



Chapter 10

Gender Empowerment

Introduction

Gender empowerment is conceived as a process by which women can overcome many of the hurdles that they face such as education, work status, employment opportunities, health care, social security, position in decision making by virtue of their gender. Thus gender empowerment veritably implies empowerment of women to do away with “subordination” or “discrimination” and “injustices” done to them in male dominated society.

The Government of India as well as various state governments have taken numerous measures and are continuing in their endeavors to raise the status of women in the society. The constitutional obligations and different plans, programmes and policies have laid emphasis on women’s empowerment, to make them active participants in the process of development.

Measures taken by the Government of India include the establishment of the National Commission for Women (NCW); Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK); launching of Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY), Balika Samridhi Yojana (BSY); and Rural Women’s Development and Empowerment Project (RWDEP). Formulating a National Policy for Empowerment of Women and setting up a National Resource Centre for Women are other efforts of the context undertaken by government in the interests of women.

The government of Himachal Pradesh has also undertaken many gender empowerment initiatives to upgrade the status of women. Monthly pension scheme for widow and destitute women and Mantri Shakti Bima Yojana for women living below poverty line and belonging to IRDP families are aimed at economic empowerment of women. Moreover, Support to Training

Women Empowerment Measures Undertaken in Different Five Year Plans by Government of India and Himachal Pradesh Government

<i>Five Year Plans of Govt. of India</i>	<i>Women Welfare Measures Formulated by Govt. of India</i>	<i>Women Welfare Measures Formulated by H.P. Govt.</i>
First Five Year Plan	Central Social Welfare Board was set up, 1953	—
Second Five Year Plan	Mahila Mandals were organised	—
Third Five Year Plan	Priority for education of women	Women Welfare Extension Centres and State Homes for women
Fourth Five Year Plan	Supplementary nutrition for women and children	Bal/Balika Ashram
Fifth Five Year Plan	Shift from women’s welfare to women’s development	Working Women’s Hostels
Sixth Five Year Plan	Separate chapter on women and adoption of a multidisciplinary approach with thrust on health, education and employment	Pension to Widows
Seventh Five Year Plan	Raise social and economic status of women. A separate department for women and child development under HRD Ministry created	Marriage Grant to Destitute Girls and Women
Eighth Five Year Plan	Shift from women’s development to women’s empowerment	Setting up Women’s Development Corporation
Ninth Five Year Plan	Vigorous steps on economic empowerment of women by launching DWACRA, STEP etc.	Setting up Women’s Commission
Tenth Five Year Plan (Approach Paper)	Promote access of women to information, resources and services	Mahila Pratsahan Yojana, Womens’ Cell

and Employment Programme (STEP); setting up of employment and income generating training-cum-production units for women; establishment of Rastriya Mahila Kosh; setting up Women Development Corporation; launching Indira Mahila Yojana are other steps aimed particularly at rural women. Reservations for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions have encouraged their participation in decision-making process at the grassroots. The 'Women Commission' constituted by the state government is actively engaged in checking crime against women and ensuring equal wages and opportunities for them. Such social security measures, as construction of state homes, marriage grants to destitute girls, construction and expansion of hostel buildings for working women, short stay homes for women and girls, and Swadhar Yojana for women in difficult situations and widows have been effective in raising the social status of women in this hilly and mountainous state. Three Nari Sewa Sadans are functioning at Chamba, Mandi and Mashobra to provide shelter to destitute and lonely women. The Mahila Mandals Protsahan Yojana launched by the Rural Development Department during 1998-99, provides incentives to Mahila Mandals on the basis of their performance in family planning and child welfare, promotion of small savings, education about social evils and participation in literacy campaigns. During 2001-2002, Rs. 156.58 lakh was sanctioned in favour of 18 women entrepreneurs. Unfortunately, both the financial and physical achievements which had increased during the year 1998-99 to 2000-2001 have declined during 2001-2002. This seems to indicate that during 2001-2002 women empowerment measures were not vigorously pursued (Table 10.1).

Women and Economic Empowerment

The economic empowerment of women means their participation in economically productive activities; their

Year	Financial Achievement (Rs. in lakh)	Physical Achievement
1998-1999	53.14	741
1999-2000	72.02	742
2000-2001	94.43	993
2001-2002	78.84	824

Source: Department of Social, Women and Scheduled Caste Welfare, Government of Himachal Pradesh.

access to savings and credits and their control over income and other productive assets such as land, business and industries. Despite legislation on equal pay for equal work, women continue to be paid considerably less than men, even when the occupational category and actual hours of employment are virtually same. It is encouraging that of total women employed in organised sectors in Himachal, 94.95 per cent are in the public sector. But this is mainly in lower-cadre jobs. The number of men employed in the gazetted posts are ten times higher than women. Of the total employed women only 3.1 per cent are in gazetted posts and the rest 97 per cent in non-gazetted posts. A study on urban female labour participation in Himachal Pradesh reveals that women are found in such activities as teaching, clerks, assistants, peons, etc., which are of lower status and carry lower remuneration (Sharma, 1994).

