



Contribution of Non-Governmental Organisations in the Empowerment of Women in Shimla District of Himachal Pradesh: An Analysis

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Abstract

In modern development era, non-governmental organisations are playing different roles in the society, including women empowerment. Empowering women is the major focus of governments, non-governmental organisations and other development agencies. Women who are empowered have a feminist principle and hope to empower other deprived women. There are several feminist NGOs which are empowering women to make sure that they get all the deserving rights in the country. The main purpose of the study is to analyse the role of NGOs in women empowerment, how the NGOs are working for the betterment of the women and what is the contribution of NGOs on women empowerment? For the purpose of present study secondary data were consulted. Shimla district of Himachal Pradesh was selected as study area and the study was analytical in nature. It is evident from the study that women are getting empowered and Non-Governmental Organisations are playing an important role in this regard.

Keywords: Women Empowerment, Contribution, NGOs, Shimla district, Himachal Pradesh, National Development

Introduction

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in India have a rich and lively history, however one which has been described by a liquid relationship with the endlessly state instrumentalities. Throughout the course of recent years Indian legislatures, both provincial and postcolonial, had played a vital role in molding Indian NGOs, both as far as how they work in the public arena and their frequently loaded associations with the state. In like manner, at key times in Indian history, NGOs themselves have had an impact in forming the state. For the most part, however, Indian NGOs are hesitant to concede that the

state decides both the degree and nature of the work that they can attempt and somewhat their primary structures, yet like it or not, the relationship with the state is a characterizing component of Indian NGOs. So who for sure are these NGOs? Set forth plainly, in India NGOs are those associations that have some type of institutional base, are private, non-profit, self-administering, will-full in nature, and enrolled with the public authority. The issue is that it is challenging to evaluate the scope of NGOs in India that have NGO status from government, as there is no focal system to decide those that have been enrolled with the different neighbourhood, state and public government instrumentalities.

Empowering women increase their participation in all spheres of life. For this the government has made different efforts through women centric policies and programs. However, there is a research gap to conduct serious research in the field of role of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in women empowerment, which are really improving the status of women in different aspects. Non-Government Organisations provided an opportunity to participate in social and political fields which were not easily granted by the for-profit and public sectors. Several NGOs are working for the poverty alleviation among women and advocating the women's rights. NGOs are playing a major role in enforcing rights provided by Indian legislation.

Strengthening of women has arisen as a significant issue lately. Strengthening of women works with for maintainable turn of events, particularly in rustic regions by inspiring the monetary, social and political status of women in India. Enabling the women in these view-points is important to change over the inactive society into self-practical society. Women strengthening can be accomplished through arrangement of satisfactory schooling, offices, political support, and powerful regulation framework and work age for women. Here, NGO'S and the Self-Help Groups assume an exceptionally crucial part in women strengthening by giving essential schooling, professional preparation, preparing for independent work, lawful guide, assurance for women and mindfulness program. Along these lines they are primarily worried about the upliftment of the women in the general public.

Role of Non-Governmental Organisation in Women Empowerment

Non-Governmental Organisations are playing a significant role in promoting women in different fields. Non-Governmental Organisations trained the women through skill development courses which provide them opportunities of self-employment to improve their social and economic status. This helps them to live a quality life. Non-Governmental Organisations are also contributing in the field of legal awareness among women. NGOs also make aware the women about their rights and their legal remedies.

NGOs help the women in fair trade. Fair trade is a general term and is tied in with giving destitute individuals power. NGOs help to eliminate the go between and guarantee makers get a fair cost for their work. They go about as facilitators in this interaction. Arrangement of credit clears way for civil rights and empowering. NGOs target and help women by giving credits as they have a past filled with being better re-payers of advance. Keeping considering the current situation with financial

advancement, NGOs are additionally associated with furnishing independently employed women with data, information, innovation, preparing and administrative methods.

