

# Planning and Women Development: Indian Perspective

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## Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to give an overview of the effect of the women and planning moment on planning practice, and to consider the factors which have inhibited progress. A tremendous deal has now been written on provisions for women empowerment in the five year plans of India. The first five years plan (1951-56) focused on the welfare of the women in various way. After wards the subsequent five year plans undertook a number of welfare measures to development and to empowerment of women. It is recommended that government and voluntary organizations make policies for empowerment of women.

**Keywords:** Women development, empowerment, household, women's equality, economic equality, social justice, Five Year Plan, family planning, socio-economic, & gender justice.

## Introduction

It has been long argued that empowering women can benefit human development and society overall not only in developing countries but worldwide. In most parts of the world, women fulfill many traditional roles such as mothers and cares, support workers and heads of household but, in more recent decades have come to occupy a far broader range of roles and the work that previously was not recognized or accounted for has begun to get recognition. It is now broadly agreed that significant economic, social and political progress can be achieved if countries invest appropriately in their women through access to education greater decision-making power.

The term women refer to girls or adolescent. "The progress of women means the progress of the world" women's equality is vital to sustainable development and the realization of human rights for all. Equality for women in connection with economically, politically socially, culturally and environmentally these are basic human rights

## Aims and objectives of the study

Women and development appeal to the promote perspective and process that is participatory and empowering ,free from violence, sustainable ,regard to human rights, to improve the gender quality of the life, attaining economic equality and social justice, achieving full employment and modernization of various sector.

## National Policy for Development and Employment of Women

In 1940, the National Planning committee formed by the National congress passed a resolution on women development in their meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> August 1940 that: In a planned society, women's place shall be equal to that of men. Equal status, equal opportunities and equal responsibilities shall be the guiding principles to regulate the status of women in the plan. Women shall not be excluded from any sphere of work merely on the ground of her sex. The global concern for women's participation was pronounced in 1975, when the United Nations declared the decade to be devoted for the development of women. In the meantime, there has been a considerable change in the situation in India due to enactment of 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment to the Indian Constitution in 1992. Jawaharlal Nehru, who introduced Five Year Plans emphasized on the adoption of a special policy towards women in the plan.

The First Five Year Plan (1951-56) focused on the welfare of women in various ways. The Central Social Welfare Board, set up in 1953, undertook a number of welfare measures through the voluntary sector. Emphasis was laid on social welfare, role of women in rural development and agriculture, women's education, health and nutrition of women and children organization of Mahila Mandals, family welfare, employment and income generation activities, functional literacy for women and measures



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aiming at development of women based on equality, empowerment, training etc. During the

Second Five Year Plan (1956-61) importance was given to the overall approach of intensive Agricultural Development. In this period women were organized into Mahila Mandals to act as focal points at the grass root levels for the development of women. The plan stated that women would be protected against injurious work, should receive maternity benefits it also suggested speedy implementation of the principle equal pay for equal work, provision of facilities for training to enable women to compete for higher jobs and expansion of opportunities for part time employment.

The Third Five Year Plan (1961-66) supported female education as a major welfare services and condensed courses of education had priority, besides provision of services for maternal and Child Welfare, Education, Health, Nutrition and Family Planning.

The Fourth Five Year Plan (1966-74) laid emphasis on Women's education, special applied nutrition and Women's welfare with the family as the base of operation, family planning and services for pre-school children. The out lay for family planning was stepped up and the highest priority was accorded to immunization and supplementary feeding programmes.

The Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79) emphasized the need to train women for employment and protection. Functional literacy programmes got top priority. This plan coincided with the International Women's Decade and the submission of the report of plan period that a new consciousness emerged forcing changed view point-women as "critical inputs for National Development" rather than as targets for welfare policies. The National Plan of Action (1976) identified the areas of Health, Education, Nutrition, and Family Planning, Legislation and Social Welfare for formulating and implementing action programmes of women. It was at this time that a call was given for planned intervention in the improvement of the condition of women in India. The immediate outcome of this was the setting up of women's welfare and Development Bureau in 1976 under the Ministry of social welfare. It was to act as a nodal point to co-ordinate policies and programme and initiate measures for women Development. In the year 1977-78 the government appointed a working group on the employment of women. Reports, each on village level organizations and participation of women in Agriculture and Rural Development were prepared. All the Five year plans, till the Fifth plan, emphasized the welfare components for programmes concerning women.

The Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85) emphasized women's economic independence, educational advancement and employment. No doubt it was a landmark in the history of women's development was recognized as one of the developmental sectors and included as the separate chapter for the first time in the Sixth Plan Document. The Report of the committee on the status of women emphasized four strategies such as (a) economic

independence (b) educational advance (c) access to healthcare and family planning and (d) income supplementing of rural women.

The Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90) has expressed all concern for equity and empowerment of women. The strategies for the development of rural women in the Seventh Plan and also to raise the economic and social status of women in order to bring them into the main stream of national development. To bring about confidence and awareness of women's potential for development and also their rights and privileges. To restructure educational programmes and school curricula to eliminate gender bias. To reduce the drudgery of women with increased stress on science and Technology. To conduct orientation programmes for rural women. Under this plan, special measures were initiated against dowry, sati harassment and atrocities on women. Efforts were made to extend facilities for income generating activities and enabling women to participate in socio-economic development activities.

The Eighth Five Year Plan (1990-95) has focused on empowering women, especially at the grass root level, through Panchyati Raj institutions. Maximum resources were directed towards releasing the productive and creative and energies of rural women so that they would become equal partners in the socio cultural transformation. Eighth Five year plan highlighted two major strategies such as : (a) Decentralization and (b) Social Development.

Decentralization deals with responsibility for development programmes to be transferred to elected representatives of local government bodies. Elected panchyats to have adequate representation of women and vulnerable sections of society.

Social development deals with action to be taken for the development of scheduled caste to liberate them from their disabilities. A major programme of education and public health for dalit women and girls to be launched. Education level, specialized skills and crafts of the minorities would be improved. Focus on family planning programme to be made to improve female literacy and control of infant mortality. Thus Eighth plan makes a shift from "development" to "empowerment" of women.

The Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) has goals for the overall development of Indian women so as to make them capable of entering the 21<sup>st</sup> century with a lot of self confidence. The main objectives are, generation of adequate productive employment and eradication of poverty, Provision for basic minimum services of safe drinking water, Primary health care facility, universal primary education, shelter and connectivity to all and empowerment of women.

The Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-07) has made a major commitment towards empowering women as the "agent of socio-economic change and development". The following are the strategies of 10<sup>th</sup> five year plan period for the purpose. To improve the nutritional and health status of children below the age of six years. To reduce the incidence of infant and child mortality and malnutrition. To ensure that funds/benefits are earmarked for women in all women related sectors. Inclusion of an identifiable women

component plan in the programmes of all sectors of development to ensure that the benefits reach the women. Thus it led to adopt fourfold women component plans for empowering women through social empowerment, economic empowerment and gender justice and Educational advancement.

#### **Suggestions**

After the study, the researcher carefully offers the following suggestions. It is observed that the political empowerment of women could be made strong by endowing them with social, cultural and economic rights. It would ensure government officials to see the progress on the developmental activities of women. There is need for the transforming values, social dogmas, superstitions, illiteracy through the provision of social awareness programmes. Simultaneous development of various sectors is quite important for attaining sustainable growth, thus framing a proper policy for sectoral development. Ensuring presence of women in different kind of jobs, entitlements to widows, creating awareness about gender equality at a young age among boys and installation of CCTV's in public spaces were among suggestions given by women participants to tackle violence against women. Focus on family planning programme to be made to improve female literacy and control of infant mortality.

#### **Conclusion**

In conclusion it can be observed to taking into account social, environmental, technical and economic consideration will ensure that development activities better use of often increasingly diminishing resources available. Women often have difficulty in fully participating in development activities due to low levels of education and lack of direct representation in community decision making bodies. Efforts to involve

women are both direct participants and beneficiaries can help them gain status within and outside the context of the project.

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