

# Empowerment of Women in India: Socio-Legal Perspective

**Dr. Sanjeeb Kumar Mishra**

*Associate Professor, IFIM School of Law, India, drskmishra73@rediffmail.com*

The term ‘empowerment’ originated from the concept of American psychology and the thought of ‘Julian Rappaport’ a scientist in the sociology (1981). One may find the origin of the “theory of empowerment” in sociology which gets connected with history of the society and even in the theory of Marxist. Sociologist correctly stated that the ‘empowerment of women’ means preparing them to be financially independent, training them for being monetarily wise, not dependent on others and developing their courage to face any difficult situation with a positive spirit.

**Keywords:** Women empowerment, legal empowerment of women, Domestic Violence, Female feticide, Vishaka Guidelines, Sexual harassment at work place, exploitation, discrimination, Cyber Crimes, online-harassment of women.etc.

## 1. Introduction

What is women empowerment?

Woman empowerment relates to the strengthening of the professional, physical, political, cultural, gender or economic intensity of women individual of the societies. Women are a critical aspect of the overall economy. The comprehensive development and vigorous expansion of a nation can only be achieved when women are regarded as equal partners to men. Empowerment is the process of altering power dynamics to benefit individuals at the lower tiers of the hierarchy. The empowerment of women refers to a process that fosters and enhances women's self-reliance. They cultivate the capacity for self-sufficiency by navigating the dynamics of subordination rooted in caste, socioeconomic status, and familial and communal standing. It includes the capacity to make decisions, manage resources, and engage in participatory relationships within the family and community to achieve these objectives.

The progress of women also signifies their readiness to participate in and even spearhead social initiatives aimed at eliminating disparities in their pursuit of objectives. Women's emancipation entails establishing a society and a democratic environment where individuals are free from oppression, exploitation, distress, misogyny, and the pervasive sense of persecution associated with being a woman in a patriarchal system they can breathe without apprehension. women comprise approximately half of the global population, India, suffers from lower sex ratio. Women should be put on the country's growth agenda in order to reach the desired target they should be roped in as Partners in creation, which will gradually turn the

progress into a mechanism of empowerment.

This ensures their complete involvement in all facets of social and national growth. This level of engagement is important in order to maximize the efficiency of women. Women's liberation will also improve the options and productivity rate of independent women and the mutual engagement of women's organisations has accomplished the same thing. Even if their social status is the same, it is not considered in all places as being equal to an individual. Women have fair rights and status in all facets of life in Western societies. In addition, gender disabilities and inequalities are still prominent in India, today her status is paradoxical since she is both a goddess and a slave.

Women's empowerment in India is significantly influenced by various aspects, including geographic location (urban or rural), educational, social standing (caste and class), and age. Policies promoting women's progress are implemented at national, federal, and municipal (Panchayat) levels in various domains, including health, education, economic opportunity, gender-based violence, and political participation. Women's empowerment facilitates autonomy and freedom in their life. Empowered women become agents of their own growth, capable of making decisions to set their own agenda and sufficiently strong to reinforce their inferior position in society. Women, particularly in rural regions, possess comparatively fewer resources, skills, education, social status, leadership abilities, and mobilisation competencies, which influence their capacity for decision-making and power retention, hence augmenting their dependence on men. They have been confined to the domestic sphere, encumbered by household responsibilities, and subjugated by males, throughout history. Consequently, they have fallen behind in education, career advancement, and employment, resulting in a substantial devaluation of their labour in economic terms.

The empowerment of women necessitates heightened awareness of women's issues, including violence against women, women's rights, opportunities for women, and the importance of gender equity. This involves community organisation, group identification, and collective influence; capacity building and skills enhancement; and a commitment to prepare, strategies, coordinate, and manage various activities.

