

Economic and Social Rights of Women in India: A Critique

Dr. Manjinder Gulyani¹

In Indian Jurisprudence both Distributive and Corrective Justice Models are incorporated. The constitution of India in its Preamble itself, indicates the Justice for all, in all walks of life; whether social, political or economic. Further, the Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles ensure that the distribution of materials is equal and judicious. Similarly, in order to eliminate the effects of exploitation of certain classes in the past, several principles in Art 15,16,17,18 have also been incorporated in Indian constitution. As a result of these provisions many classes have been advantaged and the Corrective Justice model has done great job for these classes. But certain classes especially women could not get the benefit of this model in its true sense. We hear hundreds of schemes and legislations in pursuance of women empowerment. But as per Data of NCRB so many Rape cases, Dowry deaths, incidents of Domestic violence have been committed in past years. Inequality for women remains a major barrier to human development throughout Asia, the 2010 Report shows.²

So the paper is divided into four parts. First part examines the effect of constitutional scheme and policies in pursuance of Corrective Justice Model in context of women. In the second part of the paper, the deficiencies of this model are tried to be explored. In Third part of the paper the improvements in recent years is analysed. The last part of the paper talks about the way ahead or the suggestions for improvements are made with a discussion at the end.

Idea of Corrective Justice Model

To correct the inequalities done in past and to give the opportunities of progress in the present is the essence of Corrective Justice Approach.

¹ Assistant Professor, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra

² UNDP, 2010 Human Development Report: *Asian Countries Lead Development Progress Over 40 Years* (2010)

Idea of Distributive Justice Model

According to John Rawls social contract argument distributive justice, is a form of fairness: an impartial distribution of goods.

Now we are to examine whether these models have brought any changes in the social, economic and political status of women in India.

Indicators of Women Empowerment³

1. Education: Education is an undeniable fundamental human right, for it improves self-esteem and forms the basis for active participation.
2. Technology: In terms of knowledge and skills, technology has to become accessible to women.
3. Training: Trainings provide the women with an opportunity to grow as an individual with an independent and equal status to that of a man.
4. Access to Credit: It is essential for a woman to be able to lead an independent existence and emerge from the secondary status.

According to NASSCOM (National Association of Software and Services Companies), in order to bring gender inclusivity in India individuals, society, govt. and organisations will have to work together. According to them in the journey of inclusivity there are four phases.

In the **first phase** the steps are as under

Isolated action and minimal integration → start of awareness → Almost no role models

In the **second phase** the steps are as under

Some policies, laws exist → Infrastructure in place → policies, processes, role models available → Some legislation in place on rights → Awareness is high, acceptance is low

In **Third phase** the steps will be like this

³ Empowerment Of Women, National Academy For Training And Research In Social Security (2008)

Focus on culture → Specific actions to make environment equitable → Awareness is very high → Acceptance is rising → More action is voluntary → Increased synergy and recognition of a common goal

In **phase four** the steps are as under

Awareness complete → Role models are no longer required → Empowered organisations, individuals and stakeholders, moving to self actualisation⁴

These indicators help in evaluating whether the Justice Mechanism adopted by a particular state is working properly or not. Here are discussed some of these indicators with the help of statistical data.

Grey Areas in Context of Women Empowerment

In certain areas the corrective justice model could not bring the desired results. These aspects are discussed here.

Violence against Women

If a state is not safe for a particular segment of the society, then rest of the aspects of empowerment are of no use. **Table-1**⁵ exposes the condition of crime against women.

Year	Rape Cases	Molestation	Dowry Deaths	Sexual Harassment	Importation of Girls	Matrimonial Cruelty
2008	21467	40413	8172	12214	67	81344
2009	21397	38711	8383	11009	48	89546
2010	22,172	40,613	8,391	9,961	36	94041
2011	24206	35565	8618	8570	80	99135

So, as per these data the total **Reported Cases** of rape in 2009 were 21347 and there is an increase in these crimes during 2011, the molestation cases were 38711 whereas in 2011 these are 35565, the dowry deaths were 8383 and there is an increase too with 8618 cases, the incidents of sexual harassment were 11009

⁴ Nasscom, *Gender Inclusivity in India, Building Empowered Organisations, 2009 at 38*

⁵ As per NCRB (National Crimes Records Bureau)

wherein there can be seen a decrease in reported cases, 48 girls were imported in 2009, but sadly that number has reached to 80 and against 89546 women the matrimonial cruelty was committed which again shows an increase with 99135 cases.

