

GLOBALIZATION AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT-A STUDY

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Abstract

Globalization is paving a way for the women to know about their rights and to make them empower so that they can become self- dependant Women empowerment is all about giving women the power and control of their lives to become anything they want and to do what they want in situations where they were not allowed once upon a time. It refers to the creation of an environment for women where they can make decisions of their own for their personal benefits as well as for the society. There are a lot of women in India who have done exceptionally well in various fields of life. Women like PT Usha, Hima Das, PV Sindhu, Sania Mirza, Saina Nehwal, etc. have won various trophies and medals in their respective fields and showed the girl power to Indian people. After looking at them, a lot of girls came out of their houses and showed what actual talent they carry inside them. Women empowerment leads to **increased levels of literacy** in the world. This is the case when these girls gain education that can help them better their lives. Many people do want their daughters to study and thus a lot of women remain illiterate. But, girls should be allowed to study till the time she feels it is good for her. This is not only good for her but also from the country's perspective as well.

Key Words:- *Globalization, empowerment, PT Usha, Hima Das, PV Sindhu, Sania Mirza, Saina Nehwal. Literacy*

Introduction:

Globalization is paving a way for the women to know about their rights and to make them empower so that they can become self- dependant, the Indian state in view of its commitment to various international conventions. "CONVENTION ON ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)" in 1993. Government of India, other countries and many international organizations have drafted many good policies to aware the women about their rights .In the past we have witnessed that women were au fait about their rights, now a days we can see that due to globalization women are working in different fields of the world whether its sports, corporate, film industry and many others.

"Women empowerment" and "women equality with men" is a universal issue. Women empowerment is a term that is used to encourage, inspire and celebrate women. It is also used to celebrate the strides that women and girls have taken in terms of gender equality, financial independence and high confidence.

Meaning of Women Empowerment

Women empowerment is all about giving women the power and control of their lives to become anything they want and to do what they want in situations where they were not allowed once upon a time. It refers to the creation of an environment for women where they can make decisions of their own for their personal benefits as well as for the society.

Women Empowerment refers to increasing and improving the social, economic, political and legal strength of the women, to ensure equal-right to women, and to make them confident enough to claim their rights, such as:

- ❖ Freely live their life with a sense of self-worth, respect and dignity,
- ❖ Have complete control of their life, both within and outside of their home and workplace,
- ❖ To make their own choices and decisions (right to choose: to say yes or no),
- ❖ Have equal rights to participate in social, religious and public activities,
- ❖ Have equal social status in the society,
- ❖ Have equal rights for social and economic justice,
- ❖ Determine financial and economic choices,
- ❖ Get equal opportunity for education,

- ❖ Get equal employment opportunity without any gender bias,
- ❖ Get safe and comfortable working environment.

Empowerment of women can be achieved through **education, employment and women's organization**. Five important dimensions of female empowerment are:

1. Economic participation.
2. Economic opportunity.
3. Political empowerment.
4. Educational attainment.
5. Health and well Being.

It is against this background an attempt is made in the present paper to mainly focus on two vital aspects of women empowerment viz. Employment and Education.

Globalization and liberalization of the economy seems to have affected women workers in the country in multiple and contradicting ways. Globalization is generally thought to have increased economic opportunities for a large group of workers, especially women through linking urban centers to the global economy

STATUS OF WOMEN IN INDIA

Indian cultural history has a very old and long roots, it can be traced back to thousands of years. Sociologists have analyzed the status of women from these early ages to the present day by different methods. Scholars have believed that women of ancient India enjoyed equal status with men in all aspects of life

The influence of women is marked in every page of Hindu history, right from the most remote periods. What led to the epic wars? Whether it is the abduction of *Sita* or the insult of **Draupadi** always the causes which overturned kingdoms committed to the scepter and the pilgrim's staff and formed the ground work of all the grand epics, were women.

It is evident from all available accounts that in early Vedic society, women occupied the same position as men. Reference to complete gender equality is found in all parts of Vedic literature. Women reached a very high standard of learning and culture, and made all round progress.

They could move freely with their husbands or lover, and were employed in a number of professions. Literary women scholars like *Gargi*, *Maitrayi*, *Godha*, *Vishwashra* were well known and acknowledged for their intellectual and literary abilities. The practice of allowing women to select a husband out of a chosen group ruled out the possibility of child marriages. A man could not undertake any social or religious duty without his wife. Divorce was not permitted infact marriage is considered as "**Saat janmo ka bandhan**".

There are evidences to show that widow marriages prevailed and **Sati Pratha** did not exist in Vedic period. Women had absolute control over their gifts and property received at the time of marriage (it was called "Parinaya") and it was considered a sin if relatives took away any sort of property belonging to the wife (*Stridhana*). But the status of women starts declining during the period of *Smritis* (period of codification of social laws). During this period women were denied the right to study the Vedas. Marriage or domestic lives become compulsory for women.

The Moguls, during their rule, allowed a sudden fall in the dignified position occupied by Indian women. Education for women was stopped and they became victims of evil practices like early child marriage. The Purdah system came into existence.

