

# **Issues and Challenges of Women Empowerment in**

## **India : A brief study**

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### **Introduction:-**

*The present paper is an attempt to analyze the status of women empowerment in India using various indicators based on data from secondary sources. Women's empowerment and economic development are closely related: in one direction, development alone can play a major role in driving down inequality between men and women; in the other direction, empowering women may benefit development. Does this imply that pushing just one of these two levers would set a virtuous circle in motion? This paper reviews the literature on both sides of the empowerment-development nexus, and argues that the inter-relationships are probably too weak to be self-sustaining, and that continuous policy commitment to equality for its own sake may be needed to bring about equality between men and women. Empowerment of women is essentially the process of upliftment of economic, social and political status of women, the traditionally underprivileged ones, in the society. It is the process of guarding them against all forms of violence. Women empowerment involves the building up of a society, a political environment, wherein women can breathe without the fear of oppression, exploitation, apprehension, discrimination and the general feeling of persecution which goes with being a woman in a traditionally male dominated structure.*

### **Key Words:**

Women Empowerment, Education, Health, Socio-Economic Status. Crimes against women, Policy implications

## **Objectives:-**

1. To know the need of Women Empowerment.
2. To assess the Awareness of Women Empowerment in India.
3. To analyze the Factors influencing the Economic Empowerment of Women.
4. To study the Government Schemes For Women Empowerment.
5. To identify the Hindrances in the Path of Women Empowerment.
6. To offer useful Suggestions in the light of Findings

## **Research Methodology**

This paper is basically descriptive and analytical in nature. In this paper an attempt has been taken to analyze the empowerment of in India. The data used in it is purely from secondary sources according to the need of this study. **Violence against women** in India refer to physical or sexual violence committed against Indian women, typically by a man. Common forms of violence against women in **India** include acts such as **domestic abuse**, **sexual assault**, and **murder**. In order to be considered violence against women, the act must be committed solely because the victim is female. Most typically, these acts are committed by men as a result of the long-standing gender inequalities present in the country.

Violence against women in India is actually more present than it may appear at first glance, as many expressions of violence are not considered crimes, or may otherwise go unreported or undocumented due to certain Indian cultural values and beliefs. These reasons all contribute to India's **Gender Inequality Index** rating of 0.524 in 2017, putting it in the bottom 20% of ranked countries for that year.

## **Crime Against Women**

## **RELATED WORK**

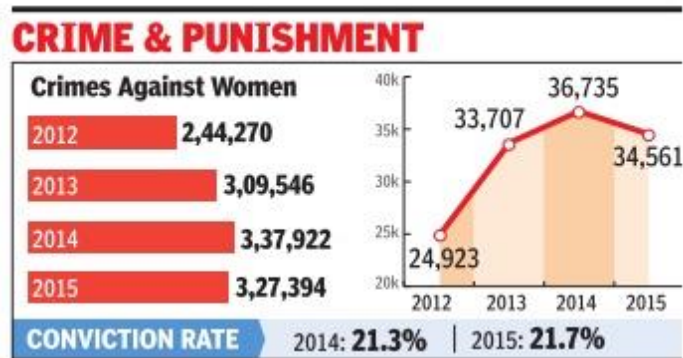
Many research papers have already been published with regards to crime data mining. Huge datasets have been assembled and then analyzed which has helped police and law enforcement agencies solve such crimes faster. Hackett M. explains how the dowry deaths and cruelty depend on the level of a state's development. It also shows how greater the levels of gender equality, health and education in a state, the lower the rates of Dowry Deaths. This leads to the theory that social development change can lead to reduction in crime rates. Thaikkat R., demonstrates how often crimes are committed by people known to the victim and how the crime rate has multiplied compared to the beginning of the century. Sureka R. et. al. provides an insight on how the perspective of dalit women on spousal violence is a contributor to crimes against women in rural India. Das P. et. al. identify states which are densely affected with crimes. Mukherjee C. et.al. reveal the clear-cut patterns regional patterns. Ropmay D. analyses the crimes against women in Meghalaya, a state which follows the matrilineal system.

