

WOMEN AND GLOBALISATION

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Abstract

Women Empowerment itself elaborates that Social Rights, Political Rights, Economical stability, judicial strength and all other rights should be also equal to women. There should be no discrimination between men and woman. Women should now there fundamental and social rights which they get once they born.

- *There should be respect and dignity towards Women.*
- *Have total independences of their own life and lifestyle inside the home and also outside at their work.*
- *They should make their decision, by their own choice.*
- *They should have a high social respect in society.*
- *They have equal rights in society and other judicial works.*
- *They should not be discriminated while providing any type of education.*
- *They should select their own economic and financial choices by their own.*
- *There should not be any discrimination between woman and man while giving jobs and employment.*
- *They should have safe and secured Working location with proper privacy.*

If one were to list the dominant themes of the 90's, both 'gender' and 'globalisation' would be somewhere near the top. Naturally, the 'impact of structural adjustment on women' or 'gender-sensitive analysis of the globalisation process' is a widely researched area. Even then, one of the most brilliant expositions encapsulating the essence comes from the quote of a slum dweller in Philippines, reported in the Human Development Report 1997. The main theme of the Report is 'poverty', and the quote is 'Poverty is a squatter mother whose hut is being pulled down by the government for reasons she cannot understand'. The simple quote illustrates the following.



Introduction

Swami Vivekananda, one of the greatest sons of India, quoted that, "There is no chance for the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved, and it is not possible for a bird to fly on only one wing." Therefore, the inclusion of "Women Empowerment" as one of the prime goals in the eight Millennium Development Goals underscores the relevance of this fact. Thus, in order to achieve the status of a developed country, India needs to transform its colossal women force into an effective human resource and this is possible only through the empowerment of women.

What is Women Empowerment?

Women empowerment means emancipation of women from the vicious grips of social, economic, political, caste and gender-based discrimination. It means granting women the freedom to make life choices. Women empowerment does not mean 'deifying women' rather it means replacing patriarchy with parity. In this regard, there are various facets of women empowerment, such as given hereunder:

Human Rights or Individual Rights

A woman is a being with senses, imagination and thoughts; she should be able to express them freely. Individual empowerment means to have the self-confidence to articulate and assert the power to negotiate and decide.



Social Women Empowerment

A critical aspect of social empowerment of women is the promotion of gender equality. Gender equality implies a society in which women and men enjoy the same opportunities, outcomes, rights and obligations in all spheres of life.

Educational Women Empowerment

It means empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to participate fully in the development process. It means making women aware of their rights and developing a confidence to claim them.

Economical and Occupational Empowerment

It implies a better quality of material life through sustainable livelihoods owned and managed by women. It means reducing their financial dependence on their male counterparts by making them a significant part of the human resource.

Legal Women Empowerment

It suggests the provision of an effective legal structure which is supportive of women empowerment. It means addressing the gaps between what the law prescribes and what actually occurs.

Political Women Empowerment

It means the existence of a political system favouring the participation in and control by the women of the political decision-making process and in governance.

The Position of Women in India

The position enjoyed by women in the Rig- Vedic period deteriorated in the later Vedic civilization. Women were denied the right to education and widow remarriage. They were denied the right to inheritance and ownership of property. Many social evils like child marriage and dowry system surfaced and started to engulf women. During Gupta period, the status of women immensely deteriorated. Dowry became an institution and Sati Pratha became prominent.

During the British Raj, many social reformers such as Raja Rammohun Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and Jyotirao Phule started agitations for the empowerment of women. Their efforts led to the abolition of Sati and formulation of the Widow Remarriage Act. Later, stalwarts like Mahatma Gandhi and Pt. Nehru advocated women rights. As a result of their concentrated efforts, the status of women in social, economic and political life began to elevate in the Indian society.