Some social scientists have described the Mogul era as the dark age of women. The atmosphere was so vitiated that even the horrid acts like female infanticide had to be performed for self preservation and even a marriage had to be celebrated secretly to prevent the abduction of new bride.

But worst scenario was about to come, Indian women's position in society further deteriorated during the medieval period when Sati, child marriages and a ban on remarriage by widows became part of social life in some communities in India. Among the Rajputs of Rajasthan, the Jauhar was practiced. In some parts of India, the Devadasis or temple women were sexually exploited.

Polygamy was widely practiced, especially among **Hindu Kshatriya rulers**. In many Muslim families, women were restricted to **Zenana** areas of the house. Then Britishers arrived in India they listened to the wise counsel of social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Swami Dayanand and they enacted several laws to improve the position of women, to bring back the dignity and glory of women.

Importance of Women Empowerment

Empowering women is important because women aren't getting what they deserve.

- ❖ **Underemployed and unemployed:** Women population constitutes around 50% of the world population. A large number of women around the world are unemployed. The world economy suffers a lot because of the unequal opportunity for women at workplaces.
- ❖ **Inspiration for others:** There are a lot of women in India who have done exceptionally well in various fields of life. Women like PT Usha, Hima Das, PV Sindhu, Sania Mirza, Saina Nehwal, etc. have won

various trophies and medals in their respective fields and showed the girl power to Indian people. After looking at them, a lot of girls came out of their houses and showed what actual talent they carry inside them.

- ❖ **Talented:** Women are as talented as men. Previously, women were not allowed higher education like men and hence their talents were wasted. But nowadays, they are also allowed to go for higher studies and it encourages women to show their talents which will not only benefit her individually but to the whole world at large. Today, Many women are occupying the top position of multinational companies.
- ❖ **Overall development of society:** The main advantage of Women Empowerment is that there will be an overall development of the society. The money that women earn does not only help them and or their family, but it also help develop the society.
- ❖ **Economic Benefits:** Women Empowerment also leads to more economic benefits not to the individuals but to the society as well. Women empowerment leads to more **financial independence of women and girls**. They are taught on how they can use their skills to get income that they can use to support their families. Women empowerment helps women to stand on their own legs, become independent and also to earn for their family which grows country's economy.
- ❖ **Reduction in domestic violence:** Empowering girls also leads to **reduced levels of domestic violence**. Educated women and girls are able to stand for themselves and escape from incidences of domestic violence.
- ❖ **Reduction in corruption:** Women Empowerment is also advantageous in case of corruption. Women empowerment helps women to get educated and know their rights and duties and hence can stop corruption.
- ❖ **Reduce Poverty:** Women Empowerment also reduces poverty. This also **contributes significantly to the family welfare**. This is because their children are more likely to acquire good education and they are also able to save and invest for the benefit of their families.
- ❖ **National Development:** Women are increasingly participating in the national development process. They are making the nation proud by their outstanding performances almost every spheres including medical science, social service, engineering, etc. This leads to **more developed economies**. This is because the women are able to work and acquire income which translates to higher levels of a country's GDP. By empowering women, we enable the nation.
- ❖ **Availability of Quality workforce:** Large organizations need a large pool of high quality workforce. Empowerment of women would help in increasing the total workforce of quality people.
- ❖ **Self-esteem:** Women should be treated equally with men in all spheres of life. This would help her develop a good emotional health.
- ❖ **Improved health:** Another importance of empowering women is that it **leads to healthier societies**. This is because women by nature are the care takers of their homes and when empowered, they are better able to take care of their homes and families.
- ❖ **Human rights:** Every Woman deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. Not allowing them to get educated or not providing them with a safe working environment is against basic human rights. Empowering women would help is in dealing with human right issues.
- ❖ **Cleanliness and hygiene:** Empowering women also include providing them education related to cleanliness and hygiene. When they understand the benefits of maintaining a clean and hygiene environment, they would obviously make effort towards it.
- ❖ **Educated society:** Women empowerment leads to **increased levels of literacy** in the world. This is the case when these girls gain education that can help them better their lives. Many people do want their daughters to study and thus a lot of women remain illiterate. But, girls should be allowed to study till the time she feels it is good for her. This is not only good for her but also from the country's perspective as well.
- ❖ **Gender equality:** Empowerment of women is also important in **accomplishing the world goal of gender equality**. By empowering girls, this goal is achieved as they are better able to compete with their male counterparts in all fields.
- ❖ **Political representation:** Girl empowerment also **contributes to equality in political representation**. This is because the girls have more confidence to compete for leadership and political seats

CHALLENGES FOR WOMEN IN INDIA

There are many challenges that are currently plaguing the issues of women's rights in India. A lot of issues are redundant and quite basic which has been faced across the country; they are contributory causes to the overarching status of women in India. Targeting these issues will directly benefit the empowerment of women in India.

