

Women empowerment

Definition of empowerment

Empowerment is the degree of freedom and self-determination in people and in communities. This enables 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 right.

There are many types of empowerments. Women empowerment is basically one of them which is the topic to be discussed.

Women empowerment may be defined as including and accepting women's viewpoints, making an effort to seek them and raising the status of women through education, awareness, literacy, and training. Women's empowerment equips and allows women to make life-determining decisions through the different societal problems. They may have the opportunity to re-define gender roles or other such roles, which allow them more freedom to pursue desired goals.

Women's empowerment has 5 components:-

- 1) Women's sense of empowerment
- 2) Their right to have access to opportunities and resources
- 3) Their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home.
- 4) And their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally.

Women in India

There are almost 700 million population of women in India which is almost 48.% the India's total population. And the ratio is 943/1000 men.

According to 2013, UNDP report on Human Development Indicators, all South Asian Countries were ranked better for women in India.

It predicts that an Indian girl child age 1-5 years. is 75% more likely to die than a boychild.

In ancient times, the women were considered with respect and dignity. During this period, there were women rishis, and they were held in high esteem. In royal households, women were given respect and they even rendered a significant contribution in the making of decisions and administrative functions. Whereas, among the economically weaker sections of the society, birth of girl child was not appreciated and preference was given to male children.

Eventually during the Late Vedic period there were discrimination of women and slowly the position of women, further experienced a decline with the prevalence of child marriage, sati, polygamy and the purdah system. During the Mauryan period too, the status of women was in a deteriorated condition. The women, belonging to upper castes were supposed to accept the purdah system. Sati was started and was regarded as an accepted norm. They were not permitted to go to any places without the permission of their husbands and were not allowed to make decisions on their own. During the Gupta period, their status experienced a further decline. They experienced abuse and mistreatment from Smriti shastras. Manu dictated that they would be dependent upon their fathers during the childhood stage, on husbands in youth and on sons in old age. When the Vedic period came to an end, then women were deprived of social and religious rights. They were not allowed to participate in

social, religious and cultural functions. Gradually, with the course of time, the position of women declined to such an extent that the birth of the girl child within the family was regarded as a misfortune.

The role and position of women in ancient India is determined by number of factors, these are, social structure, cultural norms, value system and social expectations. Changes do not come about in the norms, values, principles and standards of the society at the same pace, as the changes that come about within the social structure with the advent of technology, modernization and globalization. The status of women in ancient India experienced positive as well as negative effects. They were provided with opportunities as well as experienced discriminatory treatment. There was a connection between the status of women and their economic position. This in turn is dependent upon the rights and opportunities for rendering an effective contribution in economic activities.

In modern India many activists work relentlessly for rescuing and protecting girls and women whom are trafficked or raped and also there are many entrepreneurs who invented the low-cost sanitary pad making machine so that even women from rural India could afford to buy them.

Now Women in India now participate fully in areas such as education, sports, politics, media, art and culture, service sectors, science and technology.

There are many articles in our constitution that talked about women empowerment. It guarantees all women equality, no discrimination, equal pay for equal work. In addition, it allows special provisions to be made by the State in favour of women and children.

Need for women empowerment

As the majority of India's population, women represent a significant portion of the nation's **untapped economic potential**. As such, empowering women in India through equal opportunities would allow them to contribute to the economy as productive citizens. . With higher literacy rates and equal pay for equal work, women are able to thrive economically and rise out of poverty.

Protecting women and girls from violence and abuse while challenging the stigmas against reporting crimes would overall create a much safer society. Improving the female political representation rate would enable more women to serve as role models for young girls and allow a platform to bring awareness to the issues affecting women in India.

Without women empowerment, we cannot remove injustice and gender bias and inequalities. If women are not empowered, they are deprived from enjoying security and protection in life. It also provides them a secure working environment,

Benefits of Women Empowerment

Women empowerment raises confidence of women in their ability to lead meaningful and purposeful lives. It eliminates their dependence on others and makes them individuals in their own right. They are able to lead their lives with dignity and freedom with increased self-esteem and give them a unique identity. They are able to gain recognition and form a meaningful contribution to the well-being of society.

