

Empowering Women through Skill Development and various Government Schemes

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ABSTRACT: The critical part of education is to empower women through skill development. Women are an integral part of our society. Therefore it has become a central issue for empowering women. Though Central Government has initiated certain schemes for skill development of women. But due to some barriers women's contribution to is not better. With the spread of education and social awareness women have shifted from kitchen to workplace. Now women have entered into the male dominated fields. But still the result is not satisfactory. Hence time has come for women empowerment to remove barriers and gender discrepancies for developing their confidence and motivate them to acquire requisite skill. To join them in economic activities difference in the wages and remuneration payable to men and women should be removed. Also there is need to provide support for child and adult care to ensure mobility to and from work place.

KEYWORDS: Empowerment, Skill Development, gender discrepancies, education, workplace

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I. INTRODUCTION

‘You can tell the condition of a Nation by looking at the status of its women’ - Jawaharlal Nehru According to Brigham Young (1801-1877) if ‘you educate a man; you educate a man. You educate women; you educate a generation’. The Indian Constitution provides same platform for both male & female .Article 14 of the Indian Constitution views that the state shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India. Equal opportunities and facilities are available to all. But in reality all women do not get this equal status. Women empowerment is largely depend on three factors i.e. their economic, social & political identity .Women can be truly empowered only when all these three factors are made positively & compatible to each other. Again all these three factors are correlated with skill development. Various awareness programmes among the women for skill development are taken by India Government and other social workers in this field for which present picture has become better. According to the Annual Report for the year ended 2017 which was issued by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme implementation total number of establishment owned & managed by women entrepreneurs was 8.05 million and 34.3% out of such establishment belong to agricultural activities. Women entrepreneurship can be upgraded by increasing their skill and promoting their entrepreneurial qualities.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

There are many literatures on empowerment and skill development which are stated as below.

Shoma A.Chatterji (1993) stated that education helps the women to gain personal autonomy by virtue of the fact that education helps her to earn an income to take active part in public life and to take decisions regarding her own fertility.

Institute of Social Studies Trust,Bangalore(1997)According to their views there is a close relationship among poverty ,health and development. Avariety of socio economic factors are responsible for lower enrolment of women in education.

Blanchard &Thacker(2004) views that women exchange training programme means training, sharing ,earning and improving experience of the women locally as well as internationally.

Biswash Roy (2009) stated that women's perspective will be included in designing and implementing macro-economic and social policies by institutionalizing their participation in such processes.

Rameshwari Pandya, Sarika Patel (July 2010) stated that it has been recognised that for an accelerated socio economic development of any community the active participation of women in the entire process is very essential.

Laxmi Narayan (2015) stated that much of the work to improve the condition for women however is being done at the grassroots level, where some Indian and foreign NGOs are engaging with the male community in an effort to elevate women in society.

Seema Pandey (2015) in her study focussed on attitudes, problems and work environment for working women in various strata of society.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

All data relating to this paper are collected from secondary sources. Besides these other required information has been collected from different journals, internet based sources and reports and publications of Government of India and Government of West Bengal. Apart from these a number of articles published in various National and International Journals have also been consulted for the purpose.

The present paper makes an attempt

- To define the concept of skill development and women empowerment & their impact.
- To focus the challenges in developing skill among women.
- To provide different government's schemes relating to skill development and women empowerment.
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IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Women Empowerment is deeply rooted in the globally determined and accepted goals of equality, development and peace for all. Women's economic empowerment is highly connected with poverty reduction as women are drivers of the social and economic well being of their families. The concept of woman's empowerment appears to be the outcome of several important critics and debates generated by the women's movement throughout the world and particularly by the Third World feminists.

The conspicuous feature of the term 'empowerment' is that it contains the word 'power'. The process of challenging existing power relations and of gaining greater control over the sources of power may be termed 'empowerment'. Now a woman has shifted from kitchen to professional field. and women have taken entry into various organised as well as unorganised sectors which are male dominated fields. But inspite of these chances the result is not satisfactory. According to census 2011 women population in India is 586.47 million which is 48.5% of total population in India. But contribution from Indian women is just 17% of National GDP.

