



Women Empowerment: A journey from womb to tomb

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Abstract

The very term ‘women empowerment’ implies that women are not powerful enough – they need to be empowered. This painful truth has existed for a long time. In recent years, remarkable work has begun to lift women out of the abyss of insignificance and powerlessness. Patriarchal societies suppress women's freedom around the world. Women were not allowed to vote or even have any opinions. Women were confined to their homes. As time progressed, she realized that her life meant more than just serving the household. As more and more women began to overcome man-made barriers, the world began to witness the rise of women. Unlike men, women never try to suppress the voice of the opposite sex. They hold the hands of all the downtrodden people – both men and women – and pull them out of misfortune as they try to improve their lives.

The present paper aims to analyze the status of women empowerment in India using various indicators such as women's household decision making power, financial autonomy, freedom of movement, political participation, acceptance of unequal gender roles, exposure to media, access to education, experience Is an effort. Domestic violence etc. based on data obtained from various sources. Studies show that women in India are relatively disempowered and have somewhat lower status than men despite many efforts made by the government. Gender gaps exist with respect to access to education and employment. Women's household decision-making power and freedom of movement vary significantly with their age, education and employment status. It has been found that acceptance of unequal gender norms by women is still prevalent in the society. More than half of the women consider wife beating justified for some reason or the other. Very few women have the final say on how to spend their earnings. Control over cash earnings increases with age, education and place of residence. The performance of women in media is also less than that of men. Rural women are more victims of domestic violence than urban women. A large gender gap also exists in political participation. The study concludes with the observation that access to education and employment are the enabling factors for empowerment, achievement of the goal, however, largely depends on people's attitude towards gender equality.

History of Women Empowerment

The history of women empowerment does not start from a specific date, it is a cumulative process. However, there are some movements, protests, revolutions which have furthered the cause of women empowerment more rapidly. In ancient days and even in recent times, women were not allowed to vote in hundreds of countries. As time passed, more and more women united and raised their voices. Attaining the right to vote significantly improved the status of



women in society. Many suffrage movements campaigned daily in support of women's voting rights. In America, individuals such as Elizabeth Stanton and organizations such as the National American Woman Suffrage Association, National Woman's Party played important roles in securing voting rights for women. In the UK, the Women's Social and Political Union campaigned aggressively for women's suffrage. It is a shame for the society at large when we consider that many countries gave women the right to vote after a very long time. Kuwait, Qatar, Zaire, Bahrain, Andorra, Central African Republic, etc. gave women the right to vote after the second half of the 20th century. No woman can be empowered unless she is financially independent. Gone are the days when women had to depend on their father or husband to get the things they wanted. Since the 20th century, women have had more opportunities to join the workforce. However, at the same time, many women in England were forced to work both in the workplace and at home to support the family. After World War II, women themselves decided to join the workforce. Today more and more jobs are opening for women. Women are proving worthy of the designations given to them. Women have also got the power to take important decisions in the family. Now both men and women decide whether to have a child or not. Women became more empowered with the use of contraceptive pills. Women can now enjoy uninterrupted work life and education. Women empowerment cannot be successful if women from the lower rungs of the society are not empowered. After the beginning of the 21st century, grassroots women have got many professional jobs, labor which was reserved only for men. Today there are many women masons, bus drivers, petrol pump attendants, farmers etc. and all these women are doing their work very well. Women empowerment in India Women empowerment in India cannot be compared with other countries. Women were highly respected in the Vedic era. Attention to women's education was never absent. The word 'Sahadharmini' was known since the Vedic period. Sahadharmini means equal partner. Thus, it is quite clear that in ancient times, women in India enjoyed respect, education and reverence. As time passed, Indian culture became contaminated with conservative Middle Eastern and British culture. As a result, the power and respect that women enjoyed was lost. After independence, women gradually started getting back their lost power. Today women are everywhere. The country saw its woman Prime Minister and President, the country has many eminent women sportspersons like Saina Nehwal or PT Usha, the country has been blessed with talented women scientists like A Chatterjee or B Vijayalakshmi. Women in India are joining the fighting forces without any hesitation. However, many women in India are still finding it difficult to break free from the clutches of patriarchy – especially in the rural sector. Empowered women should urge these women to raise their voice, protest and seek help from the authorities. Inequality and the way forward Women today enjoy more freedom than ever before. They can take decisions themselves. However, there is still a long way to go. Women should oppose the use of religion to oppress them. Not all military positions are open to women. There is a pay gap in the film industry, sports and general jobs. Women need to use their hard-earned power to remove all the injustices that they have been facing since time immemorial.



Basis of women empowerment- Women's movement in the world and its impact in India

The foundation of the women's movement in the world was laid in the 19th century itself. Many nations of the West became participants in this movement during that period. It was only when the women's movement came into existence that the concept of women empowerment came into prominence before the world. Therefore, to understand women empowerment, it is important to understand the women's movement. In simple words, the women's movement started with the society considering women inferior. An important principle of feminism is that women have inferior status in this patriarchal society. This society itself constitutes the rules and form of living life for him. Denies the independent personality of women. The women's movement does not oppose any man but opposes patriarchal ideas. This movement believes that women should also get equal respect, rights and opportunities as men. Instead of gender inequality, the women's movement believes in the concept that a woman is also a human being. Apart from being a human being, he is also half of the world's population. She has as much contribution in the creation of the universe as the man.

