



EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN INDIA: AN OVERVIEW

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Abstract: Empowerment of women is one of the major issues in the process of development of countries all over the world in developing Country like India, women folk form a major part of the Indian economy? Who constitute one third of the labour resource, and prime member contributing to the survival of the family. Though women play an important role in family and national development, they are discriminated in all essential areas of life, whether in terms of education income, partner choice, inheritance laws, property rights, decision-process, community organization or access to leadership positions in education, business or politics. By keeping all these factors in view, an attempt is made to explore the various factors regarding women empowerment in the article.

Keywords: Empowerment, women capabilities, gender inequalities

Introduction

Women folk form a major part of the Indian economy, who constitute one third of the labour resource and primary member contributing to the survival of the family. Thus, women constitute nearly 50% of the population, perform two thirds of the work, and produce 50% of the food commodities, consumed in the country. They earn one third of remuneration and own 10% of the property or wealth of the country.

Now-a-days the empowerment of women is one of the major issues in the process of development of countries all over the world. Empowerment of women can help to improve women's position in society. The word 'women empowerment' means that the women have the capacity to regulate their routine lives in the social, political and economic terms. Empowerment is an active and multidimensional process, which enables women to realize their identity and power in all aspects of life. In modern India, women are given freedom and rights rich as freedom of expression and equality, right to get proper education etc., But still problems like lack of education, female foeticide, dowry, domestic violence are prevalent in the society.

Since independence, a number of innovative schemes have been launched for the upliftment of women in India. The social welfare department reported that the status of women in 1974 highlighted the total lack of implementation of the concept of gender equality established in Indian constitution and indicated that Indian women remained deprived economically and socially. Though the Fifth Five years plan (1974-79), Sixth Five year plan (1980-85), the seventh Five year plan (1985-90) gave much importance to uplift status of women's programs and schemes is much important and Tenth Five year plan emphasized on continuation of women empowerment programmes where as Eleventh plan seeks to reduce disparities across regions and communities by ensuring access to basic physical infrastructure as well as health and education services to all, recognises gender as a cross cutting theme across all sectors and commits to respect and promote the rights of the common person.

Review of literature: Empowerment of women has emerged as an important issue now a day; several studies have been undertaken by various researches on aspects of women empowerment in India. An attempt is made here to put together some of the closely related research findings in the area.

According to Krishna (2003) empowerment means increasing the capacity of individuals or groups to make effective development and life choices and to transform these choices into desired actions and outcomes. Narayan (2002) defines empowerment as the 'expansion of freedom of choice and action'. Sunitha Roy (1999) reported that empowerment of women should focus on aspects like direct involvement of women in programming and management, effective collaboration with community organizations, organizing and