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## ABSTRACT

One might argue either for or against the idea of women gaining more influence in society. In centuries past, they were making slow but steady progress toward achieving the same status as males. Nevertheless, throughout the post-Vedic and epic era periods, they had encountered a few obstacles along their path to success. They were frequently treated in a manner comparable to that of slaves. Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, they have seen a gradual but consistent shift in their ranks (the beginning of the national movement). In this particular setting, we may have mentioned the names of certain individuals hailing from the United Kingdom. After India attained its independence, the people who drafted its constitution and the leaders of the nation made it a priority to insist that men and women be given equal standing in society. They did this by mandating that women and men should have the same rights and responsibilities within the community. In today's culture, it is not uncommon to find women holding respectable positions in a broad variety of professions and areas of life. However, they have not succeeded in totally eliminating all instances of discrimination and harassment that are present in the community. Only a small fraction of women have been able to prove that they are capable of realising their full potential. As a consequence of this, each and every one of us ought to make it a priority to work toward elevating the status of women.

**keyword:** *Empowerment, Women*

## INTRODUCTION

Despite the fact that women make up over half of the world's population, the proportion of males to females in India is far higher than it should be. As a direct consequence of this, the percentage of men in the country's population is much higher than that of females. In many parts of the world, women do not receive the same amount of respect as men in terms of the social status that is rightfully theirs. This is especially true in the workplace. Because women in Western nations have achieved the same rights and status as males in all aspects of life, Western civilizations are considered to be among the most advanced societies in the world. On the other hand, it is possible that sexism and other types of discrimination against women are still practised in India today. She was at times treated as the Goddess, but because to the inherent inconsistencies in the scenario, at other times she was only treated as the slave. She was worried as the Goddess at times, while at other times she was only treated as the slave. Naturally, when we discuss women's empowerment in India, what we refer to is that women must need to be aware of their rights, such as the right to vote, property rights, freedom of movement, their legal rights, and a variety of other rights. This is what we mean when we say that women in India must need to be aware of their rights. As a result, empowering women entails making women aware of their own self-worth, their capabilities to make their own decisions, and the formation of a society in which women may enjoy the same

respect and rights as other individuals. The emancipation of women is an essential component that has a part to play in the development and expansion of society as a whole, as well as individual groups and nations.

When we inquire explicitly about the proportion of the world's population that is comprised of women, we are given a statistic that is somewhere in the vicinity of fifty percent. If we take a look at the population as a whole, though, we can see that India has an imbalanced gender ratio. This suggests that the percentage of men in India is a considerable amount higher than that of women.

In compared to other regions of the world, the western half of the world has a relatively progressive attitude toward the empowerment of women. On the other hand, due to gender bias, the empowerment of women is the least concern of society in India. It is a widely held belief that issues pertaining to literacy, population, and health will not be able to be resolved until there is a solution to the problem of gender bias, which will allow women to take an active and unrestricted part in the process of constructing a society and community that will pay attention to everyone's rights and requirements. It is also commonly held that this answer will not be able to be found until there is a solution to the problem of gender bias.

We will have a better understanding of how women's liberation in India gained momentum throughout the course of time, from the ancient period to the contemporary one, if we pay more attention to the method by which it occurred, beginning in the ancient period and continuing through the modern one. Over the course of its history, the culture of Indian society has had numerous highs and lows in terms of the degree to which it encourages the empowerment of women.

Because women all over the world are actively working as leaders and surpassing others in all parts of life, the most effective tool for development right now is to empower women in India. This is because women everywhere are actively working as leaders. This implies that the empowerment of women is the most useful tool for the country of India's overall growth. It is the women governors and nations that are being guided by these incredible figures that are taking over the responsibility and marching ahead in the battle alone wherever it is required to do so. This is occurring while the entirety of the world is holding its breath and praying each and every day for an incredible escape from the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The extent to which a number of distinct factors contribute to the empowerment of women in India varies greatly depending on a variety of factors such as the geographical context (urban versus rural), the social position (caste and class), the educational level, and the age factor. In addition, the degree to which these factors contribute to the empowerment of women in India also varies greatly depending on a variety of other factors such as the level of education. There are initiatives pertaining to the theme of women's empowerment that are now being carried out at the state, the municipal (panchayat), and the national levels. Nevertheless, women continue to face discrimination in almost all fields, including education, economic opportunities, health and medical assistance, and political participation. This demonstrates that there are significant gaps between the development of strategies and their actual implementation at the community level.

