

GENDER INEQUALITIES AND EMPOWERMENT CHALLENGES

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Abstract

The Constitution of India makes an effort to eliminate gender disparities by outlawing discrimination on the basis of sex and class, outlawing human trafficking and forced labour, and reserving elected positions for women. These provisions are all part of the Constitution. the empowerment of women is an urgent necessity in India. The Constitution of India lays forth the framework for a parliamentary form of government and ensures that all Indian citizens have the right to vote, as well as the freedom to congregate, speak their minds, and participate in the formation of organisations.

Keywords: Gender Inequalities, Empowerment, Women, RTI.

Introduction

The concept of intersectionality acknowledges that people can be subjected to many forms of discrimination and disadvantage based on a variety of intersecting identities, including but not limited to race, gender, socioeconomic status, and others. Women who are already marginalised frequently encounter additional difficulties as a result of the intersection of gender and other variables. For instance, women who come from historically oppressed racial or ethnic backgrounds may face double discrimination in the form of gendered and racially bias. Because of this, their access to opportunities, education, and medical treatment, as well as economic resources, may be restricted. In a similar vein, women from lower socioeconomic strata may face distinct obstacles to empowerment as a result of economic inequality and restricted access to social services. These factors may combine to make it difficult for these women to gain economic independence.

The concept of intersectionality emphasises how vital it is for the women's movement to take into account the varied experiences and requirements of its members. It poses a challenge to mainstream feminism to become more inclusive and to recognise the nuances of the lives of women. Taking up the challenge of intersectionality calls for policy responses that take into account and make allowances for the myriad forms that marginalisation might take. In order for empowerment efforts to be successful, they need to be adapted to the unique circumstances and identities of each participant. In addition to this, it encourages the inclusion of underrepresented women in decision-making processes and the amplification of their views. In conclusion, intersectionality emphasises the necessity of comprehending and responding to the specific obstacles that marginalised women confront in today's society. By recognising the confluence of various identities, society may work towards more inclusive policies, programmes, and social changes that will raise all women, regardless of the diverse origins in which they come from.

Review Literature

Kabeer, N. (2014) [1] This paper seeks to link the rise of empowerment as an improvement objective

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in current majority rule government with the lived experiences of a lady who has used a progressive law. In this undertaking the effort is to see how the information and the use of the law shape the lady's understanding on the changes in her day to day existence and the words she uses to describe empowerment. Empowerment is similarly new idea and has different meanings. This article seeks to bring in the voice of an ordinary lady to add to meaning of empowerment. It is in popularizing the word and the meaning of empowerment that it can really turn into a reachable advancement objective.

Dr. Seema Varma (2013) [2] Empowerment provides a more noteworthy access to information and resources, more independence in decision making, considerable capacity to design lives, more command over the circumstances which influence lives, and independence from customs, beliefs and practices. Thus, women empowerment is a process where women challenge the existing norms and culture, to successfully advance their prosperity. In India, women Empowerment is a trendy expression to-day. The Indian Constitution guarantees that there shall be no discrimination on the grounds of sex. There are various legitimate provisions for women safety and empowerment in Indian Constitution yet the incongruity is, half of the populace is unconscious of their lawful rights. In this paper we will discuss the significant lawful provisions for women empowerment in India.

Analysis

The obstacles presented by gender inequities and the struggles to empower women India, like many other nations, has struggled to overcome deeply ingrained gender inequities across socioeconomic, political, and cultural dimensions. In spite of progress made in education, employment, and legal frameworks, women frequently face discriminatory practises, limited access to resources, and restricted participation in decision-making processes. These challenges might make it difficult for women to achieve equality. In marginalised communities, in particular, these inequities are very prominent. Within these communities, women confront a multiplicity of obstacles as a result of intersecting variables such as caste, class, and location. In this setting, the empowerment of women appears as a crucial endeavour, with the overarching goal of tearing down structural obstacles and establishing a fairer society. Inequalities between men and women continue to be a prevalent and difficult problem in civilizations all throughout the world, especially in India. Women have historically been at a disadvantage due to deeply rooted societal norms, cultural practises, and institutional restrictions, which have constrained their agency and restricted the options available to them. These gender inequalities, which exhibit themselves in a variety of dimensions, provide considerable obstacles to the

empowerment of women and impede the full involvement of women in social, economic, and political realms.

