Chapter 2

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Women Empowerment :-A Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

The role of women in the socio-economic transformation is noteworthy. It is an accelerating factor in the development of a nation. In developing countries like India where approximately half of the population is female, it was definitely needed to access women's potential & treated them equally as male. The empowerment of women is the buzzword on the socio economic background of India.

Empowering the women is instrumental in a leading society towards the goals of welfare & development. Participation of women in economic activities is not enough to state it as women empowerment but number of other factors such as work-culture, financial & non financial benefits as well as the motivational & factors of moral are required to be highlighted.

In the present study, “A Study of Women Empowerment in Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad within Pune Municipal Corporation Area” is required to be highlighted.

“Empowering women is a prerequisite for creating a good nation, when women are empowered, society with stability is assured. Empowerment of women is essential as their value system leads to the development of a good family, good society and ultimately good nation.” -Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam

Empowerment is one of key factors in determining the success of development, is the status and position of women in the society. This means that neglecting women in development process of any country constitutes a human resource waste. In this principle, it will be a disservice for any country to ignore its women population in its development efforts. The task before any government, therefore, should be that of moving steadily and firmly in the direction of economic development means the development in the three categories of a women. These are individual, social and economic development. Individual development by involving women. True development means increased skills and capability greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well being. Increasing capacity connotes social development while economic development is determined by the increased capacity of the members of a society in dealing with their environment. This
emphasise means that development at the individual stage subsumes both the social and economic categories of development.1

### 2.2 Key Concepts:

#### 2.2.1 Empowerment:

The concise Oxford dictionary has given the meaning of the word empower as give power to or authorise a person to do.

In this research, the word empowerment is taken for the meaning of powering a person or to make him/her able to perform certain acts which may be money empowerment and many more social empowerment's.

The term was not much in existence during the period of Mughalraj or even during British Raj. Since during this period except the rulers, no one had the authority to do anything anywhere. There were no delegations of power nor freedom was given to anyone his/her voice in the society or in public.

The word empowerment is a two-sided word i.e., 1. authority who empowers a person/delegates a person to do things on its behalf, 2. accept such delegation by this person to perform.

#### 2.2.2 Women Empowerment:

The world women empowerment was mentioned first in 1985 in the International Women’s Conference held in Nairobi, where it was defined that there should be redistribution of social power of resources in favour of women. The conference expected economically independent through information, knowledge and necessary political power to the women. The conference held empowerment as a redistribution of social power and control of resources defined in favour of women.

Empowerment entails struggle and teaches to deal with the force of oppression. It also has a vision of new society conscious and purposeful interventions and efforts to have quality life.

Empowerment is nothing but individuals self-respect and togetherness for changing the basic power. Empowerment is also self-governance, self-sufficiency and self-maintenance.

In India, this empowerment of women is for developmental capacity in all respects which will give them choice to manage domestic and economic areas efficiently. It also means that the woman will have the power or capacity to regulate
her day to day life in the social, political economical areas. The empowerment is a power which will enable them from periphery to central stage.

The construction of India not only granted equality to the women but also empowerment to the state government to adopt measures to stop discrimination of any kind of women. The laws for the development of policies, plans and programmes have been initiated towards women’s active role in almost all spheres. India has also taken steps to secure not only rights of women in India but also strongly rectified international conventions. Various NGOs have contributed their initiatives for the empowerment of women.

Today women of India have given up their old throughs and understand male dominated areas. The woman of today are seen progressing and emancipated and grant of equal status with men in all walks of life i.e. social, political, domestic and education.

The research study of this work is centered around the empowerment of women and hence it is of utmost importance to first define the word EMPOWERMENT and its concept there to.

Number of definitions have been drawn by various leading authorities and to a name a few eminent personalities such as Mother Teresa, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam and reformer in the earlier period the historian to have taken note of such empowerment of women and have put the same in the history books.

Nevertheless, the definitions do not change since the whole aspect is aimed at upliftment of women in the society. The women empowerment is one of the key factors in determining the success of development in the status and position of women in the society. This means that by neglecting the women in the upliftment of process of any country will lead to human resource waste. In principle ignoring women population will be negative services of any country.

In the economic development of any country women have to be involved steadily and firmly to attain a perfect goal thereto. The development of the women should be individual, social and economical. In individual development of women the exploring of skills and capability freedom to the women. Self-discipline, responsibility and financial well being having to be assessed, Economic development is judged by the increased capacity of the members of a society in the environment.

In fact the women were denied all the freedom and opportunities in the past just because they were women and hence in specific sense women empowerment is
nothing else but improving the position of women in power structure of the society.

Women do have their will and power and also the capacity for their day to day life in social, political and economic terms. Thus the power which enables to move to center stage.

Women empowerment is also called Gender Empowerment and plays significant part in development and economics of the country. The very implementation of programmes and policies of women empowerment helps the nations, communities, businesses and groups. The gender empowerment (GEM) measures shows women participation in particular nation both politically and economically.

GEM is calculated by the share of seats in the parliament held by counting the female legislators, senior officers and managers as also the women in professional and technical areas and gender disparity in earned income. The core of the concept of empowerment are based on two things.

1. The first being change of power. If the power cannot change the empowerment is not possible nor conceived in any meaningful way.
2. The second possibility of empowerment depends upon the idea that power can expand.

Empowerment is the construct shed by many disciplines and areas such as community development, psychology, education, economics and also studies in the recent literature.

For the general definition, we feel that the empowerment is the multidimensional society process that helps people to gain control over their own lives.

Women empowerment in not a northern concept it is in fact all over the world including countries in south. Women have been challenging and changing gender inequality since the beginning of the history.

**A. The Three challenges of women empowerment are:**

1. Security
2. Restricted mobility
3. Education

The lack of securities has made the progression in women empowerment exercise in many Arab countries and Pakistan. The restricted mobility has resulted into unawareness in terms of health maintained, legal rights, financial and physical
security, inheritance rights and self-reliance, indirectly helping marriage, divorce as also Child marriage is also significant factors, in preventing the women empowerment.

Education has made the woman aware in terms of self-reliance, indirectly helping them to opt for smaller families and involving themselves in community services. Literacy affected the women’s ability to access relevant information.

B. Economic empowerment of the women

1. Poverty eradication-
   Micro economic policy and poverty eradication programs specifically addressed the needs and problems of poor women and hence steps to be taken for mobilisation of poor women and convergence of services by offering them economical and social option to increase their capacity.

2. Micro-credit-
   The new micro-credit mechanism along with micro finance institution undertaken to enhanced the credit and also adequate flow of credit through the financial institutions and banks should be taken as on massive scale so that women below poverty line have easy access to the credit e.g Structure of Bangladesh Gramin Bank Associated with Self Help Group and Bachat Gats.

3. Women in Economy-
   The women’s contribution to socio-economic development of the country as producer and workers to be recognised in the formal and informal sectors including home based workers.

4. Globalization
   Globalization has given rise to challenges to the women’s equality however the reframing policies for access through the quality of empowerment is very much equal. Strategies will be designed to enhance the capacity of women and empower them to meet the negative social and economic impacts.

5. Women in Agriculture
   In order to reach towards the goal of empowerment, efforts are being put into train women in soil conservation, social forestry, daily development, horticulture, animal husbandry, old tree, fishery etc.

6. Women in Industry
   The important role played by women in major cities in industries such as IT, Electronics, Food processing and Agro industries has been crucial to the development
of the sectors. New legislations will have to be brought in for the security of women who work till late hours such as IT and call centers.

7. **Support servicing**
   
   For reaching towards the empowerment support services such as child care facilities, education institution home for the aged and disabled will have to be expanded to encourage the women to effectively participate in development process.

C. **Social empowerment:-**
   
   Social empowerment will only be made when women start participating in social activities. The process was started by Mahadev Ranade, B. G. Tilak, Agarkar and Savitribai Phule to name few of them.

1. **Education**
   
   Measure will be taken to eliminate discrimination, universalize education, eradicate illiteracy, Quality of education to facilitate life learning and also retention of rate of girls in education.

2. **Health**
   
   Both nutrition and health services have to be adopted. Special attention of the needs of the girls and women at all stages of the life-cycle will have to be looked into. The infant mortality and maternal mortality is of a priority concerns. The national population policy 2000 has specially drawn the attention of the government. The policy interalia works on the infant and maternal mortality. Early marriages and spacing of children, are the prime needs. The use of Indian and alternative systems of medicines will be enhanced within the framework of overall health and infrastructure available to the women.

3. **Housing and Shelter**
   
   Special attention is required to be taken by govt towards the housing problem of women either single or working women or students or trainees and apprentices. The purpose of this is to give shelter to the women thereby reducing her problem and agony in locating the places of shelter, particularly in view of lot of transitions while searching for education/jobs.

4. **Environment**
   
   The empowerment envisages women’s participation in consecration of environment and control of environment degradations. The women in villages have still not been exposed to modern amenities of cooking such as use of electricity or natural gas. In most of the villages still the conventional method of using cow dung or
agricultural waste or fire woods from the jungle are used. The empowerment by using the present powers for cooking purposes, such as use of solar power, smokeless chulhas biogas etc.

Various Government programs towards empowerment of rural women have been checked out. They include Swarnjayanti Gram, Rojgar (SGSY) Yojana, Jawahar Gram Samruddhi Yojana (JGSY), Indira Awas Yojana (IAY), The Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP) and Jawahar Rojgar Yojna etc. ²

2.2.3 Organisational Efforts for Empowerment of Women:

SMGULP’s efforts for empowerment of women the organisation’s only motto is to provide respectful self-employment to women, irrespective of caste, creed, religion to enable the women to stand on their own financially.

Right from year 1959 i.e. when this organisation was established in 2011, this organisation has been able to financially uplift the women who have become its members. Till date there are 44,000 women working for this organisation shoulder to shoulder to achieve this motto or goal of the organisation. (Empowerment)

The organisation has left no pains in promoting education and social health programs by which the women of this organisation understand the value of money and its usage for betterment of their families.

There are many success stories of these women and the researcher has found during the questionnaire that while these women have been working as papad rolling women, their children have reached the greater heights in their respective fields.

The son of sachalika of Prabhat road, Pune is a full Colonel in the Indian Army. Few women’s children are working abroad while some are engaged in the business activities.

It was also found by the researcher that the living standard of these women has raised to considerable extent in comparison with their past living standard.

