

# Government Initiatives for Women Empowerment in India-A Study

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## ABSTRACT

Women's' empowerment has become a significant topic of discussion in development and economics. It can also point to approaches regarding other trivialized genders in a particular political or social context. Empowering women to participate fully in economic life across all sectors is essential to build stronger economies, achieve internationally agreed goals for development and sustainability, and improve the quality of life for women, men, families and communities. Give power or authority to; authorize, especially by legal or official means: I empowered my agent to make the deal for me. The local ordinance empowers the board of health to close unsanitary restaurants. Women empowerment can be defined in very simple words that it is making women powerful so that they can take their own decisions regarding their lives and well being in the family and society. It is empowering women to make them able to get their real rights in the society. The Government Of India initiated so many Schemes for empowerment of Women. Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India has started so many Programmes. The Study is Purely Theoretical. The Study is based on secondary data sources. The necessary information about the Women Empowerment Schemes in India and its various components are collected from Books, Journals, Internet Source or related topic. The Researcher study about the Importance of women Empowerment in India.

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## INTRODUCTION

The need of women empowerment arose because of the gender discrimination and male domination in the Indian society since ancient time. Women are being suppressed by their family members and society for many reasons. They have been targeted for many types of violence and discriminatory practices by the male members in the family and society in India and other countries as well. Wrong and old practices for the women in the society from ancient time have taken the form of well developed customs and traditions. There is a tradition of worshipping many female goddesses in India including giving honour to the women forms in the society like mother, sister, daughter, wife and other female relatives or friends. But, it does not mean that only respecting or honouring women can fulfil the need of development in the country. It needs the empowerment of the rest half population of the country in every walk of life. India is a famous country proving the common proverb like 'unity is diversity', where people of many religious beliefs are in the Indian society. Women have been given a special place in every religion which is working as a big curtain covering the eyes of people and help in the continuation of many ill practices (including physical and mental) against women as a norm since ages. In the ancient Indian society, there was a custom of sati pratha, nagar vadhu system, dowry system, sexual violence, domestic violence, female infanticide, parda pratha, wife burning, sexual harassment at work place, child marriage, child labour, devadashi pratha, etc including other discriminatory practices. All such type of ill practices is because of male superiority complex and patriarchal system of the society.

The most famous saying said by the Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is "To awaken the people, it is the women who must be awakened. Once she is on the move, the family moves, the village moves, the nation moves". In India, to empower the women, first it needs to kill all the demons killing women's rights and values in the society such as dowry system, illiteracy, sexual harassment, inequality, female infanticide, and domestic violence against women, rape, prostitution, illegal trafficking and other issues. Gender discrimination in the nation brings cultural, social, economic and educational differences which push country back. The most effective remedy to kill such devils is making women empowered by ensuring the Right to Equality mentioned in the Constitution of India. Giving priority to the gender equality facilitates women empowerment all over the country. To get the high level goal of women empowerment, it should be promoted from the childhood in each and every family. It needs women to be strong physically, mentally and socially. Since the better education can be started at home from childhood, the upliftment of women needs healthy family to bring a holistic development of the nation. Still in many backward areas, there is a trend of early marriage and childbirth because of the poverty, insecurity and illiteracy of the parents. In order to empower women, various steps have been taken by the government to prevent violence, social separation, gender discrimination and abuse against women.

**108th Constitutional Amendment Bill** (also called Women's Reservation Bill) was passed to reserve one-third of the seats for women only in the Lok Sabha to make them actively involved in every area. In other fields also the seats for women have been reserved for their active participation without any limitation and competition. Various mass campaigns need to be organized in the backward rural areas to make them aware about the real values of women and all the facilities available by the government for their bright future. They need to be promoted for the survival and proper education of female child to really bring the dream of women empowerment come true. Gender inequality is the main social issues in India in which women are getting back in the male dominated country. Women empowerment needs to take a high speed in this country to equalize the value of both genders. Uplifting of women in all means should be the utmost priority of the nation. Inequalities between men and women in the society generate lots of problems which become a big obstruction in the way to success of nation. It is the birth rights of the women to get equal value to the men in the society. To really bring empowerment, every woman needs to be aware about their rights from their own end. They need to take positive steps and involve in every activities instead of only involving in the household chores and family responsibilities. They should know about all the happenings in their surroundings and country. Women empowerment has the power to change many things in the society and country. They are much better than men to deal with certain problems in the society. They can better understand the disadvantages of the overpopulation for their family and country. They are fully able to handle the economic conditions of the family and country through proper family planning. Women are capable enough to handle any impulsive violence in comparison to the men whether in the family or society.

