

Five Year Plans and Women Development in India

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ABSTRACT

After independence, India has adopted Five Year Plans since 1951 for achieving economic development. So far as more than six decades of planning have passed. During this period, India has completed twelve Five-Year Plans. The main objective of the present study is to analyze the initiatives taken by the government for the development of the women in different plans period. So many programmes, policies and projects have been designed to raise the status of women in development process. Since, in our country, nearly half of the population is women, so women development is considered as a part of national development by Indian government. In India, from First Five-Year Plan to Fifth Five-Year Plan, Indian planners were concerned with helping women to fulfill their domestic roles in a more efficient way. From second plan onwards to the sixth plan women's welfare became a sub-heading under social welfare. In India, a large number of schemes will start for empowering women's in terms of social and economic condition.

1. Introduction

"There is no chance for welfare of world unless the condition of women is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly on only one wing". Swami Vivekananda

Development alone cannot bring peace and prosperity unless social justice and gender equality are ensured. According to Census Report 2011, women constitute about half of the population of the country. Women are the vital part of the economy, constituting one third of the national labour force and the major contributor to the survival of the family. It is also widely recognized that apart from managing household, bearing children, rural women bring income with productive activities ranging from traditional work in the fields of working in factories or running small and petty business. They have also proven that they can be better entrepreneurs and development managers in any kind of human development activities. We know that the poorer the family is the greater will be the dependence on women's income. They are, therefore, regarded as the better half of the society. Our society, particularly the rural society, is still male dominated and women are not treated as equal partners, both inside and outside the four walls of the house. The rural women are the most silent participants of economic development of India. That is why, in most of the developing countries today, more and more emphasis is laid on the need for development of women and their active participation in the main stream of development process.

2. Objectives

The main objective of the present study is to analyze the initiatives taken by the government for the development of the women in different plans period.

3. Methodology

The study is mainly descriptive type analysis and based on secondary data. Data have been collected from Planning Commission Report.

4. Discussion

Objectives of Five-Year Plans

Five-Year Plans are centralized and integrated national economic programs. Planning is the programme that is taken on the basis of present available resources to attain desired objectives. According to the opinion of Planning Commission of India, "planning is essentially a way of organizing and utilizing resources to get maximum advantage in terms of defined social ends. After independence, India has adopted Five-Year Plans since 1951 for achieving economic development. So far as more than six decades of planning have passed. During this period, Indian has completed twelve plans. The main feature of economic planning is to fix up some definite objectives or targets and to adopt suitable measures to achieve those targets. The main objectives of India's Five-Year Plans are: (i) Attainment of a higher rate of growth of national income (ii) Reduction in economic inequality (iii) Attainment of full employment (iv) Rapid industrialization (v) Removal of poverty (vi) Attainment of economic self-reliance (vii) Modernization of various sectors of the economy (viii) Removal of imbalance in the economy (ix) Attainment of self-sufficiency in food and basic raw materials (x) Raising the rate of investment and (xi) Women development.

Five Year Plans and Development of Women in India

Government of India has started Five-Year Plans since 1951 for achieving economic development. So far as more than six decades of planning have passed. During this period, total twelve plans have been adopted. The main feature of economic planning is to fix up some definite objectives or targets and to adopt suitable measures to achieve those targets. Each Five-Year Plan devotes a special section on the schemes and projects designed especially for women. In each Five -Year Plan, the government of India has undertaken some scheme and projects for the development of women. Plan-wise various schemes and projects designed for women development are discussed below.

First Five-Year Plan (1951-56):

In the First Five-Year Plan, the government of India had set up voluntary social welfare board at the centre and in the states for women's development. The main purpose of this board is:

- (i) To support enrolment and mobilization of girls in schools at the primary level and at the university stage, emphasize was on vocational education, to take up employment immediately;
- (ii) To make efforts of education so that women become better mothers and manage their household in an economical and efficient manner;
- (iii) To encourage training of women doctors, midwives and dais to provide better childbirth and health services for women and
- (iv) To develop the employability of women through technical training.

Development of women was clubbed with the welfare of the disadvantaged groups like destitute, disabled, aged, etc.

