

## Economic Empowerment of Women in India

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### Abstract:

This paper focuses facts on both sides of the relationship between empowerment and growth. First, it shows that poverty and lack of opportunity create differences between men and women so that as economic growth reduces poverty, women's situation improves on two aspects: the first, as poverty is decreased, the condition of everyone, including women, improves and the second is that inequality of gender declines when poverty decreases. However, economic growth is not enough to achieve full equality between men and women. Policy steps are also important in order to achieve gender equality. It is clear that such policy action is warranted if the empowerment of women also encourages further growth and the launching of a virtuous cycle.

### Keywords:

Women Empowerment, Economic Empowerment, Women, India, Empowerment of Women.

### Introduction:

Women's empowerment was needed in ancient Indian society because of gender inequality and masculine supremacy. For several reasons, women are suppressed by their families and culture. Male members of the family and community in India and also in other countries have been targeted at different levels of violence and discriminatory practices. False and ancient practice has taken the form of well-designed rituals and customs for women in the culture since antiquity. Many woman gods in India have a history of honoring women's types such as mother, sister, daughter, wife and other female family or friends. It does not say, however, that the need for country growth can only be fulfilled by respecting or honoring women. In any way of life, it needs to inspire the rest of the half population. India is a popular nation, which shows that there are so many people with many religious convictions in the Indian society as 'unity is diversity.' For women a special place has been provided in every religion which functions as an important eye curtain and helps to continue many ill practice against women as normal since years (including physical and mental). There was the custom in ancient Indian society, among other patriarchal practices: sati pratha, nagar vadhu system, dowry system, sexual assault, domestic violence, infanticide by women, parda pratha, feminine burning, sexual harassment at work, child marriage, child labor, devadashi pratha, etc. All such bad practices are due to the intricate and patriarchal structure of male superiority in society. The male-dominated country can be transformed into an equally dominating rich economy by empowering women. Empowering women can easily encourage everyone in the family to develop without any additional work. A woman is seen as responsible for everything in the family so that she can handle all the issues from her own point of view better. Women's empowerment would automatically motivate everyone. Empowerment of women is best for any large or small human, economic or ecological problems. In recent years, we are faced with the benefits of women's empowerment. Women are more aware of their families, communities and country's health, education, work, jobs and obligation. They participate in every area and are really involved in every area. In this way the government of India has initiated several schemes for women's empowerment. After years of hard fighting, women are finally getting their right to go down the right path.

### Review of Literature:

Economic empowerment is thought to allow poor people to think beyond immediate daily survival and to exercise greater control over both their resources and life choices. There is also some evidence that economic empowerment can strengthen vulnerable groups' participation in the decision-making. The literature on economic empowerment is vast, and a large part of this focuses on the economic empowerment of women – a key strategy in addressing gender inequality. More generally, the discourse on economic empowerment centers around four broad areas: a) the promotion of the assets of poor people; b) transformative forms of social protection; c) microfinance; and d) skills training (Eyben, R., Kabber, N., Cornwall, A., 2008), whereas social empowerment is understood as the process of developing a sense of autonomy and self-confidence, and acting individually and collectively to change social relationships and the institutions and discourses that exclude, poor people and keep them in poverty (Blomkvist, H., 2003).

A considerable number of studies have been conducted, highlighting the role of microfinance on Socio-Economic Empowerment in the India context. Research conducted by Juliet Hunt and Nalini Kasynathan (2002), suggests that equity and efficiency arguments for targeting credit to women remain powerful: the whole family is more likely to benefit from credit targeted to women, where they control income, than when it is targeted to men.

A similar study by Nathalie Holvoet (2005), observed that decision making pattern has not been uniform for different areas of decision making. Data from her South Indian survey suggest that the way in which direct bank-borrower minimal credit enters the household; it is not very relevant for decision-making patterns. Women gain a

higher stake in matters directly related to the loan use, but they are not able to translate this into a more substantial involvement in other domains of household decision-making.

Kamal Gupta and P Princy Yesudian (2006) used four indices developed by the data set based on DHS survey98-99 on women empowerment to analyze the spatial and socio economic and cultural disparities that exist within India. The study highlights significant divergence in these indices of women empowerment across the different states and socio economic and cultural settings within India.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The goal of the present study is to examine the lack of legislation concerning women's political participation in the present scenario and, by meeting the objectives, try to establish the definition of women's empowerment:

1. To examine present condition of women empowerment from the viewpoint of economic growth
2. To understand the contribute of women in the economic empowerment of the family
3. Propose the ways to improve the economic empowerment of women for self-esteem and upliftment.

### **Methodology**

The present study based on secondary data collected from the study reports of UN and WTO. Research conducted at national and international conventions, reports by the government of India, NGOs.

