

Scenario of Women Empowerment in India and a Comparative study on Strategic differences among selected SAARC Countries

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Abstract:

'Empowerment' May be described as a process which helps people to assert their control over the factors which affect their lives. Empowerment of women means developing them as more aware individuals, who are politically active, economically productive and independent and are able to make intelligent discussion in matters that affect them (U. Koko-1992). Women Empowerment will be possible if Socio-cultural Rights, Political Rights, Economic stability, judicial strength and all other rights will be established among the all women. Now India is a most dominating country in south Asia as well as in the world yet India secure 130th rank in human development index and 127th in Gender Inequality index whereas Srilanka secured 70th rank in respect of HD index and 80th in Gender Inequality index. Through this paper I want to access the India's position among SAARC countries in respect of Women Empowerment.

Key- Words: Women Empowerment, Gender Inequality, Gender Gap, Empowerment Strategy

Introduction:

Swami Vivekananda quoted that, "There is no chance for the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved". Women empowerment in India depends on different variables such as educational, social, and economical status of India. So participation rate of women in various sectors should be increased in our society as well as in our country. Overall human development index of India in the world is very unsatisfactory though India's position among SAARC countries is well. If the SAARC countries including India want to reach a satisfactory level of HDI then they have to give attention on women empowerment policies. According to Human Development Report prepared by UNDP, there are some basics components which indicates the women empowerment of a country such as Maternal mortality ratio, Adolescent birth rate, Life expectancy at birth, Share of seats in parliament, Population with at least some secondary education, Mean years of schooling, Labour force participation rate, etc.. I have considered Gender Development Index, Gender Inequality Index, Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) calculated in human development report as indicators of women empowerment.

Parameters:

The parameters of women empowerment are as follows:

- i. Raising self-esteem and self-confidence of women.
- ii. Elimination of discrimination and all forms of violence against women and girl child.
- iii. Building and strengthening partnership with civil society particularly women's organisations.

- iv. Enforcement of constitutional and legal provisions and safeguarding rights of women.
- v. Building a positive image of women in the society and recognizing their contributions in social, economic and political sphere.
- vi. Developing ability among women to think critically.
- vii. Fostering decision-making and collective action.
- viii. Enabling women to make informed choices.
- ix. Ensuring women's participation in all walks of life.
- x. Providing information, knowledge, skills for self-employment.
- xi. Elimination of discrimination against women's participation in the areas of: –
 - a. Access to food
 - b. Equal wages
 - c. Property rights
 - d. Family resources
 - e. Freedom of movement and travel
 - f. Access to credit
 - g. Control over savings, earnings and resources
 - h. Guardianship and custody of children and their maintenance
- xii. Gender sensitisation training in schools, colleges and other professional institutions for bringing about institutional changes (**Das Sandhya Rani ,2006**).

Beside these there have also some demographic factors such as maternal mortality rate, fertility rate, sex ratio, life expectancy at birth, average age of marriage etc. and also have some participation rate such as women participation in different development programmes, participation levels of women in political process etc.. These are also determined the women empowerment ratio.

Methodologies:

As there are various parameters in the world for measuring the women empowerment and based on these parameters many world agencies and organization published various index. In this analytical study I have considered some selected index value of SAARC countries to compare the position in respect of women empowerment such as-

- a. Gender Development Index,
- b. Gender Inequality Index,
- c. Global Gender Gap Index,
- d. The Global Gender Gap Index rankings by sub-index and
- e. Sex Ratio

As I have studied it on the basis of secondary data collected from various report so the methodologies of index value calculation is completely followed the report.

