



## Empowering women in India: A vision for a brighter future

Ruchika Parashar<sup>1</sup>, Vinod Reddy<sup>2</sup>, Rupendra Kurrey<sup>2</sup>, Khushi Gupta<sup>2</sup>, Rupali Patanwar<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Management, Chouksey Engineering College, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, India

<sup>2</sup> Department of Management, Chouksey Engineering College, Bilaspur Chhattisgarh, India

### Abstract

The empowerment of women in India is a pivotal component of social and economic development, crucial for the nation's overall progress. This research paper delves into the multifaceted dimensions of women's empowerment, providing a comprehensive analysis of the current status of women in India. It highlights the persistent challenges women face across various sectors, including education, employment, health, and political participation. The study evaluates the effectiveness of existing government policies and programs aimed at promoting gender equality and empowerment. Furthermore, it proposes strategic recommendations for enhancing women's empowerment in India, emphasizing the need for a holistic and inclusive approach. The findings underscore the importance of addressing socio-cultural, economic, and political barriers to create a more equitable society where women can fully realize their potential and contribute to the nation's development.

**Keywords:** Women empowerment, future challenges

### Introduction

Women's empowerment is a critical driver of social and economic progress in any society. In India, a country with a rich cultural heritage and diverse population, empowering women is not only a matter of social justice but also an economic imperative. Despite constitutional guarantees of equality and a plethora of government initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality, women in India continue to face significant disparities and challenges. These challenges manifest in various forms, including limited access to quality education, low participation in the labour force, inadequate healthcare, and underrepresentation in political and decision-making processes. Women's empowerment in India is essential for the nation's progress. Despite constitutional guarantees of equality, women face significant disparities in education, employment, health, and political participation. This paper aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the current state of women's empowerment in India and to propose actionable strategies for improvement.

### Objective of study

This research paper aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the state of women's empowerment in India, focusing on key areas such as education, employment, health, and political participation. The objectives of the study are:

- 1. To assess the current status of women's empowerment in India:** By examining statistical data and trends, the study seeks to provide an overview of the progress made and the existing gaps in various sectors.
- 2. To identify the key challenges hindering women's empowerment:** Understanding the barriers that women face is crucial for developing effective strategies to overcome them.
- 3. To evaluate the effectiveness of existing government policies and programs:** The study analyses the impact

of various initiatives aimed at promoting women's empowerment and identifies areas for improvement.

- 4. To propose strategies for enhancing women's empowerment in India:** Based on the findings, the study suggests actionable recommendations for policymakers, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders to foster an environment conducive to women's empowerment.

### Literature review

The status of women in India has evolved significantly from ancient to modern times. Historically, women enjoyed a relatively higher status during the Vedic period but faced severe restrictions during the medieval period. The British colonial period saw the beginning of social reforms aimed at improving women's status, which continued post-independence. Education is a critical factor in women's empowerment. Despite improvements in female literacy rates, a significant gender gap persists.

Dr. B. Devamaindan, Ms Vidhya Arumugam (2023), Way-Forward for Rural Women in Tamil Nadu to tap into the Trillion-Dollar Opportunity<sup>1</sup>. The main concentration of the research is on the concept of ways to tap into trillion-dollar opportunity, strategies Tamil Nadu rural women should adopt to achieve trillion-dollar digital opportunity, 5g in agriculture. The conclusive remarks of the author states that, it's important to note that implementing these technologies requires specific technical knowledge and skills, so rural women may need to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills through training and education programs.

Dr. S. Jamuna (2023),—Financial Inclusion for women empowerment<sup>1</sup>. This paper revolves around the exploration of the concept of the factors affecting the level of financial inclusion for women, measure the extent of financial inclusion to the literacy level, examine women's perception about financial inclusiveness. The concluding section of the text asserts, Education in all aspect is the only way forward for the government to successfully include the female folk into the financial or any other upliftment programme.

Padmalaya Mahapatra, Bibhuti Bhusan Nayak (2023), *Challenges and Strategies for Women Empowerment in India: Facts and Realities*. The crux of this research paper lies in the concept of need for women empowerment, global gender gap, women education in India after Independence, the final thoughts by the author stress that women need to take a stand on decisions that are hurtful to women, families and stemming from decisions made by government need to be challenged.

M. Aakina Barveen (2022),—Role of Micro finance in Women Empowerment in India. The research paper centers around the Role of micro finance in women empowerment, economic empowerment, decision making, health and education. The final remarks by the author affirm that micro finance can contribute to solving the problems of inadequate housing and urban services as an integral part of poverty alleviation programmes among women. A promising solution is to provide multipurpose loan or composite credit for income generation, housing improvement and consumption support. Dr. Smrati (2023), —Role of Indian Women in Entrepreneurship & growth of Indian Economy. The primary subject matter of this research paper is the concept of role of women entrepreneurship in Indian economy, to identify the factors responsible for hindrance for women entrepreneurship, to make an evolution of people's thought and opinions about women entrepreneurship in India. It is made clear in the conclusion that the world women have been able to overcome the hurdle of society's perception of considering them to be confined to the four walls of the house or viewing them as weak entrepreneurs caught up in limited business area such as papad making, paintings, handicrafts, etc.