Through women empowerment, it can be possible to change the male dominated country into the equally dominated country of rich economy. Empowering women may easily help to grow each and every member of the family without any extra effort. A woman is considered to be responsible for everything in the family so she can better solve all the problems from her own end. Empowerment of the women would automatically bring empowerment of everyone. Women empowerment is the better treatment of any big or small problems related to human being, economy or environment. In few last years, the advantages of the women empowerment are coming out in front of us. Women are being more conscious about their health, education, career, job and responsibilities towards family, society and country. They are taking part in the every area and showing their great interest in each field. Finally, after long years of hard struggle they are getting their rights to go ahead on the right track. In this way The Government of India Started so many Schemes for empowerment of Women.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

**Ganesamurthy (2008)** determined the major factors of women empowerment in India. The empowerment of women in a nation by economic, political and social identity. Study considered the measurement factors such as security, justice, safety, information, legal aid, maternal health, nutrition, education, access to credit, marketing and socio-economic status of women. Government has initiated different schemes to empower women in different states of India.

**Chandra (2008)**, defined the empowerment and discussed the empowerment involves power to, power with, and power within. It was analyzed that women empowerment in India is a measure of capacity building, awareness, control, participation and decision- making power. It involved psychological empowerment, ability to assert oneself and challenging roles.

**Upadhyay (2011)** analytically reviewed "women's empowerment in India an analytical overview". Study summarized the different policies and schemes on women empowerment at the national, state and local levels, and realized that existing significant gaps between actual practice and policy advancements at the local level. Indian society depends on different variables like location, educational status, age and social status.

**Sarkar (2015)** described briefly on women empowerment, status of men and women, educational achievement, opportunities of higher status of living, women participation in social and domestic activities, deprivation of various scopes for women in India. Situation of women in 2015 showed that education is essential for women to raise living standard, very less women have achieved the highest positions in various fields in nation.

**Priyadharshini (2016)** focused on empowering each and every woman in the country to make them independent. It was described the issues that women are facing and schemes for women empowerment. Indian women are facing many obstacles in everyday life, self -help groups (SHG) resulting successful in Tamil Nadu.

**Sihmar (2016)**, discussed the women empowerment in India. In this study researcher described the upliftment of women status in economic, social and political perspective. Women involvement to build up society without fear of oppression, apprehension, exploitation and discrimination. It was found Indian women facing many issues and challenges like lack of education and healthcare, gender-based violence, and unequal economic opportunities. Initiatives for women empowerment must be tailored to the pointed social needs in order to make it effective.

**Maneka (2017)**, emphasized on micro-level assessment of women empowerment in India to make various schemes meaningful. Study highlighted the present status with regard to women empowerment and challenges for gender equality. In certain parts of country women empowerment is a distant dream, more micro level assessment requires to make government schemes useful. Ultimate goal of women empowerment in India is to improve women facilities and gender equality.

**Panda (2018)**, discussed the concept of women empowerment in India and identified the reason of not successful in the past. India is male dominated country, to equalize the female in country it is necessary to change the mindset of men. To accelerate the process of women empowerment education, equal recognition in work place and financial independence are essential. Despite the various constraints since independence, successful implementation of programs is still lacking.

**Mandot (2020)** considered women empowerment as an instrument to expand women's ability to make strategic life choice. It analyzed that gender norms are still prevailing unequal in the society. But provision of government schemes to provide basic facilities is enabling factors to women empowerment.

**Khaparde (2020)** discussed about the reflection of empowered women, those are more confident in articulating thoughts and have productive actions. These women promoting the structure of more inclusive, creative, progressive and generative in nature. It was found that Indian women treated as objects of pleasure and have lost individual identity and fundamental human rights.

**Arulsukijothi (2020)** studied the introduction of women empowerment in sixth five-year plan for the first time in India. Women empowerment on access to knowledge, autonomy in decision-making, ability of life planning, redistribution of power and challenging patriarchal ideology and male dominance.