Current Scenario on Women Empowerment

Based on the ideas championed by our founding fathers for women empowerment, many social, economic and political provisions were incorporated in the Indian Constitution. Women in India now participate in areas such as education, sports, politics, media, art and culture, service sector and science and technology. But due to the deep-rooted patriarchal mentality in the Indian society, women are still victimized, humiliated, tortured and exploited. Even after almost seven decades of Independence, women are still subjected to discrimination in the social, economic and educational field.

Major Landmark Steps Taken for Women Empowerment

Provisions made under the Constitution of India such as: Right to equality under Article 14 of the Indian Constitution guarantees to all Indian women equality before law; Equal pay for equal work under Article 39(d), guards the economic rights of women by guaranteeing equal pay for equal work; and Maternity Relief under Article 42, allows provisions to be made by the state for securing just and humane condition of work and maternity relief for women.

Acts like the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, prohibits the request, payment or acceptance of a dowry. Asking or giving dowry can be punished by imprisonment as well as fine; Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, provides for a more effective protection of the rights of women who are victims of domestic violence. A breach of this Act is punishable with both fine and imprisonment; Sexual Harassment of Women at Work Place (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, helps to create a conducive environment at the workplace for women where they are not subjected to any sort of sexual harassment.

Panchayati Raj Institutions As per the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, all the local elected bodies reserve one-third of their seats for women. Such a provision was made to increase the effective participation of women in politics.

Women's Reservation Bill

It is a pending Bill in India which proposes to reserve 33% of all seats in the Lok Sabha and in all State Legislative Assemblies for women. If passed, this Bill will give a significant boost to the position of women in politics.



Various Government Policies Andschemes

The Government of India is running various welfare schemes and policies, both at State and Central levels for the empowerment of woman. Some of the major programmes and measures include Swadhar (1995), Swayam Siddha (2001), Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP-2003), Sabla Scheme (2010), National Mission for Empowerment of Women (2010) etc. All such policies and programmes focus on social, economical empowerment and educational empowerment of women across various age groups.

Thus, there has been no dearth of social, economic, political, legal and Constitutional efforts made for the empowerment of women both prior to and post-Independence. However, women in India continue to face atrocities such as rape, dowry killings, acid attacks, human trafficking, etc. According to a global poll conducted by Reuters, India is the “fourth-most dangerous country in the world for women”.

Women Empowerment - Challenges

Perspective

The most widespread and dehumanizing discriminations against women are on the basis of the biased perspective. The discrimination against the girl child begins from the birth itself. Boys are preferred over girls; hence, female infanticide is a common practice in India. The ordeal that an Indian girl faces at birth is only the beginning of a lifelong struggle to be seen and heard.

Patriarchate Bottlenecks the traditional Indian society is a patriarchal society ruled by the diktats of self-proclaimed caste lords who are the guardians of archaic and unjust traditions. They put the burden of traditions, culture and honour on the shoulders of women and mar their growth. The incidences of “honour killing” reveal the distorted social fiber in the male-dominated society.

Economic Backwardness

Women constitute only 29% of the workforce but forms majority of the destitute in the country. There has been a failure in transforming the available women base into human resource. This, in turn, has hampered not only the economic development of women but also of the country’ as a whole.

Implementation Gaps

Through all these years, the attention is only on developing and devising new schemes, policies and programmes and have paid less attention to the proper monitoring system and implementation short-sightedness, for e.g. despite the presence of The Pre-Natal Diagnostic Technologies Act and various health programmes like JananiSurakshaYojana and National Rural Health Mission (NHRM), our country has a skewed sex ratio and a high maternal mortality rate (MMR).

Loopholes in the Legal Structure

Although there are a number of laws to protect women against all sorts of violence yet there has been the significant increase in the episodes of rapes, extortions, acid, attacks etc. This is due to delay in legal procedures and the presence of several loopholes in the functioning of a judicial system.

Lack of Political Will

The still- pending Women’s Reservation Bill underscores the lack of political will to empower women politically. The male dominance prevails in the politics of India and women are forced to remain mute spectators.

