

An Appraisal of various Women Empowerment Schemes in INDIA

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Abstract: Women empowerment is the empowerment of women which helps them to take their own decisions by breaking all personal limitations of the society and family. It is to bring equality in the society for both male and female in all areas. Women empowerment is very necessary to make the bright future of the family, society and country. Women need fresh and more capable environment so that they can take their own right decisions in every area whether for themselves, family, society or country. In order to make the country fully developed country, women empowerment is an essential tool to get the goal of development. In this paper an attempt has been made to appraise the various schemes launched for women empowerment in India.

Keywords: National Mission for Empowerment of Women(NMEW),Beti Bachao Beti Padhao(BBBP) ,One Stop Centres(OSC), Rashtriya Mahila Kosh(RMK) ,Swayamsidha scheme (SS),Self Help Groups (SHG).

1. INTRODUCTION:

Women's empowerment is the process in which women elaborate and recreate what it is that they can be, do, and accomplish in a circumstance that they previously were denied. Empowerment can be defined in many ways, however, when talking about women's empowerment, empowerment means accepting and allowing people (women) who are on the outside of the decision-making process into it. "This puts a strong emphasis on participation in political structures and formal decision-making and, in the economic sphere, on the ability to obtain an income that enables participation in economic decision-making." Empowerment is the process that creates power in individuals over their own lives, society, and in their communities. People are empowered when they are able to access the opportunities available to them without limitations and restrictions. Feeling entitled to make your own decisions creates a sense of empowerment. Empowerment includes the action of raising the status of women through education, raising awareness, literacy, and training. Women's empowerment is all about equipping and allowing women to make life-determining decisions through the different problems in society. Alternatively, it is the process for women to redefine gender roles that allows for them to acquire the ability to choose between known alternatives whom have

otherwise been restricted from such an ability. There are several principles defining women's empowerment such as, for one to be empowered, they must come from a position of disempowerment. Furthermore, one must acquire empowerment themselves rather than have it given to them by an external party. Other studies have found that empowerment definitions entail people having the capability to make important decisions in their lives while also being able to act on them. Lastly, empowerment and disempowerment is relative to other at a previous time; therefore, empowerment is a process, not a product.

Economic empowerment:

Economic empowerment increases women's agency, access to formal government programs, mobility outside the home, economic independence, and purchasing power. Policy makers are suggested to support job training to aid in entrance in the formal markets. One recommendation is to provide more formal education opportunities for women that would allow for higher bargaining power in the home. They would have more access to higher wages outside the home; and as a result, make it easier for women to get a job in the market. Strengthening women's access to property inheritance and land rights is another method used to economically empower women. This would allow them better means of asset accumulation, capital, and bargaining power needed to address gender inequalities. Often, women in developing and underdeveloped nations are legally restricted from their land on the sole basis of gender. Having a right to their land gives women a sort of bargaining power that they wouldn't normally have; in turn, they gain more opportunities for economic independence and formal financial institutions.

Political empowerment:

Political empowerment supports creating policies that would best support gender equality and agency for women in both the public and private spheres. Popular methods that have been suggested are to create affirmative action policies that have a quota for the number of women in policy making and parliament positions. As of 2017, the global average of women whom hold lower and single house parliament positions is 23.6 percent. Further recommendations have been to increase women's rights to vote, voice opinions, and the ability to run for office with a fair chance of being elected. Because women are typically associated with child care and domestic responsibilities in the home, they have less time dedicated to entering the labour market and running their business. Policies that increase their bargaining power in the household would include policies that account for cases of divorce, policies for better welfare for women, and policies that give women control over resources (such as property rights). However, participation is not limited to the realm of politics. It can include participation in the household, in schools, and the ability to make choices for oneself. Some theorists believe that bargaining power and

agency in the household must to be achieved before one can move onto broader political participation.

2. Objectives and Methodology of the study: The main objectives of the paper to appraise the various schemes and initiative taken by the government for the empowerment of the women in india. This research paper is exploratory in nature and is confined to study. Only in India. Sources of data and information were gathered from secondary published sources viz. Books, Journals, Newspapers, Websites, Research Studies, etc. Analysis of data and information collected from published sources were made keeping the objectives of the study in mind.

