



## Role of education for empowerment of women in Kashmir

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** The main purpose of the study was to assess the Role of Education for Empowerment of Women in Kashmir.

**Objectives:** 1. To study the different problems faced by women in Kashmir. 2. To study the education status of women in Kashmir. 3. To study the role of education for empower of women in Kashmir.

**Sample** Sixty women have been selected randomly from all the 10 districts of Kashmir valley. A self-constructed questionnaire was employed to get the relevant data.

**Tool:** A self-constructed Questionnaire was employed. 1) 100% women feel that education has a very great role. 2) 100% women are of the opinion that education is very necessary for both boys and girls. 3) 100% women are of the opinion that education makes women powerful and independent. 4) Only 63.33% women know about women empowerment. 5) The study reveals that 100% women feel that education plays a great role in empowering women. 6) Only 90% women know about their rights. 7) 96.66% women feel that education plays a role to securing women rights. 8) 100% women believe that an educated women is empowered. 9) 73% women feel that educated women manage her family well than uneducated. 10) 93% women feel that uneducated women cannot guide her family properly. 11) 100% women are of the opinion that educated women have high status in the society. 12) Only 40% women are of the opinion that educated women are satisfied with their rights. 13) 100% women give message spread education to everyone.

**Keywords:** role of education, empowerment women and Kashmir

### Introduction

Empowerment of women, also called gender empowerment, has become a significant topic of discussion in regard to development and economy. Entire nations, business, communities and groups can benefit from the implementation of programs and policies that adopt the notion of women empowerment. Empowerment is one of the main procedural concerns when addressing human rights and development and capabilities Approach. The millennium Development Goals and other credible approaches/goals point to empowerment and participation as a necessary step if a country is to overcome the obstacles associated with poverty and development. One way to deploy the empowerment of women is through land rights. Land rights offer a key way to economically empower women, giving them the confidence they need to tackle gender inequalities. Having a right to their land gives women a sort of bargaining power that they wouldn't normally have, in turn; they gain the ability to assert themselves in various aspects of their life, both inside and outside the home. Another way to provide women empowerment is to allocate responsibilities to them that normally belong to men. When women have economic empowerment, it is a way for others to see them as equal members of society. Through this, they achieve more self-respect and confidence by their contributions their, they communities. Simply including women as a part of a community can have sweeping positive effects. In a study conducted by Bina Agarwal, women were given a place in a forest conservation group. Not only did this drive up the

efficiency of the group, but the women gained incredible self-esteem while others including men, viewed them with more respect participation, which can be seen and gained in variety of ways, has been argued to be the most beneficial form of gender empowerment. Political participation, be it the ability to vote and opinion, or the ability to run for office with a fair chance of being elected, plays a huge role in the empowerment of peoples. However is not limited to the realm of politics. It can include participation. When women have the agency to do what she wants, a higher equality between men and women is established. It is argued that microcredit also offers a way to provide empowerment for women. Government organizations and individuals have caught hold of the lure of microfinance. They hope the lending money and credit allows women to function in business and society, which in turn empowers them to do more in their communities. One of the primary goals in the foundation of microfinance was women empowerment. Loans with low interest rates are given to women in developing communities in hopes that they can start a small business and provide for her family. It should be said, however, that the success and efficiency of microcredit and microloans is controversial and debated.

Women play a crucial role in the fight against extreme poverty and hunger. Girls and women lag far behind boys and men in progress towards achieving universal basic education. No progress at all can be made in the fight against HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other endemic diseases, unless women are included and without the participation of women, it will be

impossible to ensure environmental sustainability. Women normally have to work harder than men, especially in the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. They maintain traditional vegetable gardens raise domestic animals, and do the farming. They are responsible for child rearing, feeding their families, doing the domestic chores, collecting the fire wood and fetching water. They supervise the education of their children and nurse them back to health when they get sick. They guarantee domestic stability taking on any work they can get to secure the family income, more often than not in the formal sector and without the benefit of social security. They do sewing, cooking, hairdressing, or house cleaning, produce market processed agricultural products and handicrafts. More and more they are finding work in clerical and sectarian occupations or in the sector.

But despite the important role they play for family and society, in all essential areas of life women are generally at a significant disadvantage as compared to men, whether in terms of education, income, partner choice, inheritance laws, property rights, decision-making processes, community organization, or access to leadership positions in education, business or politics. The goal of gender equality is far from being achieved both in the public mind as well as in reality. Work with and for women in the interest of 'women's empowerment' will continue to be one of the main task of adult education for a long time to come. The task is difficult one, considering that it involves the calling into question and changing of socio-cultural behavior patterns and rules. The advantage is that all over the world, women play a highly active role in the continuing education sector.