In the agricultural sector too women are engaged in low-skill activities, such as seed application, post-threshing, storing and, looking after crops in the slack season, and are engaged in livestock farming (Raj Kumari, 1989). According to the census, wages of

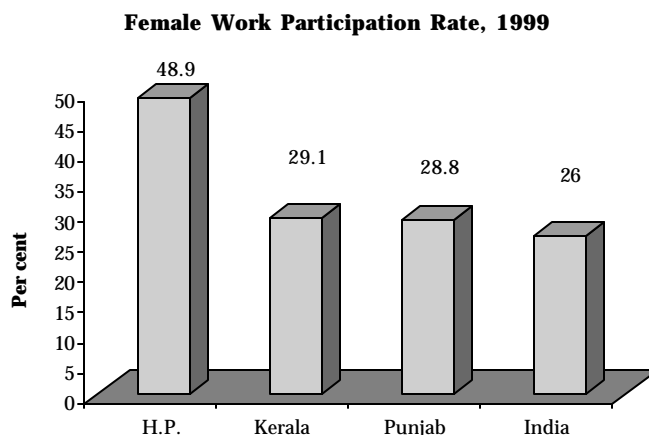
TABLE 10.2
Government Employees: A Gender Description, Himachal Pradesh

Types of Employees of all Depts/Offices	SC		ST		Others		Total		Grand Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Gazetted	647 (93.36)	46 (6.64)	281 (89.21)	34 (10.79)	5633 (89.71)	646 (10.29)	6561 (90.04)	726 (9.90)	7287
Non-Gazetted	17296 (82.38)	3699 (17.62)	4181 (80.90)	987 (19.10)	69375 (79.51)	17878 (20.49)	90852 (80.11)	22564 (19.89)	113416
Total	17943 (82.73)	3745 (17.27)	4462 (81.38)	1021 (18.62)	75008 (80.20)	18524 (19.80)	97413 (80.71)	23290 (19.29)	120703

Source: Abridged Table-8, Page No. 14, Census of H.P. Employees as on 31 March 1997, Government of Himachal Pradesh.

marginal workers increased from 1.56 per cent to 11.40 per cent, during 1991-2000, but wages of female workers increased from 15.45 per cent to 22.61 per cent. (Director of Census, H.P. 2002). This indicates that women, a large number of whom are marginal workers, are being further concentrated in the same level. The quality of women employment is poor in the state. This supports the finding that the effective per day wage rate for all wage-work (agricultural and non-agricultural work) for females is Rs. 18.6, at least 40 per cent lower than that of male workers (Rs. 31.2). The wage rate of women in Haryana is Rs. 38.3; Kerala, Rs. 30.3 and Punjab, Rs. 26.2. The lower wage rate means greater exploitation of women by the employers. Considering the geographical situation, the women are supposed to get more than their counterparts in other non-hilly states. Higher work burden and lower wage rate have affected the health and well-being of women and their dependent families in the state.

FIGURE 10.1



Source: Same as in Table No. A-10.1, Annexure-II.

Female workforce participation in the state is 48.9 per cent, higher than other major states and much higher than that of India's average (26.0%).

There were over 6000 registered Mahila Mandals in the state. Cash awards are given to those who perform well. They work in the villages to eradicate liquor shops and to promote women's economic empowerment. The Mahila Mandals in Kangra districts are performing well. Moreover, Himachal Pradesh has a good record of the status and functioning of Mahila Mandals for employment generation for women through the formation of Self-Help Groups in rural areas, for raising the per capita income of women. SHGs are emerging as a success story in Himachal Pradesh. Against a target of setting up 3000 SHGs during 2000-01, a total of 1038 SHGs have been established until December 2000. An important achievement is that loan repayment of 95 per cent of those SHGs is 100 per cent. Moreover, a group of members of SHGs (Kathur, Solan district) travelled to one of the South Indian states in 1995-96 on a field trip and are now implementing the lessons learnt from the experience of their counterparts. The SHGs are involved in a wide range of economic activities, such as agro-business; handicraft; floriculture; sheep, goat and pig farming; *papad* making; tailoring and carpentry; running of fair price shops, etc., in order to be gainfully employed and augment household incomes. The higher percentage of work participation of women and the effective functioning of Mahila Mandals and SHGs have raised the level of women's involvement in household decision-making. The NFHS II (1999) report maintains that in Himachal Pradesh, 80.1 per cent of women have access to surplus money as compared to 66.2 per cent in Kerala and 78.3 per cent in Punjab.

TABLE 10.3

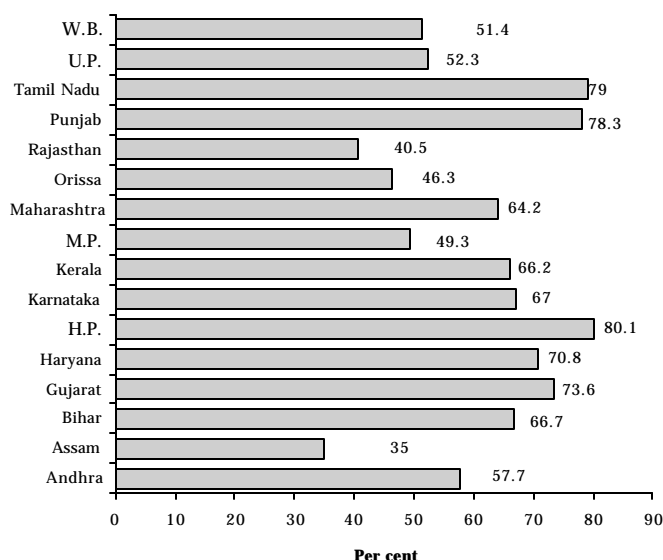
Women Employment in Organised Sector

State	Public	Private	Total
Andhra Pradesh	219.90 (51.38)	208.10 (48.62)	428.00
Assam	83.70 (19.61)	343.10 (80.39)	426.80
Bihar	95.50 (84.28)	17.80 (15.72)	113.30
Gujarat	141.80 (84.55)	25.90 (15.45)	167.70
Haryana	62.80 (91.95)	5.50 (8.05)	68.30
Himachal Pradesh	39.50 (94.95)	2.10 (5.05)	41.60
Karnataka	245.60 (46.29)	284.90 (53.71)	530.50
Kerala	192.30 (88.29)	25.50 (11.71)	217.80
Madhya Pradesh	153.40 (42.65)	206.30 (57.35)	359.70
Maharashtra	352.00 (99.77)	0.80 (0.23)	352.80
Orissa	85.70 (71.36)	34.40 (28.64)	120.10
Punjab	102.60 (71.50)	409.00 (28.50)	143.50
Rajasthan	132.90 (28.98)	325.60 (71.02)	458.50
Tamil Nadu	419.70 (98.64)	5.80 (1.36)	425.50
Uttar Pradesh	186.80 (58.28)	133.70 (41.72)	320.50
West Bengal	113.90 (99.82)	0.20 (0.18)	114.10