The first phase of the women's movement

The first phase of the women's movement is the late 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. Its first objective was to provide equal opportunities for women in the urban, liberal and industrial environment of America. The second wave is considered to have started from the sixties. It recognized that both legal and actual inequalities were intricately linked and should be addressed. The third wave starts from the nineties. This arose as a result of the reaction to the second wave. In this, the definition of femininity given by the second wave was challenged. Just as feminism was being seen and coined globally, in the same sequence, extensive efforts were being made for social reform regarding the conditions of women in India too. But its form was not the same as it has been in the West. In India, Renaissance is considered to have started from the second half of the nineteenth century and lasted till around 1915. This upliftment was progressing in association with social reform and national movement. In this, the issue of voice against superstitions, voice against child marriage, Sati system and Devdasi system etc. was raised. People like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Vivekananda, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Jyotiba, Savitribai Phule, Pandita Ramabai did important work towards removing the problems of women according to the then society, creating a favorable environment for them and empowering them.

The second phase of women's movements

The second phase of women's movements towards empowering women in India, which starts almost with the arrival of Gandhi in India, is considered to have started from 1915. This was the period when women were actively participating in a call. This is the same period when the Indian Women's Association was established in 1917. At this time, the efforts of Gandhi and Ambedkar to bring women into the mainstream of society are seen admirably. Mahatma Gandhi was talking very practically about the abolition of purdah system, child marriage, dowry system, problems of widows and abolition of untouchability. On the other hand, Dr. Ambedkar was doing similar work where he played an important role in providing voting rights, ending



gender discrimination and ensuring the right to equality.

The third phase of women's movements

Its third phase, which can be seen so far in India, its main points are related to equality in the socio-political-economic life of women. Thus, the feminist movement has played a major role in empowering women in India. In the present times, there are many aspects of empowerment of women in many fields and the challenges faced in it are also no less.

How much women empowerment?

Every year International Women's Day is celebrated all over the world on 8 March. Harishankar Parsai's satirical line is that "Days are celebrated for the weak, not for the strong." Being strong does not just mean going out of the house and doing a job or walking shoulder to shoulder with men. The meaning of being empowered here is based on her ability to take decisions whether she is taking her own decisions or is dependent on someone else for this. Similarly, today it is very important for her to be financially strong. She will never be empowered if she is not financially independent, so this is another important aspect.

Women in India today have equal rights legally in all fields but they still have to struggle for it in the society. Socially, the core of our society still exists in the form of patriarchy. The patriarchal structure is still very strong in rural areas. From time to time, Khap Panchayats or other similar organizations keep suggesting various provisions for moral policing regarding wearing of women's clothes. Religion also sometimes plays its role in this. Barring women from entering religious places is the latest result of this. Not entering Sabarimala or other religious places is a violation of fundamental rights. The nexus of religion and caste, conventions and superstition have further exploited women.

The field of politics has been a field of monopoly of men from history till present. Women's monopoly was never established on this. Politics goes beyond the confines of the home and works to govern and give direction to the society. In every corner of the world, only men were seen holding political positions in the entire society. Indian society is also no different from this. Etcetera

Present scenario and future ahead

Today women are enjoying more freedom than ever before. They can take decisions themselves. However, there is still a long way to go. Women should oppose the use of religion to oppress them. Not all military positions are open to women. There is a pay gap in the film industry, sports and general jobs. Women need to use their hard-earned power to remove all the injustices that they have been facing since time immemorial. Major role for women empowerment is played by education. As all we know Education is the key factor for women empowerment, prosperity, development and welfare. Discrimination of women from womb to tomb is well known. There is continued inequality and vulnerability of women in all sectors-Economic, Education, Social, Political, Health Care, Nutrition, Right and Legal etc, women are oppressed in all spheres of life, they need to be empowered in all walk of life. In order to fight against the socially constructed gender biases, women have to swim against the system that requires more strength. Such strength comes from the process of empowerment and empowerment will come from the education.



Summary

The term women empowerment refers to gender equality. It is especially in favor of women's rights. Women empowerment means empowering women to take all decisions of their own choice. So that he can take all decisions for his social and economic development. Women empowerment will definitely encourage all women to stand up for their education and the life of their choice. Women Empowerment Mission encourages women to become self-reliant. So that he can gain positive self-esteem and develop within himself the ability to compete with the world and create a place of his own choice. This is possible only when women also have equal opportunities in the society. Empowering women would mean encouraging them for their socio-economic development. Women have had to suffer a lot in society since ancient times. They were not given equal rights to education and to be self-reliant. They were limited to household work only. They were kept away from education and development. Women constitute half the population although their contribution to India's economy is very less. This shows that equal opportunities are not available to women in the society and the responsibilities given to them do not contribute to the GDP of the country. Development of women is equally important to develop India as a superpower. And giving them a chance to develop themselves should be a priority. To achieve this we should mainly focus on girls' education. Moreover, they also get equal pay as men for equal work. To empower women, our aim should also be to eliminate child marriage and dowry system from the entire country. The Government of India is also working to make India more suitable for women so that they can also get equal opportunities and develop themselves. In this regard, the Supreme Court of India also made it mandatory for women to enter the National Defense Academy. The Indian government also announced that military schools for women would henceforth be available. A simple approach to this problem could be a remarkable solution.

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