It will take more than just education and training measures, however, to empower women to overcome their education deficits and to develop the self-confidence and initiative they need to take action and assume new roles in society. Before women can gain status with men, it will be necessary to secure equal rights on the political and legal plane. This makes women specific education a political task as well as an educational one. Besides working directly with women, adult educators are called upon to intervene with decision makers on the national and global level. One such advocacy initiative has been launched by a group of women's organizations and networks which have joined together to form the "Women and Gender Constituency". Explaining their purpose as follows: "We seek to ensure the representation of women's voices, experiences, needs and capacities, as women are still underrepresented in planning and decision making at all levels, including parties and observers organizations to the UNFCCC", this network participates at all international conferences in order to influence and monitor the adoption of resolutions.

Empowerment of women is the process of guarding them against all forms of violence. Kofi Annan takes violence against women as the most shameful of women rights violation. To him, "violence against women takes various forms such as: domestic violence, trafficking in women, forced prostitution and violence in armed conflict such as murder and systematic rape and honor killings, dowry related violence, female infanticide female genital mutilation and other harmful practices and traditions". Women empowerment

involves the building up of a society, a political environment, wherein women can breathe without the fear of oppression, exploitation, apprehension, discriminate and the general feeling of persecution which goes with being women in a traditionally male dominated structure.

The best way of empowerment is perhaps through inducting women in the mainstream of development. Women empowerment will be real and effective only when they are endowed income and property so that they may stand on their feet and build up their identity in the society. Development warrants the eradication of the feeling of dominance and dependence of who so ever is associated with inferior economic status. Development effectiveness is an act of transformation to end violence, poverty and discrimination. Economic independence is the basic premise behind empowerment through development. While women participation in the development process provides them employment opportunity and get out of the clutches of poverty, malnutrition, illiteracy etc, economic independence imbibes confidence and the strength to stand up and think about their future. Employment generating schemes in rural areas providing preferential treatment in poor women workers may prove to be good move in this direction, but it needs a definite preconceived development strategies and pattern. Growth itself does not guarantee gender equality and women empowerment. A preconceived development strategy studded with emphasis on employment, education, health, nutrition, and sanitation etc, critical elements that contribute to the equality of human life, more so in the rural sector may prove to be effective in the long run to raise the status of women but in men dominated societies with social and political institutions biased in favor of gender discrimination, may not prove to be effective enough to take them out of the downward gravitational pull. Economic empowerment can be a handy tool in as much as enabling women to lead a graceful existence in her family and society may not prove too potent a weapon in the larger more grim battle against social, economic and political oppression, which warrants collective strength emanates from political participation.

Various studies have been carried out from time to time women in panchayat Raj: grass root democracy in India, experiences from Malgudi, Purnimass and Vinod Vyasulu (1999), women's political participation issues and challenges, (2005) Farzana Bari, Baseline report-women and political participation in India (Shanta Mohan *et,al*) Ruma Banerjee's study, women Panchayat Raj: a study in West Bengal (1995). The anatomy of Gram Panchayat's: a study of Dharwal district (2000) Jayasimha K. *et,al* though they continue to be inspirational landmarks, U. P. and Bihar still classify as virgin territory to the best of my knowledge not many meaningful ventures along similar lines have been carried out in these states and considering the pathetically glaring gender divide coupled with innumerable gross instances of women rights violation of all kinds and intensities in these states, the need for the present study becomes even more marked.

The constitution of India is based on the principles of equality. It prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex and place of birth. It envisages political equality for men and women but no concrete step was taken by the Government

before 1993. The committees on the status of women in India 1974 observed that the right guaranteed by the constitution has helped to build an illusion of equality and power which is frequently used as an argument to resist protective and accelerative measures to enable women to achieve their just and equal position in the society. It was only in 1994 that the government of India acknowledge the recommendations of the committee for the status of women report 1974, noting the low participation of women in politic, eyeing the effective implementation of developmental and poverty alleviation schemes from the grass root level and also drawing inspiration from the experience of Karnataka (which provided reservation for women in the three tier Panchayat Raj system in 1983) brought 73<sup>rd</sup> constitutional Amendment act in the year 1999 introducing not less than 33 % reservation for women in the Panchayat Raj institutions in rural areas. Undoubtedly it is a landmark legislative step in the direction of empowerment of women. With the passing of 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Indian Federal system has become a three tier federal structure: the union government at the apex and local self-government- Nagar nigam (urban) and panchayats (rural) at the lowest strata with the states crucially placed at the middle. It is acknowledged that the local self-government is an effective method of governing as well as designing and implementing the development schemes at the grass root level. We are here concerned with local self-government in the rural areas popularly known as Panchayat Raj institutions and these effectively come under the control of state government. In the rural areas a three tier structure has been adopted.

