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RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE IMPACT OF INCREASING NUMBER OF EDUCATED BUT UNEMPLOYED WOMEN ON THE INDIAN ECONOMY

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Abstract

Since 2010, the Indian economy has seen its fair share of ups and downs. As the world takes notice of the country's rise to global prominence, a matter of note has been its relatively young demographic. The hike in human resources as a new generation joins the workforce has been a notable factor, highlighted frequently in international media and backed by economic research. However, contention arises in the form of a somewhat restricted point of view when it comes to the role of women in the society. As we enter a transitional phase in development, this paper aims to understand how traditional roles for women are clashing with the demands of a growing industrial sector. The education sector has seen growing participation from women who have also performed statistically better than men. The research query, therefore deals with how this transfers on to their visibility or lack thereof in the workforce. Using methods of comparison, analysis and survey, the paper draws conclusions to make a tentative summarization of what the future holds for educated but unemployed women in India.

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Introduction:-

For any country to be continuously developing, it is necessary that the condition of all its citizens improve. This includes both men and women. In recent years, the topic of women empowerment is in its peak. Now, they are provided with much more rights and freedom than before. Yet there are still some countries which haven't realized the importance of women in the development or urbanization of the economy. Women play a significant role in development of an economy as they, according to researchers, are said to have more concentration and supremacy of hard work than men.

There has been an increase in the number of jobs for women but they are still paid less than men for the same work and even sometimes they are not paid for the overtime work they do in the office. One notion that we generally see is that it is inculcated in the mind of each and every individual that women should do all the household work. As a result, they are forced to give up on their dreams just for the sake of their family's happiness. New Zealand was the first country to give women the right to vote in the year 1893. This makes it easier to understand the plight of women due to the discrimination that they face in their entire life.

Now, though the topic of women is discussed by each and every person, it is important to discuss not only the problems faced by women but also the ways to improve this situation. Indian states like Tamil Nadu, which is one of

the more developed states, have high literacy rate for both females and males while in other states like Bihar, females still face discrimination when they either try to study or go for work.

It necessitates to quote an example of a woman who fought for her education and was even shot just for having opposing ideas. Her name is Malala Yousafzai. She was born in Pakistan. She was lucky enough to have a father with progressive mindset who not only supported but also encouraged her to study. She was given complete freedom to dream and also fulfill her dream. After 10 years of peacefully studying, the area where she was residing got occupied with Taliban who did not let women to study at all. But due to her dedication to study more she started writing blogs explaining how it is like living under the rule of Taliban. Later on it was found out by the Taliban what Malala was doing which resulted in a member of the Taliban to shoot her in the head. It took her 9 months and several surgeries to recover. Now she is an activist for girls' education and has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Several other women who are famous women activists are:- Emma Watson, Michelle Obama, Oprah Winfrey, etc.

Thus, even though countries are working towards women empowerment, still there is a long way to go. In 2018 out of 189 countries analyzed, 104 of them have some laws which restrict women from working in some special jobs, reserved only for men. In some economies, husbands have legal power to not allow their wives to work. The wage gap between men and women is estimated to be around 23 percent in 2018. Women are not offered high leadership positions as only 5 percent of Fortune 500 CEOs constitute women. Also, the unemployment rate of women was 6.2 percent while that of men was 5.5 percent in 2018 (Facts and Figures: Economic Empowerment, 2020).

Intriguing as it seems, this study focuses on the condition of women. The main aim is to study those women who are educated but are still unemployed due to restrictions of society. With increasing talks on women, people have started sending their girls to school but later in life, these girls fail to find any support from the family for jobs. I will be working on understanding the situation of educated women in few developing and developed countries. Then the questionnaire analysis is performed on a small sample of 100 women in the state of Delhi in India. The results of the analysis are discussed. Lastly some suggestions are provided for policy makers.

Literature Review:-

Economic empowerment of women is a requisite factor for any economy to develop completely. This can be achieved mainly by ensuring that women realize their rights and the economy moves towards gender equality in all the spheres. Women should have the right to raise their voices, their participation should be taken into account in meaningful economic activities and they should have access to all the productive resources just as men do (Facts and Figures: Economic Empowerment, 2020).

