Analysis of Challenges and Strategies of the Women Leadership and Economic Empowerment

Patrini. Dhanalakshmi
Lecturer in Political Science
Dr. V.S. Krishna Government. Degree College (A)
Visakhapatnam

Dr. K. Lakshmi Sirisha
Lecturer in Economics
Visakha Government Degree College (W)
Visakhapatnam

CHITTURI. LAKSHMI
Lecturer in Economics
Dr.V.S. Krishna Government Degree college (A)
Visakhapatnam

Dr. Siva sankar Mandal Baidya
Assistant Professor
Department of Social sciences and Humanities
Vignan's Foundation for Science, Technology and Research
Vadlamudi, Guntur district.

Dr. P. Jayalakshmi
Former HOD, Department of economics
St.Joseph's College for Women (A)
Visakhapatnam
Jayavinod9@gmail.com

Abstract

After independence, the Indian Government, from time to time has taken several Constitutional, statutory measures to promote women. The government programme for Women development began as early as 1954 in India but the actual participation began only in 1974. The National policy for the Empowerment of women was adopted in 2001. The goal of this policy is to bring about the advancement, development and empowerment of women. At present, the Government of India has introduced number of schemes for women operated by different departments and ministries. Women are almost half of the population having enormous potential but being underutilized for the development of the nation. The active participation of women need to strengthen and streamline the role of women in the development of various other sectors like entrepreneurship and leadership by harnessing their

power towards nation building and to attain accelerated economic growth. World Economic profile of women show that, women represents 50% of the world population make up 30% of the official labour force, perform 60% of all working hours, receive 10% of world income and own even less than one per cent of the world's property (World Economic survey report). The main aim of the study is to analyse the challenges and Strategies of the women Leadership and economic empowerment. The study is based on secondary data from Reports, Magazines, Journals and web resources. This paper reviews studies done in women leadership in the context of theory of Leadership.

Keywords: Challenges, strategies, Empowerment, Economic development, women Leadership.

Introduction: In the early years, leadership roles have been performed by men only. There has been a general agreement that women face much more challenges and barriers in reaching leadership positions. The gradual entry of women into labor force during the last few decades and their trickling into the top management and corporate ladders attracted researchers in the area of women leadership. There is also positive relationship between presence of women and the performance of the organization (Desvaux et.al.2008). The present-day women's organizations have been spawned to a great extent from their tradition and so it upholds the value of the unity and together they are moving forward. This particular study aims to understand the working of these organizations and the nature of change brought in terms the range of activities engaged in by women and to see how leadership is emerging among women. The study further aims to see how these women organizations are affecting the empowerment of women as individuals; and their attitudes towards the girl child. The researcher wants to blend the concepts and theories in group dynamics (structure and process of the group), leadership and social work methods to understand the multi-dimensions related to organizational culture and women leadership leading to an empowered society as social work plays an important role in directing leadership and capabilities towards long-lasting enhanced social change.

Empowerment is the most recent policy approach to women in development. It takes into account not only both the practical and strategic gender needs of women but also recognizes their role in development. Empowerment has a number of dimensions with leadership as being one of them; it is worth mentioning here that the different approaches to women's

empowerment used in development activities include economic participation, political participation, educational attainment, health and well-being etc.

Statement of the problem:

Women have been deprived of an equal share of rights because of the age-old system of gender discrimination, economic oppression, and social stratification. In the time of globalization, the challenges women face for their development is to ensure economic empowerment and self-reliance. But Indian women are traditionally more engaged with socio-economic and cultural activities than their counterpart. There are a number of organizations governed by only women members. But it is not explored whether these women's groups or organizations are empowered. It is also not known whether their engagements with economic activities are uplifting their position in the family or society at large.

Objective of the study: the main objective of the study is to analyse the challenges and strategies the women leadership and economic empowerment.

Methodology: This study is based the secondary sources like Journals, Reports, Magazines Books and Web sources.

Review of the Literature:

Kaushik Sanjay (2013) "Challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in India." *International Journal of Management and Social Sciences Research* (IJMSSR) ISSN: 2319-4421 Volume 2, No. 2. Social and economic development of women is necessary for development of any country. Due to changing environment, now women are easily acceptable at the entrepreneurial opportunity. Our increasing service sector also promotes the women entrepreneurship. The purpose of the study is to find out various motivating and de-motivating internal and external factor of women entrepreneurship. It will also suggest the investment and interesting working time of women.

