



A Study on Challenges, Issues and Status of Women in Present Scenario

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Abstract

This paper attempts to analyse challenges, major issues and overall status of Indian women in present scenario. Today, in 21st century role of Women in Social, Economic and Overall development of this country is inevitable. Practically Women Empowerment & equal Social Status is still an illusion found in literature only. This paper reveals that Women are relatively disempowered and despite of various attempts by Government they enjoy lower status than that of men. This paper shows you the ups and downs & the roller coaster life of women and also the paradoxical shift of Women who was once worshipped as Goddess towards her present scenario. This paper helps in finding out critical issues, problems and challenges faced by them and few solutions to overcome them like Education, Employment, and Change in social structure.

Keywords: Women Education, Empowerment, Socio-Economic Status.

Introduction

India is a divine place of Gods and Goddesses. Since early time various Goddesses are being worshipped and praised but sad reality is the real Goddess i.e. Women in form of Mother, Wife, Sister or Friend is buried deep inside burning layer of inequality, social issues and many crimes. “You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women - Jawaharlal Nehru.”

“According to United Nations (UN) – Women's empowerment has five components:

- i) Women's sense of self-worth;
- ii) Their right to have and to determine choices;
- iii) Their right to have access to opportunities and resources;
- iv) Their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home;
- v) Their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic orders, nationally and internationally.”

We all know and had heard many times that woman are equal and are given same status and freedom as men, but reality is frequently observed on newspaper. Sad reality is they are always given second grade citizen after men no matter what policies or leader's ideology says. India with its rich diversity and heritage has an ugly side too; if women have been worshipped as Goddess, there has been Nirbhayata. Though the situation has improved like education and policy making but implementation and actual reality is daunting.

Women empowerment in India depends on various factors like Geographic location – Urban or Rural, Education, Social Status – Caste and Class and Age. We being proud nationals may like everything of India and many a times criticise western culture but deep inside we also know the fact that women empowerment, social status and power that she enjoys in western culture is far more superior to that in our region. It's really a paradox situation where at a time she was worshipped as Goddess and at other times treated unfairly. Many Government Policies are there but having policies and applying them in reality is different thing. The Government figures may be supportive enough for justification of implementation of policies but sad reality is still in India women faces discrimination, inequalities, social issues and crimes in her daily routine.

I. Literature Review

H. Subrahmanyam (2011) Author has compared women education and has highlighted the increased number of enrolment of girl in schools which leads to increased education rate compared to early times.

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

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 main solution to issues faced by women.

M. Bhavani Sankara Rao (2011) Author has highlighted the improvement of health of SHG women members. Author talks about importance of health of women and make them aware about various policies which support and help in improving health of women.

Doepke M. Tertilt M. (2011) the author uses empirical analysis and non-cooperative family bargaining model in study of “Does Female Empowerment Promote Economic Development?” and shows that women if employed and earns on her own then she can take better care of her child.

Venkata Ravi and Venkatraman (2005) This paper discuss about the effects of SHG on women participation and decision power in family

III.Objective of Study

1. To know the challenges faced by women in present scenario.
2. To study the issues and status of women equality.
3. To study the Factors influencing the Economic Empowerment of Women.
4. To study the various Government Schemes For Women Empowerment.
5. To identify the obstacles and hurdles in the implementation of Women Equality and to offer some suggestions.

IV. Research Methodology

A study on Challenges, Issues and Status of Women in Present Scenario is a descriptive and analytical in nature. To study the status and challenges of women an attempt has been made in this paper. The data used in this paper is completely from secondary sources.