One of the key factors in crime prevention is, obviously, the police force. But the latest data reveal that there are over 500,000 vacancies in the police forces in India, the government said in December. There are only 131 policemen per 100,000 people as against the 173 per 100,000 norm prescribed by the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D).⁶

The January 2012 report by the BPR&D also showed police expenditure as a percentage of states' budget averaged 2.7 percent on an all-India basis.⁷ Around 47,000 policemen are deployed to keep some 15,000 VIPs safe. The report also said that police forces lack basic transport facilities, with around 144,000 vehicles available as of January 2012, around 35 percent less than required.⁸ So, this is a major cause of concern to check crime against women.

Literacy

As per Census 2011, 74.0% of the population is literate comprising 65.5% females and 82.1% males. The incremental increase over Census 2001 of 11.8% for females is higher than 6.8% for males.⁹

It is noticed that the female literacy rate during the period 1991-2001 increased by 14.87% whereas male literacy rate rose by 11.72%. Hence the female literacy rate actually increased by 3.15% more compared to male literacy rate.¹⁰

⁶ <http://blogs.reuters.com/india/2013/04/23/delhi-rape-case-reignites-police-reform-debate/> and

⁷ <http://www.ndtv.com/article/india/even-after-65-years-of-independence-women-are-beaten-says-supreme-court-348758>

⁸ *ibid*

⁹ "Statistical Year Book", Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
http://mospi.nic.in/mospi_new/upload/women_men_2012_31oct12.pdf

¹⁰ National Literacy Mission, <http://www.nlm.nic.in/women.htm>

Further, The percentage of girls in the total enrolment at primary and upper primary level was 48.0 and 46.5 respectively in the year 2006-07; this increased to 48.41 and 48.38 at primary and upper primary levels respectively in 2010- 11.

In 2009-2010, the number of women students enrolled in higher education was around 60.80 lakh (41.6%), out of which 18.45% were enrolled in professional courses.¹¹

Leadership

52.5% of currently married women participate in household decisions.¹²

While percentage of electors (male & female) participating in the elections showed an increasing trend in recent elections.¹³

*Women's Representation in Parliament, 2004 and 2009 elections*¹⁴

Year	Lok Sabha Membership		
	Total Seats	Women	Percent Seats
2004	545	45	8.2
2009	543	49	10.9

Table-2

Table-2 shows a slight increase in Lok Sabha (House of People i.e., one of the two houses of Parliament) membership. In 15th election (2009) out of 543 seats 49 were won by women candidates (10.9% of total seats), while in 2004 this number was 45 which was 8.1% of total seats.

¹¹ National Mission for Empowerment of Women, Ministry of women and Child Development, Govt of India,
<http://www.nmew.gov.in/index1.php?lang=1&level=0&linkid=103&lid=289<ypeid=2&domid=1>

¹² National Family Health Survey NFHS-3 (2005-06)
¹³ *ibid*

¹⁴ *nipccd.nic.in/reports/women-e.pdf*, Table 142, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Women and Child Development, Govt of India (2004). See also www.parliamentofindia.nic.in

Number of Seats allotted to women candidates also increased remarkably in 2009 in comparison to 2004. Seats allotted to women in 2009 election were 556 out of which 59 won while in 2004 the number of seats allotted was 355, out of which 45 won.¹⁵

Six out of 28 states surveyed have zero women participation in Cabinet. The list is dominated by northeastern states that do not have any women ministers in Cabinet. Apart from the northeastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland, Punjab in northern India too is currently without a woman in the Cabinet. Eight states - Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Chhattisgarh, Tripura and Karnataka - each have a woman minister in their Cabinet. Karnataka just inducted film actress Umashree in its new Cabinet. Ten states - Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Assam, Haryana, Delhi, Odisha and Sikkim - fare marginally better with two women members in each Cabinet.

Only two states have three women ministers in the Cabinet. These are Rajasthan and Bihar. Andhra Pradesh, however, has four women ministers in the government.¹⁶

Further, the following table shows that 12.67 percent women could find a place in Union ministry.

