



Critical Study Of Five-Year Plans And Women Empowerment

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ABSTRACT:

The Indian Constitution's Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties, and Directive Principles all explicitly state the importance of gender equality. The Constitution not only guarantees women's equality but also gives the State the authority to implement positive discrimination policies in favour of women. Five-Year Plans (FYPs) are coordinated and integrated national economic programmes. The first Five-Year Plan of the Soviet Union was put into effect by Joseph Stalin in 1928. Since then, the majority of communist nations and a few capitalist ones have embraced them. India founded the First FYP in 1951, just after independence, under the socialist influence of its first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. This paper is related to empowerment related issues in Five-Year Plans in India.

KEYWORDS : economic programme , empowerment , women , development.

FIVE - YEAR PLANS AND EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

One of the significant social and political development of the closing decades of the 20th century was the women's empowerment movement as part of the major civilizational transformation. Several steps have been taken in India to provide legal protections and institutional framework for women's health programs. Since independence, women's development has been the central focus of development planning. Policy approaches have shifted from the concept of "welfare" in the seventies to "development" in the eighties and "empowerment" in the nineties over the past thirty years. The emphasis now is on women's inclusion in decision-making and their involvement in policy (V.S.Gupta, 2002).

A number of women's welfare measures were envisaged in the First Five Year Plan (1951-56). A few steps in this direction were the establishment of the Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB), Mahila Mandals or Women's Clubs organization and **Community Development programmes**

The Second Five Year Plan (1956-61) is closely linked to the overall approach to rapid development of agriculture. The commitment to welfare often continued during the time of this plan.

As a significant social program, the Third Five Year Program (1961-66) funded women's

education. In addition to providing programs to maternal and child healthcare, health education, food and family planning, community welfare services and simplified education courses had priority.

Similarly, women's education continued to be the focus of the Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-74). The fundamental policy here was to promote the welfare of women within the family. Family planning outlay has been stepped up and immunization and supplementary feeding programs have been given high priority.

The Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79) highlighted income and protection-needed women in training. Priority has been granted to the Active Literacy Programme. This plan coincided with the International Women's Decade and the presentation of the Indian Women's Status Committee Report. Under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Women's Welfare and Development Bureau was founded in 1976. It was to function as a nodal point to integrate women's development policies and programs.

There has been a definite shift from welfare to growth in the Sixth Five Year Program (1980-85). It identified the lack of women's access to capital as a critical factor for their development.

The Seventh Five Year Program (1985-90) brought wealth and empowerment issues into action. For the first time, focus has been put on strategic issues such as awareness-raising and skills training in better employment.

During Sixth and Seventh Plan period, a number of programmes were envisaged such as: (i) Women's Development Corporations (WDCs). (ii) Support to Training and Employment Programme (STEP). (iii) Training-cum-Production Centres for Women. (iv) Awareness Generation Camps for Rural Poor Women. (v) Women's Training Centres or Institutes for Rehabilitation of Women in distress. (vi) Voluntary Action Bureau and Family Counselling Centres. (vii) Short Stay Homes for Women and Girls. (viii) Free Legal Aid and Para-legal Training and (ix) Working Women's Hostels. The thrust of all these programmes was on provision of employment and income generation, educational training, support services, general awareness and legal support to women.

The Eighth Five Year Plan (1990-95) focused on empowering women through Panchayat Raj Institutions, particularly at the grassroots level.

The Ninth Five Year Program (1997-2002) implemented a Women's Factor Project policy to devote not less than 30 percent of funds / benefits for women-specific programs. The Planning Commission's analysis of the performance of the Women's Element Program during the Ninth Period reported that approximately 42.9% of gross budgetary support (GBS) aggregating a maximum of Rs. 51,94253 crores were invested on women in 5 Ministries / Departments, including Family Welfare, Nutrition, Education, Women and Child and the Indian Medicine and Homeopathy Framework.

The Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007) approach aims to empower women by translating into action the recently adopted National Women's Empowerment Policy (2001) and

ensuring ' Right-Based Approach Survival, Protection and Development of Children. 'The Annual Plan 2002-2003, being the first year of the Tenth Plan, has initiated and brought into effect the thrust areas outlined in the approach along with relevant policies and programmes. For the Annual Plan 2002-03 a total outlay of Rs.2220 crores have been provided for the women and child development as against Rs.1650 crores made available in 2001-02 (Sayed Afzal Peerzade and Prema Parande, 2005).

Women-Specific Policies under the Plans

A number of women-specific and women related policies were enunciated in all Plan documents. There has been a significant change from protection to growth in the response to women's issues since the Fifth Five Year Program. In addition, an environment has been created to reflect women's concerns.

1. The National Women's Action Plan adopted in 1976 became a guideline for women's development. A National Women's Perspective Plan (1988-2000) was drawn up in support of a holistic approach to women's development. The National Nutritional Policy, The National Policy on Education, The National Population Policy, etc., have significant component for women aimed at their empowerment. Some of the strategies are:
2. Expediting legislation to reserve no less than one-third of women's seats in parliament and state legislatures to ensure adequate women's representation in decision-making.
3. To adopt an integrated approach to empowering women through the effective convergence of existing services, resources, infrastructure and workforce in both women's and women's sectors.
4. Adopt a specific ' Women's Component Strategy ' policy to guarantee that women from other development industries earn no less than 30% of support or benefits.
5. Organizing women into self-help groups and thus marking the start of a big women empowerment process
6. Ensuring easy and equal access to education to women and girls.
7. Equipping women with necessary skills in the modern trades, which could make them economically self-reliant.
8. Increasing access to credit through setting up of "Development Bank for Women Entrepreneurs" in small sectors.

The Eleventh five year plan (2007 -2012): The main task of the eleventh year plan was to ensure that women are the centre of all activities of economic, social and political activities. The crucial areas concerning themselves, to a large extent, suggest the thrust areas that are required to be kept in view in the Eleventh plan, while priority will continue to be laid on health, nutrition, education, income generating activities, relief and rehabilitation for women in distress. Microfinance will be continued to remain the backbone of SHG finances and therefore it will need to be strengthen and streamlined in the eleventh five year plan. (Chandramohan, 2010)

The year 2001 was observed by the United Nations as the Year of Women Empowerment. In the same year, the National Policy for Women's Empowerment was developed. The Policy acknowledges the sources of gender inequality linked to the nature of society and the economy. The Policy stresses the need for gender mainstreaming in the process of development. The National Women's Empowerment Policy's objectives include:

- A. Creating an environment for the full development of women through progressive economic and social policies to allow them to realize their full potential ;
- B. Women's de jure and de facto enjoyment of all human rights on an equal level with men in all fields-political, economic, social, cultural and civil.;
- C. Equal access to regional cultural, political and economic participation and decision-making;
- D. parity of access to healthcare, quality education at all levels career and professional guidance, employment and equal pay;
- E. Enhancing the legal system to remove all forms of discrimination against women;
- F. Changing societal attitudes and public behaviors by active involvement and participation of both men and women;
- G. Mainstreaming in the development process a gender viewpoint;
- H. Elimination of discrimination against women and children and all forms of violence; and
- I. Creating and strengthening civil society relationships, especially women's organizations (J. Bhagyalakshmi, 2004).

Now The Planning Commission has been replaced by a new organisation called NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India). The new entities were described in a cabinet Resolution that was published today. Over time, the institutional foundation of government has grown and evolved. This has made it possible to establish subject expertise, which gives us the chance to provide institutions more specialised roles. It is necessary to distinguish between the unique "process" of governance and the "strategy" of governance when it comes to the planning process.

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