



Review Article

Woman Empowerment and Socio-Economic Development

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Abstract

The progress of a nation primarily depends upon its social and economic development. Holistic socio-economic development is possible only when all the segments of the society are capable and empowered to contribute in its social and economic activities. Historically patriarchy has prevailed in most places and the fair gender could not get equal opportunity to realize its potential. Hence it has become imperative and utmost necessary that half of the world's population is facilitated to enhance its capacity and get freedom to make its own choices, so that they can optimally contribute in development. Woman empowerment will also solve many global problems created due to our own greed as women are more sensitive by nature.

KEY-WORDS Empowerment, Socio-economic Development, Capacity Building, Decision Making, Self Help Group, Leadership

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Introduction

Woman empowerment is necessary to enhance the capacity of women to achieve their true potential and contribute effectively to socio-economic growth. It means basically improve their capacity by training, allocation of resources and institutionalizing their role in decision making and leadership.

Objective of the Study

1. To know the need of women empowerment.
2. To assess the awareness of women empowerment in India.
3. To analyze the hindrances in the path of women empowerment.
4. To analyze the government schemes for women empowerment.
5. To find the factors influencing economic and social development of women.

Research Methodology

This paper is basically descriptive and analytical in nature. In this paper an attempt has been taken to analyze the social and economic empowerment of women in India. The data used in it purely from secondary sources according to the need of this study.

Necessity and Significance

Historically, women as a group have not been allowed to participate fully in socio-economic activities and thus they have been lagging as segment of society. Any large scale segmental disparity is bound to have dragging effect slowing down the growth and will also lead to other problems of social order. (1) Hence it is necessary for rapid, holistic and sustainable growth of the society. By empowering women, their productivity

will increase. This will lead to multifold increase in social capital and economic growth.

How To Achieve

There are various kind of efforts needed in all spheres for rapid empowerment of women viz.

Social:

- Firstly, Society need to get rid of many superstitious customs to eject the feeling of inferiority forced into women through generations. Eg. Parda, dowry, female infanticide etc. Recent case of Sabarimala Mandir is interesting case study in this regard. Sabarimala temple is a very popular pilgrimage place located in Kerala and is devoted to deity Ayappa. Until recently, women between age of 10 to 50 years were not allowed in temple. (2) The reason given by the temple authorities was that god Ayappa is celibate and visits of women of menstruating age could act as potential distraction to the deity's path of purity. The female police on the way to temple checks devotees for this. Additionally, temple's own security checks devotees after that. Though hon'ble Supreme Court has given the verdict that all women irrespective of their age be allowed in the temple but there is still opposition at local level. But ultimately, this judgment will have positive effect on status of women in society.
- There is also a dire need to increase women's capability through more focus on girl education, vocational

training, increased opportunity to higher education etc.

- Then, women must be given their due place in power hierarchy, decision making system and leadership. For example, initially, to leapfrog their participation, women can be given reservation in higher education, jobs and legislatures.(7)
- Social dogmas related to family structures also need to be loosened to allow them leeway to experiment and achieve excellence.

Economic

- Creating equal opportunities for women in economic activities will increase their economic independence which will empower them to make decisions.
- It is necessary to have safety on workplace, parity of treatment and equal pay to ensure enhanced participation of women in economic activities.
- Movements like SHG need to be promoted so that economic empowerment of women penetrates up to grass root level.

Political Empowerment

It is also necessary to provide women opportunity to get into leadership role. This will not only boost their confidence and morale but will infuse decision making with fresh perception also.

Psychological

It is necessary to motivate people psychologically also to shed inhibitions and dogmas and adopt a fair approach through mass awareness about women empowerment. (3)The youth can play a proactive role in such endeavour.

Government Schemes For Women Empowerment

At present ,the government of India has over 38 schemes for women operated by different departments and ministeries. Some of these are as follows;

1. Mahila Samridhi Yojana(MSY)
2. Swablamban
3. Ujjawala
4. Rastria Mahila Kosh(RMK)
5. National Mission for Empowerment of Women
6. Sukanya Samridhi Yojana
7. Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment Of Adolscence Girl(2010)
8. Swadhar
9. Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana
10. Priyadarshini
11. Mahila E-haat
12. Beti Bachao , Beti Padhao
13. One Stop Centre Scheme
14. Swadhar Greh
15. Nari Shakti Puruskars

The Way Forward

Enhanced power of women by increased capacity and exercise of that capacity

positively will lead to fast growth of society as a whole. It will also lead to rapid decline in poverty, illiteracy and malnutrition because women are fulcrum of families and an educated healthy mother will make entire family educated, healthy and forward looking. Families make societies and societies make nations so better families make better nations.(4-6) Hence women empowerment will not only entail growth but will also create a much better civilization.

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