

Education and Women Economic Empowerment in India: Special Reference to Jammu and Kashmir

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Abstract

Education is the key factor for women empowerment, prosperity, economic development and welfare. Discernment of women from womb to tomb is well known. There is continued inequality and helplessness of women in all sectors and women oppressed in all spheres of life, they need to be empowered in all walk of life. In order to fight against the economically constructed gender biases, women have to swim against the system that requires more strength. Such strength comes from the process of empowerment and authorization will come from the education. Education is well-thought-out landmark for empowerment because it allows to response the challenges, to confront the traditional role and change lives. Access to education nevertheless, gender discrimination still continues in India and lot more needs to be done in the field of women education. The objective of this paper was to identify impact of education on economic empowerment of women. Both primary and secondary Data was collected, for primary data collection was taken on the variables like decision making, power over resources, freedom of movement, power over resources and financial autonomy from educated and uneducated women respondents in Jammu and Kashmir. The study concludes that economic condition of educated women respondent is better than uneducated women respondents.

Key words: - Economic Empowerment, Women, Education.

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Introduction

Education is a key means of empowering women and is in itself a human right. Education is especially central to women economic empowerment in so far as it enables women to become more creative both inside and outside the household. Investments on women education is generally considered one of the most important elements, complementary to income-generating activities that are considered essential for women economic empowerment. Post-primary education has the greatest payoff for women economic empowerment in that it increases income earning opportunities and decision making autonomy (UNFPA 2014).

Economic empowerment is the process of achieving women equal access to and control over resources and ensuring that they can use them to exert improved control over other areas of their lives (Taylor and Pereznieto, 2014). Its attainment is now a global policy priority in light of its potential involvement to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as evidenced by the convening of a devoted High-Level Panel by the UN Secretary-General to bolster progress in this area. This effort can support Agenda 2030 ambitions around growth and decent work, poverty alleviation, human development and well-being. Benefits for society and families are very well established: Women financial advancement has led to increase in investment on children's education, health and also reduced household poverty (World Bank, 2012; 2013). The economic case is also convincing. Recent approximations suggest that gender equivalence overall has the potential to boost global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by between \$12 trillion and \$28 trillion between now and 2025 (Woetzel et al., 2015), and it has been shown that 'national economies lose out when a considerable part of the population cannot participate equitably or realize its full potential' (Golla et al., 2011: 3). The Sustainable Development Goals contain a range of targets relating to gender equality and women economic empowerment, including in the economic domain.

Yet there is not any automatic 'win-win' between extensive development outcomes and gender equality. While the latter is clearly better for economic growth, a gender equitable distribution of the monetary gains of growth does not happen automatically (Duflo, 2012; Kabeer and Natali, 2013; ILO, 2016). Growth does not necessarily translate into gains in women well-being (Graham and Chattopadhyay, 2012). It follows that understanding women economic empowerment requires concerted, targeted efforts that priorities women needs, preferences and recognize their heterogeneity. Contextually relevant strategies – particularly for poor and

marginalized women – will be also crucial to ensure equitable distribution outcomes. Women empowerment is a progression of personal as well as social change, taking place over interlinked and mutually reinforcing social, psychological, political and economic domains through which women individually and collectively gain power, meaningful choices and control over their lives (O’Neil et al., 2014). It is not a direct, unconcealed process but instead a journey characterized by compromise, negotiation and uncertain outcomes (Cornwall and Edwards, 2016). Although it has attracted increased attention in recent years, there is no universally agreed definition of women economic empowerment. Women ability to flourish, advance economically, power to make and act on economic decisions is core to the understanding of a number of development institutions (Golla et al., 2011). Others highlight the need to examine the terms on which poor women enter the labor market, the way women contributions are valued and women ability to negotiate a reasonable deal for themselves, including in relation to the benefits of growth (Eyben et al., 2008 cited in OECD, 2012a; Eyben, 2011).

Further economic empowerment is enormously complex, given its wide-ranging implications for different aspects of women lives. It requires changes within person’s knowledge, capability and self-esteem; in institutions and communities; in value chains and markets; and in the wider political and legal environment (Golla et al., 2011). Eventually, no single intervention can talk all these aspects and be effective for all women (Buvinic and Furst-Nichols, 2014). The challenge, therefore, is to identify key entry points where a range of ‘building blocks ‘or ‘enablers’ could have a pivotal, positive effect, recognizing that interferences will essentially differ between countries and groups of women, and in terms of the time needed for them to take hold (Box 1, overleaf).

