

# A STUDY OF GENDER EQUITY POLICY (2004) GUJARAT

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## ABSTRACT

*Gender equity is one of the millennium development goals (MDGs) by United Nation. The Government of Gujarat has formulated the Nari gaurav Niti in the year 2002 is also known as gender equity policy . The main aim of the policy is to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and provide the equal right to women, which is one of the most important objectives covered in MDGs. The main role of the policy is to promote conceptual clarity and awareness on gender issues. The policy has also included the technical inputs for gender planning; gender budgeting, gender analysis and Audit of policies. In this paper I would like to study the theoretical background of Gender equity and the reason behind the introduction of the policy. Secondly, i would like to study the philosophy, goal, requirement of Gender Equity Policy 2004.*

**Keywords :** Millennium Development Goals(MDGs), gender sensitization, gender equity

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Developing countries such as India facing several women's issues , therefore it needed to develop gender Equity policy as per Millenium development goal which have concentrated on women issues and need to develop gender equity policy. In spite of different measure were taken for women regarding discrimination, still non recognition and neglection of women at home and outside home has been seen. Therefore Government of Gujarat took the initiative and formulated the State Gender Equity policy with aims to introduce new programs and schemes.

The National policy for the empowerment of women was formulated in 2001. The policy was followed by the state level women policies in the various states includes Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka The guiding philosophy of the Centre, which is an initiative under the draft Gender Equity Policy (Nari Gaurav Niti) (2004) of the State, is that women and men have equal rights and opportunities to contribute to the well being of a society. The approach is to promote gender equity and equity by putting gender concerns in the mainstream of the state's overall development plan.

### 1.1 Philosophy

The Guiding philosophy of the Gender Equity policy is to maintain fundamental Equal rights and human dignity freedom of women and men . It's also based on the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, the Elimination of Violence against Women, the right to Development.

### 1.2 Objectives

The main objectives are to assist responsiveness initiation related to gender matters such as programs, policies, laws and schemes. Generate gender database, to commence research on problems and processes of gender development, to increase the participation of stakeholders on the gender related development, promote the Voluntary organisation for the activities, conduct

gender audits, monitoring the programs, project, schemes and design the programs and finally is to channelize the resources.

### **1.3 Goals**

The main goals are to eradicate discrimination of gender by introducing various programs and plans. It implements the programs and plan based on gender sensitization with appropriate design. The main role is to distribute the information related to gender sensitization and coordinate the agents to facilitate gender mainstream by building the capacities for enabling effectively. It is providing various technical inputs for Gender Planning, Gender Budgeting, Gender Analysis & Audit of Policies, Programs and outcomes, Gender Convergence, and Gender Advocacy to various organizations within and outside the state.

## **2. FOCUSED AREAS**

The policy is majorly focused on 9 sub areas which are as follow:

### **2.1 Health , Nutrition, Sanitation and Drinking water**

According to the World health Organization (WHO), 'health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely an absence of disease or infirmity'.

Health is affected by declining the sex ratio in Gujarat as show the gender inequity. In spite of Prenatal diagnostic Techniques Act passed since 1995, the sex ratio on the age group of 0-6 years has decreased. In Gujarat a very few caste have still considered a girl child as a burden due to the heavy dowry system. While it has seen that the girl child are not given a healthy life as compared to the boy child. They still consider them as inferior and unwanted. Even many a times it found that women did not access the health facilities because her health issues are ignored by her family. As it was found that mortality rate in female, especially between 0-9 and 15-29 age group. Communicable diseases are also very common among women. Violence till now was viewed as law and order problems, but now it was found that it significantly affect the health. "Thirty-six percent women in Gujarat accept at least one reason as justification for wife beating" (NFHS, India, Gujarat 1998-99).

Baby girl in few of our communities consider them as a burden and they get the reward in form of low nutrition food which directly start affecting their health during infancy to puberty and adultery to old age.rural spend their productive hours on fetching water for her family . 150 million Children below 5 years of age die due to lack of sanitation . it was estimated that 14% of india's rural household have access to latrines. Dr. Shubhada Kanani (1995) found that the average weight of adolescent girls of Vadodra in Gujarat was only 60-70% of the standards. Majority of girls (above 80%) are anemic and about 10% were severely anaemic.

Urbanization affect the urban environment which mostly affect the health of women because as we know that the poor women are not well in terms of nutrition's which makes them weak therefore they easily caught by the diseases such as skin disease, allergies, infections etc. Even women in rural areas are also not protected because of urbanization, due to urban waste which transmit through water which are chemical waste or untreated water, air which directly affect their health.

### **2.2 Gender through media**

Media has to provide more opportunities to the women in decision making and each should focused more on the role of femininity in media where it should present them strong for aware the population. It should focus more on women issues and show the real condition of women in the society that occurs in different part of our country from urban to rural.

Media has to make sure through gender sensitization and awareness programs introduction at grass root level and gender training included as compulsory training programmes in training institute that help in capacity building.

### **2.3 Capacity building**

Capacity building means all the processes that facilitate women's empowerment by strengthening their inner capacities. The main area of capacity-building is in skill-training. The main goal of capacity building is gender equality, empowerment of women, provide equal access of opportunities to women. Therefore, monitoring cell should develop that monitor the policy from the perspective point of capacity building.

### **2.4 Legislative action for gender equity**

At the national level various policies were already formulated for the gender discrimination . Here we are interested whether the policies are really working at the ground level or not and the life of the women is changing or not. For the real implementation and working of the policy as per legislation.

### **2.5 Economic empowerment of women**

The concept of women empowerment has evolved few decades ago, it started as welfare initiative and grew as "women development". The current thinking about assisting women has two characteristics. (i) Shift from welfare to development and (ii) move away from special programme for women to the systematic incorporation of a gender perspective into the development portfolio across all the sectors of the economy. "Indian women are slowly emerging as active agents participating in and guiding their destinies. The immediate need is increasingly felt to capture women's insight for solving basic problems"

Recently women are actively participating in all three sectors of an economy and becoming independent. Notably women's contribution in services sector has been increasing last few years.

### **2.6 Literacy & education**

Efforts on girls' education has been increasing, but it was found that the Gujarat has a higher net enrollment rate of Gujarat but at the same time the dropout rate, which is 48% which is incidentally also high among the highest in the country. Gujarat has the highest per student Expenditure and it also found that vast regional disparity in literacy across the different districts in Gujarat that is why the balance in literacy cannot maintained.

### **2.7 Political participation of women**

Women empowerment in politics means gain greater control over the material and intellectual resources to maintain the gender equity in a political context. The main objectives of the policy are to facilitate the constitutional Right to Equity whereby women at different levels (household, community/ public associations like Gram Sabha, Board, Committees, work places and political leadership like Panchayats, Nagar Palika, Legislative assembly and Parliament) gain recognition and legitimacy without discrimination.

Women representative in Panchayat at Gujarat was 33.4%, still the participation of the women is very limited. The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment of 1992 provided for 33 percent reservation of seats for women in local bodies of panchayats and municipalities laying a strong foundation for their participation in decision making at the local level.

### **2.8 Natural resource management**

Gender equity should be maintained in the access of natural resources. As it was found that women in agricultural sector contribute more than 50 to 60%, but still her contribution was unnoticeable.

### 3. CONCLUSION

It is well known that Central Government has contributed for formulating the policy, programs and scheme for women upliftment after Independence. But we may say, that still there are less number of policy or institution who may monitor all the programs and scheme, especially the gender discrimination reality in our country. Therefore Gujarat Government has formulated a policy in 2004, majorly based on the focused areas that are covered in the paper.

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