

## **PREFACE**

The issue of discrimination against women is a global problem faced by women in the world in various degrees, regardless of culture, religion or geographical location. In most of the developing countries, women have less access to education, jobs, income and to power than men. Women generally account for the largest proportion of deprived lot. Among the recent pressures for increasing the qualified and trained human resources which are capable to face the challenges in these days. Society in this case needs to allow women to participate its in developing plans and integrating them in the projects which aspire to improve the quality of life. In addition, to find better environment for any human being who has appropriate education and training to face the recent cultural, social, political and economical challenges.

The benefits of education are well understood for women but its role for promoting gender equality and empowering women differs from one society to another and from one country to another.

Although the rate of growth in female's enrolment in education is increasing, conventional education sector still suffers from many obstacles like geographical, political, social, and economical.


Modern life is considered complicated and complex. Women can't do the expected role in developing their society, unless they get their share of comprehensive care and suitable education. One of the features of undeveloped society is uneducated women. Acquisition of abilities is based on the acquisition of knowledge and learning including the skills' acquisition. If these basic things are not achieved, the possibility to obtain other opportunities would be meagre.

Distance and open learning system holds great advantages for the entire society, as almost anyone can benefit from this unique system of education. Open and distance learning philosophy aims to obtain university educational opportunities for those who are deprived from higher education because of social, economical and geographical conditions. ODL system however holds special implication for women, especially in conservative and patriarchal societies such as India and Palestine.

This research work examines open learning system as a practical and flexible program, which gives the opportunities for women to join higher education who were not able to join ordinary conventional learning.

Another important objective of the thesis is to look into the socio-development and empowerment of woman. It is said that women forms half of human resources, she can take part in economical and social programs which will improve her situation at all levels namely social, economic, cultural and political. Besides, she also has a role in shaping the children's character or developing the underage human resources. These social and economic returns have been proved to be particularly high, when women are educated.

Finally this research work has exceptional importance through comparing role of open learning program in socio- development and empowerment women in India and Palestine using interview schedule and case studies from Al-Quds Open University in Palestine and Indira Gandhi National Open University in India.



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