It is possible to pave the way for the successful completion of the intended missions in India's society that aim to improve the condition of women by formulating and implementing a specific policy framework, spreading civic consciousness, and educating people about the empowerment of women. These things can help to pave the way for the successful completion of the intended missions. In India, empowering women consists solely of

guaranteeing female citizens the same legal rights as male residents. This is the extent of the movement. In spite of this, it is also about ensuring that they are completely integrated into the workforce and that they are regarded as equal participants in the process. The work that our non-governmental organisation in India is doing to empower women is nothing short of a miracle in a suit of disguise, and we are proud to be a part of it.

The phrase "women empowerment" refers to both the authority and the power that are granted upon women in the form of shared rights. This is what is meant by the term "women empowerment." The process by which women are liberated from the social and economic limitations of reliance is referred to as "emancipation," and the term itself alludes to this process. However, despite the fact that women make up more than half of the entire population in this country, the vast majority of jobless women in this demographic continue to be economically dependent on one another. In this day and age of feminism, there is a subset of women in India who are liberated, who can exercise their free will, and who are given the opportunity to carve out their life in the manner in which they want. These women are part of a larger group of women in India who are given the opportunity to carve out their life in the manner in which they want. Nevertheless, there is a substantial demographic divide among the women in this nation who are in need of constructive criticism and encouragement. Women in the majority of rural and semi-urban parts of India are not allowed to get foundational education, and they are never given permission to continue their education at a higher level, despite the fact that they may already possess the requisite information.

One of the key reasons that women are seen as a society's primary source of strength is due to the fact that they are able to so effortlessly juggle the several hats they wear in the course of a single day. Women who live in societies that are predominately ruled by men are expected to fulfil a wide variety of roles, including those of caring mothers, dedicated daughters, and capable colleagues, amongst other things. The fact that they are an ideal candidate for whatever role that they are being evaluated for is the best quality about them. However, in many parts of the world, this demographic of the population has traditionally been seen as one of the least important parts of society. In turn, this has led to women surviving the burden of inequality, financial trustworthiness, oppression, and other societal problems. This has led to women enduring the load of the burden of unfairness. As a consequence of this, women have been able to endure the majority of the effects of these problems. Since the beginning of time, women have been compelled to live in situations that are analogous to slavery, which inhibits them from realising their full potential in both their personal and professional lives. This is true for both countries and cultures. The Hindrise Foundation is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) with its headquarters in India that is primarily concerned with the advancement of women's rights. As a consequence of this, we have developed our dynamic and transformation-oriented programmes in such a manner that the education of young women from disadvantaged backgrounds would enhance the overall condition of the nation.

Education is the first line of defence for women who are forced to suffer life-threatening situations as a result of conventional ways of living. These conditions are maintained by the ways in which people traditionally live. It imparts a sense of responsibility as well as control over one's own financial situation. In addition to this, one of its primary benefits is that it liberates desires from the limits of established conventions. When women acquire an education that is not superficial, they have the potential to advance their position in ways that go well beyond the limitations of parenthood. Women and girls who have a higher level of education tend to delay marriage for longer periods of time, which in turn results in a lower total number of children being born into their families. This is only one of the numerous advantageous outcomes that might result from receiving an education.

It is imperative that top attention be given to the process of enlisting and maintaining the involvement of female children in basic formal and non-formal education. This should be accomplished through the implementation of various incentive programmes, such as the provision of free textbooks, midday meals, school bags, science kits, uniforms, scholarships, residential and hostel facilities, and the elimination of gender discrimination in educational content. These are just some of the incentive programmes that should be implemented. Education will go a long way toward familiarising women with their legal and personal rights and motivating them to fight for their privileges, which will ultimately lead to the protection of the rights outlined in the Constitution that pertain to women. Education will go a long way toward familiarising women with their legal and personal rights and motivating them to fight for their privileges.

### **Importance of Women Empowerment**

In recent years, there has been a widespread focus on the advancement of women's rights. It is accurate to assert that empowering women has developed into a requirement of the present moment. Women should have the freedom, faith, and self-worth to choose what is best for their own requirements and needs. When one considers the progress that has been made by women over the last few decades, it is clear that discrimination on the basis of gender is pointless and serves no purpose. Women are paid less than males, and in many households they are still expected to perform traditionally female roles such as that of housekeeper and slave. The empowerment of women in India is necessary in order to combat issues of this nature and to provide women the opportunity to play an autonomous role in Indian society. The right of women must be prioritised in order to empower women. They ought to be granted privileges commensurate to their contributions to society's economic, educational, and political systems. They are permitted to pursue higher education and are provided with care that is comparable to that which males receive.

