



## WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA

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### Abstract

*The present paper is an attempt to analyze the status of women empowerment in India based on data from secondary sources. The study reveals that women of India are relatively disempowered and they enjoy somewhat lower status than that of men in spite of many efforts undertaken by government. Women's status is quite low, and women are disproportionately affected by poverty. All of the problems can only be solved by empowering women. Women's potential power can be used for economic development if they are educated and empowered. People's full engagement in the decision-making process that shapes their life is visualised by the empowerment aspect. Women's development and empowerment are essential to achieving the objective of inclusive growth and human development. The need, aims, importance of women's empowerment, role of women's empowerment in India, government programmes for women's empowerment, and conclusion are all included in this article.*

**Key words:** Women, empowerment, education, confident, self-respect

### Introduction

In the last five decades, the concept of women's empowerment has shifted from a welfare-oriented to an equity-oriented approach. It's been defined as the process by which the powerless gain more influence over their lives' circumstances. Control over money and ideology are two aspects of empowerment. According to Sen and Batliwala (2000), it results in increased intrinsic capability, increased self-confidence, and an inner alteration of consciousness that allows one to overcome external barriers. This viewpoint focuses primarily on two key points. To begin with, it is a power to attain desired outcomes rather than a power over others. Second, the concept of empowerment is more appropriate to those who are powerless, whether they are men or women, groups of people, classes, or castes. Though the concept of empowerment is not exclusive to women, it does cut across all classes and castes, as well as inside families and households (Malhotra et al, 2002). Women empowerment is also defined as a change in the context of a women's life, which enables her increased capacity for leading a fulfilling human life. It gets reflected both in external qualities (viz. health, mobility, education and awareness, status in the family, participation in decision making, and also at the level of material security) and internal qualities (viz. self-awareness and self-confidence) [Human Development in South Asia (2000) as quoted by Mathew (2003)]. UNDP (1990) for the first time introduced the concept of Human Development Index (HDI) that evolved initially as a broader measure of socio-economic progress of a nation but it became popular as a measure of average achievements in human development for both the sexes. Contrary to the general belief that development is gender neutral, statistics show that women lag behind men all over the world including India in almost all aspects of

life. It is for this reason that the focus on human development has been to highlight the gender dimension and continuing inequalities confronting women since 1995 (UNDP 1995). The Report noted that without empowering women overall development of human beings is not possible. It further stressed that if development is not engendered, is endangered. To bring out the facts and figures relating to deprivation of women two indices, namely, Gender related Development Index (GDI) and Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) were introduced. While GDI measures the achievements in the same dimensions and variables as the HDI, it also takes into account inequality in achievement between women and men (Anand and Sen, 1995). The greater the gender disparity in human development, the lower is country's GDI compared to its HDI. The GDI is the HDI adjusted downwards for gender inequality. On the other hand, GEM indicates whether women are able to actively participate in economic and political life. Theoretically, the index can take values between zero and infinity, with a value of unity reflecting an absolute equality in the respective attainments of males and females. A value higher than unity would imply that females have better attainments than males.

### Objectives of the Study

The study's goal is to learn about women's current status and efforts, as well as the importance of women's empowerment and the many women's empowerment programmes available in India.

### Aspects of Empowerment

Employees who work with women are evaluated on 10 key areas of empowerment. Because the qualitative parts of women's work aren't directly measured. In order to

compare different groups of employees on a comparable scale, the empowerment of women employees takes into account all variables. Ability to gain skills, Access to information sources, Self-confidence, Ownership of assets, Freedom to spend own money, Recognition of ability, Decision-making, Mobility, Social Involvement, and Ability to Make Positive Changes are some of the features of women empowerment.

### **Status of Women in India**

An Indian woman had a four-fold status in the past. These were the roles of daughter, wife, housewife, and mother. In society, a woman's rank was set. However, women's status is evolving in current times. They take an active role in social, economic, and political affairs. They earned more education, job, and a greater wage, as well as a higher social status. Women's contribution to the growth of the health and education sectors is linked to a number of social, economic, and cultural variables. Progressive social movements, government policies, and a historically favourable atmosphere are all important elements in women's success. Women's empowerment is directly linked to variables like female literacy and labour force participation rates, which help to reduce gender gaps throughout economic growth. Public action in education, women's ownership, and political involvement are required to supplement these. Access to education was critical in providing women with job opportunities or even empowering unemployed housewives.

### **Importance of Women Empowerment**

There are many unemployed ladies all around the world. Uneven opportunities for women at work have a significant impact on the global economy. Women empowerment helps to develop society. Women empowerment helps women to stand on their own two feet and become independent. It reduces domestic violence. It helps women to get educated. It helps women to understand their rights and responsibilities and can help to stop corruption. It helps to reduce poverty. Women are increasingly participating in the national development process

### **How to Empower Women**

Women's empowerment would result in a more evolved society. The world will undoubtedly be a better place to live if women contribute equally to males. Women can be empowered in a variety of ways.

### **Create safe work place**

Female members of society should be able to work in a safe environment. The construction of a safe working environment can empower women.

### **Women Education**

- Female education adds to the family's health and well-being
- Women who receive education contribute to the country's national income
- Educated women are often regarded politically active

- Educated women are more aware of their rights and are better able to protect themselves

### **Raise voice against gender inequality**

Women can be empowered by reducing societal gender inequities.

### **Job skills**

For greater results, ladies should receive proper training.

### **Create more part time job opportunities**

More part-time and flexible jobs should be established in order to increase the number of women employed.

### **Women's Role in Society**

In India, many women supported and participated in the nationalism struggle, as well as distinguished positions and office management. Previously, men discouraged women from leaving their homes to attend social events. The rise of knowledge, as well as educated women's social attitudes, has altered the status quo. The modern woman has begun to priorities her health, appearance, cultural demands and interests, academic pursuits, social interactions, religious activities, and recreational activities, among other things.

Women are gradually becoming more involved in politics. Some are becoming members of political parties, attending meetings and conventions, and implementing political programmes.

### **Government Schemes for Women Empowerment**

The Government of India has been trying to empower the women through various schemes viz., Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme, One stop centre scheme, Women helpline scheme, Working women hostel, Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme, Ujjawala Scheme, SWADHAR Greh, Support to training and Employment Programme of Women, NARI SHAKTI PURASKAR, Mahila Police Volunteers and Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana.

### **Conclusion**

In both society and the economy, women play a critical role. In India, women's standing is improving. The Indian government is attempting to empower women through passing timely acts and enforcing rules and regulations. In situations when women have higher levels of employment and money, the impact of women's employment on family and society is more obvious. When women employees have a high degree of employment, they are also more empowered. Without a doubt, India's government has a slew of weapons at its disposal in the fight for women's emancipation.

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