**Objectives of the study:** There are three objectives in this to be study-

- A) To study the various government schemes for women empowerment in India.
- B) To study the awareness of concept women empowerment in India.
- C) To analyse the factors affecting the socio-economic status of women in India.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on the secondary sources of data purely. This paper is an attempt to analyse the initiative taken on women empowerment and challenges faced to implement the government schemes. The sources used for data are various research articles, website of the global statistics for literacy rate and national sample survey organization for labour force participation rate.

**Findings and discussion: Government policies and Initiatives-** Indian government began programmes for women empowerment in 1954, but actual participation of women started in 1974. There are 34 government schemes for women empowerment in India presently operating under different ministries and departments. Some popular schemes are as following:

- ❖ Women Entrepreneur Development programme given top priority in 1997-98.
- ❖ Rastriya Mahila Kosh (RMK) 1992-1993
- ❖ Mahila Samridhi Yojana (MSY) October, 1993.
- ❖ Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY) 1995.
- ❖ Mahila Samakhya being implemented in about 9000 villages.
- ❖ Swa Shakti Group.
- ❖ Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women(STEP).
- ❖ Swalamban.
- ❖ Crèches/ Day care centre for the children of working and ailing mother.
- ❖ Hostels for working women.
- ❖ Swadhar.
- ❖ National Mission for Empowerment of Women.
- ❖ Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) (1975)
- ❖ Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescence Girls (RGSEAG) (2010).
- ❖ The Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for Children of Working Mothers.
- ❖ Integrated Child Protection scheme (ICPS) (2009-2010).
- ❖ Dhanalakshmi (2008).
- ❖ Short Stay Homes.
- ❖ Ujjawala (2007).
- ❖ Beti bachao, Beti Padhao
- ❖ Sukanya Samridhi Yojana.

### **Women welfare and Empowerment Schemes of Government of India-**

Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India have come up with various schemes, programmes, social welfare Schemes, Health and Nutrition, scholarship for women empowerment, Girl Child pregnant women, mothers, ward members, Anganwadi Workers, Women Health Volunteers, the women living in the rural & tribal areas, ex-servicemen, physically Handicapped, nursing women, Lactating mother, widows/destitute, Old age women, women self-help group (SHG), Women Entrepreneurs and Adolescent Girls'. Also, it helps to the women and child belonging to Scheduled Caste(SC) and Scheduled Tribe(ST), Other Backward Classes(OBC), Socially and Educationally Backward Classes(SEBC) Minority Category, below Poverty line(BPL) and also for General Category This scheme provides assistance for Education, Training, Financial Assistance/Cash, Subsidy on the loans, Scholarship, Nutrition, self-employment and other facilities. The prime goal is for Empowerment, development, protection and welfare of Women & Child.

**Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme-** Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India.

**Description-** Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (Save girl child, educate girl child) is Central Government Sponsored Scheme by Government of India. The prime goal of this scheme is to generate awareness and improving the efficiency of welfare services meant for women. Also, it aims to celebrate the Girl Child & Enable her Education. The Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (BBBP) Scheme has been introduced to Address the issue declining Child Sex Ratio (CSR). This scheme is being implemented through a national campaign and focused Multi-sectoral action in 100 selected districts low in CSR, covering all States and uts. This scheme is implemented by the joint Initiative of Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of Human Resource Development. Prime Minister Modi launched the programme on 22 January 2015 from Panipat, Haryana on the occasion of International Day of the Girl Child, Prime Minister Modi, called for the eradication of female foeticide.

**Objective** -The objectives of this scheme are as follows:

- To prevent gender biased sex selective elimination.
- To ensure survival & protection of the girl child.
- To ensure education of the girl child.

**Eligibility All Girl child Beneficiaries-** All Girl child .

**Benefits:** The benefits of this scheme are summarized as below:

- Improvement of the Nutrition status of girls by reducing number of underweight and anemic girls under 5 years of age
- Ensuring girls' attendance and equal care monitored, using joint ICDS NRHM Mother Child Protection Cards.
- Increasing the girl's enrolment in secondary education
- This scheme provides girl's toilet in every school.
- It aims to promote a protective environment for Girl Children through implementation of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences
- Train Elected Representatives/ Grassroot functionaries as Community Champions to mobilize communities to improve CSR & promote Girl's education.
- Reduction of Gender differentials and child mortality
- To improve the Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB)
- Evolving a sustained Social Mobilization and Communication Campaign to change societal norms, to create equal value for the girl child.
- Mobilizing and empowering frontline worker teams as catalysts for social change, in partnership with local community/women's/youth groups.
- Developing capacity of Panchayati Raj Institutions/Urban local bodies - especially women panchayat /urban local body members, to create community and peer support for making panchayats / urban wards girl child friendly.

