

## **A STUDY ON ISSUES AND CHALLENGES OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH DESIGN THINKING IN INDIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study attempts to analyze the status of Women Empowerment in India and highlights the Issues and Challenges of Women Empowerment. Today the empowerment of women has become one of the most important concerns of the 21st century. But practically women empowerment is still an illusion of reality. We observe in our day to day life how women become victimized by various social evils. Women Empowerment is the vital instrument to expand women's ability to have resources and to make strategic life choices. Empowerment of women is essentially the process of upliftment of economic, social and political status of women, the traditionally underprivileged ones, in the society. It is the process of guarding them against all forms of violence. The study is based purely from secondary sources. The study

reveals that women of India are relatively disempowered and they enjoy somewhat lower status than that of men in spite of many efforts undertaken by the Government. It is found that acceptance of unequal gender norms by women is still prevailing in society. The study concludes by an observation that access to Education, Employment and Change in Social Structure are only the enabling factors to Women Empowerment.

### **KEYWORDS:**

Women Empowerment, Education, Health, Socio-Economic Status, Crimes against women, Policy implications.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Women empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social, educational, gender or economic strength of individuals and communities of women. Women's empowerment in India is heavily dependent on many different variables that include geographical location (urban/rural), educational status, social status (caste and class) and age. Policies on Women's empowerment exist at the national, state and local (Panchayat) levels in many sectors, including health, education, economic opportunities, gender based violence and political participation. However there are significant gaps between policy advancements and actual practice at the community level. Empowerment of women is essentially the process of upliftment of economic, social and political status of women, the traditionally underprivileged ones, in the society. It is the process of guarding them against all forms of violence. Women empowerment involves the building

up of a society, a political environment, wherein women can breathe without the fear of oppression, exploitation, apprehension, discrimination and the general feeling of persecution which goes with being a woman in a traditionally male dominated structure. Women's empowerment is the most crucial point for the overall development of a country. India is amongst the countries which are not safe for women. There are various reasons for this. Firstly, women in India are in danger of honor killings. Their family thinks it's right to take their lives. In addition, domestic violence is a major problem in India.

The men beat up their wives and abuse them as they think women are their property. Moreover, because women are afraid to speak up. Similarly, the women who do actually work get paid less than their male. Moreover, the education and freedom scenario is very regressive here. Women are not allowed to pursue higher education, they are married off early. The men are still dominating.

## EMPATHY

Design thinking stage	Potential questions
Empathy	1. Why do women need empowerment? 2. Which is the main factor to develop women empowerment? 3. What are the issues and challenges of women empowerment?

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The issue of women empowerment is a critical concern in today's society. Despite significant progress over the years, women still face numerous challenges and barriers that hinder their empowerment and equal

participation in various aspects of life. This problem statement aims to highlight the multifaceted issues and challenges surrounding women's empowerment.

Design thinking stage	Interference
Define	1. What are the issues and challenges of women empowerment? 2. What are the solutions to be provided for the issues and challenges of women empowerment?

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ❖ To know the concept of Women Empowerment.
- ❖ To assess the Awareness of Women Empowerment in India.
- ❖ To analyze the Factors influencing the Economic Empowerment of Women.
- ❖ To study the violence against women in India.

## SCOPE OF THE STUDY

- ❖ Women empowerment helps in reducing gender inequality in society.
- ❖ Women empowerment helps in improving the standard of life of women in rural as well as metro areas.
- ❖ It also helps in reducing domestic violence and crime against women.
- ❖ The empowerment of women has also brought a lot of social and economic gains to India.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

- ❖ Empowering women is essential to the health and social development of families, communities and countries.
- ❖ When women are living safe, fulfilled and productively, they can reach their full potential.
- ❖ Contributing their skills to the workforce and can raise happier and healthier children.

## LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- ❖ Women's empowerment can face resistance from those who believe in traditional gender roles or who fear the loss of power and control.
- ❖ Women's empowerment may not necessarily benefit all women equally and may instead benefit only a certain class or

group of women.

- ❖ Women's empowerment may go against cultural and social norms, leading to backlash and making it more difficult for women to gain and maintain equal rights and opportunities.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A research methodology is the specification of methods and procedures for acquiring the information needed to structure or to solve problems. It is the overall operational pattern or framework of the project that stipulates what information is to be collected from which sources,

and by what procedures. Although research design may be classified by many criteria, the most useful one concerns the major purpose of the investigation. Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. Information can be collected from only a part of the population

## TOOLS USED

- Percentage analysis
- Chi-square
- ANOVA

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Purusottam Nayak and Bidisha Mahanta (2009)** Both authors studied the status of women empowerment in India using various indicators like Household decision making power and freedom of movement of women. They also reveal about domestic violence and many other issues faced by women. Their study reveals that education and employment are the main solutions to issues faced by women.

**Duflo E. (2011)** Women's Empowerment and Economic Development, National Bureau of Economic Research Cambridge The study argues that the inter relationships of the Empowerment and Development are probably too weak to be self sustaining and that continuous policy commitment to equality for its own sake may be needed to bring about equality between men and women.

**(Anita Chaudhary 2012)** Thus supporting women to earn income through self employment is an important tool of empowerment.

**(Grishma M. Khobragade 2013)** Empowerment of women involves many things such as economic opportunity, social equality and personal rights. Without freedom to work and earn a good income the goal of empowerment is difficult.

**Dr. (Smt.) Rajeshwari M. Shettar (2015)** Author has found out various crimes, their relative rate over 2012-13 and also discussed Hindrances of Women Empowerment, problems faced by their needs and solutions to increase women empowerment.

