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Women Empowerment: Challenges and Prospects

1. Introduction

In brief, the challenges faced by women are actually the hallmark of their hindering empowerment. However, there are prospects for improvement and various suggestions can be implemented to enhance women's empowerment.

2. Challenges to Women Empowerment

- a - Patriarchal attitudes and gender bias
- b - Gender discrimination in political leadership.
- c - Stereotyping women in political roles
- d - Gender pay gap
- e - Lack of access to education and job opportunities
- f - Gender based violence and harassment

g. cultural norms and stereotypes

h. Gender inequality in education and unemployment

3. Hopes and Anticipations of Success to Women Empowerment

a. Education and employment opportunities.

Women Participation in politics

b. Advancements in women rights globally.

c. Implimentation of gender-responsive Policies.

d. Access to education and resources

e. Ingress to credit and finance

f. Access to quality health care services

g. Media representation of women

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4. Strategies To Promote Women Empowerment

- a- Education and Training Programs
- b- Economic empowerment initiatives
- c- legal and Policy reforms
- d- Awareness raising campaign

Essay

To emancipate woman is to refuse to confine her to the relation she bears to man". The famous quotation by Simon De Beauvoir truly depicts an authorization of women. It means that if one wants to emancipation of women, she should be recognized as man. Men ponder that it is male-dominated society and women is considered as nameless. Similarly, these are several challenges

To women empowerment. These include Patriarchal attitude and gender bias and gender discrimination in Political leadership. Gender pay gap and gender based violence and harassment have impeded/hindered women empowerment. Lack of access to education and employment limit the women ability to participate fully in society and achieve their full potential. Likewise, cultural norms and stereotypes have clipped off the wings of confined women. Despite these challenges, there are prospects for women empowerment. Governments around the world have taken steps to promote women participation in politics, and implementation of gender-responsive policies. Similarly, women's groups have played a vital role in advocating for women's rights and access

76 Quality Healthcare Services.

However, Government should pay attention to making legal and policy reforms in general and economic empowerment initiative in particular.

Patriarchal attitude and gender bias have been a significant challenge to women's empowerment for centuries. As Simone Beauvoir contextualize the same issue in his book "The Second Sex". The groundbreaking work explore that women have ~~op~~ been oppressed throughout history. He argues that gender is a social contract rather than biological fact. Therefore, women must reject patriarchal attitude and fight for their own liberation.

Gender pay gap is a persistent issue that poses a challenge to women empowerment

The gender pay gap: an international perspective by Francine D. Blau and Lawrence M. Kahn reveal the following notion. There are some factors that contribute to wage gap, including social norms and differences in education. These factors push the women into misery and exploitation. On one hand, there has been a substantial increase in women's earning since 1970s. On the other, there is still a gender pay gap. Women continue to earn considerably less than men on average. Hence, It highlights the need for policies aimed to reducing gap. gender pay gap.

Lack of access to education is also responsible for challenge to women empowerment. Similar views are presented by Muhammad

Faheem in his article 'Girls' Education. Some challenges that impede girls' education are lack of hygiene facilities at schools, lack of transport, growing poverty, wrong perceptions, gender discrimination, early marriages, and absence of safe environment. On the other hand, where education is accessible and available, parents discriminate between their sons and daughters. Even poor family tries to send their boys to private schools to get quality education, and daughters to government schools or even no schools. In this context, 13 million according to an estimate, 13 million girls are out of schools in Pakistan. Thus, it has become a challenge to women empowerment.

Gender based violence and harassment is

another challenge that is trying to curtail the women's emancipation. The perfect scenario is depicted by Jacqui True's in his book Violence against women; what everyone needs to know in following manner. Gender based violence is a form of discrimination that reinforces gender inequality. It also perpetuates the subordination of women in society and limits the ability to participate fully in societal activities. Currently, the gender based violence there is no denying the fact that gender based violence has seriously impacted the women and girls. It does has not only affected to ^{women} mentally but also physically and emotionally. United Nations concludes that approximately 736 million women and girls have ~~to~~ suffered physical and sexual violence. Hence,

gender based violence is an obstacle in the path of women empowerment.

Moreover, cultural norms and stereotype pose a significant challenge to women empowerment. The stance is described by Judith Butler in his book Gender trouble on the following ground.

Cultural norms have limited the women opportunities for education and political participation. Even the two years old child keep his ~~his~~ shows his superiority before ten years old sister. Indeed, this behavior are is learned by dominant cultural norms.

These norms only restrict the women and girls which in turn create difficulties for women in society. So, it need to promote gender equality in order to eliminate

iron-fist cultural norms:

In spite of some challenges, there are prospects for women empowerment which are discussed in following paragraphs.

It is hoped that women's political participation take many forms including running for office, voting and engaging in political activism. Moreover, when women are involved in politics, they can advocate the policies that promote gender equality. For example, Benazir Bhutto is an excellent example of how women's participation in politics can lead to women's empowerment. She has inspired many women to participate in politics actively. Her success shows that women can hold high level position in politics. Hence, women's participation in politics encourage women's

empowerment.

The advancement of women's right has been a long-standing struggle that has gained momentum over the years. "A Vindication of rights of woman" by Mary Wollstonecraft provides the objective notion of women's rights. She is considered the first woman, who has talked about women's rights specifically political and social rights. She argues that women are not inferior to men but are perceived as such due to lack of education. Likewise, if one advocates the equal education for both sexes, it would lead to a more just society. Therefore, a woman can emancipate himself to know her rights.

Access to equal and inclusive education for all is one of the most important Sustainable Development

Goal. The book, *Half the Sky: turning oppression into opportunity for women world wide* by Nicholas Kristof argues that depicts that "investing in girls' education" is one of the most effective way to fight poverty and promote development. when a girl, in a developing nation, receives seven sixteen years of education, she marries later and gives birth to fewer children. Likewise, Primary education boosts girls' eventual wages by 10 to 20 percent and secondary school by 15 to 25 percent. A woman getting access to education, she can break down the barriers and creating a more equitable society.

Ingress to health care services is a crucial factor in women's empowerment. When women have access to quality health, they are better equipped to take care of their families.

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A report from World Health Organisation (WHO) emphasize the importance of gender-sensitive health system in promoting women's empowerment. The report notes that many health systems are designed with men's needs in mind and may not adequately address the unique health needs of women. By taking a gender-sensitive approach, health systems can be pushed to right track.

The accurate and positive representation of medical women in media has led to progress to some extent. ~~this representation does~~ ~~has~~ not only with the rise of feminists movements, there has been a shift toward representation of women in media.

As views per the views presented by Radical Feminist movement that the participation

of women should be made sure in every field of life and eliminated the women's separation. Therefore, by participating in media, women can empower themselves and challenge patriarchal norms and values.

Michael Shea has rightly said that while it is futile foolish to ignore the dark around us, it is futile to exaggerate it. So, the discussion of these points demonstrate that it needs some strategies to promote women empowerment.

Firstly, all the countries of the governments of all the countries should launch the education and training program for promoting empowering the women. Secondly, women should be engaged in

in economic activities including jobs and business opportunities.

Thirdly, there should neither be patriarchy nor matriarchy.

Last but not least, International laws regarding women emancipation should be implemented in its true sense.

In a nutshell, one can conclude that the motive of women empowerment is to bring out equality among all the genders and not to segregate people based on their genders. Moreover, the challenges provided in the essay to women empowerment are patriarchal attitude and gender bias, gender discrimination in political leadership and gender pay gap. However, by taking some prudent measures, women can be empowered. The steps taken by United Nations is fruitful providing a beacon of hope women can be emancipated in true sense in near future.