



Women in the Economic Sphere of Life

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Women, Unemployment, Resolutions, Economic

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ABSTRACT

Women in India work and contribute to the economy in one form or another, much of their work done. Economic dependence of women is what gives rise to their subordination in society today. Hence, to remove such subordination and to lay the foundation of equality women too must be make economically independent and must take an active role in all sectors of business today. To support such initiative the Government must provide some conditions, which are suitable for the needs of women. The situation of women has moved to the forefront of both national and international population policy debates. Women play multiple roles of which work for wages/employment/income earning is one among the most significant ones.

An attempt made in the present paper to examine what is the role of women in Indian economy. Our ancient wisdom proclaims: yad bhavam thath bhavathi – which means, you “are” as you “think”. So, thinking is essential – it is the ambrosial – “amrutha” of our life. However, in the present times, our thoughts, and actions are divorced from each other – resulting in the present anarchy. We have grown materially and declined spiritually. What is spirituality? It is the pleasure of the Ultimate within. Unfortunately, to-day’s world is dominated by hypocrisy, superstition hyper rationality as well as the logic of a blind faith in the Ultimate. Any activity is impossible without “sankalpa”- that yearning desire for “doing” for its own sake, with a faith in the Ultimate. That Ultimate power will give what is due to us. Women in India work and contribute to the economy in one form or another, much of their work done. Women plow fields and harvest crops while working on farms; women weave and make handicrafts while working in household industries; women sell food and gather wood while working in the informal sector. Additionally, women are traditionally responsible for the daily household chores. Although the cultural restrictions women face are changing, women still not as free as men. In the past, cultural restrictions were the primary impediments to female employment; now, however, the shortage of jobs throughout the country contributes to low female employment as well. Women-unfriendly environments discourage women from seeking advice or support or even from claiming their basic legal rights. As a result, many women are not encouraged to use their capabilities on an equal footing with men. Despite the increasing political commitment to improving women’s access to public services, and the growing number of legislative reforms aimed at achieving gender equity and a better quality of life for women.

Unemployment is a status in which individuals are without job and are seeking a job. It is one of the most pressing problems of any economy especially the underdeveloped ones. Unemployment leads to irregularities in the income pattern within huge sections of the society. This in turn implies that the individual, who has lost his job or is about to lose his job faces economic hardship. Successive periods of unemployment may lead to social exclusion under extreme circumstances. Even though, most of the times such situations are more psychological in nature and are results of the perceptions of the unfortunate individual.

The Resolutions all reaffirm the equal rights of women and men and recognise that adequate remedies to deal with discrimination against women may require different treatment of women, based on a consideration of women’s specific socio-economic context. Various UN bodies and organisations

are requested to fully incorporate women’s land, property and housing rights in their work, and the World Bank, IMF, WTO and OECD are called upon to take the human rights implications for women fully into account in their policies. Each Resolution reaffirms the substance and validity of and often further strengthens the previous Resolutions.

Each year the United Nations declares an overall International Women’s Day theme. Their 2012 theme is “Empower Rural Women – End Hunger and Poverty”. Many events conducted to celebrate the 100th anniversary of International Women’s Day. As for example in the USA announced the month of March 2011 as the “Women’s History Month” and appreciated each women on this earth for their extraordinary accomplishments. Every year around the world, International Women’s Day (IWD) is celebrated on March 8, India is not the exception. Thousands of events occur not just on this day but throughout March to mark the economic, political and social achievements of women. Organisations, governments, charities and women’s groups around the world choose different themes each year that reflect global and local gender issues.

Economic dependence of women is what gives rise to their subordination in society today. Hence, to remove such subordination and to lay the foundation of equality women too must be make economically independent and must take an active role in all sectors of business today. To support such initiative the Government must provide some conditions, which are suitable for the needs of women.

The women’s movement has used the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as an effective tool for bringing women’s issues into the rights arena. The Indian Constitution, the ILO Conventions that we have ratified and the existing laws together guarantee some rights to the workers. One of the disabilities from which women in employment suffer is discrimination in wages. Ordinarily there should have been no discrimination. The government is bound by the principle of equal pay for equal work embodied in Article 39(d) of the Constitution. It has been also ratified the ILO convention on Equal Remuneration for work of equal value. But neither the general policy of the government nor the ratification of the convention has settled the issue. An argument is always put forward that the work turned out by a woman is not of equal value with that turned out by a man and on that ground lower wages are fixed for women in a number of cases. Among the historical power relations responsible for violence against women are the economic and social forces which exploit female labour and the female body. Economically disadvantaged women are more vulnerable to sexual harassment, trafficking and sexual slav-

ery. They are also employed as bonded labour and low-paid labour in many economic enterprises throughout the world. As migrant workers, they often face innumerable hardships in foreign countries. Economic exploitation is an important aspect of modern female labour. In addition, a study of 90 societies in relation to wife beating found that economic equality was a key factor which prevented violence against women. Denying women economic power and economic independence is a major cause of violence against women because it prolongs their vulnerability and dependence. Unless economic relations in a society are more equitable towards women, the problem of violence against women will continue. Exploitation of female labour as well as more general issues of gender equality has emerged as universal concerns of nations in the past decade. 'Women's movements have been organized in most societies to address these problems and to demand more equitable conditions for women. The social and political responses of both men and women to these movements have been culturally constrained. A comprehensive attempt to take stock of the Health hazards faced by these workers was made by the Task force on Health Commissioned by the National commission on self employed women and women in Informal sector (Report of the Task Force on Health, 1988) The observations and recommendations made by the Task force found place in shramshakti, the final report of the commission (government of India, 1988). The violation and non-implementation of several protective legislations and provisions that exist within the Factories Act, Mines Act, Inter-State Migrants Act and on. The situation of women has moved to the forefront of both national and international population policy debates. Women play multiple roles of which work for wages/employment/income earning is one among the most significant ones. The large majority of Indian women who work in the informal sector face several Health problems emanating from the workplace and their domestic situation. Gender roles vary from one country to another, but almost everywhere, women face disadvantages relative to men in the social economic and political spheres of life. Gender differences affect women's health and well being throughout the life cycle. The changing patterns of economic development in the liberalisation era have put a heavy burden on women, which is reflected in their health status.

Problems faced by women in the economic sphere of life are mostly relating to unequal wages and discrimination resulting from their biological role in nature of childbearing. To curb such problems and protect the economic rights of women the legislature introduced the Equal Remuneration Act 1976 and the Maternity Benefit Act of 1961. Maternity benefits were first recognized when the Maternity Protection Conference was held by the International Labour Organization in 1919. Women need to be withdrawn from the workforce during pregnancy and after the birth also they need the steady income for medical expenses etc. and therefore to preserve her health law should make provisions for maternity benefit so women can ensure their productivity as well as reproductivity. A maternity benefit is one that every woman shall be entitled to, and her employer shall be liable for, the payment of maternity benefit, which is the amount payable to her at the rate of the average daily wage for the period of her actual absence. The Maternity Benefit Act aims to regulate employment of women employees in certain establishments for certain periods before and after childbirth and provides for maternity and certain other benefits.

Economic independence is an important step in enhancing women's status. It does not provide all the answers. For even when women contribute substantially to family income through paid and unpaid labour, there is no guarantee that they will either be respected or spared violence and abuse within the family. She plays many roles as a manager, as a producer, as a mother from ancient to present scenario not only in the family at the working place also. Now our Indian economy good in position entire credit goes to women. In terms of development, violence prevents women from participating fully in the life of the family and the community and in society.

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