Discussion:

Among all these selected index first three index is included in Human development report which is prepared by UNDP. The first global gender indices were launched in the 1995 HDR—the Gender related Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM)— just before the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing (Anand and Sen 1995). In 1995, the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) and Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) were added to the reports, as a response to the criticism that HDI did not capture gender inequalities. The Gender Inequality Index (GII) was introduced to the HDR family of indices on 2010 which is a measure that captures the loss in achievements due to gender disparities in the dimensions of reproductive health, empowerment and labour force participation. Values range from 0 (perfect equality) to 1 (total inequality). (hdr 2010, pp.26). After introducing the Gender Inequality Index (GII) Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) stopped because GII covers all the parameters of GEM and even also included the Health dimension in GII.

Table 1: Dimension and Index of Gender Empowerment

<i>Gender-related Development Index (GDI)</i>		<i>Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM)</i>		<i>Gender Inequality Index (GII)</i>	
DIMENSION	INDICATORS	DIMENSION	INDICATORS	DIMENSION	INDICATORS
A long and healthy life	Female life expectancy at birth	Political Participation and decision-making	Female and male shares of parliamentary seats	Health	Maternal mortality ratio
	Male life expectancy at birth				Adolescent fertility rate
Knowledge	Female adult literacy rate	Economic participation and decision-making	Female and male share of positions as legislators, senior officials and managers	Empowerment	Female and male population with at least secondary education
	Female GER				Female and male shares of professional and technical positions
	Male adult literacy rate				
	Male GER				
A decent standard	Female estimated earned income	Power over economic resources	Female and male estimated earned income	Power over economic resources	Female and male estimated earned income
	Male estimated earned income				

Source: Human Development Report - 2010 (UNDP)

A comparative scenario of women empowerment among SAARC countries:

i. Gender-related Development Index (GDI) :

The GDI measures the same variables as the HDI, but calculates the components separately for women. The methodology used imposes a penalty for inequality, such that the GDI falls when the achievement levels of both women and men in a country diverge or when the disparity between their achievements increases.

Among all the SAARC countries the value of GDI of India is 0.841 which is less than Maldives, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Srilanka and Nepal. There is a wider gap between HDI rank and Gender Development index. Though India rank 3rd position among SAARC countries after Srilanka and Maldives but in respect of GDI value India ranked 5th position. Female life expectancy at birth of India(70.4 years) is lower than Maldives (78.8 years), Srilanka(78.8 years), Nepal(72.2 years) and Bangladesh(74.6 years). The picture is Same in respect of mean year of schooling . But incase of estimated gross national income (per capita) of female the picture is satisfactory , though this amount is three times lower than Maldives, Bhutan and Srilanka .

Table 2: Gender Development Index

SAARC Countries	HDI RANK	Gender Development Index (value)	Human Development Index (HDI) (value)		Human Development Index (HDI) (value)	Life expectancy at birth (years)		Life expectancy at birth (years)	Expected years of schooling (years)	
			Female	Male		Average	Female		Male	Average
Afghanistan	168	0.625	0.364	0.583	0.498	65.4	62.8	64.0	8.0	12.7
Bangladesh	136	0.881	0.567	0.644	0.608	74.6	na	72.8	11.7 ^h	11.3 ^h
Bhutan	134	0.893	0.576	0.645	0.612	70.9	70.3	70.6	12.4	12.2
India	130	0.841	0.575	0.683	0.640	70.4	67.3	68.8	12.9	11.9
Maldives	101	0.919	0.679	0.739	0.717	78.8	76.7	77.6	12.7 ^m	12.6 ^m
Nepal	149	0.925	0.552	0.598	0.574	72.2	69.0	70.6	12.6	11.8
Pakistan	150	0.750	0.465	0.620	0.562	67.7	65.6	66.6	7.8	9.3
Sri Lanka	76	0.935	0.738	0.789	0.770	78.8	72.1	75.5	14.1	13.6
South Asia	na	0.837	0.571	0.682	0.638	70.9	67.8	69.3	12.1	11.7
World	na	0.941	0.705	0.749	0.728	74.4	70.1	72.2	12.8	12.7

