

## **Women Empowerment A Step To Eradicate Gender Inequalities**

**Name- Ashish Rajwade**

Designation- Student, St. Vincent Pallotti College

**ABSTRACT** : The study deals with various aspects of empowerment of women in rural development of India. Earlier women shared equal status with men, they were regarded as the better half of the society. But they too have faced difficulties during epic ages. In traditional societies, they were confined to the four walls of houses performing household activities. Many a time they were treated as slaves. From early twenty century (national movement) their status has been changed slowly and gradually. In this regard, the constitutional makers and national leaders strongly demanded equal social position of women with men. Several women have proven their potentialities, and as a result they crave for their individual identity. As such, rural areas are ultimately marked by abject poverty and backwardness. In such situation, rural industrialization is viewed as an effective means of accelerating the progress of rural development by empowerment of women in the country .Thus women empowerment is advantageous for the wellbeing of the society resulting to the economic development of our country.

**Keywords: Women, Empowerment, Potential, Development, Society**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Basically the study focuses on how the implementation of women empowerment program is running. In spite of men whether the first preference or choice for any work in society is men? The century is different works are different requirements of society is different. Going with the study the women empowerment itself elaborates that Social Right, Economical stability; Judicial Strength and all other rights should be equal to women. There should be no discrimination between men and women. Women should also know there fundamental and social rights so that they can stop the discrimination that they are facing in the modern world and this automatically empowers them.

#### **What is the meaning of women's empowerment?**

It refers to the creation of an environment for women where they can make decisions of their own for their personal benefits as well as for the society.

Empowering women to participate fully in economic life across all sectors is essential to build stronger economies, achieve internationally agreed goals for development and sustainability, and improve the quality of life for **women**, men, families and communities. In modern societies, they have come out of the four walls to participate in all sorts of activities. The global evidences buttress that women have been performing exceedingly well in different spheres of activities like academics, politics, administration, social work and so on. Today we can see that the women have occupied the respectable positions in all walks of life, but have not yet absolutely got freed from discrimination and harassment of the society. Irrespective of so many awareness programs and policies the scenario continues.

### **Dealing with Gender Inequalities**

India is a country where males dominate in every sector and females are forced to live between four walls and be responsible for family and all the household chores, irrespective of how knowledgeable or creative she is, she cannot be the head or say the food earner of the family . India is covered by approx. 50% of female's population only so the country depends on the half population for development. Woman's who are not empowered and are still restricted by many of social taboos are shackled with the

norms of the society leading to the low or no contribution in the development of the country. We cannot say that our country would be a developed country in the future without empowering women. If we want our country to be a developed country, first & very necessary step is to empower women by the efforts of men, government, laws and women too. Only respecting or honoring women cannot fulfill the need of development in the country. It needs the empowerment of the rest half population of the country in every field and giving the equal opportunity.

### **Ill Practices**

‘Unity is diversity’, India has this famous tag line where people belonging to many religion beliefs are in the Indian society. Women have been given a special place in every religion which is working as a big curtain covering the eyes of people and thus helping in continuing of many ill practices( Dowry system, Sexual violence, domestic violence, female infanticide, sexual harassment at work place) . In the ancient Indian society, there were several customs like Sati Pratha, Nagar vadhu system, Parda pratha, Child marriage, Devadashi pratha, etc including other discriminatory practices. All such type of ill practices is because of male superiority complex and patriarchal system of the society.

### **Reforms**

Many great social reformers raised their voice in favor of women for their Socio-political rights (right to work, right to education, right to decide for themselves, et c) and against the discriminatory practice against women. Through the continuous efforts of the Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Britishers were forced to eliminate the ill practice of Sati paratha. Later, other famous social reformers of the India (Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Acharya Vinoba Bhave, Swami Vivekananda, etc) also had raised their voices and worked hard for the upliftment of women in Indian society. In India, the Widow Remarriage Act, 1856 was initiated by the continuous efforts of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar in order to improve the conditions of widows in the country.

### **Recent Policies and Programs for Upliftment of Women**

In the recent years, various constitutional and legal rights have been formed up and implemented by the government of India in order to remove ill practices and gender discrimination against women. However, in order to sort out such big issues, continuous effort of everyone is required including women of society. Nowadays community & Modern society are getting more awaked about the women rights which results in the increasing number of self-help groups, NGOs, etc working in this direction. Women are now understanding their value towards the society and being more open minded are breaking the societal barriers and are able to achieve the position that they deserve in the society.

Under Article 15(3), the Constitution of India allows for positive discrimination in favor of women. The article, under right to equality, states: "Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making any special provision for women and children." In addition, the directive principles of State Policy 39(a) state that: "The State shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing that the citizens, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means of livelihood."

**The Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (National Credit Fund for Women)** was set up in 1993 to make credit available for lower income women in India. More recent programmes initiated by the Government of India include the Mother and Child Tracking System (MCTS), the Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana Conditional Maternity Benefit plan (CMB), and the Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls – Sabla.

