

A STUDY ON NATIONAL POLICY FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN BHADRAK DISTRICT OF ODISHA

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ABSTRACT

The study examined that the government policy for women in rural area is not properly functioning due to lack of supervision and discussion it is concluded that, if government makes only 50% of reservation for women electorate, it will not solve their problem. Rather, women's will be provided free quality and technical education, trade skill, training, vocational education guidance, support services, credit facility at cheap rate of interest at village / panchayat level with social awareness camp and proper supervision of utilization of subsidized funds provided to them with proper infrastructure facility so that, they may draw the benefit and development of women can be achieved.

Keywords: *Women Empowerment, Gender Equality, Directive Principles, Women Development.*

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 favor of women. Within the framework of the constitution, out laws, Development policies, plans and programs have aimed at women's advancement in different spheres. From the fifth five year plan onwards, there has been a marked shift in the approach of women's issues from welfare to development. In recent years the empowerment of women has been recognized as the central issue in determining the status of women. The National commission for women was set up by an act of parliament in 1990 to safeguard the rights and legal entitlements of women. The 73rd & 74th amendment to the constitution of India have provided for reservation of seats in the local bodies of panchayata and municipalities for women, recently (2019) amended by government of odisha for 33% reservation in Parliament and state assemblies seats for women which was complements came from United Nations entity for gender equality and empowerment of women, laying a strong foundation for their participation in decision making at local levels and national levels.

India has also followed convention of human rights on elimination of all forms of discrimination against women in 1993. The Mexico plan of action, the Nairobi foreword looking strategies, the Beijing declaration as well as the platform for Action (PAF) and the out come document adopted by the UNGA Session on gender equality, Development adopted by the UNGA session on gender equality, Development, peace for the 21st century titled, Further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration & the "plat form for Action" have been unreservedly endorsed by India for appropriate follow up. The policy also takes the note of the commitments of the 9th 5 year plan and other sectoral policies relating to empowerment of women. The women's movement and a widespread net work of NGO's, SHG's which have strong grass roots, presence and deep insight into women's concern have contributed in inspiring initiatives for the empowerment of women. However, there still exists a wide gap between the goal enunciated in the constitution, policies, plans, programmes and related mechanism on the one hand

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and the situational reality of the status of women in India, on the other. This has been analyzed extensively in the report of the committee on the status of women in India, "towards equality", 1974 & highlighted the sharma-shakti report, 1988 & the platform for action, five years after an assessment."

Gender disparity manifests that, there is declining of female ratio, in the population for the last few decades, violence against women in domestic & in the society, discrimination against girl children, adolescent girls & women still persists in the society.

The underlying causes of gender inequality are related to social and economic structure, which is based on informal & formal norms and practices. Consequently, the access of women particularly those belonging to weaker sections, including SC/ST/OBC & Minorities, Majority of whom are in rural areas and in the informal, unorganized sector inadequate. Therefore, they remain largely marginalized, poor & socially excluded.

Policy Prescriptions

- **Judicial Legal System**

The system of Indian judiciary violence against women, laws to be enacted to punish, the violence against women, assault, trafficking and such issues of women relating to marriage, divorce, maintenance, guardianship, elimination of discrimination and immediate legal punishment to the offense.

The property right of the patriarchal system must be modified, giving equal right to property on women & also the legal right of inheritance like men the gender justice.

- **Decision Making**

In the decision making process society women's to be given equal opportunity. All facilities to be provided to women in equal access and full participation in decision making bodies at every level from village, panchayat, district level including legislative, executive, judiciary, corporate, statutory bodies and also in the advisory committees, commissions, Boards, Trusts, etc. even if from Gram panchayat to Assembly & Parliament of India women friendly personnel policies must encourage them to participate in all developmental process.

Objectives of the Study

The goals of this policy are to bring advancement, development, active participation, encouragement & empowerment of women in social, economic, political field.

- To create a positive policy for full development of women to realize their inner potentialities.
- Enjoyment of freedom of women like men in the sphere of economic, political and social fields.
- Equal Access to decision making process of women.
- Equal Access to women health care, quality of education levels of living, vocational guidance, employment, equal remuneration with men, occupational safety & social security.
- Strengthening of women & elimination of discrimination against women.
- Strengthening women's organization, association, equal partnership with men and elimination of violence against women & girl adolescents.

