



A STUDY ON WOMEN WELFARE PROGRAMMES IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Women play variety of significant roles in our society from their birth till the end of life. Even after playing her all the roles and all the job timely in efficient manner in the modern society, she is weak because men are still strongest gender of the society. Even after lots of awareness programmes, rules and regulations in the society by the government, her life is more complicated than a man. She has to take care of herself and family members as daughter, granddaughter, sister, daughter-in-law, wife, mother, mother-in-law, grandmother, etc. By following such a big responsibility in the family, they are fully able to come out and do job for bright future of own, family and country. The Constitution of India allows for positive discrimination in favor of women. The article, under right to equality, states: Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making any special provision for women and children. In addition, the directive principles of State Policy 39(a) state that: The State shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing that the citizens, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means of livelihood. The Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (National Credit Fund for Women) was set up in 1993 to make credit available for lower income women in India. More recent programmes initiated by the Government of India include the Mother and Child Tracking System (MCTS), the Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana Conditional Maternity Benefit plan (CMB), and the Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls – Sabla. so many programmes implemented by Government. Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India have come up with various schemes, programmes, social welfare schemes, Health and Nutrition, scholarship for women empowerment, Girl Child pregnant women, mothers, ward members, Anganwadi Workers, Women Health Volunteers, the women living in the rural & tribal areas, ex-servicemen, physically handicapped, nursing women, Lactating mother, widows/destitute, Old age women, women self-help group (SHG), Women Entrepreneurs and Adolescent Girls'. Also, it helps to the women and child belonging to Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST), Other Backward Classes (OBC), Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBC) Minority Category, below poverty line (BPL) and also for General Category. This scheme provides assistance for Education, Training, Financial assistance/Cash, Subsidy on the loans, Scholarship, Nutrition, self-employment and other facilities. The prime goal is for empowerment, development, protection and welfare of Women & Child. The Study is Purely Theoretical. The Study is based on secondary data sources. The necessary information about the Women Welfare programmes in India and its various components are collected from Books, Journals, Internet Source or related topic. The Researcher study about the Women Welfare programmes in India. The Research Work includes I. Introduction II. Methodology III. Women Welfare programmes in India IV. Conclusion etc.

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INTRODUCTION

India is a very famous country known for its cultural heritage, traditions, civilization, religion and geographical features from the ancient time. On the other hand, it is also popular as a male chauvinistic nation.

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Women are given first priority in India however on the other hand they were badly treated in the family and society. They were limited only for the household chores or understand the responsibility of home and family members. They were kept totally unaware of their rights and own development. People of India used to say this country as "Bharat-Mata" however never realized the true meaning of it. Bharat-Mata means a mother of every Indian whom we have to save and care always. Women constitute half power of the country so in order to make this

country a fully powerful country, women empowerment is very necessary. It is empowering women to understand their rights to be independent in every area for their proper growth and development. Women give birth to the baby means future of the nation so only they can better involve in making the bright future of the nation through the proper growth and development of the children. Women need to be empowered instead of treating as a helpless victim of male chauvinism. In this way Government of India initiated so many Programmes, schemes, Policies for Women Welfare. Women welfare is a step towards all round development.

METHODOLOGY

The Study is Purely Theoretical. The Study is based on secondary data sources. The necessary information about the Women Welfare programmes in India and its various components are collected from Books, Journals, Internet Source or related topic. The Researcher study about the Women Welfare programmes in India.

Women Welfare programmes in India

National policy for empowerment of women

- In 2001, it was formulated as the blueprint for the future, with the express goal of bringing about the advancement, development and empowerment of women.
- It laid down detailed prescriptions to address discrimination against women, strengthen legal systems, provide better health care access, equal opportunities for women's participation in decision making and mainstreaming gender concerns in development process etc.

Multi-sectoral nutrition programme

- The Government of India has approved and launched Multi-sectoral programme to address the problems of maternal and child under-nutrition in the country on 24th January 2014 on the occasion of Girl Child Day.
- It has been launched as a special intervention to improve maternal and child under nutrition in 200 High Burden Districts and to prevent and reduce the under nutrition prevalence in children in age group of 0-3 years and.
- To reduce incidence of anemia among young children, adolescent girls and women.

