

Women Empowerment and their Empowering Schemes in India

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Structured Abstract:

Purpose: To awake the people, it is the women who should be awakened. Once she is on the move, the family moves, the nation moves".(Jawaharlal Nehru) In spite of her remarkable contribution in every field of life whether home or place of work, still she is at the receiving end at the hands of male hegemony. This parochial mindset approach needs to be addressed so that the role of women in growth and prosperity of state and society as a whole can be recognised as a tool of change. One such important tool in empowerment of women is state itself and state has to show its writ on ground level. Its policies and laws in long run will definitely prove a positive factor a, beacon light to meet out the challenges faced by them and this will overcome the negative thoughts of society. Women empowerment in India is one of the principal terms for society's overall development. There is nothing erroneous in participating in the development of society. In the world of corporates, women are playing numerous roles in meadows such as medical, engineering, and so on.

Design / Methodology / Approach: This research paper is basically descriptive and analytical in nature. The study materials are collected from various kinds of books and journals.

Findings: There should be no gender discrimination and women have full opportunities of self-decision making and participating in social, political and economic life of the country with a sense of equality.

Originality / Value: The Empowerment of Women has become one of the most important concerns of 21st century not only at national level but also at the international level. Society must provide equal opportunity to both of the sexes for the upliftment of society and for the wellbeing of society as a whole. Women represent half the world's population and gender inequality exists in every nation on the planet.

Keywords: Women, State, Laws, Emancipation, Policies, Problems.

Paper Type: Theoretical Research Paper.

Introduction

Women empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social, educational, gender or economic strength of individuals and communities of women. Women are an integral part

of every economy. All round development and harmonious growth of a nation would be possible only when women are considered as equal partners in progress with men. Women's empowerment in India is heavily dependent on many different variables that include geographical location (urban / rural) educational status social status (caste and class) and age. Policies on Women's empowerment exist at the national, state and local (Panchayat) levels in many sectors, including health, education, economic opportunities, gender based violence and political participation. Women empowerment enables autonomy and control over their lives. The empowered women become agents of their own development, able to exercise choices to set their own agenda and be strong enough to challenge their subordinate position in the society. Women particularly in rural areas have proportionately least possessions, skills, education, social status, leadership qualities and capabilities for mobilization, which determines the degree of decision making and power, and as a result, their dependence on men increases. They have been confined to the four walls of the household, overburdened with domestic works and controlled of their mobility and personal freedoms by the men of the household since time immemorial. So they have lagged behind in the fields of education, skill development, employment and as a result, their work is greatly undervalued in economic terms. Empowerment of women is essentially the process of upliftment of economic, social and political status of women, the traditionally underprivileged ones, in the society. It is the process of guarding them against all forms of violence. The empowerment of women include creating awareness and consciousness about situations of women, discrimination of women, rights of women, opportunities to the women and importance of gender equality, organizing a group collectively, group identity and group pressure; capacity building and skill development, ability to plan, to decide, to organize, ability to manage, ability to carry out activities, ability to deal with people and institutions in the world around them; participation in decision making at home, in the community and in the society, and access and control over resources, over means of productivity and over distribution. Empowerment is the process of changing power relations in favour of those at the lower levels of a hierarchy. Empowerment of women implies process by which women's power of self-realization is promoted and reinforced. They develop the capacity for self-reliance out crossing the relationship subordination on account of gender, social and economic status and the role in the family and society. It encompasses the ability to make choices, control resources and enjoy participatory relationship within family and community. To achieve these objectives, empowerment of women also implies their ability to participate in it and also lead social movements to remove obstacles in their progress towards their goal. Women empowerment involves the building up

of a society, a political environment, wherein women can breathe without the fear of oppression, exploitation, apprehension, discrimination and the general feeling of persecution which goes with being a woman in a traditionally male dominated structure. Women constitute almost 50% of the world's population but India has shown disproportionate sex ratio whereby female's population has been comparatively lower than males. Women should be put in the country's development agenda to achieve its desired goal. They should also be made partners in development and development ultimately becomes a process of empowerment. This ensures their full participation in every aspect of social and national development. This participation is necessary to increase the productivity level of women. Thus, women's empowerment would enlarge the choices and productivity levels of individual women and the collective contribution of women groups. As far as their social status is concerned, they are not treated as equal to men in all the places. In the Western societies, the women have got equal right and status with men in all walks of life. But gender disabilities and discriminations are found in India even today. The paradoxical situation has such that she was sometimes concerned as Goddess and at other times merely as slave.

