



POLITICAL SCENARIO IN POST -INDEPENDENT ERA AND WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN INDIAN ECONOMY

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ABSTRACT

In India the planning Commission, central and state governments recognize that women should be in the mainstream of economic development. In particular, the development of micro enterprises for women is seen as an appropriate way to attack poverty at the grass root level by generating income. After break India is in many ways at a crossroads in mid-2014. It will have a new government. But if this is to happen, then Indian women will have to be given the chance and the incentives to participate more in the economic sector. Understanding the nature and causes of female labour force participation in India is important to identify these policies. More than a third are unpaid self-employed helpers, compared to 11% of working men Women also have higher than average labour shares in low-productivity agriculture, traditional small-scale manufacturing, and in services such as education and household employment. Only about 6% of women employed are in the formal sector with social benefits, such as pensions or maternity leave that can influence participation.

KEY WORDS: Economic empowerment, Female Labor Force, Gender Equality Self-employment, Women Entrepreneur

INTRODUCTION

'You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women.' Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru

During the first 50 years of the 20th century, women's labor force participation was mostly concentrated in manual or clerical fields, and most of women's work resembled their domestic responsibilities. The underlying assumption of this practice was that women are incapable of performing complex tasks (Bird, Litt, & Wang, 2004). This not only legitimized women's underpayment in terms of their salaries but also resulted in the so-called glass ceiling effect, meaning that women encountered barratries when they tried to reach top position. This phenomenon has become widely recognized throughout society; hence both administrative and legislative agencies have taken a series of actions to enhance women's representation in all kinds of economic sector, especially high-status ones.

In this continuation the 20th century has witnessed remarkable developments in the area of social developments due to the economic progress achieved. Most of the Indian women belong to the traditional and religious orthodox families. Historically, a women has always depended upon man, both for sustainable and financial support. They are in languid state in a patriarchal society and deprived of mobility and social status. Therefore when India won independence while framing the Constitution, the leaders of the country enshrined the principal of gender equality in the Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles, they empowered state to adopt measures in favor of women. There has been a marked shift, from the fifth five year plan (1974-79) in the women related issues from welfare to development. It is only in recent times

that changes in the status of women and their participation in the workforce have permeated down to the developing countries also. This has resulted in women the world over to save and plan financially for their future. A women whole life is geared towards the daily struggle for subsistence. Till recently, most of women's work remained invisible, and had been perceived as a secondary economic activity. In fact, most of women's work was restricted to the domain of the household, and was not economically remunerative. Because of the unpaid and unrecognized character of their work, women are subject to a feeling of financial insecurity and low self-esteem.

Economic empowerment is taken to be one of the indices of improvement in the status of women. And certainly employment of women is the major concern in the 21st century. Women contribute to the Indian economy in many ways. Apart from her importance in the social framework, a woman's vital role in village centric community activities, protecting our culture and in determining the consumption attitude makes her special for the economy and society of India.

Women proof that they are the best entrepreneur, leader, mentor, guide, teacher & motivator. During post-Vedic & epic ages of India women are not involve in business but from the 20th century they overcome from this paradox and breakdowns the barriers & enter in business sector. They cover every areas of business such as large & short capital, banking & insurance, agricultural, manufacturing, construction, real estate, communication, transport, sports, hotels, institutions & whole sale market. The educated women do not want to limit their lives in the four walls of the house. They demand equal respect from their partners. However, Indian women have to go a long way to achieve equal rights and position because traditions are deep rooted in Indian society. Despite all the social hurdles, many women have become successful in their works. Ability to learn quickly from her abilities, her persuasiveness, open style of problem solving, willingness to take risks and chances, ability to motivate people, knowing how to win and lose gracefully are the of the Indian women entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship is the state of mind which every woman has in her but has not been capitalized in India in way in which it should be. Due to change in environment, now people are more comfortable to accept leading role of women in our society, though there are some exceptions. Women's participation in the labour market is influenced by social norms governing gender roles and responsibilities as much as it is by economic and structural factors. The phenomenon of female economic activity and women's employment in

each of these segment are main issues in the economy of all developing nations. Although women constitute a little less than the half of the economically active population, but their contribution to economic activity is far below its potential. India is a dominant force in Asia's economic growth and home to the world's second-largest workforce—some 478 million people. As its economy develops to encompass new knowledge-based industries, and as its population moves from rural to urban areas, a pivotal issue should be given greater scrutiny: While women have been somewhat successful in Indian political life—in parliament, as chief ministers and as cabinet-level officials, and in the panchayat system—they have not been nearly as active in its economic life. Women in India's workforce are distinct from their regional counterparts in that they drop out of professional life earlier than the rest.

