

A study on challenges and need of women empowerment in Karnataka: A sociological study

Shashikala S^{1*}

^{1*} Assistant Professor, Government First Grade College, Yelahanka, Bangalore, Karnataka, India

***Corresponding Author:** Shashikala S

*Assistant Professor, Government First Grade College, Yelahanka, Bangalore, Karnataka, India

Abstract

The World Bank has recommended that the focal point of social development initiatives should be women's empowerment (World Bank, 2001). Additionally, India has accepted a number of international conventions aimed at ensuring women's equality. "The women's movement and a wide spread network of NGOs which have strong grass roots presence and deep in right into women's concerns have contributed in inspiring initiatives for the empowerment of women," according to the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women (2001). But the policy also notes that there is "a vast gap between the situational reality of the status of women in India, on the one hand, and the aims enunciated in the constitution, legislative policies, plans, programmes, and the corresponding institutions, on the other. Gender equality is demonstrated. Many academics have debated and analysed the idea of empowerment; for the sake of this discussion, the conceptual framework proposed by United Nations is a good place to start. The procedures by which women expand their choices and take charge of their life are known as empowerment (United Nations, 2001). It is therefore the process of gaining the capacity to make wise decisions in life within the framework in which that capacity has already been identified. The fundamental components of empowerment have been identified as agency-the capacity to choose and pursue goals-awareness of gendered power dynamics, self-worth, and self-assurance.

Individual, household, community, and societal empowerment are all possible at different hierarchical levels. Encouraging factors, like exposure to new activities that can develop capacities, can be provided, and limiting factors, like a lack of resources and skills, can be removed, to enable empowerment. "Empowerment is an active multidimensional process that enables women to realize their full identity and powers in all spheres of life," claims Pillai (1995). Effective roles, policies, and programs for the development and empowerment of women have been adopted in recent years as a result of the focus placed on women in planning, policy making, and government. Women's empowerment will also lead to additional work opportunities, which will change their socioeconomic, political, and educational backgrounds.

Government of India and the state of Karnataka have launched many programs for women empowerment. The study is purely theoretical which is based on secondary data sources.

Necessary information about women empowerment programs in Karnataka state and its various parts is collected from books, magazines, online sources or similar subject.

Keywords: Women empowerment, government programme and policies

1. Introduction

The processes by which women increase their choices and take charge of their lives are known as empowerment. It is, therefore, the process of gaining the capacity to make wise decisions in life within the framework in which that capacity has already been identified. Agency-the capacity to identify and pursue goals-awareness of gendered power structures, self-esteem, and self-confidence have been identified as the fundamental components of empowerment (Kabeer 2001) [3]. Individual, household, community, and societal empowerment are all possible at different hierarchical levels. Encouraging factors, like exposure to new activities that can develop capacities, can help facilitate empowerment, while inhibiting factors, like a lack of resources and skills, can hinder it.

ISI researches identified six general areas or domains in which empowerment of women is believed to be taking place as a result of Grameen Bank, BRAC and other credit programmes; a sense of self and vision of future, mobility and visibility economic security, status and decision making power within the household, ability to interact effectively in the public sphere and participation in non - family groups. Thus, their concept of empowerment can be looked at in a behavioral sense as the ability to take effective action (Snow, 1990) [8]. Women who raised their income through self-help programs reported feeling more respected in the home, frequently with noticeable changes in attitude, in the field studies conducted for the IFAD gender mainstreaming review. According to reports, men don't oppose women's increased economic activity because they view it as a means of improving household well-being. It has also been reported that men and older kids assist with household chores and income-generating activities.

Women in Bangladesh demonstrated significant empowerment in terms of their ability to express their needs and openness

to novel concepts. The rise of women's groups as a vibrant, articulate constituency was more remarkable (Krishna raj and Kay 2002) ^[4]. The results of previous research seem to be supported by these first-hand observations and in-depth interviews (Cheston and Kuhin 2002) ^[1].

Women Empowerment

The concept empowerment has focus of extensive scholarly discourse and analysis. the main of this discussion, the Unite Nations conceptual frame work provides a helpful place to start

The processes by which women increase their choices and take charge of their lives are known as empowerment. It is, therefore, the process of gaining the capacity to make wise decisions about one's life in situations where that capacity has previously been rejected.

