

# THE ROLE OF MATHEMATICS EDUCATION IN WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

**MEENA KUMARI GURJAR**

Assistant Professor, Department of Mathematics and Statistics, Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India.

Received: November 17, 2018

Accepted: December 23, 2018

## ABSTRACT

*In this paper, we focused on the concept of women empowerment, "how women can be empowered mathematically". By women empowerment would be able to develop self-esteem, confidence, realize their potential and enhance their collective bargaining power. Women's empowerment can be viewed as a continuum of several interrelated and mutually reinforcing components. The present paper shares the experiences of an initiative taken towards developing skills among the women's through our intellectual traditions of Mathematics.*

## Keywords:

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Indian Constitution in its fundamental rights has provisions for equality, social justice and protection of women. These goals are yet to be realized. Still women continue to be discriminated, exploited and exposed to inequalities at various levels. Inadequate education and skills development keep economies trapped in a vicious circle of low education, low productivity and low income. Skills development is central to improving productivity. Women self-help groups are at present playing a vital role in the personality and skill development of women in India. Kudumbasree project was started in Kerala in 1998. Women empowerment is one of the important objectives of Kudumbasree along with poverty eradication. The aim of the Kudumbashree scheme is to improve the standard of living of poor women in rural areas by setting up micro-credit and productive enterprises. It opened a new string of expected events in our development history Kudumbasree is the poverty eradication mission of the state of Kerala. It is a community based self help initiative involving poor women. Kudumbashree was conceived as a joint programme of the Government of Kerala and NABARD implemented through Community Development Societies of Poor Women, serving as the community wing of Local Governments.

## 2. THE CONCEPT OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment means moving from position of enforced powerlessness to one of power. It can range from personal empowerment that can exist within the existing social order. Thus this kind of empowerment would correspond to the right to make one's own choices to increase. Women empowerment is the process by which women gain greater share of control over resources – maternal, human and intellectual knowledge, information, ideas and financial resources 1-access to money and control over decision – making in the home, community, society and nation, and to gain "power". True women empowerment takes place when women challenge the existing norms and culture, to effectively improve their well being. In the feminist paradigm, empowerment goes beyond economic betterment and well-being, to strategic gender interest. The empowerment of women is one of the central issues in the process of development of countries all over the world. In fact it is a global issue, that is why in September 2000 the millennium development goals (MDGs) was signed up at the United Nations in which the third goals was "promote gender equity and empower women." The issue of gender equality and women empowerment are discussed in world conferences, national and international conferences, etc. In order to give a fillip to empowerment of women, appropriate institutional mechanisms and interventions have been consciously built into the development design; separate institutions for women and child development, departments at the central and state levels, creations of the National Commission for women and also state commission for women in several states are some of the important developments for the betterment and prosperity of women. In fact the government of India declared 2001 as the year of "Women's Empowerment". The year 1975 was proclaimed the international women's year by the United Nations General Assembly. The year was a turning point in that it put women's issues on the agenda. The United Nations decade for women (1979-85) was a world – wide effort to examine the state and rights of women and to bring women into decision making at all level. In 1979, the General Assembly adopted the convention on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination

against women, which entered into force in 1981 and set an international standard for what was meant by equality between women and men. Nations like Egypt, the United State of America and the United Kingdom signed the convention on 16 July 1980, 17 July 1980 and 22 July 1981 respectively. The fourth world congress on women, Platform for Action, held in Beijing in 1995 aimed at accelerating the implementation of Nairobi forward – looking strategies for the advancement of women, aimed at removing all the obstacles to women's active participation in all areas of public and private life through full and equal share in economic, social, cultural, and political decision- making. In January 1995, the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Welfare was created by the federal government. The aim had been to ensure effective implementation and mobilization of women and children to be supported for primary health care and other related issues that are peculiar to women and also to ensure their greater participation in national development as well as empower them politically, socially, and otherwise.

