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WOMEN EMPOWREMENT AND ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN PROMOTION OF WOMEN WELFARE IN INDIA

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INTRODUCTION

In the globalization era, women are considered as the builders and molders of a nation's destiny. Across the globe, in every field, they are involved in the affairs of their respective societies and are playing their role. In this context, the male must accept, invite and promote the female education, production and decision making as well. In the absence of women's role, the sustainable development of any country is not achievable. So, there is a casual relationship between women involvement and country economic, society and political development.

In India the role of women is marginalized in the context of national development. This is not only inequitable but also effects the development with high efficiency cost. Women of today have been subject to many great changes over the past few decades.

Women empowerment is the process of upliftment of political status, economic and social status of women. This occurs when women are involved in decision making process, where such decisions lead to their better access to resources, and therefore, improved their socio-economic status.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Women empowerment is one of the key elements of every nation. By framing various policies and rendering various facilities and benefits to the women, the Government of India strive hard. Though the government took various initiatives, the empowerment and development of women India is much to be achieved. The present paper will focus on the progress of women empowerment and the initiative of government along with the problems and opinions of women.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This paper reviews the evidence on both sides of the empowerment–development relationship. It first shows that poverty and lack of opportunity breed inequality between men and women, so that when

economic development reduces poverty, the condition of women improves on two counts: first, when poverty is reduced, the condition of everyone, including women, improves, and second, gender inequality declines as poverty declines, so the condition of women improves more than that of men with development. Economic development, however, is not enough to bring about complete equality between men and women. Policy action is still necessary to achieve equality between genders. Such policy action would be unambiguously justified if empowerment of women also stimulates further development, starting a virtuous cycle. In this context I reviewed the following articles.

1. Dhruva Hazarika (2011) reveals that the women empowerment status in the early twenty century and after Independence of India. Constitutional makers and the national leaders recognized the equal importance of men and women in social position, share in political, social and economic life of the society.
2. Bowen et.al (1986) they stated that female entrepreneurship prospective in India. Its summaries various research studies which are done on women entrepreneurship and conclude that women entrepreneur need management skill to take right decisions to make the good profit.
3. Sheweta Gaur et.al (2018) they state the importance of entrepreneurship in Indian economy and women entrepreneur ability to manage and organise the enterprise. In India in the wake of economic liberalisation and globalisation, women entrepreneurship is very much needed. But they face enormous challenges to start entrepreneurial activities so, they suggest new way of balance of work and life, initiative awareness programme, financial support for entrepreneurs etc.,
4. Kaviarasu J.S and Francis C (2018) this study evinces the problems of women entrepreneurs in India and suggest some ways to develop them. Women in India still face education problem, if they educated properly means it boost their confidence. So, study suggest to give skill-based education for women. Along with that they face financial problem, a qualified woman for venturing in entrepreneurship, they need large amount of loan with subsidy. So, government need to initiate some plans in this way.

OBJECTIVES

The present paper discusses with the following objectives:

1. To study the evolution and growth of women empowerment in India.
2. To analyses the government initiatives in the achievement of women empowerment.
3. To explore the problems and challenges of women empowerment.
4. To study the opinions of women about the women empowerment and welfare activities performed
5. To offer some suggestions

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The data for this study use both primary and secondary sources. The primary data has been collected with the help of a questionnaire to 100 women from Honnali taluk, Davangere District. In

Honnali Taluk 5 villages were chosen randomly, namely bidaragede, sunkadakatte, sasvehalli, hosur and harlahalli then 20 women were selected from each of these villages. and the secondary data has been collected from the annual and periodic reports from Ministry of women and child development, journals, magazines and internet sources.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

A. Evolution and Growth of Women Empowerment of India

a. Literacy Rates

Table No.1

Census Year	Persons	Males	Females	Male-Female gap in Literacy Rate
1971	34.45	45.96	21.97	23.98
1981	43.57	56.38	29.76	26.62
1991	52.21	64.13	39.29	24.84
2001	64.83	75.26	53.67	21.59
2011	74.04	82.14	65.46	16.68
% Increase in 2011 over 2001	14%	9%	22%	

Source: Census of India, Office of Registrar General, India.

