

Impact of Education on Women's Cognitive and Psychological Dimensions of Women's Empowerment: A Case Study of Ghaziabad District of Uttar Pradesh

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Women have remained the pillar of society since the emergence of civilization. They constitute half the world's population and role played by women in a particular society is incredible. Despite this, she always has been treated as a secondary citizen in the male-dominated society. Gender inequality can be seen in all areas from her family to nation and all sectors in economic, social, political, education, health care, nutrition and legal. As women are facing inequalities in all spheres of life, efforts are made by the various agencies to empower them. In this direction education can be a potent tool in improving the status and condition of women in society, because it enables to women to gain knowledge, get status, self- identity, dignity and self -confidence. Education is important for girls and women, because educational achievements of women can have effects on objective dimensions as well as subjective dimensions of women's empowerment. An educated girl or woman may have effects within the family and outside the family. The education of women and their entry into employment can bring radical changes in their lives. It influences subjective status of the women. Thus the prime objective of this article is to analyze the role of education in building of subjective status in terms of cognitive and psychological dimension of empowerment of women in Ghaziabad city of Uttar Pradesh. Questionnaire and interview methods were applied to measure women's subjective dimension of empowerment. In the present study two major methods were adapted to process and analyze the data methodically, quantitative and qualitative. Simple statistical techniques have been used to indicate the extent of relationship between the respondents' education and subjective dimensions of empowerment of women.

KEYWORDS: women's empowerment, women's education, subjective dimension, cognitive dimension

Introduction

Indian constitution not only grants equality to women but also empower the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. The State has passed many legislations and made many other efforts for the development of women. In this direction State give special emphasize on women's education assuming that this is the most significant tool for improving the women's status in society, because it enables to women to gain knowledge, to get status, self- image and self -confidence.

Women, education and empowerment

We trace the meanings of 'women's empowerment' through an exploration of several definitions, as articulated by feminists- scholars, women's organizations and multilateral institutions.

Antrobus (1989) states that "empowerment is a process that enables a powerless women to develop autonomy, self-control and confidence and, with a group of women and men, a sense of collective influence over oppressive social conditions. **J.S. Apte 1995**, states that 'power' is the key word of the term 'Empowerment' which means 'control over material assets, intellectual resources and ideology. The material assets over which

control can be established of any type- physical, human, financial, such as land, water, forests, people's bodies and agencies, labor, money and access to many. Knowledge, information, idea can be included in intellectual resources. Control over ideology, signifies the ability to generate, capacity to propagate, capacity to sustain and institutionalize specific sets of beliefs, principles, values, attitudes action and behaviors. **Jaya Kothani Pillai (1995)** "empowerment is an active, multidimensional process which enables women to realize their full identity and powers in all spheres of life. Power is not commodity to be transacted, nor can it be given away as aims. Power has to be acquired and once acquired it needs to be exercise, sustained and preserved" empowerment is a process and is not therefore something that can be given to people. All of the above definitions and discussion indicates that there is two components first is objective and second is subjective and these dimensions are interrelated. There are many areas where women are getting position but due to lack of education and awareness they are not justifying with their role or we can say perform their duties attached to that position in a very effective manner, for instance in Panchayati Raj Institution there are many women who occupied positions but they are aware about their role and responsibilities and act just as a dummy, actual power are in their male family members. So a new concept is emerging in terms of Pradhan- Pati or Sarpanch- Pradhan etc.

All over the world, various agencies working for improving women's status has observed and emphasized that education is the most significant tool for social change and development of society and nation. "When the demand for women's education started in 18th century, it was more in the light of women's right, for access knowledge and not as a national economic asset. Than attitude change for the first time, the UNESCO conference in 1962 underlined the importance of the access of girls and women to technical and vocational education for economic and social development." (Jaya Kothani Pillai, Women and Empowerment, pg. 77)

"Education is one of the most important means of empowering women with the knowledge skills and self- confidence necessary to participate fully in the development process."

---ICPD Programme of Action, para 4.2

The NPE states: "..... to gear the entire education system to play a positive interventionist role in empowerment of women".

Empowerment through education is ideally seen as a continuous holistic process with cognitive, economic, psychological, political, and physical dimensions in order to achieve goal of gender equality. But paper is based on analysis of role of education in strengthening the subjective dimension of women's empowerment.