Way ahead starts with bridging the deep-rooted biases through sustained reconditioning. It is only possible by promoting the idea of gender equality and uprooting social ideology of male child preferability. This concept of equality should be first developed in each and every household and from there; it should be taken to the society. This can be achieved by running sustained awareness programmes with the help of NukkadNatak or dramas, radio, television, Internet, etc. across the country.

Characteristics of Women Empowerment

The following are the characteristics of women empowerment.

- Women empowerment is giving power to women. It is making women better off. It enables a greater degree of self-confidence and sense of independence among women.
- Women empowerment is a process of acquiring power for women in order to understand their rights and to perform her responsibilities towards oneself and others in a most effective way. It gives the capacity or power to resist discrimination imposed by the male dominated society.

- Women empowerment enables women to organize themselves increase their self-reliance and it provides greater autonomy.
- Women empowerment means women's control over material assets intellectual resources and ideology. It challenges traditional power equations and relations.
- Women empowerment abolishes all gender base discrimination in all institutions and structures of society. It ensures participation of women in policy and decision making process at domestic and public levels.
- Women empowerment means exposing the oppressive powers of existing gender social relations.
- Women empowerment makes women more powerful to face the challenges of life, to overcome the disabilities, handicap and inequalities. It enables women to realize their full identity and powers in all spheres of life.
- Empowerment also means equal status to women. It provides greater access to knowledge and resources greater autonomy in decision making greater ability to plan their and freedom from the shackles imposed on them by custom belief and practice.
- Women empowerment occurs within sociology, psychological, political cultural, familial and economic spheres and at a various levels such as individual, group and community.
- Women empowerment is an ongoing dynamic process which enhances women's abilities to change the structure and ideologies that keep them subordinate. Women empowerment is a process of creating awareness and capacity building.

The promotional schemes available in the country in order to develop women entrepreneurship are as follows.

- MahilaUdyamNidhi.
- MahilaVikasNidhi
- PriyadarshiniYojana.
- Trade related entrepreneurship assistance and development (TREAD)
- Special programs conducted by the SIDO (Small Industries Development Organization)
- CWEI (The Consortium of Women Entrepreneurs of India).
- WIT (Women India Trust).
- SWEA (Self-Employed Women Association)
- SHG's (Self-Help Group)
- FTWE (Federation of Women Entrepreneurs)
- Income generating schemes by Department of women and child development.
- KVIC (Khadi Villages Industries Commission)
- DIC (District Industrial Centres)
- Women Cell
- Women Industries Fund Schemes.

Conclusions

In the process of empowerment women should consider their strengths and weakness opportunities and threats and move forward to unfold their own potential to achieve their goals through self-development. In our country's empowering women through enterprise development has become an integral part of our development efforts due to three important advantage entrepreneurs, economic growth and social stability.

Recruitment of women into wage labour in the industrialised and developing world and their marginalisation in the ex-socialist economies are part of the same process: namely capital's attempt to reduce the share of labour in the total produce. If this state of affairs continues, it is only because of the absence of a coherent and feasible counter project.

The search for an alternative to capitalist production relations is to be necessarily incorporated into women's struggle for their rights. As long as the system does not resolve the conflict between labour and capital, so long as the system does not accord absolute primacy to human life and human creativity, the system cannot offer emancipation to women in any meaningful way.

Empowering women socially, economically, educationally politically and legally is going to be a Herculean task. It is not going to be easy to change the culture of disregard for women which are so deep-rooted in Indian society. But it does not mean that it is implausible. Only revolutions bring changes in a day, but reforms take their time. This one, in particular, will take its time as well. The idea of women empowerment might sound hard by the yard, but by the inch, it is just a cinch. All we need is a concentrated effort focused in the right direction that would rest only with the liberation of women from all forms of evil.



‘There is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women.’
-Kofi Annan

BEHIND EVERY
SUCCESSFUL *woman*
IS A TRIBE OF OTHER
successful WOMEN,
WHO HAVE *her back.*

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