

# Women Empowerment: Social and Economic Growth

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## **Abstract:**

Women Empowerment can be defined as a process leading to enhancing women's control over financial, human and intellectual resources in society. In any nation, the women empowerment can be measured by extent of their involvement in social, economic and political fields. Women can be made said to be truly empowered only when all the factors such as self-worth of women, their right to control their own lives, their ability to bring about social change, are addressed simultaneously.

**Rural-urban divide:** Situation of women in rural areas is more miserable than their counterparts living in urban spaces. It has been widely prevalent that the women are mostly deprived of an equal status vis-a-vis men and thus they remain as passive beneficiaries in the societies in these countries. They remain powerless, due to their less participation and involvement in the generation of resources critical for development. Therefore, women must become active partners with men, if the goal of women empowerment is desired to be achieved in totality.

To make the efforts leading to modernization of any society successful, it is urgent to bring the women in the mainstream of development. We need to strike a perfect balance between male and female contributors in rural societies by providing equal opportunities to women without being biased towards men.

For this to happen, it is required to empower women on all fronts: social, economic, political as well as religious — in such a manner that they can participate actively in all the efforts meant to provide growth to the society. If empowered with equal opportunities in different spheres of life such as social, economic and political, the women will have the choice to lead a publicly active life which may also bring about a positive change in the society. We need to create conducive environment in the society so that the women become confident enough to be able to articulate their thoughts and become more productive in their actions. They are required to be given equal opportunities to be involved in taking decisions for their family as well as society and the country altogether.

**Keywords:** Decision Making, Manifestation, Prevalent, Modernization.....

## INTRODUCTION

The persistent of gender inequality is most starkly brought home in the phenomenon of “missing Women”. Today it is estimated that 6million women are missing every year (World Bank 2011) of these, 23 percent are never born, and 10 percent are missing in early childhood, 21 percent in the reproductive years, and 38 percent above the age of 60. For each missing women, there are many more women who fail to get an education, a job, or a political responsibility that they Multidisciplinary Management Studies would have obtained if they had been men. Both the relative deprivation of women, and the extent to which there have been improvements over the last twenty years, are apparent in a number of spheres. In access to education in low and moderate income countries, the enrolment rate for girls in secondary school was 34 percent in 2010, while that for boys was 41 percent.

Meanwhile primary school enrolment has become nearly universal for both boys and girls. In labour market opportunities: women are less likely to work; they earn less than men for similar work, and are more likely to be in poverty even when they work. Women spend almost twice as much time on housework, almost five times as much time on child care, and about half as much time on market work as men do. In political representation: women constituted just 19.4 percent of the members of lower and upper houses of parliaments in July 2011. In legal rights: women in many countries still lack independent rights to own land, manage property, conduct business, or even travel without their husband’s consent would have obtained if they had been men. Both the relative deprivation of women, and the extent to which there have been improvements over the last twenty years, are apparent in a number of spheres. In access to education in low and moderate income countries, the enrolment rate for girls in secondary school was 34 percent in 2010, while that for boys was 41 percent.

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There is a bidirectional relationship between economic development and women’s empowerment defined as improving the ability of women to access the constituent of development - in particular health, education, earning opportunities, rights, and political participation. In one direction, development alone can play a major role in driving down inequality between men and women; in the other direction, continuing discrimination

against women can as Sen. Has forcefully argued and hinder development. Empowerment can, in other words accelerate development.

It first shows that poverty and lack of opportunity breed inequality between men and women, so that when economic development reduces poverty, the condition of women improves on two counts: first, when poverty is reduced, the condition of everyone, including women, improves, and second, gender inequality declines as poverty declines, so the condition of women improves more than that of men with development, however, is not enough to bring about complete equality between men and women.

## Women in Rural Development

Indian women, and rural women in particular, play many social and economic roles inside as well as outside the home, but their contribution does not receive due recognition. They have been excluded from the various training and rural development programmes which usually involve the menfolk, being offered only programmes related to child health, nutrition and so on. This can be attributed to the planners' neglect of the contributions and potential of women. The paper examines the participation of rural women in home and farm activities in the state of Haryana, India. It indicates the invisibility of the majority of women, who act as unpaid workers on the family farm. Care of livestock is a female domain but as dairy work is becoming modernized, women are losing control of both management and economic returns. Training of women in animal husbandry is found to be totally neglected. The level of improved household technology, too, is very unsatisfactory, more especially in backward regions where the majority of women are still working with age-old tools. Over half the respondents had no leisure time. The paper suggests a number of measures to help rural women, whose working day is often considerably longer than that of men.

