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Women Empowerment: A New Trend towards the Way of prosperity

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Abstract: Empowering women has become the crucial topic in India since last few decades. Gender inequality has been seen in respect to education, employment, inheritance, health and safety, politics etc. Gender gap has becoming the obstacles in the growth of the country. This study will show the government efforts to empower women by providing various welfare schemes. Corporate sector also reserving the rights of women by taking them under their CSR projects. Benefits are accessible through several of online portal of government of India. All these efforts of government, corporate sector, social societies has been changing the regime of this crucial issue as women participation is increasing in all significant area.

Index Term: women empowerment, gender inequality, corporate social responsibility, status uplift, schemes

Introduction

Over the past decade, gender equality and women's empowerment have been identified as key indicator to development of nation. Gender equality and women's empowerment is also become the millennium development goal. The basic reason behind such goal is that the status of women in India is rapidly declining. According to the report of world economic forum India has slipped to 112th rank on gender gap index which is far behind our neighbouring countries. World economic forum consider four key indicators – health, education, economy and politics. There is a large decline in the labour force participation of women. It is also recorded that in respect to health, women have less access of health facilities in comparison to India. In respect of education there is a considerable gap between male and female education. The mean year of schooling for girls is 4.7 years whereas for boys it is 8.2 years. There is gap between male literacy rate (75.3%) and female literacy rate (53.7%). Another serious problem in India is female foeticide which results sex ratio at birth at 91 girls for every 100 boys. Women participation in parliament is also low at 14.4% (122nd rank) and 23% in the cabinet. Participation of women in the Indian economy is declining due to lack of skill, finance, competencies, training, and education and due to various social issues. Due to having such status of women in India government has taken many steps to uplift the status of women. Various schemes have provided in respect of concerned area. Additionally corporate sector of the country is also concerned in this regard therefore women empowerment has become one of the major consideration in their corporate social responsibility.

Review of literature

Devi (2017) conducted a study to know the gender equality in respect of education and participation of women in the field of economy and politics. Study highlighted that to achieve the objective of gender equality there is a need of support by civil society organisation along with the government.

Agnihotri and K.S (2017) conducted a secondary data based study to analyse the various scheme provided by government to promote gender equality. This study describes the all important aspects of every scheme.

Shetter (2015) organised a study to know the various scheme for women empowerment and its awareness in India. It also showed the various hindrances in the path of women empowerment by providing suggestions in this regard. The findings of this study reflected various factors such as poverty, illiteracy and mindset of people also hinder the women empowerment.

Abraham (2013) highlighted that to know various CSR initiatives by corporate sector toward women empowerment. It was a secondary data based study whereas 21 large companies selected to take data. This study concluded that holistic growth needs to be inclusive by providing opportunities to women in corporate sector.

Swaranalatha and Anuradha (2015) conducted a study to know the role of corporate sector in building society. It was a secondary data based study which focused on highlighting over all development of women in significant area such as sports, defence, politics, and

corporate sector. That study took different area such as gender discrimination, education, health and financial assistance in order to provide comprehensive view of women status.

Objectives of the study

- To study various women empowerment schemes provided by corporate entities and government of India.
- To know the accessibility of schemes.
- To study the impact of scheme in uplifting status of women in society.
- To identify various challenges on improving women status in India

Research methodology

This study is descriptive in nature. Data used for this study is completely a secondary data. For this purpose data is collected from journal, reports, ministry of women and child development, CSRbox (CSR impact platform) and many other websites. The collected data has been presented in a tabular form to give significant results.

Corporate entities initiatives under CSR

CSRbox (India's largest impact platform) has provided the list of top women empowerment CSR project.

Name of the company	Name of the project	Project budget	Implementing partner	Project description
Hindustan Unilever Ltd.	Project Shakti	INR 43.35 cr.	Direct implementation	Company has rural sales promoters to inculcating entrepreneurial skills to Shakti entrepreneur.
Tata Steel Ltd.	Livelihood enhancement programme	INR 18.35 cr.	Not available	Company has developed technical education institute to impart professional skills. It has also created women SHGs and improved means of agriculture productivity.
Zee Entertainment Enterprise Ltd.	Programme Saarthi	INR 17.20 cr.	Dr.Subash Chandra foundation	Company provided platform to aware women for their rights in government schemes.
Hindustan Unilever Ltd.	Project Asha Daan	INR 14.75	Missionaries of charity	Company provided maintenance and upkeep facilities to weaker section of the society.
ITC Ltd.	Economic empowerment of women	INR 12.02 cr.	CII-ITC centre of excellence for sustainable development	Company provided employment opportunities to women. This project made women capable by providing them financial assistance.
Hindustan Zinc Ltd.	Sakhi project	INR 5.40 cr.	Saheli samiti , manjari foundation, centre of study of values	Under this, self help group is created to provide capacity building programme and financial assistance. This project also collaborated with khushi project to carry out various initiatives.
Hero Motocorp Ltd.	Women empowerment	INR 5.36	Humana people to people India, Indian school of business	Project empowered women by providing them short term courses to make them self sufficient. Various entrepreneurial development programmes launched for them. It also provided two wheelers to women to increase their mobility.
Gas Authority of India Ltd.	GAIL Sashkat	INR 0.54 cr.	Not available	Project helped to make women socially functionally and politically empowered. Project cover significant area such as education, skill building etc.