SAARC Countries	Expected years of schooling (years)	Mean years of schooling (years)		Mean years of schooling	Estimated gross national income per capita (2011 PPP \$)		Estimated gross national income per capita (2011 PPP \$)
		Female	Male		(Female)	(Male)	
	Average	Female	Male	Average	(Female)	(Male)	Average

Afghanistan	10.4	1.9 ⁱ	6.0 ⁱ	3.8 ^j	541	3,030	1,824
Bangladesh	11.4 ^f	5.2 ^j	6.7 ^j	5.8 ^l	2,041	5,285	3,677
Bhutan	12.3	2.1 ^k	4.2 ^k	3.1 ^o	6,002	9,889	8,065
India	12.3	4.8 ^h	8.2 ^h	6.4 ^f	2,722	9,729	6,353
Maldives	12.6 ^g	6.2 ⁱ	6.4 ⁱ	6.3 ⁱ	7,064	18,501	13,567 ^k
Nepal	12.2	3.6 ⁱ	6.4 ⁱ	4.9 ^j	2,219	2,738	2,471
Pakistan	8.6	3.8	6.5	5.2	1,642	8,786	5,311
Sri Lanka	13.9	10.3 ^h	11.4 ^h	10.9 ^f	6,462	16,581	11,326
South Asia	11.9	5.0	8.0	6.4	2,694	10,035	6,473
World	12.7	7.9	9.0	8.4	10,986	19,525	15,295

Source: Human Development Indices and Indicators 2018 (UNDP)

NOTES: f= Updated by HDRO based on data from UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2018). j =Updated by HDRO using Barro and Lee (2016) estimates, h =Updated by HDRO based on data from UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2018), i =Based on Barro and Lee (2016), k =Based on data from United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys for 2006–2017, l= Updated by HDRO using Barro and Lee (2016) estimates, o=Updated by HDRO based on data from United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys for 2006–2017.

Human development groups	Gender Development Index(2017)
Very high human development	0.983
High human development	0.957
Medium human development	0.878
Low human development	0.862
Developing countries	0.917

Human development groups	Human Development Index (HDI) 2017
Very high human development	0.894
High human development	0.757
Medium human development	0.645
Low human development	0.504
Developing countries	0.681

ii. Gender Inequality Index(GII):

As per the Human Development Report 2017 done by United Nations Development Programme's India ranked at 127th position out of 187 countries in respect of the gender inequality index. Among all the SAARC countries Afghanistan performance is very worse than India whose position is 153 though Maldives, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan performed better than India whose rank is 76, 80, 118 and 117 respectively.

Table 3: Gender Inequality Index and its components for 2017

SAARC COUNTRIES	Gender Inequality Index (2017)		Maternal mortality ratio(2015) (deaths per 100,000 live births)	Adolescent birth rate (2015-20 ^h) (births per 1,000 women ages 15–19)	Share of seats in parliament (2017) % held by women	Population with at least some secondary education (% ages 25 and older) 2010–2017 ^c		Labour force participation rate ^a (% ages 15 and older)	
	Value	Rank				Female	Male	Female	Male
Afghanistan	0.653	153	396	64.5	27.4	11.4 ^d	36.9 ^d	19.5	86.7
Bangladesh	0.542	134	176	83.5	20.3	44.0 ^d	48.2 ^d	33.0	79.8
Bhutan	0.476	117	148	20.3	8.3	6.0	13.7	58.0	74.3

India	0.524	127	174	23.1	11.6	39.0	63.5	27.2	78.8
Maldives	0.343	76	68	5.8	5.9	44.9 ^d	49.3 ^d	42.9	82.1
Nepal	0.480	118	258	60.5	29.6	27.3	43.1	82.7	85.9
Pakistan	0.541	133	178	36.9	20.0	27.0	47.3	24.9	82.7
Sri Lanka	0.354	80	30	14.1	5.8	82.6	83.1	35.1	74.1
South Asia	0.515	-	176	32.1	17.5	39.8	60.6	27.9	79.1
World	0.441	-	216	44.0	23.5	62.5	70.9	48.7	75.3

Source: HDR, 2018(UNDP)

Notes: **a**= Estimates modelled by the International Labour Organization, **c**= Data refer to the most recent year available during the period specified, **d** = Based on Barro and Lee (2016).

