

DISPARITIES IN SOCIO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

Modern interest in women development essentially stems from underdeveloped countries because of their desire for economic development and growth and also the less participation of women in social and economic activities. A developing country like India accordingly needs improvement of the status of women, who are competent to perceive the new economic opportunities and are willing to incur the mandatory risks in exploiting them. The increased supply of such men and women ends up in increased number of economic activities. The development in the status of women always includes a positive impact on economic development. During the last 20 years, various studies, working groups and task forces and national conferences are organized to spot and articulate the important issues confronting women in their multiple roles. The last half of eighties witnessed an unprecedented spurt in policy perspective on women during which, the Governmental efforts were in the type of instituting several committees and women development corporations to market economic activities among women. Because sharing of economic activity and engagement of women in gainful employment always help to push rapid economic development and enhance the standard of family life. Unfortunately, empirical studies available only answer those questions regarding the economic development normally but not those specific to women development and its disparities in several dimensions. This study attempts to produce an summary of women empowerment and disparities in several dimensions. The current study aims to understand more about women and their development and also about the disparities in several dimensions like health, education, sex ratio, income, employment and political participation.

Keywords: *Empowerment, Economic, Employment, Development, Self Help Group, Conservative.*

Introduction

Women account for roughly half the world's population, perform two thirds of the hours worked, receive one-tenth of the world's income, and have but one hundredth of the world's property registered in their names. Female deprivation is especially acute in the developing countries with high levels of poverty, though in affluent nations women also suffer position due to conservative attitudes. Same happens in India also. India isn't only a national of diversities in the economic and social spheres, but also in gender inequality and inequity, resulting in poor status and social injustice. Status may be ascertained from the extent of control that she has over her own life derived from access to knowledge, economic resources and also the degree of autonomy

enjoyed in the process of higher cognitive process and selection at crucial points in her life cycle. Socio economic suppression of women affects not only the women but also the country as an entire. Women's status and autonomy are important aspects of empowerment. Sustainable social development can improve the status of younger generation but empowerment needs over that. The degree of integration of women in economic development is often an indicator of women's economic independence, rank and also a measure of women's contribution to economic development. The role of women in social and economic development of nation has acquired a replacement and crucial dimension stemming from the imperatives of social change and modernization. The past twenty years have witnessed the attention and realization of the necessity for the full involvement of women in the process of change, progress and development.

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Meaning of Women Empowerment

Gender equality is, first and foremost, an individual's right. Women are entitled to measure in dignity and in freedom from want and from fear. Empowering women is additionally a individual tool for advancing development and reducing poverty. Empowered women contribute to the health and productivity of whole families and communities and to improved prospects for the following generation. Gender equality is acknowledged as being a key to achieving the opposite seven goals. The concept of empowerment of women refers to the method of strengthening the hands of women who are laid low with various disabilities, inequalities and gender discrimination. It's the method of providing power to women to become free from the control of others and it's the method of providing equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities to women in order that they will assume power to manage their own life and determine their own condition. The term empowerment of women has become popular only after 1980s. In its broadest sense, empowerment is that the expansion of freedom of choice and action. Empowerment of women could be a process of remodeling gender relations through groups or individuals developing awareness of women's subordination and building their capacity to challenge it.

Status of Women in India

In the changing times the status of women is changing. The status of women wasn't good in earlier days also. Everything women were subjected to inequality, discrimination and exploitation. The status of women is changing in step with changes in the general conditions of society. The history is clear that the status of women has been changing from time to time. During the Vedic and Epic period Indian women were held in equal position with men. Women enjoyed freedom in areas as education, marriage, economic production, pin money, religious activities etc. Women had freedom to pick out their life partners and widows were permitted to remarry. Wives were treated as 'Ardhanginies', got complete freedom in family matters and in many respect thought to be equals of their husbands. Hence the term 'dampati' was used and were considered the joint heads of the house hold. Property rights and inheritance were limited to women. In the religious field 'Women were actively participating. Major changes in the position of women passed off during the amount of Dharmashastras and Puranas. the liberty of women curtailed, daughters were thought to be class-two citizens and sons got more importance. Women' upanayana was stopped, education was neglected and reduced the age of women at marriage. Manu the law giver gave an injunction: 'A woman should be under her father during childhood, under her husband during her youth and under her son during adulthood.

