



## WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

### KEYWORDS

Women empowerment

**Prof. Mrs. K.R.Vasanthakohila**

Department of Community Health Nursing Sree balaji college of nursing, Bharath university, chrompet.

### ABSTRACT

*Women empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social or economic strength of women. It often involves the empowered developing confidence in their own capacities.*

### INTRODUCTION:

Women bear almost all responsibilities for meeting basic needs of the family, yet are systematically denied the resources, information and freedom of action they need to fulfil this responsibility.

Thus women empowerment should transcend the gender and reach the whole of humanity to establish a matriarchal society based on creative and generative action. Such social order should be based in the principles of love, compassion, nurturing and with a purpose of unifying the forces of nature.

### DEFINITION:

"Women empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social or economic strength of women. It often involves the empowered developing confidence in their own capacities".

### NATIONAL POLICY FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2001):

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian constitution in its preamble, fundamental rights, fundamental duties and directive principles. The constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the state to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women.

### Goals and objectives:

Specifically the objectives of this policy include

Creating an environment through positive economic and social policies for full development of women to enable them to realize their full potential.

The enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom by women on equal basis with men in all spheres-political, economic, social, cultural and civil.

Equal access to participation and decision making of women in social, political and economic life of the nation.

Equal access to women health care, equal education at all levels, career and vocational guidance, employment, equal remuneration, occupational health and safety, social security and public office etc.

Strengthening legal systems aimed at elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.

Changing societal attitudes and community practices by active participation and involvement of both men and women.

Elimination of discrimination and all forms of violence against women and the girl child.

Building and strengthening partnerships with civil society, particularly women's organizations.

### POLICY PRESCRIPTIONS:

#### Judicial legal system:

It should be made more responsive and gender sensitive to women's needs, especially in cases of domestic violence and personal assault. New laws should be enacted and existing laws reviewed to ensure that justice is quick and the punishment meted out to the culprits is commensurate with the severity of the offence.

#### Decision making:

Women's equality in power sharing and active participation in decision making in political process at all levels should be ensured for the achievement of the goals of empowerment. All measures should be taken to guarantee women equal access to and full participation in decision making bodies at every level including the legislative, executive, judicial, corporate, statutory bodies as also in the advisory commissions, committees, boards, trusts etc.

### ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN:

#### Poverty eradication:

Since women comprises the majority of the population below the poverty line and are very often in situations of extreme poverty, given the harsh realities of intra household and social discrimination, macroeconomic policies and poverty eradication programmes should specifically the needs and problems of such women. Steps should be taken for mobilization of poor women and convergence of services, by offering them a range of economic and social options, along with necessary support measures to enhance their capabilities.

#### Women and economy:

Women's contribution to socio economic development as producers and workers will be recognized in the formal and informal setups(including home based workers) and appropriate policies relating to employment and to her working conditions should be drawn up.

**Self help groups (SHGs):**

SHG is a group formed by the community women, which has specific number of members like 15 or 20. In such a group, the poorest women would come together for emergency, disaster, social reasons, economic support to each other have ease of conversation, social interaction and economic interactions.

**Objectives of SHG:**

- To create group feeling among women.
- To enhance the confidence and capabilities of women.
- To develop collective decision making among women.
- To motivate women taking up social responsibilities particularly related to women development.

**Globalization:**

Globalization has presented new challenges for the realization of the goals of women's equality, the gender impact of which has been systematically evaluated fully. Benefits of the growing global economy have been unevenly distributed leading to wider economic disparities, the feminization of poverty, increased gender inequality through often deteriorating working conditions and unsafe working environment especially in the informal economy and rural areas.

**Women and agriculture:**

In the view of critical role of women in the agricultural and allied sectors, as producers, concentrated efforts will be made to ensure that benefits of training, extension and various programmes should reach them in proportion to their numbers. The programmes for training women in soil conservation, social forestry, diary development and the other occupations allied to agriculture like horticulture, livestock including small animal husbandry, poultry, fisheries etc.

**Women and industry:**

The important role played by the women in electronics, information technology, food processing, agro industries and textiles has been crucial to the development of these sectors. They should be given comprehensive support in terms of labour legislation, social security and other support services to participate in various industrial sectors.

**Social empowerment of women:**

**Education:** Equal access to education for women and girls will be ensured. Special measures should be taken to eliminate discrimination, illiteracy, create a gender sensitive educational system, improve the quality of education to facilitate lifelong learning as well as development of occupation, vocation and technical skills by women.

**Health:** A holistic approach to women's health which includes both nutrition and health services should be adopted and special attention should be given to women and the girls at all stages of the life cycle. The reduction of infant mortality and maternal mortality, which are sensitive indicators of human development, is a priority concern.

**Nutrition:** This is also important in view of the critical link between the health of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women with the health of infant and young children. Special effort should be made to tackle the problem of micro and macro nutrient deficiencies especially amongst pregnant lactating women as it leads to various diseases and disabilities.