One of the major objectives of women empowerment is to close the gender gap between male and female in various areas such as education, work, society, etc. Equality in the corporate realm can help many businesses grow as the ideas of women and their excellence in leadership can help companies reach new heights. Women are given less employment chances than men and global data also predicts that unemployment among women is far huge in comparison to men. In this fast paced world it is necessary that women also adapt to the latest trends and technology so that employment of women is increased continuously. Thus, women must be taught various skills regarding computer science, critical thinking and analytical skills which can help them secure and sustain jobs in the future (Facts and Figures: Economic Empowerment, 2020).

In almost all countries, most of the women are working in primary sectors like agriculture. If the women are given opportunities and proper education then this untapped resource can be helpful in inclusive development of the economy. This can act as a huge catalyst in the development of an economy from either under-developed or developing to a developed economy (Facts and Figures: Economic Empowerment, 2020).

Policy makers have realized that women form an indispensable part in the growth of any economy, thus their policies revolve around women from many years. Even in 1995, the World Education Report focused on girls and women. The report stated that most of the countries now have prioritized the education of girls and women in their education policies. Those countries have realized the utmost importance of education of girls for their overall development (Dhanarajan, 1996).

This issue of deteriorating condition of women is in the minds of researchers from many times. As can be seen from the introduction of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) in 1988 with the aim to improve women's condition

through education at both national and international levels. It was founded by the United Nations Decade of Women focusing on employment, health and education. The main agendas of the COL were equality, development and peace. It worked on eliminating the obstacles that prevent women from participating in the labour market. It provided help specially in the areas which were in highest need. COL enables access to education at a time and place of the user's choice, provides flexibility and openness. Thus, it supported policy makers to increase the access of education and expand learning opportunities for all.

Due to this increased focus on women empowerment, the condition of women has improved to a great extent. But still women continue to face innumerable discrimination in their day to day life. These discriminations restrict them to achieve greater heights in different phases of life. In this respect, a paper by Khan and Khan (2009) studied the condition of women employed in the informal sector and their contribution to the overall household budget. The authors believed that urban and rural areas should be studied separately. Also the policies formulated for urban areas can be changed in accordance with the rural areas. Thus they analyzed urban areas only in this paper.

The concept of urban informal sector is theoretically as well as practically different from that of agricultural and non-agricultural rural informal sector. Also urban areas are more easily approachable and can yield complete data while rural areas are somewhat difficult to approach and yield incomplete information. However the workers of urban as well rural informal sector have similar household characteristics, thus the diversification made by policy makers and researchers is artificial. This reflects as a lack on the part of the researchers to study the data correctly, which is overcome in this paper by studying them separately (Khan & Khan, 2009).

Different factors are analyzed which affect the contribution of women to the household budget. It was found that as women age, their contribution first increases and then starts decreasing. Education of women and ownership of assets by them have a significant and positive effect on the women's involvement in the household budget. Also if the family is burdened with loans or suffering in poverty, then women do contribute financially by working mostly in the informal sector. But if the number of males in the family is large and they are employed, then the burden on women is low and women do not seem to be working. The number of children and role of women in household budgets are negatively related to each other as with more children, women are required to stay at home to take care of those children (Khan & Khan, 2009).

The struggles of women are unending in nature. Another paper by Robinson (2003) talked about the struggles that women face on a global level with respect to their rights. Women always have to take a backseat in all the sectors including education, income, healthcare, political power. Out of all the illiterates in the world, the majority of them (around 64 percent) are women. There is a huge wage gap of around 75 percent between men and women in non-agricultural jobs. Women are always discriminated only because of their sex (Robinson, 2003).

Women are extremely vulnerable to violence both in developing and developed countries. They are victims of rapes, acid attacks, torture because of dowries, sex selective abortions and many more. The situation of women is improving in many countries. A global campaign of change has begun. Many new laws, change in attitudes and policies are observed globally to work in favour of women. People are informed about the discrimination against women and strict legal actions are taken now (Robinson, 2003).

The most important factor restricting the economic conditions of women is their childbearing activity. Thus there is a strong relationship between women's childbearing timing and rising unemployment rates. It has been found in many studies that the disadvantaged group, that is those who are less educated are more vulnerable to the increasing unemployment rates in comparison to the advantaged group. It is also observed that parents take financial stability as a necessity before planning for childbirth as there is a cost to childbearing for many years (Yu & Sun, 2018).

The current study sample of individuals born between 1980 and 1984 and it includes both men and women to capture the varied views of fertility on unemployment in the research. The research was conducted using an interview method and all the external variables were precisely controlled. The analysis was first done separately for both the genders and then they are clubbed together to get the overall average results (Yu & Sun, 2018).

