

Issues and Challenges on Women Empowerment

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Abstract: *Empowering women entails providing them the freedom or authority to conduct their lives as they see fit. It enables individuals to assess their own skills, knowledge, and capacities in order to make independent judgments. It is a dynamic and evolving process for women that comprise skill awareness, acquisition, and implementation. Women's empowerment is critical for a society's socioeconomic progress. Women must identify with self - esteem and confidence. Women's empowerment may be measured by the confident smile on their faces. However, most policies and initiatives focus on economic empowerment, disregarding other factors like as health, education, literacy, and so on. Woman has played an equal role in human progress as man. In reality, women's status, employment, and work are indicators of a country's overall success. Without women's involvement in national activities, a country's social, economic, and political growth will be stalled. Women make up half of humankind and labour for two - thirds of the world's hours. She earns barely one - third of overall income and owns less than a tenth of global resources. This demonstrates that women's economic standing is deplorable, especially in a country like India. The current research is based on secondary data about the need for women's empowerment. A study was conducted to determine what issues and challenges women face in achieving empowerment on all fronts.*

Keywords: Issues, challenges and Women Empowerment

1. Introduction

Women's empowerment means providing them the freedom or authority to conduct their lives as they see fit. It enables individuals to recognise their own talents, knowledge, and capacities in order to make their own judgments. It is a dynamic and growing process for women that encompass skill awareness, accomplishment, and actualization. Empowerment, on the other hand, is a multifaceted process that should enable women or groups of women to achieve their full identity and authority in all aspects of life. It comprises of better access to information and resources, increased autonomy in decision making to allow individuals to have greater capacity to organise their lives or greater control over the conditions that impact their lives, and freedom from shocks imposed by habit, belief, and practise. In general, growth with justice is intended to produce factors that contribute to the empowerment of diverse segments of a country's people and a rise in their status, particularly for women. "Women's groups that aspire to empower themselves via increasing self - reliance are the source of empowerment. They have the right to make their own life decisions. They also want control over and access to resources. " Furthermore, empowerment in the context of women refers to a sense of awareness of one's own situation accompanied by knowledge, skills, and information that can help women gain higher self - esteem and facilitate their role as decision - makers in today's patriarchal society, where women have always been subordinate to men. Individuals and groups can be empowered by strengthening their spiritual, political, social, or economic strength. It frequently entails the empowered gaining confidence in their own abilities.

Any nation's backbone is made up of women. Until recently, women in India were seen as homemakers whose responsibilities were limited to cooking and other domestic tasks; however, the world now views them with new eyes and respect. The success of a country is determined by the well - being of its women. However, the relevance of rural women's contributions to socioeconomic development has

been undervalued. In society, women are solely expected to handle domestic tasks such as raising children, caring for other family members, and other home chores. For many years, people have held the belief that men are for the field and women are just for the house. Women are now breaking down all the obstacles and challenges that have been placed against them in society. Previously, women faced a slew of issues as a result of a male - dominated, patriarchal societal structure, the observance of old conventional beliefs, and so on. Women were exclusively responsible for conventional tasks like as child carrying and child raising. Even in the modern world, when women's standing has improved slightly, they still face challenges. They must balance familial and work duties without the assistance of their spouses. When women are tortured by their family members rather than receiving aid, their situation becomes more embarrassing. Sexual harassment by family members, relatives, neighbours, acquaintances, bosses, and others is more widespread at home and in the workplace. They must endure a great deal in their everyday lives in order to maintain their careers while also preserving their family bonds.

Objective

- 1) To examine issues and challenges on women empowerment.
- 2) To suggest possible measures on women empowerment.

Research Methodology

The present paper has been applied in descriptive method. The research done is based on secondary sources. Here, the data collected from different journals, magazines, articles and also from printed materials along with reviewing the books of different writers in order to understand issues and challenges on women empowerment.

2. Results and Discussion

Based on objective no (1) to examine issues and challenges on women empowerment

In today's world, women confront a variety of concerns and

obstacles. The following are some of the issues and challenges:

Burning of dowry and bride

Another issue that women from lower or middle - class families experience during or after marriage is infertility. Boys' parents demand a large sum of money from the bride's family in order to become wealthy in a short period of time. Bride burning is performed by the groom's family if the dowry demand is not met. Dowry system is another major women's issue in society that is becoming more prevalent by the day. Women are abused, mistreated, humiliated, tormented, and subjected to various atrocities (violence, murder, and suicide) as a result of a lack of dowry at the time of marriage. It degrades women's standing to a large extent.

Educational disparities and Rural Women's Illiteracy

Girls make up the majority of India's almost six million out-of-school children. Only 26% of girls finished high school between 2006 and 2010, compared to 50% of boys. Low-income households are the most affected by gender disparity. In India's childhood literacy rates, there is a gender divide. According to the 2011 Census of India, 82 percent of boys are educated, whereas just 65 percent of girls can read and write. According to statistics, around 10% more girls enrolled in Indian high schools in 2019 than in 2011. In India, however, women's education remains poor, particularly in rural regions, since they are discouraged from pursuing higher education, such as professional and technical education.

