



Research Paper

Women Empowerment: Comprehensive Study

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Abstract: This study or research aims to examine the current situation of women empowerment in India and highlight its major issues and difficulties. One of the most significant issues facing the 21st century is women's empowerment today. Since the start of the 20th century, their standing has progressively shifted. According to the survey, women in India are still not as advanced as men, even with the government's best efforts. There is a gender disparity in the access to jobs and education. Women's freedom of movement and decision-making authority at home differ substantially depending on their age, level of education available, and work position. It has been discovered that women's acceptance of unequal sex standards remains widespread throughout society. Compared to urban women, rural women are more likely to be victims of domestic abuse. There is a significant gender disparity in political participation as well. The study comes to the conclusion that the only enabling elements are employment and educational opportunities, even though people's opinions about gender equality have a significant impact on how goal completion is prioritized.

Keywords: Women, Empowerment, Problems, Difficulties, and Violence Against Her

Received 27 Feb., 2024; Revised 05 Mar., 2024; Accepted 07 Mar., 2024 © The author(s) 2024.

Published with open access at www.questjournals.org

I. Introduction

Women Empowerment is all about change, choice and power. It is a process of transformation that gives weaker individuals and groups the ability to make decisions that have an impact on their lives. To understand their rights and fulfill their responsibilities to others and to themselves as best they can, women must first acquire power. We call this process "empowerment of women." Women's empowerment is the process of releasing women from the damaging effects of caste, social, economic, and political discrimination. That is giving women the freedom to live their lives as they see fit. Gender equality, not masculinity, is the key to women's empowerment. It is not the same as "empowering women." In this sense, there are several facets of women's empowerment, including such as:

Human rights, often known as personal rights: Women should have the freedom to express their thoughts, imaginations, and sensations since they are part of who they are. Possessing the self-assurance to stand up and establish one's authority to choose to bargain is a sign of personal empowerment.

Social Empowerment of Women: Encouraging gender parity is an essential component of women's social agency. Gender equality is the state in which men and women have equal access to opportunities, results, rights, and responsibilities in all areas of life.

Empowerment of Women in Education: It entails providing women with the information, abilities, and self-assurance they need to actively engage in the process of growth. It entails educating women about their rights and giving them the self-assurance to assert them.

Economic and Business Empowerment: This refers to a higher standard of living through sustainable businesses run and owned by women. Making them a substantial component of the human resource will help them become less financially dependent on their male counterparts.

Legal Women Empowerment: The drafting of legislation to create a solid legal basis for women's empowerment is recommended in this section. To do this, the gap between the law's intentions and the actual course of events must be closed.

Advocating for women's rights and empowering them has grown out of a global movement that has recently broken new ground. Holidays like International Women's Empowerment Day are gaining popularity. The social and economic advancement of families, communities, and countries depends on the empowerment of women. When women lead successful, safe, and ideal lives, they can reach their greatest potential. They raise

happy, healthy children and impart their knowledge to the staff. They play a major role in sustaining humanity, society, and a sustainable economy. But in spite of tremendous progress, discrimination and violence against women and girls still exist globally.

Objectives of the Study

1. To understand the ideas behind women's empowerment.
2. To research India's gender-based violence.
3. To examine the variables influencing women's empowerment.
4. To acknowledge the difficulties with women's empowerment.
5. To offer recommendations for the similar.

II. Research Methodology

The main aim of this research is to study or examine the many forms of women empowerment. The character of the study is both analytical and descriptive. Looking up to the needs of this investigation, the only secondary sources from which the data was drawn for this was. Secondary data gathered from a variety of credible websites, periodicals, and e-content pertaining to women's empowerment, as well as reports from national and international organizations.

Violence against Women in India

India's definition of violence against women is when men, in particular, physically or sexually abuse women. Domestic abuse, sexual assault, and murder are prevalent types of violence against women in India. Since the victim is a woman, this action must be taken solely to raise awareness of violence against women. These acts are typically committed by men who conform to gender-biased roles. The National offense Records Bureau of India reports that there has been a rise in the number of crimes committed against women, with one such offense occurring every three minutes.

Murders: Dowry killing is the act of a married woman taking her own life because of a disagreement over dowry. There are situations when the wife has committed suicide, where the father-in-law and husband persistently harass the daughter to get more dowry, or where there will be a family exchange of presents, cash, or property during the daughter's wedding. The majority of these suicides were carried out by self-immolation, poisoning, or hanging. It's known as "burning the bride" when the woman is set ablaze in exchange for the dowry being paid. The bride is murdered; sometimes, the woman is set on fire so that it appears as though she ignited the kerosene burner while cooking. The murder is frequently alluded to as a suicide or accident.