Thus, it is obvious that fairly a number of interpretations have already been done on education and women economic empowerment. Entire length of literature has arranged mainly around theoretical and measurement issues and the constrictions of economic empowerment through education. The current study analyzes the economic status of women empowerment through education by taking into attention various magnitudes of it such as impact of education on women household decision making, power over resources, freedom of movement and financial autonomy collected from both primary and secondary sources.

Objective

- To analyze economic empowerment of women through education in India, with special reference to Jammu and Kashmir.

Methodology

The study was based on both primary and secondary data. Researchers collected primary data through interview from Educated and uneducated sample women respondents in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir. It was collected from the women respondents on a specially structured pre-tested questionnaire through personal interview method. Researchers has taken random sample of 40 from each in two groups literate and illiterate. The educated women selected by researchers was minimum qualification of 12th standard. In which 34 sample respondents responded from educated women and 38 responded from uneducated women. For Regression analysis of data through SPSS only 30 participants were selected from each. There was also used secondary source of data to understand the concepts, definitions, theories and empirical results. The researchers have used books, research literatures, articles, journals and reports, as secondary sources for study. Internet source was also been used for secondary sources.

Economic Condition

Every sphere of women life is influenced by the social and economic background of society in which they live. Economic status provides the financial support to involve in new activities. Education gain economic changes outlook and attitude of women.

TABLE 1.I

RELIABILITY TEST

S.NO	Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
1	Educated women	.873	4
2	Uneducated women	.818	4

Source: survey data

The reliability test was taken on data among two groups of variables educated and uneducated. The obtain values of Cronbach's Alpha are Greater than to Standard Value of Cronbach's Alpha i.e. 0.7, it mean that the data is reliable and provides necessary information as we want from data side.

TABLE 1.II

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF BOTH EDUCATED AND UNEDUCATED WOMEN MEMBERS IN ANANTNAG DISTRICT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Variables	I Educated Women			II Un Educated Women		
	Fully benefit	Partly benefit	Not benefit	Fully benefit	Partly benefit	Not benefits
Decision Making	23.7%	59.9%	16.2%	8.7%	10.1%	81.0%
Power over resources	27%	61.3%	11.6%	12.8%	23.1%	63.9%
freedom of movement	20.6%	31.3%	48%	6.3%	22.7%	70.8%
financial autonomy	28.7%	62.70%	8.4%	18.8%	29.1%	52%

Source: survey data

The table 1.II shows the economic variables among the two different groups of women in society. The part first shows the economic profile of educated women and part second shows the economic profile of uneducated women. For data collection variables was taken like decision making, power over resources, freedom of movement and financial autonomy. From the above data it show the economic background of educated and uneducated women is totally different. For the analysis of date the researchers have used regression analysis through SPSS.

TABLE 1. III

REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF EDUCATED AND UNEDUCATED SAMPLE RESPONDENTS FOR ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
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1	.114 ^a	.020	.016	3.66648	2.049
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- a. Predictors: (Constant), Educated Women
b. Dependent Variable: Uneducated Women

The model table shows educated independent variable and uneducated as dependent variable. The model summary table indicates that educated has 2.0% effect on uneducated women. Since the r square value of table is .020 which means educated has direct but very low relationship with Uneducated and the R Value 0.114 show positive correlation but very low between educated and uneducated women. The Durbin Watson value is between 1 – 3 it mean that there is no auto correlation of the errors – Data is free of auto correlation.

ANOVA^a

Table tests whether the overall regression model is a good fit for the data.

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	.262	1	.262	2.012	.013 ^b
1 Residual	1328.341	61	21.776		
Total	1328.603	62			

- a. Dependent Variable: Uneducated Women
b. Predictors Constant: Educated Women

This model has average fit as indicated by F-test value which is 2.012 insignificant at .013^b level of significance.

