



ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN INDIA

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Abstract-The empowerment of women is very essential for a nation. The freedom of life of a woman brings enlightening not only the family but also the entire nation. In the modern era, the women are achieving great level in all the fields. They do business, caring family, business, science and technology and what not? Though they earn money, most of them are not empowered economically yet. Earnings of a married women help to lead a family. Mostly middle class women earnings are contributing more in the family development. But in many occasions, they are not able to take financial decision in their life. Hence, this article is an attempt to study the economic empowerment of women in India.

Key words: women empowerment, economic empowerment in India, women employment

1. INTRODUCTION

India is going to be number one 2050 by its population. The country's economy and development is purely based on the empowerment of women. The environment which gives independence and freedom the women only can be only one choice for the development. But the empowerment of is still under thread. Economic empowerment is very essential to every women. In the present scenario, most of the women are dependent economically, physically and morally. Though the percentage literacy and knowledge growing among the women, they need economical empowerment. They should take their own independent decisions. The employability of women can only lead to their economic empowerment. The women in India should be permitted use their own money for their interest. In many families in India, the entire money of the earnings of the ladies goes out of their hands. Husband or his family members dominates.

Across India there are massive social cleavages and gender inequality is prevalent in sectors including health, education, and literacy. There are several national and international NGOs and civil society actors working towards enhancing women's rights, but the proportion of those specifically targeting women is low. The policy space available to organisations working for women's empowerment is quite restricted, however, research and advocacy on women's rights and work is on the rise, in addition to several government programmes to enhance empowerment of women.

2. WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment refers to the process of change that gives individuals greater freedom of choice and action. The development of economic empowerment for women is contingent upon available resources and whether women have the skills to use them. Moreover, it depends on women's access to economic opportunities and control over their economic benefits. In reality, women face obstacles throughout the process of transforming resources into strategic choices. Paramount among the obstacles to women's economic empowerment is society's dependence on women's unpaid work, either at home or the market (in the agricultural sector, for example). This results in women's increased time poverty, restricting their ability to engage in paid and formal work. Removing and overcoming many of the barriers to women's economic empowerment will require structural change within social institutions to actively promote gender equality and women's rights. In contexts of conflict and post-conflict, the challenges for women's economic empowerment deepen. This is because of the low priority of gender related development objectives in the political agenda of reconstruction and limited implementation capacity of different actors (e.g. government, civil society). However, there is often an increased awareness of the opportunities for women's economic empowerment in times of conflict and post-conflict, which includes a chance to change discriminatory gender norms of the past. Furthermore, there is the potential contribution of women's economic empowerment to strategic development goals and new economic prospects for women, building on their new economic roles acquired during the conflict. Women's economic empowerment is one of the most important factors contributing to equality between women and men. A specific focus on women is necessary given that women are a majority among economically disadvantaged groups. Gendered power structures and social norms lock both women and men in positions that limit their productivity and ability to make choices to improve their situation.

3. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA

Despite its growing economy (with a GDP of 7.3 per cent in 2014-15), issues such as persistent poverty, corruption, clientelism and inequality continue to disrupt the social and economic ethos in India. Women continue to be excluded in social, economic and political domains, which show the inadequate attention towards inclusive growth and unequal gender relations. India ranks 127 out of 187 countries in the gender inequality index with a score of 0.536.

Economical status will be improved when the women are getting employed. The statistics shows that India is ranked 120 among 131 countries. Though the graduate level is 42% from the female, due to many reasons like safety, physical environment and undue care about the female from their family, the females are not go into employment. Only the rural women working in unorganized sector is high in percentage. The percentage of women working in service and industry is less than 20%.

Gender biases due to patriarchal culture and tradition continue to exist within the household, impacting women's lives in the public and private sphere. Caste barriers further enunciate discrimination against women, especially those belonging to the lower caste such as Scheduled caste and Dalit women. Recognising the historical disadvantage and vulnerability of Dalit women, the government has adopted various legislations such as the Protection of Civil Rights Act (PCRA) and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act which paces Dalits to be at par with other caste groups. Recently there has been also been a considerable increase in the budgetary allocation for the Department of Women and Child Development.

Economic empowerment of women is mainly based on their participation in decision making process with regard to raising and distribution of income, investments and expenditure at all levels. The entire efforts of empowering women are to help them to exercise their rights in decision making at all levels both within and outside the households and enable them to be treated as equal partners in the society. Efforts are on to enhance the capacity of women to earn and ensure that they get access to and control the whole family or community assets. The economic empowerment is measured with the help of increase in assets value, income, Savings, loan amount and family income.

Women's economic empowerment is a priority in promoting gender equality and women's rights in Swedish development cooperation. A stronger focus on gender equality and women's economic empowerment is essential to reduce poverty. The World Bank argues that addressing gender inequalities with women's economic empowerment is 'smart economics'. They argue that greater gender equality enhances productivity, improves development outcomes for the next generation, and make institutions more representative. Women represent 40 percent of the global labour force, 43 percent of the world's agricultural labour force and more than half the world's university students. Productivity will thus be raised if their knowledge, skills and talents are used more fully. The World Bank further states that greater control over household resources by women can enhance countries' growth prospects by changing spending patterns in ways that benefit children. In fact, improvements in women's education and health have been linked to better outcomes for their children in countries as varied as Brazil, Nepal, Pakistan, and Senegal. The third message from the World Bank is that empowering women as economic, political and social actors can change policy choices and ensure more representative decision-making.² Gendered power structures and social norms lock both women and men in positions that limit both their productivity and their ability to make choices to improve their situation. Gender equality benefits both men and women, but as women are economically marginalised to a greater extent, this paper focuses on women's economic empowerment. This does not mean that we are overlooking the need for empowering certain groups of poor men or the need for addressing men in their relationship to women (i.e. husbands allowing women to earn income, fathers encouraging girls' secondary schooling etc.) which is often a central aspect for successful results.

CONCLUSION

This paper is an attempt to bring the importance of the women economic empowerment. Development of women is the development of a home, society and nation. Women empowerment is depending on their economic empowerment. When they are economically empowered, the women will have the sky as limit. Their lot of potential, knowledge, skill, sincerity and dedication will yield better result everyone. The government should take necessary initiations to protect, support and guide in their part.

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