

WOMEN'S EDUCATION AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

"Education acts as the greatest powerful weapon that can be used to change the world." Education is a prime factor in enriching and enhancing the lives of people across the globe. It aids in moulding the character of an individual right from their early stages of life. It acts as a key element in acquiring knowledge and boost their confidence in lives. It is a process of transforming knowledge and skills from one person to another. Since Education at all times have been influenced by gender, class, caste, culture, society and lots more there is no doubt that women striving for education could have struggled from ancient days till now. But women's have a greater self-determination and courage to strive persistently towards their goals. The paper focuses on the educational barriers globally and nationally and the Pioneers who made an initiative to educate women amongst all the inequalities and discriminations against them. It explains the struggles and battles fought by Malala Yousafzai a Pakistani Education Activist. In today's world, there are numerous opportunities for women to pursue their education. Women's who pursue their education lead a comparatively better and productive live.

INTRODUCTION

"Education acts as the greatest powerful weapon that can be used to change the world." Education is a prime factor in enriching and enhancing the lives of people across the globe. It aids in moulding the character of an individual right from their early stages of life. It acts as a key element in acquiring knowledge and boost their confidence in lives. Education refers to the procedure involved in studying with a view to acquire an in-depth knowledge and recognize a heterogeneity of subjects that can be applicable to daily life. Education is not bounded to just knowledge gained from books, it is earned through abundant practical experiences out of the classroom. Education may be a lecture from a textbook, mathematical concept, scientific laws and principle, a music session, sports practice, laboratory findings etc., as education is infinite and refers to all mediums of anything which is being taught and learnt. Since Education at all times have been influenced by gender, class, caste, culture,

society and lots more there is no doubt that women striving for education could have struggled from ancient days till now. Women's education must be treated as a basic fundamental right as it is not a obligation but indeed a necessity to live in this modern era. The paper focuses on the educational barriers globally and nationally and the Pioneers who made a initiative to educate women amongst all the inequalities and discriminations against them. It explains the struggles and battles fought by Malala Yousafzai a Pakistani Education Activist. It also covers the countless learning opportunities widespread in recent times that encourages women to pursue their education.

GLOBAL BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S EDUCATION

Across the globe, there are numerous countries where education is being deprived due to abundant reasons. Amongst all the nations, the top ten countries where education is still a dream among both the boys and girls includes South Sudan, Central African Republic, Niger, Afghanistan, Chad, Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Liberia and Ethiopia. The vital reasons that affects women's education throughout the world involves cost, menstruation, conflict and crisis, gender-based violence and trafficking.

- **Cost - Poverty** is the crucial element which decides a girl whether or not to enter into her education. Even in case of free education, the costs of uniforms, textbooks and transportation are taken into parent's consideration to deprive their education. When parents consider the decision to buy between necessities and education, then girls are forced to end their learning.
- **Menstruation** - Menstruation is labelled across the globe and the cultural loss of face attached to the natural procedure that makes girls to feel embarrassed in fully participating in the society. For Example: In Nepal, menstruating women are considered as impure in their community and expelled to huts during their menstrual cycles.
- **Conflict and Crisis** - In the conflict and crisis-affected areas, girls and women are encountered to face numerous obstacles to attend their schools. An estimated average of 39 million adolescent girls and girls in nations affected by the armed conflict or natural disasters deficit access to basic and quality education. Across the world, there are numerous attacks on girls' schools compared to boys' schools. With the absence of education, girls lack their knowledge and skills required to cope up with the crisis and aid to rebuild their communities.

- Gender-based Violence - The Gender-based violence may be in any forms like, bullying, physical and sexual abuse, harassment, coercion, surviving rape, discrimination and various other types of abuse that affects the girls' enrolment into schools, absenteeism and dropout rates. Every year, it is estimated that an average of 246 million girls and boys are being harassed and abused on their transportation to school.
- Trafficking -. Traffickers utilize girls for enforced marriage and labour, but most of the girls and women are being pushed into sexual exploitation. They undergo high rates of sexual and physical violence along with physical and mental health issues. Hence this form of abuse drives the abused girls stuck between slavery and poverty putting an end to their right to education.

BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S EDUCATION – INDIA

In comparison to the ancient period India in recent years have evolved a significant awakening in the field of education for women. Even though there is a progress, there are still many hurdles faced by Indian women in rural and urban areas. In many areas, girls are being deprived of their basic primary education. The crucial reasons involves the upcoming,

- Child Marriage - In developing nations like India, the concept of child marriage still prevails i.e., the wedding to girl child's done before attaining the age of 18. These kind of marriage's are done by the girl's family with a view to reduce their economic burden but it turn it actually deprives the financial independence of girl's without education. The child marriages acts as a vital hurdle to pursue even their primary stages of education. This marriages lead to numerous consequences in girls like domestic violence, early pregnancy, pregnancy complications, malnourishment and numerous health issues.
- Household Chores - Across the globe, girls spend almost more than 40% time in performing various unpaid chores like cleaning, cooking, washing and collecting water and firewood amongst which some of these chores put down them into the danger of experience sexual violence.
- Societal Standards and Cultural Customs - In Indian society, the role of customs, traditions and societal norms plays a vital role which have a biggest influence on the women's education. Even today abundant societal expectations and traditional gender

roles imposed on women restrict the numerous opportunities available for women to pursue their education.