1. Socio-Economic Inequalities

Women in India frequently confront socioeconomic inequalities, including unequal access to education, healthcare, and economic resources. This translates into fewer chances for employment, a lower earning potential, and a greater risk of falling into poverty. The wage gap between men and women continues to exist, with women continuing to earn less than their male colleagues for equivalent labour. Furthermore, the conventional gender roles sometimes force women to perform unpaid household labour, which further contributes to the perpetuation of economic inequality. Inequalities in wealth, income, education, work prospects, and access to basic services are all examples of socio-economic inequities that exist within a society. These disparities are the result of a multifaceted interaction between a variety of elements, such as sociocultural norms, historical legacies, implicit biases within systems, and economic structures. These differences frequently lead to a vicious cycle, in which individuals and communities that have limited access to resources find it difficult to break free from the cycle of poverty. This makes it more difficult for individuals and communities to work their way out of poverty. The unequal distribution of money and opportunities can help maintain existing social divisions, place restrictions on the ability to advance in one's career, and slow the general progression of society. Inequalities in socioeconomic status disproportionately affect marginalised groups, such as women, ethnic minorities, and communities of lower caste. These groups frequently confront additional challenges as a result of the intersection of several types of prejudice. For instance, women are disproportionately affected by gender-based pay inequalities, reduced educational opportunities, and restricted access to healthcare, all of which worsen already existing disadvantages. Taking on the challenge of reducing socioeconomic disparities calls for a multipronged approach that incorporates equitable legislation, targeted interventions, and economic growth that is inclusive. These inequalities can be reduced by making investments in areas such as education, healthcare, job development, and social safety nets, which will help to cultivate a society that is more equitable and inclusive.

Socio-economic disparities continue to provide a significant obstacle in societies all over the world. Their influence extends beyond the realm of purely economic considerations, extending all the way to access to opportunities, political engagement, and the general well-being of society. It is absolutely necessary to take action to address these

discrepancies in order to achieve sustainable growth, social cohesion, and a more equitable future.

2. Women's Political engagement and Representation in Decision-Making Processes

The level of women's political engagement and representation in decision-making processes remains noticeably low. The participation of women in politics is hampered by systemic obstacles such as patriarchal views, restricted access to political networks, and violence against women in political positions of power. As a result of this underrepresentation, policies are created that may not meet the interests and concerns of women in an acceptable manner. In order to achieve inclusive and efficient governance, it is essential for women to participate politically and to be represented in the various decision-making processes. Despite the progress that has been made, women are still underrepresented in political areas all around the world. A number of variables, such as cultural norms, unequal access to education, limited participation in public life, and discriminatory practises, contribute to the gender gap in political engagement. The ability of women to participate in decision-making at the local, regional, and national levels is hindered by the aforementioned reasons.

Eliminating these obstacles is necessary in order to increase the amount of political participation by women. Affirmative action, gender quotas, and targeted capacity-building programmes are all ways to increase the number of women who participate in political life. Women who hold positions of power and are able to exercise it can be a driving force behind gender-sensitive policies and bring a variety of viewpoints to the table where decisions are made. An increased number of women holding political office guarantees a more accurate and complete representation of the requirements of modern society. When there are more women in positions of power, there is a better chance that policies that address the concerns of women, such as gender-based violence, reproductive rights, and economic empowerment, will be prioritised. In conclusion, it is necessary to achieve gender parity in political engagement and representation if inclusive government is to be fostered. When women play an active role in the decision-making processes of a society, that society reaps the benefits of having access to a wider variety of perspectives, policies that are more responsive, and advancements towards gender equality.

3. Gender-Based Violence and Cultural Norms

Cultural norms and practises that perpetuate gender stereotypes and discrimination continue to impact the views of society. There is still a significant problem with gender-based violence, including but not limited to domestic abuse, sexual harassment, and the marriage of children. Not only do these

