

# Economic Empowerment of Rural Women

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## Abstract :

Empowerment is now increasingly seen as a process by which the one's without power gain greater control over their lives. The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian constitution in its preamble, fundamental rights. Fundamental duties and directive principles. The constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the state to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. According to human development reports of International Labour Organization and United Nations Organization, the problems of unemployment, poverty, inequality, terrorism, criminality, corruption and exploitation are spreading everywhere. Women are suffering from its direct-indirect effects. Sexual harassment and violence are daily matters. Government of India has liberalized labour laws under free economic policy. It affects also on employment of women. The framework of a democratic polity, our laws, development policies, plans and programmes have aimed at women's advancement in different spheres. From the fifth five year plan onwards has been a marked shift in the approach to women's issues from welfare to development. In recent years, the empowerment of women has been recognized as the central issue in determining the status of women. The National commission for women was set up an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the rights and legal entitlements of women. The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Amendments (1993) to the constitution of India have provided for reservation of seats in the local bodies of panchayats and municipalities for women, laying a strong foundation for their participation in decision making at the local levels.

**Keyword:** Women empowerment, economic, awareness, agricultural sector, working women.

## Introduction:

Women empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, Political, social, educational, gender or economic strength of individuals and committees of women. It refers to ensure equal –right to women and to make them confident enough to claim their rights, such as to make their own choices and decisions have equal rights. Women's economic empowerment is critical to achieving gender equality and sustainable development. Women are key contributors to economies as producers of food managers of natural resources and as entrepreneurs and employees. Additionally, women are the main providers of unpaid care and domestic work-globally, women do 2.6 times the unpaid care and domestic work that men do.

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.

**Definition of women empowerment:**

1) 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."

2) Women empowerment has become a significant topic of discussion in development and economics. It can also point to the approaches regarding other trivialized genders in a particular political or social context.

Women's economic empowerment refers to the ability for women to enjoy their right to control and benefit from the resources, assets, income and their own time, as well as the ability to manage risk and improve their economic status and well being.

Women in India represent 29 percent of the labour force, down from 35 percent in 2004. More than half of the work done by women in India is unpaid, and almost all of it is informal and unprotected. Women are not well represented in most sectors, including business leaders. Though they comprise almost 40 percent of agricultural labour, they control only 9 percent of land in India. Women are also shut out of the formal financial system. Nearly half of India's women do not have a bank or savings accounts for their own use, and 60 percent of women have no valuable assets to their name. It is unsurprising then that at 17 percent, India has a lower share of women's contribution to the G.D.P. than the global average of 37 percent. In addition, women face great physical insecurity. The rate of crime against women in India stands at 53.9 percent in India. In Delhi, the capital city, 92 percent of women reported having experienced sexual or physical violence in public spaces.

Empowerment is a set of measures designed to increase the degree of autonomy and self-determination in people and in communities in order to enable them to represent their interests in a responsible and self-determined way, acting on their own authority. It is the process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one's life and claiming one's rights. Empowerment as action refers both to the process of self-empowerment and to professional support of people, which enables them to overcome their sense of powerlessness and lack of influence, and to recognize and use their resources. To do work with power.

**Objectives of Research:**

- 1) To provide skill development trainings to enable the male and female to improve their economic status.
- 2) To provide the services for the community accordance to their need assessment for their economic development without disturbing their cultural values.

## Hypothesis of Research:

The hypothesis is that women empowerment can facilitate attainment of other development goals. This affirms the hypothesized inverse relationship between women's empowerment and gender inequality in access to land.

Several, varied and many trends and attempts have been fashioned and made about and for women's empowerment everywhere in our country. It was noticed while doing all round progress of our country as the 50% population of the whole population consists of women and until and unless women become competent, our nation cannot show its all round prosperity. If more than half of the population is not included in the economic or social development of the state, how will that nation show its all round development? At present the population of women is reduced less than 50% women have been completely deprived of their development due to several prevalent superstitions or wrongly followed conventions spread all over the countries of our state. The whole world has been endeavoring in order to include women in the economic flow of development by removing this lacking. Special practical steps and activities are also brought into practice in India.

The Government of India has ushered in the new millennium by declaring the year 2001 as women's empowerment year to focus on a vision where women are equal partners like men. The most common explanation of women's empowerment is the ability to exercise full control over one's actions. The last decades have witnessed some basic changes in the status and role of women in our society. There has been shift in policy approaches from the concept of welfare in the seventies to development in the eighties and now to empowerment in the nineties. This process has been further accelerated with some sections of women becoming increasingly, self-conscious of their discrimination in several areas of family and public life. They are also in a position to mobilize themselves on issues that can affect their overall position.

There won't be equal empowerment of women from all self-help saving groups. It depends on the factors from what process does that group come out? How do the members take part in it and how is their development in efficiency achieved? Likewise the co-opted members have a different procedure according to their social and economic conditions. Similarly it is difficult to segregate their social, political and economic empowerment from one another. One's effects do reflect upon others for example a member joining this group expresses her opinion in her house reliably, take judgment and her capacity of thinking is developed due to availability of facility of granting loan. The availability of opportunity and resources in any economic empowerment as well as their control is grown.

Most of women work in agricultural sector either as workers, in household in agriculture that has tended to become more volatile and insecure in recent years and women cultivators have therefore been negatively affected. The government's policies for alleviating poverty have failed to produce any desirable results, as women do not receive appropriate wages for their labour. There is also significant amount of unpaid or non-marketed labour within the household. The increase in gender disparity in wages in the urban areas is also quite marked as it results from the employment of women in different and lower paying activities. They are exploited at various levels. They should be provided with proper wages and work at par with men so that their status can be elevated in society.

It is worth mentioning here that such development is taking place in country like India. Though the development of women living in urban areas in India is multifaceted, the formation of saving groups and self-help groups in rural area has become a boon for the women in rural area. This economical saving and assistance enable them to possess some wealth and help their family economically and take decisions independently. The help that such groups receive from government and such provisions in state and central government policies is a very admirable activity. It is very essential to consider that women can never experience any sort of freedom unless they have been provided with economical opportunities, support and role is such decisions making. No positive outcome of any government police about women can prove fruitful until it is supported with economical freedom or independence of women.

### **Conclusion:**

The States of India are now strictly implementing acts related to women education, domestic violence and child marriage, equal participation in institutes, working places and in politics. These initiatives are helping to reach out to the targeted group effectively and in turn to achieve the desired objective of gender development.

Women empowerment is a process that creates and brings power amongst women over their own lives, society and in their communities. This includes the access to all their fundamental rights, which were ever denied. The conclusion of women empowerment can't be seen in a day or two. It is a process where these small differences bring a bigger change in society. The conclusion or the after effect of any women being empowered can be seen in her upcoming life, society and in her community. However, gender development and women's empowerment is now considered as the core of the growth policies and the overall economic prosperity of a country.

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