Source: National Sample Survey Organisation, Report No. 455, *Employment and Unemployment in India, 1999-2000, Key Results*.

Note: Figures in parenthesis show percentages to total.

FIGURE 10.2
Women Access to Money



Source: NFHS II, India, 1998-99.

Empowering Rural Women through Agro-Business Consortium

The Samridhi Mahila Cooperative, an agro-business consortium, was formed in 1996 in the resource-poor changer areas of Kangra and Chamba districts. The organisation got support from the Indo-German Changer Eco-Development Project (IGCEDP) and also from two NGOs viz. New Hope (Kangra) and Himalaya Bachao Samiti (Chamba). From a modest beginning with 16 women members and 357 kg of processed products in 1995-96, Samridhi has grown into a sizable agro-business consortium with 182 members producing about 23,000 kg of processed pickles, *chutneys*, and candles in 2000-01. These have wide consumer acceptability in various parts of the country (Ashokan and Singh 2002). This example needs to be followed by other women groups.

Women and Education

Education is a source of enlightenment and a means to achieve the goal of faster social development. Even after more than 50 years of Indian independence, gender-disparity in literacy continues and the situation varies from state to state and even within a state from district to district and from one community to another. Cultural prejudices, government apathy, lack of political and community will, illiteracy and the negative attitude of parents towards the education of the girl child, cost of education, etc., are some of the factors which have deprived girls and women of their right to education. Himachal Pradesh has made considerable progress in the matter of universalisation of primary education and has successfully raised the level of literacy. As Jean

Dreze (1999) has said "the schooling revolution has raised the literacy status in general and women in particular in Himachal Pradesh. Fifty years ago, educational level in Himachal Pradesh was no higher than Bihar or Uttar Pradesh. Today, Himachal Pradesh is second only to Kerala in terms of school participation and literacy rate in the younger age-groups".

The government of Himachal Pradesh has taken a number of steps in order to raise the educational status of women in the state. Some of these are: (I) formation of Village Education Committees (VECs) with one-third women members, and making them responsible for universal enrolment and retention of children in schools; (II) A girl child scheme was launched on 2 October 1997 involving a gift amount besides a scholarship at the age of six; (III) 2745 Mother-Teacher Associations have been formed till 31 March 2000; (IV) exemption of tuition fee to Himachal domicile girl students in all institutions within the state irrespective of the income of parents; (V) free text books to girls of DPEP districts and free uniform to tribal girls; (VI) girls' attendance scholarship at two rupees per month up to ten months.

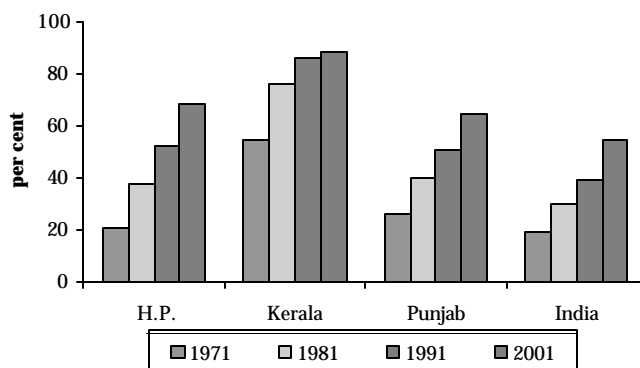
TABLE 10.4
Female Literacy Rate (1971-2001)

State	Literacy Rate				Increase 1971-2001
	1971*	1981**	1991**	2001**	
Himachal Pradesh	20.23	37.72	52.00	68.00	3.36
Kerala	54.31	75.65	86.20	88.00	1.62
Punjab	25.90	39.70	50.40	64.00	2.47
India	18.69	29.76	39.24	54.35	2.91

Source: * Director Publication Division Ministry of Information and Broadcasting GoI, 1976.

** Census of India 1981, 1991, 2001.

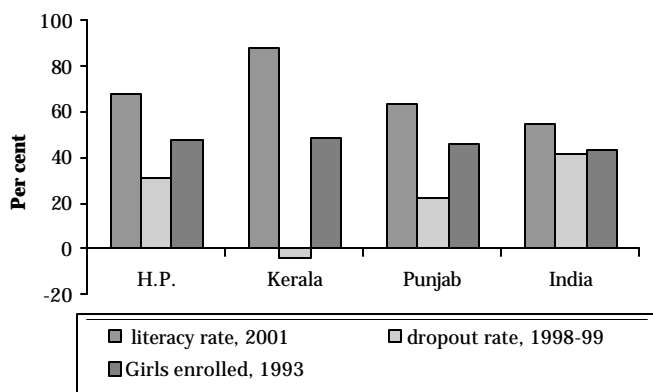
FIGURE 10.3
Female Literacy Rate From 1971-2001



Source: Same as in Table 10.4.