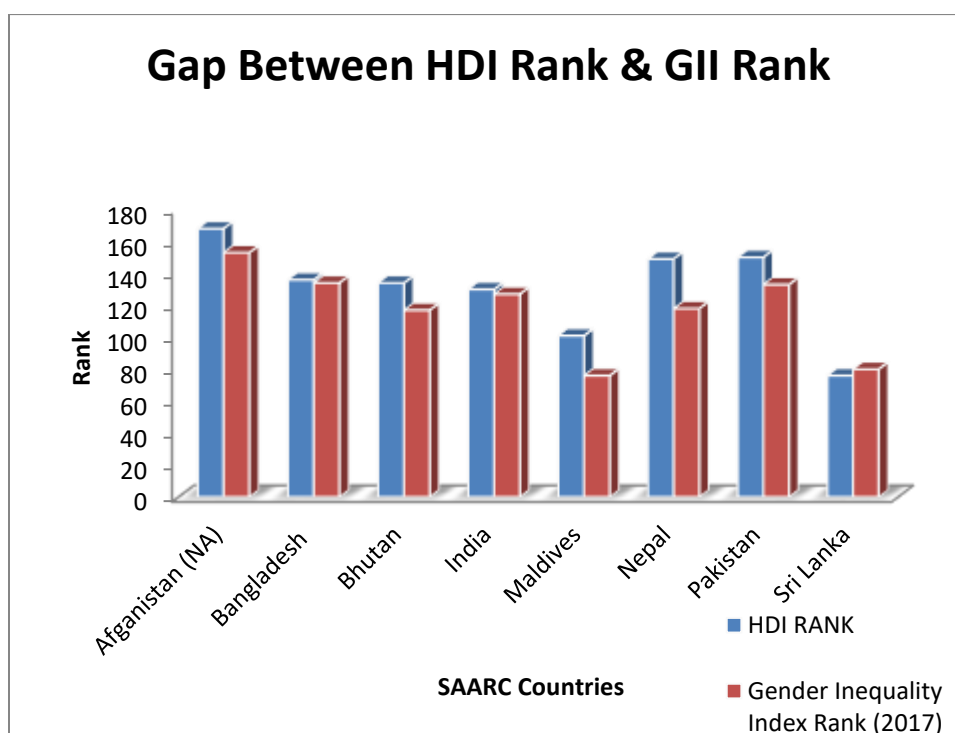


Fig. 1. HDI & GII Rank

iii. Gender Gap among SAARC countries:

The Global Gender Gap Index was first introduced by the World Economic Forum in 2006 as a framework for capturing the magnitude of gender-based disparities and tracking their progress over time. The index benchmarks national gender gaps on economic, education, health and political criteria and provides country rankings that allow for effective comparisons across regions and income groups (**Global Gender Gap Report by World Economic Forum, 2020, p-8**). The overall gender gap performance is a synthesis of performances across the four dimensions composing the index—the Economic Participation, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival and Political Empowerment sub-indexes.

. If we give attention on individual sub index, it is clear that rank and score of India in Educational Attainment and Political Empowerment is better among the SAARC countries. In respect of Economic participation and Opportunity india ranked 149th and Pakistan ranked 150th position where as remaining other SAARC countries remained in higher position. As a result of such type variation of score in sub index India's rank in overall global gender gap index is very thinkable to us. India ranked 112th position in respect of Global Gender Gap Index out of 153rd countries where as Bangladesh (50th), Nepal (101st) and Srilanka (102nd) ranked far better than India.