Methodology and Data Collection of the Study

The present study was carried out in 5 selected Panchayat from 5 block of Bhadrak District. The five panchayats have similar economic backgrounds. Here women are mostly engaging agricultural and non-agricultural activities and they are mostly sole earner of their family. The five panchayats have 250 randomly selected households 50 from each panchayat. Therefore no specific technique was employed. The study based on qualitative and quantitative in nature. The present study was based on primary data collected from each household and secondary data from deferent reports.

Data Analysis and Interpretations

- **Economic Empowerment of Women - Poverty Eradication**

Women constitute one-half of the segment of pluralism in India. The 2011 Census contend 58.74 crores female population, out of total 121 crores of population, of which 27.8 crores women live in rural areas & of them 20% remains below poverty line. In Odisha during 2014-15, 32.6% people were below poverty line, which has been decreased to 29.6% in 2018-19. In the District of Bhadrak, as per ODR Odisha Development Report 2004, 9.73% small farmers, 59633 or 29.06% marginal farmers, 83072 or 40.49%, Agricultural labourers, 874 or 0.43% Rural Artisans, Total No. of BPL families 1,36,849 or 66.70%. If we compare data with other States of India, Punjab has only 5.2% of BPL families, Kerala 11.4%.

Table 1: Percentage of People below Poverty Line in Odisha

Year	Odisha %			India %		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
1973-74	67.28	55.62	66.18	56.44	49.01	54.88
1983-84	67.53	49.15	65.29	45.65	40.79	44.48
1993-94	49.72	41.64	48.56	37.27	32.36	35.97
2004-05	39.80	40.30	39.90	31.80	31.70	31.77
2010-11	33.2	32.06	32.6	21.96	21.83	21.92

Source: Economic Survey Govt. of India, 2018-19,

Table 2: Poverty in the District of Bhadrak & Study Panchayats

Name of the District & Panchayats with Blocks	Small Farmers	Marginal Farmers	Ag. Labourers	Rural Artisans	Total No. of BPL families
Bhadrak (Dist)	19967 9.73%	59633 29.06%	83072 40.49%	874 0.43%	1,36,849 66.70%
Bhadrak Block	-	-	-	-	27052
Korkora G.P.	273	677	1447	78	943
Dhamnagar Block	-	-	-	-	22569
Palasahi G.P.	332	834	1187	45	668
Chandabali Block	-	-	-	-	32620
Baligaon G.P.	395	827	1843	157	875
B. Pokhari Block	-	-	-	-	12138
Malada G.P.	435	427	1888	85	701
Tihidi Block	-	-	-	-	22263
Kampada G.P.	365	3762	5703	-	2227

Source: DSWO, BHADRAK, BDO'S, GPO'S OF Bhadrak Dist. Odisha SDR Indicator Framework-2019, Odisha Annual Report 2016-17 Human Development Report – 2004,

- **Micro Credit**

In order to enhance women's access to credit for consumption and production, the establishment of new and strengthening of existing micro-credit mechanism and micro-finance institutions will be undertaken, so that the outreach of credit is enhanced. Other supporting measures would be taken to ensure adequate flow of credit through financial institutions and banks, so that all women below poverty line have easy access to credit.

The following table indicates the expenditure incurred for different heads for women development.

Table 3: Sector wise outlay & flow of funds under the women component in Odisha (Rs. in Crores)

Sl. No	Sector	10 th Plan (2002-07)		11 th Plan 2007-12		Annual Plan 2007-08		Annual plan 2017-18	
1	Ag & Allied Activities	2.41	1.18	620.26	91.08	110.02	16.13	276.54	29.21
2	Rural Development	201.78	48.36	938.98	309.86	187.80	61.97	306.25	79.12
3	Industry & Minerals	1.88	1.17	41.57	12.32	7.69	2.31	18.72	4.21
4	Social Services	411.45	141.46	2180.43	399.81	356.16	127.61	502.3	16.28
5	Special Area Programme	1.69	0.67	18.00	2.70	2.10	0.32	3.20	0.47
6	Energy	1.08	0.85	14.04	6.88	2.81	1.38	3.54	
7	Science, Technology & Environment	0.05	0.05	-	-	-	-	0.84	.078
8	Higher Education	2.24	1.45	16.32	3.42	14.2	9.22	110.30	14.28
	Total	622.58	195.19	3829.60	826.07	680.78	218.94	1808.85	587.04

Source: Economic Survey, Govt. of Odisha, 2008-09, 2017-18

From the above table, it is found that, Govt. of Odisha during 10th plan period on rural development for women development spent Rs. 201.78 crores & during 2006-07 Rs. 48.36 crores & during 11th plan for women Rs. 309.86 crores & during 2007-08, 61.97 crores and 2017-18 Rs.306.25 crores were allocated for women development.