It is not only the monetary empowerment envisaged by the organisation, but it also tries to support her in all the basic requirements of the women so that these women enrol in the organisation, they become free to concentrate in manufacturing activity to create a quality Papad known as LIJJAT PAPAD. ³

2.3 Need of Women Empowerment:

When we discuss about the empowerment in women, we aim at uplifting the
Socio-economic status of the women in the society in general and as far as lijjat papad is concerned the study has been taken in particular.

Considering the vast population of the country and particularly the rural population, there is hardly any literacy in men least in the women are folk.

SMGULP basically has been established with the main aim of providing respectful self-employment to the women of villages and some places near by the cities and such work of SMGULP does not require basic education level but it requires wills and wishes of the women to take up such work from their homes which facilitates both the responsibilities such as looking after the household and also avenue of earning money.

For last 50 years SMGULP has made remarkable changes in the mindset of the women who were earlier confined to their homes in bizarre financial conditions.

Today the women of the organisation with their unstinted support to the organisation, has not only reached the stage of empowered women but also see the organisation making very rapid progress. It can be called as their partnership in the progress of the organisation.

The empowerment so achieved by the sister-members of the SMGULP is a glaring example of empowerment not only in India but world around has equated, this attempt to that of Bangladesh’s Dr. Mohammed Yunus successful Self Help Group Movement.

As on date over 44000 women in SMGULP have crossed the barriers of unemployment and also poverty levels and have achieved sustained economic growth in their homes. In some places, they have been able to support the family income where in some other places they are the main money earners.

India as a whole cannot generate enough employment opportunities both to the women and men considering average low education as also developing status of the country.

The main status of the country as an agricultural country, and the contribution of the women in the agricultural fields is not recognized at all. Over 70% of the population in India is living in the villages and the income achieved by the women is directly clubbed into family income. Thus leaving no avenues identifying the empowerment within the women. Traditionally, the suppression of the women by the men does not allow the women to come together and raise voice against the male dominance.
2.3.1 The Origin of the concept of Empowerment:

Right from the beginning of the civilizations, women’s status in the society was more religion based and not a social one. In other words, the women were confined to their houses from birth to death and with a kind of approach of religious philosophy then, it was only the male dominance in all spheres of life and women had no role to play. Women were therefore do only household works and look after bringing of children and taking care of house and looking after the needs of the husband. Widow’s have, to face the religious wrath from the society including removing the hairs, wearing only white clothes and in certain sections of the society, these widows were compelled to jump in the pyre of their dead husband.

With this approach no empowerment of women could even be thought of. However after the Britishers arrived in India and with their style of functioning, women from upper strata of the society started initialising behaviour pattern of the English women and the birth of empowerment at least social empowerment and educational empowerment started in India.

The Philanthropists and political Leaders in India sensed that along with the men if women are educated there will be better understanding of the freedom struggle hence it is more essential to educate the women and also break the tradition of the religion. This was necessary as more than 50% of the population of India consisted women. In fact before 1857 women in a small way were contributing to freedom of India and to name a few, it was Rani Laxmibai, Ahilyabai Holkar and many more.

It was equally thought by these thinkers that mere educational or social empowerment will not be enough to bring out the woman in the urban area even for that matter the rural women folk but financial empowerment will be more beneficial and hence acts such as equal rights to the women in all spheres were enacted after the independence and as on date due to such enactment we find women holding very high position in the society (Indira Gandhi, Sarojini Naidu, Vijaylaxmi Pandit, Kalpana Chawala etc.).

2.3.2 Growing Importance of Empowerment:

As said in the earlier part till such time women were not empowered to do anything, their talents could not be judged nor they could come in limelight in the society. It was the education that was needed to bring about the upliftment of the women in the society and hence Government made plans to open more educational
institutions, sometimes specifically for the women in order to expand the educational activities and bring literacy ratio up.

As on date, states like Kerala have 100% literacy and one finds that in these states the employment opportunities being low the women have transhift themselves outside Kerala state in search of employment opportunities.

Slowly this picture is changing and we find that more and more women are coming out of their houses and working shoulder to shoulder with men to earn decent jobs and with higher employment (salary). Not only job as means for employment but we now a days find that large number of women are using their skills as entrepreneurs and producing most essential commodities for the Indian economy.

SMGULP is one of them where 44,000 women come together to produce a product known as Lijjat Papad which has captured not only the Indian market but world around demand Lijjat Papad.

2.3.3 Current Status of Women Empowerment:

At present in India, not everything is fine. While the statistics show jump in the figures of the women employees, reality is far away. Also in many establishments, the women are side tracked. Even today irrespective of women financially empowered or not, the mindset of men has not changed. Despite of the fact that the women works for 8 hrs, for jobs. she has to fulfill all the obligations of household duties due to the typical approach of the male. Basically women’s earning in India has been treated as supportive earnings and not the main earnings in the family.

It has been also observed that women themselves to the larger extent refuse the opportunity of higher promotions or responsibility due to their activity of household responsibilities.

With the influx of foreign Direct Investments in India number of new businesses have started operating in India for which large number of employees are required. Depending upon the facilities available by the Government these businesses open up their activities in semi-urban or rural areas where the women from city cannot travel. Also the IT sectors and the call centers have great demand for the women employees but inability on the part of women to stretch herself beyond the time limits, these opportunities are grabbed by men. Thus women are loosing good opportunity to earn more income.
At present though various avenues are available for women of this country for earning and becoming independent, still the circumstances are beyond their abilities which make them unable to become independent.

2.4 Concept of empowerment

Today we find more women in familiar and surprising places. As head of giant conglomerates and in police stations, in change of aircraft and petrol stations, in parliament, and in the trenches. By tradition and through history, Indian women were expected to fulfill roles that defined them only in relation to others - their parents, their spouse, their children. But increasingly women around us in command of knowledge define independent identities beyond those of daughter, mother and wife.

The reason they have changed is because we all have. The dynamics of economic reform begun in the last decade has transformed India and its women. "

The changed role of the women is the result of women empowerment socio economic reform shows positive results due to the financial and legal backing to the policies framed for women empowerment.  

2.4.1 Meaning of Women Empowerment

Today ‘Women Empowerment’ is a buzzword. In the wider sense it is firstly introduced in the International Women's Conference, Nairobi in the year 1985. The word ‘women empowerment’ is defined in this conference is as “a redistribution of social power and control of resources in favour of women and expected economical independence through information, knowledge and necessary political power." Thus the said conference has succeeded in defining the word women empowerment very meaningfully.

One of the important means of the women empowerment is their economic independence. It is achieved through information, knowledge and using necessary skills. If a woman is economically versatile parasite, she can never claim an equal status with men as she herself confident enough. The first step towards economic empowerment of women is creating awareness about their potential. Even after half a century of our independence, approximately 70 % of women work force is employed as unskilled employee and paid at a low rate for their unskilled job.

From the feminist stance 'empowerment' has become the current slogan of high-powered executives business tycoons, personality developers as well as those
involved in gender education. Another facet is that a woman becomes fully empowered only when she facilitates another person to grow and develop "Power means being able to make a contribution to all levels of society" (Vanessa Griffen-1987). It is unleashing the capacity of individuals to be more entrepreneurial, more self-reliant people ‘empowering themselves by pulling themselves up by the bootstraps’ (Kate Young-1971) From the standpoint of UNESCO's Gender Empowerment Index - a person (women) becomes empowered when she is able to make decisions for herself and for others, socially and politically.

‘…empowerment of women which is the central and powerful force in the search for a safe environment economic and social justice, adequate reallocation of resources, the survival of all species and the common goal of a healthy planet in which future generation can flourish.’

In this way women empowerment means to enable the women to undertake initiative to do certain things and in most cases it connoted women wielding economic and political power. Empowerment of women, which is based on equality between genders, is a long drawn, conscious and continuous process. It has comprising with enhancement of skills, capacity building, gaining self-confidence and meaningful participation in decision-making.

"Empowerment is the process of enabling or authorizing an individual to think behave, take action and centrally work in an autonomous way." 

“Empowerment is a process of creating awareness about one's rights and responsibilities. It also covers socio, economic, educational and political opportunities. Empowerment can be viewed as a means of creating a social environment in which one can make decisions and make choices either individually or collectively for society transformation. It strengthens the innate ability by way of acquiring knowledge power and experience.

2.4.2 Growth of women empowerment

It was only in late sixties after the women Prime Minister i.e.Smt Indira Gandhi came to power in Indian politics, the movement of women's literature started gaining importance in India as much as women's education and their place in the society was thought of. Also during the five year plans certain budgetary allocations were kept for women's reforms i.e. overall physical as well as social development of the women.
In certain section of the society particularly for middle-class and higher middle class society and intelligentsia of the country thought that it is time the women need to come out of their houses and start working shoulder to shoulder with men to earn monies to balance the household budget.

For such decisions on the part of the section of the society. To educate the women was dire necessity. And hence a number of educational institutions for women such as SNDT college and Hingane Stree Shikshan Sanstha for example started working.

Slowly past 40 years, the picture has been substantially change and women are at the forefront in education field also.

Nowadays we find the active role being played by the women in almost every field.

To substantiate these claims a study of recent developmental activities in regard to work of women is as per below.
1. Ms. Kalpana Chawala: A name to be reckoned with American space programme.
2. MS Golda Mayer: First woman prime minister in the world.
3. Marie Sklodowska Curie: First woman Laureate who secured Noble Prize for Physics in 1903.
   First American woman awarded a medical degree by a college.  
5. Pearl S. Buck: 1892-1973
   With her novels about American and Asian culture, she became the first women to win Nobel Prize for literature.
6. Marie Curie: 1867 - 1934
   This Physicist was the first woman to win a Nobel Prize.
7. India Gandhi: 1917-1984
   As a leader of India, the world's most populous democracy, Indira Gandhi became an influential figure for Indian women as well as for others around the world.
   A computing trail blazer, Grace Hopper invented one of the first easy- to- use computer languages which was a big advance in the field of computer programming.
   A childhood disease left her deaf, mute and blind. Helen Keller became an
   expert author and lecturer educating nationally on behalf of others with similar
   disabilities.  

    Founder of a religious group of nuns in Calcutta, India. Mother Teresa devoted
    her life to aiding sick and poor people throughout the world.

11. Dr. Sally Ride : 1951
    The first American Woman in space was also the youngest American
    Astronaut ever to orbit earth.

12. Margaret Thatcher : 1925.
    This politician was the first woman in the European history to be elected Prime
    Minister. Margaret Thatcher was also the first British Prime Minister to win
    three times.

    The First woman to be nominated and campaign for the U.S. Presidency. She
    was nominated by the women's National Equal Rights Party.

