

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper emphasizes on the opportunities and challenges of women empowerment in India. Women empowerment means emancipation of women from the vicious grips of social, economical, political, caste and gender based discrimination. We can analyze their conditions through a number of parameters like their involvement in household decision making right, freedom of thought, financial authority, gender equality, political participation, media exposure, access to education etc. It is noticed that still gender inequality is a serious concern and is prevailing dominantly in our society. Though with the changing scenario the conditions of women have also changed moving ahead from the four boundaries of the house to the working environment. But till a lot has to be done to educate and uplift their condition in the society. In this paper we have focused on the secondary source of data. The study also throws light on the initiatives and efforts taken by the government for the same. We have also focused on the measures that shall be taken and are taken to uplift their condition.

Keywords: Women Empowerment, Gender Discrimination, Education, Socio- Economic Status.

Introduction

Since ages, the situation of women has not been worthy in our society. They had faced biasness, discrimination, exploitation and much more which always left them miserable. Though time to time many activist, social workers did their bit for their upliftment but there has been a huge gap between what policies were planned and what actually has been implemented. Many times either the government was not supportive and even when things were planned for their betterment, the male dominated society acted as a barrier for their growth. There is a lot of scope for the betterment of them.

Empowerment refers to taking charge of the decisions and leading an independent life thereby also contributing towards the problems erupting within society. Through empowerment we focus on the control of violence against the women.

Literature Review

This has been an area of interest for many people and many enlightened us with their knowledge regarding the work done for women upliftment. Time to time things have been looked where there is scope of more improvement and based on the findings a lot has been planned from various dimensions for the betterment.

M. Bhavani Shankara Rao (2011) stressed that the health of women SHG members has definitely improved. This clearly shows that the health of women members discusses among themselves the health problems of other members and their children, and introduces them to the various government regulations specifically designed for them.

Objective of the Study

Following mentioned are the objectives of our studying the condition of women empowerment and what is done along with what else can be done to discriminate gender inequality.

- To understand women empowerment
- To understand the requirement of women empowerment
- Status of women empowerment in India

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- Challenges associated with their upliftment
- Government schemes for women empowerment
- Other suggestions for gender equality

Research Methodology

This paper is descriptive in nature and is based on secondary data. We have tried to analyze the scenario of women empowerment from the details collected from newspapers, journals, magazines, internet, books, previous conducted research etc.

Challenges

Women are more than a substance and to acknowledge their worth a tough phase has to be dealt. Since ages and even today in present scenario, they face lot many issues and challenges which are discussed below in brief:

- **Lack of Education:** Majority of females are still deprived of their basic right to education. They are forced to look after household work by their parents.
- **Female Foeticide:** Irrespective of till where our society and nation has grown still in many areas female foeticide is still practiced for which our government is also taking a number of corrective measures to control it.
- **Family Responsibility:** From the very early age girls are expected to look after their family and are bounded to restrict themselves within the four boundaries of their home.
- **Gender Discrimination:** Males are given more importance in every important decision making than the females.
- **Social Status:** Females have to struggle to make their appearance felt in the society. They are fundamentally and socially deprived of their rights.

Status of women empowerment in India

With the change in thought and better degree of awareness people are coming forward with their contribution towards the development of women. A number of social workers, educators along with government are initiating for the enhancement of women's status. They are being educated and are more conscious for their rights to be gained.

Government Initiatives

Government started to work for women empowerment since late few decades but have speed up only since last two decades. A number of programs are being conducted nationwide to promote them. Few among them are mentioned below:

- Mahila Samridhi Yojana (MSY) October, 1993.
- Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY) 1995.
- Women Entrepreneur Development programme given top priority in 1997-98.
- Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP).
- Hostels for working women.
- The Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for Children of Working Mothers.
- Integrated Child Protection scheme (ICPS) (2009-2010).
- Dhanalakshmi (2008).
- Prime Minister's Rojgar Yojana (PMRY).
- Mahila Samiti Yojana.
- SIDBI's Mahila Udyam Nidhi Mahila Vikas Nidhi.
- National Banks for Agriculture and Rural Development's Schemes

Conclusion

Thus we see that the status of women all over the world and especially in context to India is still under-privileged. Women have been facing lot many hardships to prove their existence and facing uncountable challenges and hardships to overcome inequalities. The prominent factor to support this inequality can be seen through the sex ratio which depicts the number of females in proportion to males is not balanced. They are not supported even at initial level of their homes by the male members. They are supposed to carry house hold activities and upbringing of their kids.

The mindset of the nation has to be taught that when women are educated the whole family upgrades. The up-gradation of women leads to the up-gradation of society and nation as a whole. It is essential as their thought and their value systems lead the development of a good family, good society and ultimately a good nation. Women empowerment is one of the significant areas which have to be managed efficiently globally. Government is also taking a number of measures towards eradication of this inequality and working towards creating a society which is far from this injustice.

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