**Why empowerment of women is required?**

Woman when empowered can get involved in development of the nation., the NCRB statistics say that CAW (Crimes Against Women) are on rise day by day, the alarming statistics stop us from denying the fact that Indian woman is not at all safe in the society. It is not easy for the Nation to handle this problem and to bring a noticeable social change. Widowhood, domestic violence, Health issues, Problems faced by Bengali woman and their problems of Bhadra Lok Culture, child marriages, Rape victims, naming women as witches, imprisoned women, their harassment at workplace and many more are the issues which are linked with lack of empowerment and vulnerability.

Women's standing in India, especially in rural areas, must be improved. An estimate shows that roughly 66% of the rural female population is not being utilised. Because of existing social norms. Women are active in 90% of the jobs of livestock and animal treatment. Women pay for almost half of the global workforce, work almost two-thirds of their waking hours, gain 10% of the world's wealth, and hold only 1% of the world's land. Indian community used to

have Vedas and Puranas that honored women as LAXMI MAA, goddess of wealth; SARSWATI MAA, goddess of wisdom; and DURGA MAA, goddess of strength. Of the 900 million illiterate citizens in the country, nearly 70% of those who are disadvantaged are women. Women occupy just 10% of the seats in the Parliament, and 6% in the National Cabinet. According to previous research, women appear to be less safe than males, even if they are in the same class. They make up fewer than one-seventh of administrators, in contrast to over one-fourth of those in developed countries. Young girls are considered as a big burden in the family. Rape cases are increasing in the modern times which force us to take an initiative about the security of women.

#### Methods to Empower Women:

- Ensuring access to education across all disciplines
- Enhancing women's authority in decision-making processes
- Establishing police stations specifically for women to lodge complaints
- Alterations in women's mobility and social engagement.
- Establishing distinct hospitals for their examinations
- Alterations in women's employment trends
- Establishing distinct educational institutions for their protection
- Ensuring equitable rights Establishing a distinct transportation system
- Alterations in women's access to and authority over resources Self-employment and self-help groups
- Ensuring equitable property rights
- Addressing fundamental necessities such as nutrition, health, sanitation, and housing
- Ensuring equitable access in athletics and other pursuits

This culture should enhance its perception of the term "women".

Encouraging women to excel in their professions and achieve a secured life. In the course of eradicating poverty and decreasing gender disparities, policymakers have implemented various schemes and initiatives that include ways and means for the development and empowerment of women. SHG movement is one of the projects that has been successful in achieving its objectives. However, it is believed that other initiatives and programs have a leading role to play in the development and empowerment of women and are being introduced successfully. The systems and programs for the empowerment of women are mentioned here, in this regard.

Following independence, the Government of India initially committed to facilitating social advancement through three primary domains: constitutional and legislative reforms, structured development predicated on a mixed economy, and governmental financing for social welfare initiatives. All three measures aim to establish a stable, equitable, and productive society. Any of these three measures impact the role of women.

The Constitution of India specifically addresses the requirements of women, enabling them to exercise their rights on par with men and participate in national progress. It aims at establishing a radically new social system in which all people have equal opportunity for growth and prosperity and in which there is no inequality on the grounds of ethnicity, nationality, caste, sex, etc.

Anticipated construction was perceived to be the most effective way to address the multiple poverty problems created by different factors. Before looking at the various laws intended for women, it is important to look at the constitution and find out which of them are the primary and which are derived from it. The constitution and the nation's laws ensure the interest of women's well-being, but the world at large treats them as an inferior class and this leaves them exposed and vulnerable.

The theory of gender equality is laid out in the constitution of Indian Fundamental Rights chapter and in the Directive Principal of State policy. The Constitution of India, does more than only guarantee women equal rights; it also gives the State the right to implement legislation for the advancement of women. The system of a democratic society has helped to advance women in various fields. Numerous international pacts and human rights instruments guarantee gender equality in India. specifically, the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

“Legal-Empowerment” of Women in India.

Legal empowerment means awareness of enforcing the rights and making the shield of the law available to people in their life. Empowerment means the authority given to somebody to do something. The term empowerment means that, the process where in one becomes strong, capable and confident, particularly in controlling his life and asserting his right. This term is applicable to the individual as well as the society. Legal empowerment of a woman is making her aware of laws and giving her the know how to proclaim her rights in the right manner when required. Empowered society is that term where in the society is capable of development.