While the researcher has narrated few examples of women as above who have
achieved greater heights in various fields. They are few in numbers and in case are
least to be published, which the researcher has avoided due to insufficient space in
this research work.

   The overall growth of the empowerment basically started in the Western
   Countries and that too particularly in those countries where the democracy in real
   sense was started. In United States of America which is supposed to be a country of
   different cultures and philosophers, people tried their luck towards seeking
   opportunities of various kind (Even today the USA is called a place for opportunities)
   Equally after the first world war, the women in European countries who faced
   the brunt; of the war, started getting education in order to create supportive role after
   the dilapidation of the country during the war.
   Such was the effect of the world war that it wiped out the younger generation
   leaving lots of widows behind them. Nation building was one of the prime objective
   which was on the shoulders of the women then and was sustained by the women as
   could be seen in the era during the post first war and the starting of the II\textsuperscript{nd }world war.
The women in those days were entrusted with responsibilities initially to choose the way of empowerment and for achieving such empowerment they worked hard initially to educate themselves and later to involve themselves into various activities, which were necessarily carried out earlier by men.

In India these activities gathered momentum in those days but with difference.

In India it was handful men who felt or realised the necessity of bringing women in the men’s stream considering the talent’s and ability to learn by the women.

For such a change initially what is required was to fight against the religious Taboos and practices in which the men had customs and traditions or to face lot of opposition from the so called defender of the religion and the society.

To eradicate the system of male chauvinism and establish the equality amongst men and women. It took almost 100 years. Even today due to the old customs and lack of education despite the fact that women can do lots of changes. If she is not literate enough then there are very less opportunities openly available to the women of these country.

The researcher has gone into the aspect of social economical and of the cross section of the society. Women have come to firmly believe that subject to providing greater freedom to the women of this country, Compulsory education to the females and sufficient amount of support on government level.

There will be a definite and fruitful empowerment of the women of this country.

The researcher has also found sad notes that in certain section of the society, the girls are not welcomed to get birth and towards these the female foetus is killed during the Pregnancy. Such barbaric act on the part of male dominated society has become an obstruction in the male and female balancing of this country and if these acts are not stopped right in the bud, it will have further effects on women empowerment in respect of social and family areas.

2.4.3 History of women empowerment

The traditions of male dominance continued in Asian countries till very recently whereas in the western world, the women fought against barricades of social restrictions put up by the men and movements such as women’s liberation got a firmed, footing in the western world. The main aim of the women was to get educated
which would fostered in the western world quickly and with educational mind within them women got the strength of the thinking and analyzing the society around.

To such an extent the women's liberalisation was successful that the world around started thinking about giving due importance and uplift the women from the old traditional values/ belief.

In the Eastern world of the African countries or even the Latin American Countries even today the women desired to get freedom and think independently is not allowed. The women in many countries in the world are treated little above the slaves not such women are purely home-makers and certainly not empowered.

The country are developed have made substantial progress economically and otherwise and have shown to the remaining world that the progress they have bought is not only due to the male dominated society but because of the participation of women. These countries would substantial progressed.

Many of the Eastern Countries have adopted similar strategies those of developed countries and have started paying due attention and respect to the women and also giving prominence to the women in new society.

The empowerment of the women era have started significantly in majority of the developed nations.

In India due to old traditions, many of the women are still not coming out of open to get financial independence. Since they are tradition bound.

Slowly the different picture at least in India, after 1990's is emerging us. When massive educational programmes having been undertaken by the government which are creating awareness among the women about herself. Her ability towards her knowledge about her surroundings and also social and economic responsibilities, she can manage to carry. Thus giving the birth to the empowerment of women in all spheres of life.

The chapter on empowerment of women need not be taken into the financial empowerment only but to be construed as an overall empowerment of the women i.e. social physical, family and finally financially. Such overall empowerment gives strength of the women to look around in totally on the horizon of emerging society.

In other words, she will not have only the duties and responsibilities but also voice and power in the society. She can be a deciding factor, when empowered, in the overall development of the nations as could be seen by us in the emerging India's development scene. The role played by various women i.e. right from the past
President of India Smt. Pratibhatai Patil to the eminent banker, Chanda Koacher or astronauts like Kalpana Chawala to name a few.

This was possible only due to the acceptance by the male dominated society of the abilities of the women, strength of the women and above all their desire to join main stream.

Institutions like Amul, SMGULP Bhagini Nivedita Bank to name a few are the examples of empowered women.

In Bangladesh too under the able guidance of Dr. Mohammad Yunus, the women have achieved financial empowerment by starting Self Help Groups the Women in China, Philippines or even Thailand have been responsible for development of their countries in many ways.

The wild fire of empowerment among the women in many parts over the world in has set in and this wave slowly will cover the entire world, where the women will work in all the spheres of the economies for achieving greater heights.  

2.4.4 Definitions

1. The major root of the world empowerment is 'Power'. Power is as usually defined in two days.
   a) The ability to get what one wants.
   b) The ability to influence others to think, feel, act and believe in ways that further ones in tenet.

2. The conference has defined this word as a redistribution of social power and control of resources in favour of women and expected economical independence through information, knowledge and necessary political power.

3. "Empowerment entails struggle, it initials struggle, it entails learning to deal with the force of oppression; it entails having a vision of a new society; it also entails conscious and deliberate interventions and efforts to enhance the quality of life, collective strength is necessary for building solidarity."  

4. "Empowerment is not giving people power, people already have plenty of power, in the wealth of their knowledge and motivation, to do their jobs magnificently, we define empowerment is letting this power out (Blanchard K)"

5. According to Author Stewart in her book "Empowering People” she describes that in order to guarantee a successful work environment, managers need to exercise the right kind of authority" (p- To summaries, "Empowerment is simply the effective
use of a manager’s authority," and subsequently it is a productive way to maximize all around work efficiently.

6. The word women empowerment essentially means that the women have the power or capacity to regulate their day to day lives in the social, political and economical terms - a power which enables them to move from the periphery to the central stage.

2.5 Objectives of the Women Empowerment

1. To improve their situation i.e. in other words to change their financial, social and family status and take it to different heights. Such objective gives a feeling of independency to the women which leads to taking decisions for themselves and in case required they also decided how to increase area of such decisions for the larger benefit of the society.

2. This being the main objective i.e. Empowerment of women, the Researcher has stressed the empowerments of the subject to the study the past, present and future stages of women development in India. By and large it is observed that the religious impact on the society in general and particularly on the women thought, is receding day in and day out still such religious faith of worshiping husband and obeying all the orders of the husband, remaining under the shadow of the husband and taking every word of the husband as almost valuable guidance has remained motto in fairly large section of semi urban and rural areas. Even as on date in the urban and most urban areas has also rural areas married woman worshipped husband and pray to the almighty to have the same husband for future seven lives. Thus empowerment in such women in any way is of remote chance.

3. The researcher has found that India being a male dominating society and since literacy in Indian women is at the lowest ebb, the dependency of the further areas or the vast areas and the vast numbers. The rule of the central government for every 60 years by almost single political party never bothered to introduce or increase the education level amongst the population of India. And the women were ignored the most least it spread education in women. The purpose of keeping the women uneducated and under the command of the husband is the main objectives of the political party and be fool the masses for achieving their political mileage.

4. The women on the other part also did not bother to give much attention to these aspect of empowerment. Since most of their needs were meted out by the
structure of the society and the family. While on the other hand the women were not allowed to come openly before the society, on the other hand it was the desire of the men to have their women within four walls of their house.

5. The oppression of the women increased substantially during the Mughal and British Raj and Philantropists as also the modertors in the society, such as Jyotiba Phule, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, M. G. Rande, Raja Ram Mohan Roy come out strongly in the defense of these women and tried to etho their voices during the British rule despite the readiness of the then government to allow freedom to the women and bring them to the fore-front of Male Chauvinism did not allow ideas of such steps of the government and the other reformist and hence the empowerment of women did not bear much fruits during that period. It was only the time when European and American women started the movement of the women's liberation, the winds of empowerment blew in India in small way. Despite the fact that the world around has acknowledged the strength of the women in the society, most unfortunately even the present government cannot give justice to the women's liberation and even a bill for women's reservation in the parliament is always voted out by the so called male parliamentarians.

2.6 Status of women in India

Before studying the subject of empowerment it is essential to view the history of the status of women in India right from ancient period to modern period. This will also helps us study of women’s status over period of time.20

2.6.1 Ancient period

This period is mainly divided into three stages such as the pre-historical age, the vedic age and post vedic age.

2.6.2 The pre-historic age

It has been stated in many references that the society was divided into Aryas and Anaryas. Basically Aryas were society of human beings who believed in women as divine Goddess and worshipped them spiritually. This can be also seen while going through the study of Mohanzodaro and Harappa civilisation. It has been observed that during this period women had almost equal rights of all those men of enjoying life as access to the properties of their parents and their husband. During this period, the
women was given a status of a friend or colleague and was never given a sub-ordinate role.  

2.6.3 Vedic Age

In a Vedic age, Indian history described women as ArdhaNarinateshwar and it was a golden age when the history depicted the life of women as one of the most ideal human being. Also the women continued to enjoy the status of the men. Women were seen in political and social problems on the same level of those of the men and the vedic Hymn did not prevent the women from meritoriously acting/performing various act of possessing well and those acts which would show the women right to the properties. It is important to note the various acts of the women in almost all the fields viz. Putikha and Brahmi experts in religious activities. Lopmudra, Vishwa,Gargi, Vilomi, Savitri, Sharda, Devyani, Kamyani are some of the names who had command over vedic knowledge.

2.6.4 Post Vedic Period

It is found in the Upanishads that women had liberty to follow the traditions of men even for Upnayan and also performing religious activities. Some important women such as Gargi, Maitreyi and many more were highly educated and cultural women had in house and outside the house activities of the women and showed equal partnership of women in society. It is also stated that Seeta and Droupadi and many more had equal rights of selecting the partners by Swayawara as also there are proofs that widow could remarry and also adopt children.

During the period, only the Aryans accepted the gift of gods i.e somras at the vedic sacrifices with both the success accepted.

However, slowly women were found not to be accepting such somras (intoxicated drinks) and also kept them away from their sacrificing ceremonies. Slowly the women were pushed back to the domestic duty. Thus between men and women widened resulted into deterioration of the equal status with those of the men.

It was only in the vedic era the men become dominant and engulfed themselves into child marriages, bahu patni marriages etc. Therefore the women’s status started deteriorating in society and family life.

