



State Education Policy and Women's Empowerment with Special Reference to Bihar

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Abstract : *Etymologically, Empowerment means 'to enable'. It refers to the accessibility and control over the existing resources that includes material, human and intellectual aspect. Women's Empowerment basically means to enable women to utilise the existing resources so as to enhance their quality of life. Women have been subject to various atrocities right from womb to tomb. There is no denying the fact that the significant advancement in the field of science and technology has considerably elevated the standard of living of mankind*

but it does not rule out the miseries caused to women in various conditions of life. The dual and ambiguous shades of human nature are reflected even in the popular culture of our society where women on the one hand are worshipped as Goddesses and are oppressed on the other hand.

The inculcation of feeling in women that they are inferior to men and will always be, starts right from their childhood (covert socialisation) needs to be challenged through women's awareness. Women suffer discrimination basically because of 'SEXISM' also known as 'sex discrimination' or 'gender discrimination'. It is defined as prejudice or discrimination based on sex i.e. treating women inferior to men.

There are different parameters of women's Empowerment as it is a multi-faceted process. Women's Empowerment can be achieved to a great extent through education. Education brings the qualitative change in people's life, empowers them in the area of employment and also prepares them for active participation in the political system. Education is that magic wand which can make things change radically and this work endeavours to highlight the major positive impacts and greater role which education can play in empowering women. The term 'education' is often confused with literacy. Literacy is the ability to read and write while education is the transmission of the values and accumulated knowledge of society. It not only brings knowledge, information and awareness to an individual but also brings development and change in human society. It is a single most instrument for social and economic transformation.

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Women's education is of great significance because of its two-fold aspects. Firstly, it leads to rise of productivity of women as a human resource (social capital) and secondly, it leads to transfer of education to the next generations as women are future mothers.

Bihar is progressing very rapidly as there has been considerable improvement in women's literacy and the dropout rates have reduced. Despite this much more work needs to be done and the State Government can play an active part in this regard. Affirmative Action, a means of Empowerment, which can also be explained as a mode of preferential treatment and social inclusion, by the State Government, is the need of the hour.

This work made a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the affirmative action of Bihar Government in implementing educational policies at Primary, Secondary and some policies which are in pipeline for higher levels for women's empowerment. The impact and lacunae have been analysed to reach to a rational generalisation. The feminist perspective is handled with caution to avoid judgemental statement.

Keywords : Empowerment, Sexism, Affirmative Action.

Introduction :

Swami Vivekananda opined, "There is no chance of welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly on one wing. (Yojana, June 2012: 03). This clearly shows the importance of women empowerment but there is an interesting fact to observe that most of the women are brought up in a society where they are taught that they are inferior to men and will always be. The inculcation of such values right from the very beginning of their childhood is mainly through covert socialisation, makes them to quietly accept all the atrocities caused on them as their fate. It is because of this very notion that encourages further deterioration of the status of women and it is this very notion that needs to be challenged through the weapon of women's empowerment. The servility of women requires a transformation.

Women suffer discrimination basically because of 'SEXISM' also known as 'sex discrimination' or 'gender discrimination' which is defined as prejudice or discrimination based on sex or conditions or attitudes that foster stereotypes of social roles based on sex. It also means treating women inferior to men without any logical foundation. This is unfortunately a universal truth and practised uniformly.

The very basic objective of women's empowerment is to create an environment where there is large scale awareness accompanied with the active participation of women themselves. There are various existing proofs which signify that women have always been on the receiving end. Speaking particularly in context of early India, there have been great Messiah like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar who have vigorously worked for the cause of emancipation of women but a very few female reformers were noticed working for the cause of women. The best examples are those of Annie Besant and Sarojini Naidu.

Coming to India of present century, the increasing awareness and commitment has produced certain great women reformers, but their representation is not very satisfactory when the total population of women is taken into consideration. Women seem marginalised and almost invisible in the decision making process. No reformatory law can do wonders till the recipients are aware and supportive. Thus, an active involvement of women themselves for their empowerment is the need of the hour.