Rural women are either illiterate or inept when it comes to modern technologies. They are frequently unable to do research and obtain the necessary training. Uneducated rural women lack fundamental accounting and measuring skills. Indian families and society encourage a female to be a nice wife rather than an entrepreneur. She is not permitted to network with other businessmen, which is regarded a sin and bad culture. While this is an important step forward, much more has to be done to guarantee that girls obtain an equal education as males.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is strongly rooted and widespread in India. According to a woman and child development official, it is an endemic and prevalent condition that affects about 70% of Indian women. It is carried out by the spouse, a relative, or another member of the family. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) 2019, Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code is used in the majority (30.9 percent) of the 4.05 lakh instances involving crimes against women (IPC).

Child Marriages

Early marriage of girls by their parents is common in rural India to avoid dowry. Over 24 million child brides are said to exist in India. According to India's National Family Health Survey, 40 percent of the world's 60 million child marriages take place there. The International Center for Research on Women reports that India has the world's 14th highest rate of child marriage. According to estimates, at least 1.5 million girls under the age of 18 marry each year in

India, making it the country with the most child brides (a third of the global total). Almost 16% of teenage females between the ages of 15 and 19 are married right now (UNICEF). As a result, child marriage is frequently the product of persistent gender inequity, affecting girls disproportionately.

Against women's rights

Almost every day, women are victims of various forms of violence, which is causing societal disruption. Women are becoming more and more victims of violence as the number of crimes against them rises (according to the report of Crime Record Bureau of the Central Home Ministry). Every 44 minutes, a woman is kidnapped, every 47 minutes she is raped, and every day there are 17 dowry killings, among other things. They may face violence within the family (dowry - related harassment, death, marital rape, wife - battering, sexual abuse, denial of healthy food, female genital mutilation, and so on) or outside the family (dowry - related harassment, death, marital rape, wife - battering, sexual abuse, denial of healthy food, female genital mutilation, and so on) (kidnapping, rape, murder, etc).

Discrimination against women

Women are viewed as a weaker segment of society than males, and are thus given less weight. Discrimination is wreaking havoc on the lives of girls' children. Because of the patriarchal framework of Indian households, there is also power and job inequality between men and women. Women are harmed by gender discrimination in areas such as nutrition, education, health, care, population decrease, employment, and public life.

Unemployment issues

Women are having more difficulty finding acceptable employment. They become more vulnerable to workplace abuse and harassment. Previously, women faced issues like as child marriage, sati pratha, pardapratha, widow remarriage restrictions, widow exploitation, and the devadasi system, among others. However, practically all of the old conventional problems have progressively faded from society, resulting in the emergence of new ones. Women continue to face several issues despite having higher levels of self - confidence, individuality, self - respect, personality, capacity, talent, and efficiency than males. Even though the Indian Constitution provides them with same rights and opportunities as men, they nonetheless face difficulties in their daily lives.

Globalization

Globalization is empowering women all across the world. It enables women to participate in several domains such as politics, society, economics, sports, and culture. Women's empowerment refers to the growth of women's assets and capacities to participate in, exert control over, and hold responsible institutions that affect their lives. Globalization has enhanced the living standards of Indian women, and people's wants have expanded as a result of media and advertising. As a result, in order to finance a comfortable living, women must work and contribute to the home income. Globalization has posed additional problems in achieving the aim of gender equality, with the gender effect of globalisation still to be completely assessed. However, it

is clear from the micro - level research commissioned by the Department of Women and Child Development that policies for access to employment and job quality need to be re - framed. The benefits of a booming global economy have been unevenly dispersed, resulting in broader economic gaps, feminization of poverty, and increased gender inequality, particularly in the informal economy and rural regions. Women's capacity will be enhanced and empowered to deal with the negative social and economic consequences of globalisation.

Agriculture and Women

Given the essential role of women as producers in agriculture and related industries, intensified efforts will be made to guarantee that the benefits of training, extension, and different programmes reach them in proportion to their numbers. The programmes for educating women in soil conservation, social forestry, dairy development, and other agricultural - related industries such as horticulture, livestock including small animal husbandry, poultry, fisheries, and so on will be expanded to help women in the agriculture sector.

Industry and Women

Upgrades in education and employment options have been aggressively encouraged in India in order to enable universal labor - force participation that is gender - neutral. Women continue to be considerably under - represented in India's workplaces. India, the world's second - most populated country, has a female labour force participation rate (LFPR) of 20%, which is less than half of the worldwide average of 47% in 2020. Women in India are primarily engaged in agriculture and traditional additional rural industries, industry, or the service service sector. However, there are various sectors and businesses where female involvement may be just as beneficial, if not more so, than male engagement. Women's employment is vital not only for their empowerment, but also for their efficiency in specific professions and for increasing the nation's economic production.

