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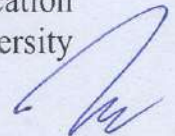
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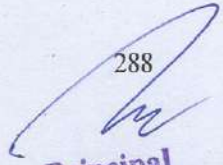
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A Study on Challenge for Women Empowerment

Kabita Medhi

Abstract : Education among women is the most powerful tool of attaining power in the society. It helps in reducing inequalities and functions as means for improving their status within the family. Educational achievement has productive effects within the family across generations. In ancient India women enjoyed equal status with men in all fields of life. But regarding they were discourage from receiving education. Today the empowerment of woman has become one of the most important concerns. But practically women empowerment is still an illusion of reality. Women empowerment is a vital instrument to expand women's ability to have recourses and to make strategic life choices. Empowerment of women is essentially the process of upliftment to economic, social and political status of women, the traditionally underprivileged ones, in the society. It is a process in which women lives of gain control over their own lives of knowing and claiming their right at all levels of society at the international, local and household levels.

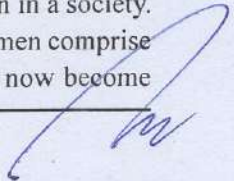
Women also bear almost all responsibility for meeting basic needs of the family. Women empowerment and their full participation on the basic of equality is all spheres of society, including participation in the decision making process and access to power, over fundamental for the achievement of equality, development peace. This paper attempts to analyze the status of women empowerment in India and highlights the challenges of women empowerment. The study is basic on the purely from secondary sources. The study reveals that women of India are relatively this empowers and they enjoy somewhat lower status than that of men in spite of money effort undertaken by government. The study concludes by and observation that access to education, employment and change in social structure are only the enabling factors to women empowerment.

Keywords : Women Empowerment, Education, Health.

“If you educate a man you educate an individual, however, if you educate a woman you educate a whole family. Women empowered means mother India Empowered.” – Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

The growth and prosperity of a nation also depend on the status of women in a society. It is more applicable to a country like India and also the state of Assam where women comprise of nearly half of its total population. The condition and position women have now become

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critical to the human rights based approach for development. Women empowerment is one of the essential factors that promote human development. Human development and women empowerment both are mutually reinforcing. In fact empowerment of women can contribute in human development through their household and community activities. But the developing and under develop countries particularly women have not been treated equal to men in many ways. They do not own property, no freedom to choose their work or job and most importantly no decision making power.

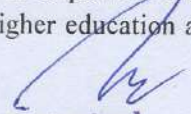
Women empowerment is a multi-dimensional social process that helps women gain control over their own lives. Women empowerment refers to the process by which women enhances their power to take control over decisions in broader sense women empowerment means acquiring the power to think and act freely, exercise choice and fulfill their potential. It refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social, educational, gender or economic strength of individuals and communities of women. Women's in India is heavily depended on many different variables that geographical location (Urban/Rural) educational status, social status (Cast/Class) and age. Policies of women empowerment exist at the national state and local level in many sectors including health, education, economic opportunities, gender-based violence and political participations. However there are significant gap between policy advancement and actual practice at the country level.

In general there are three sorts of women empowerment. 1. Political empowerment which is concern with augmenting the power voice and collective action by women. Political empowerment confirms equitable representation of women in decision making structure, both formal and informal and strengthens their voice in the formulation of politics affecting societies. 2. Social empower is a process of attaining information, knowledge and skills and active participation of women in social organization without any gender biasness in day to day activities. It is also concern with inculcating a feeling of equivalence instead of subservience among women, and 3. Economic empowerment which is concern to the quality of their economic involvement, beyond their presence poorly paid employs.

Women constitute almost 50% of the world's population but India has shown this proportionate sex ratio where by females population has been comparatively lower than males. As far as their social status is concern, they're not treated as equal to men in all the places. In the western societies, the women have got equal right and status with men in all walks of life. But gender disabilities and discrimination are found in India even today the paradoxical situation has show that she was sometimes concern as Goddess and their times nearly as slave.

Literature review

Malik and Courtney (2011) studied that how higher education offers empowerment to women. The economic independence and increased standing with the family were the benefits of higher education. It also enable the women to impact the discriminatory practices. Noreem and Khalid (2012) explored the possibilities and opportunities for women empowerment and how the participants in the study understand the rule of higher education in empowerment of women at home at work. They found at the women showed continue higher education and


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career by strategizing and acknowledging that support of their family members. Benarjee (2012) studied the empowerment of women through higher education. She concluded that the empowered women challenged the man in their work place and were seen in the powerful corporate positions. Sonowal (2013) studied the effect of the SC and ST women in the rural areas of Sonitpur district. He found that status of women in the present society attitude parents and guardians towards girl's education. Baruah and Uppadhaya (2015) studied empowerment of women in Assam and issues pertaining to it in the areas of Udalguri BTAD.