The study found that unemployed men and women do not seem to postpone childbearing regardless of their local economic conditions. Also the men and women who are earning good income tend to go for childbirth at a faster rate. It was also observed that parents who have only one child went for another one at a rate higher than others. As

discussed, disadvantaged groups are more vulnerable to rising unemployment rates, thus they are found to delay childbearing more as compared to advantaged groups. Finally, women's own unemployment was not significantly related to her parents' education. Thus, the response to fertility depended entirely on women's education with respect to both individual and contextual unemployment (Yu & Sun, 2018).

Another study discusses the benefits enjoyed by females from the changing levels of Unemployment Insurance between 1990 and 2005. The study clearly distinguishes between the eligibility of females and benefits received by them. This was mainly for the women who were single mothers or low educated. It was observed that these women started joining the workforce at a high rate during the 1990s. Thus the need for Unemployment Insurance (UI) arrived to protect these females against loss of income in case they suffer from job loss (Shaefer & Wu, 2011).

There are two more programs for income support: cash welfare and the Food Stamp Program (FSP). The study analyses the importance of these three programs in affecting the participation of single mothers and low educated women to the labour force. They compared the results of pre-reform period (1990-94) to post-reform period (2001-05) taking into consideration the welfare reform of 1996. The results suggest that the eligibility rate to UI increased for single mothers as compared to single, childless women (Shaefer & Wu, 2011).

The appalling result was that during the study period, even though eligibility improved but receipt of UI benefits did not increase for the single mothers. The reason given by authors for this result is the decline in cash assistance receipt by these women (Shaefer & Wu, 2011).

Status of women in developing countries

Educated unemployed and allied problems is an important topic of discussion in India. While analyzing this problem, researchers list overpopulation and education as the main contributors. Other factors like discrimination on the basis of gender, race, color, caste, etc. are generally not taken into consideration. This issue is reaching a global status as not only India is threatened but other first-world countries and more developed countries are also in the preliminary stage of graduate under-employment. It can be solved by the government but this would require some serious restructuring (Ilchman, 1969).

India is one of the developing countries where women empowerment has been talked about for many years. Even M.K. Gandhi tried to liberate women from the discriminations they face continuously. In spite of his efforts, women are still not treated equal to men and are not credited for their work in society. This can be observed as women are expected to perform 'double workday' as they manage both their house and work life simultaneously. They are also supposed to work at extremely low or no wages in the production of food that is fed to the nation itself and is exported worldwide. Women form around 50% of the total Indian population and perform on an average two-thirds of the work. But their earnings are just one-third of the total income earned by the country (Misra, 2006).

As per Indian mythology, women in India are professed in two forms. First, women are considered as subalterns in comparison to men. Aristotle called them as 'incomplete humans' while St. Thomas Aquina called them 'imperfect men' in literature. Women are considered to be inferior, weaker sex and in some cases, even property of the master. Second, women are represented as warriors who have the ability to uplift themselves to devi-hood like Goddess Durga, Goddess Laxmi, Sita, Draupadi, and many more. These feminine shaktis also fell victim to the society but they fought for their rights, thus the victim turned victimizer. So they regained their respect in the society (Misra, 2006).

The author articulates that the situation is in process to improve as many social reforms have taken place for women empowerment and women rights protection. There is the Dowry Act which prevents the groom's family to extort money from the bride's family which is one of the major problems in India. Another reform is the Underage Marriage Act which is known to prevent the underage marriage of girl child, which prevailed in India. Not only this, women are also being empowered in the political sphere as one-third of total seats in the Lok Sabha are reserved for women to encourage them to participate. Many NGOs in India are also known to be working for empowerment of women, especially women rights in the unorganized sector as it is the sector that is known to have most exploitation. Women empowerment, even though a gender specific goal will help to achieve equitable growth in India (Misra, 2006).

Another paper conducts a small comparative analysis between employed and unemployed women with regard to their marital adjustment, both in urban and rural areas of Junagadh district. The study consists of 120 women, with 30 employed and 30 unemployed women each from rural and urban areas. It was concluded that women have better marital relationships when they are employed in both rural and urban areas as they have a stronger social network giving them enough confidence to balance their home with work. They are also able to build better understanding with their partners which help them to make enough adjustments to keep their marriage up and running (Vaghela, 2014).