The rate of growth of female literacy in Himachal has been the highest as compared to Kerala, Punjab and the national average between 1971 and 2001 (Table 10.4). This clearly reveals that after becoming full-fledged state, the literacy status of its women has risen considerably.

FIGURE 10.4
Educational Status



Source: Same as in Table A-10.2, Annexure II.

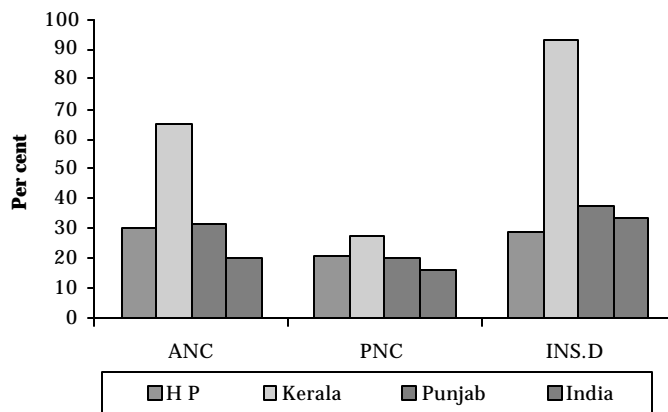
Notwithstanding all the supporting measures, however, the gap between male and female literacy in Himachal Pradesh is 17.94 per cent, which is three times higher than that of Kerala. Moreover, female drop-out rates of 31.03 per cent, 28.05 per cent and 43.20 per cent at the stages of I-V, VI-VIII and IX-X respectively are a cause of concern (Table A-10.2, Annexure II). The districts which need special attention for the promotion of women’s literacy are Chamba, Solan, Kullu, Lahaul and Spiti, and Sirmaur. The poverty of the household, distance of school from the village, girl child labour in rural areas, etc., are a few of the many reasons for a high drop-out rate in the state. Moreover, it is amply revealed that incentive can promote enrolment but cannot effectively raise participation and school attendance unless and until the motivation of pupils and parents is raised and also equally backed up by active community support. Literacy is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for gender empowerment. The higher the level of women’s education, the better will be their understanding of and participation in the development process of the society and the nation. Therefore, the level of education of women in general and vocational and technical education in particular needs to be raised in the state.

Women and Health

Health care of women is of paramount importance for the promotion of health care of the children and the

family. The health status of women in Himachal Pradesh has not been sufficiently upgraded. The NFHS-II report shows that only 30 per cent women in the state have received three recommended ante-natal care services, such as three ante-natal check-ups, two doses of tetanus injections and IFA tablets, during their pregnancies. This is more than 50 per cent lower than that of Kerala. Deliveries conducted in the health institutions are 29 per cent and only 21 per cent of the women who delivered received post-natal check-up. However, the NFHS-II report points out that women’s involvement in the decision-making process to take care of their own health is 80.8 per cent which is higher than the socially advanced Kerala (72.6%), and economically developed Punjab (78.5%). Notwithstanding the status of empowerment of women in health care decision-making, the inaccessibility of health centres, because of the topography, poor infrastructure facilities, and frequent transfer of grassroot health workers may be the reasons for lower maternal health status of women.

FIGURE 10.5
Women's Health Status

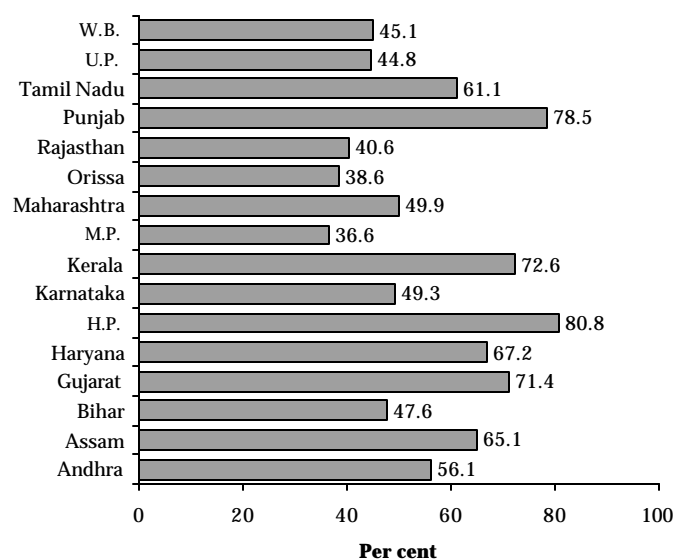


Source: Same as in Table A-10.3, Annexure II.

The NFHS-II also reveals that 34 per cent of currently married women in Himachal Pradesh report some type of reproductive health problems, such as Reproductive Tract Infections. Another gloomy picture of the reproductive health situation in Himachal Pradesh is the declining sex ratio, the overall decline being from 976 to 970 during 1991-2001. What is of major concern is the very heavy decline in sex ratio of children in 0-6 age group from 951 to 897. The NFHS-II (1998-99) points to a strong son preference among women in Himachal Pradesh; 88 per cent of women want at least one son and 62 per cent of those who

have no daughter want no more children. Thus, strong male child preference is possibly one of the reasons for the declining sex ratio in the state. This is a process of undermining the status of women and girl children in Himachal Pradesh. In the matter of women literacy Himachal Pradesh is closer to Kerala, while in the matter of health care of women, the state is way behind.

FIGURE 10.6

Women's Decision Making in Health Care

Source: NFHS II, India, 1998-99.

The spread of HIV/AIDS is a major concern for India. According to NFHS-II less than two thirds (61%) of women in Himachal Pradesh have heard of AIDS. Awareness of AIDS is particularly low among women who are not regularly exposed to any media, belong to households with a low standard of living, and illiterate and Muslim women. The floating nature of the population in a few districts of tourist attraction poses a threat of the risk of HIV/AIDS to the people in general and the women in particular.