Factors Affecting Women's Empowerment in India

Given below are the factors affecting women's empowerment:

- 1. Gender Discrimination must be Checked:** The problem of gender discrimination has affected the pace of women empowerment in India. Gender discrimination in all realms of action must be checked. Women must be furnished with a resort to take an active part in decision making at every level and direction procedures to attain the motive of empowering women. They need to get due admiration and prominence, which they rightfully earn on merit basis in society to accomplish their fate.
- 2. Educational Factor:** Education is the most vibrant factor of advancement and growth. It is the only significant tool for anticipating women empowerment in India & human resource development. It gives light to the possibilities for access to employment and making a livelihood, which in twirl revivify economic empowerment to women. In order to join the community of developed countries, people should understand the value and importance of women's education and, thereby, put combined efforts to make India on the progressive track. Education makes the individual conscientious, enabling them to comprehend, interpret, criticize, and eventually transform their atmosphere. It results in

the accession of abundances of skills that heighten a person's enthusiasm and her proficiency to shape life in a better form.

Education is the initial line of defense for women who withstand life-imperiling circumstances that traditional lifestyle perpetuates. It motivates a sense of supervision over personal fortune. In addition to this, it unlocks the door to preferences that are not confined by tradition. With a meaningful education, the women's status strides beyond the restrictions of motherliness. Advancement of education of women and girls allots to the postponement of their marriage timing and the ensuing constriction in the volume of their families.

Priority should be plopped on enrolment along with retention of the girl child in basic formal schooling and non-formal education via incentive methods like a supply of textbooks free of cost, midday meals, school bags, science kits, uniform, scholarship, residential and hostel facilities as well as the expulsion of gender discrimination in the curriculum. Education will go an extended way in making women familiar with their legal and personal rights and make them battle for their privileges, which will direct to protecting their rights mentioned in the Constitution.

❖ **Mass Media is Bringing the Transformation:** The mass media is responsible for playing a significant function to project and propagate associated issues, most specifically about women empowerment in India. The numerous programmes pertaining to women's prestige revealed the mass media enable her husband to behave toward her wife with loads of honor and respect. He can remake his attitude and assist her in the domestic domain to reduce stress and anxiety. The mass media performs a crucial role in repairing the attitude and way of conversation of husband and other family members towards women.

❖ **Steps Regarding Implementation of Women Development Programme along with Numerous Acts:** Training programme based on action at the village or in rural parts of India along with vocational programmes and the growth-oriented entrepreneurship development programmes must be organized to make women self-reliant after becoming self-employed by enhancing their efficiency and capacities in making prompt decisions. It's extremely important to check cases related to female feticide & infanticide by prohibiting the sex determination of child that is yet to take birth via the Regulation & Prevention of Misuse Act 1994 as well as PNT ACT (Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques

Act) other rulings correlating to marriage, succession, divorce, adoption, dowry and moral safety or protection against sexual harassment needs to be implemented for serving the goal of women empowerment in India.

- ❖ **Changes in Women's Attitude:** Women should empower themselves by becoming to be aware of their oppression, indicating initiative, and confiscating chances to bring a shift in their status. Empowerment must come from within the soul. Women need to empower themselves by bringing a major change in their attitude.

Women must know that opportunities will not reach their laps. They would have to determine ways to create them. They should fight back to rebuild their prominent position in Indian communities and societies. They must flourish hard to carry out their rights and maintain justice & equality in society. They need to work vigorously for the entire elimination of poverty, dowry-ills, illiteracy, and productive implementation of all programmes and laws related to women.