IndusInd Bank Ltd.	Awareness and capacity building	INR 2.79 cr.	Direct implementation	These programme purpose is to aware women regarding their rights, entitlements, legal practices by training and education.
Tata power company Ltd.	Affirmation action programme	INR 2.49 cr.	Tata power community development trust	This programme uplifts community by providing them training for handicrafts products.
Sterlite Technologies Ltd.	Jeewan jyoti women empowerment prograame	INR 1.94 cr.	Sterlite tech foundation, jnana prabodhini, tilak maharastra vidyapeeth etc.	This programme provided vocational skills to women. This programme captured various important aspects such as public speaking, health, skills in order to develop overall personality of women.
National Thermal Power Corporation Ltd.	Girl empowerment mission	INR 1.55 cr.	Not available	It focuses on creating awareness among girls about essential education, health and self defence programme. This project targeted school girls by providing them summer training.
Gujarat Pipava port Ltd.	Skill development and women empowerment	INR 1.42 cr.	Saurashtra economic development centre.	It focuses in improving health of children, adolescents and mothers. It also contributed toward skill development.
ULTRA Tech cement Ltd.	Promoting gender equality	INR 0.72 cr.	Ultra tech community welfare foundation	Company go beyond general issues and took initiatives to aware regarding anti-social issues, de-addiction campaign and government schemes.
Steel Authority of India Ltd.	Women empowerment and support to the disabled	INR 0.82 CR.	Burnpur mahila samaj, DSP mahila samaj, Bharati Bhaban, women voluntary services etc.	It focuses on sustainable generation by providing vocational skills and capacity building skill in significant areas of industry.

Women empowerment schemes provided by government of India

India is rapidly taking various initiatives to empower women. In India several of the schemes are provided in favour of women. Initiative by ministry of women and child development has taken by providing schemes as under:

Women empowerment programmes	Year of commencement	Objectives
Beti bachao beti padhao scheme	22 nd January 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To prevent practices against the interest of girls. To provide educational facilities to girls.
One step scheme	1 st April 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide assistance to women against violence. To prevent various practices such as sexual

		orientation, marital orientation etc.
Women helpline scheme	1 st April 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide 24 hours helpline services to women affected by violence.
UJJAWALA scheme	December 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To protect against trafficking and sexual exploitation. To support for rehabilitation, reintegration and repatriation.
Working women hostel	Introduced in 1992-1993 and amended on 6 th April 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote availability of safe accommodation for working women. To make arrangement of child care facility.
Rajiv Gandhi National creche scheme for the children of working mothers.	2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote health status of women. To provide child care facilities to working women and educate parents for better childcare.
SWADHAR scheme	2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide integrated services to women who are survivors in respect of health, society, natural disaster and unethical practices.
STEP(support to training and employment programmes for women)	Started in 1986-1987, revised in 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide competencies and skills to women to make them self employed.
Nari Shakti Puraskar	1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To recognise women who have high potential to uplift herself.
Women empowerment and livelihood programme in mid Gangetic plain-priyadarshani	Pilot project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To encourage women empowerment and livelihood in mid-Gangetic plains. To resolve political, legal and health issues.
Mahila E-Haat	7 th march 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make women part of “make in India” and “stand up India” initiatives, help women in their financial and economic choices.
Rashtriya Mahila kosh	1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To fulfil the credit need of poor women.
Central social welfare board	1953	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote social welfare programme for women through voluntary organisation.
Development of women and children in rural areas	1982-1983	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve the status of poor women in rural areas. To create income generating activities for women.

Accessibility of the schemes

In order to empower women, online portal NARI has inaugurated. This portal will provide online information to women regarding various initiatives by government for women. NARI portal is one place to give summarizes of the entire scheme and it also provides links to the ministries, departments offering schemes. This portal also provides information and advices on issues affecting their lives such as nutrition, health, major diseases, crimes etc. National nutrition mission has launched to improve health of women. Inter ministerial authority has been working to resolve issues related to NRIs marriages.

E-Samvad portal has inaugurated for interaction between various NGOs and ministry of women and child development. This portal provides information regarding central as well as state government scheme. E-Samvad portal create interaction between NGOs and civil society and facilitate feedback and grievances.

