



Review Paper

Women Empowerment and Legislation: A Study of Women’s Right and Entitlements in West Bengal

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Abstract	Manuscript Information
<p>Women empowerment signifies creating a new environment for the better and welfare of women. Through women's empowerment, women can make their own decisions in their daily lives and for society, which also helps social development. Women's empowerment helps to develop the country socially, economically and politically. Based on secondary sources, this research paper highlights the importance of women's empowerment and legislation made for them. It also focuses on the various schemes and entitlements available for women's empowerment. This study would help women become aware of their rights. Besides this, it can be said that to build a nation strong and progress a country's development there shall be equal contributions from both men and women. The government should increase strict monitoring on implementing the schemes so that women do not fall behind in society in any way and provide more opportunities so that women can establish themselves in their lives independently.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ISSN No: 2583-7397 ▪ Received: 10-05-2024 ▪ Accepted: 18-07-2024 ▪ Published: 30-07-2024 ▪ IJCRM:3(4); 2024: 84-87 ▪ ©2024, All Rights Reserved ▪ Plagiarism Checked: Yes ▪ Peer Review Process: Yes <p>How to Cite this Manuscript</p> <p>Prosenjit Pal. Women Empowerment and Legislation: A Study of Women’s Right and Entitlements in West Bengal. International Journal of Contemporary Research in Multidisciplinary.2024; 3(4): 84-87.</p>

KEYWORDS: Empowerment, Legislation, Rights, Entitlement, Social Development.

1. INTRODUCTION

The word “Women empowerment” means to empowering the women to make own decision to do something for their own as well as social development. It is the process by which women strengthen their capacity individually or collectively to identify and overcome gender discrimination and take control of their valuable lives. By having women empowerment, women are proof themselves that they are also do same thing as a men can do for his own or for the social development. Women have also some skills and knowledge by which they can change their life. By empowering women, it can also be seen that there has gender equality in the society. With having many innovative ideas and proper implementation in proper place they can establish themselves in the society.

Empowerment of women would mean to establish themselves as independent or self -reliant. In earlier women were treated as a housewife and were not allowed any job or work and their skills were wasted but now it has drastically changed. Women are also encouraged to work together with men. Even the government is providing many opportunities to women to prove their skills in all areas. Many schemes are open for women and encourage them for participate. Lastly, it can be said that by making women empowered, women become powerful and capable of making decisions for the betterment of their own lives.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to Rani (2023), the author discusses in the study the various laws and regulations that make gender equal and promote women's empowerment in India. The paper also states the challenges faced by the government in implementing these rules in the practical field.

The author Radhu (2016) discusses in the paper the necessity of women's empowerment in India to build the nation strong. He points out the steps that have been taken to remove such obstacles in empowering women and making them independent. He also helps to know the rights available for women in India.

Saigal (2013), the author discusses in the article that women's empowerment depends on various factors like geographical, economic, social, and political. He raises there are various policies available in India or the state for empowering women but there are some gaps in policy and its actual implementation in the field.

Tomar (2021), the author in the article explores that women in India are not empowered and they still face various problems. The paper goals to determine the factors that hamper women's empowerment. This study tries to show that the govt. Has undertaken various initiatives for women's empowerment.

According to Mahanta (2008), in the paper, women in India are disempowered compared with men despite many initiatives and efforts taken by the government. This paper points out that there is a gender gap in women's empowerment in the areas of education, employment, and political participation.

Kumuda (2012), the author states in the study that strong and strict government policies and proper monitoring are required for women's empowerment. A holistic approach and policies with integrated gender perspectives and adequate implementation are necessary for empowering women in India.

According to Mokta (2014), the author discusses in the paper the various initiatives taken by the government for women's empowerment in analyzing India's global position in the gender gap index and gender equality index of the United Nations.

According to Behera (2021), the author discusses the various legal and constitutional frameworks for empowering women in India in the paper. This paper will help women learn about the rights and laws available to them, which will help them establish themselves in every field of their lives.

Definition of Key Terms

Empowerment- Providing special powers to do something on its own initiative.

Legislation- Laws passed through the legislative process.

Rights- Some fundamental rules which direct or allow people to do.

Entitlement- Certain rights that people can enjoy.

Social Development- To promote the well-being of every individual in society to reach their goal.

3. OBJECTIVES

This paper is based on secondary sources. It highlights the importance of women's empowerment and various legislations made for women. It also focuses on multiple entitlements

sanctioned by the government through which women can get help in developing their lives.

4. METHODOLOGY

This study's collected data is taken from various books, articles, and papers of eminent writers on women's empowerment, and the legislation related to it is given importance. The quest regarding various rights and entitlements regarding women's empowerment is also incorporated in the study. The different enacted legislations for empowering women are also included in the study.

Importance and Need of Women Empowerment

The role of women in society is immense. For economic growth and to build the nation strong, it is necessary to contribute equally. Today, women are competing with men everywhere and establishing themselves. They are working together with the men. There are various reasons for why it is need to empower women in society. The importance is to give women equal status or equality to live with dignity in the society. By empowering a woman, it improves the standard of living of women in society. Women's empowerment increases self-confidence and helps to reduce domestic violence in society. Empowering women makes them self-reliant or independent in their lives. For the betterment of own and family, it needs to empower women. With providing women empowerment, they even get the confidence to protest the crimes in society.

