

PREFACE

In the year 2017, the theme for International Women's Day - 8th March, focused on "Women in the Changing World of Work: Planet 50-50 by 2030" by NITI (National Institute for Transforming India) Ayog. This advances the Government of India's commitment to ensure Gender Parity in India, with special focus on women's economic empowerment. India has taken bold steps towards creating new opportunities of job creation, entrepreneurship, skill building and access to new industries particularly ICT, through its national initiatives like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Skill India, Make in India and Digital India. This study reviews the mounting body of evidence showing that the availability of financial services for poor households is a serious appropriate factor with strong impact on the achievement of poverty alleviation initiatives of Government of India.

For empowering women, microfinance is considered to be an effective measure. It is also thought that availability to credit would help in income-generating activities among women. And in the long run, this would help in alleviation of poverty from the rural and tribal households and the society at large. Basically economic dimension is considered to be a part of the overall development. Micro-finance interventions are well-recognized over the world as an effective tool for poverty alleviation and improving socio-economic status of rural and tribal poor. Microfinance go beyond the access to credit facilities. Women need to be empowered economically, socially and politically. The women empowerment is a critical determinant of economic wellbeing, social status and political power. Micro finance aims at providing the rural, urban and tribal poor, especially women, with savings, credit and insurance and aims to improve household income security and in turn endeavours to empower the women.

Women are an integral part of every nation's economy. Holistic development and harmonious growth of a nation would be possible only when women are measured as equal partners in progress with men. Empowerment of women is necessary to connect the marginalised women in the main stream of economic growth.

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