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**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH & REVIEWS**

journal homepage: www.ijmrr.online/index.php/home

**A STUDY ON THE ROLE AND IMPACT OF WOMEN
EMPOWERMENT AND SOCIAL SECURITY SCHEMES FOR
RURAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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How to Cite the Article: Sowmya K (2026). *A Study on the Role and Impact of Women Empowerment and Social Security Schemes for Rural Sustainable Development. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research & Reviews*, 5(si2). 72-80.



<https://doi.org/10.56815/ijmrr.v5si2.2026.72-80>

Keywords	Abstract
	<p>This research paper explores whether mentoring programs for women can accelerate the process of bridging the gender gap. Although several initiatives have been implemented to promote gender equality in the workplace and society, persistent challenges—such as entrenched social hierarchies and women's own perceptions of their roles—often hinder progress. While women's empowerment has emerged as a critical concern in the 21st century, its practical realization remains elusive. Women's empowerment encompasses the enhancement of educational, economic, financial, cultural, social, and political status, particularly for those historically marginalized. This study analyzes the need for women's empowerment in India, with a particular focus on rural areas, and highlights the key challenges and governmental schemes supporting this goal. Empowerment is a vital driver of social development, enabling women to engage meaningfully in economic, political, and community activities. Despite numerous governmental efforts, Indian women—especially in rural regions—remain relatively disempowered and often internalize unequal gender norms. The findings suggest that while central and state governments have introduced various beneficial schemes, sustained progress requires both structural change and a shift in societal attitudes. The paper concludes that structured mentoring and awareness programs can complement policy initiatives to foster holistic development and gender parity.</p> <p>This research paper focuses on exploring whether mentoring programs for</p>



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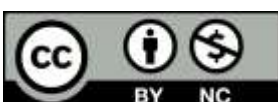
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women can speed the process of bridging the gender gap. Several measures have been taken in the past to ensure that gender equality in the workplace in the organization and society is practiced at the grass-roots level. However, the barriers and difficulties encountered during such an exercise may be compounded by the women's own attitudes towards their work place in the social hierarchy and their potential as well as their assessment of other women. Today the empowerment of the women has become one of the most important concerns of 21st century but practically women empowerment is still an illusion of reality. Women Empowerment is essentially the process of upliftment of educational economic, financial, cultural, social and political status of every woman, the traditionally underprivileged ones in the society. This paper focus to analysed the need of Women Empowerment in India and highlights the challenges and schemes of Women Empowerment. Empowerment is the main process of social development which can enable women to participate, in the educational economic, cultural, political and social sustainable development of the rural area communities. Women of India are relatively disempowered and they enjoy somewhat lower status than that of men in spite of many efforts undertaken by Government. It is found that acceptance of unequal gender norms by women are still prevailing in the society. The study concludes by an observation that Central and State Government Providing Basic Facilities and Implementing Various Schemes are enabling factors to Women Empowerment.

1. INTRODUCTION

Women Empowerment is the progression of women and, accepting and including them in the decision-making process. It also means providing them with equal opportunities for growth and development in society, and disapproving gender bias. Article 15(3) mentions the welfare of women and children and can be stated as "Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making any special provision for women and children. "Ministry for women and child development has collaborated with Facebook on November 19, 2019, to enhance digital literacy and online safety for women and children in India. The campaign categorized under the Global Literacy Program is named "We Think Digital".

Empowering women to participate fully in economic life across all sectors is essential to shape up resilient economies as it betters the sustainability, and improves the quality of life. However, empowerment is multifaceted, multi-dimensional and multi-layered conception, which requires women to undertake greater share of control over resources which could be material, human and intellectual like knowledge, information, ideas. It also includes financial resources like money – providing women with the access to money and providing them with the control over the decision making be it at home, community, society and nation level and help them gain 'power'. Encouraging Women to be Multifaceted will give more opportunity to women based on their capability to participate in, contribute to and benefit from the growth processes in ways such that the value of their contributions is valued, dignity is respected, and it is made possible to negotiate a fairer distribution of the benefits of growth. This will subsequently improvise women's control over economic



