



THE RUBRICS

Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies

Volume 2 Issue 4 December 2016

www.magnuspublishing.com

ISSN 2454-1974



Women Empowerment in India: Realities and Challenges

Dr. Ramesh D Darekar

I/C Principal, KTHM College, Nasik

ARTICLE INFO

Received: 25 Oct. 2016

Reviewed: 13 Nov. 2016

Accepted: 18 Nov. 2016

Published: 5 Dec. 2016

APA CITATION

Darekar, Ramesh D (2016). Women Empowerment in India: Realities and Challenges. *The Rubrics Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 2(4), 51-56.

www.magnuspublishing.com/therubrics/2454-1974-43.pdf

The phrase Women Empowerment is used in two broad sense i.e. general and specific. In a general sense, it refers to empowering women to be self dependent by providing them access to all the freedom and opportunities which they were denied in the past only because of their being women. In a specific sense, Women Empowerment refers to enhancing their position in the power structure of the society. This paper will focus on various aspects such as realities, challenges, provisions related to women empowerment in India. It will also focus on significance of women empowerment. The popular UNESCO slogan should come in handy "Educate a man and you educate an individual; educate a women and you educate a family".

Keywords: *Women, Empowerment, Realities, Challenges*

Women Empowerment in India: Realities and Challenge

Dr. Ramesh D Darekar

Introduction

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian constitution in its preamble, fundamental duties and directive principles. The constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the state to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. Empowerment is one of the key factor in determining the success of development in the status and position of women in the society. The paper put a focus on empowering women because we believe they hold the key to long lasting social change in communities. Empowering women must be a united approach a cause that requires continued attention and stewardship by all. It is our moral, social and constitutional responsibility to ensure their progress by providing them with equal rights and opportunities.

Women empowerment refers to creation of an environment for women where they can make decision of their own for their personal as well as for the society. In broad sense women empowerment refers to increasing and improving the social, economic, political and legal strength of the women to ensure equal rights to women and make them confident to claim their various rights. Presently women with their hard work and sincerity have excelled in each and every profession.

Objectives

1. To study women empowerment and need of women empowerment
2. To study the various schemes for women empowerment
3. To study realities of women empowerment in India.
4. To study challenges and ways to empower women.

Research Methodology

To achieve above objectives data has been collected from secondary sources which are categorized in two categories. Print Media and Electronic Media. This paper is based on secondary data which has published in various research journals, leading magazines, websites and government reports. The study focused on empowerment of women.

Need of Empowerment

Women empowerment has been recognized as an important issue for the growth and development of women. The need is that to give equal rights to women and make them confident enough to claim their certain rights such as:

1. To make their own choices and decisions.
2. To have complete control of their life both within and outside of their home and workplace.
3. To have equal rights to participate in social, religious and public activities.
4. To have equal status in the society.
5. To get equal employment opportunities with any gender bias.
6. To have equal rights for social justice and economic freedom.

In order to consider the various rights necessary for empowerment of women, the need is to focus on following practical aspects:

1. Under employed and unemployed: Women population constitutes around 50% of the world population. A large number of women around the world are unemployed. Due to this, the world economy suffers a lot.

2. Equally competent and intelligent: Women are equally competent and talented. Nowadays, women are even ahead of men in many socio-economic activities.

3. Overall development of society: The core advantage of women empowerment is that there will be an overall development of the society.

4. Economic benefit: Women empowerment also leads to more economic benefits not to the individuals but to the society as well. Women empowerment helps women to stand on their own legs, become independent and also to earn for their family, which grows the country's economy.

5. National Development: Increasing participation of women in almost every sphere, including medical science, social service, engineering, sports etc., gives a boost to national development programmes.

6. Reduction in domestic violence: Uneducated women are at higher risk for domestic violence than educated women. This can be reduced by women empowerment.

7. Reduce Poverty: Sometimes, the money earned by the male members of the family is not sufficient to meet the demands of the family. The added earnings of women help the family to come out of the poverty trap.

Schemes for Women Empowerment

The government programmes for women development began as early as 1954 in India, but the actual participation began only in 1974. At present, the government of India has different schemes for women empowerment operated by different departments and ministries. Some of the schemes are listed below.