The Table No.1 states the literacy rate of India from 1971 to 2011. The gap between the literacy rate of male and female in India was decreasing, and the female literacy rate has gradually increased from the last two decades. Hence, it shows that the government's initiatives are working better in achieving the growth in the women literacy rates.

b. Women participation and Development Statistics

Table No.2

Development Indicator	Women	Men	Total
*Work and Employment			
Work Participation Rate (2011%)	25.51	53.26	39.79
Population (2011%)	51.54	48.46	100
*Administrative			
Civil Service Exam Year			
2013	1228	261	21.25%
2014	1363	313	22.96%
2015	1164	229	19.67%
2016	1209	282	23.33%
2017	1056	254	24.05%
No of women elected (2019)	Raj Sabha 24	Lok Sabha 78	

Source: Census 2011, office of the Registrar General India.

B. Government Initiations in the achievement of Woman Welfare

Yatra naryastu pujayante ramante tatra devatah – this popular word state that wherever women are respected and worshipped, there lies divinity and prosperity. Indian people give more respect to women and provide them equal opportunities to exercise power in day-to-day life and important decisions. Empowerment means *Swashakthi* to women. Making this as a

national policy, Indian Government has taken various steps to strengthen the women empowerment for the development of the nation.

Women welfare and Empowerment Schemes of Government of India Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India have come up with various schemes, programmes, social welfare schemes, Health and Nutrition, scholarship for women empowerment, Girl Child pregnant women, mothers, ward members, Anganwadi Workers, Women Health Volunteers, the women living in the rural & tribal areas, ex-servicemen, physically handicapped, nursing women, Lactating mother, widows/destitute, Old age women, women self-help group (SHG), Women Entrepreneurs and Adolescent Girls'. Also, it helps to the women and child belonging to Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST), Other Backward Classes (OBC), Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBC) Minority Category, Below Poverty Line (BPL) and also for General Category This scheme provides assistance for Education, Training, Financial assistance/Cash, Subsidy on the loans, Scholarship, Nutrition, self-employment and other facilities. The prime goal is for empowerment, development, protection and welfare of Women & Child.

Women Empowerment Schemes under Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India.

- Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao is for create awareness and to educate girl child.
- Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY) was introduced to provide 6 months maternity leave and Rs.4,000 monetary benefit for first two child.
- One Stop Centre Scheme for women are meant to support women affected by violence, in private and public spaces, within the family, community and at the workplace.
- Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme for children Health Check-up, Food, nutrition increases women health by providing employment opportunity and it also facilitate child care facility for both working women and poor women.
- Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women provides various training programmes to women to enrich their skill to get employable and to became entrepreneur.
- Swadhar Greh- This scheme provides shelter, food, clothing, counseling, training, clinical and legal aid aims to rehabilitate women in difficult circumstance.
- Women Helpline Scheme for women a single national Help Line Number for Women- Department of Telecommunication, Government of India has allocated short code 181 to all States/UTs which is being used by some States/UTs such as Delhi, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh as Women Helpline.
- Ujjawala -

C. Problems and Challenges for Women Empowerment

Although the government is taking various steps for women empowerment as one of major issues yet, the women empowerment and development is facing the following challenges.

