

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION SEGMENT AND THERE WORK-LIFE BALANCE: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED UNIVERSITIES OF WEST BENGAL

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ABSTRACT

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru once said: "If you educate a man you educate an individual, however, if you educate a women you educate a whole family. Women empowered means mother India empowered". When women who contribute almost half of the population are empowered it will strengthen the national economy. Education is the empowerment and the freedom for excellence for the human society. Nevertheless, the role of education in the half of the population of the women folk is lagging behind. It is especially more concern when talks in the sense of women from marginalized section of society. The aim of higher education is to generate knowledge, encouraging critical thinking and importing skills relevant to the society determined by its needs. The barrier to education for women in West Bengal and also all over India was the persistent belief that women should not design to talk paid employment although voluntary work was acceptable. Supplement family incomes and today women are well represented in many occupations. However access to higher education is often restricted for girls who live in rural areas or towns without colleges or universities. Women education and empowerment are the indicators of development. Women education ensures the holistic and long development, it includes equitable and increased access to technical and vocational education and training, higher education and research with due attention to quality assurance. This communication has taken a look on women participation through women higher education institutes, women enrolment as compared with population. Today one of the most important concerns of 21st century is empowerment of women in society; women empowerment is dependent on various variables that include geographical location, educational status, social status and age. Women need to be more involved in educational policy decision making process. On the other hand Higher Education has witnessed a significant development resulting into the growth of a number of institutions in private and public sector as well. Private sector has its own work culture and intricacies several factors like placement, counseling, remuneration issues etc. make it unique in its own way. While considering female faculty's Identity crisis, financial challenges and gender bias are some pertinent issues which make their life so complex that they hardly get any time for personal care and enrichment. This is affecting their physical, mental and emotional well-being adversely making it difficult to attain a balance in their personal and professional life. Apart from this, it may have a negative impact on the education institutions also as it may lead to lower productivity, fatigue, absenteeism and attrition. In such a situation female faculties have to face a tremendous pressure due to increasing responsibilities in their personal life and ever increasing work pressure in professional life. Career women are challenged by the full-time work and at the end of each work-day in educational institution they carry more of the responsibilities and commitments to home. Majority of women are working 40-45 hours per week and 53 % are

struggling to achieve work-life balance. Women reported that their life has become a juggling act as they have to shoulder multiple responsibilities at work and home. Therefore, maintaining work-life balance has become a tough challenge for them.

KEYWORDS: *Women's Empowerment, Work-Life Balance of Women Faculties in Higher Education Segment, Work-Family Conflict, Women Education*