Women's status has been constantly changing in our society due to many factors, one of the biggest players in this situation is education. Now more women including married ones prefer to be employed instead of staying at home. They are known to carry the double burden of office work and household chores and even taking care of children at the same time. It is observed that the employed women have better personalities which helps them to face social problems, thus representing as a stronger figure. Women are required to make both social and marital adjustment for successful employment. Several studies show that the type of adjustments made are a major player in their quality of marriage. Working women are found to be having a happier marriage than those of non-working as it gives them a place to divert attention from their marriage and hence have a well-balanced relationship (Vaghela, 2014).

Afghanistan is a landlocked country located in South and Central Asia. It is poverty stricken and a major part of its economy is controlled by drug and illegal trade. The gray white economy of the country is mainly dependent on the work activities kept for females like agriculture, handicraft work, etc.

According to the UNDP Human Development Report for Afghanistan (2004b), women constituted 70 percent of the country's teachers, 50 percent of its government workers and 40 percent of its doctors; thus playing a significant role in Afghanistan's economy. One of the major reasons that women did not get salaried jobs was that only 3% of the girls in Afghanistan went to school during the 1980's. Participation of women was stuck to domestic household work or in small industries. Women mainly were responsible for harvesting certain crops like cotton and beans, figuring out the share of family for self-consumption and the share to be sold in the market. The World Bank's World Development Indicators estimated that from 1990 to 1994, about 34 percent of the workforce was female. They also estimated that around 50 percent of the working-age women worked in the labor force while around 88 percent of the working age men worked in it (Benard, et al., 2008).

Few years back, laws of Afghanistan started favoring women by allowing them to work outside in the world. But they still face many social and cultural challenges which have resulted in lesser monetization of their work. There is a huge difference between the payment for same work done by female and male; females are paid relatively less than their male counterparts. There is gender discrimination during the time of hiring of new employees. Task is allotted according to gender and age. Women are mainly made to do farming and primary sector activities with old women generally involved in livestock work while younger generations are mainly occupied in weaving and making of rugs. There are many social barriers for women which prevents women from doing business. Seeing that Afghanistan's 80-90% of the economy is black or grey economy, a reform is really needed in the country which boosts the contribution of each and every person in the economy, especially women (Benard, et al., 2008).

Status of women in developed countries

As we have seen the situation of women in few developing countries, it is now time to discuss the situation in few developed countries. It is a well-known fact that freedom of women to get employed is of paramount importance to all. Employment opportunities for women can help in boosting the countries as this acts as a contribution to economic activities by being an extra labour force, which further increase their own standard of living. If we take a look at the European Union it won't take us long to recognize that sadly there has been an increase in the rate of unemployment within European union as well as Greece. There was the highest increase in the EU (from 13.9 % to 19.2 %) between October 2010 and 2011. Also in 2010, in Greece, female unemployment (16.2%) was on an average double compared to those of men (9.9%). There have also been a lot of incidents when it is noticed that the women are working without any social security or at very low wages. Most of the women were mainly involved in the underground economy.

It has been observed that Greece compared to other European countries faces a greater challenge as the participation of women in Greece has not been greater than 35% even though participation in the labour market was increased and salaries were also hiked. Few reasons for the situation of women are: first, the salary or income earned by the female

are taken as the secondary part of the income for a family; second, there is a common notion that women have inferior physical and skills compared to men; third, lack of stability in the employment of the women mainly due to marriage and pregnancy (Panitsidou, Vastaki, & Valkanos, 2012).

Thus, women in Greece continuously faced discrimination in both society and workplace, also in the field of education and training which was considered to be the main reason of increasing women unemployment. Therefore, many public and private bodies were motivated to provide Vocational Education and Training (VET) programmes to women. The study found that the support provided by VET in enhancing knowledge and employability skills of women was significant to reduce the problem of rising unemployment in Greece.

Another study is conducted in the United Kingdom which discusses how the young and privately educated women consider themselves in relation to others. In the contemporary United Kingdom, different terms were used for women. One derogatory term used was 'chav', originated from Romany term 'chavi' meaning child. It was used as an 'othering' label and no one wanted to be identified by this term. Similarly there were other terms like pikey and girly girls. Both these terms were used for the working class but the difference lies in the behaviours they refer to. Pikey girls referred to those who use drugs and have committed some or the other crime while the girly girls are young girls whose paramount concern was to be attractive to young men (Maxwell & Aggleton, 2010).