In the above background the study has focused on the following questions:

Research Questions:

1. What are the subjective dimensions of empowerment of women?

- (a.) Cognitive dimension of empowerment of women
- (b.) Psychological dimension of empowerment of women

2. What is the relationship between education and subjective dimensions of empowerment of women?

For understanding the first question paper is focused on highlighting the subjective

dimensions of women's empowerment as cognitive dimension and psychological dimension.

(a.) **Cognitive dimension** refers to women having an understanding of the condition and causes of their subordination at the micro and macro levels. It involves making choices that may go against cultural expectation and norms. **(Define by Stromquist)** Present study highlights the role of education in developing the cognitive power of women and how it can help to women in increasing the knowledge about their subordinations and promoting them in breaking the socio-cultural barrier of empowerment.

(b.) **The psychological dimension** includes the belief that women can act at personal and societal level to improve their individual realities and the society in which they live. **(Define by Stromquist)** Hence it is necessary to women having a subjective status or self-efficiency on power and rights use.

For understanding the second question paper is analyses the role of education in empowerment of women, relationship between education and subjective dimensions of empowerment has been examined.

Area of study

For the purpose of present study an urban area of Ghaziabad city of western U.P. nearby Capital Delhi has been selected as specified focused area of study. It is an ancient city located on Grand Trunk Road 19 km east of New Delhi. As its boundary is adjacent to Delhi, it act as the main entrance of U.P., and that is why it is also called Gateway of U.P. Ghaziabad is a growing industrial city, it becomes the industrial hub of UP as well as an educational hub of NCR.

As of 2011 India census Ghaziabad had population of 1,636,068, male constitute 869,257 and female 766,811. Ghaziabad has an average literacy rate of 100.54%. The male literacy rate is 93.31% and female literacy rate is 108.67%. The sex ratio of the city is 882.

Methodology

In the present research work a total number of 200 respondents have been selected through purposive and stratified random sampling. Stratified sampling is a mixture of both random sampling and purposive sampling. Under this method the whole population is first divided into number of strata than a certain number of the sample is taken from each stratum on random basis. *The universe is defined by only Hindu population. Because if we took Muslim population than it become more difficult and more complicated to measure the variations occurring due to this difference. There by the study has been limited to Hindu Women.* In the present study interview schedule, quasi-participant observation, interviews have been used. Information related to Ghaziabad city were collected from secondary source like Uttar Pradesh District Gazetteers and Internet. Empirical data were collected with the help of specific research techniques of observation, interview, and personal- records if any. Quasi-participation observation and case-study methods were also used for collecting first hand data. In the present study two major methods were adapted to process and analyze the data methodically, quantitative and qualitative. Simple statistical techniques have been used to indicate the extent of relationship between the respondents' education and subjective dimensions of empowerment of women.

Finding:

1.1. Cognitive Dimension of Empowerment of Women

“The subjugation of women is ingrained in Indian society. It has been so much a part of ordinary reality that it is largely unseen and unquestioned. Yet today, after thousands of years of silent acquiescence, the women of India are awakening to a new possibility -- a future based on selfhood, equality and full participation. This awakening is part of a dramatic world- wide shift in consciousness about women and their role in society.” (NCRW). According to Stromquist “Cognitive dimension refers to women having an understanding of the condition and cause of their subordination at the micro and macro level. It involves making choices that may go against cultural expectations and norms.” Through cognitive dimension of women’s empowerment we have tried to analyze women’s awareness about these gender inequalities described above. Is there any picture on their cognitive map, that they feel or face gender inequalities in all spheres of life or they have accepted it as a normal phenomenon? To observe women’s empowerment it is important and necessary to recognize their awareness about causes and conditions of their subordination. To measure cognitive dimension, following questions were asked from the respondents. The facts on these questions are presented in the following tables.