1. Gram Panchayat consisting of a village having a population of not less than 5000 and not more than 7000 and the geographical distance of an area within a radius of five kilometers from the centre.
2. Block (Taluk) panchayat for every block.
3. Zilla panchayat for every district.

With the 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment the reservation system has been put into practice. It provides for one third of total constituencies to be reserved for women. Because of the adoption of the policy of rotation, reserved constituencies differ each election which implies that a constituency which is a reserve constituency this year may well be a general constituency in the next term. The elected representatives continue to hold office for a period of 5 years.

With the introduction of reservation or quota system in the Panchayat Raj institutions a great beginning has been made in the direction of legislative empowerment of women and it is hoped that along with women's empowerment through collective voicing and participation in the development stream, it should go a long way in the real empowerment of women.

Advancing gender equality, equity and the empowerment of women, and the elimination of all kinds of violence against women and ensuring women's ability to control their own fertility, are cornerstones of population and development related programmes, "according to principle 4 of the ICPD Program of Action. "The Human Rights of women and the girl child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of the human right".

The declaration programme of action of the world Summit for

social Development, held in Copenhagen in March 1995, called for equal educational and work opportunities for women.

The platform of Action of the 4<sup>th</sup> world Conference on women held in Beijing in September 1995 also called for universal access to quality health services by 2015 equal land, credit and employment access to women; the establishment of effective personal and political rights; and the education of girls and young women as the key intervention for the empowerment of women.

In 1997, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights reiterated that women's rights are fundamental human rights. Women's social status and access to education, employment and health care are closely linked to economic development. Women in many countries still lack the right to own land, to inherit property or to have access to credit; girls are denied to schooling, female workers routinely face job discrimination; and women's sexual and reproductive health needs are widely neglected. Women often face legal and institutional barriers to economic activity outside the home, including laws or customs that deny them the right to own land, inherit property, establish credit or move up in their field of work.

Enhancement of their productive roles is especially important for women whose status in society has been dependent solely on their productive capabilities. In the absence of other sources of status, a women's ability to decide about a marriage partner or family size is limited. This is true for women in all countries. Education is a crucial ingredient in the empowerment process. Of the 960 million illiterate adult in the world, two third are female. The ICPD Programme of Action calls for universal enrolment in primary school by the year 2015, a time line influenced by the magnitude of the task. Despite progress in expanding access to primary to education throughout the world, an estimated 130 million children including 90 million girls are not enrolled in primary school. And while enrollment in primary and secondary school total nearly 900 million children worldwide, there are about 85 million fewer girls than boys enrolled.

The level of education achieved by women is also strongly associated with both lower infant mortality and lower fertility. In, a poorer country where access to health care is often limited, each additional year of schooling is associated with a 5-10 % decline in child mortality. And the impact of women's educational attainment on family size is second only to that of access to family planning services. In combination, high levels of education and access to family planning services translate into both lower infant mortality and lower fertility.

Gender discrimination often begins long before a girl enters a school. Deep-rooted traditions of son preference can result in both passive and active neglect. A girl may be given less food than her brothers, be less likely to see a doctor when ill or may be prevented from attending school in order to help with household chores and child care. Access to new technologies is compounding the problem of some preference in some countries, where sex-selective abortion is a growing problem.

Women had played a great role in the development of the state J & K. But unfortunately the status of women has degraded. The entire arena of the Educational spectrum are of the

opinion that education has great role to play for the empowerment of women. For this state very few studies have been conducted so far where role of education has been highlighted. Therefore to fill this gap the investigator has taken up this study.

**Statement of the Problem**

“Role of Education for Empowerment of Women in Kashmir”.

**Objectives**

1. To study the different problems faced by women in Kashmir.
2. To study the education status of women in Kashmir.
3. To study the role of education fro empower of women in Kashmir.

**Operational Definitions of the terms**

**Education**

Education is helping the growing soul to draw out that is in itself which is best and making it perfect for a noble use.

Education means an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man body, mind and spirit”. M. K. Gandhi

**Women**

An adult human female grows into women.

**Kashmir**

Kashmir is a region in the northern India. The valley of Kashmir is known all over the world for its beauty and charm. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has rightly said that, “if there is paradise on earth it is this, it is this, it is this”.

**Sample**

Sixty women have been selected randomly from all the 10 districts of Kashmir valley. A self-constructed questionnaire was employed to get the relevant data.

**Tool**

A self-constructed Questionnaire was employed.