Women's empowerment is valuable for the development and advancement of the family, community as well as the nation. Hence, it must be a leading concern of the Indian Government to bring women into the fore of the development strategy by empowering them via numerous development-oriented schemes.

- ❖ **Organization for Awareness Programmes-** State and National level commissions for women, Non-Governmental Organisations, ICDS Programmes, must undertake e-awareness, the Taskforce for women & children Development DWACRA (Concerning Development of Women & Child in Rural Areas), women's rights, human rights, a campaign about legal rights, education about saving schemes, population education, environmental education, rehabilitation programmes with all integrity and solemnity.

Importance of Women Empowerment

In recent times, everyone is pointing on the empowerment of women. It is right to say that women's empowerment has become the necessity of the time. Women should possess liberty, faith, and self-worth to opt for their needs and demands. Discrimination based on gender is useless and is having zero worth by looking at the growth of women in the last few decades. Women are paid less and are treated as a cook and slave in families, and their real potential fails to get highlighted. Women empowerment in India is required to overcome situations of

such types and to provide them with their independent role in Indian society. Empowering women is a necessary right of women. They should have proportional rights to contribute to society, economics, education, and politics. They are approved to gain higher education and receive a similar treatment as men are receiving.

Ensures Holistic Development of Society

Women empowerment in India is one of the principal terms for society's overall development. There is nothing erroneous in participating in the development of society. In the world of corporates, women are playing numerous roles in meadows such as medical, engineering, and so on. Apart from taking part in the sphere of technology, they are energetically partaking in security services such as police, navy, military, etc. All these before-mentioned services are taking the community to another level.

Determine their Intelligence Level

Over the preceding decades, there has been a uniform increase in women's empowerment. Women must possess self-worth, confidence, and freedom to choose their needs and requirements. Classifying the people based on gender is unreasonable, and it has no worth. Still, women are paid less, expected to cook, and restricted by their family members. To overcome these situations and to have an independent role in society, women's empowerment is needed.

Empowering women is the fundamental right of women. They can have equal rights to participate in education, society, economics, and politics. They are allowed to have higher education and treated in the way like men. In this article, you will know about the importance of women's empowerment. So make a halt on this page and read the following content.

Able to solve unemployment

Unemployment is one of the common problems that can be seen in the developing society. The research says that half of the population consists of women. The unemployment of women and unequal opportunities in the workplace can be eradicated with the help of women empowerment in India. Whenever women are facing unemployment, their true potential is left without any use. To make use of the strength and potential of the women, they must be

provided with equal opportunities. You can motivate them by providing any special gifts. The best time to honor women is women's day. You can honor them with women's day gifts.

Know about their intelligence

It is unthinkable to understand and analyze the way of living of women by peeking at them. You can foresee their level of intelligence by way of moving toward the problems and in the solution-finding. In the contemporary era, women are nicely versed in unraveling technical troubles. Women's empowerment plays a vital role in these cases. Without women empowerment in India, you won't be able to determine and understand the intelligence of women. Therefore, making existence in work is particularly important and an advantageous one. You can present any gift to give recognition to their work.

Capable Enough to Solve the Issues of Unemployment

Unemployment is one of the widespread problems that can be glimpsed in societies in the developing stage. The study says that around half of the population comprises women. The unemployment of women & unbalanced opportunities in the working place can be eliminated with the assistance of women empowerment in India. Whenever women are confronting unemployment issues, their true capability is left without any intention. To make use of the courage and capacity of the women, they should be empowered with an equal number of opportunities.

Government Schemes for Women Empowerment

Government of India implemented various poverty alleviation and rural development programmes. These programmes have special components for women empowerment. At present, the Government of India has over 37 schemes for women operated by different department and ministries. The implementation of these programmes / schemes is monitored specifically with reference to coverage of women. Some of these are as follows:-

1. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)
2. Mahila Samakhya being implemented in about 9000 villages.
3. (Aajeevika) and the Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY).
4. Scheme for Gender Budgeting (XI Plan).
5. SIDBI's Mahila Udyam Nidhi Mahila Vikas Nidhi.