1. Rashtria Mahila Kosh (RMK) 1992-1993
2. Mahila Samriddhi Yojana (MSY) October, 1993
3. Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY) 1995
4. Women Entrepreneur development programme given top priority in 1997-98
5. Mahila Samakhya being implemented in about 9000 villages.
6. Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP)
7. Swalamban
8. Hostels for working women
9. National mission for empowerment of women
10. Rajiv Gandhi schemes for Empowerment of Adolescence girls (RGSEAG) 2010
11. Ujjwala (2007)
12. Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP).
13. Women's development Corporation Schemes. (WDCS).
14. Working Women's Forum.
15. Mahila Samiti Yojana.
16. SBI's Sree Sakhi Scheme.
17. SIDBI's Mahila Udyam nidhi Mahila Vikas Nidhi.
18. NGO's Credit schemes
19. National Banks for Agriculture and Rural Development's Scheme.

Women Empowerment in India: Present Scenario

Being equal to their male counterparts is still a far cry for Indian women. In 2012, women occupied only 8 out of 74 ministerial positions in the union council of ministers. There were only 2 women judges out of 26 judges in the Supreme Court and there were only 54 women judges out of 634 judges in various high courts.

Shocking Facts

According to 2013, UNDP report on Human Development Indicators, all south Asian Countries except Afghanistan, were ranked better for women than in India it predicts: an Indian girl child aged 1-5 years is 75% more likely to die than the boy child. A woman is raped once in every 20 min and 10% of all crimes reported. Women form 48% of India's population, only 29% of the National workforce, only 26% women have accessed to formal credit.

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.

In today's scenario, we have noticed different Acts and schemes of the central Government as well as state Government to empower women in India. But in India women are discriminated and marginalized at every level of the society whether it is social participation economic participation, social participation, access to education and also reproductive healthcare. Women are found to be economically poor all over the India. A few women are engaged in services and other activities. It has also been observed that women are found to be less literate than man. According to 2001 census, rate of literacy among men in India is found to be 76% whereas it is only 54% among women. It has also noticed that some of women are too weak to work. They consume less food but work more. Another problem is that workplace harassment of women. There are also so many cases of rape, kidnapping of girl, dowry harassment, and so on.

Proportion of Crime against Women (IPC) Towards Total IPC Crimes:

Sr.No.	Year	Total IPC Crimes	Crime Against Women (IPS) cases	Percentage To Total IPC Crimes
1	2009	21,21,345	2,03,804	9.2
2	2010	22,24,831	2,13,585	9.6
3	2011	23,25,575	2,28,649	9.4
4	2012	23,87,188	2,44,270	10.2
5	2013	26,47,722	3,09,544	11.2

Source: Crime in India 2013

Challenges

There are several constraints that check the process of women empowerment in India. Social norms and family structure in developing countries like India, manifests and perpetuate the subordinate status of women. The preference for a son over the birth of a girl child which in present in almost all societies and communities is also the major challenging aspect. The society is more biased in favor male child in respect of education, nutrition and other opportunities, with an exception of Meghalaya. Poverty is the reality of life for the majority women in India. It is another factor that poses challenge in realizing women's empowerment. Educational gap between women and men is severe. While 82.14% of adult men are educated, only 65.46% of adult women are known to be literate in India. The gender bias in higher education, professional equality, hit women very hard in employment and attaining top leadership in any field. The health and safety concern are vital for the well being of a country and is an important factor in gauging the empowerment of women in country. However there are alarming concerns where maternal healthcare is concerned. Women face countless handicaps in male

customized and dominated environs in government offices and private enterprises. Household relations show gender bias in significant manners, in India e.g. sharing burden of housework, childcare, menial works by so called division of work. Childbearing in the early age and number of children can also be the major constraint in women empowerment.

Ways to Empower Women

In real sense the following are some of the ways or measures to empower the women.

- Providing proper education facility
- Changes in women's labor patterns
- Changes in women's access to and control over resources
- Changes in women's control over decision making
- Changes in women's mobility and social interaction
- Self employment and self help group
- Providing minimum needs like Nutrition, Health, Sanitation, Housing.
- Encouraging women to develop in their fields they are good at and make a career.
- Other than this society should change the mentality towards the word women.

Conclusion

Women require empowerment of all kinds in order to protect themselves and to secure their purity and dignity to sum up, women empowerment cannot be possible unless women come with and help to self -empower themselves. There is a need to adopt action plans for reducing feminized poverty, promoting education of women, and prevention and elimination of violence against women. Empowerment of women could be only be achieved if their economic and social status is improved. In order to create sustainable world, we must begin to Empower Women.

References

1. Women and the Web (DDF) Intel
2. Encyclopedia of status and empowerment of women in India. Vol.4 Edited by Rajkumar Pruthi, Rameshwari Devi, Romila Pruthi.
3. Women Empowerment and sustainable development Dr. Anupama Singh.