Animesh Kumar (2022), —Political Participation of Women in India: Constitutional Analysis. In this research paper the authors have focused on the current trend in the women participation in India's politics and also Constitution regard with Women's political sharing space and problems they are facing. As well as the authors concluded with the one-third seat reservation was boon, but India didn't take note of what it was saying and hasn't yet passed a pro-women law at the federal and state levels

Ranjithab (2016), —Women Empowerment Through Self-help Groups. The key point of interest in this paper is the concept of the effects of socio-economic factors on success of ventures of women entrepreneurs and SHGs, to enquire in to the impact of success of venture on women's empowerment in terms of status and economic independence, to suggest various measures for development of women entrepreneurs in the rural areas. It is brought to the forefront in the conclusion that women's active participation in economic activities was very much limited to the lack of adequate approach by the NGOs. Though the women have formed groups they have poor decision-making capacity for their self- development.

Mun Ghosh, Arindam Ghosh (2014), —Analysis of Women Participation in Indian Agriculture. In this research paper we can see the objectives focused by authors is to study the growth trend of agricultural worker from 1961-2001 and categorize the states on their identical behaviour of participation in agriculture. as well as the authors concluded with the facts that women participation in agriculture is increasing with time and women are now acknowledge with the status of —Agricultural worker.

Gurpreet Singh, Neha Singh (2013), —Role of women workers in the Indian Economy. This research article shows the main objective are the role of Women in Indian Economy both in rural as well as urban sector. The authors have concluded that women are working in India contributes to the economy and now they are not less in any thing when compared to male Section.

## **Challenges to women's empowerment**

### **Socio-cultural barriers**

Deep-rooted patriarchal norms and cultural practices such as dowry, child marriage, and gender-based violence significantly hinder women's empowerment. These practices perpetuate gender inequality and restrict women's access to education, employment, and political participation.

### **Economic barriers**

Economic dependence on men, lack of access to credit, and discriminatory labour market practices limit women's economic empowerment. Women often face wage discrimination and are underrepresented in higher-paying jobs and leadership positions.

### **Political barriers**

Limited political representation and participation in decision-making processes restrict women's ability to influence policies that affect their lives. The political arena in India is still largely male-dominated, with women facing significant challenges in accessing political spaces.

## **Government policies and programs**

### **Education initiatives**

Programs such as Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (Save the Daughter, Educate the Daughter) aim to promote gender equality and improve female education rates. Despite these initiatives, there are still significant gaps in access to quality education for girls, particularly in rural areas.

### **Economic empowerment programs**

Schemes like the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) aim to enhance women's economic participation by providing access to credit and promoting entrepreneurship. However, the effectiveness of these programs is often limited by socio-cultural barriers and lack of awareness.

### **Health programs**

The Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) and Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) are initiatives aimed at improving maternal and child health. While these programs have made some progress, challenges such as inadequate healthcare infrastructure and awareness persist.

### **Political empowerment**

The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments mandate the reservation of one-third of seats for women in local self-government institutions. However, the impact of these reservations is limited by socio-cultural barriers and lack of political awareness among women.

## **Proposed strategies for women's empowerment**

### **Education**

1. Increase Access to Quality Education: Ensure that girls have access to quality education, particularly in rural areas, by building more schools, improving infrastructure, and providing scholarships.

2. **Promote STEM Education:** Encourage girls to pursue education in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields through targeted programs and initiatives.

### **Economic empowerment**

1. **Enhance Access to Credit:** Improve women's access to credit and financial services by expanding programs like PMMY and promoting financial literacy.
2. **Promote Entrepreneurship:** Support women entrepreneurs through training, mentorship, and market linkages.

### **Health**

1. **Improve Healthcare Infrastructure:** Strengthen healthcare infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, to ensure access to quality maternal and child health services.
2. **Promote Health Awareness:** Increase awareness about health and nutrition through community-based programs and initiatives.

### **Political empowerment**

1. **Increase Political Representation:** Implement policies to ensure greater representation of women in political parties and government institutions.
2. **Promote Political Awareness:** Conduct awareness campaigns to educate women about their political rights and encourage their participation in the political process.

### **Conclusion**

Empowering women in India is essential for the nation's progress and development. While significant strides have been made in improving the status of women, much more needs to be done. By addressing the socio-cultural, economic, and political barriers to women's empowerment and implementing targeted strategies, India can ensure a brighter and more equitable future for its women.

### **References**

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5. Academic journals and articles on women's empowerment in India.