- **Economic Constraints** - The absence of adequate financial resources may often lead girl's to drop out from school prematurely, which in turn hinders their professional and academic growth.
- **Accessibility and Infrastructure** – In India, particularly in the rural areas the presence of insufficient educational infrastructure facilities is a major disadvantage for women's education. There are also certain areas where there are lack of even primary schools and adequate teachers that disproportionately affects girl's education. During the adolescence period, the limited access to transportation facilities, safer and security concerns results in the reduction of their attendance ratio.

MALALA YOUSAFZAI – EDUCATION ACTIVIST

Malala Yousafzai is a female education activist from Pakistan. She was born on 12 July 1997 and was awarded with the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize laureate in her 17th age of years. In the year 2011, Malala was honoured with the first National Youth Peace Prize by the government of Pakistan. In the Nobel Prize laureate history Malala is the utmost youngest one to receive such a prestigious award for her service to women's education. In Pakistan, Swat Malala's native homeland girls are banned from attending schools as a part of the rules imposed by the Pakistani Taliban's. She extends her service to mankind as a human rights advocate for children and the women's education. Her advocacy skills have now progressed into an significant international movement.

Malala's father, Ziauddin Yousafzai is a school owner, a poet and an education activist running schools named Khusal Public School. Her father supported and encouraged to pursue her education in spite of all the hurdles and obstacles. Amongst numerous hardships and murder attempts Malala survived and fought for herself and the fellow women's of Pakistan to pursue their education. Her biography named 'I AM MALALA' explains the story of a Pakistani girl who fought up for her education. She was shot by the Taliban's for her activities in encouraging the girls to pursue their education. In 12 July 2013, she was addressing at the United Nations asking for the access to education throughout the world. Her speech was much inspiring and the UN decided to dub the event as 'Malala Day'. To

everyone's surprise she quoted Malala day isn't my day rather it is the day for those women's, boys and girls who has raised their voices for themselves and their rights.

BREAKING BARRIERS AND NURTURING LIVES

Women's Education acts as a pivot role in the development and enrichment of both the individuals and the nation. In order to improve education, inclusive approach must be implemented on all parts of individual, institutional and societal levels. A better transformative stage can be attained only by addressing the challenges ahead and the effective methods to resolve it. There must be practical application of strategies applicable to everyone and here lies few amongst them,

- **Learning Environments:** The strict measures must be implemented to guarantee the safety of schools attending the schools. The girls must be free from harassment and gender-based violence environment in schools.
- **Mandatory Primary Education:** Right from their early childhood, girls must be ensured with their primary education to build a powerful and stronger foundation that enriches their future learning and face all the stereotypes bravely.
- **Financial Assistance and Incentives:** The biggest hurdle that averts girl children from entering schools is the economic constraints. This can be eradicated by providing scholarships to economically weaker sections, financial aid programs and various incentives that ease them and to carry on with their studies.
- **Access to Education:** Even in rural areas, equal access to education must be developed through investments made in infrastructural facilities. The availability of better infrastructure along with numerous amenities may attract larger groups to educate themselves. Most importantly the schools must provide a safer, secured and easily accessible schools.
- **Incorporation of Technological Advancements:** Through the application of technological factors, the geographical barriers can be vanquished and replaced within the abundant educational resources. In modern era. Online teaching platforms and numerous digital resources can supply the essential flexible and easily accessible education even in remote areas.
- **Curriculum Reform and Teacher Training Programmes:** The quality of education can be upgraded by investments in boosting teacher training plans. Moreover the curricula

must be extensive and more gender-sensitive. The educational materials must ensure the promotion of diversity and equality amongst the younger minds.

- **Role of Government:** The prominent role of government is to lay down all the mandatory policies and laws that enriches women's education throughout the nation. The government policies must eventually encourage gender equality, girls enrolment into schools, retention without drop-out from schools and all the essential anti-discrimination measures.

CONCLUSION

The investments made on women's education may have a greater impact in transforming the women's families, communities, countries and even the entire world into a better place to live with peace and harmony. Women's have the superpower to achieve whatever they dream so let's provide them with all the essential education needed for their upliftment. Henceforth, Education provided at the right age and right time will enrich them with lifelong learning opportunities without any hindrances.