3. Analysis and Interpretation:

The Department of Women and Child Development in India sees all the issues related to the women and children. The Department came into existence as a separate Ministry with effect from 30th January, 2006, with the aim of “Empowered women living with dignity and contributing as equal partners in development in an environment free from violence and discrimination. And, well nurtured children with full opportunities for growth and development in a safe and protective environment”. Earlier since 1985, it was a Department under the Ministry of Human Resources Development. The Ministry launched various women empowerment schemes. They are as follows:

1. NATIONAL POLICY FOR WOMEN, 2016

Union Women and Child Development Minister Smt. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi released the draft National Policy for Women, 2016 on May 17, 2016 for stakeholder comments and consultations. The policy envisions a society in which, women attain their full potential and are able to participate as equal partners in all spheres of life. It also emphasises the role of an effective framework to enable the process of developing policies, programmes and practices which will ensure equal rights and opportunities for women. The broad objective of the policy is to create a conducive socio-cultural, economic and political environment to enable women enjoy de jure and de facto Fundamental Rights and realize their full potential. *Priority areas of the Policy include:* Health including food security and nutrition, Education, Economy, Governance and Decision Making, Violence Against Women, Enabling Environment, Environment and Climate Change.

2. THE NATIONAL MISSION FOR EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (NMEW)

The National Mission for Empowerment of Women was launched by the Government of India on International Women's Day in 2010 with the aim to strengthen overall processes that promote all-round development of women. It is conceived as an umbrella mission with a mandate to strengthen inter-sectoral convergence and facilitate the process of coordinating all the women's welfare and socio economic development programmes across ministries and departments.

The salient features of the NMEW: To ensure economic empowerment of women. To ensure that violence against women is eliminated progressively. To ensure social empowerment of women with emphasis on health and education. To oversee gender mainstreaming of programmes, policies, institutional arrangements and processes of participating Ministries, Institutions and Organisations. To undertake awareness generation as well as advocacy activities to fuel demand for benefits under various schemes and programmes and create, if required, structures at district, tehsil and village level with the involvement of Panchayats for their fulfillment.

3. BETI BACHAO BETI PADHAO (BBBP)

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao was launched by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on 22nd January, 2015 at Panipat, Haryana. It addresses the declining Child Sex Ratio (CSR) and related issues of women empowerment over a life-cycle continuum. It is a tri-ministerial effort of Ministries of Women and Child Development, Health & Family Welfare and Human Resource Development. It has been the target of fraudsters in Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Bihar and Delhi.

The Overall Goal of the Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (BBBP) Scheme is to celebrate the Girl Child and enable her Education. *The objectives of the Scheme are as under:* Prevent gender biased sex selective elimination, Ensure survival & protection of the girl child, Ensure education of the girl child.

4. ONE STOP CENTRES (OSC)

The One Stop Centres are intended to support women affected by violence, in private and public spaces, within the family, community and at the workplace. The OSC will support all women including girls below 18 years of age affected by violence, irrespective of caste, class, religion, region, sexual orientation or marital status. For girls below 18 years of age, institutions and authorities established under Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 will be linked with the OSC.

Aggrieved women facing any kind of violence due to attempted sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, trafficking, honour related crimes, acid attacks or witch-hunting who have reached out or been referred to the OSC will be provided with specialized services. *Objectives of OSC* To provide integrated support and assistance to women affected by violence, both in private and public spaces under one roof. To facilitate immediate, emergency and non-emergency access to a range of services including medical, legal, psychological and counselling support under one roof to fight against any forms of violence against women.

5. RASHTRIYA MAHILA KOSH (RMK)

The Rashtriya Mahila Kosh was set up in 1993 under the Ministry of Women and Child Development, with an aim to fulfill credit needs of poor and women with no financial assistance specifically in the formal sector. The micro finance services under RMK is provided through a client friendly and hassle-free loaning mechanism for livelihood activities, housing needs, family needs etc with a motive to uplift the economic status of poor women. It is also known as National Credit Fund for Women as it provides financial assistance to poor women to meet their needs.

6. SUPPORT TO TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME FOR WOMEN (STEP)

STEP was launched by the Government of India in 1969 in the Central Sector called the Short Stay Homes for Women & Girls to protect and rehabilitate those women and girls who are facing social and moral danger due to family problems mental strains, social ostracism, exploitation or other causes. The services extended in these Homes include medical care; case work services; occupational therapy; education- cum- vocational training and recreational facilities.

The Scheme is intended to benefit women who are in the age group of 16 years and above across the country. The grant under the Scheme is given to an institution/ organisation including NGOs directly and not the States/ Union Territories.

The assistance under STEP Scheme will be available in any sector for imparting skills related to employability and entrepreneurship, including but not limited to the Agriculture, Horticulture, Food Processing, Handlooms, Tailoring, Stitching, Embroidery, Zari etc, Handicrafts, Computer and IT enable services along with soft skills and skills for the work place such as spoken English, Gems and Jewellery, Travel and Tourism, Hospitality.