Inequality between men and women is one amongst the foremost crucial disparities in many societies and this can be particularly so in India. Differences in female and male literacy rates are one aspect of their broader phenomenon of gender based inequality in India. In most of the countries, women tend to general top fare quite badly in relative terms compared with men, even in the same families. This is often reflected not only in such matters as education and opportunity to develop talents, but also in the more elementary fields of nutrition, health and survival. Indeed, the mortality rates of females tend to exceed those of males until the late twenties, and even the late thirties in some states and this can be known from the experiences of other countries is incredibly much in contrast with what tends to happen when men and women's require similar nutritional and health care. One result's a remarkably low ratio of females to male in the Indian population compared with the corresponding ratio not only in Europe and North America, but also in geographical area. The matter isn't, of course, unique to India, but it's particularly serious during this country, and definitely deserves public attention as a matter of major priority.

Need for Women Empowerment

The empowerment is an aid to assist women to realize equality with men or a minimum of, to scale back gender gap considerably. Women play a definite role in the economic development. She is the chief architect of family, the primary teacher; supplier of labour power and by playing main role in the development of agriculture, industry, service sector, socio-culture etc. creates a civilized society. The character has given the biological power of reproduction especially to the women. She will create social, cultural and economic wonders. Even then the socioeconomic status of women's is so low. Women labourers in India are illiterates. Hence their status should be improved; she should be physically, mentally, economically, socially, politically and culturally strengthened. So the country can make use of hidden potential power for the economic development. Often the women are victimized in the cases like rape, dowry harassment, harassment, kidnapping etc. The verdicts of the many of such cases go against women due to the non-availability of witness, discontinuation of suits, difficulty of proving the incidents etc. Therefore, women should be empowered and strengthened. Women empowerment still as their

participation on the premise of equality altogether spheres of society is prime to the advancement of human rights. Women's equality in power sharing and active participation in deciding, including deciding in political process in any respect levels are ensured for the achievement of the goals of empowerment. All measures are taken to ensure women equal access to be full participation in deciding bodies at level. Social action like reservations/quota, including in higher legislative bodies, are considered whenever necessary on a time bound basis. Women-friendly personal policies will be immersed to encourage women to participate effectively in the development process. The report of the world Bank found that educated, healthy women are ready to engage in productive activities, find formal sector employment, earn higher incomes and luxuriate in greater returns to schooling than are uneducated women who are suffering from poor nutrition and health, or are victims of violence. Moreover, educated women give greater emphasis to schooling their own children, thereby improving the productivity of the following generation.

Women Development Contributes to Economic Development

Women development or empowerment is an important ingredient to eradicate poverty, and thereby contributes to economic development. it's an proven fact that a gender equality perspective will facilitate in attending the goal of reducing poverty by half the proportional of individuals living in extreme poverty by 2015 from 29 percent to 14.5 percent of all people in low and middle income countries.⁹ Indeed, gender equality is vital not only as a goal in itself, but also as the way towards achieving the economic development. Women development not only increases the per capital income but also enhances the productivity of labour and improves the efficiency of labour allocation, gender development includes a direct impact on economic process and reduction of income poverty. ¹⁰ Women empowerment contributes to cut back illiteracy, because educated women given greater emphasis to schooling their children, thereby improves the productivity of the subsequent generation. The educated women are more ready to engage in production activities, which may help to earn higher income. This successively will result in higher standard of living.

Micro finance is being promoted as a key poverty, predication strategy to enable poor women and men to address the adverse economic and social impact of structural adjustment policies and globalization micro finance programmes are currently being promoted as a key strategy for addressing both poverty reduction and women's empowerment. Access to credit will empower women by enabling them to line up or expand their micro-enterprises. More precisely, it highlights the actual fact that financial service provision may result in higher income levels and greater economic independence, access to networks and markets giving wider experience of the globe outside the house, access to information and possibilities for development of other social and political roles, increased participation in household decisions about expenditure and other issues.