Women Self Help Groups (SHGs) have been perceived as a successful technique for the empowering women in country as well as metropolitan regions as they unite women from varying backgrounds to fight for their objective. SHGs work on an assortment of issues like wellbeing, nourishment, farming, ranger service, pay age exercises, looking for miniature credit, etc. Since the general empowerment of women is imperatively reliant upon monetary empowerment, NGOs are associated with the accompanying exercises to engage women:

- Teaching and making mindfulness among women particularly the rural women;
- Supplements endeavors of government in women empowerment;
- Advances the utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for enabling women;
- Imparts initiative characteristics among women and guarantees their investment in their empowerment;
- Addresses the issues looked by provincial women to the concerned specialists and does affect evaluation of the strategy decision influencing women;
- Prepares ideal assets and plans and executes the activities that have bearing upon women empowerment;

Review of Literature

Margaret, S. and Kala, N. (2013) conducted a study on the “impact of NGO interventions on the empowerment of women”. The study is conducted with the objectives to analyse the demographic profile of the selected respondents, to analyse the level of women empowerment before and after joining the NGOs, to evaluate the relationships between demographic variables and level of empowerment of the respondents. The results of the study show that NGOs have significant impact on the women empowerment. This is also concluded that the demographic variables like age, education, monthly income and years of joining the NGOs made an impact on the level of women empowerment.

Aru, S. (2017) conducted a study on the “Role of NGOs in Women Empowerment”. The study looks into the vitality of the working process of the NGOs through which women empowerment is achieved and the status of women are uplifted with the aid of NGO’s and self-help groups. The study is focused on rural women of Uttar Pradesh and is based on secondary data. Equal participation of all the women in NGO activities, loans to women through NGOs, financial decision taken by the women itself during activity through NGOs and regular meeting of women participants in NGOs to resolve their problems and give the chance to the women to speak openly about their problems, are some measures explores by researcher to (re) position rural women as equal players in entrepreneurship and economic development.

Kumara, S. and Khanna, M. (2018), conducted a research on women empowerment through Self-Help Group in sujanpur block in Hamirpur district in Himachal Pradesh. In the present study an attempt has been made to analyse the role and performance of Self-Help Groups in empowering women

in Sujampur block of Himachal Pradesh. The study was conducted with the aim to analyses the empowerment of women with the help of Self Help Groups. The study was conducted on the bases of primary data. To generate primary data a total of 100 samples were selected by the researcher. The findings of the study revealed that women get empowered in terms of socially and economically after joining the Self-Help Groups.

Pandey, N. (2019) conducted a study on “Role of NGOs in Promoting Women Empowerment: Evidence from Delhi based NGOs”. The study was conducted in Delhi Metropolitan city. Those NGOs were selected for the study which is developing the skills of women lead to establishing business. To evaluate the impact of these NGOS on women empowerment the researcher interviewed officials of the NGOs. The researcher concluded that NGOs are playing an important role in the society. Women are receiving support from NGOs but it's not necessary that they are getting or feeling empowered.

Gupta, M. (2021) studied on the “Role of NGOs in women empowerment: case studies from Uttrakhand, India”. The purpose of the study is to identify the role of non-government organisations (NGOs) in promoting women empowerment through immediate livelihood facilities. Case study method has been used in the study. In this study five cases related to the women have been taken in to consideration for the interview, which have completed the training and started their own venture. The research find out that women empowerment occurs through venture creation and entrepreneurship, which can be attained with proper training and information. Motivation and effective leadership help women in gaining confidence, and they aim to achieve their goals. Proper information about government policies, networking with customers, relationship with self-help groups (SHGs) and NGOs also help them in attaining empowerment. The researcher suggested practical implication that the government should strengthen the present policies instead of initiating new policies. NGOs or SHGs must focus on providing immediate livelihood through venture creation or entrepreneurial activities. The social implication suggested by the researcher is that the women need to be more socialised and develop a habit of partnership with their friends and neighbours to extend their ventures.