In Odisha, the total amount spent on Gender-related budgeting for 100 percent related schemes is around Rs.1808 crore during 2017-18 and the amount has increased to Rs.2442 crore as per 2019-20 (BE). While the expenditure on 30 percent related schemes is Rs.26,005 crore during 2017-18 (Actuals) and the amount has significantly increased Rs.44,046 crores as per 2019-20 (BE). In total there are 70 schemes which are 100 percent women specific and 413 schemes, where gender component is more than 30 percent. The total expenditure related to the child was around 1.86 percent of the total expenditure and 0.42 percent of the total GSDP for the 100 percent related schemes in 2017-18. On the other hand, the total expenditure related to 30 percent gender-specific schemes is 26.67 percent of the total expenditure and 5.98 percent of the total GSDP. As per 2019-20 (BE), the total expenditure related to a child is about 1.75 percent of the total expenditure and 0.45 percent of the total GSDP for the 100 percent gender related schemes, whereas the total expenditure related to 30 percent gender-specific schemes is 31.69 percent of the total expenditure and 8.14 percent of the total GSDP.

Women and Economy

Women's prospective has been included in designing and implementing macro-economic and social policies by institutionalizing their participation in such process. Their contribution to socio-economic development as producers & workers will be recognized in the formal and informal sectors (including home-based workers) and appropriate policies relating to employment & to her working conditions will be drawn up, such measures include, Re-interpretation & Re-definition of conventional concepts of work wherever necessary, e.g. in the Census records to reflect women's contribution as producers and workers. Preparation of satellite & national accounts, development of appropriate methodologies for undertaking (i) & (ii) as mentioned above.

Globalization

Globalization has presented new challenges for the realization of the goal of women's equality the gender impact, of which has not been systematically evaluated fully. However, from the micro level studies that were commissioned by the Department of Women & Child Development it is evident that, there is a need for re-framing policies for access to employment and quality of employment. Benefits of the growing global economy have been unevenly distributed leading to wider economic disparities, the feminization of poverty, increased gender equality though often deteriorating working conditions and unsafe working environment especially in the informal economy and rural areas. Strategies will be designed to enhance the capacity of women and empower them to meet the negative social & economic impacts, which may flow from the globalization process.

Women and Agriculture

As a part of economic empowerment of women, those who are living in rural areas & most them are dependent on Agriculture as their source of living & as Agricultural labourers in tilling land, sowing, weeding, harvesting, they must be taught technology through imparting training.

Further training programmes shall be arranged for soil conservation, social forestry, dairy development, horticulture Animal husbandry, dairy farming, poultry, fishery, goatary piggery, bee-keeping to expand the benefit to women workers in Agricultural Sector. All efforts must be taken to train them, as a measure of capacity building approach by Department of Agriculture & Industry, through District Level Agricultural Officers, (AEO's), Block Level Industrial Promotion Officers (IPO's) at every Panchayat level in regular intervals. The programmes & capacity development must be reviewed in practice by enhancing production in Private farms / Government managed farms by NGO's.

Women and Industry

The important role played by women in electronics, information technology, food processing, agro industry & textiles has been crucial to the development of these sectors, so also strengthening the economy. They would be given comprehensive support in terms of labour legislation, social security and other support services to participate in various industrial sectors. Women at present cannot work in night-shift in factories, even if they wish to do. Suitable measures will be taken to enable women to work in the night shift in factories. This will be accompanied with proper security and good transportation facility.

Support Services

The provision of support services for women, like child care facilities, including crèches at work places, Educational Institutions, homes for the aged and the disabled will be expanded and improved to create an enabling environment and to ensure their full co-operation in social, political and economic life. Women-friendly personnel policies will also be drawn up to encourage women to participate effectively in the developmental process.

Conclusion

From the above discussion it is concluded that, if government makes only 50% of reservation for women electorate, it will not solve their problem. Rather, women's will be provided quality education, technical support, trade skill, training, vocational education guidance, support services, credit facility at cheap rate of interest at village / panchayat level with social awareness camp, proper supervision for utilization of subsidized financial assistance so that, they may draw the benefit and development of women can be achieved.

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