Women act as capable citizens to make the country achieve and boost Gross Domestic Product growth as they're financially independent they are able to spend on all their needs and desires and they also get fair and equitable access to resources of the country.

Importance of women empowerment

In recent times, everyone is pointing on the empowerment of women. It's right to say that women's empowerment has become the necessity of the time. Women should possess

liberty, faith, and self-worth to opt for their needs and demands. Discrimination based on gender is useless and is having zero worth by looking at the growth of women in the last few decades. Women are paid less and are treated as a cook and slave in families, and their real potential fails to get highlighted. Women empowerment in India is required to overcome situations of such types and to provide them with their independent role in Indian society. Empowering women is a necessary right of women. They should have proportional rights to contribute to society, economics, education, and politics. They are approved to gain higher education and receive a similar treatment as men are receiving.

Great Women Personalities

1) Mother Teresa

“The woman is at the heart of the home. Let us pray that we women realize the reason for our existence to love and be loved and through this love become instruments of peace in the world”

This woman of physical and material mediocrity shook the world through her selfless devotion to the poor, proving that it is not our successes that define or empower us, it is the potential for goodness and selflessness that exists in every human heart that has the true capacity to change the world. It is this forceful essence of love that Mother Teresa leaves behind that reminds us of the power that resides in us all. So long as we have a heart and a mind centred around love, we are empowered to make a difference in the lives of many.

2) Indira Gandhi

“Let’s not forget that in India the symbol of strength is a woman; the goddess Shakti”

Indira Gandhi’s life and career were marked by significant achievements and controversies. Indira Gandhi became India’s first female prime minister because of her determination, charisma, and leadership skills. She is also called the “Iron lady of India” She was a patriot and a nationalist who dedicated her life to India’s prosperity and peace and worked for the country’s integrity and unity. She received numerous accolades for her political contribution to India and the world, including the highest civilian honour, the Bharat Ratna, and the Bangladesh Freedom Honour.

3) Priyanka Chopra

“Black, brown, white, yellow – why are we always talking about colours? I’m a girl. I believe in a global community.”

Apart from being an actor par excellence, Priyanka Chopra is among the many female actors who have time and again empowered women with her speeches and films. Here are a few times when Priyanka Chopra spoke about women empowerment and how women can change the world. In a media interaction held in India, Priyanka Chopra spoke about the unequal opportunities available for men and women. The actor remarked that women of today are confident of doing what a man does and demand more respect and exposure in different fields of society.)

INCREASING GROWTH OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

An impressive 133 million Indians rose out of poverty between 1994 and 2012, an achievement that India and the world can be proud of. While worthy of celebration, the success could have been even more dramatic if a greater number of women could contribute to the work force. In 2012, only 27 percent of adult Indian women had a job, or were actively looking for one, compared to 79 percent of men. India ranks 120 among 131 countries in female labour force participation rates and rates of gender-based violence remain unacceptably high. It's hard to develop in an inclusive and sustainable way when half of the population is not fully participating in the economy. Valuing girls and women is critical factor in making societies more prosperous and my experience of working in other countries shows this. Women's economic empowerment is highly connected with poverty reduction as women also tend to invest more of their earnings in their children and communities. The Skill India Mission that we are supporting not only provides women relevant skills sought by employers, it also ensures that training programs are sensitive to their needs through helping to provide safe transport, flexible schedules and childcare support. Employers need to walk the talk and commit to supporting diversity in the workplace by hiring women and paying them the same wages as men for similar jobs. We need safe transportation and zero tolerance of sexual harassment in the office. The private sector should take a leading role in expanding women's share of employment and firm ownership in emerging industries. We can accelerate progress by working together. Gender-focused planning is more effective when it's incorporated into everything that we do. Today the World Bank thinks about gender-based development in a range of areas and incorporates it in our project design and implementation across different areas in the end, Indian women themselves will have to play a key role in claiming a space for themselves in India's work force. Personally, I will continue to advocate for them. I hope you will join me. Let's all pledge together today to increase women's participation in the work force, and realize a higher level of growth and development for India that is more inclusive and sustainable.