### 3. HOW WOMEN CAN BE EMPOWERED MATHEMATICALLY

Women's empowerment is the process of empowering women. Empowerment can be defined in many ways, however, when talking about women's empowerment, empowerment means accepting and allowing people (women) who are on the outside of the decision-making process into it. Women's empowerment is the most crucial point to be noted for the overall development of a country. Empowerment is the process that creates power in individuals over their own lives, society and in their communities. Empowerment includes that the action of raising the status of women through education, raising awareness, literacy, and training and also give training related to defense yourself. Women's empowerment is all about equipping and allowing women to make life-determining decisions through the different problems in society. Women empowerment can be measured through the [Gender Empowerment Measure](#) (GEM), which shows women's participation in a given nation, both politically and economically. GEM is calculated by tracking "the share of seats in [parliament](#) held by women; of female legislators, senior officials and managers; and of female profession and technical workers; and the [gender disparity](#) in earned income, reflecting economic independence". It then ranks countries given this information. Other measures that take into account the importance of female participation and equality include: the [Gender Parity Index](#) or the [Gender-related Development Index](#) (GDI). Many factors are known to hinder the empowerment of women generally, particularly in mathematics. Among them include culture, ignorance, poverty, gender discrimination, high incidence of crime etc. This notwithstanding, there are measures Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women. It is known that every development relies on science and technological careers, which cannot be successful without mathematics yet greater population (women), fear this queen of science. It means that something must be done to really encourage girls and women to be empowered mathematically if promotion of gender equality and women empowerment should be achieved. Reduce child mortality, Improve maternal health, Combat HIV(AIDS), Malaria, and other Diseases. When one talks about child mortality, maternal health, HIV/ AIDS, Malaria and other diseases women are more affected and involved. Mathematical knowledge will assist in reducing these health matters especially if the women who are affected and involved more are mathematically inclined. In fact a scientific nation has a lot to achieve, that is why Mangena (2006) states, "we need to be a nation of scientist not only because we are competing with other nations, but more importantly, because we need to be a nation of scientists so that we can fight enemies such as poverty, infectious diseases like HIV and AIDS, Malaria, or Tuberculosis, and lifestyle related illness such as malnutrition, obesity and diabetes. We need science to calculate and mitigate the effects of global warming, severe storms, over fishing pollution and a host of other problems.

### 4. CONCLUSION

The roles of mathematics and women in any developing any nation, this paper strongly opined that empowering women mathematically is very vital for the attainment of MDGs. To be able to achieve this, the following areas need to be seriously looked into - Women to be integrated in all aspects of the development process - Establishment of international network of women scientists and mathematicians - Promote the education of girls and women of all ages in science, technology and mathematics (STM). This can be done through free education, awards and scholarship to women - Promote knowledge and sponsor research on the role of women (especially mathematics based) - Increase women's share of seats in national parliament and local government bodies to ensure that they can participate in decision- making on equal footing with men - Invest in infrastructure to reduce girls and women's time burdens - More awareness to be created. When the aforementioned issues and their likes are dealt with, it will help in empowering women mathematically.

## 5. REFERENCE

1. Egunjobi, I (2005). Women Empowerment Perspective and Prospects. AdoEkiti Fountain Newspaper and Publishing Co Ltd.
2. Eze, J. E (2009). Mathematics Education and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)A paper presented at 46th Annual conference of Mathematical Association of Nigeria (MAN).
3. Gilmer, G.F & Milwaukee, M.T (2001). Ethno mathematics. An African American Perspective on Developing Women in Mathematics.
4. International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW) 2005 toward Achieving Gender Equality and Empowering Women.
5. JAMB (2006). Total University Students Enrolments for 2004 \2005.
6. Kenneth Kalyani, Seena P.C. (2012). Socio-economic Changes of Women through Kudumbasree– A Study from Puthenvelikkara (Gp) of Kerala State, India, International Research Journal of Social Sciences. 1(2), 1-7.
7. Kochurani, Joseph. Women Empowerment a Conceptual Analysis; Vimala Books and Publications, Kanjirappally. (2005).
8. Krieg, J. M. (2004). Student gender and teacher gender: what is the impact on high stack test scores? The African symposium, An On-line Educational Research J., 4(2), 68-87.
9. Meier, K. J. (2004). Girls' Math's Scores could indicate successes and aspirations. The African symposium. Educational Research Journal. 4 (2), 60-67.
10. Onuebunwa, B. N (2003). Low Attainment Girl – Child Functional Education Implication for UBE and Basic Family Health in Education and Annual book Reading Philosophy of Education Association of Nigeria.
11. UNESCO (1996). The Role of Women in Basic Science. UNESCO World Report.
12. Venugopalan K.(2014) Influence of Kudumbasree on Women Empowerment – a Study, IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM). 16 (10) Ver. III , 35-44.