- Problems in achieving Social Empowerment
- Health Issues
- Low Budgetary Issues
- Slow growth in education
- Violence against women in higher education and its impact on education
- Need for growth in Political Empowerment
- Family ownership
- Hazards in workplace
- Family and work life balance
- Children and family take care

D. Observations from Field Survey

Table: 3 Socio- Demographic Characteristics of the Study Population

Characteristics	Frequency (%)
Age in Years	
18-25	20%
26-35	55%
36-50	25%
Residence	
Rural	78%
Urban	22%
Type of family	
Nuclear	72%
Joint	28%
Socio-economic class	
Upper	11%
Middle	68%
Lower	21%
Education	
Illiterate	Nil
Primary	15%
Secondary	22%
Higher Secondary	35%
Graduate and above	28%
Occupation	
Help her husband	10%
Job	20%
Self Employed	10%
Unemployed	30%
Age at marriage	

Less than 18-year	Nil
18-24	81%
25-35	19%

The above table shows the demographic and economic profile of selected women for this study. Majority of the women were resident at rural (78%) belongs to 26-35(55%) age group and also belongs to nuclear family. The selected women were leading middle class life, illiterate women found nil with majority of the women studied higher secondary (35%) education and out of 100 women 30 women found Unemployed, about their marriage age less than 18 year found nil and 81 women were got married at the age between 18-24.

Table No.4

Sl.No	Reasons	Response	
		Yes (%)	No (%)
01.	Awareness of Government Initiatives	41	59
02.	Awareness on the programmes and policies of State & Central Government	38	62
03.	Opinion about the awareness on where to file a case about discrimination, abuse and violence	58	22
04.	Opinion about the confidence on Government Policies about women empowerment and welfare	48	32
05.	Opinion about encouragement of parents, elders and family for development	42	39
06.	Opinion about participation in Welfare activities for Social Empowerment	43	27
07.	Opinion about the satisfaction in participation in SHGs, micro finance and other programmes	81	19
08.	Opinion about the Problems facing in the following issues:		
	a. Education and Literacy	38	62
	b. Political Empowerment	69	31
	c. Social Empowerment	72	28
	d. Health & Hazards in Work Place	68	32
	e. Household Inequality	73	27
09.	Opinion about Entrepreneurial Skills	27	73

From the above statistics, it is clear that the awareness levels towards Government Initiatives and Government Programmes and policies are low, when it comes to the initiations of government and the problems faced by the women is clearly representing that there is still lot of work to be done to achieve women empowerment.

E. FINDINGS

The following findings are found by the research study.

- a. Government and NGOs initiated various programmes in the country, but there is still a wide gap that exists between those under protection and those not.

- b. Literacy rate of women was continuously increased but freedom to choose subject was found less.
- c. Lack of entrepreneurial skill was found in the study.
- d. In India especially rural areas, women are always seen with an eye of suspicion. The traditions and customs of Indian society hinders women for their overall development.
- e. Women have fewer support from the family.
- f. Women has low financial power as compared to men, to fight in the election.

F. SUGGESTIONS

- a. Education is the grassroots problem in India, so education for women has to be paid special attention.
- b. Government should initiate some outcome-based programmes and need to follow-up some steps after programmes implemented for women empowerment.
- c. Along with education government need to provide some education programmes, which educate the women for self-entrepreneurship like ways to explore their business into online business.
- d. Provide some addition course like decision taking, skill oriented and technology-oriented course for girls in their schooling and higher education.
- e. Election reforms and the Government intervention should be initiated in order to provide for state funding for women contesting for elections Parliament, State Assemblies, Urban Local Bodies and PRIs.
- f. Wage's inequality was found in the study. Hence, it is necessary to provide proper wages and work at par with men so that their status can be improved in the society.
- g. At present, women face high risk of malnutrition hence focused attention would have to be given to meet the nutritional needs of women at all stages of their life cycle.
- h. Provide proper awareness programmes for women health issues to women.
- i. Strict implementation of programmes and Acts are necessary to curb the mall practices prevalent in the society.

G. CONCLUSION

The women empowerment in India is still rising at a slow pace although the Government is initiating many innovative policies and programmes. The women literacy rates clearly suggesting that there is still gap between literacy rate and empowerment hence, apart from the Government, the family and people have the responsibility to lift the women for better employability for achieving the empowerment. The rate of implementation of women skill after training are quite low. So, after training follow-up programmes are necessary to frame by the concerned Government. The field survey concluded that the women are facing the problems in getting their rights to achieve empowerment in all aspects.

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