The word "Empowerment has so much connoted to it. It entails appreciating the contributions and expertise of women. Enhancing their self-worth and self-esteem is necessary honour. It entails women taking charge of their resources and achieving financial independence. It entails being able to let go of their sobs, nervousness, inferiority complex, and other emotions.

Meaning of Women Empowerment

According to Moser (1989) ^[6] empowerment is the capacity of women to increase their self - reliance and internal strength. This is identified as the right to determine choices in life and to influence in direction of change through the ability to gain control over material and non - material resources. In the words of clothes but CK and Stuart (1992) we need not "empowerment women but "power man". According to Pillai (1995) ^[7] "Empowerment is an active multi dimensional process which enables women to realize their full identity and powers in all spheres of life. Hoshemi (1996) ^[2] developed five indictors to measure women's empowerment: mobility, economic security, ability to make larger purchases, realize freedom from domination within the family and political and legal awareness and involvement in political campaigning and protests with this in mind. An attempt is made in the following situation to measure empowerment of women respondents.

Objectives

1. To study the process of economic development of rural women and create a conducive environment for social change.
2. To study the employment opportunities for the women in the study area.
3. To analyse the beneficial programmes allotted for the women.

Methodology

Secondary data sources form the foundation of the study. The essential details regarding Karnataka's women empowerment programs and their various components are gathered from different publications, books, and websites that cover related subjects

Women Empowerment programmes in Karnataka

The researcher has thoroughly examined the Karnataka State Women Empowerment Programs. The researcher examined the programs for women's empowerment run by Development of Women and Children. Numerous programs for the empowerment of women were started by Women and Child. The Women Empowerment Programs of the Karnataka State have been carefully studied by the researcher. The researcher looked at the women's empowerment initiatives managed by the growth of both women and children. Women and Child launched a number of initiatives aimed at empowering women.

Programs for employment, women's training, raising awareness, and gender sensitization are carried out by the department. The focus is on raising women's status in society and enhancing their earning potential by assisting them in becoming self-sufficient and economically independent through training and income-generating activities. The department's goals include women's economic advancement, their integration into society at large, and their recognition as human beings deserving of dignity. In addition to growing the ongoing programs, the department has created some creative initiatives like "Santhwana," which helps victims of various social injustices, and "Stree Shakthi," which empowers women.

1. Sree Shakthi

The program was introduced in 2000-01 with the goal of empowering rural women and fostering their independence by teaching them how to manage their finances and save money. The organization of rural women in self-help groups is greatly aided by the efforts of Anganwadi workers and supervisors. A self-help group is formed by about 15 to 20 women who are from SC/ST, landless agricultural laborers, and families with incomes below the poverty line.

2. Savings and Inter Loaning

The self-help groups save at least Rs. 10 and hold weekly meetings on a regular basis. To date, these women's self-help groups have lent their members an internal sum of Rs. 1251.98 crores and saved a total of Rs. 444.91 crores. They have become independent of money lenders thanks to their fervent savings efforts and have started engaging in revenue-generating pursuits.

3. Revolving Fund

The department has given Rs. 5,000 as a revolving fund to each SHG to increase the corpus used for income generating activities in order to assist them in starting their own businesses. 13,478 SHGs have received this revolving fund thus far.

4. Training

Key element of the Stree Shakthi Program is providing training to women's self-help group members. The initial training phase, which involved 11 lakh members, was designed to familiarize SHG members with the Stree Shakthi Programme. Training in gender issues, leadership traits, and communication skills was pursued in the second phase. Training in social issues, credit management, and bookkeeping was covered in the third phase. Thirty members of Stree Shakthi groups received training in fashion design from the National Institute of Fashion Technology.

5. Santhawana

In addition to being forced to confront numerous horrors like rape, sexual harassment, domestic abuse, and bounty, women who are victims of these crimes also endure physical and psychological torture. financial and social issues. The "Santhwana" program was started in 2001-2002 with the intention of consoling and rehabilitating these women. Objective: The program helps victims of atrocities become self-reliant by offering training, enabling these women to live lives similar to those of other women in society, in addition to offering them protection, financial support, temporary housing, and legal assistance. Outline of the scheme: Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) manage the Santhwana centers; priority is given to those NGOs that operate family counseling centers, short-stay homes, and those that are actively taken part.