## **2012: 2,160 kidnap cases of girls registered**

According to the NCRB figures for 2012, Delhi's share of all crimes committed in the country was 2.83%. Among states and UTs, Bengal leads the pack with a share of 12.67% As many as 2,160 kidnapping cases in which women or minor girls were the victims, were registered last year in Delhi. There were 134 dowry deaths and 1,985 cases of cruelty to women by husbands or relatives. Seeking to downplay the numbers, Delhi Police said statistics did not reveal the actual picture. Senior cops said gave a number of reasons for the rise in crime in Delhi over the past decade. They said rapid growth in the city's population, socio-economic imbalances and urban anonymity were encouraging deviant behaviour. They said the city's adverse sex ratio (866/1000) and loosening of social structures were also playing a part in rise of crime. Among the new initiatives for controlling crimes, the cops said 255 city routes had been identified as being the most frequented by women late in the evening. More than 400 women sub-inspectors and 2,088 women constables were being deployed on these stretches.

Earlier, a document submitted by a Delhi ministry in the assembly had criticized a

few rape victims themselves for inadvertently contributing to the low conviction rate in such cases. “Victims sometimes do not support prosecution during trial. At other times, there are compromises made between both parties,” the ministry stated national Journal of Humanities & Social Science.



## 2016, reporting of crime, Delhi vis-à-vis Mumbai

Worries about getting stuck in prolonged investigation and litigation and fear of retaliation deter women from going to the police in cases of crimes against them. Not surprisingly, only one of every 13 incidents of gender crimes reaches the police stations in Delhi, while it is only slight better in Mumbai, where one of nine cases is reported to the police, says a study carried out by the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI). The situation is as dismal when overall crime is considered, with the study, titled Crime Victimization and Safety Perception, finding that only half of all offences are ever reported, and of these only half are eventually registered as FIRs. In terms of sexual harassment cases, none of the six reported in Delhi and only two of the five cases in Mumbai led to an FIR being filed. In Delhi, 1 in 11 cases of all criminal events involved sexual harassment, compared with 1 in 25 in Mumbai. Of the sexual harassment cases, 94% in Delhi comprised staring or passing of lewd comments. It was worse in Mumbai, however, with almost a quarter of the cases involving indecent touching or groping or being followed by men. Among the seven overall crime categories studied by CHRI, theft was at the top in Delhi, while sexual harassment placed

second at just over 9% of all crimes. Physical assaults, logging just under 9%, constituted the third most common offence in Delhi

## **Present Situation of Women**

In Indian society, women are traditionally discriminated against and excluded from political and family related decisions. Despite the large amount of work women must do on a daily basis to support their families, their opinions are rarely acknowledged and their rights are limited. From the time they are born, young Indian girls are the victims of discrimination. According to a 2005 report from the Indian Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the infant mortality rate among girls is 61% higher than that for boys. This gender inequality is also present in education; only 2/3 of girls between the ages of 6 and 17 are sent to school, compared to 3/4 of boys of the same age. Also, in the countryside, only 46% of women are literate, which is almost one-half the literary rate for men. Instead of going to school, girls often find themselves forced to work in order to help their families, often from a very young age. Even more worrisome, 25% of women marry before the age of 15 and very often, they marry against their will. This has profound consequences, notably on women's health and their precarious situation often prevents them from receiving proper health care. For many Indian women, poor treatment, violence and exploitation take place on daily basis. However, in the last decades, the situation of women in India has greatly improved. An increasing number of Indian women are entering local and national politics and since 2007, the country has been under the rule of a woman, Pratibha Patil. She is the first woman to hold this position since the creation of the Indian Republic in 1950. Indian society does indeed recognize many women's rights, including the rights to political involvement, family allowance and set up a business. Nevertheless, in rural areas, poverty and a lack of information represent real barriers to women's independence and empowerment. Programs aimed at

advancing human rights, literacy and microfinance are therefore necessary in order to restore Indian women to the place they deserve and open doors to a better future.

