

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND ITS ASPECTS

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Abstract

Women have become a strong pillar of support to their families only by empowering themselves. They are not just a support to their families but to the society as well. The factors that are responsible for women empowerment like education, income, self esteem and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have been discussed. There are many barriers in their path while climbing the steps towards independence. They face many problems like gender discrimination and wealth issues in their day to day lives. Government has been acting as a helping hand to women in every field. They are providing financial aid, security and many special policies to women. This has helped to remove poverty among them and has given them a platform to become entrepreneurs.

Key Words: Women Empowerment, Women Entrepreneurship, Women, Challenges, Schemes

Objective

The objective of the paper is to study the major challenges faced by women, role of various factors that are responsible for women empowerment and various schemes launched by government to promote women empowerment.

Introduction

Women empowerment is the procedure that enables women to attain their real identities and power in all aspects of living. India believes in creating Indian women, self-sufficient and empowered (Sarfaraz, L., Faghih, N., & Majd, A. A., 2014).

Education is the key to success for every individual. Every individual includes all men and women. In our democratic society, every person has the right to get educated. Women being the strong pillar of our society must have the supreme right to get education. It is essential to overcome the barriers in the way of education for women. Women empowerment should be promoted to help them take a step towards their rights and career. Women have the potential to work but only when they possess the required knowledge and skills.

Women in the rural sector are very hard working in their day to day chores but are unaware of their latent talent. Awareness programmes should be organized for women in the rural areas so that they can forgo their superstitions and move towards modernisation (Sundaram, et al., 2014). They should be given an opportunity to get educated so that they can overcome issues like early marriage and can stand for themselves. Moreover, they have wide areas in which they can excel such as poultry, animal husbandry, handlooms, farming, fashion designing and many more. The literacy rate among the women must show a rise but our country is facing a low literacy rate among the women as compared to men.

Challenges faced by Women

Gender based discrimination (Mishra, A. D. (2014).) is one of the biggest hurdles which women face, which act as a roadblock in their path. Their conscience shackles while fighting for their rights. They have to face many trials and tribulations in their day to day life in order to make their dreams come true. Men easily get their rights but women need to fight for it. According to the reports of the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), over a million baby girls die as a result of their gender. Tackling the problem of gender discrimination and women's empowerment in India is a hard fight against significant societal structural factors that are opposed to women's growth and development (Gangadharrao, K. M.,2012). Finance is also one of the major factors which hinders the growth and development of women. Women who want to run their own businesses face the issue of availability of limited financial resources (Singh and Belwal, 2008 et. al.). According to patriarchal society, the role of women is confined within four walls as a result they possess lack of awareness related to finance (Goyal, M., & Parkash, J., 2011). The major reason for not seeking credit was lack of information about credit and lack of required security (Mishra and Brahme, 2011). Availability of finance is critical for startups and is always a problem to get sufficient amounts. A numerous options ranging

from loans, etc. the requirement of more cash starts increasing as the business progress. (Thippeswami and Poojitha, 2020). Starting Business on credit is one of the key problems faced by the early stage entrepreneurs in India. Getting financed by the Banks is still tough, after a lot of practices of the governments. There are some more ways of funding like venture capital, angel funding, and private equity which are becoming popular these days, But still institutional finance is not able to meet the entrepreneurial demands.(Goel and Farooque). imited amount of government and institutional support; studies-government policies, attitudes, overall quality of public administration and service to entrepreneurship or lack thereof, have been further cited as the most constraining reasons for African entrepreneurship (Elkan, 1988; Kallon, 1990; Rasheed and Luke, 1995; Koop et al., 2000). The government initiatives have failed to keep adequate pace with the desired entrepreneurial development. European Union fund granted for such developments has reported to be unused owing to lack of government initiatives (Wudneh, 2005). The same statistics hold for the inadequacy of training and updates pertaining to promotion of women entrepreneurship. Impediments of the bureaucracy, corruption and unstable government policies (Chu et al., 2007; Hussain and Yaqub, 2010), obstruct the pathways of entrepreneurs to continue with their businesses. Furthermore, they agree that the country's rising level of corruption has raised the cost of doing business (Gray et al., 1997; Kiggundu, 2002; Hussain and Yaqub, 2010). Women are frequently encouraged to stay longer at official meetings, resulting in unnecessary delays in receiving responses to their inquiries (Roomi and Parrott, 2008). Men are more able than female entrepreneurs to move freely in society and interact with their peers. Within the wider areas of society such as the administration of Government agencies, men relate to women differently than they do to their male colleagues (Al-Riyami, 2002). Despite grandiose claims and rhetoric, the dominant governments in most nations have failed to empower women; women are not included in decision-making. Inadequate budget allocation resources, a lack of political will to address women's concerns, and inefficient execution of legislation aimed at women's safety and welfare are important contributors to women's predicament (BHUYAN, P. M., 2020).