Focus group discussions and interview methods were adopted as a method to analyze the women. Young women of boarding school were interviewed. Direct questions were not asked but they used to engage in conversation with the sample to get answers to their questions. It was observed that most of these women positioned themselves differently from 'chavs', 'pikey', 'girly girl' or any other term used to depict lower class. They also mentioned the cases where they were victim of some kind of discrimination from society. In conclusion, it is important to understand that social factors play an important role in shaping the behaviour of women.

Poland is another developed country where the condition of women is analyzed. According to the author, 'rural women' is the term associated with 'a female farmer', that is a woman who devote most of her time to the farms, she takes care of the farm, she does all the activities in the farm from harvesting to sowing to seeing that how much of the harvest should be sold in the market and how much should be kept for household usage. There are various factors which affect the employability of women in the local labour market: transport system, infrastructure, residence place, economic conditions of the place and many more (Piotrowska, 2010).

Social Diagnosis 2007 indicates improvement of the labour market situation in Poland. In 2007 the unemployment rate in Poland dropped to 10.7 percent while in rural areas, the unemployment rate decreased from 13.9 percent in 2005 to 11.0 percent in 2007. It is observed that employment of women in the countryside is comparatively lower. The age group of 25-34 and 45-59 are the ones who drop out from the labour market more as they shift to economic activity (like going abroad for job or undertaking studies) from employment - unemployment during this period. It is widely seen that women with low education knowledge or vocational knowledge are the one who leaves the labour market prior to other women. Also the unemployment rate is higher among women as compared to men.

The data analysis conducted in the paper found that the family situation and number of children are not significant factors affecting the decision of women in taking a job. Their attitude towards the professional work depended on the place where they were raised and their involvement in the economic activity from a young age. The government of various countries never discuss the situation and problem faced by the rural women, ignoring the fact that they are the most affected by the discrimination.

In Morocco women have been given huge representation in the government for the last 2 decades. Morocco is the only Arab country with around 12% participation of women in the legislation. This was all possible after the coronation of the Moroccan king Mohamed VI in 1999. France, the neighbor country of Morocco has not been able to provide women of Maghrebi origin (the largest minority population in the French Republic) with various rights. There has been a reform in the Islam because of which participation of Moroccan women and women with Moroccan background in France increased in the economy as they were being appointed for more jobs. Along with it, many changes were observed in the personal and professional goals and challenges faced by women (Gray, 2006).

It was seen that women of both the countries have many similarities as they have similar thinking in the matter of the legal reforms, political reforms, and there is a need for further increase in the participation of Muslim women in the economies. It is also true that Muslim women in both countries have different customs and different ways of living in their own country but their ideologies are mainly similar. There is a shift happening from the prior patriarchal society to now a more equality environment. This is a positive change as these women are breaking the social pattern. Also more and more women in these countries are now willing to work which is very beneficial for both the countries as by this they are tapping on the untapped/uncharted resources which can help them boost their economies to a very large scale.

Research Analysis

The above literature necessitates to analyse the situation of women prevailing in the current time period. The analysis was done to study the responses of different women of different age groups. To conduct this research, it was decided that questionnaire analysis will be the most appropriate tool, outdoing the negatives of other research techniques. This method will address a wide statistical sample, provide an overview of the research topic and will also help to overcome almost all time and space constraints.

Representative sample of 100 women were taken for the present study randomly from the state of Delhi in India. As the analysis was done during the Covid-19 pandemic, an online method of questionnaire was used to get the answers from the participants. The questionnaire consisted of both open ended and closed ended questions. Anonymity of respondents was ensured to get true answers to some sensitive questions asked. I also provided women with flexibility to not answer any question if they feel uncomfortable by providing them with the option of 'don't wish to answer' in each question.

The questionnaire tried to cover all types of questions which will help us to know the demographic status of women, their employment condition and their mindset regarding different social issues related to women. The questionnaires were administered carefully and the responses of the participants were recorded in an organised manner. The overall response was quite positive and helped me in my research. The participants gave good comments regarding clarity of the questions, flexibility in filling the questionnaire and also its functionality.

The table 1 below gives a brief analysis of the demographic profile of the participants of the research. (Insert table 1 and its explanation)

Table 1:- Profile of average participant in the sample.