“Legal-empowerment” is the progression through which the vulnerable are being secured and are trained to use the law to proclaim the rights and interests as against the State and the individuals.

I) The Legal Empowerment aims at the following:

- a) Providing legal protection and opportunity for all.
- b) Protecting the vulnerable from injustice.
- c) Assuring equal access to legal system.
- d) Speedy and affordable legal mechanism.

Empowerment is a tool for feeling confident; it gives larger gateway to knowledge. Decision making becomes concrete when women are empowered. There are many dimensions of women's empowerment. With Social, economic and political legal empowerment would strengthen her thoughts, when she is aware of the legal protection given to her. Protecting women legally and making her aware of her rights makes her confident enough and this is

called legal empowerment.

What is Law with reference to Indian Context?

Indian law is described as ‘set’ of jurisprudence written by formal treaties, written statutes, passed executive orders, decided court judgements and executed administrative actions.

Necessity and Importance of ‘Law’ in the lives of Indian Women.

Law is that gist of code or rules of conduct which has mandatory legal power and effect. This legal body of rules is prescribed and recognized by controlling authority. The law is critical because it provides the rules which are necessary for regulating the conduct of the citizens. It acts a guideline for acceptable behavior. Law guarantees the equality within the communities and social groups. The law mandates the repercussions of violation of the rules. It maintains and brings harmony in the society. The writers of the Indian Constitution have assured that all, including women are equal before law. The State is even prohibited from making unequal rules against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, cast, sex, and place of birth or any of them. At the place of employment also the rule of equality is applicable. Legal equality is ensured in Indian Constitution. For law all are equal. Everybody under the umbrella of Indian flag would get equal backing of law (Art.14 Right to equality) Even at the Parliament of India for occupying the seats at parliament there is no gender bias. While the originating concept is the same, i.e., every citizen of India is treated equal in all aspects, however, the two above-mentioned concepts are slightly and only subjectively different in their nature. The nation accepts the consequence of equal protection of law is equality of law. (Patanjali Sastri, C.J.) Even the qualifications for membership of Parliament and State legislatures do not contain any provision for discrimination between men and women which shows political equality for all the citizens of India. In India women do not have to discuss upon the legal or political disabilities like any other parts of the world. The Constitutional mandate on the State, states that the State, shall take steps to organize village Panchayat and provide them the power to enable them to function as units of self-Government. The Constitution has also stated that in the panchayats one out of three positions kept as seats of women. For social equality, along with our constitution, some women specific laws are legislated post 2001. In the year 2001 Government of India adopted Women Empowerment Policy. Dowry laws are modified, Domestic Violence Act, Sexual Harassment Act 2013, Maternity benefit (Amendment) bill 2016 is passed by the Parliament in March 2017, this bill contains full paid absence from work, to nurse the child, which shows that law has taken care of maternal feelings of the mother to nurse her child. The real meaning of the term “equality” is not the uniformity of treatment to all in all respects. It means that the people from the same situation when approach legal machinery they are equal in terms of the accountability as well as in terms of enforcing their rights as against the remedies. The Political equality in India gives equal approach to men and women from India to the governance and the Parliament there is no gender bias. In India women do not have to discuss upon the legal or political disabilities like any other parts of the world. The Constitutional mandate on the State is very clear that it should be State efforts in organizing “Village-Panchayats “which would be equipped with the powers given by the Nation so as to take decisions as “self-Government” For social equality, along with our constitution, some women specific laws are legislated post 2001. In the year 2001 Government of India adopted Women Empowerment Policy. Equal law should be applied to all in each

and every situation, and there should be no discrimination between one person and another, all should be treated equally.