Indira gandhi matritva sahyog yojana (igmsy)

- A Conditional Maternity Benefit Scheme.
- Cash incentive up from 4K to 6K to pregnant and lactating mothers aiming partly compensate them for wage-loss during childbirth and childcare and also provide conditions for ensuring safe delivery and promote good nutrition and feeding practices for infants and young children.
- Centrally Sponsored Scheme under which financial assistance is provided as grant-in-aid to the State Government.
- Introduced in 2010 under the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

- All pregnant women of 19 years of age and above are eligible for the benefits under the Scheme for the first two live births. However, women who are entitled to paid maternity leave are not eligible for the benefits under this Scheme.
- The anganwadi workers play a vital role in identifying the beneficiaries to receive incentives under the Scheme.

Dhanalakshmi Scheme

- A Scheme for conditional Cash Transfer for the Girl Child
- The scheme provides for cash transfer to the family of a girl child on fulfilling certain conditionality relating to registration of birth, immunization, enrolment and retention in school till class VIII; and
- An insurance coverage if the girl remains unmarried till the age of 18.

Rajiv gandhi scheme for empowerment of adolescent girls (rgseag) – sabla

SABLA is a scheme to empower adolescent girls of 11-18 years by improving their nutritional and health status, upgrading various skills like home skills, life skills and vocational skills. The girls will also be equipped with information on health and family welfare, hygiene and guidance on existing public services. The scheme is being implemented in 200 districts across the country on a pilot basis while in the remaining districts Kishori Shakti Yojna (KSY), where operational, will continue as before. The scheme is being implemented using the platform of Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) wherein Anganwadi Centres (AWC) would be the focal point for the delivery of services. Introduced in 2010.

Nmew (national mission for empowerment for women)

National Mission for Empowerment of Women (NMEW) is an initiative of the Government of India (GOI) for empowering women holistically. It is conceived as an umbrella mission with a mandate to strengthen inter-sectoral convergence and facilitate the process of coordinating all the women's welfare and socio economic development programmes across ministries and departments.

The salient features of the National Mission for Empowerment of Women (NMEW) are:

- To ensure economic empowerment of women.
- To ensure that violence against women is eliminated progressively.
- To ensure social empowerment of women with emphasis on health and education.
- To oversee gender mainstreaming of programmes, policies, institutional arrangements and processes of participating Ministries, Institutions and Organizations.
- To undertake awareness generation as well as advocacy activities to fuel demand for benefits under various schemes and programmes and create, if required, structures at district, tehsil and village level

with the involvement of Panchayats for their fulfillment.

PSK (POORNA SHAKTI KENDRA)

Under NMEW as one stop Service centre to women at District and Gram Panchayat level

- A model intervention project under NMEW established in villages, for offering services to women at the grassroots.
- Working with the motto, HUM SUNENGE NARI KI BAAT (we will listen to women's voices)
- Two women coordinators or Gram Samanvayaks in each Kendra.
- One of the important elements of the project is to stress on processes instrumental in bringing about women's empowerment through convergence strategies on the ground.

Functions of PSK

- To reach out the information to women about all the government programs/schemes/ services and helping them to utilize those benefits providing by the Government. Further, to facilitate to avail those benefits especially related to health, education and livelihoods.
- To conduct capacity building training programs to women on various issues like leadership qualities, crisis management, stress management, life skills development, legal rights & entitlements etc., in order to create awareness and enhancing their knowledge & skills.
- To maintain a database of target population (women) on various issues related to women.
- To coordinate with the outreach services of various departments.
To organize women into clusters to access various services and to strengthen SHGs.

Ahimsa messenger

For generating awareness about basic legal rights, procedures and provisions by involving men and women to address and eliminate all forms of violence against women both inside and outside home. Launched in August 2013

- A series of awareness building programmes across the nation on Gender issues.
- A series of training and sensitization programmes for grass root level functionaries across the nation.
- Developing and introducing a gender sensitive module/curriculum which is now being introduced in various training institutes across states.
- Implemented through all Anganwadi Centres, all Panchayati Raj Institutions, Sabla Girls (in the age group of 16-18 years) and Poorna Shakti Kendras (PSK) coordinators under the National Mission for Empowerment of Women (NMEW) will be trained as Ahimsa Messengers.

Step (support to training & employment programme)

- Central Sector Scheme launched in 1986-87.
- Enabling women to take up employment cum income generation programmes. Financial assistance also given.

- Seeks to upgrade skill of poor and asset less women and provide employment on sustainable basis by mobilizing them in viable cooperative groups, strengthening marketing linkages, support services and access to credit.
- The scheme also provides for enabling support services in the form of health check-ups, legal and health literacy, elementary education, gender sensitization and mobile crèches.
- The ultimate endeavour of each project is to develop the group to thrive on a self-sustaining basis in the market place with minimal governmental support and intervention even after the project period is over.

