

A Study on Empowerment of Indian Women

Dr. Noopur Agrawal

Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce

Agrasen Mahavidyalaya Purani Basti Raipur (CG)

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Abstract:

If we talk about economic development, the economic development of any village, town, state or country closely related to the development of each and every person irrespective of religion, cast and gender in a society. In the present paper focus is given only in the conditions of female gender. Women are considered as half world, in this paper an attempt is made to focus on the need of women's empowerment. In this paper I have tried to study the status and conditions of Indian women on the basis of their household decision making power, freedom of movement, financial autonomy, access to education and acceptance of unequal gender role. The study reveals that Indian women are relatively disempowered though they accept and somewhat enjoy without complain the lower status that of man, in spite of many efforts undertaken by government and other institutions.

Key words: empowerment, opportunities, gender equality, rights, mindset, freedom

INTRODUCTION:

Empowerment is a process that remove several types of unfreedoms. Here unfreedom means boundaries that limit individual choice, power, control and self efficiency. In other words we can say empowerment is a sense of -

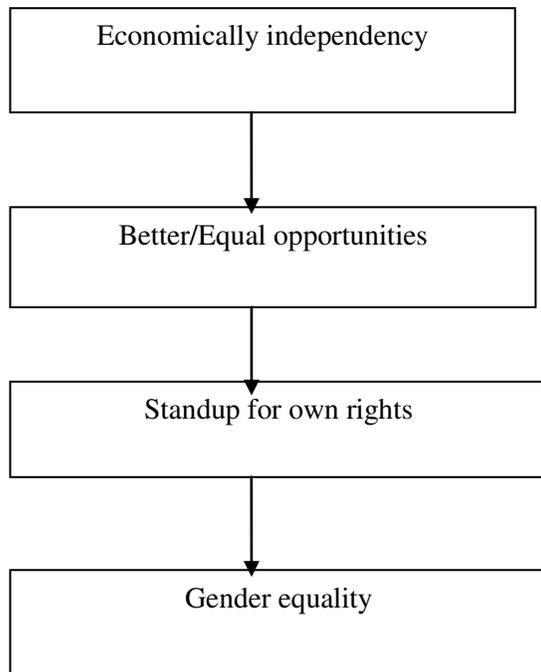
- self worth
- self choice
- access to opportunities
- power to control own life
- decision within and outside home
- ability to influence the world

Actually empowerment is a process of mind that creates inner power in individuals to take their own decisions of life. We can say if inner soul is the root of empowerment, self respect is the stem of empowerment and values, morals, and ethics are the flowers of empowerment.

In current scenario women's empowerment is a significant topic for discussion. If we say women's economic empowerment it means to achieve the ability to have the right to take benefits from the assets or income or other resources along with the ability to manage these and to improve these. The terminologies empowerment, gender equality and economic development are closely related to each other. Gender equality means there should be no discrimination about the allocation of work according to biological group, work should be allotted as per the skill, knowledge, competency and ability rather than on the basis of male and female. Both should be treated equally in all actions, programmes, policies and legislation, in all areas and at all levels.

When women achieve the position of economically independency, they will enjoy automatically better opportunities and they may stand up for their rights.

Women's empowerment at a glance :



Objectives and Methodology:

The main objective of the present study is to analysis the conditions and status of Indian women from past two present .

The present work is descriptive in nature and secondary data have been studied, analyzed and described in this work. To study the women's status from past time to current scenario different books, magazines, articles and internet database have been accessed.

An example on the basis of study the different cases:

Here I am giving an example of professional middle and upper middle class women as they are making

strong careers along with managing their homes adorably. As a human being are they not feel stress in managing the two sets of responsibility and as a human being can men not change their mindset to cooperate with her in household work? What happened when genuine role reversal takes place and women become de facto bread winner, is it digestible to men ego? Let me clear it by an example : A woman enters an arranged marriage, soon she realises they are neither emotionally nor intellectually turned to each other. A child arrive in the meantime and she stays in marriage though she want to opt out of marriage many times but find no support. Finally she takes a brave decision of going out and get a job along with carring all her responsibilities. Now the man develops an inferiority complex as he cannot see the flight of his talented wife and turns Jealous to his wife and finally one day he outs his wife with little son off the home, and now this time she decided to take charge of her own life, work and bring up her child by herself.

Status of women from vedic period to present era:

In Vedic period:

- Women had all freedom and they enjoyed and respect the freedom
- They had right to select the bridegroom of their choice. (We know this system as Swayamvar).
- Women were respected alot and worshipped also.
- Education and training of weapons were given to them

In ancient India:

- Down fall in the status of women started
- Social inputs like education and training were denied to them
- Denied the share in the property of father or husband

- Sati pratha was started

In mughal period:

- In Mughal kaal Parda system was introduced for women
- Education were denied to them
- Conversion into Muslim religion by force started by Muslim rulers
- Women were confined to homes, engaged only with families and household activities

In British period:

- The condition of rural farmers family became worst
- Population started shifting from villages to urban areas due to industrialization
- Joint family system weakened
- Economic necessity made women to work
- Christian missionaries started there co-operative work and were interested in educating girls and women

In Independence period:

- The percentage of girls education slowly increased
- Women started taking part in freedom moments
- Leadership quality in women arises
- Women's interests trended towards poesy and literary activities

In present era:

- The percentage of girls education increased
- In all fields women started competing men
- Rules and regulations are formed for gender equality, equal opportunities and for women rights.

Conclusion:

Despite of all these changes one thing need most importantly to be changed and that is change of mindset of both men and women towards women.

After independence many works have been progressed in women upliftment and in making women aware of their rights. Some basic rights given by the Indian Constitution to women are:

- **Right to equality**- means equal opportunities with all others, no discrimination against any person on the ground of gender.
- **Right to freedom of speech and expression**
- **Right to select occupation and mobility**
- **Right against exploitation** in terms of low wages and critical conditions of work
- **Right of acquiring, holding and setting the property**
- **Right to constitutional remedies**- It means they have right to approach the court for enforcing fundamental rights

In the present era, we find women are entering in all fields competing with men like sports, education, literary activities, engineering, industries, banks, insurance, agriculture, software, police, defence, and even space programmes

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