

# **WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**

## **ISSUES AND CHALLENGES**

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**THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT  
IN INDIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

Swami Vivekananda, one of the greatest sons of India, quoted that, *“There is no chance for the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved, It is not possible for a bird to fly on only one wing.”* Therefore, the inclusion of “Women Empowerment” as one of the prime goals in the eight Millennium Development Goals underscores the relevance of this fact. Thus, in order to achieve the status of a developed country, India needs to transform its colossal women force into an effective human resource and this is possible only through the empowerment of women. There is no denying the fact that women in India have made a considerable progress in almost seven decades of Independence, but they still have to struggle against many handicaps and social evils in the male-dominated society. Many evil and masculine forces still prevail in the modern Indian society that resists the forward march of its women folk. It is ironical that a country, which has recently acclaimed the status of the first Asian country to accomplish its Mars

mission in the maiden attempt, is positioned at the 29th rank among 146 countries across the globe on the basis of Gender Inequality Index. There has been amelioration in the position of women, but their true empowerment is still awaited.

**Introduction**

Women empowerment means emancipation of women from the vicious grips of social, economical, political, caste and gender-based discrimination. It means granting women the freedom to make life choices. Women empowerment does not mean ‘deifying women’ rather it means replacing patriarchy with parity. A woman is a being with senses, imagination and thoughts; she should be able to express them freely. Individual empowerment means to have the self-confidence to articulate and assert the power to negotiate and decide.

A critical aspect of social empowerment of women is the promotion of gender equality. Gender equality implies a society in which women and men enjoy the same opportunities, outcomes, rights and obligations in all spheres of life.

**Women Empowerment:**

Women empowerment in simple words can be understood as giving power to women to decide for their own lives or inculcating such abilities in them so that they could be able to find their rightful place in the society. According to the United Nations, women’s empowerment mainly has five components:

1. Generating women’s sense of self-worth;
2. Women’s right to have and to determine their choices;
3. Women’s right to have access to equal opportunities and all kinds of resources;
4. Women’s right to have the power to regulate and control their own lives, within and outside the home; and