



EMPOWER THE WOMAN, DEVELOP THE NATION

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ABSTRACT:

It is clear that the goals of human development are closely intertwined with the development and empowerment of women. Women constitute 48.46% (2011) of the total population. Women are a valuable human resource and their socio-economic development is essential for the sustainable development of countries. The country's laws focus on the development of women in various fields of development policies, plans and programs. The principle of gender equality is also present in the Constitution of India. In post-Vedic times, there was equality between men and women. In the Upanishads and the Rig Veda, it is proved by Gargi and Maitriyi. In India, which has been in the forefront of feminism since the 1970s, women soon gained the right to vote in some Western countries.

Key words: - *Women Empowerment, Gender-equality development, Socio-Economic Status.*

INTRODUCTION:

There are various principles defining women's empowerment as for one to be empowered, they must come from a position of disempowerment. It was always men who have defined women and their views have had an important and pervasive influence on human thought. By and large women are examined as semi humans unable to speak for themselves. Women should be independent and must not acquire empowerment from external forces, and women should also be liberal to make their own decision and act on them. Empowerment is a process rather than a product.

Women empowerment depends on different things. Geographical Area (Urban, Rural) Women's age, education, status of health empowerment, interest in politics, social knowledge, empowering women in all fields and giving them equal rights and status with men. To provide opportunities for development, and thereby reduce gender inequality. Women in urban areas benefit from the schemes earlier than women in rural areas. Women should be motivated for the economic development of the country by getting adequate schemes. Even in

the 73rd and 74th Amendment, 50% reservation was given to women in Panchayat Raj.

A woman has the right to express her thoughts and opinions freely, without any restriction. Individual empowerment may be achieved by imparting self-confidence to articulate and assert the power of independent decision making. Women should be aware of their rights and social positions that they are entitled to constitutionally.

The most critical aspect of social empowerment of women is the promotion of gender equality. Gender equality implies that in society women and men enjoy the same opportunities, outcomes, rights and obligations in all spheres of life. It means enabling women to grab the knowledge, skills, and self-confidence necessary to participate fully in the development process. Giving preference to the girl child for educational opportunities is a start. Indian constitution has provided the bulwarks for gender equality in the country in the following articles:-

Article 14 – Equality before law “The State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the

territory of India Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth”

Article 16 (2) – Equal Opportunities “No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, descent, place of birth, residence or any of them, be ineligible for, or discriminated against in respect or, any employment or office under the State”.

Article 23 – Prohibition of traffic in human beings and forced labour.

Article 39(a) – The citizen, men & women equally have the right to an adequate means of livelihood.

Article 40 (after the 73rd Amendment) – 1/3rd of seats in panchayats shall be reserved for women.

Article 42 – State shall make provisions for just and humane working conditions & maternity relief.

Article 51 A (e) – One of the duties of every citizen is to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of woman.

Why Need of Women Empowerment :

In ancient times, Durga was considered a symbol of power and Lakshmi was considered a symbol of wisdom in the Vedas and men. Since 90% of women in rural areas are uneducated, they are not aware of their rights. Women in rural areas are directly and indirectly involved in agriculture and related occupations. The sex ratio of women is also low. Women are less healthy than men. Empowerment helps to reduce in domestic violence due people promote and give the value to women. Women are not abused by any factors such as sexual abuse, emotion abuse and physical abuse.

Women constitute roughly 50% of the nation’s population and a majority of them remain economically dependent, without employment. Many of them are even unaware of the fact that they are eligible for positions that men enjoy. The result is that the economy of the country is skewed due to underutilization of available

human resources. Women are generally considered less competent, both intellectually as well as physically as compared with men. As a result the opportunities extended towards them become biased without actual evaluation of their potentials. While scientific data proclaims women to be more adept at multi-tasking than men, they still remain the second choice for employers in the country. Which makes us focus on “WOMAN RIGHTS = HUMAN RIGHTS”. Thus, denoting woman empowerment is essential for societal growth.

Women Empowerment :

Governments have made various efforts to empower women. More of it are discussed below.

1) Women and education

After Independence, women were liberated from the custom of in-house traditions. Higher education came into practice as the constitution framed the Right to Education. Article 45 of the Indian constitution talks about compulsory education for children. The new India surpassed the myth and stereotype of what is preferable and non-preferable to women.

Today, what we know about women's education is entirely different from the early stages. Women have already modified gender roles and eradicated some strong wrong beliefs from the minds of people. But now, women have started working towards achieving goals and being independent to make any situation favouring their interests. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has positive impact on girls' education with a Gender Equality Index of 0.94% at the primary level and 0.92% at the upper primary level.

2) Women and Health

Currently, women in India have to face numerous health issues, which ultimately affect the aggregate economy’s output. Addressing the gender, class or ethnic disparities that exist in healthcare and improving the health outcomes can contribute to economic gain through the creation of quality human capital and increased levels of savings and investment. The National

Rural Health Mission has improved the women's health index. According to the India Human Development Report, the maternal mortality rate has dropped from 301 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2003 to 212 deaths in 2009.

3) Women and Economy

The contribution of women in the workforce, the quality of work they are given, their contribution to GDP are indicators of the main liquidation of the economy. Incorporating women into the economy through microfinance is an important tactic for their financial inclusion. It means reducing the financial dependence of women on their male counterparts by making them a significant part of the human resource. A better quality of material life, within the family as well as for the overall society, can be achieved through promotion of sustainable livelihoods like cottage industries, small entrepreneurial efforts owned and managed by women. Government is taking essential steps towards entrepreneurial development of woman.

Government Scheme in Women Empowerment:

- 1) The Rajiv Gandhi National OrencheScheme for Children of Working Mothers.
- 2) Dhanlakshmi
- 3) Ujjawala
- 4) Shert Stay
- 5) Scheme for Gender Budgeting (XI Plan)
- 6) Working Womens Forum.
- 7) Prime Minister's Rojgar Yojana.
- 8) Indira Mahila Kendra
- 9) National Women Empowerment of Women.
- 10) SBI's Stree Shakti Scheme

Importance of Women Empowerment:

- 1) Health, food security and nutrition
- 2) Education
- 3) Administration and decision making process
- 4) Environment and climate change

All of these factors can lead to women's empowerment.

CONCLUSION:

The issue of women empowerment is important not only in India but matters globally. Women should get Gender Equality Right like men. Women's decision should be socially recognized. Every woman should have the same rights as men in all fields. Empowerment of women can make every woman self-reliant and dutiful. If a woman makes progress, then the progress of a house, a village and a country can be achieved. If women are empowered, women entrepreneurs will be created. The country and the economy will benefit from the development and economic benefits of Women Entrepreneurs.

RECOMMENDATIONS :

- 1) Creating an environment through positive social policies to enable women to develop to their full potential.
- 2) To provide equal participation to women in the social, political and economic life of the nation.
- 3) To change the social attitudes based on the active participation of women and men.
- 4) Awareness and dissemination of information on women's issues.
- 5) To increase women's work participation.

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