

WELFARE SCHEMES IN INDIA FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Dr. Lekhika U. Meshram
DPT. of Public Administration
Dr. B. A. M. University, Aurangabad
Mail id. meshramlekhika@outlook.com

Abstract:

Empowerment of women essentially means improving the social, political and economic status of women, especially the traditional underprivileged one. It means creating an environment where women are free from any kind of physical, mental abuse, exploitation, and prejudice that they face. They are the most vulnerable section in the society. Recognizing the importance of women in the economic growth of the nation, the Government of India along with State Governments has been taking several efforts to uplift women from their conditions in general. The focus of Government is progressively shifting towards promoting women entrepreneurship to motivate women to participate in the economic activities. This paper attempts to analyze the need of Women Empowerment in India and highlights the methods and schemes of Women Empowerment.

Key words: Woman empowerment, women entrepreneurship, women in workforce, schemes of woman empowerment

Introduction:

Today the empowerment of women has become one of the most important concerns of 21st century but practically women empowerment is still an illusion of reality. Women empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social, educational, gender or economic strength of individual women and communities of women. Women are an integral part of every economy. All round development and harmonious growth of a nation would be possible only when women are considered as equal partners in progress with men. Women's empowerment in India is heavily dependent on many different variables that include geographical location (urban / rural), educational status, social status (caste and class) and age. Policies on Women's empowerment exist at the national, state and local (Panchayat) levels in many sectors, including health, education, economic opportunities, and gender based violence and political participation. Women empowerment enables autonomy and control over their lives. The empowered women become agents of their own development, able to exercise choices to set their own agenda and be strong enough to challenge their subordinate position in the society. Women particularly in rural areas have proportionately least possessions, skills, education, social status, leadership qualities and capabilities for mobilization, which determine the degree of decision making power, and as a result, their dependence on men increases. They have been confined to the four walls of the household, overburdened with domestic works and controlled in terms of their mobility and personal freedoms by the men of the household since time immemorial. So they have lagged behind in the fields of education, skill development, and employment and as a result, their work is greatly undervalued in economic terms. Empowerment of women is essentially the process of upliftment of economic, social and political status of women, the traditionally underprivileged ones, in the society.

Women Empowerment Schemes:

- Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme
- One Stop Centre Scheme
- Women Helpline Scheme
- Ujjawala: A Comprehensive Scheme for Prevention of trafficking and Rescue, Rehabilitation and Re-integration of Victims of Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation
- Working Women Hostel
- Ministry approves new projects under Ujjawala Scheme and continues existing projects
- Swadhar Greh (A Scheme for Women in Difficult Circumstances)
- Nari Shakti Puraskar
- Awardees of Stree Shakti Puruskar, 2014 & Awardees of Nari Shakti Puruskar
- Awardees of Rajya Mahila Samman & Zila Mahila Samman
- Mahila police Volunteers
- Mahila Shakti Kendras (MSK)
- Nirbhaya

Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao:

‘Save girl child, educate girl child’ is a Central Government Sponsored Scheme by Government of India. The prime goal of this scheme is to generate awareness and improving the efficiency of welfare services meant for women. Also, it aims to celebrate the Girl Child & Enable her Education. The Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (BBBP) Scheme has been introduced to address the issue declining Child Sex Ratio (CSR). This scheme is being implemented through a national campaign and focused multi-sectoral action in 100 selected districts low in CSR, covering all States and UTs. This scheme is implemented by the joint initiative of Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of Human Resource Development. Prime Minister Modi launched the programme on 22 January 2015 from Panipat, Haryana on the occasion of International Day of the Girl Child, Prime Minister Modi, called for the eradication of female.

Scheme for setting up One Stop Centre:

The Ministry has approved Scheme for setting up ‘One Stop Centre’ to support women affected by violence on 4th March, 2015. The scheme aims to facilitate access to an integrated range of services including medical aid, police assistance, legal aid/case management, psychosocial counseling, and temporary support services to women affected by violence. One Stop Centres (OSC) is meant to support women affected by violence, in private and public spaces, within the family, community and at the workplace. Women facing physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and economic abuse, irrespective of age, class, caste, education status, marital status, race, and culture will be facilitated with support and redressal. Aggrieved women facing any kind of violence due to attempted sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, trafficking, honour-related crimes, acid attacks or witch-hunting who have reached out or been referred to the OSC will be provided with specialized services. OSC are set up in each State/UT. This scheme facilitates access to an integrated range of services including medical, legal, and psychological support. The OSC will be integrated with Helpline No. 181 and other existing helplines. Women affected by violence

and in need of redressal, services could be referred to OSC through these helplines. The objectives of this scheme are - to provide integrated support and assistance to women affected by violence, both in private and public spaces under one roof; to facilitate immediate, emergency and non-emergency access to a range of services including medical, legal, psychological and counseling support under one roof to fight against any forms of violence against women.

Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY):

The Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY) is a maternity benefits scheme implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India. This scheme is for the pregnant and lactating women of 19 years of age or above for first two live births to contribute to a better enabling environment by providing conditional cash transfer for improved health and nutrition and to also promote health and nutrition seeking behavior in them. It provides partial wage compensation to women for wage-loss during childbirth and childcare and to provide conditions for safe delivery and good nutrition and feeding practices. It provides cash maternity benefit to the women. The pregnant women of 19 years of age and above is entitled to a cash incentive of Rs. 4000 in three installments for first two live births. The objectives of this scheme are - to promoting appropriate practice, care and institutional service utilization during pregnancy, safe delivery and lactation; to encouraging the women to follow (optimal) nutrition and Young Child feeding practices, including early and Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months; and to providing cash incentives for improved health and nutrition to pregnant and lactating mothers in order to contribute to better enabling environment.

Women Helpline Scheme:

This was launched on 6th August, 2017 by the Modi Government. The objectives of this scheme are: to provide 24hrs emergency and non-emergency response to women affected by violence including sexual offences and harassment both in public and private sphere, and to provide integrated support and assistance to women affected by violence.

Stree Shakti Package for Women Entrepreneurs:

There is a lot of focus on promoting women entrepreneurship in India with the government and financial institutions having various schemes. One such scheme promoted by the State Bank of India (SBI) is Shakti Package for Women Entrepreneurs. In this article, we look at the SBI Stree Sakthi Package for women Entrepreneurs in detail. Businesses operated by women entrepreneurs are eligible to receive loan under Stree Shakti Package. For the purpose of identifying —Women Entrepreneurs| businesses, the definition recommended by the MSME Department of India will be applicable. As per definition, a Women Entrepreneur business is —A small scale industrial unit / industry related service or business enterprise managed by one or more women entrepreneurs in proprietary concerns or in which she/they individually or jointly have a share capital of not less than 51% as partners /shareholders/Directors of Private Limited Company/Members of Co-operative Society. Thus, women entrepreneurs or women entrepreneur business in retail trade, manufacturing or services are eligible for the scheme. Also, Women professionals like Doctors, Beauticians, Architects and Chartered Accountants can avail loan under the Stree Shakti package.

Shadi Shagun Yojna:

This was launched on 6th August, 2017 by the Modi Government. Under the scheme all the graduate Muslim girls completing their graduation in any of the streams before their marriage would also be eligible to avail the Shaadi Shagun Yojana benefits. To motivate girls from minority groups to pursue higher education was also under initiative.

Central Victim Compensation Fund:

Central Victim Compensation Fund has been created under Nirbhaya, which is a corpus fund to support States/UTs for their Victim Compensation Scheme. This is helping ensure adequate and timely support for women survivors of crime and violence.

Mahila E-Haat:

The Ministry of Women & Child Development launched —Mahila E-Haat a bilingual portal on 7th March, 2016. This is a unique direct online marketing platform leveraging technology for supporting women entrepreneurs/SHGs/ NGOs for showcasing the products / services which are made/manufactured/ undertaken by them. It is an initiative for meeting aspirations and needs of women. This was done keeping in mind that digital media is a critical component for business efficiency and thus it should be made available to the majority of Indian women entrepreneurs. Since its launch over 17 lakhs visitors / hits have been received by the Mahila-E-Haat Portal. Women entrepreneurs/SHGs/NGOs from all states are showcasing products/services across 18 categories viz., Clothing (Men, Women & Children), Bags, Fashion Accessories/Jewellery, Decorative and gift items, Home Décor, Carpets / Rugs, Baskets, Linen/ Cushion Covers, Boxes, Pottery, Grocery & Staples / Organic, Natural Products, Industrial Products, Educational Aids and Miscellaneous.

Conclusion:

The government has initiated some really good schemes for Women Empowerment in the Indian Society. But more than schemes and more than laws, social discussions, debate, promotion and awareness are the areas which need to be addressed to deal with concerned problems. The day when these schemes and programmes will reach each and every corner of our country, our developing country will emerge as a developed and prosperous nation. The government has made many schemes for child development and empowerment of women.

References:

- [1]. Dominic, Beena. & Jothi, C. Amrita.(2012): — Education-A tool of Women Empowerment: Historical study based on Kerala society, International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, Volume 2, Issue 4, April 2012, pp.1-4.
- [2]. Annual Report 2016-17, MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT Government of India. [7]. REPORT of the WORKING GROUP on EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN FOR THE XI PLAN MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.
- [3]. G.O.I. (2009): Gendering Human Development Indices: Recasting the Gender Development Index and Gender Empowerment Measure for India: A Summary Report, Ministry of Woman and Child Welfare, New Delhi.
- [4]. Chattopadhyay, R. & E. Duflo (2001): —Women's Leadership and Policy Decisions: Evidence from a Nationwide Randomized Experiment in India, Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta and Department of Economics, MIT, and NBER.

[5]. Bardhan, K. & S. Klasen (2000): —On UNDP’s Revisions to the Gender- Related Development Index, Journal of Human Development, Vol.1, pp.191-195.