### **Observations and Findings**

#### **Economic Empowerment of women**

##### **1. Poverty Eradication**

Since women comprise most 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 will specifically address the needs and problems of such women.

##### **2. Micro Credit**

In order to enhance women's access to credit for consumption and production, the establishment of new, and strengthening of existing micro-credit mechanisms and micro-finance institution will be undertaken so that the outreach of credit is enhanced.

##### **3. Women and Economy**

Women's perspectives will be included in designing and implementing macro-economic and social policies by institutionalizing their participation in such processes. Their contribution to socio-economic development as producers and workers will be recognized in the formal and informal sectors (including home based workers) and appropriate policies relating to employment and to her working conditions will be drawn up.

##### **4. Globalization**

Globalization has presented new challenges for the realization of the goal of women's equality, the gender impact of which has not been systematically evaluated fully. However, from the micro-level studies that were commissioned by the Department of Women & Child Development, it is evident that there is a need for re-framing policies for access to employment and quality of employment.

##### **5. Women and Agriculture**

In view of the critical role of women in the agriculture and allied sectors, as producers, concentrated efforts will be made to ensure that benefits of training, extension and various programmes will reach them in proportion to their numbers.

##### **6. Women and Industry**

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

##### **7. Support Services**

The provision of support services for women, like child care facilities, including crèches at work places and educational institutions, homes for the aged and the disabled will be expanded and improved to create an enabling environment and to ensure their full cooperation in social, political and economic life.

### **Discussion**

#### **Can economic development cause women's empowerment?**

Gender inequality among poor people is always greater, both at home and abroad. As an example, although worldwide gender differences in gross primary and secondary registration have declined rapidly between 1991 and 2009, they remain more prevalent in poor countries (7% of primary registration, 13percent of secondary enrollment) compared to middle income countries (3% of primary registration, 2% of secondary registration) and rich countries (0 percentage points for primary, 1 percentage point for secondary). And there are continued differences in poorer and more isolated populations among children in countries (World Bank, 2011). In East Asia and Latin America, the participation of women in the labor market increased by 15% from 1971 to 1995, which is more rapid than that of men, and the gender pay gap has reduced. Women's life expectancy has risen over the last 50 years (World Bank 2011) by 20-25 years in developing countries, while male life expectancy has not improved to a much.

Will women's empowerment follow naturally as countries grow and thus no special measures are required to boost the status of women? Is the battle against poverty necessary and economic development conditions in developing

countries sufficient? Recent research shows that economic development may also have a significant positive effect on gender equality by reducing poverty and increasing opportunity.

- **Relaxing the grip of poverty through economic development:**

Also in countries with the highest preference for boys, it is not clear how much less treatment is systematically paid for girls than for boys in normal circumstances. Obtaining girls less than boys, for example, is clearly very difficult to observe, because families that are watched can alter their behavior. Also, households may misreport the portions of boys and girls when they are asked to keep records as to how much each member absorbs during a given time period. Homes may eventually give boys and girls the same number, but girls may have different needs. Angus Deaton (1989, 1997) proposed a genius for indirectly determining whether girls are given less to eat than boys using household consumption data. He noticed that the household actually gets poorer when a child is born because one more person is to eat – one for a long time that remains unproductive. This suggests that adult family members must reduce their own consumption to fund new expenses. An indirect calculation of the "child's cost" can be made by observing how much domestic consumption of "adult goods," such as cigarettes, alcohol or adult clothes, drops when a child is born. If families spend less on girls than children, for instance, when girls are allowed to eat less than boys, adults are allowed to reduce their adult consumption in less numbers when they have a supplementary girl than when they have another boy. However, there is no proof that holidaymakers are reducing adult consumption less for a girl than for a young child either in the Côte d'Ivoire, where Deaton initially conducted analysis, or in Pakistan, where he repeated the analyzes (Deaton 1997). For example, in the vaccination rates the lack of obvious discrimination in daily life is also apparent. The disparity in vaccination between boys and girls is minimal or inexistent in India (according to the National Family Health surveys, girls have received 4.55 shots, and boys 4.79 shots). Rajasthan is one of the lowest female-to-male states in India and the lowest vaccination rate in India. However, the immunization rates of Banerjee et al. (2010) between boys and girls are not different: boys were on average 1.19 immunized, while girls 1.18 received immunizations.