**How to Apply:** Contact to any of the following:

- At the National level, Contact to Ministry of Women and Child Development, India.
- At the State level, Contact to Project Management Unit (PMU) supported by National Resource Centre for Women (NRCW) Or Principal Secretary, WCD/Social Welfare
- At the District level, Contact to District Collector/Deputy Commissioner/CEO zilaparishad OR District Programme Officer (DPO) in the District ICDS Office
- At the Block level, Contact to Sub Divisional Magistrate/Sub Divisional Officer/Block Development Officer
- At the Gram Panchayat/Ward level, Contact to respective Panchayat Samiti/Ward Samiti
- At Village level, Contact to Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Committees
- In identified cities/ urban areas, Contact to Municipal Corporations.

**Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY) for the pregnant and lactating women, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India.**

**Description :**

The Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY) is a maternity benefits scheme implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government Of India. This scheme is for the pregnant and lactating women of 19 years of age or above for first two live births to contribute to a better enabling environment by providing conditional cash transfer for improved health and nutrition and to also promote health and nutrition seeking behavior in them. It provides partial wage compensation to women for wage-loss during childbirth and childcare and to provide conditions for safe delivery and good nutrition and feeding practices. It provides cash maternity benefit to the women. The pregnant women of 19 years of age and above is entitled to a cash incentive of Rs. 4000 in three installments for first two live births.

**Objective** -The objectives of this scheme are summarized as below:

- To promoting appropriate practice, care and institutional service utilization during pregnancy, safe delivery and lactation
- To encouraging the women to follow (optimal) nutrition and Young Child feeding practices, including early and Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months; and
- To providing cash incentives for improved health and nutrition to pregnant and lactating mothers inorder to contribute to better enabling environment

**Eligibility**- Pregnant Women & Lactating women of 19 years of age and above for their first 2 live births. Women have to register pregnancy at the Anganwadi centre (AWC) within four months of conception Women have to register the birth

**Beneficiaries** -Pregnant and Lactating Women

**Benefits** -The conditional cash transfer benefits of Rs. 6,000/- to be paid in two installments of Rs. 3,000 /-

- The first transfer (at the end of second birth / pregnancy trimester) of Rs. 3,000 /- to the mother
- The second transfer (three months after delivery) of Rs. 3,000 /- to the mother.

**How to Apply**- Contact to any of the followings:

- Contact to Deputy Director/ District Programme Officer in-charge of the ICDS Cell Or
- Contact to Anganwadi worker or Anganwadi centre (AWC)

**One Stop Centre Scheme for women, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India.**

**Description**- One Stop Centres (OSC) are meant to support women affected by violence, in private and public spaces, within the family, community and at the workplace. Women facing physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and economic abuse, irrespective of age, class, caste, education status, marital status, race, and culture will be facilitated with support and redressal. Aggrieved women facing any kind of violence due to attempted sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, trafficking, honour-related crimes, acid attacks or witch-hunting who have reached out or been referred to the OSC will be provided with specialized services. OSC are set up in each State/UT. This scheme facilitates access to an integrated range of services including medical, legal, and psychological support. The OSC will be integrated with Helpline No. 181 and other existing helplines.

Women affected by violence and in need of redressal, services could be referred to OSC through these helplines.

**Objective** -The objectives of this scheme are as below:

- To provide integrated support and assistance to women affected by violence, both in private and public spaces under one roof.
- To facilitate immediate, emergency and non-emergency access to a range of services including medical, legal, psychological and counseling support under one roof to fight against any forms of violence against women.

**Eligibility:** The OSC will support all women including girls below 18 years of age affected by violence, irrespective of caste, class, religion, region, sexual orientation or marital status.