Representation of Women in the Central Council of Ministers¹⁷

Ministerial Rank	Central Council of Ministers		
	Female	Total	Percentage
Total	9	71	12.67

Table-3

¹⁵ Parveen Rai, "Electoral Participation of Women in India: Key Determinants and Barriers", *Economic and Political Weekly* Vol. XLVI No. 3 (2011) pp. 50-51

¹⁶ Pankaj Sharma, "Token Women Representation in Cabinet across States" June, 2013 http://zeenews.india.com/exclusive/token-women-representation-in-cabinet-across-states_6391.html

¹⁷ Pankaj Sharma, "Token Women Representation in Cabinet across States" June, 2013 http://zeenews.india.com/exclusive/token-women-representation-in-cabinet-across-states_6391.html

The number of women judges in the Supreme Court and in High Courts in various states is given in the following Table.

Number of Judges by Sex in Supreme Court/ High Courts as on 4.12.2012¹⁸

S. No.	Name of Court	No. of Judges		Percentage
		Female	Total	
1	Supreme Court	2	26	7.69
2	High Courts	54	634	8.51

Table-4

Economic Status of Women

Although the number of employed females increased from 111,910 to 135,370 during the period 1995-2007, the proportion of employed females witnessed a decline from 32.3% of the total population to 30.5%. This could be explained by an increase in the number of non-economically active females such as infants.¹⁹ According to Nasscom, the current ratio of women to men in the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry is 69:31.

Women in Unorganised Sector

Many women feel they receive neither support nor understanding from their employers, Hewlett said that although many companies offer flexible work arrangements, more than half 54% of women professionals believe they will be penalised if they choose that option.²⁰

¹⁸ Times of India, <http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/keyword/women> (Dec 4, 2012)

¹⁹ Euromonitor International at p 4 motherchildnutrition.org/india/pdf/mcn-annual-gross-income.pdf

²⁰ Indian Women Professionals Ahead Of Those In US, Germany, Japan PTI Apr 2, 2013, 01.56PM IST <http://articles.economicstimes.indiatimes.com/keyword/indian-women/recent/5>

But Indian women have split opinions on how children will affect career ambitions (40% of those currently without children believe they will not slow down their careers, while 60 % feel they will).²¹

Women still face significant career barriers at the workplace eg. lack of investment in professional development (48%), followed by the absence of a role model (43%). Additionally, juggling between work and family life (36%) and inequality in pay (25%) were perceived to be major inhibitors of professional success.²²

Women in India work over one-and-a-half hours more than the country's men every day, making this difference in total work hours the maximum in nearly 30 countries, a report shows.²³

In India, especially, most private sector employers are stingy with maternity leave: most companies offer as little as three months' worth of paid leave as maternity benefits. Paternity leave is almost unheard of.²⁴

This is why among India's 500 largest companies, 50% of women give up on their careers before they turn 30 and 18% of women drop out of work every year.²⁵ So, the rate of women's workforce participation remains sluggish at 28%.²⁶

Then talking about problem with women's healthcare in India is that health administration is a state subject. The funding for the same is from international resources. That resultantly creates pressure to allocate these funds on particular projects only. So, local needs are generally ignored. Each state has geographical jurisdiction and often have to find the additional funds or redesign existing staff to

²¹ 94% Indian Women Think They Have Successful Careers: LinkedIn Survey, ET Bureau Mar 4, 2013, 12.32PM IST <http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/keyword/indian-women/recent/5>

²² ibid

²³ Indian Women Work 94 Mins More Than Men Every Day: Survey, PTI Dec 20, 2012, 04.30PM IST

²⁴ Indian Working Women Need A Better Deal Than What India Inc Now Gives Them, ET Bureau Oct 4, 2012, 05.42AM IST

²⁵ ibid

²⁶ Saundarya Rajesh, "Companies Need To Classify Their Women Employees And Engage With Them Accordingly" Economic Times, Dec 16, 2011, 07.01am IST

carry them out. Again, programme priorities may shift with changing priorities at the centre and states are forced to go along with changes in order to continue to receive central funding. 12% of countries funding comes from international sources which is ring-fenced for specific programmes.

Progress made in Recent Years

But in some aspects we can heave a sigh of relief wherein this justice model has done quite well.

Unorganised Sector

India's women professionals are realising their career ambitions remarkably well and are far ahead of their counterparts in the United States, Germany, and Japan in some critical ways.²⁷

According to 2001 census data, the number of women informally employed in rural areas doubled from 25.5 million in 1991 to 53.7 million in 2001. While rural men are migrating to urban areas and looking for jobs, rural women are filling in as agricultural labourers.

93% Indian women believe it is possible to have it all, in terms of career and family life. This is significantly higher than the global average of 74%.