Goyal Meenu and Prakash Jai (2011) "Women Entrepreneurship in India- Problems & Prospects." *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research,* Vol.1 Issue 5. The study revealed the concept of women entrepreneur; reasons women become entrepreneurs, reasons for slow progress of women entrepreneurs in India, suggestions for the growth of women

entrepreneurs and schemes for promotion & development of women entrepreneurship in India.

Thapa Arjun Kumar and Gurung Leena (2010) "An Assessment of Factors Influencing Empowerment Level of Females: A Case Study of Pokhara," *Economic Journal of Development Issues* Vol. 11 Issue 1. The paper attempted to analyze the association between social, economic and demographic factors on the female empowerment level. The study underpins the importance of economic interventions to empower and uplift all round condition of women.

Choudhary Neelam "An Account of Women Entrepreneurship Development in India: Challenges, Opportunities & Future Prospects." The paper analyzed women's participation in entrepreneurial activities to highlight the contribution of women entrepreneurs towards economic development. It examined the facilitating factors and policies and programmes of the government also exist to promote and strengthen the development of women entrepreneurship in India.

In the modern era, education as a field has become feminized, a term used to explain that it is a women-dominated field (Anderson, 2021). However, women representing a substantial amount of the educational workforce which is not being reflected in leadership positions within higher education.

As presented by Gomez (2020), "The overall percentage of women leading colleges and universities in the United States remains disproportionately low at 26%" (p.85). If institutions factor in the number of women in this occupational field and are striving for diversity in the workplace, leadership roles within higher educational institutions would reflect an increase in women in those roles (Anderson, 2021). Education has been viewed as a feminized field and as such, its value is viewed differently than occupational fields that have a high concentration of men. It is undervalued and when work is undervalued, it shows how society views and invests in that work. As explained by Anderson (2021), "So that helps to explain why we have, for example, still issues around teachers being substantively underpaid, why buildings are in disrepair, and why we say we value education, but we consistently underfund it…" (p.1). Women educators are not viewed as valuable as the concept of achieving academic excellence.

Manongsong & Ghosh, (2021) When considering the role of a leader, it is the individual that has the most authority in a specific setting and uses their knowledge, authority, and power to influence others they oversee. Often in higher education, this refers to department heads, divisions, working groups, or even the institution.

Cañas et al., 2019) Even within a few years of large social movements such as the "Me Too" and "Black Lives Matter" movements, that advocated to increase workplace diversity and combat injustices minority groups face, the percentage of women in leadership roles at universities ranges between 30% or lower.

Research consistently indicates that women have limited opportunities to participate as leaders in higher education, understanding the challenges for seeking leadership and how to change that is where information is still being gathered. Women face additional barriers that impact their career progression that their men colleagues on average do not need to overcome. Barriers and challenges such as inequality in the workplace, harassment, and family needs can be disruptive to career progression for women.

Types of Leadership styles:

There are many leadership styles of women which usually implement in their own business. Women are more likely than men to motivate others by changing their personal interests a group goal, then to women to encourage participation, share power and information and increase the value of the community. Other capabilities are women more likely than men to consider they serve as the strength of interpersonal skills or personal than for the purposes of the company. Women can try to create situations that help people to change their perception to feel better about themselves in terms of workers and their jobs well and own efforts to make people feel part of the organization (Anonim, 1997).

Female's style of leadership in general contains the nature of a democratic, participatory, caring and also more likely to encourage community involvement and motivation. While the masculine leadership style is more emphasis on individualism, duty and clear rules (Shakeshaft, 1998). Research using the survey conducted by Bass and Avolio (1994) concluded that the value of the leadership of women higher than men, judging from several criteria such as the speed of learning on organizational issues. Moreover considered better in

terms of ideal influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration, so that more responses about job satisfaction in the workplace with a woman leader.

There are many differences in leadership perceptions of male and female, these differences can be seen from some of the key aspects of leadership. The conclusion is derived from differences in perceptions of their perceptions about skills and attributes which are regarded as important in leading a task, then in terms of cooperation with parties that involved in running the business (Anonim, 1997).

Challenges and Barriers of Women Leadership and Economic Empowerment:

Women face many challenges in their daily life. Some issues relating to women economic empowerment are particularly challenging or sensitive. These challenges need to be acknowledged and discussed. Reaching the poorest of the poor and women in remote communities is the biggest challenge because of lower levels of literacy, lower level of access and control over resources, lower levels of networks and people who can assist and support.