Measures taken for Women's Empowerment

Reduce school dropout- It is necessary to reduce school dropout among women children. Govt. should take more initiative to increase women's education. Education helps an individual to establish themselves in their life. Various initiatives decrease the rate of early school dropout among children.

Mid-day meal scheme- The Central Govt. has started mid-day meals for children to fulfill their nutrition needs and help families avoid hampering their children's education due to Indigenous issues.

No discrimination- There should be no discrimination between men and women in any field. Equal opportunities or equality should be provided among men and women in society.

Preventive action- It is necessary for the parents not to marry their woman child early or before 18 years of age. At present, there are many schemes and scholarships provided by the govt. for women's education.

Role of parents- Parents have to take a special role so that their children can study and establish themselves. Even parents have to encourage their women children to participate in every field where there is an opportunity to prove to themselves that women can also do the same as men.

Adequate incentives for girls- The government should take more initiatives to establish women in society. There should be a few incentive schemes for women that encourage them to do something and establish themselves, which women desire but cannot do due to the insufficiency of the funds.

Adult women education- Household women or women who have completed their education and want to do something to earn and make themselves independent, they can do vocational courses and get training such as tailoring, cooking, handicrafts etc. and establish themselves. There are many financial support schemes available from the govt. which they can get benefit also.

Roles of Education in Women Empowerment

Education has a special role in women's empowerment. Proper education increases the mental strength of a person. Education boosts confidence and leadership among women. Education broadens people's world and simultaneously increases their desire to know more. Education improves women's lifestyle and helps them develop their personality. By getting education women can get various job opportunities which make them independent and also help to growth of the economic condition of the country. Education and knowledge help them know about their rights and encourage them to protest in any situation. Education reduces the early marriage of women's children and can reduce the pregnancy mortality rate.

Legislation for Women Empowerment

Constitutional provision:

- Art. 14 states that there shall be equality before the law and equal protection of the laws within the territory of India and states cannot deny it. There shall be equal opportunity for both men and women in all spheres.
- Art. 15 entails that the states shall take action for the benefit of women and raise gender equality.
- Art. 16 defines that states shall not discriminate based on sex, religion, race, birthplace, caste or colour for employment in any govt. office.
- Art. 39(A) entails that the state can make policies which is secure for both men and women in livelihood.
- Art. 39(d) defines that there shall be equal pay for equal work for both men and women.
- Art. 42 entails that states shall make provisions for securing humane conditions of work and for maternity relief.
- Art. 51(A)(e) entails to maintain harmony and brotherhood among all the people of India for give up the practices which is harmful to the dignity of women.
- Art. 243(D) entails reservation of seats in panchayats and Art. 243(T) reservation for municipal bodies in favour of women belongs to SC and ST in election.

Few Legislations for women safeguard:

- **Sati (Prevention) Act 1987-** The practice of sati was earlier banned in the year 1829 later in 1887 it declared illegal.
- **Special Marriage Act 1954-** The minimum years for marriage of men is 21 years and for women is 18 years.
- **Hindu Succession Act 1956-** The daughter has an equal right to get the property of her father and the widow has the right to inherit her husband's share in property.
- **Dowry Prohibition Act 1961-** It forbids to exchange of dowry during, before or after of marriage.

- **Maternity Benefit Act 1961(Amended in 1917)-** Women can get maternity benefits at the workplace before or after childbirth.
- **Equal Remuneration Act 1976-** This act prohibit discrimination of pay and mandates equal pay for equal work.
- **Domestic Violence At 2005-** It protects the rights of women who are victims of domestic violence.
- **Sexual harassment of women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013-** This law gives safeguards to women at every workplace.
- **Pre-natal diagnostic (Prohibition of sex selection) Act 1994-** This law banned and prohibited sex determination before childbirth.

Few Schemes and Policies for Women Empowerment

Central Govt. Policies:

- **Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao-** To save the girl child and educate the girl child.
- **Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana-** This can help the parent of a girl child for small savings.
- **Balika Samriddhi Yojana-** It helps to parents to open a bank account in their girl child's name.

State Govt. Policies

- **Kanyashree Prakalpa-** It gives financial aid to girl children during education, keeping girls away from marriage up to the age of 18 years.
- **Rupashree Prakalpa-** It gives financial assistance to parents during the legal marriage of daughter.
- **Lakshmir Bhandar Prakalpa-** It gives financial aid to married women who attains 25 years of age.
- **Aikyashree Scholarship-** To give financial assistance to economically weak students.

5. CONCLUSION

Women empowerment continues to play a special role in the present era. Through women empowerment they are able to establish themselves independently in the society. With empowering women, it helps also to build our nation strong in every fields. This study will inform them about various women laws and they will be aware of their rights and various schemes provided by the government and from there they can establish themselves at all levels through various government opportunities. Beside the above various women laws and its implementation, it is also necessary to make educate the youth and learn to give respect to women in every situation. Central and state govt. trying to make more empower to women with introducing new schemes and its proper implementation.

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