- **Economic Development, fertility, and maternal mortality**

Women are more likely to be absent compared to men in childbearing years other than before birth and early childhood. This is not, of course, because of active discrimination but because women bring and give birth and it is risky in itself. This is not because of active discrimination. Maternal mortality is possibly the source of lower parental investment in children rather than specifically influencing the health of women (and not men), since if parents are expecting girls to die even more as young women than boys, they are more likely to invest in boys. The sudden drop in maternal death (based on successful policy) in Sri Lanka has led to convergence in educational standards for boys and girls Jayachandran and Lleras-Muney (2009) find it obvious. It is estimated that an improvement in life expectancy per year contributes to 0.11 per year in girls' (relative to children) education. This provides two possibilities for economic growth, to increase women's relative well-being: it decreases their chances of killing each child, and it also reduces fertility in economic development. This is possible.

- **Giving women hope by expanding their opportunities**

It could lead to unequal treatment in the household by women having less chance of entering the labor market. Parents have lower ambitions than children for their daughters and young people have lower aspirations themselves. In West Bengal, for example, Beaman et al. (2011) have found that 86 percent of the parents wanted their daughters either a housewife or whatever their lawyers preferred for her where no woman had ever been the local chief (the corresponding fraction was below 1 percent for the boys).

If women don't work outside the home, they may believe they don't have to be as strong and safe and that they don't need formal training. The public report on basic education (PROBE) conducted in India in interviews with parents in five northern states (The PROBE Team, 1999) found that up to 10 percent of them thought it was not necessary for girls to obtain education—just 1 percent thought this was the case for boys. Fifty-seven percent wanted their children to study "as far as possible; only 28% wanted their daughters to study the same thing. Many parents felt it was not required to educate girls because only girls are supposed to marry and care for their families. 32% of parents report they want adolescents to graduate from high school or college in the Beaman et al (2011) survey, but only 18% want that for their girls.

- **Freeing up women's time**

The way they are expected to spend time is a key source of inequality between women and men. The World Development Report 2012 was reviewed using data for 23 multinational usage countries in Berniell and Sanchez (2011) and 12

Countries added to increase the data set to represent poor countries. The pattern is clear and unsurprising: women do most of their housework and care at each income level and spend less time working for the market as a consequence. The gap is between 30% more of the time used for women's housework in Cambodia and 6 times more in Guinea, and 70% more of the time spent on childcare in Sweden, and ten times more in Iraq. These differences affect the ability of women to participate in marketing, participate fully in their professional lives and so on. That is one reason why women in developing countries are more likely than not to be engaged in informal work (such as running a small business). They can run a shop from their home, for example, so that they can remember children simultaneously, rather than take on productive jobs. This reduces the chance of an autonomous income which clearly implies, as we can see below, its negotiating capacity in the household.

- **Economic Development and women's rights**

There is a strong link between economic growth and women's rights empirically, in areas as diverse as rights to property, access to land, access to bank loans, violence against women, abortion policies and so forth. The strong negative correlation of Doepke & Tertilt (2009) between the lack of rights and per capita GDP is 0.4 or higher across countries. The expansion of women's economic rights historically preceded their access to political rights in the United States and Europe (Doepke and Tertilt, 2009, Fernandez, 2009). Whilst the data cannot deduce causality, two paths of discussion suggest why economic growth could bring men to voluntarily surrender their women's economic rights. Dr. Doepke and Tertilt (2009) argue that men are willing to surrender certain rights to women to ensure that children are better educated when the importance of human capital in the economy increases (the argument requires that women care more of their child's human capital and that the negotiation of household decisions is important for the power of negotiations which we discuss below). The compromise now lies between their usefulness and their children's usefulness (children, grandchildren, and future generations).

Fernandes (2009) argued that the father's interest as husbands (who would like to take all the rights) started to conflict with their interests as fathers, as fertility declined (who would like to protect their daughters against their future son-in-laws). The balance begins to decline towards the latter interest and women's economic rights increase with the growth of economy and a decline in fertility. Doepke and Tertilt offer historical accounts consistent with their theory and Fernandez offers suggestive evidence that states with a rapid decline in fertility are more likely to increase women's rights in the US. Their rights have been granted to women. There is still a lot more to be done empirically, and this is a very important field of research. These two documents, however, provide convincing theory that economic growth can lead to a rise in the rights of women. Indeed, doepke and tertilt explicitly conclude, rather than pursue direct legislative changes for women's rights, that institutions like the World Bank which are concerned with the rights of women would be well-inspired to focus on programs conducive to economic development (such as education policies).

### **Conclusion:**

Empowerment for women is closely linked with economic development. Although development itself will empower women, empowering women will lead to improvements in decision making, which will directly affect development. Contrary to what some of the more ambitious politicians say, however, there is no evidence that a one-time push towards women's rights can instill a virtuous cycle that mutually strengthens women's empowerment and growth while women will gradually become equal partners in rich societies.

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