

# Empowerment of Tribalwomen in India

## OPEN ACCESS

Volume: 7

Special Issue: 1

Month: October

Year: 2019

P-ISSN: 2321-788X

E-ISSN: 2582-0397

Impact Factor: 3.025

Citation:

Anto Soniya, M., and G. Monikanda Prasad. "Empowerment of Tribalwomen in India." *Shanlax International Journal of Arts, Science and Humanities*, vol. 7, no. S1, 2019, pp. 236–39.

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3549326>

**M. Anto Soniya**

*Reg.No.17214011032011*

*Ph.D, Full-time Scholar, Department of Economics  
Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli*

**Dr. G. Monikanda Prasad**

*Assistant Professor, Department of Economics  
Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli*

## Abstract

*Empowerment of Tribal Women for the accelerated socio-economic development of any community, the active participation of women is essential. In a social set up like India's, their inclusion has to be confirmed through tangible measures, taken at various levels, which result in their empowerment in the real sense. Empowerment of women is one of the concepts that has developed in connection with improving their status. Empowerment includes higher literacy levels, education, better healthcare, equal ownership of productive resources, increased participation in economic and commercial sectors, awareness of rights and responsibilities, improved standards of living, self-reliance, self-esteem, and self-confidence.*

**Keywords:** Women empowerment, tribal women, healthcare.

## Introduction

Women's empowerment in India is heavily dependent on many different variables that include geographical location, educational status, social status, and age. Policies on women's empowerment exist at the national, state, and local levels in many sectors, including health, education, economic opportunities, gender-based violence, and political participation. However, there are significant gaps between policy advancements and actual practice at the community level. One key factor for the gap in the implementation of laws and policies to address discrimination, economic disadvantages, and violence against women at the community level is largely due to the patriarchal structure that governs the community and households in India. As such, women and girls have restricted mobility, access to education, access to health facilities, and lower decision-making power, and experience higher rates of violence. Political participation is also delayed at the Panchayat level and the state and national levels, despite existing reservations for women.

## Status of Tribal Women

The position of women in a society is a significant reflection of the level of social justice in that society. Women's status is often described in terms of their level of income, employment, education, health and,

fertility as well as their roles within the family, the community and, society. In tribal communities, the play of women is substantial and crucial. They constitute about half the total population but, in tribal society, women are more important than in other social groups because they work harder and, the family economy and management depend on them. Even after industrialization and the resultant commercialization swamping the tribal economy, women continue to play a significant role. The collection of minor forest produce is done mostly by women and children. Many also work as laborers in industries, households and, construction, contributing to their family income. Despite exploitation by contractors and managers, tribals are sincere and honest than nontribal.

### **Concept of Empowerment**

Broadly, empowerment means individuals acquiring the power to think and act, freely exercise choice, and fulfill their potential a full and equal member of society. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNDFW) includes two factors in its definition

- Acquiring knowledge and understanding of gender relation and how these relations may be changed;
- Developing a sense of self-worth, a belief in one's ability to secure desired changes and, the right to control one's life.

Philosophers and social activists have defined women empowerment from diverse perspectives. Swami Vivekananda has put forth his view in the following words "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, to achieve the status of a developed country, India should transform its colossal women force into an effective human resource and, this is possible only through the empowerment of women. Empowering women to participate fully in economic life across all sectors is essential in building stronger economies, achieving internationally agreed goals for development and sustainability, and improving the quality of life for women, men, families, and communities. Malala Yousafzai has commented, "We cannot all succeed if half of this is held back." There is no denying the fact that women in India have made 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. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru (India's first Prime Minister) said: "When women move forward the family moves, the villages move, and the nation moves." In the opinion of Kofi Annan, "There is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women."

### **Objectives of the Study**

The following Objectives are

1. To know the various obstacles of empowerment of tribal women.
2. To know the various programs for the empowerment of tribal women in India.

### **Methodology**

The study of the empowerment of tribal women in India is created on the secondary method of data. The data have been composed from various books, journals, articles, newspapers, government publication report, etc.

### **Various Obstacles of Empowerment of Tribal Women**

- 50% of tribal women are illiterate even they do not know the official language of a state, which creates hindrance to express their view in the meeting of local affairs.

- Lack of recognition of the collective rights of indigenous people to their lands and resources.
- Scarcity or the loss of access to forests and natural resources needed to maintain the family's livelihood.
- Forced displacement brought about by development aggression.
- Improper facility for attendance to educational institutions.
- Limited access to social services such as education and health.
- Loss of traditional roles and knowledge.
- Domestic violence
- Poverty

### **Various Programs for the Empowerment of Tribal Women**

1. The government should focus on the empowerment of scheduled tribe women and allocate separate funds throughout the five-year plan. Health, education, and nourishment should be selected. Besides key focus areas, women should be given ample opportunities for economic development, based upon traditional skills. Women should also be provided additional talents, for value additions to the produces.
2. The government should ensure 100% literacy among the tribal women by the welfare programs and through the five-year plan. The Adivasi girls, who are desirous of higher education, should be provided subsidy for education like technical. The state should give hostel facilities for motivation.
3. The tribal women workers who are engaged in agriculture, construction, brick kiln, etc. are un-organized. The government should protect their labor rights. And the government should make a special allocation for the implementation of labor laws for the schedule area to prevent the exploitation of the workers.
4. The tribal forest land cultivators who have been given the land entitlements should be assisted by enhancing the yield by soil and water development process. The farmers should be provided the high yielding seed varieties along with training to improve their agriculture. Such farmers should be delivered the loan assistance for improving their agricultural productivity.

### **Conclusion**

More importantly, the developmental process in India should give priority to welfare schemes and programs meant for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, including women. By empowering rural woman through education can thus enable them to live with dignity and self-reliance cutting across the barriers of customary biases and prejudices, a social obstacle of caste, class, gender, occupation and institutional barriers that prevent them from taking actions to improve their state both at the individual and collective level. Therefore, free education and necessary and employable skill development programs must be launched for tribal students and women to make them self-reliant and economically independent. Furthermore, right to vote is meaningless unless rural women are made aware, educated and imparted skills to understand the order of the day and this can bring change in their lives, in the family and lastly transform the holistic tribal landscape of India, through education, legal awareness, and socio-economic independence.

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