Women economic empowerment: it is a holistic approach. Social and political factors have a significant influence on women's ability to participate in the economy. These include access to family planning and other healthcare services: social protection coverage, girl's completion of a quality post-primary education, improving literacy rates of adult women and increasing women influence in governance structures and political decision-making.

Traditional customs and Culture: In every family, community and country, expectations about attributes and behaviours appropriate to women or men are framed by culture, custom and tradition. So coming out of glass shells is a biggest challenge.

Care of Women: Women are more responsible to family, society and country. So balancing maternity and family responsibilities with a daunting challenge. In most of the countries sexism and the lack of role models are no longer the main obstacle to women leadership and empowerment. Most women take carrier breaks to look after children and elderly in-laws or parents. Sometimes, women had at change their work from full time to part-time or flexible

time to balance work and family. Such choices should be respected. But they make it harder for women to gain the experience to make it the very top.

Few women reach the top: The myth is that Women don't aspire for leadership roles but the reality is not about the aspirations of leadership but it is all about the barriers to advancement. Women leaders were more likely to adopt a "waiting for" rather than a "seeking" approach. Actually women are doing more efforts in every organization, but do all these efforts translate into actual promotions and appointments. Very few Women reach the top.

Providing credit is not sufficient: Simply giving credit to women is not the only solution.

Micro-finance-including micro0credits- is often considered as an instrument that promotes empowerment. Whilst it can stabilise livelihoods, broaden choices, provide start-up funds for productive investment, help poor people to smooth consumption flows and send children to school. It can also lead to indebtedness and increased financial exclusion unless programmes are well- designed.

Strategies for Women Leadership and Empowerment:

There is a need to sketch empowerment in Indian scenario were in women need to know their industry, protecting their business credibility for upward organizational mobility. Women need to have good work habits, good attitudes, the ability to delegate with delegation of execution, a focus on the big picture issues, strategic alliances, be good at what they do, and an increase in management visibility.

Empowering Women in the Informal economy: The self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) is a unique example of empowerment led by poor women working in the informal economy. The informal economy is by far largest sector in India, and more than 90% of working women belong to it. Traditional trade unions have had no space for these women and it was to address this failure that SEWA was set up in the early 1970s. SEWA works to bring poor women together at every level of activity, encouraging them to address their problems by envisioning change and putting it in practice. The common agenda is that of full employment and self -reliance. SEWA is active in the areas of microfinance, training and

communication. But it is its work on labour issues- paralegal assistance, lobbying, health insurance, maternity benefits and pensions- that is at the heart of the association.

Self-help groups: The Self- help groups are the new buzz for promoting entrepreneurship as well as empowerment of women. The formation of self-help groups as basis for the social and economic empowerment of deprived and disadvantaged women has been found to be a successful mechanism for the organization, mobilization and self-development of women. With the feeling of ownership and management of their own resources and savings, poor women have been able to choose their priorities and have even been found to cover the cost of additional nutrition and health gaps. The success of this approach has resulted in universalization of this mode of organization in all the States. There is a need to replicate this mode throughout the country.

Education and Training: Education provides women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence they need to seek out economic opportunities. Removing school fees and providing financial incentives for girls to attend school had proven to be effective for increasing their enrolment and completion rates. Education is the only weapon for bringing about free-reaching changes in the status of women. Educating girls is one of the most powerful tools for women's empowerment.

Participation in politics is a pivotal tool for Leadership and Empowerment: The aim of quota system in politics is to increase considerable political representation of women. For empowerment, women need to have a voice in decision making and planning through adequate representation. Reservation for women in the rural and urban local bodies had enabled representation of nearly a million women at the grassroots who play a very important catalytic role in transforming the society. Similar representation in State Legislative and Parliament would further strengthen the process of empowerment of women. All the political parties have received the parliamentary seats for village Panchayats this is a very good initiative for effective promotion of leadership from the ground level.

The flipside: The active   participation of women in all walks of life including education, politics sports etc., has been growing. But there **is** a need to strengthen and streamline the role

of women in the development of various other sectors like entrepreneurship and leadership by harnessing their power towards nation building and to attain accelerated economic growth. Majority of women had been undertaken entrepreneurial ventures. Hence, entrepreneurship is a key to economic development of a country. Realizing the fact that women need to be promoted to the higher levels of reservation in politics, and quotas in the boards of the organization are been implemented. On the flipside if inexperienced women were being appointed, this has serious damage on the firms' performance. To ensure all round development and to realise vision of India becoming superpower by 2047 can only be achieved with a balanced approach and systematic investing in women education and empowerment from the poorest of the poor.