Table 1. Cognitive Dimension of Empowerment of Women

s.n.	<i>Indicators</i>	%	<i>No=200</i>
1.	Do you feel that women are subordinated by men? A. Yes B. No C. Don’t know	75.5 6.5 18	151 13 36
2.	Do you observe that parents become unhappy when a girl is born? A. Yes B. No	93.5 6.5	187 13
3.	Do you feel subordination in matter of education A. Yes B. No C. Don’t know	54.5 45.5 00	109 91 00
4.	Feeling of subordination at the level of A. Primary B. High School C. Graduation D. Technical	9.5 12.5 14 18.5	19 25 28 37
5.	Do you feel subordination in marriage and spouse selection A. Yes B. No C. Don’t know	65.5 8 26.5	131 16 53

6.	Do you feel subordination in doing and selection of job A. Yes B. No C. Don't know	45 20.5 29.5	90 41 59
7.	Do you feel subordination in moving outside to home A. Yes B. No	68.5 31.5	137 63
8.	Do you know about your legal rights A. Yes B. No	63.5 36.5	127 73
9.	The level of awareness about the legal rights A. High B. Medium C. Low	18.5 20.5 29.5	37 41 59
			N=137
10.	Have you aware about declining sex ratio in India A. Yes B. No	71.5 28.5	143 57

The facts of the above table indicate that the first question was asked about their subordination either they feel or practice in all spheres of life, a large segment (75.5%) feel and practice subordination in their life. There are (18%) respondents who don't have any idea or awareness about their subordination. Facts on "do you observe that parents become unhappy when a girl is born?" show that maximum number of the respondents accepted that parents become unhappy on the birth of girl child, only (6.5) respondents say that they don't feel so. A large number of segment also accept that they feel subordination in matter of education, of course they feel subordination at different level of education viz. primary, high school, graduation and technical level. There are (65.5%) respondents who accept that they feel subordination in marriage and spouse selection. Marriage to whom, age of marriage and other issues related to their marriage discussed with respondents. There are (26.5%) respondents who think so that. A large number of segment also reported that they feel subordination in doing and selection of job. Regarding to the question "do you feel subordination in movement outside to home", majority of the respondents (68.5) say that they feel subordination.

There were (68.5) respondents who have awareness about their legal rights; the level of awareness is varying. Maximum numbers of the respondents have awareness about declining sex ratio in India.

1.2. Psychological Dimension of Empowerment of Women

It is well known fact that women are facing life- time subjugation and discrimination in their lives. The subjugation and discrimination starts even before of her birth (abortion of girl child) and stop at her death.

Global women's conferences were held in Mexico City in 1975, in

Copenhagen in 1980, in Nairobi in 1985 and in Beijing in 1995. Women's issues moved to the forefront of the international agenda in global conferences on food, environment, population and human rights. Thus awareness is increasing among women and they start to challenge patriarchal ideology to transform the structure and institutions that reinforce gender discrimination and social inequality. According to Stromquist :“The psychological dimension includes the beliefs that woman can act at personal and societal level to improve their individual realities and that of the society in which they live.” In the light of above discussion following questions asked to the respondents to measure their psychological empowerment. Facts on these variables are given in the following tables.

Table 2. Psychological Dimension of Empowerment of Women

s.n.	<i>Indicators</i>	%	<i>N=200</i>
1.	Do you feel freedom in expressing of personal desire? A. Yes B. No	54.5 45.5	109 91
2.	Do you think that women should be treated equally as men? A. Yes B. No C. Don't Know	75.5 10.5 14.0	151 21 28
3.	Do you think that education helps a girl in finding suitable partner? A. Yes B. No C. Don't Know	81.5 8.5 10.0	163 17 20
4.	Do you think that occupation helps a girl in finding suitable partner? A. Yes B. No C. Don't Know	76.5 18 5.5	153 36 11
5.	Do you need permission to go to the market? A. Yes B. No	41.5 58.5	83 117
6.	Do you need permission to visit friends and relatives? A. Yes B. No	84 16	168 32
7.	Do you think that rape criminal should be hanged? A. Yes B. No	100 00	100 00

8.	Do you think that women should take strict and legal actions against her husband if she is beaten by him? A. Yes B. No C. Don't know	29 60.5 10.5	58 121 21
9.	Do you think that women should take strict and legal actions against her husband if he has extra marital relations? A. Yes B. No C. Don't know	21.0 69.0 10.0	42 138 20
10.	Did you take any actions that go against your elders? A. Yes B. No	32.5 67.5	65 135
11.	Does your husband help you in households' duties? A. Yes B. No	40.38 59.61	42 62

The facts of the above table indicate that nearly half of the respondents have freedom in expressing of personal desire and half of them are not. Responses related to the question that women should be treated equally as men, majority expressed positive opinion towards it. Majority of the respondents also accepted that education and occupation helps a girl in finding a suitable partner. Freedom of movement is an important factor of women's empowerment, thus two questions were asked to the respondents to measure their freedom of movement. 'Do you need permission to go to the market, there is a large segment that has freedom to go to the market but a large number of respondents accepted that they do not have freedom in visiting their friends and relatives and need to take permission.