Among other findings, (25%) of professional women in India consider 'working for herself' as a key barometer for success. This figure is significantly higher than most other countries (12% globally).²⁸

Female professionals in India cited good remuneration (33%) and exciting career opportunities (25%) as the top two attributes of an attractive employer.²⁹

²⁷ Indian Women Professionals Ahead of Those in US, Germany, Japan, PTI Apr 2, 2013, 01.56PM IST <http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/keyword/indian-women/recent/5>

²⁸ 94% Indian Women Think They Have Successful Careers: LinkedIn survey, ET Bureau Mar 4, 2013, 12.32PM IST <http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/keyword/indian-women/recent/5>

²⁹ *ibid*

Breaking from tradition, Indian women seek adventure and experience and are confident, enthused and eager to travel on their own terms.

Among women who travel alone, 41 per cent said they actually enjoyed travelling alone for work. 76 per cent said they enjoy going solo on holiday.³⁰

Role Models

And we have women like Aarti Parikh, a techie who co-founded mobile and Internet publishing house SachManya.³¹ Parikh's iPad app for children, Being Global, beat Disney at the 2012 Appy Awards. One such woman is Parvati Dev an IIT alumni who, after researching medical e-learning for over 18 years at Stanford University, founded CliniSpace and this app to train nurses treating wounded soldiers on a battlefield is set in a medical camp at a war zone with realistic depictions.

Three Indian women -- ICICI Bank Deputy Managing Director Chanda Kochhar, HSBC India CEO Naina Lal Kidwai and Biocon head Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw -- have been named among the world's 50 most powerful businesswomen by the Fortune magazine.³²

The 49-year-old Jayanthi, Capgemini³³ veteran is a walking history of the French company's evolution in India. Jayanthi was ranked the third most powerful business woman in India in 2012 by Fortune magazine.

Vanitha Narayanan, Managing Director, IBM India working at the computer-maker-turned-services major since 1987, Narayanan has handled multiple roles

³⁰ Delhi Voted Most Unsafe Metro City In India By Women Travelling Alone: Survey, PTI Feb 26, 2013, 10.36AM IST <http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/keyword/indian-women/recent/5>

³¹ Madhu T, "Indian Women Bridging Gender Gap In Financial Literacy: MasterCard", ET Bureau Jul 26, 2012, 06.28PM IST

³² Fortune's Favourite: Indian Women On Power List, PTI Oct 12, 2006, 12.00am <http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/keyword/indian-women/recent/5>

³³ Akanksha Prasad, "Indian Women In IT Who Have Found Their Way To The Corner Offices", ET Bureau Jan 7, 2013, 12.09AM IST <http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/keyword/indian-women/recent/5>

across divisions, working with large clients of the company. Kumur srinivasan, President, Intel India, She manages chipmaker Intel's largest non-manufacturing site outside the US – the India unit that employs about 3,500 engineers. Srinivasan has been with Intel for over a quarter of a century. Neelam Dhawan, MD, Hewlett-Packard India³⁴ 52, was among the first women chiefs of a technology firm in the country, when she became India head of the world's largest software company, Microsoft, in 2005. She now heads India operations for computer-maker Hewlett-Packard.

On the other hand we have examples of Marissa Mayer who left Google to join Yahoo as its CEO, she was already six months pregnant, but didn't let that get in the way of her professional duties. Now, having given birth to a baby boy, she plans to get back to work within two weeks. This might be great for her employers, Yahoo, but hardly sets a role model for women at work.³⁵

According to International Society of Women Airline Pilots (ISA+21), the percentage of women pilots globally is 5.88. Compare that to India, where the conservative estimate of women pilots is now about 11%.³⁶ Thus, the percentage of women employed or taking up career as pilots in India is almost double that of the global percentage.³⁷

Health

Then the National Rural Health Mission 2005-12 attracted substantial funds from Indian government. Under this Accredited social Health Activists were appointed to help with primary health outreach services especially in the area of maternal

³⁴ ibid

³⁵ Akanksha Prasad, “Indian Women In IT Who Have Found Their Way To The Corner Offices”, ET Bureau Jan 7, 2013, 12.09AM IST <http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/keyword/indian-women/recent/5>

³⁶ Manju V, “Indian Women Start Ruling The Sky”, Economic Times, Sep 7, 2006, 02.39 am <http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/keyword/indian-women/recent/5>

³⁷ ibid

health and child birth. In addition to that Jan Swasthya Abhiyan- a federation of 21 organisation is also there to augment health policies.³⁸

The Maternal Mortality Ratio has come down from 254 during 2004-06 to 212 during 2007-09³⁹

According to National Family Health Survey–III (2005-06) in the rural sector currently married women take 26% decisions regarding obtaining health care for herself.