Women and Political Participation

In India, women's representations in Parliament and state assemblies of many states have not gone beyond eight and ten percent respectively (Table A 10.4 Annexure-II). The average percentage of women elected to state legislative assemblies in Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Kerala during 1970-75 to 1998-99 are 5.04, 4.35 and 4.66 respectively (Table 10.5). This clearly reveals the lower level of political participation of women in state level politics. However, as compared to socially progressive Kerala and economically developed Punjab, Himachal Pradesh has the highest representation. The constitutional amendment, which proposes reservation of one-third seats for women in Parliament and state assemblies, if passed, will be a great advantage for participatory democracy and women's political empowerment.

TABLE 10.5

Women in State Legislature 1975-1999 (per cent of Women MLAs)

State	1970-75	1977-78	1979-83	1984-88	1989-92	1993-97	1998-99	State Averages
Andhra Pradesh	9.1	3.4	4.1	3.4	3.7	2.7	9.5	5.12
Assam	7.0	0.08	0.08	4.0	4.0	4.8	****	3.33
Bihar	3.8	4.0	3.7	4.6	2.8	3.4	****	3.72
Gujarat	3.2	****	2.7	8.8	2.2	1.1	2.2	3.36
Haryana	6.2	4.4	7.8	5.6	6.7	4.4	****	5.85
Himachal Pradesh	5.9	1.5	4.4	4.4	5.9	4.4	8.8	5.04
Karnataka	5.1	4.0	0.9	3.6	4.5	3.1	2.3	3.36
Kerala	1.5	0.7	3.2	5.7	5.7	9.3	****	4.35
Madhya Pradesh	5.4	3.1	5.6	9.7	3.4	3.8	8.1	5.58
Maharashtra	9.3	2.8	6.6	5.6	2.1	3.8	4.2	4.91
Orissa	1.4*	4.8	3.4	6.1	4.8	5.4	****	4.32
Punjab	5.8	2.6	5.1	3.4	5.1	6.0	****	4.66
Rajasthan	7.1	4.0	5.0	8.0	5.5	4.5	7.0	5.87
Tamil Nadu	2.1	0.9	2.1	3.4	9.0	3.8	****	3.55
Uttar Pradesh	5.9	2.6	5.6	7.3	3.3*	4.0*	****	4.78
West Bengal	1.6*	1.4	2.4	4.4	7.1	6.8	****	3.95

Source: Jayaprakash Narayan Lok Satta Hydrebad, Dhuru Bhai Sheth Lokeyan Delhi, CSDS, Centre for the Study of Development Society, Yogendra Yadav and Madhu Kishwar (Manushi).

Note: % women MLAs elected to state legislature in relevant elections.

* two election held during this period. The given figures are the average of the two.

**** States did not exist/no elections held in that year/ period.

With the reservation of seats, a good number of women have been elected to Panchayati Raj Institutions in Himachal Pradesh (Table 10.6). 40 per cent of them are chairpersons of *zila parishads*, 31.94 per cent chairpersons of *panchayat samitis* and 33.20 per cent chairpersons of *gram panchayats*. However it has been observed that, in Himachal Pradesh, women are still ostracised by political parties and isolated from mainstream democracy on the basis of caste, class and poverty, and the majority of women *panchayat* members are illiterate or educated up to the primary level (PRIA, 2002). At the same time it must be admitted that the greater participation of less educated and more disadvantaged women would not have been possible, but for the reservation of seats for women (Mahapatra, 2002).

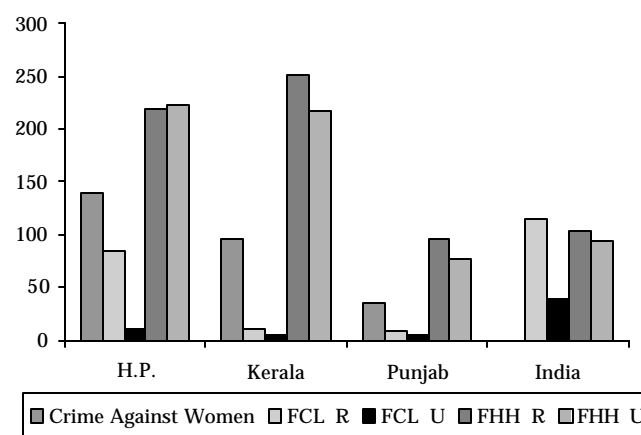
Ironically, Himachal Pradesh does not have a single woman MP, in the current Lok Sabha, but the current Rajya Sabha has one. The Ninth *Vidhan Sabha* has only four women members, which constitute only 5.9 per cent of the total Assembly seats. However, the rate of success of women who contested assembly election in 2003 is quite encouraging (60%). The success in Assembly elections clearly shows that, if provided with the opportunity, women can excel in state politics.

Women and Security

Crime against women is a manifestation of social insecurity and of the real lower status of women in the

society. Himachal Pradesh falls in the category of higher-ranking states in crime against women. Kangra, Mandi and Shimla districts have recorded high rates of crime against women. The prevalence of drug abuse among male, female-headed households, migrant population, etc., are some of the reasons for this state of affairs.

FIGURE 10.7
Gender and Security



Source: Same as in Table A-10.5, Annexure II.

