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## Employment Of Women: Importance And Challenges

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### Abstract

*Employment is the most natural and best way to achieve the objectives of economic growth, poverty eradication, social justice, social stability and peace. To have gainful and creative work is the basic need of and an imperative for man*

*No country can progress if half of the population is left with subsidiary function and subsidiary status in work participation.*

*In short, it can be said that women should develop their confidence level and increase their self-reliance to decide and determine their important choices of life. Power has to be acquired, exercised and preserved. Unless women themselves become conscious of their subjugation and appreciation, show proficiency and grasp the opportunities, it would not be possible to change their status. Attitudinal change, principles of justice and equality should be deep-seated in the minds of each and every individual in the society. There is need for creation of awareness for achievement to search for one's identity which should represent women as having great potential for achievement in all spheres of life.*

**Keywords:** Poverty Eradication, Social Justice, Social Stability, Self-Reliance

"Peace and Progression in the world is possible only when all the efforts are made to implement 'Employment Oriented Plans'."

Dr. Amartya Sen  
The Nobel Scholar and famous Indian Economist

### Introduction:

Employment is the most natural and best way to achieve the objectives of economic growth, poverty eradication, social justice, social stability and peace. To have gainful and creative work is the basic need of and an imperative for man.

Though creation of employment opportunities has been an important objective of the developed planning in India, there has been chronic problem of unemployment encircling almost all the organs of the society. Though problem of unemployment, even after seven decades of planning still occupies the top most position among all other problems.

No country can progress if half of the population is left with subsidiary function and subsidiary status in work participation.

### Objectives:

The Present paper mainly focuses on the following objectives

1. To know the concept of Women Work Force.
2. To know about Status of women employment in India.
3. To know the importance of women employment and asses the challenges faced by women employees.

### Division Of The Paper:

The present paper is divided in to four parts. First part introduces the concept of women employment. Second part gives information regarding women work force. Third part focuses on the status of women employment in India. Fourth part gives information about Importance of women employment and challenges faced by women employees. Conclusions are drawn in the fifth part.

### Methodology:

The information for the present study is obtained through secondary sources. The secondary data is collected form books related to rural labour, labour in unorganized sector, rural labour market etc.

## CONCEPT OF WOMEN EMPLOYMENT

In India, women constitute half of the human population and so their participation in the field of economic activities with men is necessary for the development. The equality of women with men would remain myth till women become economically self-reliant.



However, after independence remarkable changes took place in this context. The constitution of India declares that there should be no discrimination against employment of women. This results in increase in the employment rate of educated women. Nowadays, more and more women with higher education are trying to get paid employment. In present days, due to rapid increase in prices it is difficult for the only earning head to fulfill the family needs. Therefore, married women also with a desire to add to the family income, come forwards to take employment.

## II

### WOMEN AS WORK FORCE

The working women is a new phenomenon in the Indian society. The female labour-force participation has an important bearing on gender relations in the form of independent earning opportunities and this will empower the women.

Amartya Sen in Development as freedom provides an account of various kinds of freedom- one of them being women's freedom to participate in paid work outside their homes and its interconnectedness with other forms of freedom.

However, today the role of women goes much beyond the confines of the home. Several factors such as industrialization, individualization, inability of a single person to earn enough for the family has drawn out the women from their homes to earn.

Low earnings, Sex discrimination, job discrimination, wage discrimination, non application of industrial and labour laws, displacements of women due to mechanization, lack of unionization, lack of supportive services for women and their children, lack of access to resources, low level of health and educational status, sexual harassment, lack of job security, lack of training and skill development and socio-cultural constraints are considered as major hurdles in the growth of women's employment. Hence multi-dimensional intervention strategies were needed for the economic empowerment of women in the country.

## III

### STATUS OF WOMEN EMPLOYMENT IN INDIA

#### I) Historical Background Regarding Status of Women Employment

The freedom movement under Gandhi's leadership (1947) inspired women for outside threshold work and marked their entry in social and political work. In the beginning, women's employment might have started due to the financial necessity for family maintenance, or for poverty reduction. Women employment has brought out a substantial transformation in India's economy.

#### II) Women Employment in Post-Independence Period

In modern days of globalization employment opportunities for women have immensely multiplied in various fields. Due to the development of educational facilities, industrialization and the new economic system and social change there is gradually increase in employment of women.

Today, the new policies of structural adjustment and economic liberalization are bound to have a major impact on the nature and conditions of employment. The changes brought about by these new policy initiatives are bound to be felt by women, both in terms of the overall employment opportunities available to them, as well as in terms of structural shifts in the employment patterns and the nature and conditions of work. With liberalization globalization and structural adjustment employment generation in the public sector has been marginalized in recent years. The informal sector, therefore continue to be crucial as far as employment opportunity for women are concerned.

## IV

### IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN EMPLOYMENT AND ITS CHALLENGES

#### Importance of Women Employment:

Due to the educational facilities, industrialization and new economic system, Women entered in to gainful employment. A women's status in the family would be definitely related to whether she is engaged in gainful economic activity or not. The importance of women employment is multifaceted. They can be cited as-

#### 1) Rise in the standard of living of the family:

The woman entered in the labour market due to the economic necessity. Their income helps to raise the standard of living of the family.