**Drinking water and sanitation:** Special attention should

be given to the needs of women in the provision of safe drinking water, sewage disposal, toilet facilities and sanitation with adequate facilities and sanitation with in accessible reach of households.

**Housing and shelter:** Special attention should be given for providing adequate and safe housing and accommodation for women include single women, heads of households, working women, students, apprentices and trainees.

**Environment:** Women should be involved and their perspectives reflected in the policies and programmes for environment, conservation and restoration. Considering the impact of environmental factors on their livelihoods, women's participation should be ensured in the conservation of environment and control of environmental degradation.

**Violence against women:** All forms of violence against women, physical and mental, whether at societal or domestic levels, including those arising from customs, traditions or accepted practices shall be dealt effectively with a view to eliminate its incidence. A special emphasis should also be laid on programmes and measures to deal with trafficking in women and girls.

**Institutional mechanisms:** Institutional mechanisms to promote advancement of women which exist at central and state levels should be strengthened. These should be through interventions and programmes to achieve the empowerment of women.

**Gender violence:** Women's group discuss sensitive issues such as gender violence and make special efforts to identify victims and help them to start new livelihoods.

**Health insurance of the poor:** Over 21,000 households have been covered with health insurance on a pilot basis. The community managed risk fund aims to provide quick financial support to meet families' health expenditure, including emergencies.

**Women empowerment organizations (WEO):** Women empowerment organization is a non-governmental, voluntary and independent organization, established in June, 2004 in Iraq, to consolidate women's role and ability in the Iraqi community through enhancing their political, economic and cultural participation. WEO holds training, seminars, conferences and workshops that foster an exchange of information and experience among national, regional and international human rights movements.

**RIGHTS OF WOMEN:**

- The right to work as an inalienable right of all human beings.
- The right to the same employment opportunities, including the application of same criteria for selection in matters of employment.
- The right to free choice of profession and employment, the right to promotion, job security and all benefits and conditions of service.
- The right to equal remuneration, including benefits and right to equal treatment in respect of work of equal value.
- The right to social security, particularly in case of retirement, unemployment, sickness and old age, as well as the right to paid leave.
- The right to protection of health and to safety in working conditions, including the safeguarding of the function of reproduction.

## SCHEMES IN WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

**Welfare programmes for women and girl child:** The following schemes are implemented under these programmes:

**Magalu Namma Shakti:** This scheme provides Rs 2500 insurance facility to girl child at the age of 5 years and from the 6<sup>th</sup> year will get annual dividend on the deposit and at the age of 18 years she will receive Rs 4410 provided she is unmarried. The main aim of this scheme is to discourage early marriage.

**Widow and Devedasi Re-marriage in rural areas:** Maintenance of nine destitute cottages where food, shelter, clothing, bedding is provided for destitute school going children. Also runs crèches for working mothers in urban and rural areas.

### Central sector schemes:

**National Maternity Benefit Scheme:** This scheme is sponsored by central government and it is implemented by the department at the district level through ICDS projects. Under this scheme Rs 500 is paid in one instalment to pregnant women to meet her delivery expenses. The benefit is admissible for the first two births.

**Balika Samrudhi Yojana:** Under this scheme Rs 500 is given to the nursing mother of a girl child belonging to BPL families. This is limited to 2 female live births.

**Women development corporation scheme:** Women and child development department also carries out women development corporation schemes like training programmes and financial assistance to women to strengthened women economically.

**Ladly Yojana:** Bhopal, 16<sup>th</sup> May. The state government had launched Ladli Laxmi Yojana with a view to creating positive thinking about girls among the masses, improvement in gender ratio and improving standard and education of health of girls apart from laying a solid foundation for their future.

### Measures In Improving Women Empowerment:

- Employment and work participate rate
- Women literacy
- Women and political participation
- Free coaching classes
- Entrepreneurship awareness programme
- Tamil Nadu corporation for development of women
- Self help group
- Capacity building and skill formation

- Skill up and grading training programme

### Conclusion:

There is a long way still to go before we see women empowerment become a reality. The more the woman becomes economically empowered, the more progressive she becomes in the other spheres of life.

Somewhere we have to make a beginning and it's always better if we make the initiation at own self. We can strengthen this mass movement for the "rise of womenhood" by bringing about the necessary changes in our own life as felt by our inner self. Further we can transmit the new thinking to other who cares to listen. A small step today will definitely lead to a giant leap tomorrow.

## REFERENCE

- Shebeer . P . Basheer, S . Yaseen Khan, "A CONCISE TEXTBOOK OF ADVANCED NURSING PRACTICE", Emmess Medical Publishers, page no: 723-729. • Net reference [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) [Ezinearticle.com](http://Ezinearticle.com) [En.wikipedia.org/wiki/women\\_empowerment](http://En.wikipedia.org/wiki/women_empowerment) [www.artofliving.org/in-en/womenempowerment](http://www.artofliving.org/in-en/womenempowerment)