

# WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: A STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT

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**Abstract:** Empowerment can be stated to be a process that strengthens socio-economic basis of lives of the people. It, as well, assists people to gain control over their lives and living. Women empowerment signifies enhancement of knowledge base of women towards realities in the light of which they can view and review things in the right perspective and thus gain control over their lives and living. Women are said to be the viable members in their households and they are equally important towards improving socio-economic status of their households. Realizing the importance of the roles of women in the overall development of the house-holds, state as well as Central Government have taken up various schemes and programs for women especially for the rural women in order to give the women wider scope of getting involved in various economic activities for improving their familial socio-economic status. Reservation of seats for women in the decentralized administrative bodies, implementation of schemes of self-help groups (SHGS), Development of women and children in rural areas (DWCRA), Training and employment program me for women (TEDW), Rashtriya Mahila kosh (RMK), Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for employment of adolescent Girls (RGSEAG), Central social welfare Board (CSWB) short stay home for women and Girls (SSH), etc. are such governmental initiatives for bringing women at par with their male counterparts in integrated development of their families. Needless to mention, women, not only manage and maintain their house-holds but also take active part in income generating activities towards supplementing their economic earnings. Participation of women in SHG and other Programs has proved that they have courage, confidence and full enthusiasm of providing wider involvement in various activities aiming at developing their overall living status.

**Key Words:** Empowerment, Development, SHGS, Socio economic development, income generating activities, Supplementing.

## 1. INTRODUCTION:

The status of women in India has been subject to many great changes over the past few millennia. The history of women in India has been eventful. Women are the potential forces of managing and maintaining their households. Women have made significant contribution in all areas and there are so many examples to substantiate their contribution in all fields. There is a need to think over formulation of women empowerment program me at all levels. Women empowerment commission is stated to be a tool for overall development of the families. This article has mainly focused on the role of women empowerment in Indian context. The article has brought towards various suggestion as part of a plan to strengthen women empowerment Program me in India.

## 2. VARIOUS PROBLEMS FACED BY INDIAN WOMEN:

### 2.1 Violence against women:

The lives of Indian women are full of sorrow and anxiety. There are various types of crimes, like, rape and molestation, dowry harassment, wife battering, kidnapping, female children to be sold into brothel homes; Sexual exploitation, female feticide, domestic violence etc. are the common practices prevalent in Indian society faced by Indian women. Main cause of it is that social mentality with old customs and traditions.

### 2.2 Gender discrimination:

Gender discrimination refers to the practice where by one sex is given preferential treatment over the others. After over population in second number greatest problem in India is the female feticide and discrimination. The practice of giving social importance to the biological differences between men and women is every where. In some societies these differences are very much pronounced while in others, they are given less importance. Main cause of it is that social mentality with old customs and traditions.

### 2.3 Negligence and poor health:

Indian women are most vulnerable and exploited in the world. Socially, psychologically, politically and economically she is always in the secondary place. Improper hemoglobin, different medical problems, malnutrition and high death rate are the feathers of Indian women.

#### **2.4 Unequal sex ratio:**

Normally, in the population of any country, male female ratio remains more or less the same, that is 50:50. In India as the census reports reveal female population has been steadily declining ever since 1901. This is serious indicator in society. Efforts should be takes place for identification and sort-out these problems.

#### **2.5 Inadequacy of female education:**

Since ancient time women are generally seen ignored from the education. 'Ladki to parayaya dhan hoti hai' is common tendency observe among the Indians. Accordingly, much attention is paid to the education of women after independence. The female literacy level is also increasing steadily. It has increased from 18.7% in 1971 to 39.42% in 1991 and to 64% 2001. In spite of this change in the trend towards literacy, some problem has cropped up.

#### **2.6 Dowry a curse:**

At the time of marriage ceremony, the gift or amount given by the parents of girl is general trend in India. In later stage it become problem called dowry. Every year so many cases of dowry death occur in India. It is very serious problem faced by Indian women and their parents.

#### **2.7 Sexual harassment:**

Now a days sexual harassment has become a burning issue in a society. Ganged rape and so many incidents or rape cases are taking place in different parts of the country. Child sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, human trafficking, Child labor etc., are the various serious problems faced by women in Indian society.