V. Women Life-Cycle & Discrimination

Women Life-Cycle and Discrimination if we see it can be divided into four stages-

- | | |
|--------------|------------------------------|
| 1) Pre-Birth | 3) Youth & Crimes |
| 2) Birth | 4) Marriage & after marriage |

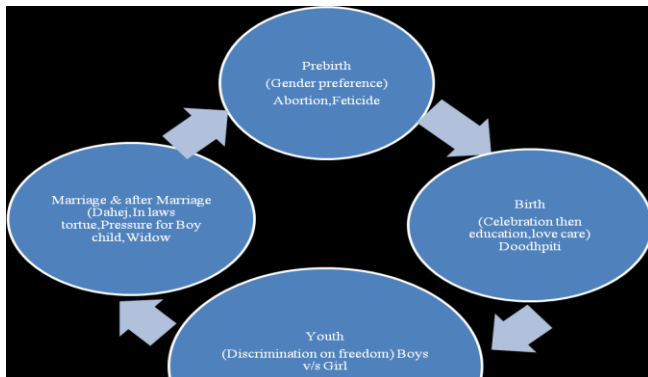


Figure 2 - Projected population pyramid : India - 2001

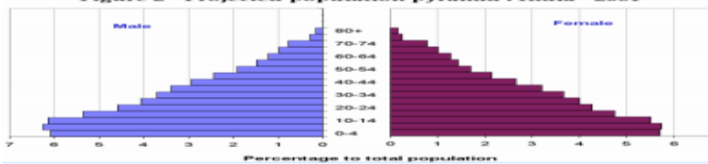
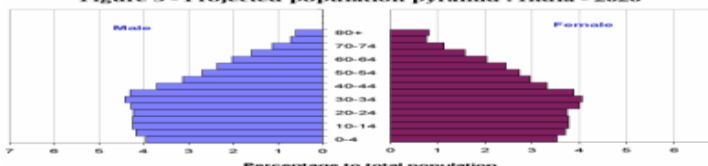


Figure 3 - Projected population pyramid : India - 2026



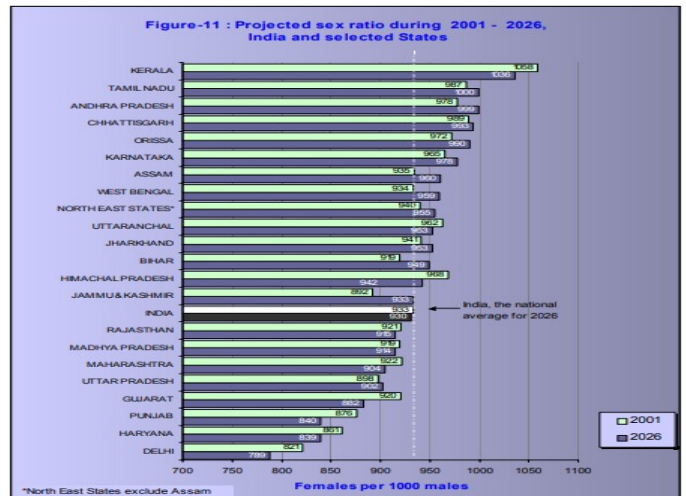
According to Times of India (16 May 2016) “the recent BMC data collected from registered medical termination of pregnancies (MTP) centres, 34,790 women underwent medical or surgical abortion in 2015-16 which is 13% jump from 2014-15 (30,742 abortions which were reported that year). This study also shows teen pregnancy has a sharp rise under-15 category as their numbers jumped from 111 to 185 and 271 during last three years. Also the abortions among under-15 girls in the city have increased by 144% over the last three years.”

Also according to Dr Nandita Palshetkar, “who is president of Mumbai chapter of the Federation of Obstetric & Gynecological Societies of India (FOGSI) says that sex education

1) Pre-Birth: If we talk about pre-birth or family planning stage of parents we often hear that they desire or wish for a boy child, but is it so? Do they really wish or is this the pressure (of in-laws)? Or is this the social culture and environmental factor that influence them to think in this way. We rarely hear that they wish for a girl child. Also if we go through the statistics data available we may see improvement in women status but if we see in the deep remote areas of India, reality may be shocking.

If we see the graphs and see the forecast of projected sex ratio for 2001-26 period (next page), forecast for states like Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and most states are below average ratio of our country (933-India average for 2026) and no doubt if we see few states like Kerala and Tamil Nadu their ratio is justified with their literacy rate. So if we improve literacy rate and counselling and lay more stress on Family planning, ratio of the other states can be improved.