Barring some personalities such as Badaryan and Gemini who fought for the right of women, other women remained silent spectators and it further deteriorated the
gap between the men and women. Equally while in Ramayana and Mahabharata the women’s status was slightly damaged, thereafter only because of the acquiring territories an inhabitance the men had to make their way to moving south holds and women were confined to household duties.\textsuperscript{26}

Whereas for the Anarya women, the then society did not permit participation of women in religious activities or the Sanskrit Knowledge and remaining of widows as also they were not given right in the property and were treated as a liability of their father till marriage. After marriage these women were a liability for their husband or after becoming widows or the old age, their sons. Such shadow on their Aryan women of ill treatment wowed the seeds of evil dignity in the Aryan Society also. Marriage with more than one women was the theme during that period and women had no rights of performing religious sacrifices or studying the Vedas.

In Shruti period, further deterioration of women’s dignity and status took place. The attack by Shakh and Hun in the northern region made women’s life more difficult.\textsuperscript{27}

\textbf{2.6.5 Medieval Period}

The rigid social custom such as Balvivah, Satipratha and pardapratha made further sufferings to the women in this period.

Particularly in India, right from alternative invasions of the Turk and the Muggals, the women were restricted and confined to their homes. The birth of the boy is rejoiced while the birth of girl was taken to be bad omen. Some social developers in the form of Padmini, Ahilyabai and greatest such as Kalyani sisters showed the ray of hopes in this period. The pre independence period was influenced by Raja Rammohan Roy, Maharshi Karve, Pandit Ramabai, Mahatma Gandhi’s period where women started participating in national movement and also towards the women’s education. The level of literacy in women being low, society dominated by customs/traditions, superstition and the reforms formed of women/education were called for. Many moderate women/congress leaders such as sister Nivedita, Yesutal Savar, Ani Bezant, Sarojini Nauidu and many more came to rescue of illiterate women to influence education on them. There were many who sacrificed their life in the Indian national movement such as Parvatibai Parchure and Saraswatibai Bhuskute, Jayabai Bhoi and many more women such as Rajutai Patil and Godatai Parulekar to work for upliftment
of women’s life in the Adivasi area and also were active in Indian independence movement.  

2.6.6 Modern Period

By various codes such as Manu’s code the Britishers who ruled the country, practised various ways to deteriorate further social status of women. In today’s world, both men and women have common needs. There are no jobs which are the only areas of the men and where women cannot work. On the other hand it is also seen that the devotion, sincerity and truthfulness which are the main feature of Indian women, there is not only the sustained marriage life but also stability of men and women relationship in the society.

During the Post independence era the government enacted various acts thereby improving the status of women in the society. Such act is known as prohibition of discrimination in employment on the basis of sex and also equality.

Basically India being the agriculture country and is fragmented into small villages across the country, the activity of the agriculture in large way is managed by women folk.

Major contribution towards empowerment and upliftment of status of women has seen done by Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and his wife Savitribai Phule by starting exclusive school for women also the prominent women in the then society Such as Laxmibai Tilak, Pandita Ramabai, Dr. Anandibai Joshi and Ramabai Ranade etc. The work to Maharshi Karve is remarkable in uplifting women’s education.

It is observed that number of women as per below have performed extra ordinary contributions towards various field in India.

Eminent women in various field:

a. Socio- political field
   - Razeya Sultan (First Part of 13th century, 1240)- Medieval period Muslim woman who was queen, actively ruled and made her own marks.
   - Rani Chandbibi (1547-1599) bridges the pool between Adilshah And Nijam very skillfully.
   - Rani Durgavati (1564)- brave queen who fought against Asafarkha and Akbar.
   - Rani Tarabai (1675-1761)- wife of Rajaram a son Shivaji Maharaj. She was famous for her skillful administration and fought against Mughal kings.
   - Rani Chennmma (17th century)- fought against Aurangzeb
- Ahilyabai Holkar (1735-1795) great administration and well known for her fair justice and sacrifices
- Rani Laxmibai (1858-1885)- activist who worked against British.
- Swarup Rani (1930) – activist in the national movement of independence.
- Kausturba Gandhi (1942)- activity participation in Quit India March
- Kamaldevi Chattopadhyaya (1945)- activity participation in ‘Mit (Salt) Satyagraha’
- Aruna Asaf Ali (1942)- a great activist of independence movement.
- Vijayalaxmi Pandit (1945) – a well-learned activist of Indian independence movement, later on worked on several highest post in Indian Government including First women President of United Nation Organisation.
- Indira Gandhi (1927-1984) – First woman prime Minister of India known for her skilled- ruff and tuff administration,
- Mother Teresa (1910-1997) renowned Noble Prize Winner spend life for weaker section of the society and for humanity.
- Ela bhatt (1933)- Worked for woman unorganised sector

b. Poetess and writers
- Mirabai (1498-1547) – Lord Krishna devotee poetess
- Maltibai Bedekar (1905-2001) – activist who exposed very forcefully against injustice of woman.
- Amruta Pritam (1919) – the famous Modern Indian writer
- Mahashweta Devi (1929) – used her skill of writings for the social justice for woman
- Arundhanti Roy (1960)- First Indian Woman Writer who won world famous buker award.

c. Art field
- Hirabai Badodekar (1905-1989) – renowned classical singer
- Amruta Shergil (1913- 1941) – world famous painter
- Begam Akhtar (1914-1974) – gazhal singer
- Lata Mangeshkar (1929)- world famous playback singer
- Kishori Amonkar ( 1931) – Jaipur Gharana Classical Singer
- Asha Bhonsale (1933) – famous singer
d. **Science and Astronomy**
   - Kalpana Chawala – Astronought
   - Sunita Williams – Astronought

e. **Sports**
   - P.T. Usha – world famous India Athletic
   - Saniya Mirza – Tennis Player

f. **Remarkable Contributories**
   - Hansa Mehta – first woman chancellor
   - Arti Mehta – first woman who swam English Khadi Channel
   - Suchitra Kruplani – First woman Chief Minister in India
   - Sulochana Modi – First Mayor the First Woman
   - Aditi Pant – first woman visited the Atlantic (Daksin Gangotri)
   - Dr. Salinitai Patil – Established First Woman Corporator
   - Surekha Bhosale- First Woman Rail Driver
   - Mira Saheb Fatima Bivi –First Woman Supreme Judge
   - Anna Jorge- First Woman IAS Officer
   - Harpreet Ahulvaliya – First Woman Pilot
   - Dr. Nirmal Ahuja – First Woman Major General
   - Jayshree Khadilkar- Rashtrakul Chess Champion
   - Geeta Chand – First Woman Parachute Rider.
   - Kiran Bedi- First Woman IPS Officer
   - Patibhatai Patil – First Woman President of India

   This is women empowerment by SMGULP. A case study with special reference to Pune city. The overall study of the present role empowerment in this institution will be conducted. This study covers the importance of women empowerment.

2.7 **Indian Women - Some Facts and Figures**

The principle "Gender equality" is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The constitution not only grants equality to women but also empowered the state to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women.
On the Indian Socio-cultural background large number of responsibilities are expected to be fulfilled by women folk in their day to day life. The lifestyle and status of employed women has been affected by this new role over their traditional roles as a wife and mother. The influences of the family and of society, both are indispensable and consequential. While fulfilling the new responsibilities at par, the peace and harmony for utmost satisfaction of women on both the front at home and at work place is needed.

Women constitute a significant part of the workforce of India. But they lag behind the men in terms of level and equality of employment. Where as the role of women and men in society as well as the issue of equality of men and women cannot be ignored, as it has been identified on the background of biological differences also. The biological differences between men and women are needed to consider as vital to fulfill any quest for empowerment of women.

The status and work situation of women in post independence India is reflected in transformed from and in its objectives. The concept of women empowerment is gratified in many respects. The bureaucrat treatment for the women would be substantially affected by the nature and mechanics of socialisation, family background and economic setup.

In turn it reflects in women's attitude, their way of thinking and even the philosophy of their life. Where as, at the cost of behavioural and psychological aspect, the work culture is one of the most important elements. The result of individuals aptitude and attitude towards the work culture is reflected in an organised work culture. It is in the form of productivity, efficiency, leadership and overall work culture.

2.7.1 Demography

According to the 2001 census, total population of India is 1,02,70,15,247 on 1st March 2001. India is the second largest over populated country in the world. Indian population comprises of 53,12,77,078 males and 49,57,38,169 females. The decadal growth in population from 1991 to 2001 is 21.34 %.

Sex ratio is known as an important social indicator of the equality prevailing between males and females at a particular time. The factors influencing the discrepancy in sex ratio are the differentials in mortality, purposive gender selection, migration, gender ratio at birth and the gender differential in population, etc.
The 2001 census is dominated by males. For example sex ratio is noted down 933 females per 1,000 males. The total population of number of females as against to males are less. The following table No.2.1 highlights various features of Indian population and male to female according to census 2001.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population of India</td>
<td>1,02,70,15,247 (1.027 Billion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>53,12,77,078 (531 Billion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>49,57,38,169 (496 Billion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decadal Growth (1991-2001)</td>
<td>21.34 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20.93 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>21.79 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The decadal growth rate during 1991 to 2001 shows female growth is more than the total average by 0.45 % and the percentage of male growth rate is less than total average by 0.47 %.

2.7.2 Education

Literacy is an indicator of social development. The speed of literacy is also associated with the trends of industrialisation, urbanization, better communication, increased trade and commerce, revolutionary information technology and modernisation.

Education plays a positive and dominant role in improving the status of women. Here the fact remain inevitable that low status coupled with rigid socio-cultural practices denies basic rights to women.

Knowledge is a right of every person. It empowers a person and a literate person is able to acquire knowledge. Literacy is the first step towards the empowerment. Self help is easier to the educated person. Increasing numbers of educated women are significance of improvement in their status within family and in society.

According to the census 2001, total literacy rate of Indian population is 65.38 % where is male to female literacy ratio is 75.85 % to 54.16 %. The female literacy is less by 21.69 %. Though data on the education shows some improvement in female
literacy rates but there are massive variations within the country as regard the women literacy is concern for example women literacy in Kerala and Bihar. The Former have highest literacy and the later is suffering from low literacy rate. So as far as the literacy indicator is concerned the necessity of the proper strategy for the development of women is a must. The table No.2.2 indicates the changing picture of literacy between male and female in India.