WOMEN'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND POLITICAL SCENARIO AFTER POST-INDEPENDENT ERA

When Mrs. Indira Gandhi became the first lady Prime Minister. Women got empowered and moved to participate further in all spheres of services – financial, administrative, and judicial and education to name a few. Women in India are playing an important role in the country's governance. Many women have emerged as exemplary leaders at the policy level as well as the community level. It is important to note the critical role women have played in working together to forge solidarity, and unity among themselves. Together they have been able to lobby and influence the enactment of laws that protect and promote the rights of women. Vast networks of women groups such as NGOs, associations and co-operatives at the grassroots level have played a pivotal role in providing empowerment initiatives which resulted in socio-economic development and income generating activities. This, in turn, paved the way for sustainable development and economic growth of the country. Since independence, governments' policy on women's development has taken varying types of emphasis; from the initial welfare oriented approach to the current focus on development and empowerment with economic contribution. After economic liberalization of 1991, India is passing through a decisive stage of socio-economic development. An increase in entrepreneurial activity is playing a major role in this development. But in the traditional Indian village community, the economic activities present were that of cultivators, artisans and people performing menial services. In each of these categories women were involved in the process of earning a livelihood for the family, putting in an almost equal

amount of labor both in production and marketing of products of agriculture and handicrafts. In most parts of India, women are still involved in the production and marketing of items such as vegetables, processed and semi-processed foodstuffs as well as handicrafts. In India agriculture remains major economic activity for women, since the Indian economy is predominantly an agriculture economy. Women form the back bone of agriculture operation and majority of agriculture labourers are women. 70-80% of the field work is done by women. In urban areas, a sizeable proportion of the female labor force is employed in the unorganized sector. Contractors employ many of them as daily wage labourers, to work in the construction industry. Women are employed as unskilled labourers for carrying earth, mortar or bricks, crushing bricks and working hand pumps. They also work as domestic servants and provide services such as cooking, cleaning, and sweeping, washing and looking after children. They take up petty trades such as making food and food products, home crafts, paper bags, agarbattis and tobacco and so on. Women also dominant the garment as tailor, designer and involved in embroidery as in the chikan industry in Uttar Pradesh. As well as they involve in beauty and make-up industries as beautician, hair dresser or consultant. Daily wages earners are found in all types of unskilled jobs in both the organized and unorganized sector. Many women work as casual workers in mines, where they are engaged in wagon loading or earth moving operations. They also work as substitute workers in the jute industry. Self-employment is also one of the modes of female employment and can be seen in the areas of weaving, retail trade (selling agriculture and non-agriculture products in daily or weekly markets) such as selling vegetables, fish gram, spices and utensils in village markets as well as urban areas. The quality of female jobs has improved somewhat over the past seven years as the share of female unpaid work declined in rural areas, and organized employment (salaries) rose slightly in services and manufacturing in the urban areas. Women make one third of the national labour force. In present scenario, India is the developing country & in the year 2020 India becomes the developed country. Many expect that in Asia's current economic growth, women's economic involvement will rise with it—a fact true for some but quite untrue for others.

GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

After post independent, Indian governments started many programmes and schemes, having Women's economic involvement include Swarnjayanti Gram

Swarozgar Yojna (SGSY), the Jawhar Gram Samridhi Yojna (JGSY), and National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), the restructured Centrally Rural Sanitation Programme the Accelerated Rural Water Supply programme, the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), the Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWACRA) and the Jawahar Rojgar Yojna (JRY), Rashtriya mahila Kosh (RMK) MANREGA. All these programmes exclusively for rural areas to eradicate poverty, unemployment. These are India's largest employment guarantee schemes, at the village level – and cares about employment opportunities for women, this may directly influence women's employment opportunities.

The previous governments in order to give a fillip to empower women socially, economically and politically so it has been launched these programmes, along with one third number of seats in Panchayats and local bodies. RMK is to facilitate credit support or micro-credit support to the poor women for income generating, production, skill development and housing activities through nongovernmental organizations, Women Development Corporations, Cooperative Societies, Self Help Groups. The inspirational efforts of the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), founded by Ela Bhatt, and other successful self-help groups, have sowed the spirit of entrepreneurship in hundreds of women. Sewa's women members are trailblazers, redefining themselves as they add value to their families and the nation.

