

Women's Welfare Programmes in Kerala: An Overview

A. Asharani

Research Scholar in Political Science, ICKS Kariavattom, University of Kerala, India

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Abstract

This study is largely depends upon the empowerment of women in kerala. Women's are the marginalized group in the society. Social justice and human rights are equal to all people of their sex, race, caste, class, religion and such social differentiation. This seminar contains "The women welfare programmes in kerala an overview". Earlier women life was confined within for walls of her house as the domestic slave whose only duty was child bearing, rearing and looking after the family. But now a days things are change in the society, our government also think for the women's protection or the welfare organization was provided. Such organization are Working Women Hostel, NGO's programmes, Women's Training centre etc. These programmes to promote voluntary efforts in the field of Women's empowerment. Today's women has become to have a better acceptability and respectability, better status of equality with men better rights and previlages, better opportunity in all spheres of national life- social, economic and political. In addition to the legislative measures, the governments at the centre and state administrations have also initiated welfare measures for the developments and welfare or women but much more needs to be done to achieve the desire objective. This seminar paper tries to observe the role of government in the field of women empowerment and welfare programmes in kerala.

Keywords: Welfare programmes, empowerment of women, women development, women rights, NGO's, Indian Constitution.

Introduction

This study is largely depends upon the empowerment of women in Kerala. Women's are the marginalized groups in the society. Violence against women in a global phenomenon. In Indian society the problem of violence against women is not now. In a society where women are marginalized and subjudicated for whatever reason women have become the victims of humiliation, torture and exploitation from time immemorial. The manifestation of gender violence may differ in different socio-economic and cultural settings but its impact intently and consequences on women remain in same. Gender violence makes a mockery of the fundamental rights of women. Hence violence negates women's rights. The expansion of international law by the United Nations and regional Conventions and charters includes definition of human rights and women's rights as part human rights.

The status of women in India has been a chequered one as it has been many ups and downs. In the vedic age, they were worshipped as goodness. The British regime they were looked down upon as slaves of slaves. Today Indian women have made some progress, may be because of the social legislation the progress made in the fields of education, health or economic or as a result of technological developments or because of a process of evolution. Though in very small numbers today we have women almost all spheres of life, they are doctors, engineers, pilots, journalists, teachers etc. The constitutions C (73rd and 74th) Amendment Acts 1992 provide 33 presents reservation for women in Panchayati Raj institutions and urban local bodies enabling women to take the position of surpuncher, majors councillors etc of their respective bodies.

The condition in the political arena is no better. Each political party stands for women's participation in political activities, in a big way. But do we see the reflection of their wishes in parliament. The percentage of women members of parliament has been on the decrease. The overview of the situations generally is distressing. Rape, dowry deaths, misuse of the tests to determine the sex of the child in the womb and the termination of pregnancy in the event of a female foetus given an indication of the horrible behavior patterns. In recent years the government has taken a number of steps to right the wrong that is done to the girl child. We have the Report of the Committee on the status of women, the women's departments, national perspective plan for women, women's welfare programmes, the inclusion of a separate chapter on women's development in the seventh plan and the national commission.

Objectives of the Study

1. To improve the status of women's in state and central levels
2. To study the status of women in Kerala
3. To study about the welfare programmes for women's and their progress in the state

Programmes for Women Welfare

Women all over the world have been agitating and struggling for their rights and privileges and initiating women liberation movements to achieve their rightful place in their respective societies. The United Nations had declared 1975 as International Women year and the period 1975 to 1985 as the international Women Decade. March 8th is observed as Women's Day in our country every year. All these anniversaries and commemorative days are observed to focus the attention and concern of the governments and the society on the needs of women and the efforts required to meet them on their fundamental rights to equality, the equal right to nutrition health, education and opportunity, beginning with the rights to survive. Institutional mechanism for the advancement of women includes institutions for different types – central, state and local governments, non-governmental organization, civil society and other bodies with support the cause of women's advancement. The various institutional mechanism

that are will contribute to the achievement to women's empowerment and gender equality as laid down in the Eleventh five year plan (2007-2012).

The center and state government and union Territories administrations had launched a number of programmes for improving social and economic status of women, intensified efforts to maintain continuity and their progress and expanded them during women's Decade. The Departments of women and Child Department is charged with nodal responsibility to implement and coordinate programmes of women's welfare and development it activates different Ministries/Departments both at the center and state levels dealing with women's welfare and development programmes. It also initiates and intensifies measures to promote voluntary efforts in the field of women's development. The department besides playing a nodal role also implements the following schemes for the welfare and development of women.

Hostels for Working Women: Construction of a number of women's hostel building by voluntary organizations with the aid given by the Central and State Government: With the progressive change in the economic structure of the country more and women are moving from their homes in search of employment.

Employment and Income Generating Production Programmes

This programmes was started in 1982-1983 to main women belonging to weaker sections of society and provide them employment on sustained basis.

Women's Training Centres: Adversities of life arising out of economic, social, psychological and environmental situations affect women the worst young and old widows, unmarried mother and victims of kidnapping are some of the vulnerable groups affected. With the objectives to rehabilitate such women and their dependent children, a scheme was launched in 1977 to provide vocational training cum – employment and residential care so that these women could become economically independent.

Short Stay Homes for Women and Girls: The Department given grants in aid to voluntary organizations to establish and run short – stay Homes to protect and rehabilitate those women and girls,

who are facing social and moral danger because of family problems, mental strain exploitation or any other cause. Under the scheme services/facilities of medical care, psychiatric treatment, case work service education, vocational and recreational activities are provided.

