

CORRELATION BETWEEN WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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Abstract – Women empowerment and gender equality is a necessary foundation for peaceful, powerful and sustainable world. Women empowerment promotes women's sense of self worth, their ability to determine their own choices, their right to influence change for themselves and others, it can be social, educational, economic, political and psychological. Women empowerment is foundation to empower and progress entire society. Women are not only more effected by problems of society, but also possess ideas and leadership to solve them.

The gender discrimination still holds many women back and holds back the society too. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in 2015 embody a road map for progress that is sustainable and all inclusive. Achieving gender equality and women empowerment is integral to each to the 17 goals. Only by ensuring the rights of women across all the goals will get better justice and inclusion economics the work for all and sustained environment can be given to future generation. SDG-5 aims to grant women and girls equal rights and opportunity without any discrimination, By 2030 empowering women urgently and intesively will result in sustained growth and development of every society. This paper focuses on SDGs as a visionary for sustainable growth and development of every society which can be achieved though women empowerment and gender equality.

Keywords: Women Empowerment, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Sustainable Development, Women's Rights, Policy, Empowerment Indicators.

1 INTRODUCTION

Women constitute approximately half of the world's population. They have been forced to live as secondary status. They live a marginalized life of subjugation and subordination, limiting themselves to patriarchal notion of confining themselves to home and hearth. Through centuries women have been made to suffer from much repugnant social practices, much due to her low access to education and thus leading to their low literacy, less decision making power, less ingress to occupation, and less economic independence and poor health conditions and consequently in a situation where they are more dependent on males, women and girls comprise the majority of people living in poverty, and experience multidimensional inequalities. Additionally persistent and chronic under investment in gender equality and women's empowerment has exacerbated development limitations. Women construct approximately an equal ratio of the total human population. Therefore women empowerment is indispensable tool for advancing all round development and reducing poverty. Empowering women and girls needs looking at the gender with gender neutral perspectives and achieving gender equality in every society. It requires the concerted efforts from the entire of society as a whole. It is a crucial step towards acceleration of sustainable development. Therefore everyone in the society have baseline responsibility to respect rights of women and girls and support their empowerment. Gender equality and women. empowerment is essentially important and expand economic growth and thus pivotal to the health and development of families, communities and national as a whole.

Women empowerment is a means of emancipation of women and their harmonious co-existence with men in society. It enables their ability to contribute in development of society at all levels maintaining their self dignity rights and influence in decision making. Women empowerment provides women with social justice and equality and improves on her ability to contribute to the society at all levels.

It can also be described as promoting women's sense of self worth, their ability to determine their own choices, their right to influence social change for themselves and others. It ranges from self-strength

to efficiency building of women which includes making her empowered socially, educationally, economically, politically, digitally, psychologically and making her healthy. Culturally, women must be given digital skills to make their voices heard and increase women's participation and thus raising her status and dignity in the society. Women thus, must acquire empowerment themselves rather than have given it to them externally.

1.1 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 5

Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) is one of the 17 global goals established by the United Nations as part of the 2030 aim for Sustainable Development. SDG 5 focuses on gender equality and is aimed at achieving gender equity and empowering all women and girls around the world. The specific targets and indicators for SDG 5 include:

End all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls: This target seeks to eliminate all forms of gender-based violence and discrimination, including harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation.

Eliminate all harmful practices: This target aims to eradicate practices that harm women and girls, such as child marriage and female genital mutilation.

Ensure equal participation and opportunities for leadership: It calls for equal participation of women in political, economic, and public life, as well as leadership roles.

Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights: This target aims to provide women and girls with access to reproductive health services and information and promote gender-responsive family planning.

Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources: This includes access to land, property, and financial services.

Enhance the use of technology to promote women's empowerment: It calls for using technology to bridge the gender gap in access to information and communication.

Adopt and strengthen policies and legislation for gender equality: This target is focused on legal and policy reforms to promote gender equality and protect women's rights.

SDG 5 is crucial because gender equality is not only a fundamental human right but also a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world. When women and girls are empowered and have equal opportunities, societies benefit from their contributions to education, healthcare, the economy, and overall well-being. Progress toward SDG 5 is critical for achieving the broader sustainable development goals, as gender equality is interconnected with many aspects of social, economic, and environmental sustainability.