It is observed that after 1980 women contribute gradually in economic sector. In May 2014, the new government started a new path for India. The Central Government lead by Shri Narendra Modi has become quite famous for launching a number of social welfare schemes throughout the country within a short span of time.

Digital India Program was launched in August 2014 to change the face of India digitally and electronically. This would in turn pave way for a digitally empowered nation and economy. As well as women.

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana is primarily a welfare housing scheme provide housing to all by year 2022. In order to make the scheme a success and reality, a total of around 2 crore houses would be constructed across the length and breadth of the country by year 2022. The houses would be distributed to the needy sections of society and a subsidy on loan would be provided by the central government, thereby making housing an affordable thing for the economically weaker people of the country. Special preference would be given to senior citizens, women and SC/ST in allotment of these houses.

Sukanya Samridhi Yojana is one of the most promising and relevant schemes launched by the Narendra Modi Government. SSY lays special emphasis on financial empowerment of the girl child. Through this scheme, the parents of any girl child below 10 years can open a saving account for their daughters and operate it till they attain an age of 21 years.

The schemes were launched as a part of **Swavamlamban Abhiyaan** (self-reliance drive) at the Mahatma Mandir.

Other programmes and policies of Present Government are

1. Aid for milk cattle and equipment to tribal women
2. Milking machines and chaff cutters for cooperative rural milk producing women groups
3. Assistance to cooperative milk producing women groups to build 'dudh ghar'
4. Mukhyamantri Amrutam Maa Vatsalya Yojana for construction labourers suffering from occupational health diseases
5. Interest benefit to farmers to build warehouse in farm
6. Tablet distribution to ITI apprentice studying computer courses
7. Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Young Entrepreneurs Scheme
8. Benefit in interest on self-employment loan to ITI apprentice
9. Shri Nanaji Deshmukh Housing Scheme
10. Dattopant Thengdi labor interest assistance scheme for construction laborers.

Most famous Swaksh Bharat Abhiyan and Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' programmes are as it aimed at the economic empowerment of women in India and to take the benefits of PM's flagship social security schemes to women. These financial inclusion is mainly to provide finance on easy terms to the vulnerable and weaker sections of society to facilitate investment and economic growth in the country. It enables empowerment of the under-privileged and poor, including women, with the mission of making them self-sufficient and well informed to take better financial decision. The policies for women workers are New Economic Policy (NEP), and Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP).

Budget 2016-17 has largely been termed as pro-farmer, pro-poor, pro-growth and pro-women. After all these are continues to play a very significant role in overall economy of the country by contributing 17% to GDP and engaging 50% of the country work force. With the intention

of giving big push to social sector including health, women and child development, the government has increased budgetary spending on women by 55% across ministries. Doubling the allocation under National Mission for Empowerment of Women, enhanced allocation under Nirbhaya scheme, Rs 2000 crore being set aside for providing LPG connection in the name of women members of rural households and allocation of Rs 500 crore for SC/ST and women entrepreneurs under stand up India scheme are all aimed at bringing about social and financial empowerment of women and active participation in Indian economy.

Women's declining participation in the labor market is another area of concern of present government. Cuts in social sector spending disproportionately affect women by increasing their care work. Allocation to core Integrated Child Development Service and Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY) have also been given importance. MANREGA has proved to be an important Employer of women with 50% of all workers being women.

Keeping in mind at least 2.5 lakh entrepreneurs, it will also benefit Women Entrepreneurs and facilitate at least two projects per bank branch. The proposed hub will be set up in partnership with industry associations and provide professional support to women, and SC/ST entrepreneur to fulfill obligations under the Central Government procurement policy of 2012.