Sex Ratio

Sex-selective abortion has significant consequences for the number of men and women in an overall population. However, the United Nations projects that highly skewed sex ratios in most countries will decline in the coming decades. Only India is projected to remain steady at 1.08⁴⁰

At present, the sex-ratio (number of women per 1000 men) is 940 in 2011 which shows continued improvement over the sex ratios of 927 in 1991 and 933 in 2001. Among the States, in Census 2011, Kerala has the highest sex-ratio of 1084 and Haryana has the lowest of 877.⁴¹

Suggestions

These Data reveal that the legislations, the policies, the Schemes and the whole mechanism dealing with women empowerment is not working in the direction they are supposed to do. So there are certain suggestive measures that can help:

In order to progress from phase two to three,

³⁸ Harini Narayanana, “Women’s Health, Population Control and Collective Action”, *Economic and Political Weekly* Vol XLVI No. 8 (2011) pp 40-45

³⁹ “Statistical Year Book”, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
http://mospi.nic.in/mospi_new/upload/women_men_2012_31oct12.pdf

⁴⁰ “The World’s Women and Girls- 2011 Datasheet”, Population Reference Bureau, [http- www.prb.org](http://www.prb.org)

⁴¹ “Statistical Year Book”, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
mospi.nic.in/mospi_new/upload/women_men_2012_31oct12.pdf ; Madhu Purnima Kishwar, “Census Of India 2011: Sick Culture Of Preferring Sons” *Economic Times*, Apr 1, 2011, 03.24am

*Women must*⁴²:

- Recognise their skills and weaknesses.
- Be responsible for upgrading their professional skills.
- Be willing to stand up to disapproval or disagreement.
- Actively learn how to work in the environment as it is.
- Champion their cause and reach out to mentor/coach other women.
- Advocate with government and organisations for changes, small and big, to make the road smoother for other women.

Organisations should

- The infrastructure to free women from many of the responsibilities that tie them down now must be in place to a scale that reaches all women – e.g. creches and dependent care facilities.
- There has to be the possibility for career breaks and alternate options.
- Setting up mentorship programmes for women in the organisation.
- Multinational and domestic firms pin their future on the galloping Indian economy-in just a year, it is poised to take third place from being the 11th largest in the world, according to McKinsey⁴³ so the authors of the study entitled, *The Battle for Female Talent in India*, Sylvia Ann Hewlett and Ripa Rashid tell why it's important for global organisations to "get it right", and establish systems that will⁴⁴
- Developing training practices that address re-skilling after breaks and re-skilling for new roles.

⁴² Nasscom, *Gender Inclusivity in India, Building Empowered Organisations, 2009 at 40*

⁴³ Shubha Sharma, "Important For Organisations To Establish Systems To Help Highly-Qualified Women Flourish", *Economic Times*, ET Bureau Mar 8, 2011, 02.26am IST

⁴⁴ *ibid*

The Government must:

- The government will have to make stringent laws to check crimes against women so that the women can move independently and they do not need a ‘*male escort*’ everywhere.⁴⁵
- Then there is a need that the personnel of law enforcement agencies, the judges, medico legal examiners must be sensitised so that when they take up such a case they must be aware of the implications of the action taken by them.⁴⁶ For that purpose is required the implementation of judgment delivered On 22 September 2006 by the Supreme Court of India in *Prakash Singh vs. Union of India* instructing central and state governments to comply with a set of seven directives laying down practical mechanisms to kick-start police reform. The Court's directives seek to achieve two main objectives: *functional autonomy for the police* - through security of tenure, streamlined appointment and transfer processes - and *enhanced police accountability*, both for organisational performance and individual misconduct.⁴⁷
- Special policies are required to support women in key transition periods i.e., marriage and child birth.
- Need is to formulate gender sensitive policies rather than gender neutral ones because women in India are responsible for children or aged parents and the household chores. According to Amartya Sen’s capability approach which acknowledges human diversity needs to go in consonance with the

⁴⁵ Manjinder Gulyani, “The Offence Of Dowry Death Under Indian Penal Code: A Socio-Legal Study” A thesis submitted for Ph. D (2007)