Beneficiaries Women, Girls Benefits

**The overall benefits under this scheme are summarized as below:**

Emergency Response and Rescue Services OSC will provide rescue and referral services Medical assistance Women affected by violence would be referred to the nearest Hospital for medical aid/examination. Assistance to women in lodging FIR/NCR/DIR. The OSC will facilitate the lodging of FIR/NCR/DIR. Psycho-social support/ counseling. A skilled counselor providing psycho-social counseling services would be available on call. This counseling the process will give women confidence and support to address violence or to seek justice for the violence perpetuated. Counselors shall follow a prescribed code of ethics, guidelines and protocols for providing counseling services.

**Legal aid and counseling:** To facilitate access to justice for women affected by violence, legal aid, and counseling would be provided at OSC through empanelled Lawyers or National/State/District Legal Service Authority.



**Shelter:** The OSC will provide temporary shelter facility to aggrieved women. For long term shelter requirements, arrangements will be made with Swadhar Greh/Short Stay Homes (managed/affiliated with government/NGO). Women affected by violence along with their children (girls of all ages and boys up till 8 years of age) can avail a temporary shelter at the OSC for a maximum period of 5 days. The admissibility of any woman to the temporary the shelter would be at the discretion of Centre Administrator.

**Video Conferencing Facility :** To facilitate speedily and hassle free police and court proceedings the OSC will provide video conferencing facility (through Skype, Google Conferencing etc.). Through this facility, if the aggrieved woman wants, she can record her statement for police/ courts from OSC itself using audio-video electronic

**How to Apply:**

Contact to any of the following:

- Call to Helpline No. 181
- Contact to Anganwadi Worker Or Community Outreach Or Volunteer Or
- Send a text message (SMS/Internet) to the District Programme Officer (DPO) Or Protection Officer (PO) Or Community Development Programme Officer (CDPO)/ Station House Officer (SHO) Or District Magistrate (DM) Or Superintendent of Police (SP) Or Deputy Superintendent of Police (DYSP) Or Chief Medical Officer (CMO) of the district in which the women is located at the time of accessing OSC. Contact to Supervisor of OSC Administrator
- Contact to Case Worker Or
- Contact to Police Facilitation Officer (PFO) Or
- 6. Contact to Para Legal Personnel/ Lawyer Or
- Contact to Para Medical Personne Or
- Contact to Counsellor Or • Contact to IT Staff

**Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme for children Health Check-up, Food, nutrition. Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India.**

**Description:** With rising employment opportunities for women and the growing need to supplement household income, more and more women are entering the job market. With the breaking up of joint family system and the increasing number of nuclear families, working women need help in terms of quality, substitute care for their young children while they are at work. Creche and Day Care Services are not only required by working mothers but also women belonging to poor families, who require support and relief for childcare as they struggle to cope with the burden of activities, within and outside the home.

Therefore women need a safe place for their children in their absence. It has become necessary to provide support to the young children in terms of quality, substitute care and other services while the mothers are at work. A crèche is a facility which supports/ make able to parents to leave their children while they are at work and where children are provided the stimulating environment for their holistic development. Creches are developed in such a way that they provide group care to children, usually up to 6 years of age, who need care, guidance and supervision away from their home during the day.

**The objectives of this scheme are as follows:** • To provide day-care facilities for children (6 months to 6 years) of working mothers in the community.

- To improve nutrition and health status of children.
- To promote physical, cognitive, social and emotional development (Holistic Development) of children.
- To educate and empower parents /caregivers for better childcare.

**Eligibility:** The scheme focuses on children of 6 months to 6 years, of working women in rural and urban areas who are employed for a minimum period of 15 days in a month, or six months in a year.

**Beneficiaries:** Women, Child Benefits

**The scheme will provide the following services:** • Daycare Facilities including Sleeping Facilities.

- Early Stimulation for children below 3 years and Pre- school Education for 3 to 6 years old children.
- Supplementary Nutrition (to be locally sourced)
- Growth Monitoring.
- Health Check-up and Immunization.
- Other services provided under this scheme are as Drinking water and Sanitary Facilities, Food and Cooking Facilities, Growth Monitoring, Health Check- up, Medicine & First Aid Kit, Equipment, and Play Material

**How to Apply:** Contact to any of the followings:

- Contact to Anganwadi Centres under ICDS Scheme.
- Contact to ngos implementing under this scheme.

- At Block level like Tehsildar/Block Development Officer, local Child Development Project Officer, a representative from the local Health Department and a Social Welfare Officer of the area.