Empowerment of women is a major social phenomenon and a multidimensional understanding is required to analyse its influence. This also requires an understanding of our family

structures and society at large. Though it is difficult to enlist all the areas in which there is a need to empower women, yet some significant areas are encompassed below-

1. Social Security
2. Health Care Facilities
3. Educational Attainment
4. Economic Participation
5. Political Participation

Among these, education is one of those basic facilities which could empower women to avail all the other basic facilities. Greater access to education can make a woman get benefits of good health, nutritious food, skill building, credit facilities, opportunities for capacity building, awareness for legal rights and decision making.

Education is that magic wand which can make things change radically and this project endeavours to highlight the major positive impact and greater role which education can play in empowering women.

The term 'education' is often confused with literacy. Literacy as defined by Oxford dictionary is the ability to read and write, while education can be described as the transmission of the values and accumulated knowledge of society. It is described as the means through which the aims, objectives and behavioural patterns of a group of persons are sustained from one generation to the next. Education brings a qualitative change in human life; it empowers them in various areas and prepares them for an active participation in all walks of life. Education not only brings knowledge, information and awareness to an individual but also brings holistic development and positive change in human society. It is a single most important instrument for social and economic transformation.

Late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru rightly remarked "Some people seem to think that education is not as important as putting up a factory. I may sacrifice any number of factories, but I will not sacrifice human beings and their education because it is the human beings who set up factories and produce the things we want." However, women holding almost half of the human population lagged behind in educational pursuits. This obviously created a gender gap as suggested by data.

Education helps an individual to develop his potential to full, to increase his productivity and become a useful member of society and this ultimately helps in increasing the productivity of the nation and strengthens all bonds- social and cultural, economic, attitudinal and behavioural.

Constitutional Safeguards

With the incorporation of constitutional Eighty-sixth amendment Act, 2002, Section 2 (w.e.f.1-4-2010); **Right to education** has been granted to all Indians as their fundamental right.

Article 21A of Part III reads "The state shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as the state may, by law, determine" (Bakshi, 2010:57)

Right To Education Act

The year 2009 is a landmark year in the development of the history of elementary education, as the government finally managed to pass the 86th amendment to the constitution that made Right to Education (RTE) a fundamental right.

The Right to Education Act came into force in the entire country from April 1, 2010. It is now legally enforceable for every child between the age of six and fourteen years irrespective of sex to demand free elementary education. The RTE Act is the first legislation in the world that puts the responsibility of ensuring enrolment, attendance and completion

of course on the shoulders of government. Thereby makes government responsible and accountable which is the core issue of good governance.

Apart from these, the Directive Principles of State Policy (Article 45, Part IV) and Fundamental Duties, Article 51A (K), Part IV A also highlight the importance of education.

Article 45, part IV reads “The state shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years.”(Bakshi, 2010: 90)

Article 51A (K) of fundamental duties reads, It shall be the duty of every citizen of India “who is a parent or guardian to provide opportunities for education to his child or, as the case may be ward between the age of 6 and 14 years.” (Bakshi, 2010:92)

Women Education And Empowerment

In past, our system of education was elitist. Education was seen as a prerogative of the privileged class due to the caste/gender bias and only male members of upper caste were allowed to receive education. People of lower births and women as a group were deprived of their right to education and hence women remained under privileged and marginalised group of the society but in modern times the situation has changed a little because now all women of society are not deprived of the education but still the number is not adequate enough to empower women. Education is the most important driving force for progress and development of the nation and both male and female have to play an equal role in the contribution to the nation development so education becomes very important in the life of women.

It is evident from various studies that female have equal potential as their male counterparts when it comes to developmental process in any society. So bridging the gulf in education is

necessary to realise the ideal of a full fledged developed society.