Figure-11 : Projected sex ratio during 2001 - 2026, India and selected States



needs to be given in all schools to reduce pregnancy rate in young girls.”

Few state data (Maharashtra) showed decrease in abortion rate for first time in decade according to a RTI but if we see the scenario on national level it’s not true.

“According to the data from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (Mo HFW), there is increase in abortions," as said by Poonam Muttreja, Executive Director of the Population Foundation of India.”

Few Government reports also states that statistics may not include data about

- Abortions done by Doctors who are not legally given rights for same and who may not work in registered certified facilities
- Those performed by professionals who do not have specific training
- Those using abortion pills without a prescription of a registered medical practitioner.
- Unregistered or not reported in any legal environment.

Also according to report Abortion rates in India were highest for women age below 20 in metro and urban areas but this is not the case in village areas because of early marriages which mean very less premarital or unwanted pregnancies.

V.I Crime against Women& Present Situation of Women

When we discuss about challenges, issues and Women Empowerment crimes against women are main hurdle that need to be studied in deep. If we see any news from time to time we will find number of cases coming against women.

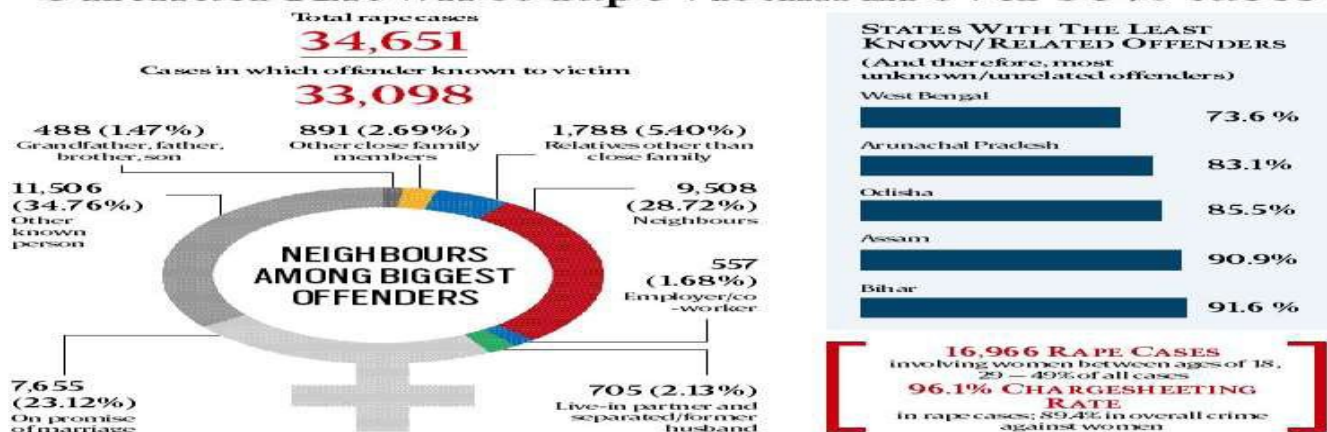
“Trust Law, a news service by Thomson Reuters, has ranked India as the worst G20 country for woman.”We are talking about such a country where we see increased participation of women in all areas let it be Politics, Education, Sports etc. but at the same time number of crime of also increasing.

- As per Women and Men in India-2017 report by Indian Government crime like rape has increased by 12% in 2016, Kidnapping by 9%and here the figures are only reported ones so we can imagine the total increase in crime rate in India.
- From official records more than 50% cases were between age group 18-30 years of age and in more than 90% case offenders were relative or known persons and neighbors.
- Also if we see kidnapping more than 50% were with intention of marriage.
- If we see Dowry, Dahej and Crime by Husbands and Relatives luckily registered data say decrease in them and reason can be strict laws, punishments, education, modernization and status in society has also helped a lot in this issues but still in remote areas dowry, dahej and crime by husband, relatives is seen and in remote village areas where this major cases take place formal reporting may be low as they are solved outside or women never reports them.