Skill Development is not an end in itself .It is a way to fulfil another end. Skill can be developed through education. As education is a milestone for women empowerment. Hence skill development enables women to respond to take opportunities to challenge their traditional roles and to change their livelihoods. Similar ideas were expressed and supported in an International Conference in 1994. It was said that education is one of the most important things empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self confidence needed to participate fully in the development process. Hence it can be said that proper education of women is advantageous for the benefit of the whole society. It has a positive impact on poverty and development than man's education.

New technologies and first changing markets bring new skills and concepts of multi-skilling which is also result of globalisation and liberalisation. From the point of view of payment in our society female workers are regarded as low category. They are called unskilled worker. For example women in forest area have required skill for identifying a particular herbal plant for preparing ayurvedic medicine but this skill is not recognised. When there are sold in a renowned shopping mall which have a good market like embroidery then picture will be changed. As a result female workers in our country lose their traditional or acquired skills when they remain unemployed having requisite skill. So to join them in economic activities wage discrimination between male & female workers should be removed

For women empowerment there are some training institute to input skill like communication skill, entrepreneurship skill, leadership skill, technology oriented skill etc.

Demographic Status in India

Sex Ratio:

Sex ratio is an important population features that focuses the social attention provided to women. Sex ratio has also been a matter of concern for the all population

$$\text{Sex ratio} = \frac{\text{Number of females}}{\text{Number of Males}} \times 1000$$

Literacy Rate:

Literacy rate of population is defined as the percentage of literates to total population age 7 years and above.

$$\text{Literacy Rate} = \frac{\text{Literate person} \times 100}{\text{Total persons aged 7+}}$$

A census is conducted once in ten years in India. A comparative study among 1991, 2001 and 2011 census on the transaction of sex ratio has been made. The sex ratio in India is shown as below:

a) Sex ratio of the entire populations

Year	1991	2001	2011
Sex ratio	927	933	940

According to census 2011 total population of India is 1.21.01.93,422 out of which number of male is 62,37,24, 248 and number of females 58,64,69,174 i.e.

$$\text{Sex Ratio} = \frac{586469174}{623724248} = 940.27$$

Top Five states/ union territories with high sex Ratios (i.e., females per 1000 males)

Figure 1:

State	Sex Ratio
Kerala	1084
Puducherry	1038
Tamil Nadu	995
Andhra Pradesh	992
Chattisgarh	991

Source: Census Report 2011

States Union Territories with Low Sex Ratio (females per 1000 males)

Figure 2:

States	Sex Ratio
1. Daman & Diu	618
2. Dadra Nagar & Haveli	775
4. Chandigarh	866
5. NCT of Delhi	878

Hence From the above total it is observed that sex ratio is skewed in favour of males and has continued to rise and expand in various forms

b) Sex ratio between the ages 0-6

year	1991	2001	2011
Sex ratio	945	927	914

The female ratio among 0-6 years old dropped 18 points from 1991 to 2001. The situation was also worse in the year 2011 as it is further dropped from 927 to 914. This is really a dreadful figure.

c) Sex ratio & Literacy rate of W.B

As per the Latest Census of 2011, 48.74% of the total population in West Bengal are female and the literacy rate among these female is 70.54% comparing to 81.70% for male.

Specific Programmes for Women Empowerment in India & West Bengal.

Women Empowerment and Skill Development Scheme by Government of India as well as Government of West Bengal. Are the following:

- **By Government of India**

There are various skill development programmes for women empowerment adopted by the Government of India through National Skill Development Mission headed by Prime Minister in the year 2008. This programme includes the following:-

- Strategies guidelines and instructions on the advice of the Council are adopted by the Skill Development Co-ordination Board.
- The Prime Minister's National Council for Skill Development as per the apex body for advice on policy and intervention.