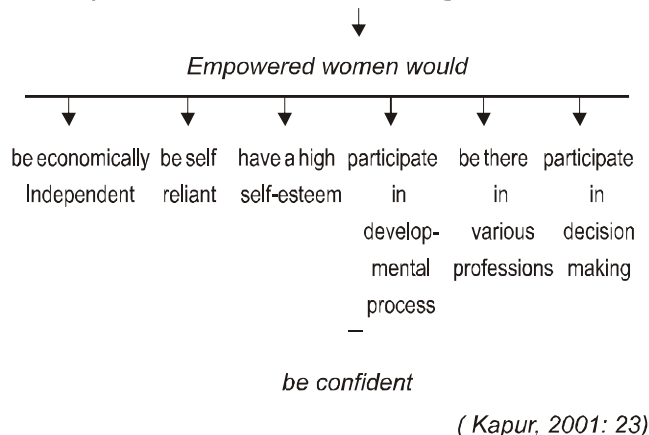
Though it is difficult to encompass all the great positive impacts which education has in empowering women; yet a few significant ones are listed below :-

- Education helps women to overcome the negative impact which the culture, religion, caste and class have generated.
- Education also provides access to quality health care. A glaring example to this is the emerging concept of maternal education which emerges as the single most strongest and positive influence on better child health care keeping other socio economic indices constant. So investment in female education is also directly linked to the child and mother health. Education empowers women to enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedom.
- Education creates an environment where women have a positive realisation of economic and social equity.
- Education empowers women to play confidently the role of agents of social transformation.
- Education helps in inculcating the values of gender equality and gender justice.
- Education empowers women to enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- It provides access to participation and decision making of women in social, political and economic life of nation.
- Education empowers women to fight against the atrocities committed on them and thus, results in the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women in the long run.
- Education of women empowers them economically, especially in the present era of

inflation where women are taking up jobs outside their homes to augment their family resources.

- An educated woman also contributes to the GNP and GDP of an economy and is also an indicator of a socially developed society.

Empowerment of women through education



Bihar State Education Policies For Women

Bihar, in ancient times, was the core center of learning. The world-renowned universities like the Nalanda and Vikramshila existed on the soil of Bihar. Such fertile was the soil of Bihar that it produced many great and eminent scholars, administrators, laureates etc. But the condition of education deteriorated with the passage of time and the condition of women education was even more deplorable. However, in the recent years, women literacy in Bihar has considerably improved.

Bihar is located in the eastern part of the country (between 83°-30' to 88°-00' longitude). It is an entirely land–locked state, although the outlet to the sea through the port of Kolkata is not far away. Bihar lies mid-way between the humid West Bengal in the East and the sub humid Uttar Pradesh in the West which provides it with a transitional position in respect of climate, economy and culture. It is bounded by Nepal in the North and by Jharkhand in the South. The Bihar plain is divided into two unequal halves by the river Ganges that flows through the middle from West to East. Patna is its Capital City.

TotalArea : 94163.59 Sq. km.

UrbanArea : 1804.60 Sq. km.

RularArea : 92358.40 Sq. km.

Demography (As per Census, 2011)

State	Persons	% of India's population	Decadal Growth Rate	Sex Ratio (Females per 1000 Males)
Bihar	103,804,637	8.58	25.07	916

Source : www.gov.bih.nic.in

Literacy Rate

(Per cent, as per Census, 2001 and 2011)

	Persons	Males	Females
India, 2001	64.83	75.26	53.67
Bihar, 2001	47.53	60.32	30.03
India, 2011	74.04	82.14	65.46
Bihar, 2011	63.82	73.39	53.33

Source : www.gov.bih.nic.in

The data pertaining to literacy rates indicates that there has been considerable improvement in women literacy in Bihar, but much more work needs to be done and State Government can play the most active part in this regard.