### Table No. 2.2

**Percentage of Male- Female Literacy Rate of India.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>27.16</td>
<td>8.86</td>
<td>18.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>40.40</td>
<td>15.34</td>
<td>28.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>45.95</td>
<td>21.97</td>
<td>34.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>53.45</td>
<td>28.46</td>
<td>41.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>64.13</td>
<td>39.29</td>
<td>52.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>75.85</td>
<td>54.16</td>
<td>65.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001 (Rural)</td>
<td>71.40</td>
<td>46.70</td>
<td>59.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001 (Urban)</td>
<td>86.70</td>
<td>73.20</td>
<td>80.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India 2001, 251.

The female literacy rate in India has increased almost six fold since 1951. It is increased from 8.86 % to 54.16 % during the period 1951-2001. It is noticeable that the percentage of female literacy is less than the total average literacy rate by 11.22 % 21.65 % less than male literacy.

The variation is also found in rural and urban literacy. The urban female literacy is higher as compared to the rural literacy. The gap between rural and urban literacy is 26.5 %. Female literacy in the rural region is below the average percentage by 7.46 % and the urban literacy is higher than the average by 19.04 %. The main twin causes of low rural literacy are lack of infrastructure facilities and lack of awareness about the education among the people.

On the national front the literacy rate of Kerala is highest whereas the literacy rate of Bihar is very low. An analysis of important social indicators highlights the social differences between the two states Kerala and Bihar. The differences clearly indicates that literacy is the key to improvement in quality of life.
Table No. 2.3

Difference in Social Indicators.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particular</th>
<th>Kerala</th>
<th>Bihar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literacy rate (2001)</td>
<td>90.86%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life expectancy at birth (2001-2006)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For Male</td>
<td>71-61</td>
<td>65-55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For Female</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>64-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Mortality (per 1000 live births 2002)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provisional data</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth Rate (Per 1000)</td>
<td>16-9</td>
<td>30-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death Rate (Per 1000)</td>
<td>6-4</td>
<td>7-9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India 2001, 221

The achievement of Kerala on the social front is remarkable. Among many other reasons, the high literacy is one of the important reason of such overall development of Kerala. The literacy rate of Maharashtra is quite satisfactory. Even it is above the average rate of Indian literacy.

The educational background of women has a direct bearing to development. “The department of elementary education and Literacy has come out with the fact that at the primary level the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) for girls has gone up from 24.8% in 1950-51 to 81.8% in 1996-97. The recent initiative undertaken for the universalization of elementary education especially in the developing world has resulted in increased demand for secondary education (between 14 to 18 years of age group) The tenth plan(2002-2007) has made provisions for raising enrollment of women in secondary education (14-18 age group) especially vocational courses and in higher education in the age group of 18-32 years.”
Table No. 2.4

Enrollment of girls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Primary (I-V)</th>
<th>Middle (VI-VIII)</th>
<th>Secondary (IX-X)</th>
<th>College and University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950-51</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-61</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-71</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-91</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50@</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-99(P)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>66@</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: University News 43 (42) 2005, October 17-23, p.3

Table No. 2.4 shows the continuous rise in the number of girls enrolled in school as well as college level. It mainly indicates a number of girls per 100 boys enrolled in schools and as well as at college level. It mainly indicates number of girls per 100 boys enrolled in schools and colleges in India.

From the above table No.2.4 it is revealed that the education of girls has a positive result. At all the levels, there is remarkable increase in girls education for example primary, middle, secondary and even at college and university level. From the above figure it is revealed that

1. There is a continuous increase in the literacy ratio. At primary schooling level, the number of female are doubled within 50 years. Earlier it was only 39 per hundred boy students, which increased to 77 in the year 1998-99, of course this increase is not justifiable.

2. Female literacy at middle level has also increasing trend for example in the year 1951 only 18 girls students were enrolled as against the 100 boys. It is increased upto 68 in the year 1998-99.

3. At the secondary level, total increase in the girls enrolled from 1951 to 1998-99 are 16 to 62 as against to 100 boys.

4. The same increasing trend is continued at college level as the 11 girls enrolled in 1951 reached to 66 in the year 1998-99.

5. Free and compulsory education to all children (male and female) until they complete their age of 14 years made compulsory by the constitution of India. Providing such education is obligatory to Government. As per the Census 2001
only 65.38% persons of the total population in India are literate. Which means more than one-third population is still illiterate. Shockingly out of 900 million illiterate people in the world one third belong to India.

Though lower literacy rate is observed in the primary education the sailent positive change is noticed due to continuous government efforts especially after independence. Where as the low female literacy ratio brings down the total literacy rate of the country, in the rural area, male literacy rate is low due to lack of awareness about literacy, nature of work (as unskilled agriculture labour) and migration of literate person to the town etc.

Table No. 2.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diploma / Certificate</td>
<td>32.70</td>
<td>35.80</td>
<td>33.74</td>
<td>33.80</td>
<td>40.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>37.50</td>
<td>40.90</td>
<td>39.93</td>
<td>40.10</td>
<td>40.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Graduate</td>
<td>39.50</td>
<td>42.20</td>
<td>42.04</td>
<td>42.18</td>
<td>40.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>36.10</td>
<td>38.90</td>
<td>37.95</td>
<td>39.04</td>
<td>39.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: University News 10-16 Dec. 2007, p.14

The above table highlights the share of women enrollment to total enrollment at different stages of higher education during 2000-01 to 2004-05. It is revealed that the women are enrolled at different level below 40% and at almost all the level men are enrolled at an average rate 60%. The available disciplines are unfortunately divided into masculine and feminine disciplines. For e.g. Popularly arts, social sciences, humanities and teachers training are famine disciplines while engineering, law and commerce are viewed as masculine discipline.
### Table No. 2.6
Faculty wise Enrollment of Women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>95-96</th>
<th>97-98</th>
<th>99-00</th>
<th>00-01</th>
<th>01-02</th>
<th>02-03</th>
<th>03-04</th>
<th>04-05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>51.79</td>
<td>51.13</td>
<td>51.01</td>
<td>51.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>19.94</td>
<td>20.22</td>
<td>20.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comm/Mgt</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.56</td>
<td>16.48</td>
<td>16.43</td>
<td>16.45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.86</td>
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<td>Eng/Tech</td>
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<td>2.1</td>
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<td>3.75</td>
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<td>4.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.63</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1.62</td>
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<td>1.56</td>
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<td>1.08</td>
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<td>0.79</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
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Note: # 'Other' in 1995-96, 1996-97 include Agriculture, Medicine, Veterinary Science, other sources: University News (New Delhi : 10-16 Dec 2007) 15.

Table No.2.6 focuses faculty-wise distribution of women students as a proportion of total women enrolled in higher education.

From above table 2.5, it is revealed that number of women taking higher education in arts faculty are more i.e. approximately 50 %. In totality approximately half of the educated women are from the arts which followed by science with approximately 20 %. The emerging third option is commerce and management, showing steady increasing trend with approximately 14 % enrollment of women in higher education.

The women literacy ratio in India is changing hardly. The gap between male and female literacy ratio is still wider, especially in the rural areas.

### 2.7.3 Participation of Women in Work-Force.

During 2005-06 Indian economy has experienced a growth rate about 8.1 % as against the targeted 8.5 %. In the coming years for achieving targeted growth rate basically needed a wide range of constructive efforts. The following table 2.7 highlights the employment of women in organised sector.
Table No. 2.7
Employment of Women in the Organised Sector.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public</td>
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<tr>
<td>India</td>
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<td>2859.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>303.5</td>
<td>171.7</td>
<td>357.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamilnadu</td>
<td>323.5</td>
<td>179.4</td>
<td>402.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: <http://nrcw.inc/statistics%20tables/emolovmentorg.html>

The above data explains the participation of women in the national workforce. At all India level the highest number of women engaged in organised sector are from Tamilnadu and the Maharashtra State stood second according to this norms. Whereas Manipur, Meghalaya, and Chandigarh are states that are at the last position. According to women participation in workforce norms these three are backward states. The total women employed in these states are approximately 19 thousands only.

According to the statistics of the Registrar General of India, the proportion of women in the workforce is increasing very slowly e.g.19.67 % women engaged in 1981 rose to 25.73 % in 1991 and further rose to 25.68 % in 2001. As on 31st March 2003 in India there are about 49.68 lakh women workers employed in the organised sector. In totality in the year 2001, the work participation rate of men is 52.93 % which is more than double as compared to their counterpart.

As a part of work force, the use of full potential of women is certainly an important component of economic development. In this respect since last three decade some progress has been made in a positive manner. But the basic attitude of Indian society towards the women has not yet changed in totality. On the social front women continue to be seen as a burden on a family. They are still accorded a lower status. Women are not yet given equal treatment. Naturally women have to work harder to prove themselves continue. The entire Indian society suffers the consequences of this denial of opportunities to one half of its population. Now the time has come to initiate a place mechanism that intervenes positively in favour of anti discriminatory and gender friendly opportunities for women.
2.8 Government Programs for Women Empowerment:

On the eve of ‘The Sixth South Asia Regional Ministerial Conference’ for commemorating at New Delhi on 17th January 2008 Hon’ble President of India Pratibhatai Patil enlightened the role and importance of ‘women employment’ Hon’ble President states that “Empowering women is the most effective tool for development as well as for poverty reduction. Women who are educated and have been given a chance have proved that they excel in their professions and careers. Educated and enlightened women can look after families better, make societies compassionate and make nations progressive.

An Agenda for the empowerment of women should cover gender needs and concern at every stage and protecting sphere of life, from protection in the womb by protecting female foeticide preventing female infanticide by giving better nutrition and care to the girl child and addressing female gender to preferences in families to giving equal education opportunities to the girl child by sensitizing society, to look at a girl child as a born, to making women economically independent by importing skills to them, to making work places safe for women by chaving fast track implementation of string out laws against sexual harassment, to addressing issues like dowry and domestic violence, to making women feel secure by taking strict action against those who indulge in reprehensible acts like teasing and molesting and to allowing women to fully realise their capacities…”

In concluding remark, Hon’ble President of India Smt Pratibha Devi Singh Patil expressed that the need of the hour is the speedy implementation of legislative and policy measures for empowerment of women. There is often lack of awareness about schemes for promoting welfare and development among women. This results in women not availing of the benefits. This situation needs to be rectified. This can only be achieved through an awareness programme we need aband of ‘gender advocates’ whose mission is to bring about effective implementation of the policies and programmes for women’s empowerment.

Within the framework of a democratic policy, our laws, development policies, plans and programmes are aimed at women advancement in different spheres. From the fifth five year plan and (1974-78) onwards there is a remarkable shift in the approach on woman’s issues i.e. from welfare to development. In recent years the
empowerment of women has been recognized as the central issue in determining the status of women continue.