## **Mother and Child Tracking System (MCTS)**

The Mother and Child Tracking System, launched in 2009, helps monitor the health care system to ensure that all mothers and their children have access to a range of services, including pregnancy care, medical care during delivery, and immunizations. The system consists of a database of all pregnancies registered at health care facilities since 1 December 2009, and all births since 1 December 2009.

## **The Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana Conditional Maternity Benefit plan (CMB)**

Main article: The Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY)

Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY), Conditional Maternity Benefit (CMB) is a scheme sponsored by the national government for pregnant and lactating women age 19 and over for their first two live births. The programme, which began in October 2010, provides money to help ensure the good health and nutrition of the recipients.<sup>[3]</sup> As of March 2013 the programme is being offered in 53 districts around the country.

## **Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls – Sabla**

The Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls – Sabla is an initiative launched in 2012 that targets adolescent girls. The scheme offers a package of benefits to at-risk girls between the ages of 10 and 19. It is being offered initially as a pilot programme in 200 districts. The programme offers a variety of services to help young women become self-reliant, including nutritional supplementation and education, health education and services, and life skills and vocational training.

## **Rashtriya Mahila Kosh**

Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (The National Credit Fund for Women) was created by the Government of India in 1993. Its purpose is to provide lower income women with access to loans to begin small businesses .

## **Priyadarshini**

Priyadarshini, initiated in April 2011, is a programme that offers women in seven districts access to self-help groups.

---

**(Source-wikipedia)**

The most famous saying said by the Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is “To awaken the people, it is the women who must be awakened. Once she is on the move, the family moves, the village moves, the nation moves”. In India, to empower the women, first it needs to kill all those mentality which are killing women’s rights and values in the society such as dowry system, illiteracy, sexual harassment, inequality, female infanticide, domestic violence against women, rape, prostitution, illegal trafficking and other issues. Gender discrimination in the nation brings cultural, social, economic and educational differences which push country back. The most effective remedy to kill such devils is making women empowered by ensuring the Right to Equality mentioned in the Constitution of India.

108th Constitutional Amendment Bill (also called Women's Reservation Bill) was passed to reserve one-third of the seats for women only in the Lok Sabha to make them actively involved in every area. In other fields also the seats for women have been reserved for their active participation without any limitation and competition. Various mass campaigns need to be organized in the backward rural areas to make them aware about the real values of women and all the facilities available by the government for their bright future. They need to be promoted for the survival and proper education of female child to really bring the dream of women empowerment come true

**Women are delivering their bigger role in economic field: as workers, consumers, entrepreneurs, managers and investors. According to a report of The Economist, 'Women and the World Economy'.**

---

Women have been seen marching into domains which were previously reserved for males (police, driver's army, pilots, chartered accountants, commandos). There are number of opportunities are opened for women but In spite of their increasing number in every field, women still remain because of restriction. Many are still excluded from paid work and many do not make best use of their skills.

We can now see women in almost every field: architecture, lawyers, financial services, engineering, medical and IT jobs. They have also entered service occupations such as a nurse, a beautician, a sales worker, a waitress, etc.

Earlier women are dependent on men for economical support but by the help of this new amendment bill they are self dependent. Economically independent women feel more confident about their personal lives. The rapid speed of economic development has increased the demand for educated female labor force almost in all fields. Women are earning as much as their husbands do.

It would help the innumerable women in the country who get abandoned by their husbands and have no means of proving their marital status. Amendment bill would also help check child marriages, bigamy and polygamy, enable women to seek maintenance. The Act is applicable on all women no matter what is there caste, creed or religion. It would truly empower Indian women to exercise their rights.

Hence, women are taking more personal decisions, for instance, about their further education, marriage, etc. More and more women want freedom of work and control, freedom of mobility and freedom to define own style of life. Knowingly freedom leads to greater openness. Anything that makes a woman feel inferior and takes away her self-respect is abuse. Compulsory Registration of Marriage Act can be beneficial in preventing the abuse of institution of marriage and embarrass social justice especially in relation to women.

**CONCLUSION**

Women empowerment and gender inequalities should not just be a word but it should be implemented and supported by all and this can be achieved in a true manner if all broaden their mind set and truly believe that women deserve the same rights and respect as men. If all this works correctly, then India will not need to hold the campaign for women's empowerment and gender inequalities. This would be surely the most important steps toward the country's development. Supporting women to know about their rights, encouraging them to know that they are no way down from men will motivate them and help in contributing equally in the society. The gap between the men and women that persist from decade is too strong to make up so soon. Gender inequalities are a problem that has a solution.

**Reference**

Rural And Urban Development In India  
Co-Operative And Rural Development In India  
Women Empowerment Through Literacy Campaign

By R.K Khosla  
By Rais Ahmad  
By Jaimon Varghese

**Webilography**

<http://www.wikipedia.com>  
<http://www.prideindia.org/womens-empowerment.aspx>  
<http://www.worldbanks.org/projects>  
<http://www.fsdinternatinal.org>