Under the **Department of Education**, there are major directorates such as **Primary Education Directorate**. This Directorate is concerned with the education, schemes and policies for the development of children for the age group 6-14 i.e., for Std. I- VIII. **Secondary Education Directorate** is concerned with the education of students of Std. IX-X. **Higher Education Directorate** is concerned with education of Under Graduation and Post-Graduation. **Mass Education Directorate** has the mandate to execute programmes pertaining to promotion of Functional Literacy among Adult and adolescent illiterates particularly among age group (15-25). Besides this, **Bihar Education Project Council (BEPC)**, is an associated organization of the Administration Directorate dedicated to achieve Universal Elementary Education in the State. The ultimate goal of the Council is "Social

Reconstruction through Education”.

Primary Education of Women in Bihar

“Primary education is a basic human right, both transformative and empowering. Beyond this intrinsic importance it is also indispensable for the enjoyment of other human rights and is a means for accessing broader social, economic, political and cultural benefits.” (Kuruksheetra September 2012: 32)

Primary education particularly among girls is the first step towards ensuring a developed society and Bihar Government has legislated various policies to foster primary education in the state. Some policies are Mukhyamantri Balika Poshak Yojana, Meena Manch, Gyan Jyoti, National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL, a scheme sponsored by Central Government), Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV, a scheme sponsored by Central Government). Apart from these policies, the State Government is continuously undertaking several other initiatives for the primary education of girl child. A recent example is State Government's new initiative: **Celebration of Dadi-Nani Diwas**. It's a scheme aimed at increasing the attendance of girls wherein all those Dadi/Nani (grandmothers) would be awarded whose granddaughter attends schools regularly.

Enrolment Rate (% girls to total enrolment)

Level	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Primary	46.6	47.5	47.8	48.4	49.3
Upper primary	43.0	45.2	46.4	47.6	48.8

Source : BEPC.

Dropout rate

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
2009-10	7.69	7.22	7.47
2010-11	7.10	4.79	6.00

Source : BEPC.

Apart from these the Government is also committed to ensure certain other facilities, which have a direct relation to dropouts particularly among girls. For example:

Description	No. of other facilities to be constructed in (2012-13)
Drinking water	3172
Boys Toilet	6799
Girls Toilet	7686
Total	17655

All these initiatives will certainly give a positive boost to girl education.

Secondary education of Women in Bihar

After the basic fundamental education, there is a need of such education, which can improve the career-oriented approach in students. This is the actual stage from where imagination about future starts to realize. Women education at secondary level is no doubt an important tool of human development and improved human development plays a very important role in improving living standards of the people. But official report says that less number of girls are enrolled at secondary level as compared to primary education. There are also several schemes of state government for ensuring secondary education to the girls and they are Mukhyamantri Balika Cycle Yojana, Mukhyamanti Protsahan Yojana, Bihar Shatabdi Mukhyamantri Balika Poshak Yojana.

Mukhyamantri Balika Cycle Yojana

Financial Year	Number of girls targeted	Number of beneficiaries	Approved Expenditure	Actual Expenditure
2009-10	4,36,670	4,14,011	87,33,40,000	82,80,22,000
2010-11	5,35,037	5,32,497	1,07,00,74,000	1,06,49,94,000
2011-12	6,48,291	5,97,279	1,62,07,27,500	1,49,31,97,500

Source: Department of Education, Secretariat.

An analysis of the above data depicts that the State Government has not been fully successful in implementing the scheme yet the positive role it has played in changing the mentality of people

throughout the state is certainly laudable. In this respect the following quote is worth mentioning: "It was because of Mukhyamantri Cycle Yojana that I could go and study in a high school" – Khushboo, 2nd topper in Std. X, 2010, Bhagaon, Katihar (CM Report Card 2010, Bihar:61).

