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Government welfare schemes for securing the position of the women in the society: An analysis

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Abstract--Women has been faced several obstacles for surviving and empowering themselves in emerging countries like an India, because social taboos and mind sets of male dominated society have been responsible for her secondary position. Moreover, India is a welfare state where equality provided to men and women under the law but still far away from reality to overcome this matter. So, government started enormous policies or programmes for wellbeing of vulnerable sections of society like SC, BC, OBC, children and women. Punjab state has been also introduced several policies and schemes to upgrade the livelihood of economic trodden sections. In this section, main focus is on women welfare schemes launched by Indian and Punjab Government.

Keywords---welfare scheme, women empowerment, policies and programmes, girl child, social security, Indian and Punjab Government.

Introduction

In Indian society, women are still living under the shelter of male members because they are controlled by men. Their life related decisions are mostly taken by male members of the family. From historical background, all the social setups leading to male dominated society, she has never ever dare to take her own decisions independently. Despite of all social obstacles she marked her position in her respective field. She becomes more educated and empowered to upgrade her life style with the advancement of society. An educated woman does not want to spend her whole life in the four walls of house. She wants to move freely in society. Indian Government has been launched many welfare schemes and programmes to secure the position of women. Welfare schemes or programmes in

an initial step to upgrade the position of trodden sections of society such as SC, ST, BC, women and children. Punjab Government has also focused on education, health, empowerment, social security and women sanitation through many schemes and programmes.

Objective

These are main objectives of the study

1. To examine various Women welfare Schemes in India
2. To analyze the policies pertaining to women launched by Government in Punjab.
3. To find how these various schemes and programmes are largely helpful for women.

Methodology

The study is in descriptive nature based on merely secondary data retrieved from websites and articles.

Various women welfare schemes launched in Punjab

Punjab state has been started the Department of Social Security and Development of women & Children in 1955. The department is worked for the welfare of widow & impoverished women, aged people in addition mentally & physical retarded and homeless children. Some of women welfare schemes and programme in Punjab sponsored by Indian and Punjab Government are:

- (1) Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (SABLA)
- (2) Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)
- (3) Pradhan Mantry Matritva Vandana Yojana:
- (4) Digital Laado Scheme
- (5) Mai Bhago Vidya Scheme
- (6) Beti Bachao, Beti Pado
- (7) Widow Pension Scheme
- (8) Bebe Nanki Ladli Beti Scheme
- (9) Shagun Scheme
- (10) Attendance Scholarship to Scheduled Caste Primary Girl Students

Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (SABLA)

Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (SABLA) is sponsored by centre Government of India under the leadership of Dr. Manmohan Singh in April 2011. It is a scheme for empowering and make self- dependent the adolescent girls under the age of 11-18 years. The scheme improving the nutrition and health condition of adolescent girls and promoting awareness regarding hygiene, adolescent reproductive and sexual health (ARSH), family and child care. The scheme upgrade skill development among girls and unified with the National Skill Development Programme (NSDP) encouraging vocational skills. It also provides knowledge about running scheme such as CHC, PHC, Post Office, Bank,

Police Station etc. Ministry of Women and Child Development is the nodal agency for implementing the scheme.

MGNREGA

MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) launched by UPA government under the leadership of Dr. Manmohan Singh in 7 September 2005. It is a flagship programme to abolish chronic poverty of rural India. It assured 100 days of employment to unskilled manual workers in remote areas. Moreover, the act has many women friendly provisions. There must be 1/3 of women workers at worksite. Every rural citizen is eligible to apply for employment who is up to 18 years of age. Men and women have equal work opportunities with equal wages. Workers get employment within 15 days after applying for job card. If they did not, they get extra allowance. The employment is available within 5km. radius of the locality where women are worked with their neighbors and family members. Under the act, the prohibition of contractor secures them any kind of harassment at work place. Thus, they feel safe and secure at worksite. The worksite facilities such as drinking water, first aid, rest room and creche for children below 6 years etc. are provided to employees. So, they feel relaxed to care about their children. Working hours are fixed under the scheme, thus they perform their household chores as well as they secure ourselves financially. Next, under MGNREGA work, women play a vital role in natural resources and assets development in villages. For instance, women received their wages in bank or post office in their individual account. They earned and spend their wages with their own choice like on health, sanitation, food, consumer items and on their children's education. Some of them repay their family tiny loans. Thus, they helped to upgrade their family status which is helpful to enhance their decision-making ability in family and social matters. Women are also participated in social audit under this scheme to raise their confidence level. They moved freely in various premises such as Gram Panchayat, BDO office and banks. It inhaled more self-reliance among women. MGNREGA plays a significant role to upgrade rural women.

Pradhan Mantry Matritva Vandana Yojana

Pradhan Mantry Matritva Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) is social welfare scheme launched by Indian Government in 1 January 2017 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. First and foremost, maternity benefit scheme for pregnant and lactating women of the age of 19 and above for first delivery. Ministry of Women and Child Development is responsible for implementation of this programme. It is conditional cash transfer scheme to provide safe delivery and better nutrition conditions for pregnant and lactating women with the help of Rs. 5000 in three installments. The first two installments are under Janani Suraksha Yohana (JSY) and third installment is under PMMVY. She takes first installment of Rs. 1000 after registration her pregnancy at Anganwadi Centre and second installment of Rs. 2000 after 6 month of pregnancy and third installment of Rs. 2000 after delivery. If beneficiaries fulfilled conditions of Janani Suraksha Yohana (JSY) then they are eligible to receive third installment from PMMVY. Thus, this scheme is very helpful for providing better conditions regarding the safe delivery for those

who are living below the poverty line. It is also minimizing malnutrition among new born children and their mothers.