Rmk (rashtriya mahila kosh)-- (national credit fund for women)

- Set up in 1993.
- The RMK is now being restructured as a NBFC.
- Provides micro finance to poor and asset less women in informal sector.

Wwh (working women hostel)

- Aims at providing safe shelter for single, widowed, divorced, separated, married but whose husband or immediate family does not reside in same area and for those who are under training for job.

Rajiv gandhi national creche scheme for the children of working mothers (rgnccs)

- Introduced in 2006.
- With a view to encourage women to join/ continue with gainful employment.
- It seeks to provide day care facilities to children in the age group 0-6 years from families with a monthly income of less than Rs. 12,000.
- In addition to being a safe space for the children, the crèche provide services like supplementary nutrition, pre school education, emergency health care etc.
- It is a Central Sector scheme being implemented through Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) and two national level mother NGOs i.e. Indian Council for Child Welfare (ICCW) and Bharatiya Adimjati Sevak Sangh (BAJSS).

Ujjwala

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development launched a comprehensive scheme called 'Ujjwala' in 2007.
- Conceived primarily for the purpose of preventing trafficking on the one hand and rescue and rehabilitation of victims on the other,
- The scheme has five specific components- Prevention, Rescue, Rehabilitation, Reintegration and Repatriation of victims of trafficking.
- The scheme is mainly implemented through NGOs.
- The scheme also facilitates rescue of victims from the place of their exploitation and place them in safe custody in order to provide rehabilitation services, both immediate and long-term.
- It provides to the victims basic amenities/needs such as shelter, food, clothing, medical treatment including

counselling, legal aid and guidance and vocational training.

- It also facilitates reintegration of the victims into the family and society at large.

Swadhar

- Provides shelter for women in difficult circumstances, widows, destitute and deserted women.
- Administered by Women and Child Development ministry since 2001.
- Another scheme with similar objectives/target groups namely Short Stay Home (SSH) was being implemented by Central Social Welfare Board. Being similar in objectives and target groups, both the schemes have been merged to Swadhar Greh scheme.

Women's empowerment and livelihood programme in mid gangetic plain (welp) also called priyadarshini

- Being implemented with the assistance of International Fund for Agricultural Development in 13 Blocks spread over 5 Districts in Uttar Pradesh and 2 Districts in Bihar.
- It aims at holistic empowerment of vulnerable groups of women and adolescent girls in the project area through formation of Women's Self Help Groups (SHGs) and promotion of improved livelihood opportunities.

Sexual harassment of women at workplace (prevention, prohibition and redressal) bill

- Seeks to provide a safe and secure working environment to all women. It covers all work places whether organised or unorganised including domestic workers.
- The definition of "aggrieved woman", who will get protection under the act is extremely wide to cover all women, irrespective of her age or employment status.
- It defines sexual harassment at the work place and creates a mechanism for redressal of complaints.
- It also provides safeguards against false or malicious charges.
- Definition of employee covers regular/temporary/ad hoc/daily wage employees, whether for remuneration or not and can also include volunteers. The definition of employer includes the head of the Government department/organisation/institution/office/branch/unit, the person responsible for management/ supervisions/ control of the workplace, the person discharging contractual obligations with respect to his/her employees and in relation to a domestic worker the person who benefits from that employment.
- The redressal mechanism provided in the Act is in the form of Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) and Local Complaints Committee (LCC). All workplaces employing 10 or more than 10 workers are mandated under the Act to constitute an ICC. The ICC will be a 4 member committee under the Chairpersonship of a senior woman employee and will include 2 members from amongst the employees preferably committed to the cause of women or has experience in social work/legal knowledge and includes a third party member (NGO etc) as well.