Mukhyamantri Protsahan Yojana

Financial Year	Number of girls targeted	Number of beneficiaries	Approved Expenditure	Actual Expenditure
2009-10	26650	26650	26,65,00,000	26,65,00,000
2010-11	52051	52051	52,05,10,000	52,05,10,000
2011-12	33163	33163	33,16,30,000	33,16,30,000

Source: Department of Education, Secretariat.

The above official data depict a cent percent success in the implementation of the Scheme.

Enrolment Trends at secondary Level

Financial Year	Boys	Girls	Total
2010-11	1043838	862083	1905921
2009-10	919507	696214	1615721
2008-09	838508	580995	1419503

Source : Inter Council.

Dropout Rate, 2010-11

Boys	Girls	Total
2.71	3.29	3.00

Source: Inter Council.

Though the dropout rate is not very high yet, it is higher in girls, which is a matter of concern.

Higher Education of Women in Bihar

The strength of the country is measured through the efficiency of their youth. India is a nation of young people and if Bihar wants to become a major stakeholder in the nation building it has to earnestly work towards achieving higher education for women.

There are various institutional and cultural barriers that have debarred women from attaining higher education. The problems related to expansion, inclusion and excellence in higher

education have created great stumbling blocks in the road to achieve higher education.

If figures are taken into account, regarding the situation of higher education in Bihar it is found that Bihar has a total number of **17 Universities** (1 Central, 13 State, 2 Deemed and 1 formed under the State Legislation Act) and **354 Colleges**, which are duly recognized by the National Body-University Grants Commission (UGC).

If Women Education is taken into account then it is found that India has a total of 5 all women Universities and a total of 851 women's colleges that exclusively serve women students. Bihar is lagging behind as it doesn't has even a single women's university

Status of Women in Higher Education in Bihar

2010-11	Total enrolment in higher education	Women's enrolment in higher education	% of Women enrolled
Bihar	690776	215748	31.2

Source : UGC Annual Report 2010-11.

The plight of education of women in Bihar is not satisfactory enough. State government is taking certain initiatives for encouraging higher education for women in Bihar

1. In the financial year 2010-11, **Rs. 18.84 Crore** was allotted for the construction of 50 bedded girls's hostel in the 12 already established Polytechnic Institutes in Bihar
2. Further allotments are proposed for the establishment of Rajkiya Mahila Polytechnic.
3. Presently, there are 9 Women's ITI which are run by the Government of Bihar and there is a proposal for the opening of a new Women's ITI.
4. A hostel for minority girls is constructed and operationalized in the campus of

Patna University, which is the first of its kind. Another construction of such hostel is sanctioned for Gaya.

5. 2 Nursing Colleges were established in the financial year 2009-10 for B.Sc. Nursing courses at Indira Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences, Patna and Holy Family Hospital, Kurji Patna.
6. India's 1st Nursing Skill Lab was set up at Guru Gobind Singh Hospital, Patna City in 2010.
7. The State Government is committed to develop the Rajkiya Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Gulzarbagh as a center of excellence. For this, the College has been provided with the needed land resources.
8. The State Government is committed to develop the Rajkiya Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Gardanibagh as a center of excellence. For this purpose **Rs. 100.00 Lakhs** have been provided.

The above initiatives clearly portray that the State Government has not taken any major step towards ensuring women education at higher level; this needs to be tackled with effective and immediate reforms.

Apart from these initiatives, State Government has also legislated some general policies aimed at the education of women particularly of the adult illiterates. They are Hunar and Auzaar, Akshar Aanchal Yojana, Mukyamantri Mahadalit Akshar Aanchl Yojana, Mukhyamantri Jhuggi Jhopri Mahila Saksharta Yojana and Provision of Gender Budgeting.

Thus, Bihar has made a substantial progress in women education and their subsequent empowerment. The dropout rates have reduced and literacy rate increased. The Chief Minister of Bihar Shri Nitish Kumar is also optimistic about the

figures and has opined: "We have endeavored to bring the female literacy at par with the national level through introduction of innovative programmes." (CM Report Card, 2011:3)

But what should be the real concern of the state now, is universal retention and satisfactory quality of learning. Gender Equity in terms of education can be realized if quality education is made the priority. And certainly the State Government will be the most important stakeholder in the road to realize this dream.