⁴⁶ Manjinder Gulyani “Need to Redesign the Corrective Justice Model in Context of Women” Punjabi University, Patiala, A paper presented in National Seminar on Weaker Sections and Law (2011)

⁴⁷ <http://www.humanrightsinitiative.org/index.php>

theory that all human beings are not homogenous and have different roles to play.⁴⁸

- It is the duty of the state to provide the women adequate social security. In addition to that, some government run homes for victimised women may also be there so that a victim of cruelty may seek shelter in case her parents are not so accommodating.⁴⁹
- In addition to that, electronic media which is very popular these days may be used in altering the old notions against women.⁵⁰
- The government should recognise such people who showed courage in defying malpractices of the society.⁵¹
- Encouraging the initiatives like the one Indian Institute of Bangalore launched a certification course on Indian women in leadership which will train students on different aspects required to hold important posts of governance.⁵²
- Governments should make policies in providing improved tax benefits systems, and make childcare more affordable to help women contribute more to economic growth and a fairer society."⁵³
- Aim to be a role model by increasing the number of women at all levels in Government.

Society must:

- As a family unit, extend support and share burden of balance.

⁴⁸ Nirmala Padmanabhan, "Understanding Gender Equality in Software Industry of Kerala Through the Capability Approach", *Economic and Political Weekly* March 2011 Vol. XLVI No. 12

⁴⁹ Manjinder Gulyani "Need to Redesign the Corrective Justice Model in Context of Women" Punjabi University, Patiala A paper presented in National Seminar on Weaker Sections and Law, (2011)

⁵⁰ Manjinder Gulyani, "The Offence Of Dowry Death Under Indian Penal Code: A Socio-Legal Study" A thesis submitted for Ph. D (2007)

⁵¹ ibid

⁵² Devina Sengupta, "IIM Bangalore Launches A Course To Groom Women Politicians", *Economic Times* ET Bureau Apr 11, 2012, 04.48AM.

⁵³ Indian Women Work 94 Minutes More Than Men Every Day: Survey, PTI Dec 20, 2012, 04.30PM IST

- Recognise needs of working women in terms of safety, stress, health, etc.⁵⁴
- At Organisational Level educational campaigns for young men and women must be taught that they are equally responsible for the success of the household.⁵⁵
- Spiritual and traditional may also be urged to contribute in awakening of people, as recommended by United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in its report as to strategies on violence against women dated June 22, 2007.⁵⁶
- Cultural constraints need to be dealt with that limit women's mobility. Nearly 75% eschew jobs which involve frequent travel.⁵⁷

Conclusion

Over the past three decades, a strong feminist movement has emerged, there has been a greater participation of women in economic activity in the cities, and there is reservation in panchayats for women, all of which would suggest a growing empowerment of women.⁵⁸

A significant change from the 1970 which levelled off in the mid-1990s was a rise in voter turnout, specifically of the rural electorate, women, and Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. All this has made elections more “inclusive.”⁵⁹

The sex ratio has at last begun to see some improvement, though only in the past decade. And the life expectancy of women is now, as it should be, longer than of

⁵⁴ Nasscom, *Gender Inclusivity in India, Building Empowered Organisations, 2009* at 38

⁵⁵ Manjinder Gulyani “Need to Redesign the Corrective Justice Model in Context of Women” Punjabi University, Patiala, A paper presented in National Seminar on Weaker Sections and Law(2011)

⁵⁶ *ibid*

⁵⁷ Shubha Sharma, “Important for Organisations To Establish Systems To Help Highly-Qualified Women Flourish”, *Economic Times*, ET Bureau Mar 8, 2011, 02.26am IST

⁵⁸ *S. Guhan Memorial Lecture delivered in Chennai on December 5, 2012. The author is Editor of the Economic & Political Weekly, The Hindu, Dec 29, 2012* <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/how-is-india-doing-2012/article4249630.ece>

⁵⁹ *S. Guhan Memorial Lecture delivered in Chennai on December 5, 2012. The author is Editor of the Economic & Political Weekly The Hindu, Dec 29, 2012* <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/how-is-india-doing-2012/article4249630.ece>

men. But we are in a far worse situation than in 1982 with respect to the status of the girl child.⁶⁰

So, as per the present study India right now is somewhere in between second and third phase. The awareness is increasing. That is the reason we are seeing reporting of rape cases with such a rapid increase. Acceptance is also increasing. But for further improvement of our present mechanism some concrete steps are required.

⁶⁰ Ibid