6.1 : Trend in Major Crimes Committed Against Women

Crime Head	2014	2015	2016	% Share in 2016	% Increase in last 1 year
Rape (Sec. 376 IPC)	36735	34651	38947	11%	12%
Kidnapping & Abduction (Sec.363 to 373 IPC)	57311	59277	64519	19%	9%
Cruelty by Husband and Relatives (Sec.498-A IPC)	122877	113403	110378	33%	-3%
Assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty (Sec.354 IPC)	82235	82422	84746	25%	3%
Insult to the modesty of women (Sec.509 IPC)	9735	8685	7305	2%	-16%
Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961	10050	9894	9683	3%	-2%
Total Crime Against Women	337922	327394	338954	100%	4%

Offender known to rape victim in over 95% cases



6.5 : State-wise Distribution of Rape Victims (by age-group) during 2016

State/Union Territory	Below 6 years	6-12 years	12-16 years	16-18 years	18-30 years	30-45 years	45-60 years	Above 60 years	Total	% to All India Victims
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	1	0	0	0	25	3	1	0	30	0%
Andhra Pradesh	17	43	142	261	436	85	9	2	995	3%
Arunachal Pradesh	3	12	25	10	32	7	2	1	92	0%
Assam	0	52	147	265	938	373	4	0	1779	5%
Bihar	0	7	41	121	684	146	9	0	1008	3%
Chandigarh	2	4	18	17	21	6	0	1	69	0%
Chhattisgarh	33	79	340	532	475	150	13	5	1627	4%
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0	0	6	3	5	0	0	0	14	0%
Daman & Diu	0	0	2	6	1	3	0	0	12	0%
Delhi	55	116	294	335	1059	302	9	0	2170	6%
Goa	2	3	15	20	8	11	2	0	61	0%
Gujarat	10	23	175	319	304	146	7	2	986	3%
Haryana	32	82	194	210	474	165	29	3	1189	3%
Himachal Pradesh	6	13	67	62	81	23	6	0	258	1%
Jammu & Kashmir	2	1	9	9	182	51	2	0	256	1%
Jharkhand	0	16	51	138	657	212	36	0	1110	3%
Karnataka	39	73	295	735	418	94	14	3	1671	4%
Kerala	42	146	276	412	525	226	27	7	1661	4%
Lakshadweep	0	2	0	0	2	1	0	0	5	0%
Madhya Pradesh	39	153	964	1323	1790	545	86	8	4908	13%
Maharashtra	107	241	732	1230	1425	436	42	3	4216	11%
Manipur	1	2	7	8	24	11	2	0	55	0%

STATES WITH THE WORST RATES, NUMBERS OF INCIDENTS

State	Incidents	Per 1 lakh female population
Delhi	2,199	23.7
Chhattisgarh	1,560	12.2
Madhya Pradesh	4,391	11.9
Odisha	2,251	10.8
Rajasthan	3,644	10.5
Maharashtra	4,144	7.3
UTTAR PRADESH*	3,025	3.0

*Surprisingly low rate suggests widespread non-registration of rape cases

OVERALL CRIME AGAINST WOMEN

Delhi tops rate chart, UP has biggest national share

State	Cases	Per 1 lakh female population	%age contribution to all-India total
1 Delhi	17,104	184.3	5.2
2 Assam	23,258	148.2	7.1
3 Telangana	15,135	83.1	4.6
4 Odisha	17,144	81.9	5.2
5 Rajasthan	28,165	81.5	8.6
6 Haryana	9,446	75.7	2.9
7 West Bengal	33,218	73.4	10.1
8 Tripura*	1,267	68.2	0.4
9 Madhya Pradesh	24,135	65.5	7.4
10 Chandigarh*	463	64.8	0.1