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resources and strengthening women's economic security. Empowerment of women in rural area is a necessity as this would help women to get rid of the social violence and atrocities against her. Many suggestions have been given in this research paper which would open up the doors of awareness in the surroundings and the society in which women makes the living and make them actively participating member and thus fight for their rights.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In 1972- Working Women Hostel-To promote the availability of safe and conveniently located accommodation for working women. To provide accommodation to children of working women, up to the age of 18 years for girls and up to the age of 5 years for boys. In 1986-87-Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP) To provide skills that give employability to women. To benefit women in the age group of 16 and above in the country. In-2012-NIRBHAYA-To facilitate safety and security for women at various levels. To ensure strict privacy and confidentiality of women's identity and information. Provision for real-time intervention as far as possible. In 2016- Nari Shakti Puraskar- To strengthen the place of women in society. To facilitate institutions that work towards the progress and development of women in society. In 2016- Mahila EHaat to facilitate entrepreneurship opportunities online for women. To educate women on various aspects of online selling and helping they establish their venture. In 2017- Mahila Shakti Kendras (MSK) to create an environment for women where they have access to healthcare, quality, education, guidance, employment, etc. To facilitate these opportunities at the block and district level in the country.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research paper is based on published research paper findings and media news reports on the factors that affect the growth and development of women. The researcher collects the data insights from various business organization, in which the attitude of the women is counterproductive to their development, will be assist and help in comparing their opportunities and development factors such as level of literacy, Internet usage, employability and employment.

4. OBJECTIVE

1. To Understand and evaluate some government schemes / programs for economic empowerment of women in rural India.
2. To find out problems/ challenges facing by women in rural India

5. PROBLEMS FACING WOMEN INDIA

a) Lack of access to education and employment:

In India women face significant barriers when it comes to accessing her education and employment. For example, data from the World Bank disclose that only around 48% of women in India participate in the labour force, compared to around 78% of men. This is due in part of



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educational, economic, cultural and social barriers that prevent women from participating in the workforce, as well as lack of access to education and training program.

b) Gender-based violence is a major problem in India.

The National Crime Records Bureau reports that in 2021, there were over 428,278 reported cases of violence against the women in India. This included incident of physical, physiological and sexual assault, as well as in marriage dowry-related violence and female infanticide. The statistics are alarming, with 31,677 reported the rapes against women in 2021 alone.

c) Disparities between urban and rural areas:

In India majority of women in rural areas of India often face greater challenges when it comes to empowerment. For example, they may have less access to education, economic, cultural, social and health care, and may be more isolated and vulnerable to gender-based violence.

d) Discrimination:

In India women often face various types discrimination in many areas of life, including in the home, society, education, sport, leadership and in the workplace. This can be making it difficult for them to access education and employment opportunities, and can lead to unequal treatment and lower pay.

e) Poverty:

In India Many women mostly particularly in rural area live in poverty, Poverty can make it difficult for women to access education and employment, and can lead to other challenges such as poor health and malnutrition.

6. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS:

Budget 2024 the Central Government announce the "empowerment of women through entrepreneurship, ease of living, and dignity for them has gained momentum in these ten years", the minister said, adding that all these measures are getting reflected in the increasing participation of women in the workforce Budget 2024: Finance Minister announced the target enhancement for the 'Lakshpati Didi Scheme' from 2 crore to 3 crore. The scheme aims to empower women and transform Self-Help Groups (SHGs) into sustainable income-generating producer organizations. Sitharaman highlighted the success of SHGs, with 9 crore women, in transforming the rural socio-economic landscape and creating lakshpati didis.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing various schemes/programmes for empowerment of women and development of children across the country. The details of those schemes are as follows: For Women empowerment:

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), {erstwhile Maternity Benefit Programme} has been contributing towards better enabling environment by providing cash incentives for improved health and nutrition to pregnant and nursing mothers.

Scheme for Adolescent Girls Scheme for Adolescent Girls aims at girls in the age group 11-18, to empower and improve their social status through nutrition, life skills, home skills and vocational training



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Pradhan Mantri Mahila Shakti Kendra scheme, Pradhan Mantri Mahila Shakti Kendra scheme promotes community participation through involvement of Student Volunteers for empowerment of rural women.

National Creche Scheme National Creche Scheme to provide day care facilities to children of age group of 6 months to 6 years of working women who are employed.

Rastriya Mahila Kosh (RMK) Rastriya Mahila Kosh (RMK) to provide micro-credit to poor women for various livelihood support and income generating activities at concessional terms in a client-friendly procedure to bring about their socio-economic development.

Swadhar Greh to provide relief and rehabilitation to destitute women and women in distress.

Ujjawala, a Comprehensive Scheme for prevention of trafficking and for rescue, rehabilitation, re-integration and repatriation of victims of trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation

Working Women Hostels for ensuring safe accommodation for women working away from their place of residence. Under this scheme, 2 new proposals have been received and 2 sanctioned in Himachal Pradesh during last three years.