WOMEN PLAYING AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN INDIAN ECONOMY

Women play a dominant role in the Indian economy, undertaking a wide range of economic activities including farm operations and powering a high savings rate. However, changes in the employment scenario, rising inflation, social conditions and neglect by policy-makers have impacted adversely on women. The agriculture sector is the biggest in rural India. This sector provided employment to close to total 68% of the total rural workforce. The rural labor market in India is undergoing a significant change away from agriculture towards non-farm sectors. At present, the 2.5-million strong SHGs in rural areas have less than 15 per cent institutional credit, while plans are afoot to increase it to 30-35 per cent in the next six to eight months. These groups usually comprise 8-10 women and work in remote areas of the country. As per annual report of Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India, 2013-14, total urban (18.5%) and rural workforce participation rate for females is 25.8% against 74.4% for males. Rural sector has a better female workforce participation rate of 29.1% compared with 73.8% for males whereas for urban sector and 74.7% in rural

area. The women workforce has been playing a very significant role in the expansion and growth of the Indian economy, and is now a force to reckon with. That is, in the software industry 30% of the workforce is female. They held 16.9% of corporate board seats in 2013, 14.6% of executive officer positions, 8.1% of top earner slots & 3.2% of color employees. In rural India, 89.5% participation of women labor force, in farm production average contribution is estimated at 66%. 94% employment in dairy production of India & 51% employed in forest based small scale enterprises. The statistics further highlight that in rural areas, the women workforce participation was 30.98%, while in urban areas, the picture is not that rosy, here the work participation for women workforce was 11.55%. While in urban areas as they are equipped with good education they are engaged in many noteworthy spheres, namely, education, science and technology, media and medical. Let's talk a little about, females' managerial skills, undoubtedly, they have performed well on this pivotal front, and in comparison to their male counterpart, they are naturally superior. In the corporate world, female bosses command more respect as they don't wear their ego on their sleeves. Emotionally very strong, they think twice before firing or scolding subordinate employees. Many women have broken the glass ceiling in the corporate world. Owing to their incredible knowledge, sheer hard work and remarkable performance, they have created a respectable niche for themselves in the corporate world and society as a whole.

They take a first step individually or with the groups & work on projects. For this, sometimes the government or financial intermediaries provide a fund for their help. Or otherwise women collect their savings & invest on it. They take participation in progress of India. They can up gross domestic product (GDP) rate is 4%. Women from one-third of early stage entrepreneurs in India. Women's Empowerment encompasses the process of change through which they gains power in decision making. Many women got the peak position in India. They play an important role in business, politics, and society & in NGO's. Pratibha Devisingh Patil was 12th President of India. In present, Sushma Swaraj is the minister of Foreign Affairs. Sudha N. R. Narayan Murthy, Indra K. Nooyi, Chanda Kocher, Shikha Sharma, Arundhati Bhattacharya have enriched the top position in business. Women are half India's demographic dividend; if they are given the right tools and community support, they can not only become financially independent, but could also become the engines that fuel India's future growth. Over the next two decades, India's GDP is projected to grow between 7% and 9%

annually, making India the world's third largest economy by the year 2030. A government of India study shows that more than 40% of rural women directly or indirectly contribute to the uplift of their families and thereby bringing social change.

CONCLUSION

Amartya Sen in *Development as Freedom* provides an account of various kinds of freedom, one of them being women's freedom to participate in paid work outside their homes and its interconnectedness with other forms of freedom. The augmented access to employment opportunities, financial independence and progressive educational attainments seen in India should presumably enable women to exercise "their reasoned agency". India has already starting moving on the path of high economic growth. The women workforce has been playing a very significant role in the expansion and growth of the Indian economy, and is now a force to reckon with. Over the years their contribution has been increasing - vindicating the hypothesis of leading feminists that women are second to none in the world. Emotionally very strong, they think twice before firing or scolding subordinate employees. Many women have broken the glass ceiling in the corporate world. Owing to their incredible knowledge, sheer hard work and remarkable performance, they have created a respectable niche for themselves in the corporate world and society as a whole. In India, a working women faces a number of challenges. These include the all-important challenging balancing between housework and family, on the one hand, and meeting the demands of the job on the other. The notion of work and employment is complex. In India, fewer women participate in employment compared to men. While economic factors determine men's participation in employment, women's participation depends on diverse reason and is often rooted in a complex interplay of economic, cultural, social and personal factors. According to Mahatma Gandhi "Women is the companion of man, gifted with equal mental capacities. She has right to contribute in minute details of the activities of man and she has the same right of freedom and liberty as he. She is entitled to a supreme place in her own sphere of activity as man is in his."

While the contribution of Indian women should be appropriately factored, their importance in terms of sustainable development must be fully appreciated. Excluding women from the growth process is the best way of ensuring that growth itself is short-lived. We are celebrating 125th birth anniversary of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. This must become the year of economic empowerment for SC/ST and Women Entrepreneurs.

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