Hypotheses :

1. Modification in the State Educational policies serves the object of equality for women and their empowerment.
2. Prevalent social conditions have been major stumbling blocks in the road to achieve education.

Objectives :

1. To find out whether Education policies in Bihar have significantly contributed to Women's Empowerment.
2. To identify whether the policies are implemented effectively at the grassroots level.
3. To assess whether these policies have resulted in quality education.

Methodology :

It was an empirical study based on both Primary and Secondary methods.

Primary method included interview with Mr. Amarjeet Sinha, Principal Secretary, Department of Education, Government of Bihar and interview of 50 women respondents. Secondary method included interpretation of data available from BEPC, Inter council, Mahila Samakhya and Department of HRD, Secretariat, Bihar.

- **Area of study :** Bailey Road in Patna District.

- **Sample size and Sampling Method :** 50 Women respondents and method adopted was purposive cum Incidental sampling .
 - **Tools and Techniques for data collection :** Administration of Questionnaire to the selected sample.
 - **Method of Data Analysis :** Quantitative analysis with the help of pie charts.
12. Do you believe that economic problems obstruct women education?
 13. Do you agree that very less number of girls opt for higher studies in Bihar?
 14. Do you think that value education lacks in our curriculum?
 15. Should women's studies be included as a subject in the educational system in Bihar?

Questionnaire :

1. Are women discriminated in our society?
2. Is education a tool for women empowerment?
3. Is there any gap between male- female literacy ratio in Bihar?
4. Is Bihar Government taking steps to ensure women empowerment through education?
5. Are you aware of any schemes of Bihar Government related to Women Education?
6. Do you think these schemes are properly implemented?
7. Have the policies of State Government reduced the enrolment gap between girls and boys?
8. Have such policies increased a sense of security among parents with respect to their girl child?
9. Is the dropout of girl student a frequent phenomenon in Bihar?
10. Do you think that lack of basic facilities like sanitation, drinking water etc. are a cause for low enrolment and dropouts among girls?
11. Are the policies of state for education of women more urban oriented?

Results and Discussion :

Through the empirical study view of women respondents were taken into consideration. Though our Schedule comprised of 15 questions but our findings revolved around 5 major questions.

Majority of our respondents accepted the fact that women are discriminated in our society due to prevalent socio-cultural and economic conditions.

We analyzed the view of our respondents on the fact that education is a tool for empowerment and has a major role to play in their holistic development. Majority of them accepted this notion whereas there were few who were unaware of the real meaning of the term empowerment and its urgency.

During our whole research, our main motive was to know the schemes of Bihar government for women education and assess its impact, so some space needs to be devoted to it. Only a small fraction of about 20% were satisfied with the implementation of the schemes, 60% believe that there were deficiencies like corruption, bureaucratic delays which prevented the policies to reach the needy.

We were inquisitive to know the response of our respondents on the question whether the governmental policies have reduced the enrolment gap between girls and boys. 52% of women gave answer in favour of it. They particularly gave credit

to some specific policies like Mukhymantri Balika Poshak Yojna, Mukhymantri Balika Cycle Yojana, etc. However 42% were not very positive and stressed that government policies have no impact in reducing enrolment gap as the policies have not trickled down to the grassroots level.

Data available showed that dropout was still a major problem in Bihar. Our respondents blamed the prevailing feudal outlook, attitudinal barriers, structural rigidity as the major reasons behind this and also recommended that government should address these issues and formulate needed measures to combat it.

Besides these, we also found that education is indeed a major source of empowerment of women but the present educational system is not democratized which is a major concern. Education for women is exclusively not given much importance in society of Bihar and that is why Gender Parity Index of Bihar is not at par with other developing states of India and hence, it a matter of concern for all of us.