An act of Parliament had setup the National Commissions for women in 1990 to the safeguard of rights and legal entitlements of women.

There are four basic forms of participation for empowerments of women

1 Household Participation
2 Economic Participation
3 Socio-Cultural Participation
4 Political Participation

All these basic formats are interrelated to each other and also isolated one in itself. The year 2001 was declared as women empowerment year. On the Government front, three-fold strategy for empowering women was declared i.e. social, economics and gender justice are on the precedence. The empowered Indian women should discover ways of blending religious commitment, cultural traditions and essential aspect for the overall development of moral esthetic cultivation of imagination and personality for self-employed women in the society. In this direction, governments non-government organisation’s and also the private organisation’s are actively participating and are very positively working.

The government of India committed to the task of carrying forward the process of labour reforms which is an integral part of government’s economics policy. With this purpose, the Industrial Disputes Acts-1947, Trade Union Act 1926, Social Security Workmen Compensation Act 1923, Maternity Benefit Act. Employee’s State Insurance Scheme, Employees Provident fund and other miscellaneous provisions and schemes, payment and training etc. were enacted in India for the workers. All these acts are enacted keeping in the view the basis needs of women employees.

Another landmark of women empowerment is the establishment of ‘Department of women and child Development. It was set up in the year 1985 as a part of Ministry of Human Resource Development to give the much needed impetus to holistic development of women and children. It was enacted as the national machinery for the advancement for women and child.

This department formulates plans policies and programmes legislations, guidelines and co-ordinates the efforts for women and child development. Besides playing noble role, this department also implements certain innovative programmes for women and children.
The programmes for women implemented by Department of Women and Child Development cover welfare and support services, training income generation, awareness and gender sensitization etc. The intention of such programmes are to support health, educational and economic development programs for the women and children. This department has one statutory body and three autonomous organisations viz,

a) A Statutory body- National commission for women
b) Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK)
c) Autonomous organisations- National Institution of public co-operative and child Development (NIPCCD) and Central Social Welfare Board’ (CSWB)

Thus from time to time the government has taken some sorts of special initiatives for women empowerment. At present in India a separate cell for women employees namely ‘women labour cell’ i9s also functioning under the control of Ministry of Labour to address the problems of women employees.

As legal support the ‘Maternity Benefit Act 1961’, Equal Remuneration Act 1976 and a like other some laws are amended by government. These are protective legislation enacted to protect and safeguard the interest of women workers at the workplace.

The equal remuneration is one of the most important requirements. The Equal Remuneration Act was enacted which prohibits any gender discrimination in recruitment and service conditions.

Other than the above measures several committees were setup by the State Governments and Union Territories for women empowerment. At present, the Central Advisory committee at National level and the Advisory Committee state level along with the competent authorities to oversee the process of implementations of the Equal Remuneration Act are working in the interest of women employees.

According to the guidelines and directions given by the Hon’ble Supreme Court the Government has taken numbers of initiative for effective implementation of several laws related with women employees. The apex court in its landmark judgment of 13th April 1997 laid down detailed guidelines against the sexual harassment at work places.

India has also rectified various International conventions and human rights instruments committing to secure equal rights of woman.
The liberalization has undoubtedly created many opportunities for working women in different spheres. Liberalization initially opened new markets, attracting investment in infrastructure and increasing wage levels and productivity. Today women are joining the global workforce in increasing numbers. The changing nature of employment as a result of globalization and trade liberalization has a dramatic impact on their work and on the rest of their lives. The impacts of all global changes are different on men and women. Such differences are known as ‘gender differential’

In our national economy there has been wide expansion in labour market especially in skilled professionals. India is known for the nation of large surplus of cheap and mostly unskilled labour. On this background the reality is that it availed immense opportunity for women employment but at the lower end of the pay scales. Further, competition among developing countries has put downward pressure on salaries and wages. Indian women, especially of rural areas and of urban unorganised sector are particularly vulnerable.

The service sector is widely offering enormous employment opportunities to women particularly in Information Technology, export oriented data processing etc. Women in India now hold about 30% of all professional jobs in the software industry.

In this regard the International Labour Organisation (ILO) pointed out that “as the traditional manufacturing industries, those previously employed women, gradually disappear, the women finding jobs in the information and communication technologies-related industries are rarely the same as those who lost their jobs in the traditional sectors.” In short the liberalization of services can have the potential of enhancing the efficiency and competitiveness of host economies but at the risk of creating or worsening inequities for the poor and for women. To overcome the reality strong domestic regulation and safeguard mechanism are needed to protect women workers.

2.9 Women Empowerment- Indian Scenario

For the empowering, women, initial step is education to the women. The educational help to liberate women from their own psychological and social constraints. It enables them to have self-respect and have better image awareness. It also makes them free from a sense of dependency, despondency and the Powerlessness. It helps to change their mindset from the chronic socio-psychological
variable. In nutshell by education, women become emotionally, socially and economically empowered. It turned them into intellectual capital for nation.

“Empowerment entails struggle.” it entails learning to deal with the forces of the oppression, in entails having a vision of new society; it also entails conscious and deliberate interventions and effort to enhance the quality of life. Collective strength is necessary for building solidarity.

Long we has given following five levels of empowerment of women.
1. “Welfare:- Concepts meeting the basic needs without attempting to solve the underlying structural causes.
2. Access:– Access to the resources such as education, opportunities, land and credits.
3. Concretization:- Recognition of structural and institutional discrimination as the cause for low socio-economic status and of women’s own role in reinforcing the restrictive system.
4. Participation- Through mobilizing collective action, women gain increased empowerment to make decisions along side men.
5. Control- Being able to make decision on all affairs concerning themselves, their families, at the political level from the Panchayat Raj to the Parliament level, to play an active role in the development process of the nation and be recognised and appreciated for their contribution.

Women empowerment enables autonomy and control over their own lives. The empowered women become agents of their own development, able to exercise choices to set their own agenda. They may be strong enough to challenge and change their own agenda. They may be strong enough to challenge and change their position in the society. In order to achieve this, emphasis should be on the formulation of appropriate organisation for women to facilitate communication, learning and organized action.

Empowerment is an individual’s self-esteem and collective mobilization for challenging basic power relations like social injustice and mobilization of resources. In a wide spectrum ‘empowerment’ is self-governance, self-sufficiency and self-maintenance.

In Indian context, empowerment of women means development of women’s capacity in all respect. To make them discover their own potential. So they have opportunity for the choices and expansions of their capacity. To manage their
domestic and economic environment efficiently. It is needless to say that the economic development of India is also closely intervened with the process of women’s oppression. Unless it is removed, it is not possible to achieve expected target.

In this way empowerment means ‘empower or enable women to undertake initiative to do certain things. In Most of the cases are connected with women wielding political power. But in reality it has many dimensions and implications. The concept of empowerment of women is long drawn, conscious and continues process, comprising enhancement of skill, capacity building, gaining self-confidence and meaningful participation in decision making.

In wider spectrum, it is not merely as control over physical resources, but internal transformation of one’s consciousness. It enables to overcome external barriers to accessing resources or change traditional ideology making excellent use of modern technology. Empowerment also includes control over resources (physical, intellectual and financial) over ideology beliefs, values attitudes and broadly over one’s life options. Gaining access to societal resources like education, employment, political power household resources and also income, proper health nutrition and decision making are seen as important pathways for ‘empowerment’.

Throwing the light on the importance of the issues of women empowerment, the Noble prize winner, Dr Amartya Sen stated that “Women experience greater poverty and transmit their disadvantage more readily to their children, thus perpetuating the poverty cycle”. He added ‘gender inequality affects boys and men through biological connection’. So it is in the interest of the whole community to empower women.

What is needed today are not only the opportunities but to create such environment which makes the women friendly atmosphere and boost up their morale and motivate them, to contribute their potential in the interest of the national development. In the Indian scenario, it is implementer part of the theory of women empowerment. India is on war-footing to tackle and solve all its diverse problems and to become a developed nation. Expectations all around have reached a new high with the new government policies of liberalization. The policy of liberalization is expected to open floodgates for major industrial investment both from within and outside the country. It sprays in industrialization with all around economic development.
As women constitute half of the population of the country; to sustain and utilize all its resources certainly requires due attention. It is also necessary to motivate and boost up their morale within an organisation through the strategic planning. As stated by the eminent thinker Longwe -the welfare access, concretization participation and control should be involved in the strategy for the women empowerment.

The economic status of the women is now accepted as an indicator of a social development and therefore it becomes imperative for the government to frame the policies for the women empowerment. There is a necessity of rights, roles and opportunities to women for their safe and sonic work environment for their better in particular and society in general.

2.10 Steps taken by Government for Women Empowerment:

Women Empowerment is the part and partial of social transmission. Appropriate steps are needed to undertake such transmission. In this respect the active educational machinery is one of the most important steps among others.

There should be continuous need of effective plans and policies which will encourage participation of the women in non-traditional and emerging technological education. The government has initiated several plans and policies, which start from education and covers the earning programs for the women. Some of the landmarks, ‘Plans and Policies’ initiated by the government are explained in forth coming points.

2.10.1 Several Imperative plans

The objectives of various plans and policies initiated by government are to bring out the advancement and empower the women. These policies are widely spread to encourage active participation of all stakeholders for achieving the objectives. The specific objectives of various policies incorporated for the women includes,

(i) “Creating an environment through positive economic and social policies for development of women, to enable them to realize their full potential.

(ii) The de-jure and de-facto enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom by women on equal basis with men in all spheres- political, economic, social, cultural and civil.

(iii) Equal access to participation and decision making of women in social, political and economic life of the nation.
(iv) Equal access to women to health care, quality educational at all levels, career and vocational guidance, employment, equal remuneration, occupation health and safety, social security etc.

(v) Strengthening legal system aimed at elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.

(vi) Changing societal and attitudes and community practices by active participation and involvement of both men and women.

(vii) Mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development process.

(vii) Elimination of discrimination and all forms of violence against women and the girl child; and

(viii) Building and strengthening partnership with society, particularly women’s organisations.”

The core areas of above policies are exclusive as it includes social, political, legal, economic and eliminating gender discrimination. Women as an independent target group, account for 495.74 million and represent 48.3 % of total population of the country. Empowering women as process demands a life cycle approach.