*Fewer cases, but small populations raise the rate

Meghalaya	12	26	49	36	49	20	2	0	194	0%
Mizoram	1	2	4	2	7	5	0	2	23	0%
Nagaland	2	5	4	8	1	6	0	0	26	0%
Odisha	5	32	404	817	597	127	2	0	1984	5%
Puduchery	0	0	2	0	3	0	0	1	6	0%
Punjab	15	33	175	187	281	139	9	1	840	2%
Rajasthan	6	37	195	539	2032	807	41	0	3657	9%
Sikkim	0	16	27	14	32	9	0	0	98	0%
Tamil Nadu	0	0	0	0	279	37	4	0	320	1%
Telangana	25	65	272	257	480	137	26	16	1278	3%
Tripura	5	28	40	35	73	24	2	0	207	1%
Uttar Pradesh	56	271	1078	710	2092	543	65	2	4817	12%
Uttarakhand	2	13	41	35	166	74	5	0	336	1%
West Bengal	0	0	0	0	804	268	38	0	1110	3%
All India	520	1596	6091	8656	16462	5192	494	57	39068	100%
% to All Age	1%	4%	16%	22%	42%	13%	1%	0%	100%	

Source: Crime in India 2016, National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs.

If we see above and below tables it's clear that rape cases in Delhi, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra are shocking. State wise and age wise rape data is given in below table which shows us the urgent need of taking some crucial measures for reducing this figures which can be education (adult education) and proper guidance and counselling.

Crime can be violence, can be mental physical and can also be public but in all cases fear of violence or fear of crime reduces women participation and also is major hurdle in participation of women in social and economic development.

If we see above tables for politics and labour in both cases women participation is much low. If we see any area we will find women participation much lower and case may be they are capable and willing to participate but are under

7.9 : Labour Force Participation Rate by sex

Country	For Persons aged 15-24				For Persons aged 15+			
	Year	Female	Male	Both	Year	Female	Male	Both
SAARC Countries								
Afghanistan
Bangladesh	2016	23.6	53.1	38.0	2016	33.2	79.4	56.1
Bhutan	2015	31	28	29.6	2015	55.9	71.2	63.1
India @	2015	21.3*	66.8*	45.2*	2015	27.4	75.5	52.4
Maldives	2014	42.9	61.1	52.2	2014	46.8	78.5	62.8
Nepal					2014	79.7	86.8	-
Pakistan	2015	20.7	59.8	40.3	2015	24.2	79.7	52
Sri Lanka	2016	23.3	42.9	32.7	2016	35.9	75.1	53.8

pressure of this evils called society norms which are different for both male and female and fear of crimes.

3.14 Per 1000 distribution of dropping out/discontinuance (for persons aged 5-29 years) by reasons for dropping out/discontinuance : 2014

Major Reasons	Rural		Urban		Rural + Urban	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Not interested in education	251	162	208	143	238	156
Financial constraints	236	154	237	149	236	152
Engaged in domestic activities	59	329	24	231	48	297
Engaged in economic activities	299	39	336	69	310	49
School is far off	6	42	2	18	5	34
Unable to cope up with studies	55	51	53	36	54	46
Completed desired level/class	45	43	83	113	57	65
Marriage		124		171		139
Other reasons*	48	57	58	70	51	62

*include (for all): timings of educational institution not suitable, language/medium of instruction used unfamiliar, inadequate number of teachers, quality of teachers not satisfactory, unfriendly atmosphere at school, preparation for competitive examination and others. For girl students only, additionally: non-availability of female teacher, non-availability of girls' toilet.

If we study above table maximum dropping of education is considerably more for women and main reasons are Domestic Activities and Marriage.

Women and Employment Role in Economy & Social Development

According to the World Bank collection of development indicators, compiled from officially recognized sources, Population of female (% of total) in India was reported as 48.17 % in 2016. If we see daily routine of women in India she works for around 14-15 hours in a day continuously without Salary, Leaves and any incentives. If we see the official reports on national level 22% approx. are in employment rest huge mass is working, is capable but is not recorded. If we can convert this huge population towards official employment we can't imagine the impact that can be bought to our economy. Women if given proper

education and direction (Government support is there only need is of awareness) they can create a huge thrust to our economy. If we talk about social development they are the building blocks of any society. If they are given proper education and support they can mould the future of India in desirable way. They are the one who can teach and guide the future of India in best way possible. By ignoring and not supporting this women population we are not able to reap best benefits (social and economic) that we can.