- A non-profit making Company under the Companies Act 1956 (Presently Companies Act 2013) should be registered by the National Skill Development Corporation (NCDC).

A. Skill India Mission

This scheme was introduced in July 2015 by the Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. Various skills training programme for women are adopted by this missions. Women get facilities of safe transport, child care support etc. This programme enhanced income earning capacity, financial security and better livelihood.

B. Women's Component Plan (WCP)

WCP involved efforts to ensure that not less than 30% of funds were earmarked for women under the various scheme.

During Ninth Plan the Planning Commission notified Central Ministries and departments and the state government to identify a 'Women's Component'

in the various scheme and programme which aims to achieve the objectives of empowering women. In the eleventh five year plan (2007-12) for the first time women were regarded not for only equal right but as medium of economic social growth.

C. Specific programme for women in rural areas

In Indian economy rural women form the most important work force. Ministry of Rural Development Government of India is implementing various Rural Development Programme. The major schemes relating women empowerment include the following:-

- **National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS):-**

Under this scheme, there is a provision in case of employment opportunities priority shall be given to women in such a way that at least 1/3rd of the beneficiaries shall be women who have enrolled for work under this scheme.

- **Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY):-**

In the scheme it is said that in each block fifty percent of the groups should be exclusively for women who will account for at least 40% of total Swarozgaries. The purpose of the scheme is to encourage women to become self-reliant by practicing thrift and credit. It creates fund, bank credit, subsidies which enhances self employment opportunity. Government make adequate provisions to ensure that women of the country are empowered and they are the active partner in development process.

- **Indira Awas Yojana (IAY):-**

IAY give assistance for construction of houses for people below the poverty line in rural areas. Under this scheme widows and unmarried women get preference.

- **Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARSWP):-**

ARSWP provides training to the women for using and maintaining hand pumps for drinking water. They are also included in the committee at village level and are actively participated in the various activities such as sites selection for hand pump etc.

- **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikash Yojana (PMKVY):-**

Under this scheme Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) provides for skill training. Main objectives of this scheme are to bring a large number of youth including women to take the skill development training a get the employment opportunity. Rewards in terms of money and given to these trainee who are trained successfully. For this certification the assessment are made by independent third party assessment agency.

- **Trade Related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development Scheme(TREAD):-**

Women entrepreneurship is regarded as untapped source of economic growth. But they are required to motivate to develop their own skill. So under this scheme, women in rural, urban and semi-urban areas can developed themselves with the help of this scheme.

- **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme:-**

It we compare the child sex ratio i.e. the number of girls per 1000 boys between census 1991 and 2011 then it has been shown a decreasing trend which indicate women disempowerment. Women working in some industries like construction, brick, kilns, electronic industry, leather industry suffer from many critical gynaecological problems, miscarriages, premature delivers etc and give birth to babies with low birth weight or with birth

defects. Hence under this circumstance some efforts are required for ensuring protection, survival and empowerment of girl child. The Government of India has announced the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao initiative. This programme is taken jointly by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of Human Resources Development. The scheme was launched on 22/01/2015 with an initial funding of Rs 100 crores. It mainly targets the clusters in Uttar Pradesh. The main purposes of the programme are as follows:-

- To address the issue of the declining child sex ratio image.
- To focus multi sector action in 100 districts throughout the country where there was a low CSR.
- To ensure education & participation of girl child.

• **Various Schemes for Women Empowerment in West Bengal**

We found that 8.14% of rural women participates in main work as compared to 44-037 of men whereas in case of urban areas 10.89% of women participates in main work as compared to 51.18% of urban men.

The following table shows different categories of manpower requirement in West Bengal during Twelfth and Thirteenth Plan.