Another noteworthy feature of social security is the care for female-headed households. The National

TABLE 10.6

Women's Representation in Panchayati Raj Institutions in Himachal Pradesh

Type	Total Institutions	Total Member	Members Category-wise						Overall	
			SC		ST		General		M	F
			M	F	M	F	M	F		
<i>Zilla Parishad</i>	12									
Chairpersons of <i>Zilla Parishad</i>		12	2 (66.66)	1 (33.34)	1 (50.00)	1 (50.00)	5 (66.66)	2 (33.34)	8 (60.00)	4 (40.00)
Members in <i>Zilla Parishad</i>		252	46 (69.70)	20 (30.30)	14 (66.66)	7 (33.34)	108 (65.45)	57 (34.55)	168 (66.67)	84 (33.33)
<i>Panchayat Samiti</i>	72									
Chairpersons of <i>Panchayat Samiti</i>		72	14 (70.00)	6 (30.00)	3 (50.00)	3 (50.00)	32 (69.57)	14 (30.43)	49 (68.66)	23 (31.94)
Members in <i>Panchayat Samitis</i>		1661	280 (66.04)	144 (33.96)	74 (67.27)	36 (32.73)	749 (66.46)	378 (33.54)	1103 (66.40)	558 (33.59)
<i>Gram Panchayat</i>	2922									
Chairpersons of <i>Gram Panchayat</i>		2922	503 (66.62)	252 (33.38)	120 (68.18)	56 (31.82)	1329 (66.75)	662 (33.25)	1952 (66.80)	970 (33.20)
Members of <i>Gram Panchayats</i>		18264	3824 (71.81)	1548 (28.82)	672 (66.66)	336 (33.34)	7749 (65.20)	4136 (34.80)	12244 (67.04)	6020 (38.96)

Source: Panchayati Raj Department, Government of H.P. and Himachal Pradesh Human Development Report-2001.

Commission on Self-Employed Women maintains that the number of women-headed households is the maximum among the poor, as a result of widowhood, migration, desertion, unemployment and addictive habits of their husbands. Even the United Nations has noted that the underlying reasons for the greater incidence of female-headed households are two-folds: (a) *de jure* as a result of being single, divorced, or widowed; and (b) *de facto* due to long-term migration, economic crisis, refugee status or abandonment. Next to Kerala, Himachal Pradesh has the highest number of female-headed households. Female-headed households per thousand households in rural areas are 220 and in urban areas 222. Kangra district has 42.28 per cent of widows, the highest among all the districts. Out-migration of male members for jobs and widowhood are mostly responsible for the existence of female-headed households. The government has to pay special attention towards the social security and welfare of these households in general and widows with no children in particular.

TABLE 10.7

District-wise Incidence of Crimes in Himachal Pradesh

District	1998	1999	2000	2001
Bilaspur	865	986	1241	1284
Chamba	790	831	759	878
Hamirpur	633	717	754	883
Kangra	2999	2665	2455	2712
Kinnaur	187	226	134	177
Kullu	1036	1053	1069	1104
Lahaul & Spiti	138	146	176	152
Mandi	1970	1970	2262	2254
Shimla	2411	2363	2398	2458
Sirmaur	1128	1252	1160	1063
Solan	1575	1419	1426	1385
Una	1205	1123	1136	1161
Himachal Pradesh	14983	14758	14976	15516

Source: Economic Survey 2002, Police Department, Himachal Pradesh.

Unlike female-headed households, female child labour is also another dark feature of the status of women in the society. The number of girl child labour in Himachal Pradesh is more than eight times higher than in Kerala and Punjab. Engagement of girl children in petty-income earning activities deprives them of school education. This is one of the contributory factors to high drop-out rates of girls at the primary, middle and secondary levels of education. This also affects the health of young and adolescent girls.

TABLE 10.8

Status of Crime Against Women in 15 Major States of India

(Per million persons)

Major States	Persons	Status of Crime
Andhra Pradesh	121.97	High
Bihar	38.98	Low
Gujarat	89.27	Lower Middle
Haryana	119.41	High
Himachal Pradesh	139.42	High
Karnataka	74.51	Lower Middle
Kerala	95.76	Upper Middle
Madhya Pradesh	206.97	High
Maharashtra	173.81	High
Orissa	110.35	Upper Middle
Punjab	35.81	Low
Rajasthan	208.16	High
Tamil Nadu	72.03	Lower Middle
Uttar Pradesh	77.40	Lower Middle
West Bengal	86.77	Lower Middle

Source: National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) Averages 1995 to 1997 Economic and Political Weekly 27 October, 2001.

TABLE 10.9

District-wise Figures of War-widows in Himachal Pradesh

District	Number
Bilaspur	1205 (6.64)
Chamba	606 (3.34)
Hamirpur	4111 (22.64)
Kangra	7646 (42.28)
Kinnaur	30 (0.17)
Kullu	145 (0.80)
Lahaul & Spiti	21 (0.12)
Mandi	1768 (9.74)
Shimla	253 (1.29)
Sirmaur	254 (1.40)
Solan	231 (1.27)
Una	1873 (10.32)
Himachal Pradesh	18155 (100.00)

Source: Statistical Outline Himachal Pradesh, Economic & Statistical Abstract, 1998.

Note: Figures in parenthesis show percentages to total.

Women and Environment

Women can be best involved in increasing the growth of the flora and fauna and protection of the environment of this beautiful mountainous state. Facilitating such capacity of women in different agro-based and plantation activities would augment income of the household substantially and raise the status of women in the society. One of the capacity building

projects entitled *Gender sensitisation of rural women through the introduction of agro-based vocation — A case study of Himachal Pradesh*, conducted by the Mountain Women Development Centre of Dr. Y.S. Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry, Nauni, Solan, has revealed that as a result of knowledge gained through training, women farmers are taking necessary precautions in using insecticides and pesticides. One of the encouraging findings of the project is that, it has promoted an increasing trend of jointly completing an activity by both males and females of the households and thus promoted equal participation of both. The Directorate of Extension Education (DEE) of Dr. Y.S. Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry has conducted eight training programmes entitled *Training on Environmental Conservation through the Mahila Mandals under the Indo-Norwegian Project* of four days duration each, during March to August-2002. Moreover, several capacity-building programmes for women have been conducted by the Directorate of Extension Education from time to time, largely aimed at increasing their involvement in horticultural activities and conservation of forests.