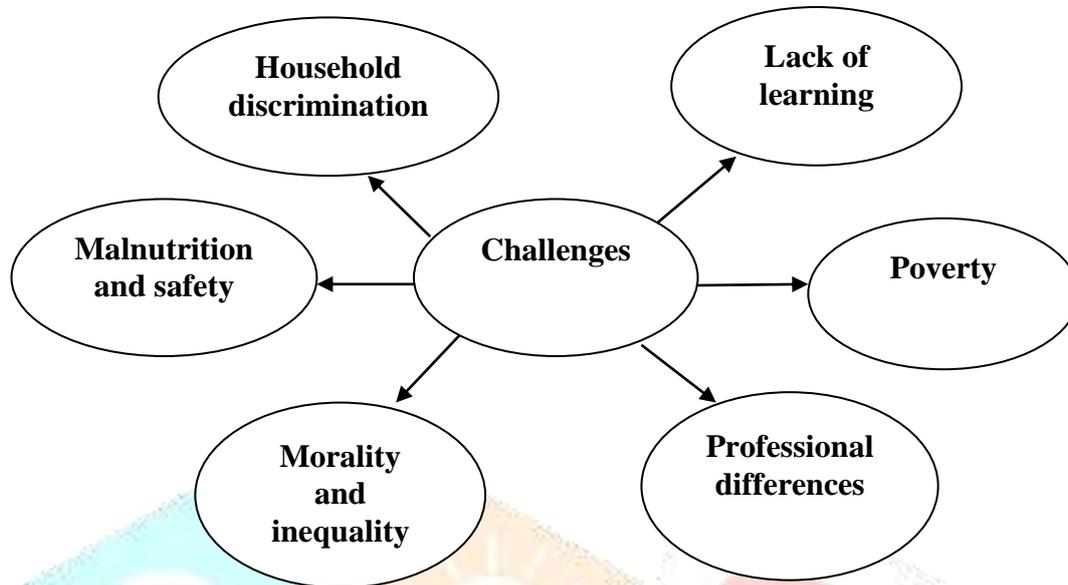
Impact of scheme in uplifting the status of women in India

In some ways, the status of women is held back by decades due to discrimination on every aspect of life. However there will be a shift once in a lifetime, as presence of women is increasing in economy. Women are rapidly gaining access to education and jobs. Role of the women is increasing in growth of India. India is providing various schemes in regard to education, training and skill building programmes which not only create competencies, skills for women but also make them capable to earn their livelihood. Many campaigns have started to aware women for their health and safety measures. Women are now more aware regarding their rights. Various financial assistance programmes gave opportunity to women on becoming successful entrepreneur. Due to handicrafts training programme, role of rural women in industrial sector has been increasing. Self defence programme has made women powerful and mentally strong. Women cell facilitate to fight against anti- social activities. Corporate sector has taken various initiatives to provide safe environment to women. Working women has no worry regarding child care as facilities regarding child care has provided in corporate sector.

Challenges for women in India

There are many challenges which have become the issue of women's right in India. A lot of issues are redundant and common which has faced across the country. These are mentioned as under:

- **Poverty:** Poverty is a one of major issue in India. That issue not only obstacle in growth of country but also become reason of domestic exploitation of women.
- **Household discrimination:** In our society male member of family are supposed to be more important than female member because either they are the earning member or head of the family.



- **Lack of learning:** Although country has grown in respect to literacy level but still there is a gap between women and men in respect of education.
- **Morality and inequality:** Due to gender biasness in respect to education, it results lack of professional skill among women. That is the reason they get less opportunities for employment.
- **Professional differences:** Illiteracy and traditional beliefs of family have prevented a great majority of women from access to nutrition and balanced diet, which results high mortality rate among women.
- **Malnutrition and safety:** Due to lack of nutrition and balanced diet, various health problems have faced by women. Commonly reproductive health of women is neglected due to her illiteracy and their ignorance.

Conclusion

Traditionally, in India women's role was limited to household. They were not supposed to take decision in isolation. They were considered to be dependent upon male member. This gender inequality has become the major hindrance in the development of the nation. From last few decades government and many other stakeholder of the nation has realised the importance of women in the growth of country. Therefore need of empowering women has arisen. For this purpose government has provided lot of benefit for the interest of women. Many of the schemes in respect of health, education, safety, rehabilitation, reintegration, childcare, training, financial assistance has been given to make them powerful. Corporate sector has also played in well manner by including them in the corporate social responsibility regime. Majority of Indian companies are giving their participation to empower women. In this regard online portal has been inaugurated for their awareness. As a result of such efforts, there is a great transformation in the status of women. Now they are not only homemaker but also multitasked, handling their responsibility without any fear. At present they are independent and taking their decision boldly and standing up for their rights. But that is not enough because still there is a gap of gender inequality in some backward area of the country. That regional disparity arises due to having number of challenges in the path of women empowerment. Poverty, education, health and safety etc. are the part of these challenges. So it can be said that there is need to take these hindrances under consideration. If all these hindrances tackle in efficient manner then the day is not far when women will hold every aspect of nation with their majority of share.

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