**Table -I
Incremental Manpower Requirement in West Bengal for 2017-2022 periods.**

Sector	2012 - 2017			Total	2017 - 2022			
	Unskilled Category	Semi-Skilled Category	Skilled Category		Unskilled Category	Semi-Skilled Category	Skilled Category	Total
Sericulture	81000	NA	NA	81000	72000	NA	NA	72000
Animal Husbandry	360000	NA	NA	360000	300000	NA	NA	300000
Pisciculture	113789	NA	NA	113789	65022	NA	NA	65022
Agro Based & Food Processing	28743	23539	5885	58166	24122	19298	4824	48245
Iron & Steel	25536	19068	4767	49371	19534	15627	3907	39069
Jute & Textiles	9651	7721	1930	19303	7931	6345	1586	15863
Auto/Engineering	21267	17013	4253	42533	17410	13928	3482	34881
Electrical & Electronics	5713	5471	1143	11426	4677	3742	935	9354
Drugs, Chemical & Petrochemicals	10904	9540	2385	22830	9763	7810	1953	19525
Rubber & Plastic Products	11127	8901	2225	22253	9109	7287	1822	18218
Region Specific Industries (Tea, Gems & Jewellery & Port Based Industry)	4027	3222	805	8055	3297	2638	659	6594
Manufacturing /Assembling/Processing MSME	205668	119973	17139	342780	171990	100275	14325	286500
Repairing & Maintenance	57672	33642	4806	96120	48060	28035	4005	80100
Construction	911922	138170	55268	1105359	699476	186527	46632	932635
IT & ITES	NA	38700	141300	180000	NA	25800	94200	120000
Healthcare	211269	25855	46993	284116	359367	43979	79935	483280
Transportations & Logistics	421927	61001	25417	508345	349660	50553	21064	421277
Trade, Retail	952958	137777	57407	1148140	686128	99199	41333	826660
Hospitality	174917	62470	12494	249881	169776	60634	12127	242537
Communication	93251	38971	6959	139181	77279	32296	5767	115342
Banking & Financial Services	103982	12233	6117	122331	96539	11358	5679	113576
Education and Training	26442	20868	52000	99310	17628	13912	34667	66207

(Source: West Bengal Planning Commission and KPMG Analysis)

From the above table it reveals that there are large requirements of manpower in different category. So it can perceive that skill development training is necessary in the state to satisfy the manpower requirements which also reduces employment. These skill development training relate to education & social security & protection of women. In our state there are approximately 250 women empowerment related scheme under 23 departments. These programmes which are operated by the Government of West Bengal are stated below.

Government of West Bengal has taken major initiatives for women empowerment. As a result all over the state education, livelihood, earning capacity of women enhanced. Major initiatives for women empowerment include the following:-

• **Education:-**

All university in West Bengal are co-education. For the first time a university for women has been established in Diamond Harbour. In rural area State Government has introduced Sabuj Sathi Scheme. Bicycles are given to school through these schemes. As a result many girl children have benefitted through this scheme.

• **Kanyashree Scheme:-**

Government of West Bengal has taken an initiative for the betterment of girl child up to the age of eighteen by enhancing their skill through education which is known as Kanyashree Prakalpa . State Government provide financial assistance to the girls of family whose annual income is less than Rs 1,20,000/-. The purpose of these schemes is to prevent child marriage & to increase drop out students. More than 3-4 million girls students are enrolled under this scheme.

- **Swabalambar Scheme:-**

This scheme was launched by the Department of Women and Child Development. It aims to improve the livelihood of poor women through various skill developments training such as embroidery, zari craft, wood carving, beautician courses. It also helps the needy women of urban slums and rural areas from weaker sections. Besides these, our State Government has launched an acting project for sex workers to become self sufficient through acting lessons and enhancing employment opportunity in the entertainment industry.

Performances of this scheme for the last three years are given below.

