

## WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND GENDER EQUALITY – A REVIEW

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### ABSTRACT

*Women empowerment is a debatable subject. In the days gone by, they were getting equal status with men. But they had faced some difficulties during the post-Vedic and epic ages. Many a time, we treat as slaves and second-class citizens. From early twenty century (national movement) their statuses have been changed slowly and gradually. In this regard, we mentioned the name of the British people. After the independence of India, the constitutional makers and national leaders strongly demand equal social position of women with men. Today we have seen the women occupied respectable positions in all walks of the field. Yet, they have not freed some discrimination and harassment of society. A few women have been able to establish their potentialities. Therefore, everyone should be careful to promote women's statuses.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Women Empowerment, Leadership, Entrepreneurship, India, South India, Impacts, Challenges*

### INTRODUCTION

Economic progress and women's empowerment are inextricably linked. While growth will lead to women's empowerment, women's empowerment will lead to decision-making changes that will directly impact development. It is not evident that a one-time push for women's rights will create a virtuous loop, with women's empowerment and development mutually reinforcing each other and women finally becoming equal partners in more affluent countries.

Economic development, on another note, is insufficient and irrelevant to acquire significant progress in critical aspects of women's empowerment, a particularly substantial advancement in a decision-making capacity in the face of widespread prejudices about women's competence. On the other hand, women's empowerment improves some areas of children's welfare (particularly health and nutrition), but at the expense of others (education).

It is clear; women are neither portrayed as economic development nor women's empowerment in the panaceas. Only through maintaining legislative acts that favor women at the expense of males, maybe for a very long period, will equality between men and women be attained. While there may be some indirect advantages, they may or may not be sufficient to offset the costs of the distortions associated with such redistribution. Policymakers on both sides of the development/empowerment argument need to temper their viewpoints with this degree of realism. This is not a good thing for empowerment to offer, but it may be vital to avoid the backlash that usually follows failed miracle remedies.

Today, we can acknowledge that women's empowerment is becoming increasingly critical and necessary for the excellent development and transformation of the already prevailing unequal society. Women's roles as mothers,

homemakers, wives, and sisters have long been recognized, but their involvement in changing a country's fundamental power dynamics is a relatively new concept. For achieving perfect gender equality in society, all forms of dominance, oppression, and discrimination against the female sex by their male counterpart must be eliminated. With hand-in-hand cooperation and active engagement of both men and women in all fields of developmental activity, we can hope that India can grow and fulfill its expectant and expected targets in gender equality and women empowerment.

## OBJECTIVES

- To identify factors, methods, and conditions empowering women and mothers (WAM) for social action and health promotion movements.
- Increase intake of maternal and child micronutrient-rich foods through women's increased production of these foods
- Increase income and women's control overpayment through the state of excess production
- Facilitate adopting of optimal health and nutrition practices by increasing knowledge and encouraging their adoption
- Increase ownership and control of agricultural assets
- Increase decision-making power via ownership and control over assets and micronutrient-rich foods and increased knowledge
- Increase social capital through participation in the E-HFP program

## PRINCIPLES OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

UN Global Compact and UN Women collaborated to deduce women empowerment principles to empower women deployed in the workplace, marketplace, and to those women in the community. They are,

- Create high-level corporate leadership for gender equality
- Treat everyone equally at work, respecting and supporting non-discrimination and human rights
- See to that the health, wellbeing, and safety of all workers, whether male or female, is maintained well
- Uplift education, training, and professional development for women
- Administer supply chain, marketing practices, and enterprise development that empower women
- Champion equality through community initiatives and advocacy
- Estimate and report publicly on progress to create gender equality

## TYPES OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

It is observable from the preceding discussions that many authors and groups have tried to define the term 'empowerment' from their respective perspectives. It extends from self-strength to the efficient building of women. Women's empowerment, on the other hand, can currently be divided into five categories.

- Social Empowerment
- Educational Empowerment
- Economic Empowerment
- Political Empowerment and
- Psychological Empowerment

## **DISCUSSION**

In addition to examining progress toward achieving gender equality and women's empowerment, it is also vital to estimate and understand gender differentials in selected health and nutritional outcomes. We should also focus on evaluating and eradicating differences by sex in the relationship of women empowerment and experience of spousal violence on intriguing indicators.

Essential understandings of our review are,

### **Education**

In metropolitan areas, there is gender equality in school attendance; but, in rural areas, the female disadvantage in education is significant and grows with age. School dropout after primary school is a big issue that affects both girls and boys.

### **Age at Marriage**

Age at first marriage continues to be very low in India.

### **Spousal Age Difference**

Sixteen percent of married women aged 15 to 49 are married to men who are ten years or older than them, and 4% are married to men who are 15 years or older. Significantly, when education is taken into account, the spousal age gap narrows as the age of marriage rises.

### **Female Household Headship**

Female household heads are, on average, less educated and older than their male counterparts. Female-headed households are also over-represented in the lowest wealth quintiles while being under-represented in the highest wealth quintiles. According to these findings, female-headed families are more economically susceptible than male-headed households.

### **Access to Resources**

Women's access to resources they control, such as the media, health care, and money, is severely limited. Furthermore, only a tiny percentage of women are permitted to leave the house alone. Women have lower per capita resource access than men because they are over-represented in poorer households and under-represented in affluent ones.

### **Gender Relations**

Although many men believe that husbands and wives should make decisions together, a sizable percentage believe that husbands should have the last say in the bulk of decisions, particularly those involving large household purchases and trips

to the wife's family and relatives. More than half of both women and men agree that one or more of the reasons for wife-beating is valid. If a woman disrespects her in-laws and neglects the house or children, both are likely to agree that wife bashing is justified. On the other hand, few women and men agree with gender standards prohibiting women from refusing sex with their husbands.

### **Gender and Health and Nutritional Outcomes for Children**

In terms of full immunization coverage, there remains a continuous, albeit minor, the gender gap in favor of boys. Having a mother who is empowered in terms of higher education or having a significant say in utilizing her husband's money advantages a girl child more than a boy child in terms of her full immunization status. Hence, various types of women's empowerment are expected to reduce the gender gap in full immunization. In the proportion of underweight children aged 0-35 months, gender differences are not significant. Specifically, when controlling for affluence, the likelihood of a child being underweight is considerably higher for boys than for girls if a mother encounters spousal physical or sexual assault.

### **Gender and Nutritional Status of Adults**

Women are more likely overweight than men, and homemakers are more likely than their partner's husbands to be heavy in relationships. Two possible markers of disempowerment among women, notably not having a say in big household purchases and enduring spousal physical or sexual violence, are risk factors for women becoming too thin. Even if we consider affluence, employed women are more likely than jobless women to be overweight. Having no earnings or having little control over their income, on the other hand, is linked to being overly thin among employed women.

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