Women can be oriented and motivated to be engaged in social forestry activities, which would provide them sustainable income. Care should be taken that under the social forestry programme, only such socially accepted trees should be considered for plantation, as would be helpful in generating employment for female labour on the one hand and promoting the ecology on the other. It will have dual benefit of forestation and also economic earning by women. A NORAD-aided project titled *Environmental Conservation through Mahila Mandals*, is to be launched in three districts, viz., Hamirpur, Kullu and Solan: (i) to create awareness among selected Mahila Mandals in environmental conservation and the concept of Self Help Groups; (ii) conservation of the environment to be undertaken by the Mahila Mandals in the following (a) afforestation and protection of forests; (b) conservation of traditional water resources; (c) solid waste management and promotion of organic farming; (d) alternate fuel and fodder; and (iii) to activate and empower Mahila Mandals to form Self Help Groups and, with the help of Micro-credit, help them in income generating activities. Himachal Pradesh can adopt SEWA's model of *Feminise our Forests* campaign, (1998). As the women workforce participation is quite high in Himachal Pradesh, this could be an added opportunity to canalise their energies and efforts to the management of natural resources, environment and forest.

Feminise our Forests

The Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in Gujarat launched a campaign to Feminise our Forests. The campaign had three major goals: (i) to highlight the critical role women play in forests; (ii) to call attention to the ways current policies have failed to support women and their activities; and (iii) to advocate for changes in state and national forest policy to benefit women. The campaign began with a workshop that brought to shelter women tree nursery growers from nine states to share experiences and discuss common issues. SEWA's experience successfully demonstrated that it was possible and potentiality profitable to Feminise forest.

Conclusion

Himachal Pradesh is ranked third in the Women Empowerment Index, calculated by using following 14 variables i.e. (1) female literacy rate, (2) girl enrolment rate, (3) girl drop-out rate, (I-V), (4) antenatal care, (5) post-natal care, (6) institutional deliveries, (7) nutritional anaemia in women, (8) women life expectancy, (9) crime against women, (10) female child labour (average of rural and urban percentages) (11) women members in Lok Sabha, (12) women members in Rajya Sabha, (13) female work participation rate, usual and subsidiary status, and (14) effective wage rate for all wage work for females. However, the state should not be complacent about its high position in the Women Empowerment Index among 16 major states. Rather it should think of taking appropriate steps to overcome the shortcomings in different areas of women's empowerment. Himachal must augment its efforts to elevate the status of women by formulating appropriate strategies to deal with some of the existing weaknesses: (i) to reduce gender gap in literacy below five per cent and female drop-out rate at the primary level of education below five per cent. Districts requiring specific attention are Chamba, Solan, Kullu, Lahaul and Spiti and Sirmaur; (ii) reduce discrepancies in effective wage rates between male and female workforce and raise the effective wage rate for women, at par with men, if not, at least to Rs. 25; (iii) more percentage of women need to be positioned in gazetted posts; (iv) reduce girl child labour to less than 10 per thousand female children in rural areas; (v) 100 per cent female-headed households living below poverty line need to be covered under social security schemes; (vi) in order to prevent maternal and child mortality and for raising the health status of women, at least 50 per cent of deliveries need to be conducted in health institutions; and (vii) reduce crimes against women such as rape, molestation, abduction, eve-teasing, dowry deaths, etc. and (viii)

TABLE 10.10

Women Empowerment Index

States	Women Education Empowerment Measure Index (WEMI)	Women Health Empowerment Measure Index (WHEMI)	Women Political Empowerment Measure Index (WPEMI)	Women Economic Empowerment Measure Index (WEEMI)	Women Social Security Measure Index (WSSMI)	Women Empowerment Measure Index (WEMI)
Andhra Pradesh	0.45	0.52	0.47	0.48	0.25	0.43
Assam	0.49	0.15	0.79	0.12	0.67	0.44
Bihar	0.04	0.09	0.33	0.28	0.93	0.33
Gujarat	0.53	0.341	0.34	0.50	0.43	0.41
Haryana	0.63	0.30	0.50	0.58	0.45	0.49
Himachal Pradesh	0.68 (3)	0.41 (7)	0.50 (5)	0.63 (1)	0.61 (9)	0.57 (3)
Karnataka	0.58	0.55	0.22	0.36	0.63	0.47
Kerala	0.99	0.89	0.13	0.59	0.83	0.69
Madhya Pradesh	0.41	0.12	0.36	0.31	0.37	0.31
Maharashtra	0.68	0.48	0.29	0.36	0.52	0.47
Orissa	0.40	0.18	0.51	0.26	0.68	0.41
Punjab	0.64	0.46	0.39	0.52	1.0	0.60
Rajasthan	0.12	0.17	0.55	0.37	0.05	0.25
Tamil Nadu	0.74	0.67	0.21	0.37	0.59	0.52
Uttar Pradesh	0.17	0.11	0.25	0.27	0.82	0.32
West Bengal	0.37	0.34	0.52	0.25	0.75	0.45

Note: Figures in parenthesis show rank of H.P.

considering the success of women in recent assembly elections (2003), one Lok Sabha seat and 33 per cent of State Assembly seats need to be voluntarily left for women until reservation is made through a constitutional amendment.