7. RAJIV GANDHI SCHEME FOR EMPOWERMENT OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS (RGSEAG) – ‘SABLA’

The Sabla Scheme was launched in year 2011. It aims at covering all out-of-school Adolescent Girls in the age group of 11 to 18 years who would assemble at the Anganwadi Centre (AWC) on a fixed day at regular interval. The others, i.e., school-going girls, meet at the AWC at least twice a month, and more frequently (once a week) during vacations/holidays. Here they receive life skills education, nutrition and health education, awareness about socio-legal issues, etc. This Scheme mainly aims at reducing the dropout rate of Adolescent Girls by increasing their literacy rate and work participation.

The Scheme has two major components namely nutrition and non-nutrition component. Nutrition is being given in the form of Take Home Ration or Hot Cooked Meal for 11 to 14 years out of school girls and 14 to 18 years to all adolescent girls, out of school and in school girls. In the Non Nutrition component, the out of school Adolescent Girls 11 to 18 years are being provided IFA supplementation, Health check-up and Referral services, Nutrition and Health Education, Counselling and guidance on family welfare, Adolescent Reproductive Sexual Health ARSH, child care practices and Life Skill Education and accessing public services and 16 to 18 year old adolescent girls are also being given vocational training, Anganwadi centre AWC in the village is the focal point for the implementation of the scheme Sabla, where the school going girls and out of school girls would meet.

8. THE INDIRA GANDHI MATRITVA SAHYOG YOJANA (IGMSY)

IGMSY was introduced in year 2010 by the Ministry of Women and Child Development for pregnant and lactating women, aiming to partly compensate them for wage-loss during childbirth and childcare and also provide conditions for ensuring safe delivery and promote good nutrition and feeding practices for infants and young children.

The Scheme provides partial wage compensation to women for wage-loss during childbirth and childcare and to provide conditions for safe delivery and good nutrition and feeding practices. It also provides cash maternity benefit to the women. The pregnant women of 19 years of age and above is entitled to a cash incentive of Rs. 4000 in three installments for first two live births.

9. SWAYAMSIDHA SCHEME

Swayamsidha scheme was launched in the year 2001 dedicated to Women empowerment. It is a Self Help Groups (SHG) based programme with emphasis on convergence activities. The objective is to ensure that SHG members avail the benefit of all schemes and services in an

integrated and holistic manner. This scheme is being implemented in 6 Swayamsidha Scheme districts under which 13 blocks have been sanctioned in Haryana State.

1,300 SHGs have been formed under the scheme and all the 1,300 SHGs are doing saving and have accumulated savings to the tune of Rs. 526.48 lakh and all these groups are conducting inter loaning which is to tune of Rs 442.24 lakh and all of them have also opened bank accounts out of which, 603 groups have even availed Bank loans.

10. SWADHAR

This is a Central sector scheme for providing holistic and integrated services to women in difficult circumstances such as destitute widows, women prisoners released from jail and without family support, women survivors of natural disasters; trafficked women/girls rescued from brothels or other places or victims of sexual crime, mentally challenged women who are without any support etc. The package of services made available include provision for food, clothing, shelter, health care, counselling and legal support, social and economic rehabilitation through education, awareness generation, skill up gradation. The scheme is implemented through voluntary organisations including Department of Women and – bodies etc., provided they have the required experience and expertise in the rehabilitation of such women. The scheme also supports a helpline for women in distress, counselling centre, training centre and medical centre. At present, 34 Swadhar centres are functioning in the State.

11. DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN RURAL AREAS (DWCRA)

Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) introduced in 1982-83 in a sub-scheme of Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) at district level.

The primary objective of the scheme is to focus attention on the women members of rural families below the poverty line to provide them the opportunities of self-employment on a sustained basis. The programme was initially introduced in 50 selected districts. Later, it was extended to more districts in a phased manner all over the country.

NAI ROSHNI

Ministry of Women and Child Development started Nai Roshni, a Leadership Development Programme for Minority Women in 2012-13. The Programme is run with the help of NGOs, Civil Societies and Government Institutions all over the country. It includes various training modules like Leadership of women, Educational Programmes, Health and Hygiene, Swachh Bharat, Financial Literacy, Life Skills, Legal Rights of Women, Digital Literacy and Advocacy for Social and behavioural change. The effort would embolden minority women to move out of the confines of their home and community and assume leadership roles and assert their rights,

collectively or individually, in accessing services, facilities, skills, and opportunities besides claiming their due share of development benefits of the Government for improving their lives and living conditions. The objective of the scheme is to empower and instill confidence among minority women, including their neighbours from other communities living in the same village/locality, by providing knowledge, tools and techniques for interacting with Government systems, banks and other institutions at all levels.