Demographic Characteristics	Profile	Percentage
Age Group	20-40 years	45%
Marital Status	Married	96%
Child Status	No child	5%
Education background	Bachelor's degree or more	90%
Employment Status	Employed	40%

Women were asked few questions regarding their likeness towards the household work especially after marriage. The purpose was to find out if they quit their jobs by their personal choice of preference or was it the household chores which forced them to quit their jobs. I also observed that most of the women are not working for earning income but are working just to attain self-satisfaction. These women are satisfied with the work they are doing, even if they are not being paid equal to men.

I also tried to judge the situation prevailing at the women's places. Questionnaires included questions asking the participants about their family support in providing them with educational qualifications. It was found that around 94.7 percent of women got support from their families in attaining educational qualification.

Concerning the employment status of respondents, 56.4 percent are found to be housewives; 25.7 percent women stated that they are working in their own enterprise. Out of all, 15.8 percent are full time salaried workers while the rest (around 2 percent) are freelancer or self-employed. While mailing the questionnaires, I selected participants in such a way that the majority of them are housewives as I am more interested in studying their condition and thought process. So I prepared a follow up question asking whether they will accept the job offer right now, if given an opportunity. On an average, 42 percent responded with yes and around 23 percent were not interested in taking the

job offer. This leaves behind around 35 percent of women who responded with 'maybe' implicating that they are so busy in their current lifestyle that they have not given any thought to this.

Another finding depicts that 54.7 percent of the women never had any work experience while others (45.3 percent) had been employed at least for some time period in their life. This 45 percent included those women who are still working and those who have left jobs due to one or other reason.

One of the major questions of my analysis was what made them leave their first job. This question was applicable to only those women who were actually employed in the past. Out of them, most women had to take care of their family or children which forced them to leave their job. Few of the women said that they didn't like the work environment while others shifted to a new place after marriage which forced them to leave their job and search for a new one. These women got busy in adjusting to new life that they failed to find any new job suitable for them and thus were left jobless.

Next, it is important to know that with changing times, does the condition of women increase or not. It is expected that in the next few years, more girls must be provided with support for education. Also if girls are motivated for education, then they must be willing to work instead of just being a housewife. My analysis confirms these expectations giving the same significant results.

I compare the responses of women aged 20-30 with the women of age 40-50. This comparison will depict the changing situation in the last 10-15 years. It was found that only 70.2 percent of total women aged 40-50 years got support from their family for attaining education while 100 percent of women aged 20-30 years got complete family support for their education.

For 40-50 years of women, it is surprising that even though around 70 percent got support for their education, still about 40.4 percent of them never had a job. This suggests that there are few women who got complete support for their education from their family, but they still never opt for a job. The reason might be lack of motivation for a job from their family. Also, they must have seen their elder females as only doing household chores and they too got inclined towards it. This is further supported by the response to the question of why women left their job, if they were working earlier. So most of them answered that it was because they had to take care of family and children. This implies that responsibility of the house still lies on the women only, which discourages them to go out and work.

The similar analysis for the women of age 20-30 years depict quite different results. All these women (that is 100 percent of them) had at least one job once in their lifetime. Also when asked the reason for leaving their job, all of them replied with the option of 'not applicable'. I assume, this implies that all of them are still working and have not left their jobs. This implication is actually confirmed by another question which asks them their current employment status. All of them answered that they are working as a full time salaried worker, with only few of them being a freelancer. The most interesting result is of the question asking them the reason for doing a job. All of them answered that they are working for self-satisfaction, leaving out other options like income and social networking.

Sample Questionnaire

Please indicate your age group:

1. 20-30
2. 30-40
3. 40-50
4. 50-60

What is your highest educational qualification?

1. PhD
2. Master's degree
3. Higher Secondary School Diploma
4. Higher School Diploma
5. Other:

Please list family members who are in the same household as you (live and eat with you and with whom you share the expenses). Tell us their name, highest degree of education and whether they are working. 1)name and relation 2)highest academic level 3) working or not. [Eg XYZ, son , Phd , working]

Did you find support from your family for attending school?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't wish to answer

Do you have any previous experience working for a salaried job?

1. Yes
2. No

Why did you leave your job? (For those who were working before but are now not working)

1. You did not like the job
2. You lost the job
3. You had to take care of family and children
4. Your family didn't want you to work
5. Don't wish to answer
6. Not applicable to you
7. Other:

What do you do now?

1. Work in own enterprise
2. Full time salaried worker
3. Housewife
4. Student
5. Retired
6. Unemployed
7. Other:

Would you be willing or ready to work if you were offered a position right now?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Maybe

According to you, what is the main reason for doing a job?