6. Financial assistance to run hostels for girls from rural areas

Goal: To make it possible for girls living in rural areas to access resources for higher education. Eligibility: Students living in rural areas, with family incomes under Rs. 10,000 per year, who are enrolled in government-run or non-governmental organizations recognized by the Karnataka government as of the sixth grade onwards, are eligible to be admitted to the hostels. Assistance Pattern: A maintenance grant of Rs. 500/-per boarder is provided, and expenditures for staff salaries, rent, emergencies, and other costs are covered as periodically specified by the government.

7. Scheme of Financial assistance for remarriage of destitute

- a) Poor widows are receiving financial assistance of Rs 10,000/- for their remarriage. The impoverished widow must be a woman between the ages of 18 and 35. a Karnataka resident for more than five years. The annual income must meet the requirements of the Integrated Rural Development Program. The couple is initially given Rs. 5,000 to cover their wedding costs; the remaining Rs. 5,000 is saved in the form of a National Savings Certificate in the woman's name.
- b) A couple with a devadasi bride will receive Rs. 10,000 in financial assistance. The devadasi woman ought to be between the ages of 18 and 35.

8. Karnataka Mahila Abhivrudhi yojane

Karnataka is the first state in the country to implement a system intersectoral allocations for women. One-third of the funds will be set aside for women in labor-intensive and individually beneficiary-oriented programs run by different government departments. Karnataka Mahila Abhivrudhi Yojane (KMAY), which was started by the department between 1995 and 1996, aims to integrate women into the mainstream of development and promote gender equality. It was a historic government order because it represented the first time that the government had intentionally and constructively attempted to address gender issues.

9. Scheme of assistance to women for taking up job oriented courses

Women and girls from lower income groups are assisted to enroll in diploma courses in any ITI/Polytechnic course, any short-term skill-instruction course, and secretarial practice in an effort to improve the status of these women from lower socioeconomic groups and to provide them with the skills they need to become economically independent. There is financial support available in the form of fees, scholarships, and housing costs.

Findings and analysis

The process of empowering women has multiple facets. One of the key strategies for empowering women in SHGs is

women empowerment, which is achieved through training, community organization, facilities for SHG networking, and some significant government programs that promote women's empowerment by increasing social work capacity through all of their policies and practices that implement women's empowerment through social work and social aspects. Secondary data sources form the basis of the investigation. The essential data regarding the women's empowerment initiatives in Karnataka and their constituent parts is gathered from a variety of publications, including books, journals, and websites covering related subjects. The Karnataka State Government and the Government of India have launched several projects and programs aimed at empowering women on a socio-economic level. Rural women through the program's implementation. The researcher has concentrated on the Karnataka state's women empowerment programs in detail. The researcher has finalized the main findings. 1. The aspect of empowerment is related to women's individual histories as well as other factors. 2. Rural women lead simple lives and are incredibly innocent. They are unaware of the specific definition of women's empowerment. Rural women should therefore be aware of the state's empowerment initiatives in Karnataka.

Conclusion

The empowerment of women in Karnataka has seen significant strides through various government initiatives and programs. The "Stree Shakthi" and "Santhwana" programs are exemplary in promoting financial independence, social awareness, and self-reliance among women. The "Stree Shakthi" program, through the formation of self-help groups, has enabled women to engage in savings and income-generating activities, thereby reducing their dependency on moneylenders. The revolving fund provided to these groups has further facilitated their entrepreneurial ventures.

The "Santhwana" program has provided critical support to victims of social injustices, offering them protection, financial aid, and opportunities for skill development to reintegrate into society. The comprehensive training provided under these programs has equipped women with essential skills in leadership, communication, and financial management, fostering their confidence and capability to make informed decisions.

Despite these efforts, the study reveals that rural women often remain unaware of the empowerment initiatives available to them. Thus, there is a need for increased awareness and accessibility to these programs to ensure that the benefits reach every woman in need. Continued focus on education, skill development, and community engagement will be crucial in bridging the gap between policy and practice, ultimately leading to the holistic empowerment of women in Karnataka. In conclusion, while significant progress has been made, ongoing efforts and innovative approaches are required to sustain and enhance the empowerment of women, ensuring they realize their full potential and contribute actively to the socio-economic development of the state.

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