Table 4: The Global Gender Gap Index Ranking by Sub index 2020 (Out of 153 Countries)

SAARC Countries	Economic Participation and Opportunity		Educational Attainment		Health Survival		Political Empowerment	
	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score
Afganistan	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Bangladesh	141	0.438	120	0.951	119	0.969	7	0.545
Bhutan	130	0.544	116	0.954	144	0.96	132	0.082
Maldives	131	0.518	1	1.000	147	0.953	115	0.111
India	149	0.354	112	0.962	150	0.944	18	0.411
Nepal	104	0.632	133	0.895	131	0.966	59	0.227
Pakistan	150	0.327	143	0.823	149	0.946	93	0.159
Sri Lanka	126	0.558	88	0.988	31	0.98	73	0.193

Source: The Global Gender Gap Index rankings by sub-index, 2020

Table 5 : Global Gender Gap Index (Out of 153 Countries) Maldives

SAARC COUNTRIES	Rank	Score(0-1)
Afghanistan	NA	NA
Bangladesh	50	0.726
Bhutan	131	0.635
India	112	0.668
Maldives	123	0.646
Nepal	101	0.680
Pakistan	151	0.564
Sri Lanka	102	0.680

Source: Global Gender Gap Reported by World Economic Forum, 2020

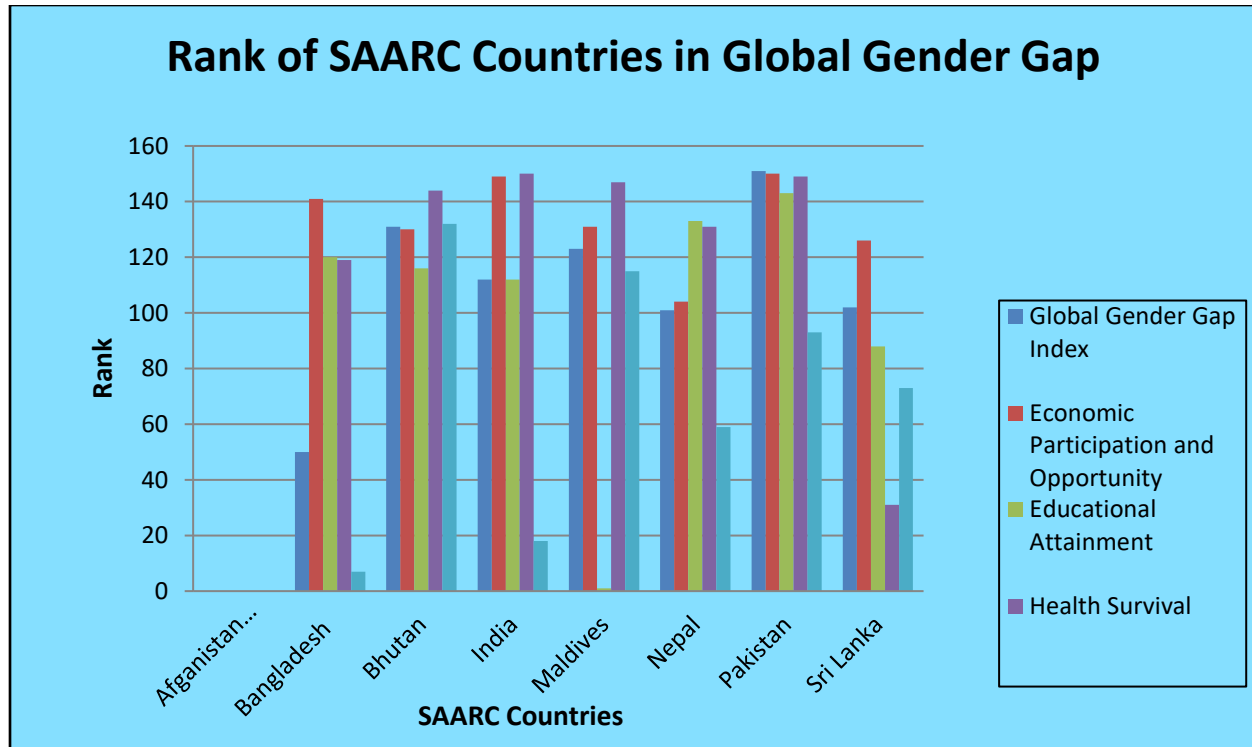


Fig. 2. Global Gender Gap Index & Sub Index

Strategic Differences among SAARC Countries:

In this context of strategic difference between India and SAARC countries I have selected only three countries Srilanka, Maldives and Bangladesh along with India because these countries overall performance is better than India or very close to India in respect of women empowerment.

a. Women Empowerment Strategy in India:

Before independence of our country Raja Ram Mohan Rai, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Gandhiji and various other social reformers laid emphasized on women's education and their freedom.

Law and Policies:

Various act was established to reform the society and to remove the social evils which was the constrains in the way for their liberation such as the Act of Sati (abolish) 1829, Hindu Widow Remarriage Act' 1856, Indian Penal Code 1860, The Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929, the Women Property Right Act 1937, The Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act 1937etc.

The Indian Constitution also guarantees the equality of sexes and also taking all necessary steps for eliminating all practices that discriminate against women. After independence of our country various law and act such as

- i. The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955,
- ii. The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956,
- iii. The Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961,
- iv. The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961,
- v. The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976,
- vi. Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1976,
- vii. Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987,
- viii. The Pre-Conception & Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994,
- ix. Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005,
- x. The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006,
- xi. The new Act 2006 initiated by the Government has provided for reservation for 1] women for the first time and wards have been reserved accordingly in the elections to cantonment boards.
- xii. Women's Reservation Bill 2010:- Women's Reservation Bill or the Constitution (108th Amendment) Bill proposes to provide 'thirty three per cent of all seats in the Lower house of Parliament of India and State legislative assemblies reserved for women.
- xiii. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Work Place (Prevention, Protection and) Act, 2013,
- xiv. The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act-2019 etc. The National Commission for Women was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the rights and legal entitlements of women, etc..

Schemes & Organisations:

- i. The Mother and Child Tracking System(MCTS) was launched in 2009, helps to monitor the health care system to ensure that all mothers and their children have access to a range of services, including pregnancy care, medical care during delivery, and immunizations.
- ii. Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY), Conditional Maternity Benefit (CMB) is a scheme sponsored by the national government for pregnant and lactating women age 19 and over for their first two live births(2010).
- iii. The Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls – Sabla is an initiative launched in 2012 that targets adolescent girls.
- iv. Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (The National Credit Fund for Women) was created by the Government of India in 1993. Its purpose is to deliver women from lower income group with access to loans to begin small businesses.

- v. Priyadarshini, initiated in April 2011, is a programme that offers women in seven districts access to self-help groups (Wikipedia).
- vi. NIRBHAYA to provide safety and security for women .
- vii. Mahila E-haat (2016) to facilitate entrepreneurship opportunities online for women.
- viii. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme (2015) to ensure education, participation of the girl child and to prevent gender-biased.
- ix. One-Stop Centre Scheme (2015) to provide support and assistance to women affected by violence, both in private and public spaces.
- x. SWADHAR Greh (2018) for providing primary need for shelter, food, clothing, medical treatment and care of women in distress.
- xi. National policy for the women empowerment (2001), etc..

b. Women Empowerment Strategy in Maldives:

Law and Policies:

