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WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

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1)INTRODUCTION

Women empowerment was one of the most important thing that all women wanted in their life because based on gender women are ill-treated i.e., equal rights were not provided for them in all circumstances for example education, employment, etc.,. Women cannot take decisions by themselves so by women empowerment they can take decisions without any hesitation or limitations by their family or society. We treat our country i.e., India as our Mother i.e., goddess (BHOOMI MAATHA). But in reality this is not true because women are subjected to molestation, cruelty, rape, dowry death, forced pregnancy, forced prostitution, sexual slavery etc.,. To eradicate this Education was one of the powerful weapon to overcome these inequalities by women in this era. Comparitively women population was disproportionate to men's population i.e., women's are less in number when compared to male's. This is due to lack of education i.e., in ancient times people thought female gender as shameful so they practiced female infanticide.

2)EVOLUTION OF STATUS OF WOMEN AND WOMEN

EMPOWERMENT:

i)ANCIENT INDIA AND WOMEN:

In ancient india female were ¹treated as goddess because of that they treated earth as mother. Equal rights were given for women as that of male .Women are free to receive education and also free to take part in spiritual activities along with their husband.Women were treated as "BETTERHALF" of their husband during this culture.Both male and female were two sides of the coin in ancient india. Examples: Sita, Draupati etc.,. Child marriage started to increase. There was limited access to education,practice of polygamy and sale of girls for marriage were followed.

ii)MEDIEVAL INDIA AND WOMEN:

In later vedic period women rights were decreased especially their rights in rituals and ceremonial activities.Later women who ²were treated as goddess in ancient times got worsed and got dominated

¹ <https://ijcrt.org/papers/IJCRT2111250.pdf>

² <https://www.nextias.com/blog/women-empowerment/>

by the men. Gender inequality was increased due to that males started domination against women. The system of 'sati', 'child marriage' were introduced. The 'sati' system means if the husband dies his wife should also sit on the fire burning his husband and burn herself. Widow remarriage were also not allowed during this period. Child marriage were also increased due to lack of education.

Later male dominance started to increase in peak. That is violence against women like domestic violence, acid attack, rape, cruelty, dowry death, kidnapping, sexual harassment, eve teasing etc.,

iii) CURRENT SCENARIO:

When compared to previous records now there are some positive developments, privileges and various schemes were established for women empowerment. Especially in 18th, 19th and 20th century women were succeeded in getting equal rights and social conscience. The various schemes implemented for women empowerment were one stop centre and universalization of women helplines, swadhar greh scheme, ujjawala scheme, working women hostel, beti bachao beti padhao, mahila shakthi Kendra, pradhan mantra matru vandana yojana etc.,

3) WOMEN EMPOWERMENT SCHEMES:

i) ONE STOP CENTRE AND UNIVERSALIZATION OF WOMEN HELPLINES:

The two schemes³ such as One stop centre and universalization of women helplines were implemented by ministry of women and child development and they are administering these schemes from nirbhaya funds.

a) ONE STOP CENTRE:

It is popularly known as sakthi centres.

AIM: To aid women who are affected by violence.

SERVICES: Medical aid, legal aid, police support, legal counselling, psycho social counselling etc.,

b) UNIVERSALIZATION OF WOMEN HELPLINES:

AIM: To aid women who are affected by violence by providing 24 hours helpline response for both emergency and non emergency purposes both in public and private by connecting them with their appropriate police authority.

SERVICES: Medical aid, police support, legal aid, legal counseling, psycho social counseling, rescue van etc.,

³[https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1795471#:~:text=Beti%20Bachao%20Beti%20Padhao\(BBBP,over%20a%20life%20cycle%20continuum](https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1795471#:~:text=Beti%20Bachao%20Beti%20Padhao(BBBP,over%20a%20life%20cycle%20continuum)

HELPLINE NUMBER: To get aid from women helpline women can dial 181.

ii) SWADHAR GREH SCHEME:

AIM: Women who want⁴ institutional support for rehabilitation i.e., victims of difficult situations

iii) UJJAWALA SCHEME:

AIM: Protection from⁵ trafficking, rescue, rehabilitation (to restart their life with dignity) and repatriation from sexual trafficking.

iv) WORKING WOMEN HOSTEL:

AIM: To provide convenient,⁶ comfortable and safe accommodation for working women with day care facility for their children wherever possible i.e., in urban, semi urban or even rural areas wherever women employment opportunity exist for women.