Objective and Methodology

The present study has the following specified objectives.

1. To know the need of women empowerment.
2. To access the awareness of women empowerment in India.
3. To analyze the factors influencing the economic empowerment of women.
4. To study the government schemes for women empowerment.
5. To identify the causes Hindrances in the path of women empowerment.
6. To offer useful suggestions in the light of findings.

This paper is basically descriptive and analytical in nature. In this paper an attempt has been taken to analyze the empowerment of women in India. The present study is mainly best upon secondary data collected from different sources. The secondary is collected mainly from different books and websites. Some secondary data are also collected from news paper, journals and Result Framework Document for Nation Crime Record Bureau (Crime in India 2014).

Crime against women

The crime against women flies against orchestrating women empowerment in India. A report on the crimes against women by the Nation Crime Records Bureau comes up with alarming statistics. The crime had wise details of reported drawing the year 2010-2014 are presented in table in.

TABLE 1

Sl. no	Crime Head	Year				
		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
1	Rape	22172	24206	24923	33,707	36,735
2	Attempt to commit rape					4234
3	Kidnapping and abduction women	29795	35565	38262	51881	57311
4	Dowry deaths	8391	8618	8233	8083	8455
5	Assault on women with intent to outrage her/their modesty	40613	42968	45351	70739	82235
6	Insult to the modesty of women	9961	8570	9173	12589	9735
7	Cruelty by husband or his relatives	94041	99135	106527	18866	122877
8	Importation of girls from foreign country	36	80	59	31	13
9	Abetment of sati prevention act					3734
10	Total IPC crime against women	205009	219142	232528	295895	325329
11	Commission of sati prevention act	0	0	0	0	0
12	Indecent representation of women act	895	453	141	262	47

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13	The dowry prohibition act	5182	6619	9038	10709	10050
14	Protection of women from domestic violence act					426
15	Immoral traffic act	2499	2436	2563	2579	2070
16	Total SLL crime against women	8576	9508	11742	13565	12593
17	Total IPC and SLL crime against women	213585	228650	244270	309456	337922

Source – Crime in India 2014

A total of 3,37,922 incidents of crime against women (both IPC and SLL) were reported in the country during the year 2014 as compared to 3,09,546 in the year 2013. These crime have continuously increased during 2010-2014 with 2,13,585 cases in the year 2010. 2,28,650 cases in 2011 and 2,44,270 in 2012 and 3,9,546 cases in 2013 and 3,37,920 cases in the year 2014.

TABLE No. 2

Proportion of crime against women (IPC) towards total IPC crime

Sl. no	Year	Total IPC crimes	Crime against women (IPC cases)	PC to Total IPC crimes
1	2010	22,24,831	2,13,585	9.6%
2	2012	23,25,575	2,19,142	9.4%
3	2013	23,87,188	2,44,270	10.2%
4	2014	26,47,722	2,95,896	11.2%
5	2015	28,51,563	3,25,327	11.4%

Source- Crime in India 2014

The proportion of IPC crimes committed against women towards total IPC crimes have increased during the last 5 years from 9.6% in the year 2010 to 11.4% during the year 2014.

A total of 10,24,423 cases of violence against women have been registered across India in the past three years during 2014-2016. This included 1,10,277 cases of rape, 14,390 cases of attempt to commit rape, 18,126 cases of dory death, 2,49,285 cases of assault on women with intent or outrage her modesty, 19,153 cases of insult to modesty of women, 3,46,757 cases of cruelty by husband or his relatives, 31 cases of importation of girls from foreign country, 444 cases of acid attack, 116 cases of attempt to acid attack, 139 cases of deaths cause by act done with intent to cause miscarriage, 550 cases of causing miscarriage without women's consent, 1,827 cases of human trafficking, 12,243 cases of human trafficking, 125 cases of indecent representation of women. 11,586 cases of under the protection of children from sexual act, 1,464 cases under protection of women from domestic violence act, 6,695 cases of under immoral traffic act, 340 cases of foeticide, 7,572 cases of procurement of minor girls, 32 cases of buying minors of prostitution and 314 cases of selling minors for prostitution. Out of the total 10,24,423 cases 3,40,826 were registered in 2014, 3,31,649 in 2015 and 3,51,948 in 2016. Out of the total cases 9,28,285 cases were registered directly in police station across the country while 96,138 (36,870 in 2014, 32,438 in 2015 and 26,830 in 2016) cases were registered on the directions of the Magistrate under section 156(3) of the criminal procedure-code.