- i. The Sexual Harassment Law was passed in April 2014.
- ii. The Family Law Act (2001) was the first law specifically related to gender relations. This act set a minimum age at marriage and annulled men's right to divorce their wives by reciting a verbal formula (Jana El-Horr and Rohini Prabha Pande , 2016, p.13).
- iii. In 2009, a National Gender Equality Policy was established. It instructs all agencies of government "... to address women's issues ... recognizing that women and men have different needs and priorities" (ADB 2014).
- iv. Domestic Violence Prevention Act in 2012(Jana El-Horr and Rohini Prabha Pande , 2016, p.26)
- v. The 2008 Employment Act, the most recent law on employment, outlines provisions for equal access to employment for men and women, prohibits the use of sex or marital status as grounds for dismissal from any job, and includes generous provisions for maternity leave (Jana El-Horr and Rohini Prabha Pande , 2016, p.12).
- vi. The 2008 Constitution is founded on the fundamental principle of "equality for all" and guarantees the same rights to female and male citizens (Article 62(a)).
- vii. The National Gender Equality Policy and Framework for Operationalisation - 2009(maldives Gender Equality Diagnostic of selected sectors , Asian Development Bank,2014, pp.13).
- viii. The Maldives Gender Equality Act 2016–2021, published in 2015, has four main policy goals. The first policy goal is to develop and activate the necessary policy, legislative and institutional frameworks for gender equality, so that women and men enjoy fundamental human rights and rewards of democracy equal to those of men. The second goal emphasises women's

empowerment to facilitate their equal access to available opportunities, as well as equal outcomes/results. The third policy goal is to cultivate a culture of non-discrimination and respect for women's human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil and all other fields on a basis of equality between men and women. The fourth goal aims at eliminating all forms of discrimination against women (Country Gender Assessment Of Agriculture And The Rural Sector In Maldives , 2019, p.16).

- ix. The Penal Code of 2015, which was amended to define rape; the Sexual Harassment and Abuse Prevention Act of 2015(Country Gender Assessment Of Agriculture And The Rural Sector In Maldives , 2019, p.16).
- x. The Domestic Violence Prevention Act of 2012 (Country Gender Assessment Of Agriculture And The Rural Sector In Maldives , 2019, p.16).
- xi. The Decentralization Act, ratified in 2010, mandates that local councils have a Women's Development Committee (WDC) at the island level, as an integral part of local governance (Country Gender Assessment Of Agriculture And The Rural Sector In Maldives , 2019, p.16), etc..

Schemes & Organisations:

- i. National Reproductive Health Strategy for 2014–18 (Jana El-Horr and Rohini Prabha Pande , 2016, p.12)
- ii. In 2010, new changes were brought to change the gender architecture within the government and appoint Gender Focal Points (GFP) at all ministries at Deputy Minister level and above (Country Gender Assessment Of Agriculture And The Rural Sector In Maldives , 2019, p.17).
- iii. The Amendments to the Civil Service Regulations in 2014, women civil servants are entitled to a total of 60 days of maternity leave, excluding public holidays and weekends (Country Gender Assessment Of Agriculture And The Rural Sector In Maldives , 2019, p.18), etc..

c. Women Empowerment Strategy in Srilanka:

Law and Policies:

- i. The Constitution of Sri Lanka [Art.12(1) and 12(2), 1978] seeks to guarantee gender equality as a fundamental right and nondiscriminatory new legislation (ADB, Women In Sri Lanka, 1999, p.4).
- ii. Prevention of Domestic Violence Act in 2005 (Adb, Country Gender Assessment Sri Lanka An Update, 2015).
- iii. The Maternity Benefits (Amendment) Act, No 43 of 1985(Sri Lanka Shadow Report 2010, p.18).

- iv. the Citizenship Act (2003) and Maintenance Act 1999 have eliminated some discriminatory provisions on their rights (Sri Lanka Shadow Report 2010, p.32), etc..

Schemes & Organisations:

- i. Gender Issues in the Bank's Loan and Technical Assistance Pipeline 1998–2001 (**ADB, Women In Sri Lanka, 1999, p.33**).
- ii. Women's Environment and Development Organization 2007, etc..

d. Women Empowerment Strategy in Bangladesh:

Law and Policies:

- i. The country has taken action against the practice of dowry through laws such as Dowry Prohibition Act, 1980; Dowry Prohibition (Amendment) Ordinance, 1982; and Dowry Prohibition (Amendment) Ordinance, 1986.
- ii. In 2010, Bangladesh enacted the *Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2010*.
- iii. Citizenship Act (amended), 2009
- iv. Mobile Court Act, 2009, etc..