#### **2.8 Organizational problems:**

At working place, women face a lot of problems regarding their movement and work with their colleagues and superiors many a time, they fall victims of sexual abuse by their superiors and co workers. Excessive bossing, unequal shifts, un wanted demands by high authority etc, are the factors responsible for women's exploitation and harassment in organization.

#### **2.9 Familial and social problems:**

Family and society have to take the cognizance about women issues. The intensity and proportion of works is always more than men. In religious and cultural activities women are generally ignored and put secondary place. Whatever, be the situation there, the women are convicted responsible for that act. Also there is a tendency amongst the men to assume that women are incapable of taking active part in various activities and Programs.

### **3. THE ROLE OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN DEVELOPMENT:**

Empowering women usually involves giving them opportunity for better education and personality development. Focus on the overall development of women in India is the major thrust of women empowerment commission in India. Basically as per the provision of human rights there should be the equal opportunities for both men and women but society doesn't allow women to enjoy such opportunity and, as a matter of fact, they face discrimination in the society. Various surveys and relevant studies have shown that the women apart from their engagement in household activities, have full courage, confidence, interest and enthusiasm in getting involved in various income generating activities for supplementing their household earn ships. Successful launching of SHGs through active and whole hearted participation of the women in poor rural households has proved that the rural poor women play equally improper role in overall development of their households. In pursuance of brining women, in general and poor rural women, in particular at per with the men forth in the development Millie.

#### **The following are some of the important schemes and program for development of women and girls as governmental initiatives towards women empowerment:**

Indian govt. is always few rebel and conscious about women development. Time to time different schemes and plans has been implemented for the success of women.

#### **Mahila cosh yojana:**

This is first plan started for especially rural women of India in which self employment and supplementary occupation are the most priority factors.

#### **Training and employment program for women:**

To build up the confidence, economically strong and for enhancing the productivity are the main targets of this plan.

#### **Rashtiya mahila kosh (RMK):**

For social and economical changes, financial improvements through various programs are the main objects of this plan. Micro finance to poor women, agriculture women, shop keeping and hand crafts etc. are important objects of this plan.

#### **Rajiv Gandhi scheme for empowerment of adolescent girls (RRGSEAG):**

This is specially well known for the over all development of teen age girls for the issues like nutrition, education, medical facilities and eradication of the different problems.

#### **Central social welfare Board:**

The central social welfare board also embarked upon a scheme in 1958 to set up about 66 pilot welfare extension projects in urban areas particularly for the development of welfare services for women and children during the second plan period. In the rural areas the board has introduced a number of schemes for women's welfare in the last two decades.

#### **Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY)**

For the improvement to the health and nutrition status of pregnant, lactating women and infants, child vaccination with sort out the various problems.

#### **Swayam Siddha yojana:**

Creation of self help groups with financial support and availability the fund for poor women in society.

#### **Short Stay Home for Women and Girls (SSH):**

Arrangement of temporary accommodation of deprived, mentally affected, very poor, widow, exploited and rejected by society and family. With the help of this plan various works knowledge given and try to become self to such type of women.

#### **4. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE EFFECTIVENESS OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVES:**

- Ensuring grater Participation of women in each and every sphere of life.
- Utilizing women in recourses accumulation and mobilization.
- Intensifying efforts for educational personality and carry development of women and girls.
- Intensifying governmental and non-governmental efforts to reduce sexual harassment and domestic violence related issue.
- Ensuring co-ordination and Participation in administrative and political reformation processes
- Strengthening supportive and positive roles of media about women empowerment.
- Introducing kinship pattern in society
- Encouraging involvement in public decent making.

#### **5. CONCLUSION:**

India is a developing country and as matter of fact, all developmental initiatives must be channelized in all works of life to make the country a developed one, which was, to be cited, the dream of the late ex-President of India, Dr. A.P. Kalam, to make the country a developed by 2020. Varies nation-wide intervention made by the central govt. toward the empowerment of women have successfully launched and new schemes and programmes are being planted and executed to intensify efforts for wider envelopment of women in development initiatives. The govt. in the recent years has introduces schemes to assisted women and girls for making them variable agents for development. The non-government and philanthropic organization have join hands with state as well as national governments through under taking various programs and projects for the empowerment of women and girls. Need less to mention, we, in India, are marching ahead with hours need-based thrust of empowerment women and girls for the national development.

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