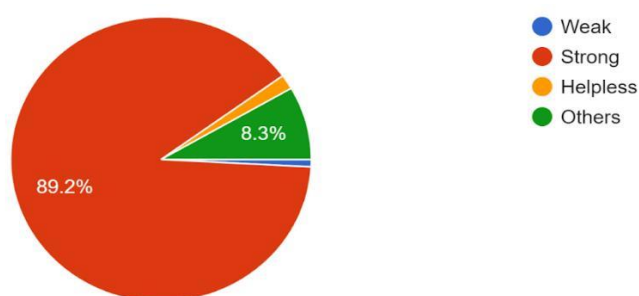
Current research on women empowerment mainly looks at its issues and challenges and it could be investigated to see the impact of cultural and societal norms on women's empowerment

initiatives. However this topic was researched by many persons but still it would be a valuable research avenue.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

**TABLE 1.1 WHAT REMINDS YOU WHEN THINKING OF WOMEN OF OUR SOCIETY ?**

PARTICULARS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE%
Weak	1	0.8%
Strong	107	89.2%
Helpless	2	1.7%
Others	10	8.3%
Total	120	100%



### INTERPRETATION:

The above table shows that 0.8% of the respondents think women are weak, 89.2% of the respondents think women are strong, 1.7% of the respondents think women are helpless, 8.3% of the respondents think women are others in our society.

**TABLE 1.2 PRESENT CONDITION OF WOMEN IN OUR NATION?**

	ObservedN	ExpectedN	Residual
Bad	4	30.0	-26.0
Good	94	30.0	64.0
Fair is enough	18	30.0	-12.0
At its best	4	30.0	-26.0
Total	120		

**Test Statistics**

	Present Condition
Chi-Square	186.400 <sup>a</sup>
df	3
Asymp.Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 30.0.

**INTERPRETATION:**

The above table shows the present condition of women in our nation, 4% of respondents says bad, 94% of the respondents says good, 18% of the respondents says fair is enough, 4% of the respondents says at its best.

**TABLE 1.3 WHAT MAKES YOU A STRONG WOMEN?**

	ObservedN	ExpectedN	Residual
Education	10	30.0	-20.0
Occupation	5	30.0	-25.0
Both	102	30.0	72.0
None	3	30.0	-27.0
Total	120		

**Test Statistics**

	Makes a strong women
Chi-Square	231.267 <sup>a</sup>
Df	3
Asymp.Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 30.0.

**INTERPRETATION:**

The above table shows that what makes a strong woman, 10% of the respondents says education, 5% of the respondents says occupation, 102% of the respondents says both, 3% of the respondents says none.

**TABLE 1.4 HOW DO YOU EMPOWER YOURSELF AND WOMEN AROUND YOU?**

**Descriptives**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Be yourself	13	1.9231	1.03775	.28782	1.2960	2.5502	1.00	4.00
Setgoals	38	2.3684	1.19506	.19386	1.9756	2.7612	1.00	4.00
Work on your self confidence	48	2.4375	1.04995	.15155	2.1326	2.7424	1.00	4.00
All of the above	21	2.1429	1.15264	.25153	1.6182	2.6675	1.00	4.00
Total	120	2.3083	1.11367	.10166	2.1070	2.5096	1.00	4.00

**ANOVA**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.443	3	1.148	.923	.432
Within Groups	144.149	116	1.243		
Total	147.592	119			

**INTERPRETATION:**

The above table shows that how to empower yourself and women around you, 13% of the respondents says by yourself, 38% of the respondents says set goals, 48% of the respondents says work on your self confidence, 21% of the respondents says all of the above.

**TABLE 1.5 HOW CAN WE TACKLE OUR CHALLENGES FROM A POSITION OF STRENGTH?**

**Descriptives**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Make a plan	36	2.6111	.99363	.16561	2.2749	2.9473	1.00	4.00
Positive mindset	36	2.5556	.96937	.16156	2.2276	2.8835	1.00	4.00
Think big	23	2.8696	.62554	.13043	2.5991	3.1401	1.00	4.00
Other	25	2.6000	.86603	.17321	2.2425	2.9575	1.00	4.00
Total	120	2.6417	.89627	.08182	2.4797	2.8037	1.00	4.00

**ANOVA**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.539	3	.513	.633	.595
Within Groups	94.053	116	.811		
Total	95.592	119			

**INTERPRETATION:**

The above table shows how we can tackle our challenges from a position of strength, 36% of the respondents says

make a plan, 36% of the respondents says positive mindset, 23% of the respondents says think big, 25% of the respondents says others.

**FINDINGS**

- Majority (89.2%) of the respondents thought women are strong.
- Majority (94%) of the respondents said the present condition of women in our nation is good.
- Majority (102%) of the respondents said both education and occupation makes a strong woman.

- Majority (48%) of the respondents said working on yourself confidence will empower yourself and women around you.
- Majority (36%) of the respondents said a positive mindset and make a plan would tackle our challenges from a position of strength.

## SUGGESTIONS

- ❖ The first and foremost priority should be given to the education of women, which is the grassroots problem. Hence, education for women has to be paid special attention.
- ❖ Awareness programmes need to be organized for creating awareness among women especially belonging to weaker

sections about their rights.

- ❖ Women should be allowed to work and should be provided enough safety and support to work.
- ❖ Strict implementation of Programmes and Acts should be there to avoid the mal-practices prevalent in the society.

## CONCLUSION

Given the way in which India has become one of the fastest-growing economies, India also needs to focus on achieving the goal of women empowerment in the near future. We need to understand this work of women empowerment because only through this, gender equality and economic progress can be achieved in the country. Women represent half the world's

population and gender inequality exists in every nation on the planet. Until women are given the same opportunities that men are, entire societies will be destined to perform below their true potentials. The greatest need of the hour is a change of social attitude to women.

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