

Women Education: Need for Sustainable Development

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Abstract

Women are the backbone of any civilized society. Be it a role of friend, daughter, sister, wife, mother or a role of a working women, women have facilitated this male dominant society in every aspect. Women constitute approximately 50

Index terms— needed, we need to concentrate, development, women education need a serious concern. Women plays important and varied roles from home to society to workplace as a homemaker, societal well being and job provider and job seeker respectively. Her role is of paramount interest to the economy as she contributes near about 50 % of the world population. Her education is essential for sustainable development as Greg Mortenson says, "If you teach a boy, you educate an individual; but if you teach a girl, you educate a community." teacher of a man. The values given by her to the children remains throughout with them and guide their way in all walks of life. It is hence she, if being educated for sustainable development can bring a drastic change in life not only of hers but for the future generations too. Sustainable Development is nothing but utilizing the present facilities and technologies etc. without compromising the needs of the future generations to meet their own. This is what can be better done by educating the women.

1 II. Pillars of Sustainable Development

There are three pillars of Sustainable Development viz, society, environment and economy. ESD (Education for Sustainable Development) equally addresses these three pillars of sustainable development with culture as an essential additional and underlying dimension. These pillars enable all individuals to fully develop the knowledge, values and skills that are necessary to improve their quality of life. These pillars are not that supportive to the female counterpart in many countries and hence are not good for sustainable development.

2 a) Society

Society is the place where a person lives, grows and practices culture. The society plays an important role in upliftment as well as deterioration of an individual. Society is not much favorable to women as data reflects. 2013 global review of available data says that 35 per cent of women worldwide have experienced violence either physically and/or sexually more than once in their life. This figure falls to 30% only when violence against women by intimate partners was studied. In India, the distribution pattern of crimes against women too has not changed much in the last few years, but between 2001 and 2011, the overall number of incidents of crime against women rose steadily, and was 59% higher than that in 2001. This is one of the aspect. Women are far low in education, economic participation, physical safety and health etc. Issues. In such a society, how can one think of sustainable development or even development?

individual to behave in an acceptable manner. In India only, female child population in the age group of 0-6 years was 78.83 million in 2001 which declined to 75.84 million in 2011. The reason is not letting the female child to take birth and if she has somehow taken birth, killing her by any of the popular method by family members or mothers under the pressure of family members. In such an environment, where the existence of female has become questionable, sustainable development cannot be achieved.

3 c) Economy

In the World, as a proportion of male economic participation, female participation in the labor force has remained constant at 65% between 1991 and 2009. In India, the female participation in labor force is 29% only. It has become a global consensus too that approximately 30% female representation in key political decision-making positions is needed for women to bring about significant and meaningful change. In the 46 countries lower or single chamber parliament, data available for 2010 says that women representatives comprised less than 10% in 20 countries. In such an economy, sustainable development will be far reaching dream.

If we really need sustainable development, these pillars need to be channelized to work in favour of women and educating women can be the first step to it.

4 III.

5 Educating Women for Sustainable Development

Education for all is on World agenda. In India also, as per RTE Act, 2009, Education is the fundamental right of every child irrespective of sex, color, caste and creed. But in reality, that is exactly not the case especially for women. Mostly sons are being sent to schools for the study. Again the drop out rates of girls are more than that of boys at elementary stage. Today, nearly 17% of the world's adult population is illiterate. Two third of them are women. Approximately, 122 million youth globally are illiterate, of which young women represent 60.7%. So far as literacy rate in India is concerned, it is 82% of males and 65% of females according to 2011 census. So educating women should be the foremost priority of every Government of any country if they want to develop. If we talk of Education for sustainable development, then it again becomes priori to all other agendas.

6 a) How does Educating Women help in sustainable

Development?

ESD is for everyone, at all walks of life and in all possible learning contexts. Education for Sustainable Development helps every individual to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to shape a sustainable and better future. It also requires participatory and developing society, economy and environment for sustainable development. This participation will be complete only if women are given their due place everywhere without any kind of gender discrimination. Hence educating Women helps in multifold ways to achieve the goal of sustainable development as discussed below:

i. Employment Education is a great tool to impart knowledge, develop motor abilities, change the attitude and improve the self confidence. It increases employment opportunities, income and self dependence. Employment gives the income and improves the economic position of the women. Employed women are given due importance by the family members. Hence educating women can prove to be a prime factor to bring gender equality, upliftment of women and sustainable development.

ii. Economic Independence Woman economic and political participation is quite low. So her economic independence has been in question for the ages. Education helps women to get employment which in turn helps in getting economic independence. Economic independence frees the women from the dependency position and boost her self confidence. Such a woman helps in the national economic development and hence in Sustainable development.

iii. Empowerment Educated Women is empowered. She is aware of her own rights and duties. She asks society to accept her as an equal gender like male. She avails of all opportunities of development and national participation and hence plays a significant role in Sustainable development.

iv. Self-confidence Women need self confidence to fight against all the atrocities against her and to live a self esteemed and respected life. Hence, education helps in bringing in her this self confidence.

v. Decision Making In many societies especially Indian societies, the decision making power lies with men. Mostly males take the importance decisions in the family and in the society. The one aspect to this is also the less education of the females. Hence, in order to end this gender discrimination, education empowers women

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Figure 1:

88 given due consideration at both societal and Government levels.

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