Wideness of Legal Protection given to Indian women:

1) Dowry and Law: The huge peril of dowry is horrifying. In the era of

World coming together, India is still facing the problem of dowry as shown by NCRB, India faces one dowry death per day. Women are facing terrible situations creating havoc in their lives. The fact of increasing greed lies in ‘use and throw’ policy, consumerism and the desire of artificial wants and desires created by the technological advancements and new market values. Demand and Supply rules the dowry system also. There are parents today also those who take a pride in giving dowry. This turns into the abundance of weddings with huge expenditures and spending crores of rupees as status symbol. Dowry is nothing but a medium to purchase the wife. Women are also responsible for this dowry system some what extent. The dowry Prohibition Act, and its amendments with reference to dowry related violence and crimes, has played an important role in establishing dowry as crime and made it punishable but looking at the vastness of the problem, legal enactments alone are not sufficient. The law has its own limitations. On the other hand, looking in to the rising number of dowry deaths, escalating violence, there is general propaganda by the conservative section of the society that there is wrong application of S. 498A. The modifications are demanded. Such problem will take time to solve. The “social-problem” of such vastness is linked with change in status of the woman. It needs a multi-dimensional strategy. The fight against this evil will end with the education, social reforms and the legislative efforts.

ii) Female feticide, Femicide, Honor Killings, health issues, timid display of women in movies and through media, extra marital relations of the husband, exploitation, discrimination, harassment, violence, eve teasing, issues of Muslim women, problems of working women. Sexual harassment at work place and many more problems women in India are witnessing and it has become the plight of their life. Constitutional protection, Legal provisions and the judicial decisions are protecting them. “The Constitution of India” has given equality rights, reservation of one out of three positions in to local governance, banning the trading and forced labor, assuring “equal pay for equal work”, and it has also given responsibilities to the State to provide “just and humane” conditions of work. The fundamental duty also provides that every citizen should honor the women and stop derogatory practices which will harm their modesty.

iii) New laws are brought under the guidance of experts for the promotion and protection of womanhood. Domestic Violence, Amendments in Maternity Benefit Act, “Sexual Harassment in work Place” laws, modifications in factory laws, Modifications in anti-dowry legislation are some of them.

IV) The law is protecting women in Media also as the Indecent representation of woman in media is forbidden by the legislated rules of law. The representation of women in advertisements and serials is monitored and there is a check under various laws. The derogatory and prejudiced portrayal needs a strict legal check. This strict check is provided by the anti-indecent representation legislation, the press and Registration of books laws, the advertising standards councils, press council guidelines and I.T. Act monitors and prohibits

the derogatory practices through media.

V) Medical Termination of Pregnancy legislation is another help for the unwedded mothers and the other women who are in duress of unwanted pregnancy.

vi) Triple Talaq, annulment of Muslim marriage legislation and other laws Have protected Muslim women.

vii) Cyber Crimes, online-harassment of women is another issue women are facing due to the advancement in the technology. Information Technology Act under s,66 controls such exploitation of women through social networking sites.

viii) Establishment of family courts, lokadalats, alternative dispute mechanism And empowering NGOs are some other aids provided by the legislators of India.

ix) Inheritance of property, Sati ban, widow marriage, changes in Hindu

Succession rules are changing the fate of women and protecting them from the traditional harassment and exploitation.

x)The most important is the establishment of a separate authority to look after the women issues (National Commission for Women) at State and National level to work for and monitor the women related issues has shown the concern the Indian legislators and administrators have for women in India.

**Legal-Empowerment**” of women and the response of Indian Judiciary – Factors of Legal Empowerment.

As India has entered into globalized economy, the growth of the nation depends on both men and women. As we have entered in to the new zone the future of our country needs the help of all the present members of the society. As a Nation India has achieved many things yet many more dimensions are yet to be covered. The world is dynamic. Technology has become a center force. Two decades ago, India was at the infant stage of the development. Society was also crude. Today the literacy rate is going up. The social change is visible. Yet certain norms of the society remain same. The aims of the developing society must differ from the old one. India dreamt on Independence to form a ‘Just and secure’ society. The active part of the judiciary is crucial in fulfilment of the said dream of the members of the society, government and the Constitution of India.