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The cases of rape which is the most common from the crimes against women in India, recorded a dip by 5.67% from 36,735 cases in 2014 to 34,651 in 2015 but only to record a rise by more than double (12.23%) in 2016 over 2015. The cases of attempt to rape increased by 4.79% from 4,234 cases in 2014 to 4,437 cases in 2015 and increased about six times (28.89%) with 5,719 cases in 2016.

This information was given by Mr. Hansraj Gangaram Ahir, Minister of state in the Ministry of Home Affairs in the Lok Sabha on 1st August responding to stated question no 237 on the situation of crimes against women in the last three years.

Women empowerment is a challenge task as we need to acknowledge the fact that gender based discrimination is deep rooted social malice practiced in India in many forms since thousands of years. The malice is not going to go away in a few years or form that matter by attempting to work at through half hearted attempts. Formulating laws and policies are not enough as it is seen that most of the times this laws and policies just remain on paper. The ground situation on the other hand just remains the same and in many instances worsens further. Addressing the malice of gender discrimination and women empowerment in India a long drawn battle against powerful structural forces of the society which are against women's growth and development.

Barriers of women empowerment

The main problems that faced by past and still today up to some extend

1. Gender discrimination.
2. Lack of education.
3. Financial constraints.
4. Family responsibility.
5. Low mobility.
6. Low ability to bear risk.
7. Low need for achievement.
8. Absence of ambition for the achievement.
9. Social status.
10. Dowry.
11. Parental preference for going to school.
12. Child labor practice.
13. Poor school environment for girls.
14. Female as at marriage.

Ways to empower women

1. The ministry of education centre and state level should work out strategic steps to stop firmly the ongoing high dropouts among girls especially in rural tribal and stumps areas with the serious involvement of voluntary organizations and every locality to realize zero drop-out among girls.

2. The poverty stricken families can be identified through proper research and necessary poverty alleviation services are provided to strengthen the income there by to enable the families to send their children to school and colleges without much financial difficulties.

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Education:- While the country has grown from leaps and bounds since independence where education is considered the gap between women and men in sever. The gender bias is in higher education specialized professional training which hit women very hard in employment and attaining to leadership in any field.

Poverty:- Poor families cannot afford to send their children to school. Parents who are poor usually send their son's to school and prefer to engage their daughters in household tasks of cooking, washing and looking after their siblings.

Health and safety:- The health and safety concerns of women are paramount for the wellbeing of country and is an important factor in gauging the empowerment of women in a country. However there are alarming concerns where maternal elder is concern.

Professional in equality:- These in equality is practical in empowerment and promotion women face countless, heartless in male customized and dominated environs in government offices and private enterprises.

Morality and inequality:- Due to gender bias in health and nutrition there in unusually high morality rate in women reducing their population further specially in Asia, Africa, China.

Household inequality:- Household relations so, gender bias in infinitesimally small but significant manner all across the globe, more so, in India. e.g. sharing burden of homework, childcare and menial work by so called division of work.

Suggestion :

Higher education is a potent-tool in the emancipation and empowerment of women. Educational achievements have productive effects within the family and across generations. In ancient India women enjoyed equal status with men in all fields of life, but gradually they were discouraged from receiving education. But globalization has presented new challenges for realization of the goal of women equality. There is n urgent need for reframing policies for access to employment and equality of empowerment. The international Women's Conference of 1985 defined "Women empowerment as a retribution of socio economic power and control resources in favor of women". The Cairo Conference in 1994 also gave attention to women's empowerment as a central focus. In order to create proper environment and support women's social, political and economic empowerment in India, the following recommendations are put forward.

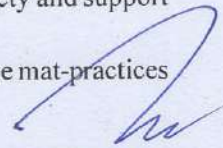
1. The first and foremost priority should give to the education of women, which is the grassroots problem. Hence education for women has to be paid special attention.

2. NGOs and government should come together to arrange different awareness programme and women centric initiatives in remote and background areas.

3. Rural women need to be involved in decision-making concerning in the development of new technologies in order to partake totally in their growth.

4. Women should be allowed to work and should be provided enough safety and support to work.

5. Strict implementation of programmes and acts should be there to curb the mat-practices prevalent in the society.



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Conclusion :

The empowerment of women has become one of the most important concerns of 21st century not only at national level but also at the international level. Government initiatives alone would not be sufficient to achieve the goal. Society must take initiative to create a climate in which there is no gender discrimination and women have full opportunities of self decision making and participating in social, political and economic life of the country with a sense of equality. Education among women is the most powerful tool of attaining power in the society. Higher education of women plays a very important role in realizing their energy and creativity and enabling them to meet the complex challenges of the present world. The higher education increases the women to take independent decision to reduce violence women's ability to claim legal rights, participations in civic society, economic independence and many more.

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