forms of violence violate the rights of women, but they also contribute to the cycle of disempowerment and insecurity that they create. Globally, women and girls are subjected to a disproportionate amount of harm caused by gender-based violence (GBV), which is a serious violation of human rights. The perpetuation and normalisation of such violence is largely due to the influence of cultural norms. These standards frequently have their origins in deeply ingrained social institutions, traditions, and beliefs that serve to perpetuate uneven power dynamics between the sexes. Gender-based violence (GBV) can be trivialised or justified by cultural standards, which can perpetuate a cycle of abuse. It is possible for survivors to be dissuaded from seeking treatment or reporting incidents when they are stigmatised, silenced, or blamed as the victim. Under the pretext of traditional customs, some communities still condone barbaric behaviours such as child marriage, female genital mutilation, and honour killings, all of which can have serious negative health consequences. In order to address gender-based violence, it is necessary to challenge these damaging conventions. Education, public awareness campaigns, and the mobilisation of communities are essential components in the process of altering attitudes and behaviours. Through engagement with cultural leaders, influencers, and local communities, it may be possible to assist in the reshaping of cultural narratives to reject violence and support gender equality. In order to protect survivors and ensure that perpetrators are held accountable, legal structures also need to be brought into alignment with international human rights standards. The economic and social empowerment of women can also contribute to shifting power dynamics and lowering a community's vulnerability to violent behaviour. In conclusion, in order to eliminate gender-based violence, it is necessary to dismantle societal norms that allow for its continuation and condone its occurrence. By questioning harmful attitudes and practises, cultures can work towards establishing gender equality and creating safer conditions for women and girls. These goals can be accomplished simultaneously.

4. Limited Access to Healthcare and Reproductive Rights

The ability of women to get high-quality medical treatment and to exercise their reproductive rights is frequently hampered by insufficient facilities, a lack of information, and cultural barriers. The necessity for gender-sensitive healthcare policies is highlighted by the high maternal mortality rates, the imbalanced gender ratios, and the restricted access to various methods of family planning. There is a major problem that is harming the well-being of women all around the world: limited access to healthcare and reproductive rights. Women, particularly those living in marginalised groups, are disproportionately affected by obstacles to accessing

healthcare services and reproductive rights. Disparities in socioeconomic status, a lack of understanding of the issue, cultural norms, and an inadequate healthcare infrastructure are frequently the sources of these impediments. It is possible for women to have trouble gaining access to prenatal care, contraceptives, safe abortions, and maternity healthcare, which can result in increased rates of maternal mortality and poor reproductive health outcomes. Women's autonomy over their bodies and the choices they make in their lives is impacted when they have limited access to reproductive rights. As a result, cycles of poverty and inequality are perpetuated, and women are unable to exercise agency over family planning, educational possibilities, or economic prospects. To effectively address these difficulties, comprehensive measures are required. It is imperative to make investments in healthcare infrastructure, sexual education programmes, and family planning services. It is essential that the legal and societal obstacles that impede reproductive rights be eliminated. It is possible to greatly enhance the results of women's reproductive health and women's general well-being by equipping women with information, making healthcare services more easily available, and cultivating an environment that is supportive. Maintaining women's access to healthcare and reproductive rights is essential for attaining gender equality and enhancing women's health. This is especially true in the context of the United States. Taking steps to eliminate these obstacles will lead to healthier families, more independent women, and a society that is more egalitarian.

5. Intersectionality and the Marginalisation of Women

The difficulties that marginalised women already confront are made even more difficult by the intersectionality of their experiences. Women who come from lower castes, indigenous communities, rural areas, and other marginalised groups frequently face multilayer discrimination, which makes it even more difficult for them to access opportunities and resources. Other marginalised categories include people who live in urban areas.

Conclusion

In light of these issues, the concept of women's empowerment is gaining significance as a method to address and overcome these gender inequalities. This is because it is a strategy that seeks to address and overcome these gender inequalities. Improving women's decision-making abilities, giving them access to resources, allowing them to take part in decision-making processes, and enabling them to exercise their rights are all aspects of women's empowerment. The empowerment of women is not just an issue of social fairness but also a driving force for general growth and progress. Women who have more control over their own lives tend to have healthier families, better educational opportunities

for their children, greater involvement in their communities, and stronger economic growth. The urgency of resolving gender inequality has prompted policymakers, civil society organisations, and individuals to begin efforts to promote women's empowerment across a variety of fields. These activities have been begun in response to the urgency of the issue. The passage of the Right to Information Act (RTI) ushered in some exciting new opportunities for the advancement of women's rights. Women are given more agency when they have access to information because it equips them with the resources necessary to oppose discriminatory practises, fight for their rights, and actively participate in governance processes. The following sections of this study will look into the connection between the RTI Act and women's empowerment, revealing insights into how information access may be a dynamic force in demolishing gender inequities and promoting a more inclusive and equitable society.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest by the authors in this manuscript.

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