Women's contributions to the advancement of electronics, computer technology, food processing, agriculture, and textiles have been critical. They would be provided with full assistance in terms of labour regulations, social security, and other support services in order to engage in various industrial sectors. Even if they wanted to, women are now unable to perform night shifts in industries. Women will be permitted to work the night shift in industries thanks to appropriate procedures. This will be accompanied by security, transportation, and other support services.

Education

Women and girls shall be given equal access to education. To facilitate life - long learning and the development of occupation/vocation/technical skills by women, special measures will be taken to eliminate discrimination, universalize education, eradicate illiteracy, create a gender - sensitive educational system, increase enrolment and retention rates of girls, and improve the quality of education. A focus area would be closing the gender gap in secondary and higher education. Existing policies' sectoral time objectives would be met, with a specific focus on girls and

women, particularly those from disadvantaged groups such as Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes/Other Backward Classes/Minorities. To combat sex stereotyping as one of the causes of gender discrimination, gender responsive curriculum would be designed at all levels of the educational system.

Technology and science

Women's participation in science and technology will be increased via the strengthening of programmes. These will include initiatives to encourage females to pursue higher education in science and technology, as well as ensuring that development programmes involving scientific and technical inputs completely incorporate women. Efforts to instill a scientific mindset and awareness will be intensified as well. In areas where they have exceptional talents, such as communication and information technology, extra efforts will be made for their training. Women's needs will be prioritized in the development of relevant technology, as will efforts to lessen their drudgery.

Collaboration with non - governmental organisations (NGO's)

All policies and programmes affecting women will be formulated, implemented, monitored, and reviewed with the participation of voluntary organisations, associations, federations, trade unions, non - governmental organisations, women's organisations, and institutions dealing with education, training, and research. They will be given sufficient assistance in terms of resources and capacity building, as well as the opportunity to engage actively in the process of women's empowerment.

3. Recommendation

Following are some proposals for improving women's empowerment based on the foregoing discussion:

- 1) A gender and poverty awareness programme should be designed in order to foster an atmosphere in which everyone works together to eliminate all gaps, physical, social, and economic.
- 2) All allusions to women's dignity must be removed from all public publications and legal instruments.
- 3) Curriculum and instructional materials are being reviewed to incorporate gender education and human rights problems.
- 4) Communication of social messages on women's equality and empowerment through various types of mass media.
- 5) Equitable access to health care, high - quality education at all levels, career and vocational advice, employment, equal compensation, occupational health and safety, social security, and public life for women, among other things.
- 6) Empowering people via skill - building programmes will increase their chances of earning a living and being self - sufficient.
- 7) Girls' education should be prioritised, and awareness about the importance of girls' education should be raised so that they can contribute effectively to the country's socio - economic development.
- 8) In order to ensure equity and justice, law drafting technologies and enforcement mechanisms, including the police, court, and other components, must be

- evaluated, sensitised, and reinforced.
- 9) It is necessary to strengthen women's policy by providing more seats for them.
 - 10) Increase the number of training institutes in remote areas with job prospects for long - term growth.
 - 11) Raising social awareness of women's human rights and gender concerns.
 - 12) To attract the attention of adolescents and boost the enrolment rate in educational institutions, skill - based vocational courses should be introduced in schools and colleges.
 - 13) The percentage of women enrolled in higher education should be raised, and special scholarships and free cruises for females should be provided to that end.
 - 14) There is a need to design gender - based training strategies that take into account local traditions and practises.
 - 15) Women must be given the opportunity to participate in political decision - making. Every constituency should nominate at least one woman to run for the Assembly.
 - 16) While various ministries will continue to implement women's programmes, the Department of Women and Child Development needs a strong interministerial coordination and monitoring body.
 - 17) Women's engagement in social life is adequate, but they should be given more autonomy in making decisions.
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4. Conclusion

Women's empowerment has been facing some serious challenges as a result of various evil customs and attitudes such as child labour, child marriage, illiteracy, superstition, partial parental attitude, female feticides, and so on, and in such a situation, women empowerment is an important requirement. To enhance women's empowerment, an atmosphere must be created that allows women to engage in educational programmes and profit from them. Women's empowerment policies, including educational and other policies, should be put into practise in order to empower women across the world. Women's involvement must be equal and active. Poverty, unemployment, and inequality cannot be addressed alone by man. Women will not be able to comprehend their rights and importance until they are educated. As a result, social, economic, educational, political, and legal empowerment of women is critical for socioeconomic progress. If given the chance, women are capable of managing. Respect, purity, decency, and equal rights must be accorded to them. All that is required is a concerted effort directed in the proper direction, with the only goal of liberating women from all sorts of evil.

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