**Description of the Tool**

The self-constructed Questionnaire consists of 14 questions.

**Table 1:** Table showing the extent of respondents feeling that education can change the society. Literate= 15 Illiterate= 15

Category of Respondent	Yes	No	Can't say
Literate	15 100%	-	-
Illiterate	15 100%	-	-
Total	100%		

The above table shows the opinion of respondents regarding the role of education for social change. The table also reflects that 100% of literate women feel that education has a role to play.

The table also reflects that 100% of illiterate women feel the same.

The above table also shows the 100% of women feel that

education can change the society.

**Table 2:** Table showing the extent of respondents feeling that education is necessary for a person

Category of Respondent	Yes	No	Can't say
Literate	15 100%	-	-
Illiterate	15 100%	-	-
Total	100%		

The above table shows the opinion of respondents regarding the importance of education in a person’s life. The table also reflects that 100% of literate women feel that education is very important for a person. The table also reflects that 100% of illiterate women feel the same. The above table shows that in total 100% women are of the opinion that education is necessary for both boys and girls.

**Table 3:** Table showing the extent of respondents feeling that education is necessary for a girl

Category of Respondent	Yes	No	Can't say
Literate	15 100%	-	-
Illiterate	15 100%	-	-
Total	100%		

The above table shows the opinion of respondents regarding is education necessary for girls. The table also reflects that 100% of literate women feel that education is necessary for girl because education of a girl means education of the whole nation. The table also reflects that 100% of illiterate women feel the same. The above table shows that in total 100% women are of the opinion that education is necessary for a girl.

**Table 4:** Table showing the extent of respondents feeling that education give her power to know their rights.

Category of Respondent	Yes	No	Can't say
Literate	15 100%	-	-
Illiterate	15 100%	-	-
Total	100%		

The above table shows the opinion of respondents regarding why education is necessary for girls. The table reveals that 100% of literate women feel that education give her power and make her independent and strong. The table also reflects that 100% of illiterate women feel the same. The above table shows that in total 100% women are of the opinion that education makes a women powerful and independent.

**Table 5:** Table showing the extent of respondents knows about women empowerment.

Category of Respondent	Yes	No	Can't say
Literate	15 100%	-	-
Illiterate	04 26.66%	-	73.33%
Total	63.33%		

The above table shows the opinion of respondents regarding empowerment of women. The table reveals that 100% of literate women know about women empowerment. The table also reflects that 26.66% of illiterate women know about women empowerment. The above table shows that in total 63.33% women know about women empowerment.

**Table 6:** Table showing the extent of respondents feeling that education plays a great role in empowering women.

Category of Respondent	Yes	No	Can't say
Literate	15 100%	-	-
Illiterate	15 100%	-	-
Total	100%		

The above table shows the opinion of respondents regarding role of education in women empowerment. The table reveals that 100% of literate women know about role of education in empowering women. The table also reflects that 100% illiterate women know the same. The above table shows that in total 100% women know that education play a great role in empowering women.

**Table 7:** Table showing the extent of respondents know what are the rights of women

Category of Respondent	Yes	No	Can't say
Literate	15 100%	-	-
Illiterate	12 80%	3 20%	-
Total	90%		

The above table shows the opinion of respondents regarding rights of women. The table reveals that 100% literate women know what the rights of women are. The table also reflects that 80% illiterate women know the right of women while as 20% did not know. The above table shows that in total 90% women know about the right of women.

**Table 8:** Table showing the extent of respondents feeling that education is very helpful in securing women rights

Category of Respondent	Yes	No	Can't say
Literate	15 100%	-	-
Illiterate	14 99.33%	-	16.66%
Total	96.66%		

The above table shows the opinion of respondents regarding is education helpful in securing women rights. The table reveals that 100% of literate women say yes and also 99.33% of illiterate women are in favor and 6.66% of illiterate women cannot say anything. The above table shows that in total 96.66% women feel that education is very helpful in securing women's rights.

**Table 9:** Table showing the extent of respondents feel that there is difference between educated and uneducated

Opinion	No. of Respondents
Both look different	6 23.33%
Literate women has the ability to understand everything easily	2 6.66%
Educated women differentiated between good and bad	3 10%
Educated women can solve every problem	1 3.33%
Educated women manage every situation nicely	2 6.66%
Educated women is intelligent than uneducated women	2 6.66%
Uneducated women faces difficulties in every field	1 3.33%
Educated women is broad minded	1 3.33%
Educated women knows her rights	3 10%
Educated women is empowered	1 3.33%
Educated women is free than uneducated women	1 3.33%
Educated women has developed mental horizon	1 3.33%
Uneducated are not civilized	1 3.33%
Educated women knows basic values	1 3.33%
Uneducated women is narrow minded	1 3.33%
Both are different in their thinking way and behaviour	1 3.33%
Educated women educate whole society	1 3.33%
Total	T

Percentage is given in parenthesis. The above table shows the opinion of respondents regarding difference between educated and uneducated women. The table reveals that 100% of literate as well as illiterate women are of the same opinion that there is difference between them. The above table shows that in total 100% women are of the opinion that an educated women is empowered.