1. Income
2. Job Satisfaction
3. Social networking
4. Other:

Is any female member(s) of your family working at present?

1. Yes
2. No

People have different attitudes towards housework (not only child care, but also cooking, cleaning, sewing). How much do you like housework?

1. I like very much
2. I like it somewhat
3. I do not like it at all
4. I do not know
5. I don't want to answer

Does your husband help you in housework?

1. He doesn't help
2. He wants to help, but family does not allow him
3. He helps in housework
4. Housework is responsibility of women, so his help is not required
5. Do not wish to answer

Mostly who makes decisions on different family matters in your household?

1. You
2. Your husband
3. Both
4. Do not want to answer
5. Other:

Read all the statements given below and then select the option for each part that supports your ideology:

1. Women get equal opportunities in the professional world as compared to men.
2. Family responsibilities or marriage force women to leave their jobs.
3. Women are paid equally as men, if they are equally productive.
4. A man should go out and work while a woman should take care of the household and the family.
5. A man should make decisions and women should obey them.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Do not want to answer
- ☐ no idea

Read all the questions given below and then select the set suited option that describes your ideology:-

1. Do you think females are given more freedom of choices now?
2. Do you agree that more females are financially independent nowadays?
3. Do you think that now the perspectives of families have changed and they allow females to go for higher education?
4. Do you agree that women are equally paid as men for equal work?

- ☐ Yes, definitely
- ☐ Yes, but not much
- ☐ no not much
- ☐ No, not at all
- ☐ Do not want to answer
- ☐ No idea

What did you want to become when you grew up?

What stopped you from achieving what you had dreamt of?

Policy Implications and Suggestions:-

Every country is different so the same policy cannot be implemented everywhere. There are some suggestions from the experiences of different countries. Some mass movements can be initiated in every country to make people

aware about the importance of women. Some feminist movements have been started in India but their proper implementation is also necessary.

Women should be provided with more job opportunities and must be paid equal to men. Laws like Equal Remuneration Act of India should be made. In India, these laws are not implemented so it is necessary that people adhere to these laws and do not break the rules. Women should be provided with proper skill training to compete with men in the market at the same level.

There are many poverty stricken families who do not send their girl child to the school because either they cannot afford to send them to school and some also find it unsafe for women to travel alone. Some do not educate girls because they believe that women are only meant to do household work. In this regard, the government needs to start schemes to encourage these families to send their girl child to school by giving both monetary and non-monetary benefits. This will reduce the education gap between two genders. Also, this will help the women to gain some confidence and control over their lives by acting maturely and independently, which in long run will help them to make wise decisions.

It is commonly seen that most girls have better fashion sense as compared to their male counterparts. Thus, women should be the one in top positions in the fashion industry. It is commonly observed that men are made the managers of various fashion stores or in the fashion industry. This needs to be changed and women should be given a chance to come forward.

Another problem is that banks don't give loans easily to women. As a result they are not able to start their own businesses or firms. This discourages women to become entrepreneurs. So a system of micro financing should be developed which can provide women with loans whenever needed. These changes are observed in many countries. But still there are some parts where such changes are required.

Thus, it is the mindset of people (both men and women) which needs to be changed soon. People need to believe that women can also manage the work and can also work on par with males. If this is accepted worldwide, then there will be an increase in the participation of women in an economy. For a country to develop equally, they will have to scrap all the taboos of the society and should start treating everyone equally irrespective of gender.

Conclusion:-

As seen, women empowerment is the topic discussed everywhere. All countries have started working towards improving the situation of women and providing them with equal rights as men. In this respect, many laws and policies have been implemented by different countries. Even today governments have not stopped and are regularly working towards reducing the discrimination faced by women. Change of people's mindset is the need of the hour, which will take a good span of time. Attitude of people is changing but at a slow pace. We are not very far in achieving an equitable society.

Many researchers have contributed to this field. They have seen the improving condition of women with changing times. To see whether the changes have reached ground level, I conducted a questionnaire analysis. I found quite positive results. More women are getting support for their education. Also most of them are working even after marriage. They are getting complete support from their partners in managing household chores and children.

At last I would like to conclude by saying that if these women are not able to enter the workforce because of lack of opportunity or discrimination or racism, then all the countries will be losing on a very effective resource which could have helped them in their economic growth and development.

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