Second Five-Year Plan (1956-61):

In the second plan, the objectives were:

- (i) To promote girl's education through parents and to make education more relevant to girl's needs and employment of women teachers;
- (ii) To improve maternal and child health but the emphasis was more on children;
- (iii) To take care of women's physical and biological disabilities at the work place while allotting types of work in the field of labor.

Third Five-Year Plan (1961-66):

The main objectives of this plan were:

- (i) To link health, the maternal and child welfare services with the general health facilities and referral institutions;
- (ii) To encourage family planning by adoption of the oral pill, a relatively new method of family planning at that time.

Fourth Five-Year Plan (1969-74)

In the Fourth Five-Year Plan, the emphasis was given on women education. The basic policy was to promote women's welfare as the base of operation. The outlay on family planning was stepped up to reduce the birth rate through education.

Fifth Five-Year Plan (1974-78)

During this plan period, importance had been given on the training of women, who were in need of income and protection.

Sixth Five-Year Plan (1980-85):

The objectives of this plan were:

- (i) To increase enrolment of girls at the elementary level, promotion of functional literacy and encouraging the promotion of education for women in backward areas;
- (ii) To improve health and family welfare, maternal and child welfare services and attention was paid to women's nutrition needs;

- (iii) To generate more skilled and unskilled employment through vocational training and support services. However, on agriculture and industry side no new schemes for the employment of women were made however, integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) was launched.

Seventh Five-Year Plan (1985-90):

In this plan period, the main objectives were:

- (i) To empower women by generating awareness of their rights and privileges;
- (ii) To train women for more productive economic activity;
- (iii) To develop support services to reduce the excessive daily burden of domestic work on women;
- (iv) To enhance women's access to science and technology to promote their participation in creation of a sustainable environment;
- (v) To promote women's corporations for every state with the centre and state governments participation, at 50:50 funding.

Eighth Five-Year Plan (1992-97):

This plan focused on empowering women, especially at the grass roots level, through Panchayat Raj Institutions. The Department of Women and Child Development also prepared a plan of action for women for 1989-2000 and set emphasis on the development of women.

Ninth Five-Year Plan (1997-2002):

The main objective of this plan was to empower each and every woman. Every effort will be made to create an enabling environment where women can freely exercise their rights both within and outside home, as equal partners, along with men. The plan also aimed at 'convergence of existing services' available in both women-specific and women-related sectors.

Tenth Five-Year Plan (2002-07):

It also includes the expansion of economic and social opportunities for all individuals and groups, reduction in disparities and a greater participation in the decision making process.

Eleventh Five-Year Plan (2007-12):

In the Eleventh Plan, women are considered not just as equal citizens but as agents of economic and social growth. For the development of women, the government provides women with basic entitlements to address the reality of globalization and its impact on women by prioritizing economic empowerment and ensure an environment free from all forms of violence against women physical, economic, social, psychological etc.

Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17):

The main objectives of 12th Plan were:

- (i) Empowering adolescent girls (11-18 years) through nutrition, health care and life skill education;
- (ii) Enabling economic empowerment of marginalized women;

- (iii) Providing relief and rehabilitation to marginalized and vulnerable women who lack family and societal support and independent means of income;
- (iv) Preventing and combating trafficking of women and children; Protecting women from all forms of violence and discrimination;

National Perspective Plan for Women 1988 – 2000

A National Perspective Plan for women was initiated for the development of women by the Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Human Resource Development during 1988–2000. The plan gives special attention to the rural poor women. The main purpose of this plan was to promote holistic perspective to the development of women.

5. Conclusion

The main objective of this paper is to analyze the governmental policies and programmes for the development of women in different plans period. It is seen that in each plan,

a large number of schemes have been undertaken for the development of women. Planned development has been considered to be the most effective way of solving the numerous problems comes in the way of eradicating poverty, reducing imbalances and preventing discriminations among vast number of poor people living in rural areas, especially of rural poor women folk. In this process, various policies and programmes intended for empowerment of women have been implemented for which special budget allocations are made in Five-Year Plans. Besides, various schemes are being implemented to uplift socio-economic status of rural poor women and paving a path for their empowerment. Thus, the government has been making sincere efforts to empower women in socio-economic and politico-cultural aspects, so that a welfare state and a prosperous nation can be built. Without these policies, women are not able to respond to the development process because of their disadvantaged position that is evident from the statistical data of the country.

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