VI. Findings & Suggestion

Challenges faced by women are as follows:

Challenges	Notes	Solution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Abortion/Feticide killing, ➤ Doodhpiti, ➤ Gender Preference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sex Ratio-In states like Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Gujarat, U.P, Bihar is much low than India Avg. (predicted 933 for year 2026 by Indian Govt.) ➤ Abortion Rate- It's too high specially for age group of less than 20 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <u>For sex ratio</u>- Literacy rate should be increased (sex ratio is high for states like Kerala and Tamil Nadu) ✓ <u>For abortion rate</u> – Marriage at proper age (early marriages and unplanned pregnancy are key issues) ,Sex education and Family planning should be there at high scale ✓ Government scheme awareness and support for girl child by Government can influence and motivate parents for having no gender biasness.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Child Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Government Schemes ➤ Compulsory Education ➤ Overall child education has improved because of Government schemes and schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Improved quality of Government school education, compulsory education for children (specially girls)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Youth-Crimes like Rape,Kidnaping, Molesting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rape has increased by 12% in 2016 ➤ Kidnapping by 9% (maximum for marriage and rape) ➤ In both rape and kidnaping maximum case reports known person to be involved (relative or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Adult Education should be increased ✓ Counselling and teaching self-moral, respect for women and Thought of “Women alone at night is not an opportunity but a responsibility” , should be accepted by all ✓ Strict and fast legal actions for culprits and changing society norms and culture for accepting rape victims

	<p>neighbour) or illiterate person is involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Delhi is at highest position for crime against Women ➤ Above figures are reported and still maximum crimes are not reported because of fear of society, image and respect ➤ Overall we can imagine the figures in total (reported and unreported) which are shocking. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Education Drop out Ratio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Education dropout ratio is high ➤ Marriage and domestic work are main reason for dropout 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Overall education should be improved and literacy rate should be increased ✓ By counselling and making them understand importance of education they should complete education and not drop them because of marriage ✓ Employment- By providing proper employment this ratio can be decreased
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Marriage related issues, ✓ Child marriage, ✓ Dahej, ✓ In law tortures, ✓ In law pressure for boy child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Overall rate of crime by husband and relatives (in-laws) has decreased significantly ✓ Reason can be strict legal actions, Society norms and culture, name and status and also social media ✓ Still this figure is much high in remote areas were this cases are solved outside and not reported formally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Education ✓ Employment ✓ Strict Laws and Legal actions ✓ Awareness about various Government Schemes ✓ Self-capable (Women)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Decision power, employment and education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No powers, no decision making involvement let it be family or any other ✓ Participation in employment and economy ✓ Reason can be NOT ALLOWED by family and husband, FEAR-fear of society, fear of crime and social evils (rape, kidnapping, molesting) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ More involvement should be there ✓ Possible only when they are educated ✓ Better job opportunities are there for them ✓ Awareness about Government support for employment, business(GruhUdyog) for women ✓ Fear of crimes like kidnapping and rape should be removed by having and implementing strict laws and legal actions against culprit.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Widow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Discrimination against widow ✓ Not given equal rights and status in society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Education, changing society norms and culture and providing better job opportunities to them

Government Schemes for Girls and Women

Umbrella ICDS “Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)”