Way Forward: The extent of woman empowerment is determined largely by three factors – her economic, social and political identity. These factors are interlinked and interdependent. Even one dimension remains absent or un-addressed; the momentum generated by the other cannot be sustained. When all the three factors are addressed simultaneously then only women can be truly empowered, and the holistic development of the society can be assured. Women need to set their goals. As business becomes more diverse with a global perspective, women need to leverage their advantages. These advantages include women's skills emphasizing connection, traits of warmth and expressiveness, their heightened sensitivity to cultural difference, willingness to communicate, handle any task assigned, a make women valuable players accept challenges, and looking at the entire context before acting. All these skills make women valuable players in the business environment-both on a national or international level.

Conclusion: India is now a leading country in the field of women education. History of India is never blank of brave women however it is full of women philosophers like Gargi, Viswabara, Maritreyi, Apala, Mamata (of Vedic age), and other famous women are like Mirabai, Durgabati, Ahalyabi, Laxmibai, etc. All the famous historical women in India are inspiration for the women of this age. We never forget their contributions to the society and country. Women empowerment and leadership can only be achieved when the attitude and ways of behaving towards women become congenial and positive. Society must step up with regards to make an atmosphere in which there is no sexual orientation segregation and

women have full chances of self-basic leadership and taking an interest in social, political and monetary existence of the nation with a feeling of equity.

References:

1.Amey M. J. (2006). Leadership in higher education. The Magazine of Higher Learning, 38, 55–58. https://doi.org/10.3200/chng.38.6.55-58

2.Anderson, J. (2021). The unique challenges facing women in Education. Harvard Graduate School of Education. https://www.gse.harvard.edu/ideas/edcast/21/04/unique-challenges-facing-women-education

3. Kaushik, Sanjay, 2013. Challenges faced by Women Entrepreneurs in India. File retrieved from http:// www.irjcjournals.org/ijmssr/Feb2013/2.pdf

4. Thapa, Arjun Kumar & Gurung Leena, 2010. "An Assessment of Factors Influencing, Empowerment Level of Females: A Case Study of Pokhara." Economic Journal of Development Issues. Vol.11, Issue 1.

5. Choudhary, Neelam. An Account of Women Entrepreneurship Development in India: Challenges, Opportunities & Future Prospects. File Retrieved from https://editorialexpress.com/ cgibin/conference/download.cgidb_name IAFFE2013 &paper_id=90.

6. Schuler, Sidney Ruth, Islam Farzana & Rottach Elisabeth, "Women Empowerment Revisited: A Case Study" from Bangladesh. File retrieved from http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/ pmc/articles/PMC2941240.

7. Malhotra Anuj, Schulte Jennifer, Patel Payal & Petesch Patti, Innovation for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality. File retrieved from www.icrw.org/node/288.

8. Kumar, Prahlad and Paul, Tinku, (2004), "Informalization and Need for Gender Sensitive Statistics" paper presented in a National Conference by Indian Political Economy Association on 'Globalization, State and the Weaker Sections' held at G.B Pant Social Science Institute on 11-12 June, 2004**.**

9.Hackman, M. Z., & Johnson, C. E. (2009). *Leadership: A communication perspective* (5th ed.). Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland.

10.Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. L. (1995). *The leadership challenge: How to keep getting extraordinary things done in organizations.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

11.Schein, E. H. (1992). *Organizational culture and leadership* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

12. Schein, E. H. (1992). *Organizational culture and leadership* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

13.Wergin, J. F. (2007) (Ed.). *Leadership in place: How academic professionals can find their leadership voice*. Boston: Anker.

14. Falls, L., Jara, T., & Sever, T. (2009). Experiential workshop with educational leadership doctoral students: Managing affective reactions to organizational change. *The Journal of Leadership Studies, 7*(3), retrieved from http://www.fhsu.edu/jole/issues/JOLE_7_3.pdf.

15. Pankaj Kumar Baro1 & Rahul Sarania (2011). "Employment and Educational Status: Challenges of Women Empowerment in India", A Peer-Reviewed Indexed International Journal of Humanities & Social Science.