Digital Laado Scheme

The Indian Government With collaboration of FICCI and Google Digital Unlock and many other national and international organizations started Digital Laado Scheme to empower women on digital platform. The Indian Government stated that 65% girls quit their higher education due to household activities. Girls who lived in small cities and towns will not be able to take admission in professional or employment-oriented courses due to taboo of society. They are forbidden to study with boys, travel alone to other cities or towns. Under this scheme, girls do not need to move physically outside. They are taught and trained at home and they are able to interact and connect worldwide on digital platform. Women who are 18- 65 of age eligible to register under the scheme.

Mai Bhago Vidya Scheme

Mai Bhago Vidya Scheme launched in the Punjab state by Chief Minister Sr. Prakash Singh Badal in 2011. The scheme provides easy conveyance to go to schools for girl students. The schools are situated far away from their residence so girls feel inconvenient to go to school. They merely depend on their family members or other means which are sometimes not available. As a result, school dropout rate highly increased among girls. Under the scheme, every girl student of class 11 and 12 given a bicycle. The facility is further extended to 9 and 10 class girl students. With bicycles they easily go to school and the dropout rate among girls fall down from educational institutions. So, the scheme is very helpful to increase presence of girls in schools and improve academic status of girls.

Beti Bachao, Beti Pado

It is a flagship programme run by Indian Government in 2015. As census 2001, the child sex ratio in India (0-6 years) was 927 girls per 1000 boys which was declined as 918 girls per 1000 boys in census 2011. To overcome the declining child sex ratio Indian Government launched this scheme. The Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Human Resource Development and Ministry of Health and family Welfare collaboratively run the scheme covering all the states and UTs. All the government officials across the country are responsible for proper implementation of this scheme to ensure the survival, security and quality education of girl child.

Widow Pension Scheme

For the welfare of widow, Punjab Government has been started widow pension scheme. Under this scheme eligible women received financial assistance on monthly basis. The beneficiaries get Rs. 1000 per month from state government. The main objective of this scheme to provide economic and social security to widows. The widows who are permanent resident of Punjab state belong to Below Poverty Line (BPL) and below 58 years of age eligible to register under the widow pension scheme.

Bebe Nanki Ladli Beti Scheme

In Punjab, sex ratio rate drastically declined, people preferred boy over girl child. To improve sex ratio Punjab Government started Bebe Nanki Ladli Beti Scheme. This scheme is an initial mission to develop the socio- educational status of economically feeble sections of the state. The Anganwadi Centers will provide all the related information to beneficiaries when they required. The scheme focused to educate girl child that they become more empowered. Girls who born after January, 2011 are eligible to get the benefits under this scheme.

Shagun Scheme

Punjab Government has been started Shagun scheme also called Ashirwad scheme for financial help on marriage of girls belongs to economically weak families. The marriage of a girl is a big burden on parents that's why they ignored girl child. Therefore, sex ratio rate is declined in Punjab. To fill up this gap Punjab Government has been launched many schemes and Shagun Scheme is one of them. Under this scheme, families belong to SC, BC and other economically poor families gets financial assistance of Rs. 15000 to 21000 on girl's marriage. The beneficiary must be permanent resident of Punjab.

Attendance Scholarship to Scheduled Caste Primary Girl Students

It has been observed that scheduled caste girl's presence in educational institutions not up to mark because the poor parents of girls did not able to pay fee of their schooling. So, they left from study and involved in bread earning activities. To reduce dropout tendency among SC girl students Attendance scheme for Scheduled Caste Primary Girl students has been started. Under this scheme girls received monthly 50 Rs. for ten months in a year. The beneficiaries must be residing permanently in Punjab and studying in primary classes.

Sakhi One Step Centre

In year 2015-16, One Step Centre was started to provide support and help women who affected by any form of violence, whether in public or private field. One Stop Centre have been working in all districts of Punjab which provide emergency or non-emergency services like free medical aid, legal aid, police aid, counseling and timely stay to any women who is affected with violence. These services are provided to all victims irrespective caste, category, religion and age. Under this scheme, funds are directly controlled by DCs.

Women Helpline 181

Women Helpline 181 provide 24 hours telecom service to women who victims of violence seeking help and information. Women Helpline offer quick and emergency response to victims through referral to the appropriate agencies such as Police, Hospitals, Ambulance, One Stop Centre, District Legal Service Authority, Protection Officer. In addition, provide information about women related govt schemes and programmes across the nation uniform number.

Conclusion and Suggestions

To conclude this, Indian Government has been launched many women welfare schemes or programme to improve women's condition in society. Most of them launched and sponsored by Indian Government and many of them by Punjab Government. These schemes are becoming an open gate for women to interact with society. These are helpful for reducing sex ratio gap and empowering women. With the help of these schemes' girls are no more burden on their families. They get financial assistance on the birth, education, and marriage of a daughter. Even widows and old age women also secure their livelihood with pensions from the state. They are now interacting with outer world on digital platform. However, most of the people are still ignorant about these programmes and schemes. The benefits and assets are out of reach to actual needy people. The state or officials should be more attentive to aware people regarding these schemes. NGOs also involved for proper implementation of these schemes. Many awareness programmes and seminars should be conducted on local level for mass awareness.

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