#### 2) Woman Participation in decision making:

The income of a working woman is a substantial contribution to the family income which gives her greater interest in financial decisions and greater respect from her husband and other members of the family.



- 3) **Increase in Women's Power in the family:**  
Economic well-being as a result of employment helps to increase the freedom of women. The Employment of women has contributed to some changes in the traditional norm and an increase in women's power in the family and their status.
  - 4) **Change in approach:**  
Employment of women fosters in them a dynamic and pragmatic approach to life, an individualistic view of life and also a cosmopolitan orientation towards life.
  - 5) **Redistribution of the work within the family:**  
Woman's outside work makes it necessary even for the head of the family or other male members to take over some of the woman worker's household responsibilities while she is away in order to maintain the smooth functioning of the household.
  - 6) **Active participation in organizations:**  
The employment enables women to take part in the activities of organizations which are related to their work.
  - 7) **Changes in life-style:**  
Working women have the opportunity to develop a taste for material goods and services used by colleagues whose life-style differs from their own. Their employment familiarizes them to new settings.
  - 8) **Changes in ritual behavior:**  
Women's employment results in the modifications in the ritual behavior. Customs relating to dietary habits also changed significantly.
- It is thus evident that employment has contributed immensely to change in the status of women in the modern period.

Today the role of women goes much more beyond the confines of the home, the boundaries of the gender division of labour between productive and reproductive roles are gradually being crossed as a women is adopting a career of her own and sharing equally with men the responsibility for the development of the country in all aspects.

Working women indirectly contribute to bring about economic equality and the employment enhances women's abilities in India. But though she plays an important role in family maintenance, can't take decisions for investment without husband's consent. Even sometimes they tend to hold lower jobs though they have sufficient skills for higher level jobs. The women living in metropolitan cities and urban areas have a wide exposure to the global network. But women in rural areas are deprived away from such opportunities.

#### Challenges of Women Employees:

The main impact of globalization on labour markets in developing countries in general and women in particular has been on the growth of informal sector employment. Formal sector faced with declining employment opportunities, most new entrants to the labour force are forced to work in the informal sector.

With structural transformation of rural economy in the context of decentralized development, employment of rural female labour is expected to decline overtime. Nobel laureate, Amartya Sen (1995) has revealed his distress over the explosive situation of unemployment.

##### 1) **Lower Educational Level**

Due to lower educational level of women employees, it puts restrictions on their promotions.

##### 2) **Insufficient Training Facilities**

The poor status of employment of women employees is due to insufficient training facilities provided by the employer.

##### 3) **Dual Role**

Working women work outside the home at the same time has to do a larger share of work. It puts pressure on women worker.

##### 4) **No Enough Time for Family**

Women employees have to stay outside the house for a number of hours and find it difficult to devote enough time to their children.

##### 5) **No Provision of Day Care Centre**

At the workplace there is hardly found the facility of Day Care Centre, the women worker having children at home have divided mind.



**6) Health Problems**

Working women feel that due to their employment they are not able to do justice to their family. This kind of feeling naturally affects upon their health. At the same time they have to do overtime work at workplace. While managing these two roles they feel physical and mental stress and it leads to their health problems.

**7) Limited Participation in Family Functions**

Being employed women even though have a strong desire to participate in family functions, are not able to do so.

**Suggestions:**

**1) Provision of Educational Facilities**

The state action is initiated for the provision of 'Distance Education'. Counseling sessions for the needy women employees should be organized by the employer to enhance their educational attainment and thus involve in all the functions of the working including planning, decision-making, implementation, financial and management control.

**2) Organization of Training Programmes**

Training, education and information have an important role to play in increasing women's involvement in employment to enable them to get more acquaintance relating to job. Skill development programmes should be introduced according to the interests of the women.

**3) Recognition of Efficiency**

Efficient women employees have to be identified and they need to be rewarded suitably. It will motivate other women employees also to improve their efficiency. This will lead to an increase in the efficiency as well as the profits earned by the employer.

**4) Change in the Attitude of Family Members**

Women have to be given due participation in the development activities of the home and country. Unless attitude of family members towards the working women changes and they understand the working women properly and shares her home making activities, her problem of dual role will not be solved easily.

**5) Provision of Support Services**

Greater emphasis should be placed on the provision of crèche/ day care centre facility as a support service. It is therefore, recommended that it be made mandatory for every work site to provide a crèche facility.

It is also necessary to provide labour-saving devices to make home-making as easier and less time consuming process.

**6) Recognition of Household work**

If household work and the rearing of children are recognized as socially and economically productive, then sharing such responsibilities need not disgrace a man. Division of functions of men and women must be redefined as their roles are changing.

**7) Financial Literacy**

The employer should organize financial literacy programmes so that women employees can invest their money properly.

**Conclusion:**

In short, it can be said that women should develop their confidence level and increase their self-reliance to decide and determine their important choices of life. Power has to be acquired, exercised and preserved. Unless women themselves become conscious of their subjugation and appreciation, show proficiency and grasp the opportunities, it would not be possible to change their status. Attitudinal change, principles of justice and equality should be deep-seated in the minds of each and every individual in the society. There is need for creation of awareness for achievement to search for one's identity which should represent women as having great potential for achievement in all spheres of life.

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