Methodology

The study was based on secondary data and is analytical in nature and was conducted in Shimla district of Himachal Pradesh. The focused area of the study was women empowerment. The present topic was selected because issue of women empowerment is a focus point of the policy makers. Many initiatives have been taken to empower the women. Many NGOs and other agencies are working for the upliftment of the women status in the society. The main purpose of the study is to analyse the role of NGOs in women empowerment, how the NGOs are working for the betterment of the women empowerment and what is the contribution of NGOs on women empowerment?

Contribution of NGOs in Women Empowerment in Shimla District

Non-Governmental Organisations are playing a vital role for the welfare of the society throughout the globe. Various NGOs are active to serve the mankind according to their expertise. Many of them are working in the field of welfare of women. In Shimla district of Himachal Pradesh many

NGOs are working for the welfare of the humanity. Here the researcher will discuss about the selected four NGOs which are working for the welfare of women in Shimla district. They are:

Himachal Gyan Vigyan Samiti (HGVS): The head office of this NGO is in Shimla which is capital city of Himachal Pradesh. The working area of this NGO is very wide. This NGO is popularly known for its campaign for adult education. Besides this the NGO is also working for the women empowerment. This NGO publishes a magazine entitled “Sampada” which publishes the issues related to the women. HGVS also conduct the training programmes for the elected women elected panchayat representatives. The NGO is also doing the life insurance of the women. During the death of the insured women due to COVID-19, their families got financial benefits. HGVS time to time conduct the awareness campaign for the women related to their issues and rights.

Himachal Pradesh Voluntary Health Association (HPVHA): This NGO especially deals with the reproductive child health. The NGO has deputed their health expert volunteers in different health centres to aware the women on different health issues. The volunteers educate the pregnant women since their pregnancy to the five years of age of their child. Volunteers provide them iron tablets, nutrition chart, diet chart and other necessary information as per the requirement.

Education Society for IT: This NGO deals with the legal rights and health issues of the women. The NGO conduct awareness camps in the localities to aware the women regarding their rights. They also provide legal help to the women.

Umang Foundation: This NGO is playing an important role especially in the field of empowering disabled women. NGO especially focused on the education of poor and disabled girls and their legal rights. NGO bear the educational expenses of poor and disabled girls. It conduct awareness camps and webinars on human rights to aware the society. It also organised blood donation camps. The NGO has also fought for the exemption of fee for the disabled students and got success. Now disabled students are getting free education in HP due to the efforts of the Umang Foundation.

Results of the Study

It is evident from the analysis of the working of the NGOs, women and girls are getting benefitted. No doubt, the selected four NGOs are doing commendable job in Shimla district of HP. They have performed well to promote women in different fields. NGOs are providing basic education, skill development training, legal aid, protection of women rights and conduct self-awareness programs. But they also have to face some problems like financial problems, managerial problems, attitude of people towards the working of NGOs etc. Despite these problems, they try to do better in their respective fields. The primary concern of the NGOs working on the field of the women issues is to uplift the women in the society.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that NGOs are constantly striving in the context of women empowerment but there are some hindrances in success and empowerment of women which include social constraints and lack of proper awareness. Still, women face discrimination from both family and society, and also do not possess decision making power. Therefore, more should be done on this front. In this regard,

government's commitment must be critical. Government should formulate policies for the socio-economic upliftment of women. Women should be given equal opportunities for education as well as employment because even if women are financially empowered, they will be contribute significantly in the nation building. Steps are also being taken by the NGOs for the upliftment of women in the society. The study revealed that the selected four NGOs of Shimla district are played an important role in creating awareness among women about their rights, legal aids, health issues etc. It also analysed that after joining the NGOs, the women beneficiaries become more confident, self-aware and independent. As a result of the efforts of these NGOs, the standard of living of women beneficiaries has improved a lot and their way of thinking has also changed. Although NGOs are doing good work for the empowerment of women, but this is possible only when a change can be brought in the ideology of the people of the society in this regard.

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