6. NGO's Credit Schemes.
7. Crèches / Day care centre for the children of working and ailing mother.
8. National Mission for Empowerment of Women.
9. Rastria Mahila Kosh (RMK) 1992-1993
10. Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescence Girls (RGSEAG) (2010).
11. Swalamban.
12. Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP).
13. Integrated Child Protection scheme (ICPS) (2009-2010).
14. Swadhar.
15. Swayasjdha.
16. National Banks for Agriculture and Rural Development's Schemes
17. Khadi and Village Industries Commission.
18. Hostels for working women.
19. Ujjawala (2007).
20. Working Women's Forum
21. Mahila Samridhi Yojana (MSY) October,1993.
22. Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP).
23. Swa Shakti Group.
24. Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for Children of Working Mothers.
25. Short Stay Homes.
26. Women's Development Corporation Scheme (WDCS).
27. Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY) 199517.
28. Dhanalakahmi (2008).
29. Women Entrepreneur Development programme given top priority in 1997-98.
30. Mahila Samiti Yojana.
31. SBI's Sree Shaki Scheme.
32. Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY) 199517.
33. Indira Mahila Kendra.
34. Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM).
35. Indira Priyadarahini Yojana.
36. Prime Minister's Rojgar Yojana (PMRY).
37. Beti padao beti bacho yojana.

The status of women in India particularly in rural areas needs to address the issue of empowering women. About 66% of the female population in rural area is unutilized. This is mainly due to existing social customs. In agriculture and Animal care the women contribute 90% of the total workforce. Women constitute almost half of the population, perform nearly 2/3 of its work hours, receive 1/10th of the world's income and own less than 1/ 100th the world property. In the past "Vedas Purana" of Indian culture, women were being worshiped such as LAXMI MAA, goddess of wealth; SARSWATI MAA, for wisdom; DURGA MAA for power. Among the world's 900 million illiterate people, 70% of people living in poverty are women. Lower sex ratio i.e. 933, only 10% seats in World Parliament and 6% in National Cabinet are held by women. The existing studies show that the women are relatively less healthy than men though belong to same class. They constitute less than 1/7th of the administrators and managers in developing countries. Young girls are considered as a big burden in the family. Rape cases are increasing in the modern times which force us to take an initiative about the security of the female population. Ways to Empower Women: Providing education in every field Change in women's control over Decision making Providing women police stations for their complaints Changes in women's mobility and social interaction Providing separate hospitals for their checkup Changes in women's labour patterns Providing separate schools / colleges for their safety Providing equal rights Providing separate transport system Changes in women's access to and control over resources Self-employment and self-help group Providing equal property rights Providing minimum needs like Nutrition, Health, Sanitation and Housing Providing equal opportunity in sports and other activities Other than this society should change the mentality towards the word women Encouraging women to develop in their fields they are good at and make a career.

Conclusion

From the study we concluded that in the present scenario the condition of the Indian women is not as good as it should be and there is a need to accomplish such steps which will help to accommodate the rights and the basic needs of women population. Thus, the attainment in the field of income, employment and in educational front, the scenario of women empowerment seems to be comparatively poor and needs to be checked. Because with the empowerment of women, the elimination of gender discrimination and the creation of a balance of power between men and women will not only be beneficial to women, but society as a whole shall benefit politically, economically and culturally. The greatest need of an hour is change of

social attitude to women. “When women move forward the family moves, the village moves and the nation moves”. It is essential as their thought and their value systems lead the development of a good family, good society and ultimately a good nation. The Empowerment of Women has become one of the most important concerns of 21st century not only at national level but also at the international level. Society must provide equal opportunity to both of the sexes for the upliftment of society and for the wellbeing of society as a whole. Women represent half the world’s population and gender inequality exists in every nation on the planet. Until women are given the same opportunities that men are, entire societies will be destined to perform below their true potentials. The best way of empowerment is perhaps through inducting women in the mainstream of development. Government initiatives alone would not be sufficient to achieve this goal because 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. Society must take initiative to create a climate in which they can get the proper benefit from the schemes made by Government for the women development. There should be no gender discrimination and women have full opportunities of self-decision making and participating in social, political and economic life of the country with a sense of equality.

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