Table-II
Performance of Swabalambar Scheme

Year	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
No of Project	78	72	96
No of beneficiaries	3423	2730	3800

Source:-Department of Women & Child Development, Government of W.B

- **Child Care Leave:-**

For the benefit of women present Government has introduced child care leave as per letter no: - 793 (19)- Edn (V)/EH/IV-53/99 (Pt-1) dated 14.08.2015. Hence women teachers having any minor child or children who are not attained at the age of eighteen may be granted leave up to a period of two years (730 days) for taking care of the minor child/children. This type of leave is applicable all government sponsored college or university. But for granting this leave at least 15 days leave should be taken and maximum 3 times is allowed in an academic year.

- **Muktir Alo:-**

It is a comprehensive scheme for the rehabilitation of sex workers. This scheme is also launched by the Department of Child Development & Social Welfare. It provides opportunities to sex worker for upliftment their life through vocational training to set up small & cottage entrepreneurship. Simultaneously it also provides social security and protection to victims of sex trafficking. Present statuses of Muktir Alo scheme are given in the following table.

- **Hostel for working women:-**

Working women have faced accommodation problem in Kolkata. To solve the accommodation issues in Durgapur Government of West Bengal has constructed a 40-bedded hostel name Ananya and other 40 bedded name Swayamsiddha to enable them for becoming self sufficient.

- **Self Help Groups (SHGs):-**

SHGs are being viewed by governments as a strategy for both women's empowerment as well as poverty reduction. Swayamsiddha is another scheme which lays stress on micro credit for women empowerment. Around 39 blocks of 4 districts of Bankura, Purulia, Dakshin Dinajpur and Darjeeling has introduced this scheme.

- **Other Women empowerment Scheme:-**

The other women empowerment programme introduced by the Government of West Bengal are:-

- Anti Trafficking unit to set up dedicated Anti Human Trafficking Units and Special Juvenile Police Unit in each district.
- Police Station run by Women to adopt a 'zero tolerance' approach towards crime against women.
- Kolkata so best city for women in terms of crime against women .Kolkata is one of the safest city for women.
- Women below poverty line through backyard poultry development.
- Distribution of chicks/ducklings among women SHG members.

Problem in Skill Develop and Women Empowerment

- Illiteracy: - Women in developing country like India constitutes the largest share of world's illiterates, lack of education and training opportunities for acquisition of higher level skills.
- Lack of Family Support: - Women continue to be perceived as weak, inferior and second class citizen. As a result women do not get family support to set up a business sexual harassment.
- One problem more specific for women is that they are targeted for sexual harassment specially in unorganised work place. As a result it reduces the productivity of the women workers.

- Dual Responsibility: - In a family women play dual role i.e. wife and mother. A kind of conflict has arisen for adjusting two competing roles. As a result women are unable to manage their home & entrepreneur.
- Gender discrimination in wages: - Discrimination practices in the labour market are reflected in the wages of women worker.
- Inadequate Infrastructure: - New comer do not possesses adequate training capacity which create obstacle to facilitate adequate infrastructure.
- Finance Problem: - SHGs do not provide sufficient financial assistance to the women for establishing a new business.

V. CONCLUSION

The study found that there is a challenge of skilling 500 millions work force by 2022 and 33% of them will be kept for women. Hence a strong leadership is needed to fulfill this figure. There are also a number of initiatives which has been taken by Government of West Bengal for women empowerment and skill development. But there are also some challenges like lack of awareness support services inadequate infrastructure facilities.

Our economy is now diversifying from greatly agro based to manufacturing and service based economy which needed availability of skilled workforce. Hence Government and NGOs should provide training for their skill up gradation and to equip with better and improved technological skill. For socially disadvantaged groups in various region of the state.

With the advent of globalization and liberalization, new technologies and fast changing markets tends to make skills obsolete. Hence the change is inevitable to upgrade the existing skill. The people who adopt the change dynamically and update their skills will survive in more competitive world.

The information technology policy should also be women friendly which skill and strength the knowledge of the girl in the field of computer software & hardware especially in rural areas. The strategy should focus on speed scale, capacity collaboration, knowledge and, productivity. This can be possible by empowering youth by becoming them self independent. This can be done also by applying labour intensive.

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