Measures Undertaken for Women Empowerment by Government and Other Agencies

The Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) has noted that a purely formal legal or programmatic approach isn't sufficient to attain women's de facto equality with men. Additionally, the convention requires that women lean an equal start which they be empowered by an enabling environment to realize equality of results. The committee noted that it's not enough to ensure women treatment that's same as that of men. Rather, biological similarly as socially and culturally constructed differences between women and men would be required so as to deal with such differences. ⁴¹ Interventions to make an enabling environment may thus be required at many alternative levels and involving many alternative actors so as for them to achieve success. Actions to make an enabling environment generally occur at the policies, legal and regulatory fram works by Governments and organizations in the context of reform programmes. However, they'll not be immediately enforced and their results might not be directly felt at the micro level. The enabling environment for gender equality and women's empowerment might also be influenced by factors that aren't easily controlled by Governments, organizations or communities, as an example, the worldwide political and policy environment, the supply of international financing for development, and therefore the development of latest technologies. Globalization, including trade liberalization for instance, affects women's migration and employment. The millennium task force on child health and maternal health has argued that service delivery systems like health systems, complies core social institutions for women's empowerment. Providing cultural norms and men attitudes and resistance to alter also have to be taken into consideration.

Economic Empowerment of Women

- **Poverty Eradication:** Since women comprise the bulk of the population below the personal income and are fairly often in situations of utmost poverty, given the cruel realities of intra-household. Women empowerment helps in making poverty eradication a self made tool.
- **Micro Credit:** To reinforce women's access to credit for consumption and production, the establishment of recent, and strengthening of existing microcredit mechanisms and micro-finance institution are undertaken so the outreach of credit is enhanced. Other supportive measures would be taken to confirm adequate flow of credit through extant financial institutions and banks, so all women below poverty level have quick access to credit.
- **Globalization:** Globalization has presented new challenges for the conclusion 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's evident that there's a requirement for re-framing policies for access to employment and quality of employment. Benefits of the growing global economy are unevenly distributed resulting in wider economic disparities, the feminization of poverty, increased gender inequality through often deteriorating working conditions and unsafe working environment. Strategies are going to be designed to reinforce the capacity of women and empower them to satisfy the negative social and economic impacts, which can result the globalization process.
- **Women and Industry:** The important role played by women in electronics, information technology and food processing and agro industry and textiles has been crucial to the event of those sectors. they'd run comprehensive support in terms of labour legislation, Social Security and other support services to participate in various industrial sectors. Women at the present cannot add night shift in factories whether or not they need to. Suitable measures are taken to enable women to figure on the night shift in factories. This can be accompanied with support services for security, transportation etc.

Conclusion

During the last twenty years, various studies, working groups and task forces and national conferences are organized to spot and articulate the real issues confronting women in their multiple roles. The last half of eighties witnessed an unprecedented spurt in policy perspective on women during which, the Governmental efforts were in the variety of instituting several committees and women's development corporations to push economic activities among women. Because sharing of economic activity and engagement of women's in gainful employment always help to push rapid economic development and enhance the standard of family life. The Indian Government has assumed the role of integrating women with economic development long back and simultaneous efforts are made to enhance their conditions from both economic and social angles. Thus the Governmental approaches are directed towards women development and integration of women's in economic development and this has provided increased opportunities to women. Entrepreneurship and self employment are some among them. With this it's been noted that women's are moving into traditional and non-traditional areas also. Nevertheless, despite the few notable exceptions, in India, the women's entrepreneurial scene remains dominated by traditional small and medium scale industries. India isn't only a national of diversities in the economic and social spheres, but also in gender inequality and inequity, resulting in poor status and social injustice. Status is ascertained from the extent of control that she has over her own life derived from access to knowledge, economic resources and also the degree of autonomy enjoyed in the process of decision making and selection at crucial points in her life cycle. Socio economic suppression of women's affects not only the women but also the country as an entire. Women's status and autonomy are important aspects of empowerment. Sustainable social development can improve the status of younger generation but empowerment needs quite that.

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