The “Indian Judiciary” has always earned a tremendous respect. The roots of this respect are in the transparency, independence, and truthfulness of the members of the judiciary. The women know the contribution of the Indian judiciary in forming the ‘Just’ society. Hence, they trust the judiciary. We know when the legal mandate is maintained in this society, it is through this organ of the Constitution. As stated by Chanakya, Law and Morality work together in formation of good society and the world is sustained on these two pillars. The fiduciary relation of people and the judges is based on the perception that the judges are impartial and knowledgeable. People today also have not lost the faith in this institution. That is why this third organ of the Constitution is more respectable organ from the other two legislative and executive. The individuality of the “judiciary” is one of the reasons of the respect. An Independent judiciary is the real wealth of this country. When we look behind in the India’s history, we see that the court has been responsive for many changes which society

experienced. To enforce the rights recognized by the Constitution we as a society approach the judiciary.

Latin maxim --“boni judicis est ampliare jurisdictionem” which means that it is the onus of a respectable judge to extend his jurisdiction. The rule of law, on which the law runs, must keep the pace with the society. If the law does not change and remains stagnant and the society goes further it will not be fair for both. The India’s functional judiciary has given the judgements based on humanity and human rights by extending the jurisdiction. It is the power of the Supreme Court to declare and interpret the law of the land. The higher courts of India can contribute in making India a great unit which preserves the culture, traditions and usages. On the other hand, the independence of judiciary would be honored by the masses when the judiciary is serving the humanity.

The betterment of the ‘Society’ and the changing role of the judges: From Gopalan’s case to Vishaka’s case”

The Gopalan’s case (AIR 1950) judgement was given soon after our Constitution came into force. The way the SC interpreted the Art 21 was very narrow. The judgement delivered was based on the Constitutional mandate. It stated very restrictive version of Art. 21, saying that in India nobody can be killed or his personal freedom cannot be disturbed without the due action of law and remedy (Art21) The court held in this case that the “process of law” means the procedure established by law means the law made by the State. Hence the language of the Constitution was used verbatim.

On the other hand, when we see the Vishaka case (1997) for prohibition of “sexual harassment at work place”, in spite of not having the legislation in hand the court by the extended jurisdiction, delivered the great piece of legislation. This judgement stated that to have safe working environment is the right of every working woman. The crime of sexual harassment at work place was for the first time recognized as the crime against the human rights of women. The verdict of the case reflected that it is the case of breach of human rights. It is a systematic discrimination that affects women’s right to life as on the basis of Art. 21, right to livelihood, this crime was noticed by the society because of the activism of the judiciary. The Supreme Court in this case has given the mandatory guidelines, known as Vishaka Guidelines. These rules worked in absence of law till 2013. And finally based on these principles given by the Supreme Court the new law was enacted for prevention prohibition and redressal of sexual harassment at work place. The Court held the employer responsible for providing the safe environment. This transition is experienced by the Indian Society and so the society as such respects the independence of the society. “The life of law” is not based on logic but weaved by net “experiences”.

In Maneka Gandhi’s case (1978) the court has mentioned the interpretation of Art. 21 stating that the due procedure of law which the article means should be the procedure of the process of law based on “right and just” law and not the arbitrary procedure. The procedure of law must pass the test of reasonableness.

The comment of the court about “reasonableness” of process of law is interpreted as the court meant by the human rights. So, from 1978 to 1997, again we witnessed the change in law and the legal experience the judges gave us. Hence the role of the judge

should be dynamic as the law he makes, ‘the precedent’ is both dramatic and educative. The progress of the society depends upon the proper application of law and the needs of the society are changing; hence the judge has to handle the legal provisions in the interest of the society. The judge through his judgement talks to the society and responds to the desires of the society. Hence the decision of the judge in effective enforcement of liberty equality has to be respected.

