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Problems and prospects of women economic empowerment in India

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Abstract

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 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. For example: A stripper no longer has to take off her clothes to get money and now is a receptionist for a respectable company. Empowerment stems from self respect. 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. 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.

Keywords: Women, Empowerment, Economic, Assets and Income.

Introduction

Economic empowerment is very essential to every women. In the present scenario, most of the women are dependent economically, physically and morally. Though the percentage literacy and knowledge growing among the women, they need economical empowerment. They should take their own independent decisions. The employability of women can only lead to their economic empowerment. The women in India should be permitted use their own money for their interest. In many families in India, the entire money of the earnings of the ladies goes out of their hands. Husband or his family members dominates. Across India there are massive social cleavages and gender inequality is prevalent in sectors including health, education, and literacy. There are several national and international NGOs and civil society actors working towards enhancing women's rights, but the proportion of those specifically targeting women is low. The policy space available to organisations working for women's empowerment is quite restricted, however, research and advocacy on women's rights and work is on the rise, in addition to several government programmes to enhance empowerment of women.

Empowerment refers to the process of change that gives individuals greater freedom of choice and action. The development of economic empowerment for women is contingent upon available resources and whether women have the skills to use them. Moreover, it depends on women's access to economic opportunities and control over their economic benefits. In reality, women face obstacles throughout the process of transforming resources into strategic choices. Paramount among the obstacles to women's economic empowerment is society's dependence on women's unpaid work, either at home or the market (in the agricultural sector, for example). This results in women's increased time poverty, restricting their ability to engage in paid and formal work.

Women's empowerment is the process of empowering women. 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.

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Women's empowerment is the most crucial point to be noted for the overall development of a country. 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 such as in education, profession and lifestyle. 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 and also give training related to defence ourself.

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 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. For example: A stripper no longer has to take off her clothes to get money and now is a receptionist for a respectable company. Empowerment stems from self respect. 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. 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.

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, including women's empowerment. 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.

Review of literature

Review of related literature is an important research effort as it provides comprehensive understanding of what is already known about the topic. Familiarity with research

work of others provides up-to-date knowledge of the latest developments, findings, recommendations, tools and loop holes of researches.

Hazarika, Dhruva (2011) ^[3] concluded that women are future of country's development. Empowering women will be the right approach for growth in this competitive world.

Kittur, Praveen (2014) ^[4] concluded that in order to encourage women entrepreneurship, a special training course for women entrepreneurs must be started to improve their skills.

Mokta, Mamta (2014) ^[5] found that women need to find their own way in this male dominated society. They should be motivated for growth & empowerment by self-help groups, NGOs, government policies & micro finance institutions.

Objectives

The basic objective of the paper is:

- To determine the Problems and Prospects of women economic empowerment in India .
- To suggest possible solutions for future development.

Methodology

The paper is mainly based on descriptive in nature. The paper done is based on secondary data. Here, the data from various research journals, websites and articles are collected in order to understand the Problems and Prospects of women economic empowerment in India.

Result and Discussion

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 countries 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.

Race has a huge impact on women's empowerment in areas such as employment. Employment can help create empowerment for women. Many scholars suggest that when we discuss women's empowerment, discussing the different barriers that underprivileged women face, which makes it more difficult for them to obtain empowerment in society, is important when examining the impact of race in connection to employment. Significantly examining how opportunities are structured by gender, race, and class can transpire social change. Work opportunities and the work environment can create empowerment for women. Empowerment in the workplace can positively affect job satisfaction and performance, having equality in the work place can greatly increase the sense of empowerment. In connection to power,

feminist perspectives look at empowerment as a form of resistance within systems of unequal power relations. women feel these pressures, while others have become accustomed to being treated inferior to men. Even if legislators, NGOs, etc. are aware of the benefits women's empowerment and participation can have, many are scared of disrupting the status of the women and continue to let societal norms get in the way of development. Research shows that the increasing access to the internet can also result in an increased exploitation of women. Releasing personal information on websites has put some women's personal safety at risk. Sexual harassment in particular is a large barrier for women in the workplace. It appears in almost all industries, but is most notable in the following: business, trade, banking and finance, sales and marketing, hospitality, civil service, and education, lecturing and teaching. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), sexual harassment is a clear form of gender discrimination based on sex, a manifestation of unequal power relations between men and women. Recent studies also show that women face more barriers in the workplace than do men. Gender-related barriers involve sexual harassment, unfair hiring practices, career progression, and unequal pay where women are paid less than men are for performing the same job.

The Challenge

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 GDP than the global average of 37 percent. In addition, women face great physical insecurity. The rate of crimes 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. Removing and overcoming many of the barriers to women's economic empowerment will require structural change within social institutions to actively promote gender equality and women's rights. In contexts of conflict and post-conflict, the challenges for women's economic empowerment deepen. This is because of the low priority of gender related development objectives in the political agenda of reconstruction and limited implementation capacity of different actors (e.g. government, civil society). However, there is often an increased awareness of the opportunities for women's economic empowerment in times of conflict and post-conflict, which includes a chance to change discriminatory gender norms of the past. Furthermore, there is the potential contribution of women's economic empowerment to strategic development goals and new economic prospects for women, building on their new economic roles acquired during the conflict. Women's economic empowerment is one of the most important factors contributing to equality between women and men. A specific focus on women is necessary given that women are

a majority among economically disadvantaged groups. Gendered power structures and social norms lock both women and men in positions that limit their productivity and ability to make choices to improve their situation.

The Opportunity

The economic impact of achieving gender equality in India is estimated to be US\$700 billion of added GDP by 2025. The IMF estimates that equal participation of women in the workforce will increase India's GDP by 27 percent. More than half of India's women don't have cellphones, and 80 percent don't use them to connect them to the internet. If as many women as men had phones, it could create US\$17 billion in revenue for phone companies in the next 5 years. Globally, women make or influence 80 percent of buying decisions and control US\$20 trillion in spending. There are also social benefits to empowering women. Women spend 90 percent of their income on their families, and economically empowered women boost demand, have healthier and better-educated children, and raise human development levels. One in three private sector leaders reported that profits increased as a result of efforts to empower women in emerging markets. The Government of India's MUDRA scheme to support micro and small enterprises and direct benefit transfers under the Jan Dhan Yojana seeks to empower women. Women entrepreneurs account for about 78 percent of the total number of borrowers under MUDRA. In particular, education empowers women to make choices that improve their children's health, their well-being, and chances of survival. Education informs others of preventing and containing the disease, and it is an essential element of efforts to reduce malnutrition. Furthermore, it empowers women to make choices that can improve their welfare, including marrying beyond childhood and having fewer children. Crucially, education can increase women's awareness of their rights, boost their self-esteem, and provide them the opportunity to assert their rights.

Conclusion

Development of women is the development of a home, society and nation. The private sector and business community will be crucial in helping bridge the gap between skills and jobs and enable access to decent work for women. Vocational and technical training, life skills and financial literacy programmes for women to help them develop marketable skills and better decision-making abilities cannot be undertaken in a meaningful way without the involvement of industry. Companies can also invest in women entrepreneurs through microfinance, and bring their goods and services into supply chains. Enhancing women's access to the internet and ICT can create a merging market of connected women who can be linked to business opportunities. In addition, as employers, the private sector can invest in women's security against violence at home and in public spaces, and take steps to ensure their mobility through inclusive transport. Women empowerment is depending on their economic empowerment. When they are economically empowered, the women will have the sky as limit. Their lot of potential, knowledge, skill, sincerity and dedication will yield better result everyone. The government should take necessary initiations to protect, support and guide in their part.

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