Honor Killing: The murder of a family member is known as honor killing, because it brings shame and disgrace onto the family. Honor killings include being raped, choosing a partner who has been rejected by family, refusing to get married, and committing adultery. People who disobey their caste or tribe's rules are often put to death by caste councils in various Indian communities. Even now, Indian women who are suspected of practicing witchcraft are still killed. Widow's and Poor women from lower castes are more vulnerable to this kind of killing. The deliberate killing of a baby or the sex-selective abortion of a female pregnancy is known as sexual femicide. In India, having children was motivated by the need to protect the family in old age and the ability to carry out rites for departed parents and ancestors. Conversely, girls are viewed as a financial and social liability. The dower ban is one instance of this. In impoverished households, female feticide may result from social marginalization and a fear of not receiving a dowry. Considering that the infant is still pregnant, modern medical technology has identified the baby's gender.

Sexual offenses: When it comes to sexual assaults on women, India is regarded as the world's most dangerous nation. In India, rape is among the most frequent crimes. The definition of rape as the act of a male entering a woman's physical space without her agreement and without consequence is found in the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013. The National Crime Records Bureau claims that one Indian woman is raped every 20 minutes.

In India, marital rape is not considered a crime. Among the fifty nations that do not yet have a prohibition on marital rape is India. Twenty percent of Indian males acknowledge pressuring their girlfriends or spouses into having sex. Though prohibited by Indian law, human trafficking remains a significant issue in India. People are frequently trafficked through India in order to be used as slaves or forced labor and for commercial sexual exploitation.

Domestic abuse: When one partner mistreats the other in a close relationship—be it romantic, married, intimate, or familial - it is referred to as domestic violence. Intimate partner violence, dating abuse, marital abuse, assault, and domestic violence are other names for domestic violence. Physical, emotional, verbal, financial, and sexual abuse are all forms of domestic violence. Domestic abuse can be violent, forceful, or subtle. Renuka Chaudhary, a politician, claims that 70% of Indian women experience domestic abuse.

Child and Forced marriage: Young girls who run the possibility of being married off at a young age run the risk of becoming both a woman and a kid. Both boys and girls frequently lack understanding of the obligations and significance of marriage. Girls fear losing their chastity prior to marriage and are harassed by their parents as a result of these marriages.

Acid Spilling:- In India, women are subjected to violent attacks using acid hurling, sometimes referred to as acid attacks, vitriol attacks, or vitriolage. Tossing acid is defined as "acid seeds or alternative corrosive substances" against a person's body with the intent to cause harm, deformity, torture, or death. Identical twin attacks typically target the victim's face, resulting in skin damage and frequently exposing or shattering the bone. Acid assaults can result in social, psychological, and financial difficulties in addition to irreversible scars and blindness.

Challenges of Women Empowerment

The Indian context presents numerous obstacles for women's rights advocates. Addressing these problems will have a direct positive impact on Indian women's empowerment are follows as:

Education: The country has developed since attaining independence, and its current focus is on education. The differences between men and women are significant. In India, 82.14% of adult males with a college degree are considered literate, compared to just 65.46% of adult females. Advancement in education and specialized training in the workplace significantly contribute to the discrimination faced by women in leadership roles across diverse industries.

Professional Inequality: Inequality in employment and promotion is pervasive. Women encounter numerous obstacles in settings where men predominate, such as government agencies and private businesses.

Household Inequality: Gender disparities are evident in family connections globally, particularly in India, where they manifest in subtle yet significant ways. dividing up little tasks, childcare, and assignments according to the theoretical division of labor.

Unemployment: Finding the ideal work for oneself is getting more and harder for women. They become more susceptible to harassment and exploitation at work.

Unbearable Conditions: Women with less education have a higher chance of divorcing and leaving their husbands at any point in their lives. They will have to live in constant fear of getting divorced. Sometimes they are forced to take their own lives because of intolerable conditions.

Features of the Women Empowerment

Empowerment of women has various features, They are as follows:

1. Empowering women leads to increased levels of independence and self-assurance in them.
2. Women's empowerment is the process of gaining authority so that they can comprehend their rights and carry out their obligations to others and themselves as effectively as possible.
3. Women's empowerment gives them the ability to better organize themselves and become more independent.
4. Women who are empowered have more autonomy.

Dimensions of Women Empowerment

According to Lee-Rife (2010), women's empowerment is viewed as a gradual process that turns them into agents who manage resources, make decisions, and make calculated life choices. She focused on the strategic life decisions choice of career, marriage, and having children which are regarded as the first order decisions and how it affects less consequential second order decisions raising children, making daily decisions for the home, and overseeing the family's well-being.