2 WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND ITS DIMENSIONS

Women empowerment embodies a multifaceted concept encompassing various interconnected dimensions that are fundamental to enhancing the status, capabilities, and influence of women in society. Recognizing and promoting these dimensions is crucial for achieving gender equality and fostering sustainable development. Here, we delve into the key dimensions of women's empowerment:

- **Economic Empowerment:**

Economic empowerment entails providing women with the ability to access and control economic resources, opportunities, and assets. This includes access to financial services, credit, entrepreneurship opportunities, employment, equal pay for equal work, and participation in decision-making related to

economic activities. Economic empowerment enables women to be financially independent and contribute to household and societal economic growth.

- **Social Empowerment:**

Social empowerment involves ensuring that women have an active and equal participation in social processes and structures. This includes challenging and changing discriminatory social norms, cultural practices, and stereotypes that limit women's roles and opportunities. Encouraging women's involvement in community activities, providing access to social services, healthcare, education, and promoting their voices in social and political discussions are vital aspects of social empowerment.

- **Political Empowerment:**

Political empowerment focuses on increasing women's participation and influence in political and decision-making processes at all levels. This includes representation in government, access to leadership roles, involvement in policy formulation, and active participation in electoral processes. Political empowerment strengthens the voice of women in shaping policies and legislation that address their unique needs and concerns.

- **Educational Empowerment:**

Educational empowerment centers on providing women with equal opportunities for education, skill development, and knowledge acquisition. This encompasses access to quality education, literacy programs, vocational training, and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education. Education equips women with the tools needed to make informed decisions, participate in the workforce, and advocate for their rights.

These dimensions are interdependent and reinforce each other. For instance, education contributes to economic empowerment, which in turn enhances social and political empowerment. Achieving progress in all these dimensions is essential for creating an environment where women can fully participate in society, contribute to sustainable development, and realize their potential without facing gender-based discrimination or barriers. Policymakers, organizations, and communities need to actively work towards advancing these dimensions to achieve gender equality and create a more equitable and sustainable world.

3 WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND HEALTH:

The relationship between women's empowerment and health is intricate and symbiotic, with the empowerment of women being a significant determinant of improved health outcomes. When women are empowered, they are better positioned to make informed decisions about their health, seek appropriate healthcare services, and contribute to the overall well-being of their families and communities. In this section, we explore the multifaceted connection between women's empowerment and health.

- **Healthcare Access and Decision-Making:**

Women's empowerment significantly influences their ability to access healthcare services. Empowered women are more likely to seek timely and appropriate medical care for themselves and their children, leading to improved health outcomes. Moreover, empowered women are active decision-makers in healthcare choices, ensuring that health decisions are based on informed choices and are aligned with their family's well-being.

- **Reproductive Health and Family Planning:**

Empowerment plays a critical role in reproductive health and family planning. When women are empowered, they have the knowledge and agency to make decisions regarding family planning, spacing of pregnancies, and the use of contraceptives. This empowers them to manage their reproductive health effectively, leading to better maternal and child health outcomes.

- **Maternal and Child Health:**

Empowered women are more likely to access prenatal care, have skilled attendance during childbirth, and follow essential postnatal care practices. This contributes to a reduction in maternal and child mortality rates. Additionally, empowered women are better informed about proper nutrition, immunizations, and early childhood development, positively impacting the health and growth of their children.

- **Mental Health and Well-being:**

Women's empowerment also extends to mental health. When women have the ability to control their lives and make choices, it positively impacts their mental well-being. Empowered women are better equipped to cope with stress, manage mental health issues, and seek appropriate mental health services when needed.

- **Preventive Healthcare and Awareness:**

Empowered women are more likely to have knowledge about preventive healthcare measures, such as regular check-ups, screenings, and vaccinations. They take proactive steps towards preventive healthcare, reducing the risk of diseases and promoting a healthier lifestyle for themselves and their families.

4 WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND EDUCATION

Education is a fundamental pillar of women's empowerment and a powerful catalyst for their socio-economic development and overall well-being. In this section, we explore the critical relationship between women's empowerment and education, highlighting the transformative impact of education on their lives and the broader society.

- **Access to Quality Education:**

Providing equal access to quality education for girls and women is a key component of women's empowerment. Accessible education equips women with the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to make informed decisions and actively participate in various spheres of life.

- **Enhanced Decision-Making:**

Education empowers women to become critical thinkers and decision-makers. Through education, women gain the ability to analyze information, understand their rights, advocate for themselves, and contribute meaningfully to societal decisions and policies.

- **Economic Empowerment:**

Education is directly linked to economic empowerment. Educated women have a higher likelihood of securing gainful employment and earning higher wages. They are also more likely to engage in entrepreneurial activities, contributing to economic growth and poverty reduction.