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	24.001	3.389		7.082	.000
	Educated Women	-.024	.221	.114	1.110	.013

- a. Dependent Variable: Uneducated women

The result of regression from the coefficient table indicates that Educated Women has direct but low relationship with Uneducated women having beta value of 0.114 tested through t-test having t-value of 1.110 (t standard value is 1.96) which is insignificant at 0.013 level of significance. From the above analysis it shows that the economic profile of educated women

respondents is completely different from illiterate women. Shows directed relation between education and women economic empowerment.

Education and Women Economic Empowerment

Education is determinate for women empowerment. It affects both economic contribution and opportunity, directly and indirectly. Education indirectly affects women economic involvement and opportunity through affecting the likelihood of enrolment and the education level. When education costs too much and when education is hard to come by, parents, especially those in poverty, may feel that the future returns may not justify the present costs. However, girl's enrollment is more sensitive than that of boys to school. Evidence from Kenya, Bangladesh and Pakistan indicates that girls' enrolment is more sensitive than boys' to school and to specific delivery attributes, such as the presence of female teachers and sex-segregated schools and infrastructure, and safe transport to and from school (Lewis et al. 2008; Govinda 2008; Bergmann 1996; Abbas 2007). On the other hand, access to education increases the likelihood of achieving higher levels of education. It influences earnings by affecting college choice behavior. Finally, we may conclude that education is an important path to achieving women economic empowerment through the labor market. However, there is also appreciation that education is an insufficient condition for women empowerment. The impact of women education is greater in settings that are already relatively equal. Education alone may not be transformative in the absence of other normative moves and changed power relations. In such settings, it takes more than education to reach edges of change (Task Force on Education and Gender Equality 2005b; UNFPA 2005; ILO 2008b). However, women economic empowerment cannot be reached without ensuring the access of girls to education, not only to basic level education but also to higher levels of education. These changes are very essential conditions for women economic empowerment.

International actions and commitments on women economic empowerment

Governments, NGOs and businesses around the world wide increasing their focus on women economic empowerment. In 2011, leaders at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Women and the Economy Summit pledged to take actions "to realize the full potential of women, assimilate them more fully into APEC economies, harness their talents, remove barriers that restrict women full economic contribution and maximize their contributions toward economic growth." World Bank successfully drew an attention to the global issues surrounding women

economic empowerment in its 2012 World Development Report: Gender Equality and Development. Organizations like the International Labour Organization, UN Women, the OECD and the United Nations Development Programme are supporting research and programming targeting women and their work. The Food and Agriculture Organization also highlighted the role of women in their report the state of food and agriculture 2010–2011 – Women in agriculture: Closing the gender gap for development. Donors, including Sweden, United States and United Kingdom, have established approaches to women in the economy. The private sector has also looked at ways in which to support women participation in their leadership, workforce and supply or distribution networks, including through the Women Empowerment Principles of the UN Global Compact and UN Women. These recent obligations are based on broader commitments to women rights and gender equality that provide a standard and guidance for women economic empowerment approaches. The international community, including India has signed on to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Convention on the Removal of all forms of Discrimination Against Women conventions on worker rights and protections, including on discrimination in employment and occupation, among others.

Suggestions

1. Inspire and ensure economic contribution of women in local and international forums.
2. Boost participation of women in income generating activities. Proper operation of schemes provided by the government should be done.
3. To bring the sensation of self-dependence amongst females.
4. Spread message of education among women is a pre-condition for fighting against their oppression aware people regarding the requirement of educating girls so as to prepare them to contribute successfully economic development of the nation.
5. Eradicate all forms of discrimination in employment particularly to eliminate wage differentials between men and women.

Conclusion

It shows that education is the foundation stone of women empowerment which could be only achieved through hearty and co-operative role and efforts of the Government and Non-government organizations and also eliminating the traditional norms, attitude and practices through proper education and guidance. The efforts taken by government on women empowerment go in unsuccessful unless and until the women are well educated, independent and self-supportive in every field of life. The measure problems of Indian economy like unemployment, poverty, and inequality cannot be eradicated by man alone. Equivalent and active participation of women is mandatory. Unless women are not educated they can't able to understand about their rights and their importance. Women Empowerment aims pushy towards acquiring higher literacy level, better health care for women and their children, increased participation in Economic, equal ownership of productive resources and commercial sectors, awareness of their rights improved living standard and to achieve self-confidence, self-reliance and self-respect among women. We should never forgotten as women like men need to be practical in the process of lifelong learning.

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