

Article 15 (1) – prohibits discrimination against any citizen on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex etc

Article 15 (3) – special provision enabling the State to make affirmative discriminations in favour of women

Article 21A - the State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age 6-14 years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine.

Article 24 – no child below the age of 14 years shall be employed to work in any factory or mine or engaged in any other hazardous employment.

Article 39 (a) – the State shall direct its policy towards securing all citizens men and women, equally, the right to means of livelihood.

Article 39 (d) – equal pay for equal work for both men and women.

Article 39 (e) - enjoins the State to ensure that the health and strength of workers, men and women and the tender age of children are not abused and that the citizens are not forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their age or strength.

Article 39 (f) - enjoins the State to ensure that children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that the childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment.

Article 42– the State to make provision for ensuring just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief.

Article 45 -the State shall endeavor to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years.

Article 51 (A) (e) – to renounce the practices derogatory to the dignity of women.

Article 243 G - read with Schedule 11- provides for institutionalization of child care by seeking to entrust programs of women and child development to Panchayat (item 25 of Schedule 11), apart from education (item 17), family welfare (item 25), health and sanitation (item 23) and other items with a bearing on the welfare of children.

2. Laws related to women

- Legal Practitioners (Women) Act, 1923
- Maternity Benefit Act, 1961
- Equal Remuneration Act, 1976
- Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961
- Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act, 1994 (PNDT) amended in year 2003
- Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006
- Crimes identified under IPC
- Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956
- Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961
- Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986
- Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987
- Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005

(Source: Annual Report 2012-13, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, p.169 and 170)

Another aspect in understanding gender roles is gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming is the process of ensuring that women and men have equal access to and control over resources, development benefits and decision-making, at all stages of development process, projects, programs or policy. Gender mainstreaming was established as an intergovernmental mandate in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995 followed by Economic and Social Council (ESCOSOC) Agreed Conclusions in 1997. The mandate for gender mainstreaming was further strengthened in the outcome of the General Assembly special session to follow-up the Beijing Conference during June, 2000. Gender mainstreaming is not being imposed on governments by the United Nations. Member states have been involved in the intergovernmental discussions on gender mainstreaming since the mid 1990s and have, in consensus, adopted mainstreaming as an important global strategy for promoting gender equality. (United Nations, 2002)

Women specific projects are essential for gender equality. Targeted initiatives focusing specifically on women or the promotion of gender equality are important for reducing existing disparities, serving as a catalyst for promotion of gender equality and creating a constituency for changing the mainstream. It is important to understand that two strategies namely gender

mainstreaming and women's empowerment are not competing with each other but only complementary in the sense that gender mainstreaming must be carried out in a manner empowering women.

3.7 GENDER DEVELOPMENT INDEX

To measure gender inequality requires a proper knowledge of the sources and the depth of such discriminations (Jütting and Morrisson, 2005). Such measures and any indicator that could capture various aspects of gender inequality are essential to frame policies. For instance Human Development Index focuses on life expectancy, educational attainment and income. There are also certain indicators that tend to focus on gender disparities related to access to education, health care, political representation, income etc. The aggregate indices that have received attention are Gender Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) developed by UNDP. The Gender Development Index is an unweighted average of three indices that measure gender differences in terms of life expectancy at birth, gross enrolment and literacy rates and earned income. The Gender Empowerment Measure is also an unweighted average of variables reflecting the importance of women in society. They include the percentage of women in parliament, the male/female ratio among the administrators, managers and professional and technical workers, and the female/male GDP per capita ratio calculated from female and male shares of earned income. Both of these indices measure the results of gender discrimination. But equally important is to understand its underlying causes. Another limitation of such index is that it does not measure the institutional frameworks that govern the behavior of people and hence the treatment of women.

The various other types of the indices along with scale used to measure such indices are shown in Table 4. Such indices would help to measure the other dimensions of the roles that the women play and the limitations faced by these women in performing their roles. However, more detailed analysis would be required to understand the underlying causes for such inactiveness.

Table 3.4 Gender Development and Empowerment Index

Index and their measurement scale	Indicators
Personal Autonomy Index (Generally, Occasionally, Never)	Visiting respondents' parental home, Visiting Hospital, Visiting village market, Helping a relative with money, Setting money aside for own use
Family Decision Making Index (Wife Alone, Joint Decision, Husband Alone)	Children's education in school, Family planning, Family day-to-day expenditures, Going outside of home, Medical treatment, Entertaining guests, Buying respondent's traditionally favorite things
Economic Domestic Consultation Index (Generally, Occasionally, Never)	Buying household furniture and utensils, Purchase of land, Education/expense of children, Purchasing Medical treatment of family, Purchasing women's clothes, Purchasing children's clothes, Purchasing daily food
Political Autonomy index (Generally, Occasionally, Never)	Voting according to own decision, Awareness of any political issue, Participating in any public protest, Campaigning politically, Contesting for elections

Note: Adapted from F. Handy and M. Kassam, ISTR conference, 2004, Canada.

3.8 SUMMING UP

It is not an exaggeration to conclude that women play major roles and hence are instrumental in development of the household, as a member of the family and for society and nation with their strength. At home, in order to alleviate the hidden hunger, women's access to productive resources such as land, credit and appropriate technologies has to be ensured. Capacity building for rural women to improve their participation at grassroots level, mobilization of funds, action programs and networking would further bring required awareness and impacts. Besides researchers and extension workers have to be sensitized on gender issues so that technologies appropriate to rural women are developed and effectively promoted. More information about women's economic role and quantification women's contribution in terms of the national income provides a guide for investments in rural development, and serves as a useful reference in monitoring and impact analysis and overall improvement in the roles and the activities.

3.9 GLOSSARY

Gender: A concept that deals with roles and activities and indicates the relationship between men and women.

Gender analysis: It is a tool to diagnose the differences between women and men in regard to their specific activities, conditions, needs, access to and control over resources, and ability to receive development benefits and participate in decision-making.

Gender Development Index: It is an unweighted average of three indices that measure gender differences in terms of life expectancy at birth, gross enrolment and literacy rates and earned income.

Gender Empowerment Measure: It is also an unweighted average of variables reflecting the importance of women in society. They include the percentage of women in parliament, the male/female ratio among the administrators, managers and professional and technical workers, and the female/male GDP per capita ratio calculated from female and male shares of earned income.

3.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1. Women play major roles and activities related to three major sectors namely Agriculture, Industry and Service Sectors
2. Among the various industrial activities, Community, social and personal services provided major employment to women.

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3.12 QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND PRACTICE

1. Explain in detail the various roles played by women
2. What you understand by gender analysis? Why and how it should be performed?
3. Explain in detail about Gender Mainstreaming
4. Discuss the various constitutional provisions and laws made to protect the interest of the women and children. Comment on its coverage and the implementation of such provisions.
5. Discuss the various indices developed to understand the roles and activities, empowerment of women.
6. What is your opinion about the current status of women and the roles they play in the economic development? If the existing provision is inadequate, suggest few measures to improve their role in the nation.