Schemes launched by Government

Government plays an important role in the upliftment of women in society. Proper implementation of schemes provided by the government should be done by respective agencies. (edu) Government has taken various initiatives to empower women by

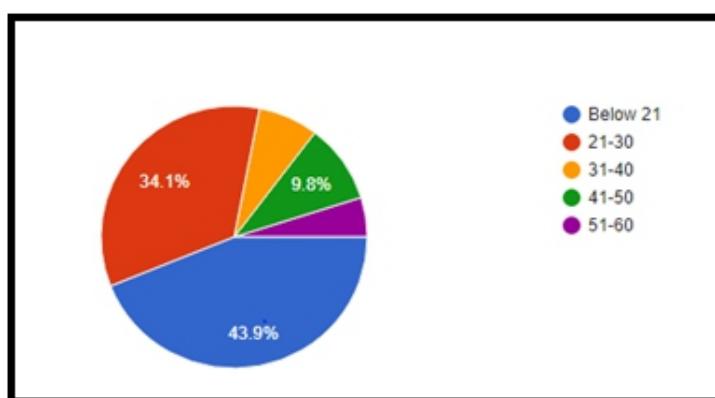
launching various schemes. These schemes act as a support system in the upliftment of women but the major drawback is fewer women have the information of such schemes. Due to many bureaucratic hurdles, it is difficult to get the benefits. Despite many hurdles many women are able to get the benefits of schemes, which are depicted through a table given below.

<u>Name of the Scheme</u>	<u>Beneficiaries</u>
Working Women Hostel	74,666
PMMVY	2,70,56,812
One Stop Centre	3,05,896
Women Help Line	54,25,294 (Women Users)
Swadhar	7956
Ujjwala	5133

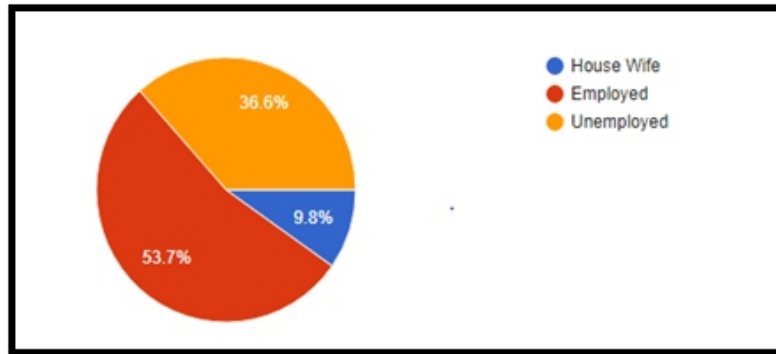
(Source: Ministry of Women and Child Development)

Results and Discussions

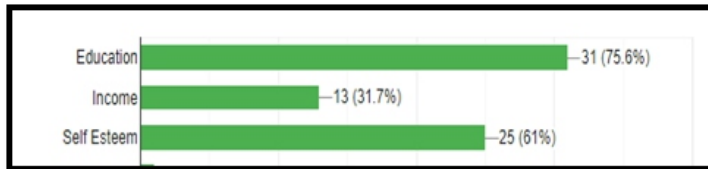
Self administered questionnaire was prepared to study the aspects related to women empowerment. The survey was taken on small scale by the women. In which following are the findings:



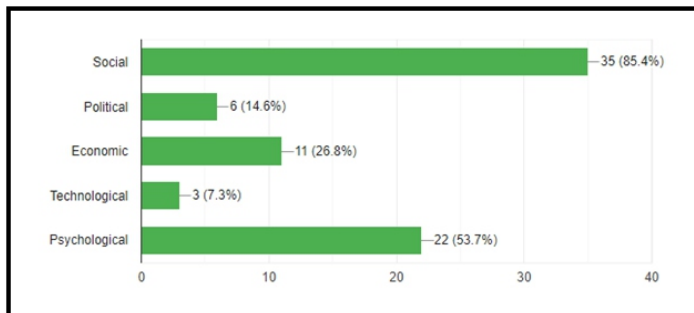
The data was collected from the depicted age groups.



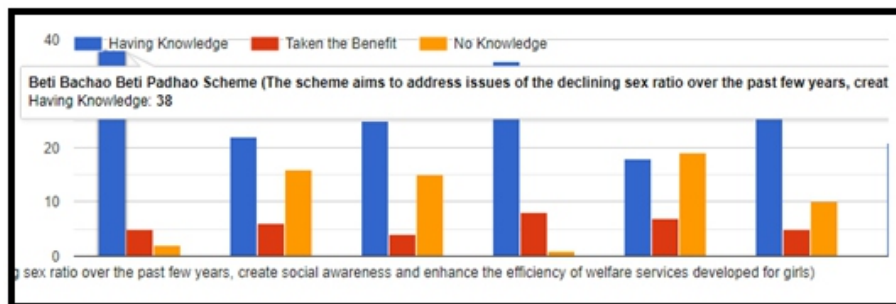
It has been observed that out of total respondents 53.7% of the women are employed and 9.8% are House Wife.



This above diagram depicts the factors which may lead to women empowerment.



The above diagram depicts the challenges which were faced by women.



Out of the various schemes launched by the government it was concluded that only few are having the knowledge and despite having knowledge they did not taken the benefits.

Future Implications

Performance of women nowadays is skyrocketing in every spheres of life. Despite of many reforms taken by the government in order to empower women, some are still confined within four walls and struggling to survive. Lack of awareness is the biggest hurdles which were faced by women; they don't even know the various schemes which were launched by government to empower them. Women empowerment plays a major role in the development of whole economy. There are still many issues which need to be unfolded in order to uplift the women of our society.

Conclusion

Women are considered as the building blocks in the development of nation as a whole. Women empowerment plays a major role in uplifting women of our society. But because of patriarchal society, women lag behind. There are many challenges which were faced by women like financial, bureaucratic hurdles; education etc. With the advent of technology it is easier to get the information in a click of a mouse. Though government has launched various schemes for their upliftment but lack of knowledge and too many paper formalities leads to non a ailment of benefits. According to the self administered questionnaire also only few women have taken the benefit of the schemes and policies initiated by the Government. Therefore there is the urgent need of awareness of women related to various schemes and innovating steps in empowering women.

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