BENEFICIARIES:

Single

Widow

Divorcee

Separated

Married but her husband was not residing in the same place.

ACCOMMODATION:

For girls: upto the age of 18 years they can accommodate with their working mother.

For boys: upto the age of 5 years they can accommodate with their working mother.

INCOME LIMITATION FOR ELIGIBILITY TO THIS SCHEME:

Metropolitan cities: Consolidated (Gross) income should not exceed Rs.50,000/- per month.

Other places: Consolidated (Gross) income should not exceed Rs.35,000/- per month.

[If the income of working women exceeds the above limits then she should vacate the hostel within 6 months of crossing the income ceiling.]

RENT UNDER THIS SCHEME:

For single bedroom: Rent should not exceed 15% of their gross salary

For double bedroom: Rent should not exceed 10% of their gross salary

For dormitories: Rent should not exceed 7 ½ % of their gross salary

⁴ <https://byjus.com/free-ias-prep/women-empowerment/>

⁵ <https://fi.money/guides/investments/list-of-women-empowerment-schemes-in-india>

⁶ https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Working%20Women%20Hostel_about_revised_about.pdf

v) BETI BACHAO BETI PADHAO:

OBJECTIVE: To improve sex ratio⁷ of female, to protect girl child, to prevent female infanticide, to ensure education and empowerment of girl child.

4) IMPORTANT LEGISLATIONS FOR WOMEN:

SPECIAL MARRIAGE ACT, 1954

HINDU SUCCESSION ACT, 1956

DOWRY PROHIBITION ACT, 1961

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACT, 2005

SATI (PREVENTION) ACT 1987

MATERNITY BENEFIT ACT, 1961

EQUAL REMUNERATION ACT, 1976

CHILD MARRIAGE RESTRAINT ACT, 1929

HINDU MARRIAGE ACT, 1955

HINDU WOMEN'S RIGHT TO PROPERTY ACT, 1939

i) SPECIAL MARRIAGE ACT, 1954:

Through amendment the age⁸ for marriage has been amended i.e., for girls minimum age for marriage is 18 years and for boys minimum age for marriage is 21 years.

ii) HINDU SUCCESSION ACT, 1956:

This act was brought to guarantee the right of daughter in her father's property i.e., daughters receive equal share in their father's property and widows have right to inherit their husband's property.

CASE LAW: VINEETA SHARMA vs RAKESH SHARMA (2020):

Here the supreme court guaranteed the rights of daughters in a hindu undivided family that they have equal coparcenary rights by virtue of their birth. But this is applicable to the daughters born before Hindu Succession Amendment Act (2005).

iii) DOWRY PROHIBITION ACT, 1961:

This act prevents the dowry⁹ exchange before, at and after the marriage.

In dowry cases the burden of proof lies on person to whom the dowry was given i.e., the person demanded a dowry.

⁷ <https://unacademy.com/content/railway-exam/study-material/static-gk/women-empowerment-schemes/>

⁸ https://thelawbrigade.com/criminal-law/legislation-related-to-women-empowerment-and-gender-equity/#VI_The_Special_Marriage_Act_1954

⁹ <https://www.kelphr.com/blogs/laws-for-women-rights-in-india/>

iv)DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACT, 2005:

This act aims on all ¹⁰domestic violences against women for example physical abuse,sexual violence,verbal abuse,emotional abuse and economic abuse etc.,

v)SATI (PREVENTION) ACT 1987:

This act was abolished on 1¹¹829.Sati means if the husband dies his wife should also sit on the fire burning his husband and burn herself.

vi)MATERNITY BENEFIT ACT,1961:

Under this act women ensures maternity benefits and other advantages in workplace in course of employment during a particular period of before and after child birth.

vii)EQUAL REMUNERATION ACT,1976:

This act mandates equal pay for equal work for both men and women without any discrimination on basis of gender.

CASE LAW: MACKINNON MACKENZIE vs AUDREY D’COSTA:

This was the first case where the Supreme court had delivered its first judgement on equal remuneration act. Here the women alleged about her unequal pay when compared to his male colleague i.e., both were worked equally but the pay was not equal.