1. Anganwadi Services Scheme
2. PradhanMantriMatruVandanaYojana
3. National Creche Scheme
4. Child Protection Scheme

5.	<u>Scheme for Adolescent Girls (SAG)</u>
6.	<u>National Nutrition Mission</u>
“Schemes for Girls	
1.	ChiranjeeviYojana
2.	DikriBachao Campaign (Save Girl Child) – MatruVandanaYatra
3.	Free Higher Education for Girls
4.	KanyaKelavaniNidhi
5.	Kasturba PoshanSahayYojana (KPSY)
6.	Kunverbai nu Mameru scheme
7.	Post SSC Scholarship for ST Girls
8.	SaraswatiSadhnaYojna
9.	Vidhyadeep Scheme
10.	VidyaLaxmiYojana
Women and Child Schemes of Gujarat Government are listed below	
1.	BetiBachao (Save Girl Child) – MATRU VANDANA YATRA
2.	Fish Entrepreneur Yojana
3.	Ghardivda Bankable Finance Scheme
4.	MahilaVrudh Ashram
5.	Mata YashodaGauravNidhi
6.	SaatPheraSamuhYojna
7.	SakhiMandalYojna
8.	SWADHAR home scheme
9.	SwayamsidhYojna-Self Reliance and empowerment
10.	VidhvaSahay and TalimYojna”
Women Empowerment Schemes	
1.	<u>BetiBachaoBetiPadhao Scheme</u>
2.	<u>One Stop Centre Scheme</u>
3.	<u>Women Helpline Scheme</u>
4.	<u>UJJAWALA : A Comprehensive Scheme for Prevention of trafficking and Rescue, Rehabilitation and Re-integration of Victims of Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation</u>
5.	<u>Working Women Hostel</u>
6.	<u>Ministry approves new projects under Ujjawala Scheme and continues existing projects</u>
7.	<u>SWADHAR Greh (A Scheme for Women in Difficult Circumstances)</u>
8.	<u>Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP)</u>
9.	<u>NARI SHAKTI PURASKAR</u>
10.	<u>Awardees of Stree Shakti Puruskar, 2014 & Awardees of Nari Shakti Puruskar</u>
11.	<u>Awardees of RajyaMahilaSamman&ZilaMahilaSamman</u>
12.	<u>Mahila Shakti Kendras (MSK)</u>
13.	<u>Mahila police Volunteers</u>
14.	<u>Mahila E-Haat</u>
Others	
1.	<u>General Grant-in-Aid Scheme in the field of Women and Child Development</u>
2.	<u>General Grant-in-aid (GIA) Scheme for Assistance to Voluntary Organisations in the field of Women and Child Development</u>
3.	<u>Family Counselling Centre Scheme</u>
4.	<u>Kishori Shakti Yojana</u>
5.	<u>RashtriyaBalKosh (National Childrens Fund)</u>
6.	<u>Dhanalakshmi</u>
7.	<u>Grant-in-Aid for Research, Publication and Monitoring</u>
8.	<u>Gender Budgeting Scheme</u>
9.	<u>Nutrition Education and Training through Community Food & Nutrition Extension Units(CFNEUS)</u>
10.	<u>General Grant-in-Aid Scheme for innovative projects</u>

VII. Suggestion

- Strict Law should be there and not only in documents but care should be taken for proper implementation.

- Women education has to be compulsory and they should be participative enough because education will help them in knowing their rights, in supporting their family and most importantly in moulding economy and social values of country.
- Proper implementation of policies for women empowerment should be done.
- Awareness camp should be organized so that they can know their rights, various policies which will help them to grow and thus in turn will help economy to grow.
- Adult education (for male) will also help in reducing crime rate as observed above maximum crime cases are from illiterate sector of country.
- Also adult education will also help and support growth of economy.

VIII. Conclusion

It is right time to start steps against women empowerment because with proper education and direction supported by Government policies we can get maximum development in both economy and society development because an educated woman only can mould the shape of country's progress. Women across the world lack participation and they are not involved in decision making. Maximum decision making are under male dominance which should be changed and women's participation should be increased. Even in politics their presence can create a huge impact, their role in budget, in policy framing will give them proper rights and also proper opportunity to showcase their talent and skill and whose benefit can be enjoyed by country on whole. But this can be possible only when they are educated, are employed and are participating in decision making. Thus, women should not be neglected, should be given equal rights in real sense, should be made aware about their rights and should be involved in important decision making and should be employed to support growth of their family and country on whole.

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