Another important issue that we found prevalent was that there was lack of awareness among the parents regarding the provisions of policies of state government and reluctance to avail the schemes as they don't realize the importance of the schemes, for example many were reluctant to send their daughters to school with a fear that it would increase their burden. They were completely unaware of the fact that state government tries to make girl education almost free and has legislated all its policies with this aim and so they would not have to bear any economic crises. Mindset a requires positive change.

There was poor attendance of both students and teachers and it was also found that even the teachers present did not perform their duties ardently and thus there was a huge shortage of

quality education which government must further consider.

Lack of adequate infrastructure facilities, sanitation and hygiene. The number of classrooms are not available as per requirement, classrooms are dingy, lack of pure water and food provided by government is not up to the mark, brokers mint money by giving food of low standard and at times children become prey to it. Unfortunately, time and again we got the view of respondents that children get sick with the intake of food provided by schools.

The condition of higher education of girls is in dire straits and the state government has not paid much attention to the issue. There exist very few number of colleges for education of women that satisfy the required criteria of quality education. State government have also taken very few initiatives in this regard.

Some policies like Mukhymantri Balika Cycle Yojana and Mukhymantri Poshak Yojna are very popular among the common people.

Value education is not given due importance in the curriculum, though respondents strongly affirmed that it is a must criteria for holistic development of man/woman. The flaw requires quick rectification. This remedy will definitely boost the morale of parents, teachers, students and particularly girl child.

Conclusion :

Gender inequality is the result of age old socialization process. This is an universal phenomena, with varying degrees. Survival is not the issue, it is the question of participation and success of women. The work focused on paving ways to imbibe leadership skills among women. To save her from marginalization and enable her to march at par with men. The yardstick was educational attainment. Empowerment through education has been pondered upon with special

reference to Bihar Government's affirmative policies, to enhance self-awareness, self-regulation and motivation of women. This was made with the objective of enhancing the self-esteem of women breaking Sexism. Education definitely leads to holistic development of personality. But the crux of the problems is the effective implementation at the grassroots level and to target the accurate beneficiaries. An effective implementation can be ensured with the help of private sector. In a state like Bihar, which possesses a huge population it becomes difficult for the governmental departments, to single handedly implement the policies, at such a large scale. Hence, an urgent replacement of bureaucratic controls in education by Public-Private Partnership is the need of the hour. An outsourcing of the functions to the Private sector will definitely serve the cause. Moreover, there is also an urgent need to create awareness among the masses about the provisions of the policies so that the needy are truly aware of the policies formulated for them. A positive effort by the media and the civil society can be the most effective in this regard.

Corruption is probably an issue, which has corroded the Indian society most shoddily. It has destroyed the system from within; the proper implementation of the educational policies in the state is no exception. The spectre of venality can be checked through the setting of proper Monitoring Committees for all the major policies. Further, tracking of girls who are the most needy will prove beneficial. Distribution of kind instead of cash can also serve the purpose, as it will ensure that beneficiaries are actually benefited and the grants are not misused.

Nothing can be more hazardous and dangerous than a morally corrupt society. The prevalent social evils serve as the greatest hurdle

for girls in the way to achieve education. The state government should legislate policies, keeping in mind these evils and the measures to check them. Holistic environment for girls at home, in schools, colleges or more broadly in the society as a whole is the demand of the time. Further, the future generation should be inculcated with higher values. For this, the inclusion of value education and women's studies in the curriculum is required.

Within the framework of a democratic polity, our laws, developmental policies, plans and programmes have aimed at women's advancement in different spheres. There is definitely a lot of improvement, which is reflecting, yet a lot remains to be done. Only by assessing the situation followed by an intelligent legislation and implementation of policies, the dream of inclusion of all women in the orbit of fundamental right to learn and grow will be achieved.

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