There are two important question asked to the respondents to measure their psychological dimension of empowerment. 'Do you think that women should take legal and strict actions against her husband if she is beaten by him', majority of the respondents are not in favors of to take strict or legal actions. Another question asked 'Do you think that women should take legal action if her husband has extra marital relation', majority of the respondents do not agree to take legal action on this issue. Majority of the working women say that their husbands do not help in domestic or households' duties.

2. Relationship between education and subjective dimensions of empowerment of women:

Following tables show the facts on relationship between education and subjective dimensions of empowerment of women.

Table:3. Education and Cognitive Dimension of Empowerment of Women

SN	Indicators	Education-Level				Total N=200
		Illiterate N=19	Low (Up to 8) N=26	Med. (IX-XII) N=44	High (Grad.& above) N=111	
1.	Do you feel that women are subordinated by men?	02	09	41	99	161
	A. Yes	00	00	01	12	13
	B. No	17	17	02	00	36
2.	Do you observe that parents become unhappy when a girl is born?	19	26	44	98	187
	A. Yes	00	00	00	13	13
	B. No					
3.	Do you feel subordination in matter of education	19	26	31	33	109
	A. Yes	00	00	13	78	13
4.	Feeling of subordination at the level of	19	26	00	00	19
	A. Primary	00	00	00	00	26
	B. High School	00	00	27	00	27
	C. Graduation	00	00	04	33	37
	D. Technical	19	26	31	33	109
	Total					
5.	Do you feel subordination in marriage and spouse selection	02	00	34	95	90
	A. Yes	00	00	00	16	51
	B. No	17	26	10	00	59
6.	Do you feel subordination in doing and selection of job	00	02	37	51	90
	A. Yes	15	21	04	12	52
	B. No	04	03	03	48	58
7.	Do you feel subordination in moving outside to home	09	13	33	82	137
	A. Yes	10	13	11	29	63
	B. No					

8.	Do you know about your legal rights A. Yes B. No	02 17	05 21	21 23	109 02	137 63
9.	The level of awareness about the legal rights A. High B. Medium C. Low D. Nil	00 00 02 17	00 00 05 21	00 10 11 23	37 31 41 02	63 59 41 37
10.	Have you aware about declining sex ratio in India A. Yes B. No	02 17	03 23	29 15	109 02	143 57
11.	Have you aware about declining sex ratio in India A. Yes B. No	02 17	03 23	29 15	109 02	143 57

The facts of the table show that education has a positive relationship with the awareness of subordination. The awareness about their subordination increased with the increasing order of education. The facts related to second question reveal that illiterate and low educated respondents accept that they don't feel subordination because some other variables like nature of occupation, class and need of occupation reflect the data. All the respondents in this category are from wage-based and low category of occupation, where they are forced to do job to serve.

The data of second question show that they are only 13 respondents who accept that they did not observe that parents become unhappy when a girl is born, are from the category of highly educated. It shows that majority of the respondents feel subordination on this issue.

The facts related to the question "do you feel subordination in matter of education", shows that they all respondents who said that they do not feel subordination are medium and highly educated. It shows that education accelerate to education, and having positive relationship between the variables. The facts of the question related to subordination on marriage and spouse selection on reveals that the a very miniature part of the sample is not feel subordination are highly educated, and second important fact is that education and awareness about their rights to marriage and spouse selection are positively related. The fact related to the issue of subordination in movement outside to home shows that the freedom of movement outside to home increased with the increasing order of education.

Awareness about their legal rights increased with the increasing order of education. Respondents with the medium and high education have more awareness than

the illiterate and low level of education. The facts on the last question related to awareness of the respondents about declining sex ration in India show positive relationship between the variables.