**Table 10:** Table showing the extent of respondents feel that uneducated women can change her family and some respondents feel that uneducated women cannot

Category of Respondent	Yes	No	Can't say
Literate	15 100%	-	-
Illiterate	7 46.66%	8 53.33%	-
Total	73%		

The above table shows the opinion of respondents regarding does educated women manage her family well than uneducated women. The table reveals that 100% of literate women say educated women say that educated women manage her family well. The above table also reveals that 46.66% of illiterate women say yes and 53.33% say no. The above table shows that in total 73% women feel that an educated women manages her family well than uneducated women.

**Table 11:** Table showing the extent of respondents feel that uneducated women cannot guide her family properly

Category of Respondent	Yes	No	Can't say
Literate	15 100%	-	-
Illiterate	13 86.66%	2 13.33%	-
Total	93%		

The above table shows the opinion of respondents cannot an uneducated women guide her family properly. The table reveals that 100% of literate women say uneducated women cannot guide her family properly and 86.66% of illiterate women feel the same. The above table also reveals that 13.33% say no. The above table shows that in total 93% women feel that an uneducated women cannot guide her family properly.

**Table 12:** Table showing the extent of respondents feel that there is high status of educated women in the society

Opinion	No. of Respondents
Educated women have very high status in the society	27 90%
It depends on what type of society she lives in	1 3.33%
Education hardly determines her status	1 3.33%
In Kashmir girls exploited	1 3.33%
Total	100%

The above table shows the opinion of respondents regarding status of educated women. The table reveals that 90% of literate as well as illiterate women are of the opinion that educated women have high status in the society but 9.99% of literate as well as illiterate have different opinion. The table shows that in total 100% women are of the opinion that educated women have high status in the society.

**Table 13:** Table showing the extent of respondents feel that some women are satisfied with their right and some not.

Category of Respondent	Yes	No	Can't say
Literate	08 53.33%	5 33.33%	-
Illiterate	04 26.66%	5 33.33%	4 26.66%
Total	40%		

The above table shows the opinion of respondents regarding is

women satisfied with her rights as given by the society. The table reveals that 53.33% of literate women say yes and 33.33% say no. The above table also reveals that 13.33% say no. The above table also reveals that 26.66% of illiterate women say yes and 33.33 % say no. Then table also shows that 26.66% of illiterate women did not know. The above table shows that in total 40% women satisfy with her rights.

**Table 14:** Table showing the extent of respondents feel that education is must

Opinions	No. of Respondents
We should give education to women	85 26.66%
Women should be fully respected	4 13.33%
We must guide our girls properly	1 3.33%
Spread education	13 43.33%
Provide all rights to a women	4 13.33%
Total	100%

**Percentage is given in parenthesis**

The above table shows the opinion of respondents regarding education. The table reveals that 26.66% give message to the society that provide education to girls 13.33% give message that women should be respected, 3.33% give message that we must guide our girls properly. 43.44% of women literate as well as illiterate women are of the opinion to spread education. The table also reveals that 13.33% of literate as well as illiterate women's is to provide all rights to her. The above table shows that in total 100% women give message to the society that provides education to girls

**Major Findings**

1. 100% women feel that education has a very great role.
2. 100% women are of the opinion that education is very necessary for both boys and girls.
3. 100% women are of the opinion that education makes women powerful and independent.
4. Only 63.33% women know about women empowerment.
5. The study reveals that 100% women feel that education plays a great role in empowering a women.
6. Only 90% women know about their rights.
7. 96.66% women feel that education plays a role to securing women rights.
8. 100% women believe that an educated women is empowered.
9. 73% women feel that educated women manage her family well than uneducated.
10. 93% women feel that uneducated women cannot guide her family properly.
11. 100% women are of the opinion that educated women have high status in the society.
12. Only 40% women are of the opinion that educated women are satisfied with their rights.
13. 100% women give message spread education to everyone.

### **Suggestions**

The further study may be conducted in the following areas:

1. Role of education for women's rights.
2. Empowerment of women in rural and urban areas.
3. Role of education for removing disparity.
4. Social justice and role of education.
5. Access to education for women.

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