Therefore, every stage of their life counts as priority in the planning process for which government has taken initiative. Presently women in the economically active age group of 15-59 years account for 289.40 million (58.04%) This group has different demands, for example education, training, employment sources of income, participation in the decision making, developmental process, etc. At every stage the strategic planning of women empowerment, and the financial backing is essential. In this respect after the independence from time to time, due have been taken by the government. It has been reflected in the financial plans of our country.

The ‘Five Year Plans’ are the mirror of the economic activities of our nation. The instrument five- year plans have been most positive indicator of the policy formulation for women empowerment. The gradual changes are found in the plans related to women development.

Development of women has been receiving due attention by government right from the very First Five Year Plan (1951-56). This has been treated as a subject of ‘welfare’ and clubbed with the welfare. The 10th five year plan deserves special credit due to its full devotion towards women empowerment. through five year plans.
2.10.1.1) First Five Year Plan

The First Five Year Plan pointed out the need of social welfare for the women. It highlighted need of providing several opportunities to women. This also stated the objectives to create power among the women of self-expression to make their full contribution towards the economic and social life of the community. The planners felt that the best policy to achieve women development was self-expression, which would be needed to undertake under umbrella the social legislation. It will also solve the problem relating to health, education and vocational training of women. The planner’s mainly pointed out that need of education and expected higher rate of enrollment of girls in schools. The planner has also emphasized the need for imparting vocational education for the women to make their education career oriented.

2.10.1.2) Second Five year Plan

The Second Five Year Plan has not contributed enough material on the subject of women development. The plan discussed matters related to women development. It was only the review of the Central Social Welfare Board and its achievements. Plan also considered a view about women’s physical and biological disabilities and expressed that care should be taken at the time of allotting the works. This plan has also given the priority to education of women and suggested the measures to improve maternity and child health services.

2.10.1.3) Third Five year Plan

The continuity of laying emphasis on the welfare of women is maintained in the Third Five year plan (1961-66). This plan also recommended the need of increased allocation for Central Social Welfare Board with state activeness. It is remarkable that the plan has increased assistance to voluntary organisations working for women and recommended health progress programs for the women.

2.10.1.4) Fourth Five year plan

Surprisingly the Fourth Five Year plan (1969-74) has not innovated any schemes for women. The policy parameters continued to stress on an approach through the Social Welfare Board of assisting voluntary organisation who are working for welfare of women.
2.10.1.5) Fifth Five Year Plan

The trend was not changed even in the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79) This five year plan has neither the policy statement nor new initiatives. Indicated for women development. The only remarkable thing of this plan is the plan has pointed out that ‘development of women’ is the need of time. Off course it is only the realisation but lacking any practical approach to this.

2.10.1.6) Sixth Five year plan

This is a new chapter in the light of women empowerment in India. The Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85) was a hallmark and watershed for development of women. For the first time a separate chapter on ‘Development of Women’ included in documents of this plan. The main focal point of this period was the First Women’s International Conference held at Nairobi in the year 1985. This conference has successfully attracted the attention of the entire whole world on the subject of women empowerment.

The sixth five-year plan reviewed the legal and constitutional guarantees to women and pointed out that women are lagging behind men in almost all sectors. Expressing low status and deprivation indicator, this plan highlighted that women are far from the expectation. It also pointed out adverse and declining sex ratio and lower life expectancy of women.

The policy also stressed out the strategy for development of women focusing three elements- Education, Employment and Health. The shifting of the approach from ‘women welfare’ to ‘women development’ has taken place in the sixth five year plan.

For making women self- dependence, it was firstly suggested to set up ‘Women Cell’ at the district level. Thus first time the grass root level, authorities are involved in the process of women development.

In this plan for the protection of women’s rights, it was decided to review the adequacy of implementing machinery working for the protection of women’s rights. The plan has also stressed that Science, technology research and survey are instruments for assessing women’s participation in national development. Functional literacy, need of increasing enrollment of girls at the elementary level and encouraging education for women in backward areas are other important points which are mainly highlighted in this plan.
As regards health element family welfare, material and child welfare services are extended and expected to improve in this plan. Attention was also given to the policies of women nutrition. The Women Cell at district level has initiated with an objective to providing increasing number of employment programs for women. As far as the welfare is concern, this plan highlighted necessity of providing basic amenities at the workplace, better living conditions, maternity benefits, education and crèche facilities to the women employees.

The training of women is another important point stated in this plan. The need of training has been realised and paid due attention for training of women employees this plan. The plan has insisted on the abolition of contract labour and ameliorating the condition of construction workers where the large numbers of women are engaged.

2.10.1.7) Seventh Five Year Plan

In the Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90) main stress is on integration between health and family welfare of women. The seventh Plan noticed the gaps and shortfalls in the enrollment of girls especially in primary education. This plan has also reviewed the lacunas in existing legislation related to women. The joint programme with 50.50 partnerships of State and Central Government is introduced in this plan. This has also focused policies to promote employment and skill training programme for the women.

The plan has commented the need of setting up of Krishi Vigyan Kendra and Technology Demonstration Centre. And also stressed the need for involving large number of women in such programs. The building confidence and awareness among women accelerate potential of women for their development and preserve their rights are the major achievement of this plan.

In this way in the Seventh Five Year Plan the development programmes for are initiated with the main objective of raising the economic and social status of women. The plan has pointed out to bring the women workforce into the main stream of national development. The plan trusted on generation of both skilled and unskilled employment for the women is possible through proper education and vocational training.

2.10.1.8) Eighth Five Year

A Step further in the women development is of Eight Five Year Plan (1992-
This plan has also included a separate chapter on women development. The term ‘Social Welfare’ is elaborated in this plan with several elements for example women, children, the disabled, the old age person etc.

A noticeable outcome of this plan is special department of ‘Women and Child Development’ at the ministry level. The numerous plans and programs are started in the seventh plan and the monitoring of beneficiaries oriented schemes of women are other two features of this plan.

On the educational front of all time high rate of enrollment of girls is recorded during the plan period. In the age group of 6 to 11 years it was 8360% at primary schooling and 37% enrollment of women at higher education.

It is creditable that the task of gender sensitization brought out in this plan. The change of educational structure is also remarkable achievement of this plan. The benefit of universal immunization for women, nutrition, education and strengthening of the primary health centers are some other favorable outcomes of this plan.

Another milestone of this plan is the work of Department of Women and Child Development in initiating new legislation, employment schemes and assistance to the voluntary sector. The department also prepared a Plan Of Action for women for the year 1989-2000. This plan introduced ‘Shram Shakti Commission‘ for evaluating the functioning of Women in the informal sector and to provide the suggestions for ameliorating their conditions.

This plan also has also stated a strategy for women employment with the motive to enable the women to function as equal partners and participants in development and not merely as beneficiaries.

For the 1st time the plan has stressed a more holistic view towards the role of women in the family and society. Normally women in economic activities it would be taken as opposed to the restricted role of a mother and homemaker. The women’s participation in economic development anticipated here along with her status in family.

There is a clear circular in the plan that different ministries would try to allocate the resources in a manner that will benefit to women development. Stress was also given for the need of social changing attitude towards women through awareness and introducing the employment parameters for women. Health education (both scientific and non-formal) for the women is also inculcated in this plan.
In this way in the eighth five-year plan, the subject of ‘Human Development’ is major issue in which the main focus is given on the theme ‘development of women.’ In this plan it is also expected to introduce special programs to enable women to function as equal partners and involve them as active participant in the development process.

2.10.1.9) Nineth Five Year Plan

The special feature of 9th Five year plan (1997-2000) is empowering women as the agents of the social change. This plan has made two significant changes in the conceptual strategy of women development. Firstly ‘Empowerment of Women’, it has became one of the nine primary objectives of Ninth Five year plan. Secondly, the plan attempted convergence of existing services available in both women specific and women related sectors.

The best approach of the plan is to enable women to their rights both within and outside home, an equal partner along with men. In this regard, directions are issued to both the centre and states to adopt a special strategy of ‘Women’s Component Plan’ (WCP). It is also stated in the plan that not less than 30 % of funds or benefits flow to women from all the general development sectors.

The innovative idea of reservation of seats for women in Parliament and State legislative assemblies is introduced in this plan. The 30 % representation for the women is proposed in public sector and expected to provide base for large entry for women. Education, Health, Gender equality, Participation, Entrepreneur are other subjects included in the plan for the women development. In this way this plan has enumerated special features for the women empowerment

Whereas on the part of enactment or implementory aspect this plan is badly criticized. Though number of government organisations voluntary groups or social organisation actively participated, but there was a failure on the part of implementing authorities’ as non-active involvement of the Central Ministry of Women and Child Development Department. And the plan is also criticized, there are many loopholes in policy implementation at every stage. These loop holes are the main reason of the failure of the plan. There are number of suggestions received from several front for example need of inter-sectoral co-ordination, monitoring, supervision and feedback mechanism.
2.10.1.10) Tenth Five Year Plan

The Xth Five year plan is really good endeavored to women empowerment. This plan is enacted for the period of 2002-07. The special commitments of the Xth Five Year Plan to empower women are

The Approach: To continue with the major strategy of ‘Empowering Women’ as ‘Agent of Social Change and Development’.

Strategies: To adopt a specific 3-fold strategy for empowering women, based on the prescriptions of the National Policy for Empowerment of Women. It includes

-Social Empowerment- Providing women easy and equal access to all the basic minimum services through various affirmative development programmes. So women can realize their potentials fully.

-Economic empowerment: To ensure provisions of training employment and income- generation activities with both ‘forward’ and ‘backward’ linkages with the ultimate objective of making all women economically independent and self-reliant; and

-Gender Justice: To eliminate all forms of gender discrimination and thus, allow women to enjoy the rights and fundamental freedom on par with men in all spheres of life-social, political, civil and cultural, etc.  

The integrated approach adopted by two on-going programmes of women empowerment viz. Swa-shakti and Swayamsidha. The concept of ‘Self Help Groups’ is further strengthened and expanded during the tenth plan with an ultimate objective of universalizing of power from the grass root level networking.

The plan has also noted down that efforts by governmental institutions are not adequate in terms of human and financial resources to achieve empowerment and advancement of women in its various dimensions. Therefore, they need to be supplemented by Civil Society Organisations or Voluntary Organisations or Non-government Organisation and the private corporators.

As an outcome of this plan large numbers of such organisations have been emerged throughout the country. Some of them have also made significant contributions towards projecting and addressing issues related to women especially at the grass root level. Services of these organisations are encouraged, supported and availed in many ways. It turned this movement of women development as process of empowering women and becomes truly a national and peoples movement.
Thus the Xth five year plan is endeavored to increase involvement of the corporate and private bodies in fulfilling their social responsibility through empowering women.