2.2. Education and Psychological Dimension of Empowerment of Women

Table4: Education and Psychological Dimension of Empowerment of Women

SN	Indicators	Education-Level				Total N=200
		Illiterate N=19	Low (Up to 8) N=26	Med. (IX- XII) N=44	High (Grad.& above) N=111	
1.	Do you feel freedom in expressing of personal desire?					
	A. Yes	03	05	17	84	109
	B. No	16	21	27	27	91
2.	Do you think that women should be treated equally as men?					
	A. Yes	02	05	37	107	151
	B. No	07	07	03	04	21
	C. Don't Know	10	14	04	00	28
3.	Do you think that education helps a girl in finding suitable partner?					
	A. Yes	02	12	38	111	163
	B. No	11	06	00	00	17
	C. Don't Know	06	08	06	00	20
4.	Do you think that occupation helps a girl in finding suitable partner?					
	A. Yes	02	16	33	102	153
	B. No	10	06	11	09	38
	C. Don't Know	07	04	00	00	11
5.	Do you need permission to go to the market?					
	A. Yes	19	26	44	111	200
	B. No	00	00	00	00	00

6.	Do you need permission to visit friends and relatives? A. Yes B. No	11 08	13 13	15 29	44 67	83 117
7.	Do you think that rape criminal should be hanged? A. Yes B. No	17 02	24 02	32 12	95 16	168 32
8.	Do you think that women should take strict and legal actions against her husband if she is beaten by him? A. Yes B. No C. Don't know	00 14 05	00 18 08	07 33 04	51 56 04	58 121 21
9.	Do you think that women should take strict and legal actions against her husband if he has extra marital relations? A. Yes B. No C. Don't know	00 19 00	00 23 03	04 36 04	38 60 13	42 138 20
10.	Did you take any actions that go against your elders? A. Yes B. No	02 17	07 19	09 35	47 64	65 135
11.	Does your husband help you in households' duties? A. Yes B. No	02 11	00 16	05 12	24 34	31 73

The facts of the above table indicate that education has a significant relationship with the respondents' freedom of expressing their personal desires. It increased with the increasing order of education. Respondents' education and other variables of indicators also show a significant relationship between them. It suggests that education directly or indirectly strengthens the inner capacity to take decision and having their own stands on concerning issues.

Bearings of the empirical research

After arriving at the above findings we may observe the following trends and look at the similarities and variations.

Pratima Chaudhary and H.C. Upadhay (1991:11-17) have found that higher education has been successful in bringing about changes relating to marriage, family and decision-making among women. Our findings also confirm these changes. Indicators of different dimensions show that education has a very significant impact on attitude and decision making. **S. Sahay (1998)** states that there is a close relation between education and women's dignity. Women's education helps to improve their awareness and ability. Our findings also suggest that education is the most important instrument for achieving cognitive and psychological empowerment. **K.M. Kapadia (1966:266-267)** analyzed that "the rapid strides in higher education during the last twenty five years have exercised their impact in two ways, first by creating conditions for a women to be self or reliant and secondly by creating stronger emotional bonds between her and her husband. Findings of the present study also confirm the same. The awareness about their subordination increased with the increasing order of education. They are more aware about their self-identity in family and outside the family also.

Conclusion:

Thus on the basis of above discussion it appears that education is a potent tool in the empowerment of women. It influences to cognitive and psychological dimensions. The gaining of education also affected by the respondent's class, parents education, and these variables also influence economic, political, physical dimensions as well as to cognitive and psychological dimensions.

Thus education is positively related with each dimensions of empowerment. Education enables women to gain more knowledge about the cause and condition of their subordination, help her to get status, self- image and self- confidence. Education helps in enhancing self-esteem and self-confidence of women and developing ability to think critically, Enhancing access to legal literacy and information relating to their rights and entitlements in society as identified by NPE. Education enhances their intrinsic capability- greater self-confidence and inner transformation of one's consciousness enable one to overcome external barriers. Thus the processes of empowerment involves not only chances in access to resources, but also an understanding of one's rights and entitlements and believe in that gender roles can be changed and gender equality is possible and education has a very crucial role in shaping that kind of thinking. It enhances women's decision- making in the family and outside to the family. Education help them to strengthen their beliefs that woman can act at personal and societal level to improve their realities and situation.

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