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Issues and Challenges of young female empowerment and social mobility: Special reference to Indian and Sri Lankan undergraduates

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Abstract

This study has been conducted in order to identify the women issues and challenges for women in 21st empowerment century in India and Sri Lanka, for social mobility. Therefore, the present study had two main research objectives such as to identify the threats and challenges faced by young women for their educational development in socio- cultural contexts of both countries and to identify the threats and challenges face by young women from their family circle social mobility. This is qualitative research. The data has been collected from young female undergraduates from both countries. The data gathered through focus group discussed. Three focus group discussions conducted from each country with including 10 participants in one group. The focus group formed as per purposive sampling strategy. The participants are from government universities in both countries. The undergraduate students are basically coming from middle/lower income families. The present study indicated common issues and challenges. Therefore, limiting the freedom mentally and physically from the family, gender-based discriminations, stereotype thinking of women role in family, female to female judgment and lack of support among women social bullying for out of frame thinking were identified as common issues and challenges for women in both countries. Further specially Sri Lankan focus group mentioned that less guidance for career development in Sri Lankan females and specially for Indian female it was the family pressure for marriage. Therefore, the study identified family support and good communication with daughters. That they will be empowered and identify themselves more positively.

Keywords: Women Empowerment, Social mobility, Young Female

Introduction

India and Sri Lanka, while sharing some similarities in terms of cultural and historical context, face unique issues and challenges that hinder women's advancement in society.

Women play a role in the domestic sphere as housewives and also have a big role in the public sphere. Women become strat egic actors in the community (public), especially in socioecon omic development. This research has been conducted in order to identify the issues and challenges of the undergraduate female face in India and Sri Lanka in terms of empowerment and social mobility. Even though many researchers have notified main challenges face by the women specially in south Asian context the issues are yet continuing in the societal system. divorced women, who live or die, can immediately become poor. Therefore, efforts to empower women are needed to improve their skills so they can work and earn a decent income so that they can help the family economy Agnihotri, S (2000).

This research particularly conducted to identify the challenges of young women in Sri Lanka and India in order to social mobility and national contributions. The main objective of the study to understand the common and uncommon challenges for women in these two countries with the selected young group. Therefore, the below questions were addressed through the present research study.

Q1: what are the common challenges face by the Indian and Sri Lankan young females for the empowerment and social mobility?

Q2: what are the different challenges face by the Indian and Sri Lankan young females for the empowerment and social mobility?

Therefore, this research will understand the challenges of women in educational development. Because education is one of the major sources they can contribute towards national

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integration. Additionally, this research will understand the threats in the family circle towards mobility.

Research Methodology

This is a qualitative study. This research has been using the qualitative methods to collect the data. The data were collected through focus group discussions. 3 focus group discussions have been conducted to collect the data from each country. Each focus group had 10 students and there were 60 participants in total. The research used the purposive sampling strategy to select the sample for the present study. Therefore, university undergraduates from few universities in south India and Sri Lanka were selected to do the focus group discussion. The students from both countries are coming from middle class and lower middle-class families basically from semi urban areas. The students were in between 20-25 age group. Each focus group has taken 2 hours for collecting data. The data analyzed through thematic analysis in the present study.

Data Analysis and Discussion

The present study indicated several issues and challenges of young female for their empowerment and social mobility. Firstly, the commonly identified issues and challenges between two countries could be explained as below.

1. Limiting the freedom mentally and physically from the family.
2. Gender based discriminations
3. Stereotype thinking of women role in family
4. Female to female judgment and lack of support among women.
5. Social bullying for out of frame thinking

The different challenges and issues for women empowerment and social mobility.

- Less guidance for career development for Sri Lankan females.
- Family pressure on marriage for Indian females

Even though world is technologically well developed in some cases world is still at early stages. Gender, women issues in South Asia is also same issue like that. Even though its little developed than very early stages. In early stages women are not even allowed to work or educated and women are only for household work and family caring. Now adays they are mainly allowed to have very good education but stereotype thinking still frames her job and life. No matter how educated women are, the society believes that women are naturally for nurturing the family. This very patriarchal thinking bothers for the women development and social mobility. Women are not encouraged for leadership and by the family they are trained not to be leaders and have their own freedom in thinking. Hence, the framing of a woman starts from the family system. Specially when they are girls in family, they have to live in social frames which they are totally making less freedom and less confident. This upgrades from schools as well. The women are equal to men in education and for certain things schools are not encouraging girls. Instead, they are embossing that these are not for girls to do. Further the South Asian cultural perspectives for women still valued and it makes women ability and talents which is hard for them to step up to the world freely. Therefore, its very clear that even though technologically the world is developed the thinking of human being about certain things still hard to change. Further its clear that the female social structure is still there and they are not allowed to go beyond the social frames. Even though they can go beyond, society doesn't want to encourage it and the society stops the women indirectly. Further society feeds the social structure for women from beginning. They are letting the female know these are the perfect jobs for women and the life of a woman is better with these kinds of jobs. Further mentions that, it's very easy for them to have a happy life if they are following social structure. Additional if someone wants to go beyond, they are mentally harassed and bullied. In this society there are men and women both restricts women life and career. But still its interested to find out that woman, stops the development of woman as they do not encourage the women to go beyond the frames in South Asia.

Its very clear that from the beginning of the female life they are framed and structured by different social groups such as family, school, society etc. When the general circumstances come in that way the women empowerment and social mobility would be every day talk. Hence its very important to know that the attitudinal changes of the peers are very important. Further, practicing the updated thinking for the young females as they are going to be in society in future. Hence, its very important to learn and understand the freedom concepts for human being and cannot be deviated for women and men. Family is the most important thing for strong female. If the family stops the strong female values and limits their thinking with being supportive to the social structure or frame. That family never produce the female to the world with confident. Hence, to support another female is also trained from family and the society. Henceforward, for this they need to see more supportive and helpful females to learn from them. Therefore, these challenges and issues of women empowerment and social mobility only could be changes in future if the family supports and think differently.

South Asian societies need to come out of framed thinking for woman and her perspectives. For this family communication is very important where the parents' daughters and sons talk freely share the values on same platforms. In this mostly the females will have the family as a back born the same time to think beyond the social structure. Moreover, the school system should have more empowered. Women stories should have share in schools and empower the young girls to step up to the world.

Further the school should indicate the women role models for the guest speaking and public talks to encourage young female to go beyond boundaries. Therefore, the people can come out of very stereotype thinking of a woman. These suggestions should be practiced. Further, the social media ethics or law for harassments should be introduced to the society. Therefore, not only the technological development the attitudinal development in South Asia also will be there. The present study has some limitations. The study only used the qualitative research method. Therefore, in future this could

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be a mix methodological research. The research only used focus group discussion to collect the data and, in the future, this could be expanded. Further the sample size and the sample techniques could be varied. Therefore, this research could be expanded in future with using different research methods.

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