The Bandhua mukti Morcha’s case (1984) the SC held that the right to life guaranteed included the “right to -live with human dignity and right to live free from exploitation” This showed the Judicial concerns about the downtrodden part of the society. In the case of sexual harassment (Apparel Export Promotion Council case) the SC extended the scope of the guaranteee (Art. 21) and added the words ‘right to live with the dignity’ The SC agreed that the human rights are necessary as they build the personality of the human being. The court further added the need of healthy environment to develop and enhance the personality. The court in short stated the nexus between the human rights and the environment and its development.

#### **Public Interest Litigation: A way for Legal Empowerment.**

Reaching to the court and reaching to the law, in seeking protection of the fundamental rights was very difficult post-independence period. For the weaker part of the society, it was impossible due to the poverty, illiteracy ignorance etc. They did not even understand the meaning of fundamental rights and the meaning of Constitution of India. They could not assert their rights. Hence the denial of justice was prevalent. Here again the judiciary has come to the rescue of such downtrodden people. To make them understand and reap the benefits of the legal rules socio-economic privileges the judiciary moved ahead. The Judiciary took the first step by introducing the PIL (Public Interest Litigation). The eminent Judges of the era (Justice Krishna Iyer and Justice PN Bhagwati) opened the doors of justice to the underprivileged class of India. They took it as their duty to make access available to those, who cannot afford or access it due to the handicap of poverty, illiteracy and other things. The traditional concept of ‘Locus Standi’ was changed by PIL. This was the vital transformation of the Supreme court as they changed the very apprehension of reaching to the justice. Now if the aggrieved cannot reach to the courts, the associations, NGOs or any public-spirited individual may lodge the complaint in the interest of the people at large. In this way all will be benefited. Access to the court has now become a reality. Hence it is said that the socio-economic justice is made. This is another reason why the judiciary respected by the Indian Society. The judges contributed in bringing the social change. Many examples where women are benefited by PIL are given in the courts.

#### **Challenges and remedies in creating legal empowerment:**

All the three organs of the Constitution must show activism in creating legal awareness in women to make them legally empowered.

For achieving legal empowerment of women following are the hindrances:

- (i) Lack of legal education at school level
- (ii) The scheme of Legal Aid is not reaching to the needy women and owing to their Vulnerable condition, women are not able to think that the justice can be accessed with minimum cost

. The most important laws about the health of the women are not known to them. The government should spend more money on improving the health of women. Benefits of the provisions for mothers (Maternity Benefit Act) are not reaching to the women in many types of employment. The unorganized sector is not aware of the health care laws and facilities law makers have provided.

(iii) Traditional norms, such as men are better than women are not changing

Women are not aware of this fact that they are equal. The promotion of gender justice is required on large scale.

(iv) Similarly, morality and equality are the two law features should be fixed in the minds of women so as to bring them up to raise their condition in the society. This can be done with the aid of legal knowledge.

(v) The major barrier in achieving the women empowerment is the factor that at home woman is not recognized as working person when she is not working outside and earning money. Her efforts at home go in vain they are not recognized and she is taken for granted. The home maker is the designation for her better than house wife. In fact, the society should call her domestic engineer who designs the future of the society.

(vi) Slow pace of justice in the court of law.

(vii) The travel of the case from advocate to the judge is costly.

(ix) Accountability and transparency of the courts is necessary to maintain rule of law and achieving empowerment.

Knowledge of technology is less in women. They should learn how to use computers. In cities techno knowhow is more as compare to rural areas.

(viii) Problems of women prisoner's go unnoticed.

(ix) The issue of children born in prisons has to be talked by the authorities Very sensitively.

Some other challenges the organs of the constitution may face:

i) The law makers: The legislators have to study the women issues through the machinery implemented and work for the betterment of women. Domestic Violence Act, Anti Sexual harassment Act are the new additions in Indian set of laws. Similarly, the working women should know their rights at work place and however they are in need of the job, they should fight for their rights.

ii) On the part of the executives: the speedy implementation of laws is the challenge. The speedy inquiry, appropriate actions, awareness campaigns are expected.

iii) On the part of the judiciary, the judicial activism must cross the barrier of Judicial restraint.

