

Investment in a Woman is Always Reinvested by her



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Abstract

Since generations, women, not all the women but only a few, have been coming to the front with their achievements and encouraging other women too. They have been treading on the path of renown and recognition. But this is the partial truth of the improving condition of women because one cannot ignore the struggles, fears, and sacrifices women have to face for accessing their fundamental rights even. They have to struggle to have 'a room of one's own' in this generations old patriarchy. The introduction of 17 Sustainable Development Goals is a medium through which the role and importance of women in accomplishing these goals for themselves and the nation can be determined. An active participation and involvement of women in these sustainable development strategies will assure the sustainability and credibility of these goals. Investment in women, to a great extent, can eradicate the threats of underdevelopment, poverty, violence, environmental degradation, ill health etc. An empowered woman benefits the society in various spheres. This paper is an attempt to bring forth the prerequisites for empowering the women.

Keywords: Women Empowerment, Sustainable Development Goals, Inequality, Marginalization, Patriarchy.

Introduction

Though women are an inseparable part of a family, a society and a nation but the past and present conditions of women around the globe give an overall impression of disgust and depression, or even seem ridiculous and incredible. The sad events happening to women present a repugnant image of the patriarchy, that has for long disrespected, marginalized, subordinated and suppressed them.

Women are victims of their environment. Their actions do not depend on their own free will but rather they react to the pressures and forces working on them from within and without. Men have usually been the masters or authors of their fate. Men make choices for them and women are determined by these choices. This hopeless and hapless condition of women has turned into a sore that is worsening by being continuously touched. Therefore the need of the hour is to improve the condition of women by empowering them with sustainable development strategies.

Aim of the Study

Empowerment in its literal context means to give or warrant power. The term Women Empowerment focuses on creating the means and providing the channels through which women can practice equal rights as men, no less no more and improve her long deteriorating condition. Since decades women rights have been violated in many forms through the practices of female feticide, rapes, dowry, gender inequality etc. in almost all the nations. Women have experienced painful and ugly experiences and unpleasantness of various sorts. The layers of inequality are apparent in almost all fields. Owing to the fact, the lives of most of the women often end in despair and self-inflicted violence. This fact raises the need of Women Empowerment.

At the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015, world leaders adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This agenda includes the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are focused to eradicate poverty, hunger, malnutrition, gender disparity; to provide education, employment, justice, clean water, energy and sanitation and invite both public and private sectors to contribute in the successful achievement of these goals by 2030.

One of the SDGs is committed to promote gender equality which is a prerequisite for women empowerment and universal development. With gender discrimination suppurating at every pore of a society, to talk of national development is tantamount to an act of frivolity. Amartya Sen, the

Nobel prize-winning economist, has drawn distinct faces of gender inequality under the headings: *Survival inequality* - As a result of the bias in health care and social attention, the mortality rates of women are higher than those of men, *Natality inequality* - The sex-specific abortions, given a general preference to a male child, *Unequal facilities* in schooling, technical trainings, social participation or the opportunity to enter politics or commerce, *Ownership inequality* - It not only reduces the voice of women to property claims but also hamper women's entrance into commercial, economic and social activities, *Unequal sharing of household benefits and chores*, also termed as 'accumulation of labor' on women, and *Domestic violence and physical victimization*.

Hence, some decisions are to be taken to eliminate this many-headed monster surviving in societies since times immemorial and to enhance women's social capability and effectiveness by giving her empowering roles. What is necessary is to revise the set customs of society regarding the traditional role of women because the expansion of women's capabilities would make a difference to the lives of many. For this, the foremost step is to educate the women. The statistics reveal that women are denied the right to education and are kept at home inside the walls. This denial results in a multitude of problems. They never come to know of their real worth due to the absence of exposure and opportunities. The condition of most of the women can be explained in the famous lines of the poet Thomas Gray:

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air. (53-56)

Also they are unable to receive the basic necessary primary education of health, nutrition, and fundamental rights etc. which adversely affect their own well-being and the progress of nation. Hence the foremost sustainable step towards the national development is to empower the women through education. Women are one of the most brilliant and powerful intellects in the world. She is an epitome of self-abnegation, renunciation and self-sacrifice. But the contemporary situation demands an improvement in her tragic condition. It is high time when the many pitfalls in her way to success and development were removed forever by imparting awareness and education.

The unfavorable circumstances to women in the society are the reason of the rising cases of female feticide. Girl child is treated as a liability because of the dowry practices in society. Therefore investment in the future of women is necessary because an educated woman will be free of such baseless customs and rituals. Empowering women worldwide will help drive growth in the global economy because of the surplus of potential and skills and will also promote economic security to women. Women never limit the knowledge and awareness as they play different roles in the society. Being a daughter, a wife and a mother she imparts her knowledge first into the family itself, and then into society. Therefore the investment in women is reinvested by her in the

communities and homes. An economically independent woman will increase savings and spend towards healthy food, healthcare and education.

It is an important means of ending poverty because instead of one, two people will earn for the family, thus sharing the burdens of each other. This economic support will end hunger also.

An educated woman ensures healthy lives and well-beings for the people at all stages. Most of the women suffer from malnutrition Since birth, inviting fatal diseases. Hence, women should be guided and counseled about good eating habits and the importance of nutrition in food. Healthy food ensures healthy mind. Awareness of important health tips will improve maternal health which in turn will reduce child mortality rates also. Many women die during childbirths or give birth to still babies. It happens due to carelessness and unawareness. Women must be informed of various vaccinations and safety measures. Therefore, an education of health and vaccines must be promoted.

Women must be provided with sustainable sanitation facilities also. It is one of the major reasons of women's ill-health. They should be told the importance of cleanliness and hygienic habits. It will prevent them from contracting life-threatening infections and diseases. Education of various diseases is also necessary to prevent them from spreading further. People can combat various fatal diseases such as HIV/AIDS, cancer, malaria, dengue etc. by being alert and taking precautions. Awareness of diseases will also reduce an infant's chances of contracting a disease in the womb. Less rate of illness provides sustainable growth and development of human body. In order to assure healthy lives for all, the important step needed to be taken is education.

Education of fundamental human rights is also necessary for women so that they can practice the rights of liberty and equality that still exist at a distance from them. Education and awareness will ensure women's increased participation in various sectors such as in government, public and private sectors. They would equally participate with men in public debates and discussions, and influence the decisions that will determine their future. Women must be provided with business management education and skill development courses. It will tremendously help them in coming out of their shells and displaying their talents. It will also promote women entrepreneurs. Access to new technologies will increase the chances of employment for the next generation.

Another important step to be taken for women empowerment is to ensure a safe, healthy and resilient environment to live in. Nowadays women are safe neither inside their homes nor outside. Their security is a matter of concern. For this government must come up with strict laws and promote peaceful and inclusive societies. Access to quick and transparent justice is the need of the hour. Different transportation facilities must be provided to women and those in vulnerable situations. Various punishments should be decided for those inflicting violence on women of various types such as acid

attacks, rapes, eve-teasing, domestic violence, honor killings etc.

Conclusion

Education is not the only means to achieve the above mentioned goals but it is undoubtedly one of the most important one. Strength and security to women seem to be the logical means of advancing the amenities of women. An empowered and educated woman is like a burning candle that can burn other candles too with her spark and energy. Thus, there has to be a strong environment that provides women enough space and facilities, where

they themselves can grow and develop to benefit the society further.

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