- **Health and Hygiene Awareness:**

Education plays a crucial role in improving health outcomes for women. Educated women have better knowledge of healthcare practices, nutrition, family planning, and hygiene. This knowledge enables them to make informed choices about their health and that of their families.

- **Empowerment Against Gender-Based Violence:**

Education can act as a shield against gender-based violence. Educated women are more likely to recognize and challenge abusive situations, advocate for their rights, and seek support to break the cycle of violence.

- **Participation in Public and Political Life:**

Education enables women to participate actively in public and political life. It equips them with the skills and confidence needed to engage in civic activities, run for office, and influence policy decisions, contributing to a more inclusive and equitable society.

- **Inter-generational Impact:**

Educated women are more likely to prioritize education for their own children, creating a positive inter-generational impact. This results in a cascading effect, breaking the cycle of poverty and ignorance.

Efforts to promote women's education should focus on eliminating barriers to entry, ensuring retention through various stages of education, and providing opportunities for skill development and lifelong learning. By investing in women's education, societies can unlock a powerful force for progress, development, and gender equality, ultimately creating a more inclusive and prosperous world.

5. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

The relationship between women's empowerment and economic growth is a fundamental aspect of sustainable development and inclusive prosperity. Empowering women economically not only benefits them individually but also contributes significantly to the overall economic development of societies and nations. In this section, we explore the critical dimensions of the relationship between women's empowerment and economic growth.

- **Increased Labor Force Participation:**

Empowering women economically increases their participation in the labor force. When more women are engaged in formal employment or entrepreneurship, it expands the workforce, which is essential for economic growth and productivity.

- **Enhanced Productivity and Innovation:**

Women's empowerment fosters a diverse and inclusive workforce, leading to enhanced productivity and innovation. Different perspectives and skills that women bring to the workplace contribute to a broader range of ideas, creativity, and problem-solving approaches, driving economic growth.

- **Entrepreneurial Ventures:**

Economic empowerment provides women with the opportunity to start and manage businesses. Women-owned businesses contribute to economic growth by creating jobs, stimulating innovation, and boosting local economies.

- **Financial Inclusion and Investment:**

Empowered women have better access to financial resources, credit, and investment opportunities. When women have control over financial decisions and resources, they can invest in education, healthcare, businesses, and their families, thereby positively impacting economic development.

- **Poverty Reduction and Household Income:**

Economic empowerment of women helps alleviate poverty by increasing household incomes. Women who have economic independence can contribute financially to their households, improving the overall standard of living and reducing poverty levels.

- **Gender Equality in the Workplace:**

Empowering women economically fosters gender equality in the workplace. Providing equal opportunities, pay, and benefits for women enhances workplace satisfaction, employee retention, and organizational performance, all of which are critical for sustained economic growth.

- **Investment in Human Capital:**

Economic empowerment enables women to invest in their own education and skills development. A well-educated and skilled female workforce is essential for fostering innovation, productivity, and competitiveness in the global market, promoting long-term economic growth.

- **Market Potential and Consumer Influence:**

Empowered women represent a significant market segment with purchasing power and consumer influence. Understanding and catering to the needs and preferences of women consumers can drive market growth and economic expansion.

Policies and initiatives promoting gender-sensitive employment laws, equal pay, access to education, and financial inclusion are crucial in empowering women economically. By harnessing the economic potential of women and integrating them fully into the workforce and entrepreneurial sphere, societies can experience sustainable economic growth and development. Women's empowerment is not just a matter of equality; it is a strategic imperative for maximizing human potential and advancing economic progress.

6. CONCLUSION

In India we can empower them to join workforce. As economic empowerment and education depends on digital literacy and access to smart phones. It will give them safety, save time, money and resources. In communicating and balancing home & work, fulfilling SDG.

Goal 8-Decent work and economic growth

Goal 9- Industry innovation and infrastructure

Goal 1- No poverty

The protection of women decision makers, planners, advisors managers, in relation to environmental management should be increased. Environmental education should be extended to rural areas. The potential to science and technology should be utilized at homes to reduce her household drudgeries. She should be given constitutional, legal, administrative social, educational and economic power to enable her full participation in sustainable development. Gender relevant knowledge and valuation of women role should be imparted.

A gender perspective of (SDG-5) women are marginalized though they are fine frontline workers women can be agents of change, leading biodiversity protection, conservation and sustainable farming efforts.

The Positive effects can be magnified by making women empowered, giving her equality and using her experience & insight for a sustainable environment. It can be rightly pointed out that women are not passive victims of the environmental crisis. Our very existence depends on sustain of environment and earth which may depend on empowerment of women.

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