IV) Judges should be techno savvy.

v) More Lok Adalats and Legal Aid Counsels should be made available.

vi) Administration of criminal justice should be monitored by the judges. A very large number

of acquittals are taking place because of nonscientific and disoriented investigation.

But only law is not sufficient.

The study of Legal-Empowerment of women" in this chapter that the existing legal provisions are very wide. But looking at magnitude of the issues relating to women, only legal ceiling is not sufficient. The problems are to be tackled with multi-dimensional theories. Law, society, women, NGOs, administrators, education, media, policies and all those who can reduce and curb such issues of women should come together to secure the future of today's woman and to give her the gift of her 'Empowerment'. It is ironical that when Indian mythology places women on a very high level as they call them 'devi' they are worshiped as goddesses; the society adopts double standards and neglects her rights which are granted by the law. There has been over five decades now where the society is evident of declining moral values. So we are facing the problems today. It is sad that the law recognizes her equality, promotes the womanhood and the society on the other hand shows no concern for her honor and her dignity. It is a pathetic reflection on the attitude of the indifference of the society. We having the special provisions in the Constitution and also other legislations, the exploitation, violation of women's rights and their harassment is rampant. They are on the increase. The Constitution levying the duty on every person to give away the acts, disparaging the dignity of the woman (Art. 51(A)) how many people from India are aware of this duty? We take pride in saying that our Constitution has given wide protection to women, and in reality, it is true. But the question is; are the women in India, reaping the benefits provided to them under the Constitution? The answer unfortunately is negative. Lot more has to be achieved. To achieve the goals enshrined in our Constitution, unitedly we need to proceed.

This fight of women should not be treated as fight against 'men'. It is a fight against old aged traditions, against attitude, and a fight against crossing the 'Lakshman Rekha' which is separate for men and separate for women. Therefore, the society now high time must rise for the occasion. Accept the truth that both are 'equals' They are individuals with own identity. Finally, women should get proper and deserved priority.

## **2. Conclusion:**

The belief is that planned development is the most productive approach to cope with multiple problems that may occur while attempting to reduce poverty, deal with imbalances, and avoid prejudice against significant numbers of rural disadvantaged women residing in rural areas. Policies and programmes aimed at advancing benefits for women have been adopted through this process, for which separate budget arrangements have been identified in the Five-Year Plans. In addition, a variety of initiatives are also currently being undertaken with the aim of helping to uplift the socio-economic status of rural poor people, and to pave the way for their empowerment. Thus, the government has attempted to empower women in both socio-economic and political-cultural facets, which will go a long way as well as in the development of a welfare and a prosperous country.

Despite numerous benefits, concessions, security, and safety having been given to working women in order to shield them from different threats, which are likely to arise in their lives, the extent of their participation in the job does not reach the benchmark. Women tend to earn

a lower average wage than men, as a result of all religious records having a higher rate of unemployment among women than men, though they work for longer hours than men in every sector. India's clear dedication to the cause of women's liberation is unquestionable. But transitioning takes time and effort. A great deal of change has occurred in India over the last two decades. A long time after, conventional thought and sexist beliefs gave way to gender equity and growth that is free of conflict. Enacting policies for raising the age of women for marriage, educating them, and opening more doors of employment will also have a positive effect on inspiring them, at least in some respects. Overall goal of every Govt. is to aid economic, political, and societal change that will improve the lives of women and girls all over the world.

Human development focuses on equality, which relies on the expansion of people's capacities, the increasing number of options, and a rise in personal independence. This shows that empowerment is both a means and an end for human growth. The Twelfth Five-Year Plan aims to end gender-based inequities, sexism, and child and women abuse as all the preceding five-year plans have done. Governments and voluntary sectors are urged to implement policies to enhance the status of women and to build initiatives into measures to reduce the gaps women experience in getting access to and influence of resources, jobs, political influence, equality, and expression.

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