## **Need of Women Empowerment**

Reflecting into the “ Vedas Purana” of Indian culture, women is being worshiped such as LAXMI MAA, goddess of wealth; SARSWATI MAA, for wisdom; DURGA MAA for power. The status of women in India particularly in rural areas needs to address the issue of empowering women. About 66% of the female population in rural area is unutilized. This is mainly due to existing social customs. In agriculture and Animal care the women contribute 90% of the total workforce. Women constitute almost half of the population, perform nearly 2/3 of its work hours, receive 1/10th of the world’s income and own less than 1/ 100th the world property. Among the world’s 900 million illiterate people, women out number men two to one. 70% of people living in poverty are women. Lower sex ratio i.e. 933, The existing studies show that the women are relatively less healthy than men though belong to same class. They constitute less than 1/7th of the administrators and managers in developing countries. Only 10% seats in World Parliament and 6% in National Cabinet are held by women.

## **Government Schemes For Women Empowerment**

1. Rastria Mahila Kosh (RMK) 1992-1993
2. Mahila Samridhi Yojana (MSY) October, 1993.
3. Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY) 1995.
4. Women Entrepreneur Development programme given top priority in 1997-98.
5. Mahila Samakhya being implemented in about 9000 villages.
6. Swayasjdha.
7. Swa Shakti Group.
8. Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP).

9. Swalamban.
10. Crèches/ Day care centre for the children of working and ailing mother.
11. Hostels for working women.
12. Swadhar.
13. National Mission for Empowerment of Women.
14. Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) (1975),
15. Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescence Girls (RGSEAG) (2010).
16. The Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for Children of Working Mothers.
17. Integrated Child Protection scheme (ICPS) (2009-2010).
18. Dhanalakahmi (2008).
19. Short Stay Homes.
20. Ujjawala (2007).
21. Scheme for Gender Budgeting (XI Plan).
22. Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP).
23. Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM).
24. Prime Minister's Rojgar Yojana (PMRY).
25. Women's Development Corporation Scheme (WDCS).
26. Working Women's Forum.
27. Indira Mahila Kendra.
28. Mahila Samiti Yojana.
29. Khadi and Village Industries Commission.
30. Indira Priyadarahini Yojana.
31. SBI's Sree Shaki Scheme.
32. SIDBI's Mahila Udyam Nidhi Mahila Vikas Nidhi.
33. NGO's Credit Schemes.
34. National Banks for Agriculture and Rural Development's Scheme

## Challenges

There are several challenges that are plaguing the issues of women's right in India. Targeting these issues will directly benefit the empowerment of women in India

**Education:** While the country has grown from leaps and bounds since independence where education is concerned. the gap between women and men is severe. While 82.14% of adult men are educated, only 65.46% of adult women are known to be literate in India. The gender bias is in higher education,

specialized professional trainings which hit women very hard in employment and attaining top leadership in any field.

**Poverty:** Poverty is considered the greatest threat to peace in the world, and eradication of poverty should be a national goal as important as the eradication of illiteracy. Due to this, women are exploited as domestic helps.

**Health and Safety:** The health and safety concerns of women are paramount for the wellbeing of a country and is an important factor in gauging the empowerment of women in a country. However there are alarming concerns where maternal healthcare is concerned.

## **Conclusion**

Thus, the attainment in the field of income / employment and in educational front, the scenario of women empowerment seems to be comparatively poor. The need of the hour is to identify those loopholes or limitations which are observing the realization of empowerment of women and this initiative must be started from the women folk itself as well as more importantly policy initiative taken by the state and society. Let us take the oath that we want an egalitarian society where everybody whether men or women get the equal opportunity to express and uplift one's well being and well being of the society as whole.

Women's empowerment is not a Northern concept women all over the world, including countries in South, have been challenging and changing gender inequalities since the beginning of the history.

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