## WOMEN EMPOWERMENT:

The word Women Empowerment essentially means that the women have the power it regulate the activities in day to day in the external environment as in the social, political and economic terms. Women's empowerment is the new phrase in the economic development. There are many researchers and scholars have proved that increase in women empowerment has a drastic change in the economic development. Empowering women and promoting gender equality are enshrined as global development activities within the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the 2000's. Women agency and freedom are among the crucial means for enhancing to their development. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century most of the women are involved in the agriculture and home based activities as shown below.

Table 1: Levels and trends in sector wise composition of women by sector and region (%) for the years 2009-2010

Year: 2009-2010	Agriculture	Manufacturing	Construction	Services	Mining
North	70.1	6.4	2.4	20.9	0.2
Centre	76.9	5.5	8.8	8.7	0.2
North-East	67.9	4.0	9.6	18.3	0.2
East	59.4	18.7	4.0	17.4	0.6
West	72.3	5.9	1.8	19.9	0.2
South	61.4	14	5.6	18.5	0.6

Notes: Definition of Region: North – Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and Chandigarh; Centre – Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh; East - Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal; West - Gujarat, Maharashtra and Goa; South – Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Kerala; North-East – Sikkim, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur and Tripura. Data for states created in 2000 (Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand) were merged with the original states to maintain comparability over time periods.

From the above table it was clear that women participation in different sectors as shown above India stands fifth in agriculture, third in manufacturing, third in construction, sixth in services and third in mining. From this we can say that the women can withstand in any sector so by making some development interventions and programs make them to be more effectively involved in many fields and make economy as developed.

### **WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:**

The Indian women have spread of their age old shackles of serfdom and male domination. She has come to her own and started scaling the ladder of social advance with proud and dignity.

Women in India are now uplifted and granted equal status with the men in all of life activities including the political, social, domestic and educational. But still there is a need to motivate and encourage women to participate in the activities because women secure around of in the total population. For this, Women empowerment must need some interventions for making

women to be involved in the economic development of the country. The development interventions which must focus on the real gender needs, including women's income and material assets which will lead to the increased women empowerment and decreased poverty. From this intervention the women empowerment will start and led to the extent. With the implementation of some new interventions the rate of increase in the women empowerment will raise to mark. Duflo's explanation was that there was a positive correlation between women's rights and the per capita GDP in terms of a cost benefit calculus. From this point of view it was clear that by increase in the women empowerment the economic development may a raise.

### **WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH:**

Most women in the India rely more on the informal work sector for an income. If women are empowered to do more the possibility for economic growth will be at large. If the informal sector is involved into many tasks and activities then there will be more growth. It was proved that female participation in counsels, groups and businesses is seen to be an increase in efficiency.

For instance how empowered women can impact a situation monetarily this was done by fortune 500 companies, " Those with more women's in the category of board directors had significantly higher financial returns, including 53% higher returns on equity, 24% higher returns on the sales and 67% higher returns on the invested capital (OECD,2008)." This study shows that there was a impact of women in the overall economic benefits of the company. If this was implemented on the global scale then the women in the formal workforce can increase the economic output of a nation. There by the increase in the economic growth of the nation.

### **WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND EDUCATION:**

Education is most important means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self confidence to participate fully in the development process. It is necessary for everyone mostly to girls and women because it is an entry point to other opportunities. Investments in secondary level education yield especially more and higher dividends. At present in the 21<sup>st</sup> century there was no difference made it eh matters of education between boys and girls. Girls who have been educated can recognize the importance of health care and their children needs. Women's literacy rates are lower when compared to men in the developing countries like India. Finally if the women are educated then the status will be improved in the economy. Thereby they can grab more number of opportunities and become stronger and powerful than earlier. "If you educate a man an individual is educated if you educate a woman the entire family is educated."

Table2: Women participation in the education and labour force participation rate

Countries	Primary Education Enrolment (in %)	Secondary Education Enrolment (in %)	Labour force Participation Rate(in %)
Pakistan	38	12	14
India	78	28	34
Srilanka	108	76	38
Bangladesh	76	16	60

From the above table India can improve with comparison to the Srilanka and more over India's must concentrate on certain programs for making people to be enrolled in the secondary education.

#### CONCLUSION:

Indian women play an important role in initiating socio-economic progress of the country. The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world. Women should be empowered so that they can lead India to glory.

Our women entrepreneurs, social welfare workers, scientists, politicians and economists are leading the way for a brighter future. Women in urban and rural areas should be given access to good opportunities so that they can bring about positive social change and contribute to the growth of the country.

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