Schemes of One Stop Centre (OSC) and Women Helpline (WH) are being implemented to facilitate access to an integrated range of services including medical aid, police assistance, legal aid/case management, psychosocial counseling and temporary support services to women affected by violence.

Gender Budgeting Scheme is being implemented as a tool for mainstreaming gender perspective at various stages of planning, budgeting, implementation, impact assessment and revisiting of policy/programme objectives and allocations. The Scheme helps in strengthening of institutional mechanisms and training of various stakeholders so as to mainstream gender concerns in Central and State Governments.

Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao Launched with initial funding of Rs.100 crore the scheme aims to address the issue of the declining child sex ratio image (CSR) and is a national initiative run jointly by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Ministry of Human Resource Development. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP), a comprehensive programme is being implemented to address the declining Child Sex Ratio (CSR) and related issues of empowerment of women over a life-cycle continuum.

Sukanya Samridhi Yojna Part of the 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' campaign, this Government of India backed saving scheme is targeted at the parents of girl children. The programme encourages them to build a fund for future education and marriage expenses for their female child. Parents can start saving early as the minimum amount of investment required is small, and the account is active for 14 years from the date of opening the account.

Balika Samridhi Yojna This scheme was launched by the Government of India on 15th August 1997 and covered all girls born on or after 15 August 1997 who are below the poverty line. Aimed at offering financial aid to girl children born on or after 15 August 1997, the schemes key objectives include improving the enrolment and retention of the girl child in schools and helping raise



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daughters until their legal age of marriage. If successful, young girls will get an education that will help them with jobs to generate a steady income.

CBSE Scholarship Scheme/Policy for Girl Education This central government scheme is available at Government CBSE schools only. It is applicable for one girl child per family across India and aims to supplement the school tuition fee.

Kishori Shakti Yojana also aim to educate adolescent girls about the importance of health care. Adolescent girls get access to current and updated healthcare initiatives and learn about good hygiene. As future mothers to be, knowing about 13 life-saving vaccines that the government provides free of cost and the importance of MMR, Polio and similar vaccination is integral to their health and reducing child mortality through vaccinepreventable diseases in the future.

7. STATE GOVERNMENT SPONSORED SCHEMES FOR GIRL CHILD IN INDIA

Apart from the central government, the Indian State governments also actively offer several schemes that benefit girl children. Some of these include:

- Rajshri Yojna - Rajasthan
- Girl child protection scheme - Andhra Pradesh
- Sivagami Ammaiyar Memorial girl child protection scheme - Tamil Nadu.
- Ladli Laxmi Yojana - Madhya Pradesh.
- Ladli - Delhi & Haryana
- Mukhyamantri Laadli Yojna – Uttar Pradesh
- Mukhyamantri Kanya Suraksha Yojna – Bihar
- Ladli scheme - Haryana • Kishori Shakti Yojana - Odisha
- MAMTA scheme for girl child - Goa • Saraswati Bicycle Scheme - Chhattisgarh.
- West Bengal Kanyashree Prakalpa - West Bengal
- Bhagyalaxmi scheme - Karnataka

8. SUGGESTION

A structured women mentorship programme can offer the necessary internal and external environment for development of mentors and mentees alike, and for providing the basis for a lasting holistic relationship. The Lessons learned from the controlled and implementation of a pilot programme aimed at early career researchers can be useful for others intending to support every woman with a focus on the holistic growth and motivation of individuals while also combatting gender inequalities.

9. CONCLUSION

Women are empowered to participate in the political process, they can have a greater say in the decisions that affect their lives and their communities, leading to more inclusive and representative decision-making and policies and programs that better address the needs of women and girls. Women's empowerment can also assist and help to reduce gender inequality and promote greater



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gender equality, leading to more balanced relationships between men and women and positive impacts on women's health, well-being, and overall quality of life Women's empowerment can have a range of positive impacts on women's lives, including improved economic opportunities, greater control over their own lives, increased political participation, and greater gender equality. By empowering women to participate fully in the economy, women can have access to better paying jobs, which can help to lift them and their families out of poverty. Empowering women can also give them more control over their own lives, allowing them to make decisions about their own health, well-being, and future, which can lead to increased self-esteem and confidence, as well as improved mental and physical health.

10. AUTHOR(S) CONTRIBUTION

The writers affirm that they have no connections to, or engagement with, any group or body that provides financial or non-financial assistance for the topics or resources covered in this manuscript.

11. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

12. PLAGIARISM POLICY

All authors declare that any kind of violation of plagiarism, copyright and ethical matters will take care by all authors. Journal and editors are not liable for aforesaid matters.

13. SOURCES OF FUNDING

The authors received no financial aid to support for the research.

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