women. It is therefore indispensable to change the attitudes of the population to strengthen and enforce the laws and to spread the new social consciousness of the principle of equality between the sexes and above all the development of women.

Education should meet this crisis by creating a set of values that are integral to human as well as women survival. A curriculum should be provided which will meet and overcome the gender biases and problems of women in our society. In this task we should learn from the day to day incidence happening with women. To promote a gender just society and sustainable future our education system need to address inequalities and focus on creating an environment in which men and women prosper together and women of our society will be able to contribute in the developmental process. Therefore an alternative model of development will be needed which can meet the varied needs of our society. The process of globalization should start from below and from the weaker section of our society, from the perspective of Indian society with the principle of learning to live together.

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Emotional Intelligence ...

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A cowardly teacher would never succeed in making his boys valiant and a stranger to self - restraint could never teach his pupils the value of self-restraint.

- Gandhi

A truth learnt is only a half - truth; the whole truth is reconquered reconstructed and rediscovered by the pupil himself or herself

- Jean Piaget

The links between teaching and psychology are complex; teaching is an art, whereas psychology is a science, but while the art of educating presupposes unique innate abilities, it needs to be developed by the requisite knowledge of the human being who is to be educated.

- Jean Piaget

Pupils should know to discriminate between what should be received and what rejected. It is the duty of his teacher to teach his pupils discrimination.

- Gandhi