- Complaints from workplaces employing less than 10 workers or when the complaint is against the employer will be looked into by the LCC. A District Officer notified under the Act will constitute the LCC at the district level. LCC will also look into complaints from domestic workers.
- LCC will be a five member committee comprising of a chairperson to be nominated from amongst eminent women in the field of social work or committed to the cause of women, one member from amongst women working in block/taluka/tehsil/manicipality in the district, two members of whom at least one shall be a woman to be nominated from NGOs committed to the cause of women or a person familiar with the issues related to sexual harassment provided that at least one of the nominees should preferably have a background in law or legal knowledge. The concerned officer dealing with the social welfare or women and child development shall be an ex officio member.
- A complaint of sexual harassment can be filed within a time limit of 3 months. This may be extended to another 3 months if the woman can prove that grave circumstances prevented her from doing the same.
- The Complaints Committees are required to provide for conciliation before initiating an inquiry, if requested by the complainant.
- Penalties have been prescribed for employers. Non-compliance with the provisions of the Act shall be punishable with a fine of up to 50,000. Repeated violations may lead to higher penalties and cancellation of licence or registration to conduct business.
- The Complaints Committees have the powers of civil courts for gathering evidence.

Protection of women from domestic violence act (pvdva), 2005

- Brought into force on 26th October 2006.
- Provides help from police, district protection officer, service provider or DM in case of violence by intimate partner or by anyone within the family.
- Under the PWDVA, various reliefs are provided to the aggrieved women on the orders passed by the Magistrate after following due procedure.
- The Act also has a provision for appeal against the orders of the Magistrate.

Saileent Features

The Act seeks to cover those women who are or have been in a relationship with the abuser where both parties have lived together in a shared household and are related by consanguinity, marriage or a relationship in the nature of marriage, or adoption; in addition relationship with family members living together as a joint family are also included. Even those women who are sisters, widows, mothers, single women, or living with the abuser are entitled to get legal protection.

- Domestic violence' includes actual abuse or the threat of abuse that is physical, sexual, verbal, emotional and economic. Harassment by way of unlawful dowry demands to the woman or her relatives would also be covered under this definition.

- One of the most important features of the Act is the woman's right to secure housing. The Act provides for the woman's right to reside in the matrimonial or shared household, whether or not she has any title or rights in the household. This right is secured by a residence order, which is passed by a court. These residence orders cannot be passed against anyone who is a woman.
- The other relief envisaged under the Act is that of the power of the court to pass protection orders that prevent the abuser from aiding or committing an act of domestic violence or any other specified act, entering a workplace or any other place frequented by the abused, attempting to communicate with the abused, isolating any assets used by both the parties and causing violence to the abused, her relatives and others who provide her assistance from the domestic violence.
- The draft Act provides for appointment of Protection Officers and NGOs to provide assistance to the woman w.r.t medical examination, legal aid, safe shelter, etc.
- The Act provides for breach of protection order or interim protection order by the respondent as a cognizable and non-bailable offence punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or with fine which may extend to twenty thousand rupees or with both. Similarly, non-compliance or discharge of duties by the Protection Officer is also sought to be made an offence under the Act with similar punishment.

Criminal law (amendment) act, 2013

- The Bill brought out after the Delhi gang rape of the Para-medical student on 16th December 2012.
- Bill provides for amendment of Indian Penal Code, Indian Evidence Act, and Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 on laws related to sexual offences.
- Act has expressly recognised certain acts as offences which were dealt under related laws. These new offences like, acid attack, sexual harassment, voyeurism, stalking have been incorporated into the Indian Penal Code.
- Fixed the age of consensual sex to 18 years.
- Provides stringent punishment for sexual offences against women.
- The bill states that offender could be given an imprisonment of not less than 20 years, extendable up to life term.
- The bill also includes provisions for death sentence for offenders who are convicted earlier for such crimes.

Hlwc (high level working committee on status of women)

- Entrusted with the task of preparing report on the current socio-economic, Political and legal status of women in India and to recommend measures for their holistic empowerment.

- Committee was set up in February 2012 to undertake a comprehensive study to understand the status of women since 1989 and evolve appropriate policy interventions based on a contemporary assessment of women's needs.
- The 14-member committee was headed by Pam Rajput and it has presented its first copy of the Preliminary Report in February 2014

OTHER LEGISLATIONS

- The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987 (3 of 1988)
- The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986
- The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 (28 of 1961) (Amended in 1986)
- The Immoral Traffic(Prevention)Act 1956

Conclusion

Women are powerful and beautiful entity of the world. Women leadership is restricted by the various social, cultural and political norms which need to be understood and addressed. First of all we need to address all the social inequalities hindering women's advancement in order to change women situation in the society as well as nation. In order to enhance the women's leadership in every area like men. Men too with women need to engage in all social and cultural norms to encourage combined participation as well as create equitable environment in home, office and community. Women role in Society is highly appreciable. So Women welfare is very important. Thus The Government of India initiated so many programmes, policies, schemes for welfare of Women

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