5)RIGHTS FOR WOMEN UNDER INDIAN CONSTITUTION:

i)FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS:

ARTICLE 15(1): State shall ¹²not discriminate any citizen irrespective of their religion, race, caste, place of birth etc., thus ensure all citizens to be treated equally by government irrespective of sex.

ARTICLE 16(2): State shall not discriminate any citizen irrespective of their religion, race, sex, place of birth, caste or any in respect to employment or office under state.

ARTICLE 15(3): Nothing in this article shall prevent the state from making any special permission for women and children.

ARTICLE 14: All citizens i.e., both men and women has equal rights in political, economic and social activities.

ARTICLE 23:It prohibits human trafficking and forced labor.

¹⁰ <https://testbook.com/static-gk/laws-protecting-women-in-india>

¹¹ <https://www.indiacode.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/1814/2/A1988-03.pdf>

¹² <https://edukemy.com/blog/constitutional-provisions-laws-and-policies-for-women-in-india-upsc-indian-society-notes/#:~:text=A%3A%20The%20Indian%20Constitution%2C%20under,access%20to%20opportunities%20and%20resources>

ii) DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES OF STATE POLICY:

ARTICLE 39(a):All citizen i.e.,both men and women has equal right to an adequate livelihood

ARTICLE 39(d):All citizen i.e.,both men and women has equal right for equal pay for their work.

ARTICLE 42:State to make provision for securing just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief.

iii) FUNDAMENTAL DUTIES:

ARTICLE 51A(e):To desist practices expressive of a low opinion to the dignity of women

ARTICLE 300A:Women has right in property i.e.,right of property to women.

6) BHARATIYA NYAYA SANHITA 2023 AND WOMEN:

SECTION 80: DOWRY DEATH: Within 7 years of marriage¹³ if the women dies due to any burns ,bodily injury or other than normal circumstances i.e.,if she was died due to harassment or cruelty by her husband or of his relatives then they shall be punished with imprisonment not less than 7 years but may extend to life imprisonment.

SECTION 96: PROCURATION OF CHILD: If the child was¹⁴forced or seduced for illicit intercourse with another person then they shall be punished with imprisonment not less than 10 years and shall be liable to fine.

SECTION 74: ASSAULT OR USE OF CRIMINAL FORCE TO WOMEN WITH INTENT TO OUTRAGE HER MODESTY:This section was framed¹⁵mainly to protect women's probity,modesty,self respect,decorum etc., and to provide safe and protection for women from these things.Here the punishment was provided based on the nature or force of the offence it may varies.\

7) SUGGESTION:

Many laws, legislations, schemes and constitutional rights were available for women but they were not aware about these so awareness programs should be conducted especially in rural and semi rural areas.

Many of them were not ready to discuss or no priorities were given for women centric problems

¹³[https://www.advocatekhaj.com/library/bareacts/bharatiyanayasanhita/80.php?Title=Bharatiya%20Nyaya%20Sanhita,%202023&STitle=Dowry%20death#:~:text=\(1\)%20Where%20the%20death%20of,for%2C%20or%20in%20connection%20with%2C](https://www.advocatekhaj.com/library/bareacts/bharatiyanayasanhita/80.php?Title=Bharatiya%20Nyaya%20Sanhita,%202023&STitle=Dowry%20death#:~:text=(1)%20Where%20the%20death%20of,for%2C%20or%20in%20connection%20with%2C)

¹⁴ <https://sudhirrao.com/section-96-bns-section-96-of-bharatiya-nyaya-sanhita-bns/>

¹⁵ <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/section-74-bharatiya-nyaya-sanhita-bns-assault-use-criminal-rohilla-qcprf#:~:text=Section%2074%20of%20the%20Bharatiya,safer%20and%20more%20respectful%20society>

that should be changed so most of them will come front to open up their problems confidently.

8)CONCLUSION:

Women empowerment should get developed and motivated for many women because half of the population was represented by women. So it is one of the most important one that bring huge changes in present and future. Education and employment opportunities should be provided equally without any gender discrimination. Through women empowerment we let women's to take decision by their own, access for education, opportunities for employment, equal treatment in all field without any gender discrimination so let them draw their best picture on their own thought. Let us give them a wings to fly or to stand on their own through women empowerment.