As a part of the efforts for empowering women the Xth Five Year Plan recommended the Task Force for Women and Children for the women related legislations and expeditious action. It has been with the objective to bring necessary amendments and enact new legislation if required to improve status of women.

Finally the Xth five year plan is also concentrated on the role of women in decision-making process. Prior to this statement, the representation of women in administrative and decision making is as low as 7.6 % (2000) in the premier services of Indian Administrative Service and Indian Police Service; their representation in political decision making is 8.5 % (2001) in Parliament and 10.8 % (2001) in the Central Council of Ministers. No doubt, they represent 26.7% 2001 in Panchayats against the 33.1/3% reservation for women. When increasing number of women are positioned at various levels of decision-making, it is bound to have a definite impact on public policy in favor of women and thus, women’s issues helped transform into social issues. 38

In this way increased Xth Five year plan is in depth preparatory plan which is enacted For the women ‘empowerment’

2.10.2 Policies for Women

The policies and programmers for education and empowerment of women conducted by the government from time to time. Some of the milestones programs for the women empowerment are listed in forth-coming points.

2.10.2.1) Women is Economic Programme

In the year 1982 this program was launched. This program has received assistance from the ‘Norwegian Agency for Development Corporation(NOARD)’. Under this programme financial assistance is given to Women Development Corporation, some autonomous bodies and also to voluntary organisations to train poor women, mostly in non-traditional area and to ensure their employment in these areas. The main objective of this program is to bring more income in the hands of women so they can lead to economic stability and better social life.
2.10.2.2) National Policy of Women’s Education -1986

The major recommendation under this policy is Education which used as an agent of basic change in the status of women. Scenario of women education is reviewed under this policy and women studies are undertaken in this direction. In this policy it is realized that in order to neutralize the accumulated distortions of the past, there will be positive and interventionist role of government is needed in the empowerments of women.

Women’s studies will be promoted as a part of various courses through educational institutions, encourage them by taking up active programmes for further development of women “The policy of non discrimination will be pursued vigorously to eliminate sex-stereo typing in vocational and professional courses and to promote women participation in non traditional occupations as well as in existing and emergent technologies.” This program also highlighted the positive relationship between education and employment.

2.10.3 Other policies
2.10.3.1) Programme of Action -1966

This programme is time- bounded targets, policy parameters and strategies for education of women. This plan increased access of women to vocational, technical professional education to existing and emergent technologies. This programme is actively implemented at national and state level.

2.10.3.2) Training and employment programme

This program is launched in the year 1987 with an objective to provide new knowledge and update the skills of poor women and assist women in the traditional sector for example:- Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Dairying Fisheries, Handloom, Handicrafts, Khadi and Village Industries, Social Forestry and Waste Land Development for enhancing their productivity and incomes.

2.10.3.3) National Policy on Education Review Committee:-

With several dimension of women empowerment practicable policies are recommended in the National Policy an Education Review Committee (NPERC)-1990 viz. equality in learning, vocational education for women research and development of studies of women, employment and hostel facilities for women etc.
2.10.3.4) Programmes of action 1992

This action plan 1992 mainly recommended the measures to make the education as an effective tool for empowerment of women. It is included to enhance self-esteem and self-confidence and enabling women to get education, employment and better health. This program has provided due attention to encourage women education, professional knowledge and skill for their economic independence.

2.10.3.5) National Policy 2001

It is a strategic approach of the National Policy for the women empowerment 2001. The Origin of Policy lies in the recommendations made in the National Perspective Plans for women Commitment to adopt a National Policy for Women Empowerment-2001 by every member nations and made in the Fourth World Conference for women. This conference was held at Beijing in the year 1995. On the background of Beijing Policy, a well-framed National Policy for the Women Empowerment-2001 was enacted in India. This policy has goal to bring advancement, development and empowerment of women. It should be through a process of change in societal attitude towards women, elimination of all forms of discrimination against women in all spheres of the life. So it will deserve to empower the women both socially and economically.

The action plan for National Policy for Empowerment of Women (2001) is framed and activated through- creating an environment and positive economic and social policies. This policy has enabled, the women to realise their potential for self-development. This plan has also expected to activate human rights and fundamental freedoms for women on par with men in all spheres-Political economic, social, cultural and civil. To eliminate gender discrimination, participation in decision-making and strengthening partnerships with civil society, particularly women organisations corporate and private sector agencies participation are also included through this plan.

The operational strategy, as prescribed in this policy, directs to all the Central Ministers and State Department to draw up time-bound Action Plans for translating the policy into a set of concrete actions through a participatory process of consultations with all the concerned, both in the governmental and non governmental sectors.

Accordingly, the first step in this direction is formulation of National plan of action by the Department of Women and Child Development., The creditable
achievements of this plan is in-built mechanism for effective co-ordination monitoring of the implementation of the policy, besides evaluating the impact of the implementation of policy in improving the status of women, based on a Gender Development Index.

2.10.3.6) Support Services 1997

The scheme is included in the year 1997 to support Women and Balika Samiridhi Yojana. The main objective of this schemes is to change the attitude of community towards the girl child. This scholarship scheme included monetary incentive for the poor family having girl child.

2.10.3.7) The Swa Shakti Project

In this project Self Help Group (SHGS) for women is formed. The main aim of this project is to work towards gaining access and control over physical, social, and economic resources as well as political process from the year 2001. For women development such product has capacity to bring women together under one roof Self Help Groups. The main achievement of this project is creation of Self Help Groups. These Self Help Group are means to self reliance and helpful in increasing the confidence among the women.

2.10.3.8) Rehabilitation of Marginalized Women

As a part of social security the government has started this scheme for poor marginalized women by providing them shelter, medical facilities, pension and security.

2.10.3.9) Hostel for Working Women

Under the Department for women and Child Development Construction and expansion of hostel building for the working women in another major project. This scheme also provides hostel accommodation at moderate rates which has enabled women to seek employment or participate in training programs at different places mostly far from their home. This scheme has been also applies for the short stay homes for women and girls. It has aimed to protect and rehabilitation, and girls and women who face moral danger mental strain and social ostracism due to their family problems.

2.10.3.10) Women’s Education

The government of India has taken due efforts and provided resources to comprehensive literacy drive for women. It is with an aim to meet the demand of worldwide employment especially skilled persons. India has also recognized skilled
human resources. Women educational policies have mainly focused on acceleration of
literacy among women for their empowerment.

The special attention has been given to literacy particularly among the poor,
socially weaker section of society, where women including the girl child are debarred
from and are devoid of learning for various reasons.

Several adult education programmes were initiated from time to time viz. Social
education is started in 1951. Former Functional Literacy Program in 1967, Non
Formal Education 1978, National Literacy Mission in 1988 and Total Literacy
Campaign in 1991. Not only to reduce the dropout rate, some incentive schemes has
been adopted by the government for example Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Mahila
Samakhya, Mid Day Meal Scheme etc.

Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is a Comprehensive Scheme. It is launched in the
year 2000 with joint collaboration with the state. The aim of this Abhiyan is to make
wider scope for elementary, education, throughout the country. This scheme has also
aimed at seeking the bridge for gender inequality by giving due emphasis to promote
education for girl child in the society and on a large percentage to afford them social
justice security and equality at par with the male child. With an aim to promote the
Abhiyan the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education
(Midday Meal Scheme and National Programme for Education) of girls at elementary
level (NPEGEL) are implemented as supportive programs.

The government has enacted other innovative programs for women
development for e.g. Women Co-operation Counselling Center for students and
adolescent groups, Lecture Series on development issue etc.

2.10.4 Legislative Support For Women Development

From time to Support Women Development Programs, the government has
enacted several Supportive Laws. Some important laws are listed as below.

- The Immoral Traffic (prevention) Act, 1956
- The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 (28 of 1961)
- The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986
- The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act 1987 (3 of 1988)
- The Guardians and Wards Act 1890 (8 of 1890)
- Indian Penal Code, 1860
- The Charismas Marriage Act, 1872 (15 of 1872)
• The Indian Evidence Act, 1872 (yet to be reviewed)
• The Married Women’s Property Act, 1874 (3 of 1874)
• The Workmen’s Compensation Act 1923
• The Legal Practitioner (Women) Act, 1923
• The India Succession Act, 1925 (39 of 1925)
• The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 (19 of 1929)
• The Payment of Wages Act, 1936
• The Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937
• The Factories Act, 1948
• The Minimum Wages Act, 1948
• The Employees State Insurance Act, 1948
• The Plantation Labour Act, 1951
• The Cinematograph Act, 1952
• The Special Marriage Act, 1954
• The Hindu Marriage Act 1955 (28 of 1989)
• The Hindu Adoptions And Maintenance Act, 1956
• The Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956
• The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 (53 of 1961)
• The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961
• The Maternity Benefit Act 1961
• Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966
• The Foreign Marriage Act, 1969 (33 of 1969)
• The Indian Divorce Act, 1969 (4 of 1969)
• The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971 (34 of 1971)
• Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973
• The Bonded Labour system (Abolition) Act, 1976
• The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976
• The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1979
• The Inter State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979
• The Family Courts Act, 1984
• The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986
• Juvenile Justice Act, 1986
• The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986
• National Commission for Women Act 1990(20 of 1990)
• The Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Boatels and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act 1992
• The Pre -Natal Diagnostic Technique (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994
• Reviewed by National Commission for Women (NCW- 2000)
• Reviewed by the Task Force on Women and Childrenf Reviewed by both NCW and the Task Force of Women and Children (2000-2001)

2.11 Present Scenario of Women Empowerment in India
• Women employment in the states and union territories has fallen by 35,000 during the period 2001 to 2002. It has recorded 5.07 million on March 31, 2001, which later decreased to 5.03 million on March 31, 2002.
• On March 2001, 4.94 million women employees were engaged in organized sector of which 2.85 million were in public section and 2.09 million in the private sector
• It is however, encouraging that the women employment reflected increase in almost all the zones of the country except the Central Zone. In Central Zone a decrease in women employment of 0.18 % over the corresponding quarter of the previous year was recorded.
• An increase of 3% in Women’s Employment was observed in Orissa Kerala Karnataka and and, Andaman and Nichobar Islands.
• Women’s employment in all major industrial divisions registered an appreciated growth during the quarter ended March 2001 over March 2000.
• The growth of women’s employment over the previous year in the private sector was registered at 1.18 % whereas the public sector indicated an increase of 0.08 % during 2000-01.  

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