**Contact to any of the followings:** • District Collector Or

- Chief Medical Officer Or
- Superintendent of Police Or
- District Social Welfare Officer/Women and Child Development Officer Or
- Representative of District Legal Services Authority Or
- Representative of the Municipal Corporations/Panchayati Raj Institutions Or
- Other eminent persons of the district at the discretion of District Collector.

**Scheme for Universalisation of Women:** Helpline is meant to provide 24 hours immediate and emergency response to women affected by violence. This scheme is being implemented since from 01-04-2015 by the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development. The Scheme of Universalisation of Women Helpline is meant to provide 24 hours immediate and emergency response to women affected by violence through referral (linking with appropriate authority such as police, One Stop Centre, hospital) and information about women related government schemes programs across the country through a single uniform number. Women Helpline (WHL) is working with the One Stop Centre Scheme (OSC) under which one OSC will be set up in every State/UT to provide integrated support and assistance to women affected by violence, both in private and public spaces under one roof. Women affected by violence and in need of redressal services will be referred to OSC through WHL. Under this Scheme, the States/uts will utilize or augment their existing women helplines through a dedicated single national number. Department of Telecommunication, Government of India has allocated short code 181 to all States/uts which is being used by some States/uts such as Delhi, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh as Women Helpline. From any post/pre paid mobile or landline services through any public or private network i.e. GSM, CDMA, 3G, 4G etc can be called to 181 as Women Helpline (WHL).

**Objective:** The objectives of the Scheme are

- To provide toll-free 24-hours telecom service to women affected by violence seeking support and information
- To help crisis and non-crisis intervention through referral to the appropriate agencies such as police/Hospitals/Ambulance services/District Legal Service Authority (DLSA)/Protection Officer (PO)/OSC.
- To provide information about the appropriate support services, government schemes and programmes available to the woman affected by violence, in her particular situation within the local area in which she resides or is employed.

**Eligibility:** Any woman or girl facing violence within public or private sphere of life or seeking information about women related programmes or schemes.

**Beneficiaries :** Women.

**Benefits:** The benefits are summarized as below:

Violence against Women (VAW) Prevention: As soon as an aggrieved woman (AG) or somebody on her behalf will contact WHL, she will be immediately assisted by the call responder appointed there. The responder will refer her to relevant support services like medical aid, police assistance or connect her to OSC for professional counseling, shelter, legal aid etc;

Information of Women Empowerment Schemes and programmes: The information about the laws, existing schemes and government programs related to women empowerment and protection are provided. It will help to women about processes to be adopted for accessing benefits of these schemes and programs.

**How to Apply:** The Women Helpline will be up and active 24 hours a day 7 days a week to any woman or girl suffering violence or in distress in the following manner:

- Telephone - landlines, mobile phones through calls, SMS/text messaging, mobile apps and fax messages are considered.

**Challenges:** There are many challenges in improvement of women empowerment. Factors responsible for low literacy of women in comparison of men are lack of importance to education, shortage of classroom for students, unavailability of schools, no drinking facilities, no proper sanitation and gender inequality. Looking towards the literature on various studies has been realized that undoubtedly many programmes has been launched by the government of India but yet challenges to implement it properly. Some important challenges discuss in the study.

## CONCLUSION

Women empowerment refers to increase in social, political, educational or economic upliftment of individuals and women communities. Various policies on women empowerment exist at local, state and national levels to improve the education, health, gender bias, economic opportunities and political participation. Study insights the challenges in the awareness and implementation of the government schemes on various levels local, state and national level. Government

should focus mainly on the implementation of the literacy programme, it might be helpful in the awareness and changing of mindset of the people. Study has focus on the employment level of women and men, it has seen that labour force participation rate has gender gap in the employment that shows many women are still either household or non-working or financial dependent too. It should be necessary to understand that a financial dependent woman can never be independent to make choice, decision or other steps for the growth of herself as well as growth of society.

**Scope for future research:** In this study we have discussed about the initiative taken by Indian government for the empowerment of women in country. Various challenges faced to implement these government schemes at national, state and local levels. Study suggests that implementation of the government schemes can be more effective with the awareness of the different schemes at the local, panchayat and rural area at national level. For gender discrimination government have taken many steps but still in Indian society it needs to adjust the mind set of the society to accept the equality of women. To change the mindset of society education and cooperation is needed. It must need to take initiative for change social climate so women can participate and contribute equally in the social and economic development.

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