12. DIGITAL GENDER ATLAS

In May 2015, the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of School Education and Literacy, presented the Digital Gender Atlas for Advancing Girls' Education in India. The tool, which has been developed with the support of UNICEF, will help identify low performing geographic pockets for girls, particularly from marginalised groups such as scheduled castes, schedule tribes and Muslim minorities, on specific gender related education indicators. The Atlas is placed on the MHRD website and available and ready to use by States/Districts/Blocks education administrators or any other interested group. In order to plan and execute educational interventions, the purpose of the Gender Atlas is to help identify and ensure equitable education with a focus on vulnerable girls, including girls with disabilities. To ensure this is feasible, the Gender Atlas has been developed as a hands-on management tool to enable critical decisions and actions in pockets where gaps are to be met. *The main components of the Gender Atlas:* Composite Gender Ranking, Trend Analysis of Gender Indicators, Vulnerabilities based on educational indicators in districts with substantial tribal, schedule caste, minority population in educationally backward blocks and in left wing extremist districts, and the low sex ratio districts selected under Beti Bachao Beti Padhao programme.

13. NAND-GHAR YOJANA

The Centre on 24th June, 2015 launched the country's first modernised Anganwadi Centre at Hasanpur village in Sonapat, which will be replicated at 4,000 other places and is likely to change the face of government's 40-year-old children and women-oriented scheme. The Sonapat facility, built in partnership with private mining firm Vedanta at a cost of Rs. 12 lakh, is part of Central government's Nand-Ghar Yojana that aims at transforming the Anganwadi Centers, which accommodate around 50 children in daytime every day, by making them equipped with latest facilities.

The Objectives of the Nand-Ghar Yojana:

To make Anganwadis as a community center for children and mothers. To provide solar-power system to make them stand-alone and television for teaching purpose. To provide supplementary nutrition to children in the age group of 0-6 years and to pregnant/lactating mothers with main objective to fight the problem of malnutrition.

14. PRIYADARSHINI YOJANA

With a vision to make powerful the women by offering loans to women industrialist, a proposal named as 'Priyadarshini Yojana' was started in the year of 1989 in India. In this 'Priyadarshini Yojana' women industrialist are comprehensive loan services at liberal conditions and at concessional fee of interest, for financial actions. *Purpose of the Yojana*: Buy apparatus, machinery, means of transportation, fixtures / furniture etc. required for assets investment & working resources requirements, Farming and Allied actions, Education credit

15. LADLI SCHEME

Ladli Scheme is a scheme that aims to alter the position of the girl child in family/the public. It also aims to help modify the people's mindsets for appropriate taking care of the girl child and as well to offer the girl child their birth rights as stated in Indian constitution. Daughters are taking care of extremely deprived in current society in contrast to boys in the society. The behaviour a girl child takes from the family members is extremely pitiable. To battle all the troubles such as female foeticide, waning females sex ratio and to augment the figure of daughters in the families of society government has set up a variety of plans in which a girl child obtains particular profits. Ladli Yojana is among such plans and schemes. On the birthday occasion of late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi this scheme was started in the year of 2008. According to the Scheme the daughter child obtains free education & upbringing with additionally after eighteen years of age she will be permitted to acquire one Lakh rupees. This money is given in her name and it can be utilized for the marriage of the girl which is considered by some parents as burden in the society.

4. Conclusions:

Entire nations, businesses, communities and groups can benefit from the implementation of programs and policies that adopt the notion of women empowerment.¹ Empowerment of women is a necessity for the very development of a society, since it enhances both the quality and the quantity of human resources available for development. Empowerment is one of the main procedural concerns when addressing human rights and development.

Women's empowerment and achieving gender equality is essential for our society to ensure the sustainable development of the country. Many world leaders and scholars have argued that sustainable development is impossible without gender equality and women's empowerment. Sustainable development accepts environmental protection, social and economic development, and without women's empowerment, women wouldn't feel equally important to the process of development as men. It is widely believed that, the full participation of both men and women is critical for development. Only acknowledging men's participation will not be beneficial to sustainable development. In the context of women and development, empowerment

must include more choices for women to make on their own. Without gender equality and empowerment, the country could not be just, and social change wouldn't occur. Therefore, scholars agree that women's empowerment plays a huge role in development and is one of the significant contributions of development. Without the equal inclusion of women in development, women would not be able to benefit or contribute to the development of the country.

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