Schemes for financing of women weavers: Short term credit limits are available from NABARD to state co-operative Bankson behalf of District central or industrial co-operative Banks for financing production and marketing activities of primary women weavers co-operative

Family Life Institute: The Association for social Health in India runs the Family Life Institute in Delhi. The major functions of this institute are counseling service and family life education for the maledhusted spouses, parents, unmarried youths, child drop-outs etc.

National Commission on self employed women: The National Commission or self employed women under the chairmanship of Smt. Ela. R. Bhatt was set up under the Department of women and Child Development on 5th January 1987. Its terms of references were: to examine the present status of women in the self Employed sector with special references to employment, health, education and social status to assess the impact of various labour legislations of the self employed specially in respect of maternity benefits, health insurance etc. On the status of self employed women to consider the link between the productive and re-productive roles of the self employed women with special references to their health status and to suggest measures relating to all sections for removing the constraints with adversely affect the integration of self – employed women in the national development process.

Women’s Development Corporation: A scheme it set up women’s Development corporation in all the state and union Territories was formulating during 1986-87. The objectives of the scheme is to provide better employment avenues for women so that they can become economically independent and self reliant.

Women Welfare And Development: There are number of women welfare and development programmes adopted by the government. They are computer operator and programming Assistant,

Swayamsidha Integrated Women’s Empowerment Programmes, Working Women Hostel, Support Training and Employment Programmes for Women and Women Economic Empowerment.

The concept of welfare state means what spearheads the socio economic development plans of Kerala. The state recently added a milestone to its activities by providing job to transgengers in Kochi Metro Rail Project. The kerala State provide a lot of scheme and programmes for children and women.

Even in Kerala there are number of women welfare programmes introduced by the State government. They are Kudumbasree, Nirbhaya, She Taxi, Programme NGO’s etc.

Kudumbashree: Launched by the government of Kerala in 1998 for wiping out absolute poverty from the state through concerted community action under the leadership of Local Self Government, Kudumbashree is today one of the largest women – empowering projects in the country. The 73rd and 74th amendments to the constitution strengthened Panchayati Raj institute and Urban local Bodies.

Nirbhaya scheme for women: Adding a new chapter to the raging debate of ensuring the safety of women and children in the highly literate society of Kerala, Chief Minister Omman Chandy launched the path braking Nirbhaya in Kochi on Sunday. The scheme also aims at providing proper rehabilitation facilities to help the victim to heal, recover empower and reintegrate back into society. The policy focuses on child abuse, commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking which constitute the worst forms of sexual violence in the state.

NHO’s and Sakhi: Sakthi meaning women friend in an informal collective of feminish who shared a common vision. It was initiated in 1996. The main aims of the project is to share information and strengthen the capacities and capabilities of grassroot level women’s group and women. To main stream gender in the political discourse in this state. Another welfare programmes for Govt Departments are Panchayat Department, Dairy Development Department, Directorate of Coir Development, Fisheries Department, Industrial Training Department, handloom and Textile Department, Health and Family welfare and Agricultural Department.

She Taxi: In Kerala Government is all set to roll out She Taxi all women taxi service as a part of its women empowerment programme to secure safe journey for the fairer sex. The main objectives of this programme safe, secure, and responsible travel for women in all Kerala. Another point focus on the She Taxi drivers need not wait for their commuters at any particular place. The commuters who want to hire a taxi cab can contact the all centre and they will pass the message to the drivers, she said.

Conclusion

It is obvious from the analysis of the measures taken for the development and welfare of women that due partly to the social upsurge and change in attitude manifesting themselves into various forms and ways and partly due to the accompanying social, economic and legal measures, the women in independent India has come to acquire a better status in the society. The policies concerning Indian women formulated by government are in accordance with the provisions of the constitution of India. The constitution guarantees certain fundamental rights besides freedom of speech, protection of life, liberty and prohibition of discrimination etc. The needs of mentally challenged women are quite different from that of women survivors of disasters. The recently introduced protection of women from Domestic violence Act provides that women seeking shelter should be accommodated in the shelter homes.

Amongst vulnerable groups, the women belonging to socially backward communities- such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes face double discrimination of being a women and also from a backward community. Similarly women with disabilities have specific problems even when compared to men with disability. Women are also overworked in the field and complete the all of the domestic work. Most Indian women are uneducated. Although the country's constitution says and are mistreated inside and outside at home. But in modern Indian women have held high office in India including that of the

president, Prime Minister and speaker of Lok Sabha etc. In addition to the legislative measures, the government at the centre, state and union Territories administration have also initiated numerous welfare measures for the development and welfare of women but much more needs to be done to achieve the desired objectives. New programmes need to be introduced. A number of welfare programmes for women had been initiated during the last few years but their implementation at the grassroots seems to be weak. The focus has therefore to be on the implementation and strengthening of machinery at various levels. Present situation of women cover domestic violence, and they suffer huge human rights violations. Today the government and administrative machineries have take proper steps to protect the rights of women. And institutional mechanism also play a vital role in protecting the rights of women. With all the concern that is reflected in the policy of government and a massive programmes undertaken by it for the development and welfare of women the future scenario for women is indeed bright.

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Author Details

A. Asharani, *Research Scholar in Political Science, ICKS Kariavattom, University of Kerala, Kerala, India*,
Email ID: ashasaji1984@gmail.com.