### **OBJECTIVE**

1. Creating an environment through positive economic and social policies for full development of women to enable them to realize their full potential
2. The de-jure and de-facto enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom by women on equal basis with men in all spheres – political, economic, social, cultural and civil

### **CONCEPTUAL MEANING OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT**

The ability or capability to engage as equal participants in social, economic, political, and cultural processes in the society is the conceptual meaning of the term "women empowerment." The world's economy, as well as the domains of science and technology, are among the many areas that are currently undergoing a period of rapid development. In spite of the fact that in both developed and developing nations throughout the world, the position of women still needs to improve in a number of different disciplines, and that for decades they have been suppressed in all aspects of life, the world economy has transformed into a global economy. The empowerment of women is something that is far simpler to say than it is to really execute. Because of all of these factors, many women's organisations around the world are calling for a revolutionary change in the status of women as well as the sociocultural norms that are currently in place in society 4. The education, economy, business, and health care sectors of a woman are much more developed in many developed countries than they are in developing countries.

This means that developed countries are developing at a higher rate than developing countries. However, discrimination on the basis of gender continues to play a significant part in the processes that slow the expansion and development of women's rights around the globe. In the same way, gender discrimination may still be found in India, despite the fact that the country's central government and its many state governments have enacted a number of constitutional measures designed to safeguard women's rights and eliminate gender disparities. 6. Empowerment of women means supporting and encouraging women to be self-reliant, have positive self-esteem, economically independent, and generate self confidence to face with courage in any challenging situation. It also encourages active participation in various socio-economic and political development in the society.

Women Empowerment refers to complete freedom of women from socio-economic and cultural hindrances of dependency and deprivations in the society. 6. Empowerment of women means supporting and encouraging women to actively participate in various socio-economic and political development "Enabling each person to realise their greatest potential while respecting their right to make their own free choices." IGNACIO SOCIAS Those who are empowered have the potential to take control of their lives and fortunes with the assistance of the government and civil society. This may be accomplished with the cooperation of both of these groups. In order to achieve empowerment, both men and women need to have the same rights and privileges as well as the same possibilities, particularly when it comes to employment and labour that is considered respectable. MARYANN TARANTULA 9 "Supporting individuals in such a way as to enable them to realise goals that would enhance life for everybody is what we mean when we talk about empowerment." 10. "Women's empowerment is, essentially, giving authority to women in areas of society where they didn't have it before," said Eva Boone. It is a procedure that involves include individuals in the decision-making process in an area where they previously did not have that ability. They must meet the criterion of having their power in this domain taken away from them. We bring up the concept of empowerment because it gives women the ability to exercise control over their own lives. "The process by which women gain the ability to make strategic life choices in a situation where this ability was previously denied to them" is how women's empowerment is described within the field of economic development. Women empowerment is a process of personal and social change through which women gain power, meaningful choices, and control over their own lives.

Empowerment of women is essentially the process of upliftment of women in the status of social, economic, and political fields and the traditionally who is underprivileged in the society, and it is the process of safe guards them against all forms of discrimination and violence prevailed in the society. The phrase "empowerment" refers to "a multi-dimensional social process that empowers individuals to obtain control over their own lives." This definition applies to the term in its broadest sense. It refers to the procedures that promote and encourage power to be used by individuals in their own lives, their communities, and society through taking action on topics that people define as being significant. People's personal lives, society, and the communities in which they live may be controlled through a process known as empowerment. "Individuals are engaged when they are able to open out to one another without hindrance or constraint such as directives, calling, or ways of life," In the context of women's rights, empowerment refers to the process of elevating the position of women via the provision of teaching, mindfulness, education, and preparation, as well as preparation pertaining to the individual's own safety. "Women's empowerment" refers to the process of preparing and enabling women to make life-threatening decisions on many aspects of society. The emancipation of women and the maintenance of a healthy gender correspondence are critical components of our society that must thrive in order to ensure the continued expansion of the nation.

## WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA

The term "women's empowerment" refers to the process of enabling women to achieve economic autonomy, self-sufficiency, a healthy self-image that enables them to deal effectively with adversity, and the capacity to take part in activities that contribute to the advancement of society. The government has established a variety of plans and initiatives, including the National Credit Fund for Women (1993), the Food and Nutrition Board (FNB), and the Information and Mass Education Fund (IMF), amongst others, specifically for the women who would benefit from them. The most significant progress that has been made in the Panchayati Raj institutions over the past few years has been the increased participation of women. At the level of the village council, there are a significant number of elected female representatives. In addition, women are becoming increasingly involved in human development concerns such as gender equality, education, and health care. Pickles, tailoring, needlework, and other handicrafts are just some of the things that many of them have begun producing and selling in their homes. The economic independence of women is increasingly seen as a necessary condition for a nation's continued development in modern times; hence, the topic of the economic independence of women is of the utmost significance to political thinkers, social thinkers, and reformers.

### Women Rights in India

The preamble, fundamental rights, fundamental duties, and directive principles of the Indian Constitution all uphold the value of the principle that women should have the same rights and responsibilities as men. In addition to ensuring that women be treated fairly, the constitution also gives the state the authority to enact laws that feature favourable discrimination for female citizens. The following is a list of some of the major articles.

- Equality before law[ Article 14]
- No Discrimination by state on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them[Article15(i)]
- Special provision by state in favour of Women and Children[ Article 15(3)]
- Equality of opportunity in matters relating to employment [Article 16]
- Securing adequate means of livelihood for men and women equally [Article 39(a)]
- Equal pay for equal work[Article 39(d)]
- Promoting justice on basis of equal opportunity and to provide free legal aid[Article 39(A)] Renounce practices derogatory to women[Article 51(A)(e)]
- 1/3 reservation for women in panchayats[ Article 243(D)] and in municipalities[Article 243(T)]
- Right to Property to Women[Article 300(a)]

### Legislations

- Abolition of Sati Act,1829
- Special Marriage Act,1954
- Hindu Succession Act,1956
- Dowry Prohibition Act,1961
- Maternity Benefits Act, 1961
- Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971
- Domestic Violence Act,2005

- Sexual Harassment Bill, 2010(Ram, 2004)

### 3.3.Government Schemes for Women Empowerment

In India, governmental programmes for the advancement of women were first implemented in 1954; however, women's involvement in these programmes did not begin until 1974. At the moment, the Government of India runs around 34 distinct programmes specifically for women, which are administered by a variety of departments and ministries. The following are examples of some of these:

1. Rastria Mahila Kosh (RMK) 1992-1993
2. Mahila Samridhi Yojana (MSY) October, 1993.
3. Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY) 1995.
4. Women Entrepreneur Development programme given top priority in 1997-98.
5. Mahila Samakhya being implemented in about 9000 villages.
6. Swayasjdha.
7. Swa Shakti Group.
8. Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women(STEP).
9. Swalamban.
10. Crèches/ Day care centre for the children of working and ailing mother.
11. Hostels for working women.
12. Swadhar.
13. National Mission for Empowerment of Women.
14. Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) (1975),
15. Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescence Girls (RGSEAG) (2010).
16. The Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for Children of Working Mothers.
17. Integrated Child Protection scheme (ICPS) (2009-2010).
18. Dhanalakahmi (2008).
19. Short Stay Homes.
20. Ujjawala (2007).

### Suggestions

1. Women, especially those who come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, need to be educated about their rights through a series of awareness programmes that need to be established.
2. The education of women, who make up the bulk of the population, should be given the utmost importance as the problem at its source. Because of this, we must place a particular emphasis on the education of women.
3. In order to put a stop to the unethical behaviours that are widespread in the community, there should be strict application of programmes and laws.
4. Women should be permitted to participate in the workforce and should be given with adequate protection and assistance so that they may do so successfully. They should be given appropriate remuneration, and they should have the same working conditions as men, in order for their standing in society to be raised.

## CONCLUSION

Women empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social, educational, gender or economic strength of individuals and communities of women. Women's empowerment in India is heavily dependent on many different variables that include geographical location (urban/rural) educational status social status (caste and class) and age. Policies on Women's empowerment exist at the national, state and local (Panchayat) levels in many sectors, including health, education, economic opportunities, gender based violence and political participation. They ensuring gender equality and women participation in every field, but the Government initiatives alone would not be sufficient to achieve this goal. The Individuals and society must take initiatives to create a space in the equality and against gender discrimination. Women have the full rights and opportunities of self-dependent and to participate in politics and decision-making process and participating in the social, economic and political life in the society and nation.

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