- **EDUCATION**

While the country has grown from leaps and bounds since its independence the gap between women and men education is severe. In comparison to 82.14% of adult educated men, only 65.46% of adult literate women are there in India. Additionally, the norm of culture that states that the man of the family is the be-all and end-all of family's decisions is gradually deteriorating the Indian society. Eradicating this gap and educating women about their real place in the world is a step that will largely set this entire movement rolling down the hill to crash and break the wall of intolerance, negligence and exploitation.

- **POVERTY IN THE COUNTRY**

Poverty is considered the greatest threat to peace in the world, and eradication of poverty should be a national goal as important as the eradication of illiteracy. Due to abject poverty, women are exploited as domestic helps and wives whose incomes are usurped by the man of the house. If poverty were not a concern, then the girl child will be able to follow her dreams without concerns of sexual exploitation, domestic abuse and no education or work.

- **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The health and safety concerns of women are paramount for the wellbeing of a country, and are important factors in gauging the empowerment of women in a country. However there are alarming concerns where maternal healthcare is concerned. While there are several programs that have been set into motion by the Government and several NGOs in the country, there is still a wide gap that exists between those under protection and those not. Poverty and illiteracy add to these complications with local quacks giving ineffective and downright harmful remedies to problems that women have. The empowerment of women begins with a guarantee of their health and safety..

Few ways to empower women and girls

- ❖ One of the ways to empower women is to **stand against domestic violence**. Domestic violence is a vice that makes many women fear to stand up for their rights and hence standing against it will give confidence to girls and women.
- ❖ Women can also be empowered through the **creation of platforms** where the issues that they are facing in the society can be aired and addressed.
- ❖ We can also empower girls by **making sure that they are able to access education**. They should gain formal education that will help them to make their lives better.
- ❖ Women can also be empowered through **educating the community**. The community can be educated on the importance of the girl child and how they can contribute towards their welfare.
- ❖ Girls can also be empowered by **having a significant percentage of women in leadership and political positions**. This will help them to better address the issues that are facing the girls and women in the society.
- ❖ **Having laws and legislation** that advocate against gender based violence is also a way of empowering girls. It will give them the confidence to stand up whenever they are abused.
- ❖ Welfare organizations should also take the initiative of **having training centers in the community** where women can be taught on how they can start small businesses that will help them earn money.
- ❖ **Having mentors** in our communities will also give girls and women a role model in the society who will inspire them to become better and hence raising their confidence.
- ❖ We can also empower women and girls by **advocating and campaigning against vices** like early marriages, dowry system, etc. This will create a friendlier environment for our girls and women.
- ❖ Girls and women can also be empowered through the **creation of equal opportunities in all areas**. This can be in education, work places and in leadership positions.

- **NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR WOMEN**

It was launched by the government of India on International women's day in 2010 with the aim to strengthen the overall processes that promote all round development of women. It has the mandate to strengthen the inter-sector convergence; facilitate the process of coordinating all the women's welfare and socio-economic development programs across ministries and departments.

The Mission aims to provide a single window service for all programs run by the Government for Women under aegis of various Central Ministries. In light with its mandate, the Mission has been named **Mission Purna Shakti**, implying a vision for holistic empowerment of women.

The National Resource Centre for Women has been set up which functions as a national convergence centre for all schemes and programs for women. It acts as a central repository of knowledge, information, research and data on all gender related issues and is the main body servicing the National and State Mission Authority.

This commission has around 15 major ministries of Indian government as its partner.

There are number of schemes running under the women empowerment mission we will discuss the major schemes here:-

- **Poverty Alleviation and Economic Empowerment of Women**

1. Schemes of Department of Animal Husbandry Dairying Fisheries
2. Scheme on Development of Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture
3. Scheme on Development of Marine Fisheries, Infrastructure and Post harvest Operations
4. Scheme on Fisheries Training and Extension
5. Assistance to Cooperatives
6. National Bamboo Mission
7. Central Poultry Development Organisation
8. Development of Commercial Horticulture through Production and Post-Harvest Management
9. Promotion and Strengthening of Agricultural Mechanization through Training, Testing & Demonstration
10. Gramin Bhandaran Yojna

Conclusion:

Women were denied a lot of opportunities and they missed out on a lot of things that would have changed their lives. However, they deserve equal opportunities for **education, in their careers, in the society**, and so much more.

The empowerment of women is a very important task that every one of us should undertake. This is because empowering women is equal to empowering the whole community and generations to come. There are many ways in which we can empower girls and women and the task does not solely lay with the government but with everyone in the society.

SUGGESTIONS

- Proper awareness for laws should be there that is law should not be restricted to papers only but the implementation of law should be there so that every woman can be familiar with her rights. Significant steps should be taken to implement all the laws which are amended to facilitate detention, prevention and punishment of crimes against women.
- Women education has to be made compulsory and women should be encouraged to become literate because without being educated women cannot have a access to her right.
- Strict implementation of the schemes and policies for women empowerment should be done.
- Awareness camps for women should be organized where they can become familiar with the framed schemes and policies and can take benefit of those schemes and policies.

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