



Woman Empowerment and law

DR. PANKAJ K. PANDYA
Associate Prefacer,
Law College, Himmatnagar
Gujarat (India)

Abstract:

Each year on March 8, International Women's Day is celebrated with much fanfare but no policy-maker seems to take into consideration the fact that the women face very unique problem and crimes committed against them cannot be proved under the existing provisions of the India Evidence Act. A majority of the most heinous crimes against women are committed by people who are respected members of society and can never be considered criminals.

One woman can change anything but many women can change everything. Women bear almost all responsibility for meeting basic needs of the family, yet are systematically denied the resources, information and freedom of action they need to fulfil this responsibility.

Keywords: *Economical, Empowerment, Service area, Social empowerment*

1. Introduction

In the ancient Vedic Age, women used to enjoy equal status and a place of pride in the Indian society. One important measure of a progressive society is in the way it treats its women. As an ancient Sanskrit saying goes- 'Where Women are worshiped the Gods Rejoice.' After the foreign invasion, began the concept of inequality between the males and their female counterparts. The blind following of the western culture resulted in the supremacy of the male while the female-women were deprived of their place of pride in the society. Sadly, in a male dominated set up, women have been relegated as means of entertainment for the male - a mere play thing. The constitution of India has conferred equal lights on both, but the implementation thereof has more or less remained a myth. This has not been only at the behest of the male for many of the customs and traditions are also responsible for their present plight. It is important to safeguard and protect the rights of women, and this should be given due priority. The Domestic Violence Act of 2005 has played a vital role in safeguarding the rights of women and seats them on their deserving place. This would mean conferring on them equal human rights and promising them a social status at par with their male counterparts.

Born as a woman, she continues her existence as a helpless being and till her death is doomed to live unequal to the male. Women have absolutely no idea or awareness as to their rights. The rights are pathetically few, the duties indeed many. It is a paramount importance that women know what their problems are and where to approach for their satisfactory and acceptable solutions. In the absence of such awareness they continue to feed a state of confusion. They are placed in despairing situations and simply know not what to do and given proper guidance in such cases, they will feel emboldened to demand their rights and will be in positions to enjoy / avail of them. They may even place their complaints before the competent authorities and ask for redresses. Not only this, the persons responsible in such cases may be dealt with by the law appropriately.

A woman is an important and inseparable part of the society. And, yet the fact remains that she suffers neglect and even torture and has none of the glory. At the back of this plight are the timidity of her nature lack of legal knowledge on her part and her ignorance. It is because of this that her legitimate rights are not taken note of and are ignored. The present society watches her solitary march as a mute almost a disembodied observer. She is a mere puppet before marriage (childhood) with her parents and with the in-laws after marriage. (Youth & adulthood.) She has no existence of her own. And in situations as these it would not be surprising if women are subjected to unjust and immoral exploitation in the society.

The only way out of this situation is the protection of women as separate entities for which it is important that every woman becomes aware and enlightened and uses her rights and duties for the protection, security and well-being.

She is become just the pivot of the society. The woman is surrounded by difficulties and hardships. Her main difficulties are her protection, sense of insecurity, awareness of her rights, raising her legitimate voice against the family, the husband or he in-laws as the case may be. Besides, she should have complete knowledge of the legal solutions. These are the foremost problems of women of this society.

2. Educational and Economical Empowerment

Educational attainment and economic participation are they key constituents in ensuring the empowerment of women. Educational attainment is essential for empowering women in all spheres of society, for without education of comparable quality and content given to boys and men, updated with existing knowledge and relevant to current needs, women will be able to have access to well-paid formal sector jobs and advance with men. The economic empowerment of women is a vital element of strong economic growth in any country. Empowering women enhances their ability to influence changes and to create a better society.

3. Social Empowerment

Other than educational and economic empowerment, changes in women's mobility and social interaction and changes in intra-household decision-making are necessary. Slight improvement in women's involvement in household decision-making in male-headed household, on such issues as credit, the disposal of household assets, children's education and family healthcare can work wonders. Traditionally, gender based divisions persisted in intra-household decision-making. Women basically decide on food preparation and men make the financial decision. Women are one of the greatest assets in our society. They equal to men in all aspects. Women are more perfectionists in the power to create, nurture and transform.' Today, women are emerging as leaders in growing range of fields. be it aeronautics, medicine, space, engineering, law, politics, education, business...you just name the profession and they are there, all that needed in today's world in their empowerment.

4. Women Empowerment in India

In India, the empowerment process has already begun. We are now witnessing a steady improvement in the enrolment of women in schools, colleges and even in profession institutes. Their health is better as compared to earlier decades. In this decade, women are entering into the job market in increasing numbers. They are showing their skills even in non-traditional sectors like police, defence, administration, media and research fields. Twenty-six laws have been enacted so far to protect women from various crimes. The recent law on the 'protection of women against domestic violence' satisfies the long pending demand of the women activities. In

the political field, the reservation for women is a significant step forward towards their political empowerment. When thirty-three percent reservations for women in Parliament becomes a reality, women's voice will be heard in the highest forum of democracy. The day, women of India will reach zenith in their empowerment. But a lot of work has to be done as there is a category of women (who consider themselves highly educated) that proudly accepts that they don't have digital literacy even though they own a computer, they cannot even operate bank accounts or make travel arrangements for family or handle hospital admissions even during emergencies. Even for a simple task like social visits or shopping generally they need the company of their husbands.

5. Need of Women Empowerment in Service area

In our service area, most of the disadvantaged women work as domestic workers, agricultural labours, sweepers & cleaners in schools, hospitals, shops and establishments. They do not have permanent, dignified, sustainable livelihoods. They work at the mercy of landlords and owners of shops and establishments. They have uncertain and seasonal wage employment in agriculture fields. Unfortunately, agriculture has become gambling in this area due to persistent drought conditions. Due to lack of skills and regular income generation activities, they are below the poverty line. We conducted need assessment on their skills, market and demand for various market-driven skill trainings, which provide dignified and sustainable livelihoods. After conducting vocational skills training assistance will be provided for establishments of self employment units of their own as well as placement services to the deserving women.

6. Conclusion

Some qualities to be acquired by women to become truly empowered are awareness about risk prevailing at home, in work place, in travelling and staying outside home. They should have political, legal, economic and health awareness. They should have knowledge about support groups and positive attitudes towards life. They should get goals for future and strive to achieve them with courage. The best gift parents today can give to their daughters is education. If women choose to be ignorant then all the efforts taken by the Government and women activists will go in vain. Even in twenty-fifth century, they will remain backward and will be paying a heavy price for their dependence, So, it is a wake-up call for women to awake from their deep slumber and understand the true meaning of their empowerment. In the end I would like to conclude with the following words, "Women as the motherhood of the nation should be strong, aware and alert".

References

1. Argawal, Bina (2010). "Gender and Green Governance: The Political Economy of Women's Presence Within and Beyond Community Forestry." New York, NY: Oxford University Press
2. Nussbaum, Martha C. (1995). "Introduction," in Martha C. Nussbaum and Jonathan Glover, eds. Women, Culture, and Development: A Study of Human Capabilities, pp. 1-15. Oxford: Clarendon Press
3. World Survey on the Role of Women in Development (2009). Women's Control over Economic Resources and Access to Financial Resources, including Microfinance. New York: United Nations.
4. UNICEF. (2007). "Equality in Employment," in The State of the World's Children. New York: United Nations Children's Fund.