Schemes & Organisations:

- i. Women Rehabilitation Board in 1972,
- ii. Bangladesh Women Rehabilitation Welfare Foundation in 1974,
- iii. National Women's organization in 1976,
- iv. Ministry of Women Affairs in 1978 ,
- v. The Women Affairs Directorate was formed in 1984 and it was upgraded to Department of Women Affairs in 1990.
- vi. Ministry of Women and Children Affairs' in 1994,
- vii. National Women Training and Development Academy,
- viii. Career Women's Hostel, Children's Daycare center,
- ix. National Council for Women and Child Development (NCWCD), etc..

From the above discussion it is clear that all the countries have formulated various acts, schemes and also established various organizations. All countries time to time also revised their laws and extend their schemes for the empowerment of women according to the needs for chasing the emerging issues or problems. Now women are working shoulder to shoulder with men and also enjoying some equal right such as Right to equal pay, Right against harassment at work, Right to maternity-related benefits, Right to free legal aid, Right to dignity and decency, Right to property etc. In spite of it, in our everyday life in every moment we get the news about domestic violence,

molestation, rape etc. To combat the situation some remedial steps may be given as recommendations.

Recommendations:

- i.** We all are well known about the role of women as mothers, sisters, wives and homemakers but now in modern era power is shifting towards women in this world so male dominated orthodox should be removed in the name of socialization.
- ii.** Violence against women, especially spousal violence is a common phenomenon in India which is significantly increasing over the years. In this case strong steps should be followed by government and women should be vocal against this. So starts from home for empowering the women.
- iii.** India is a participatory democracy there must be women's participation. Without their participation democracy is meaningless and lopsided. So Political Parties Promote Greater Participation of Women in Politics.
- iv.** Throughout the world today also women are treated as subordinate to man and second class citizen in every country in this world which is very pathetic. So people perceptions and attitudes should be changed about the women.
- v.** Women's Participation at the Local Level should be increased. Changes in public perception will encourage women to enter into the developmental works of our country.
- vi.** 'Literacy of women is an important key to improving health, nutrition and education in the family and to empowering women to participate in decision-making in society...' (**FWCW, Beijing, 1995**). To promote the fulfillment of women's potentiality through skill development and employment education is a key factor.
- vii.** There is needed to raise social awareness and improving the status of women through training, workshops, educational programmes etc., which will also improve their decision-making capacity at all levels in all spheres of life.

Through the various act, right and schemes it is trying to established the equal opportunity of women but they should be conscious about their own right in society , in country and as well as in this world, or it can be said that self realization about their own right is necessary then elimination of all type discrimination will be possible .

Conclusion:

‘The girl child of today is the woman of tomorrow. The skills, ideas and energy of the girl child are vital for full attainment of the goals of equality, development and peace. For the girl child to develop her full potential she needs to be nurtured in an enabling environment, where her spiritual, intellectual and material needs for survival, protection and development are met and her equal rights safeguarded. If women are to be equal partners with men, in every aspect of life and development, now is the time to recognize the human dignity and worth of the girl child and to ensure the full enjoyment of her human rights and fundamental freedoms...’(**Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women ,1996**). The statement given by a global forum indicates that all community of the world has great concern about the women empowerment. ‘For achieving complete equality in the society between two genders, it is necessary to eliminate all kinds of domination, oppression and discrimination against the fair sex by their male counterpart. It is hoped that India will prosper and achieve its Vision – 2020 with hand to hand co-operation and active participation of both men and women in all spheres of developmental activities’. (**Mandal , Keshab Chandra, 2013p. 26**).

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