Three Dimensional Model of Women Empowerment (Source: Kabeer)

NGO's Initiatives for Women Empowerment

Particularly in rural areas, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have placed a higher priority on women's empowerment than on government policy. The Ministry of Women and Child Development collaborates with many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to carry out research studies and implement its many initiatives. Many of the government of India's projects are actively supported and participated in by NGOs, who play a critical role in accelerating the pace of implementation at the local level. NGOs are essential to efforts aimed at empowering women since they offer resources, advocacy, and support for women's rights and gender equality. These groups address the different issues that women confront by concentrating on topics including healthcare, education, economic empowerment, and legal aid. NGOs encourage women to take charge of their own lives, access healthcare and education, and speak up for their rights in society through campaigns and activities. NGOs help build a more just and inclusive society for women by working with local governments and communities.

State wise list of NGO's :

State	Performing NGOs	% age of NGOs working for Women Empowerment*
Andhra Pradesh	35	68.6
Arunachal Pradesh	4	100
Assam	38	81.6
Bihar	18	100
Chandigarh	7	57.1
Chattisgarh	7	100
Delhi	146	54.8
Goa	1	-
Gujarat	16	93.8
Haryana	17	58.8
Himachal Pradesh	8	100
Jammu and Kashmir	2	50
Jharkhand	11	90.9
Karnataka	63	74.7
Kerala	12	75
Madhya Pradesh	12	75
Maharashtra	82	90.2
Manipur	37	89.1
Meghalaya	2	-
Mizoram	1	100
Nagaland	2	100
Orissa	72	87.5
Punjab	5	60
Rajasthan	25	92
Tamil Nadu	53	87.7
Telangana	20	75
Uttar Pradesh	61	86.9
Uttarakhand	15	73.3
Tripura	1	-
West Bengal	37	73
Total	811	77.5

(Source: Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt. Of India)

Government Schemes for Women Empowerment

In India, government programs for women's development were started as early as 1954, but genuine participation didn't start until 1974. Currently, various departments and ministries under the Government of India oversee over 34 programs specifically designed for women. The following are a few of these:

1. From 1992 to 1993, Rastria Mahila Kosh (RMK)
2. The October 1993 Mahila Samridhi Yojana (MSY).
3. The 1995 Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY).
4. From 1997 to 1998, the Women Entrepreneur Development program received significant focus.
5. Approximately 9000 communities have implemented Mahila Samakhya.
6. Swayasjdha.
7. The group Swa Shakti.
8. Assistance with the Women's Training and Employment Program (STEP).
9. The Swalamban.

Legislations

1. Sati Act Abolition, 1829
2. The 1954 Special Marriage Act
3. The 1956 Hindu Succession Act
4. The 1961 Dowry Prohibition Act
5. The 1961 Maternity Benefits Act
6. Act of 1971 on Medical Termination of Pregnancy
7. Act on Domestic Violence, 2005
8. The 2010 Bill against Sexual Harassment (Ram, 2004)

III. Suggestions

1. It is necessary to create awareness campaigns to educate women, particularly those from underrepresented groups, about their rights.
2. Since women's education is the fundamental cause of the issue, it should be given top priority. Therefore, extra emphasis needs to be given to women's education.
3. Strict enforcement of laws and programs is necessary to stop the bad behaviors that are pervasive in society.
4. Women ought to be permitted to work and ought to get adequate safety and assistance in order to do so. To improve female standing in society, they ought to be paid fairly and treated equally to men at work.

IV. Findings of the Study

1. India has passed numerous laws, however the number of crimes against women has not decreased.
2. In India, there are numerous obstacles to women's empowerment.
3. Deficits in education and poverty pose significant barriers to women's empowerment.
4. Women can only be empowered when their social and economic standing

improves. This is only achievable if specific social and economic policies are relied upon to support women's holistic development and acknowledge their ability to mature into capable men.

5. Women's confidence must be cultivated if they are to be empowered.
6. In order to build a sustainable world, we must first empower women.

V. Conclusion

The hamlet and the country advance when women head the household. This is required because of their beliefs and moral code, which create good families, good societies, and eventually excellent nations. Including women in the core of growth is the best approach to empower them. Only until women have money and resources to support themselves and forge their own identities in society will their empowerment truly and successfully take root. One of the most significant issues of the twenty-first century, both domestically and globally, is the empowerment of women. To accomplish these goals, government measures alone are insufficient. Women should have complete access to self-determination so they can engage in the social, political, and economic life of the nation with a sense of equality. There should be no gender discrimination, and society should take the effort to establish such an environment.

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