Suggestions

- The state should launch a special drive for the education of women and girl children belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Adult, non-formal and functional literacy programmes for women would be helpful in reducing the gender gap in literacy. Special emphasis needs to be given to the districts with lower literacy rate and higher gender gap in literacy.
- Participation of women needs to be promoted in decision-making positions. Protective discrimination measures of reservation in government jobs would enable women to occupy gazetted posts. Orissa government has for instance reservations for women in government jobs.
- At least one Lok Sabha seat out of the four should be left for women in Himachal Pradesh. Political parties need to reach a consensus to do so, until the amendment on reservation of seats is passed in Parliament. Moreover, at least 33 per cent of seats in the State Legislative Assembly

should be left for women. For example, recently Haryana Government has reserved 33 per cent of seats for women in the state assembly.

- The State Human Rights Commission needs to have a special Cell on Women for the speedy disposal of cases of crime against women and for the proper rehabilitation of war widows.
- Cent per cent enrolment and retention of girl children in primary school would reduce percentage of girl child labour in the state particularly in rural areas. The two main causes of drop-out are the engagement of girl children in household activities and the negative attitude towards education of girl children. The *Panchayat* and the Village Education Committees (VEC) have to play a key role to check drop-out rates and raise the level of education of girl children. The vocational education and technical education need to be promoted among girls.
- For effective participation in grassroot democracy, women members of the Panchayati Raj Institutions need to be given training and encouraged to participate in workshops, seminars and meetings held at the village, block, district and state levels. Confidence building exercises would help them to fulfil their responsibilities on their own. Grassroot functionaries of government

- and NGOs need to encourage educated women to contest elections for various positions of Panchayati Raj Institutions.
- The health status of women needs to be improved and ante-natal and post-natal care should be raised to more than 60 per cent and at least 50 per cent of deliveries should be required to be conducted in health institutions. The PRIKAS (Parivar Kalyan Salahkar *Samities*) need to be activated in the respective *panchayats*. The AIDS awareness campaigns need to be vigorously undertaken in the districts experiencing in and out migration in population such as Hamirpur, Kangra, Manali, Kullu, Shimla. The most vulnerable are women population.
 - Women need to be involved actively in social forestry and farm forestry activities. Formation of Self Help Groups and economic support to them will not only promote afforestation and environmental conservation but also raise the income of the family. Mahila Mandal Members and SHG members, along with the women *Panchayat* members, need to be given orientation training on environmental conservation and be provided with other necessary inputs to carry out the afforestation and social forestry programmes.
 - Himachal should formulate a Women Empowerment Policy (WEP) to integrate women effectively into the process of development. A holistic policy approach is necessary to consider all aspects of women's empowerment, social, economic, education, political, cultural, security and decision-making. Different state governments, for instance Rajasthan, have formulated WEP.
 - A separate chapter on women in the State Five Year Plan document should help focus particular attention to women's development.
 - Himachal should set up a Women Resource Centre (WRC). It will provide update information regarding women's empowerment in such areas as health, education, politics, economic, cultural and social activities, etc. It will also act as a documentation and information unit. Moreover, it can conduct capacity-building programmes and other activities, aimed at raising the status of women in the society.
 - An enabling environment has to be created for Mahila Mandals, SHG members and women *Panchayat* members to act on various gender issues to further improve the status of women in the state. These organisations need to play a key role in natural resources management and poverty alleviation programmes.

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ANNEXURE-I

ANNEXURE-II

Method of Construct

The *Women Development Index* for Himachal Pradesh and fifteen major states were constructed by employing, more or less the same method used in the construction of the *Human Development Index*. However, the objective was to construct gender development measures independently for women only (that is without reference to male-female disparity). (Hirway and Mahadevia Method-1996).

The steps followed for the construction of the indices are as follows:

- (A) To start with, variable scores were calculated for all variables using the following formula:

$$I = \frac{\text{actual value} - \text{min value}}{\text{max value} - \text{min value}}$$

Where, I is the variable score for the index. Min value is the minimum value observed in the 16 states and max value is the maximum value observed in the 16 states.

- (B) The negative variable scores were converted into positive scores by subtracting each of these from one. This was done in order to have all the variable positive variables.
- (C) Sector indices were constructed for each of the components by giving equal weightage.
- (D) *Women Development Index* (WDI) is the composite indices of the component indices computed for each of the 16 states and by giving equal weightage to each of the component indices. *Women Development Index* is the average of the added-up total scores of compound indices.

TABLE A-10.1

Women and Economic Empowerment

State	Work Participation Rate Usual and Subsidiary Status, Female, 1999 (i)	Effective Wage Rate for All Wage Work Female 1999 (ii)
Andhra Pradesh	37.8	18.2
Assam	8.9	17.8
Bihar	19.0	19.9
Gujarat	29.5	19.3
Haryana	14.9	38.3
Himachal Pradesh	48.9	18.6
Karnataka	32.5	14.0
Kerala	29.1	30.0
Madhya Pradesh	28.3	15.2
Maharashtra	38.3	11.5
Orissa	24.8	14.8
Punjab	28.8	26.2
Rajasthan	25.8	20.5
Tamil Nadu	29.1	18.3
Uttar Pradesh	20.6	18.2
West Bengal	20.4	17.4
India	26.0	16.9

Source: (i) & (ii) Abusaleh Shariff, *India Human Development Report*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1999.

Note: Figures relate to usual status of individual, workforce covers those involved in gainful activity regularly and those involved in gainful activity occasionally. The figures represent size of workforce as per cent of population.

TABLE A-10.2
Women and Education

States	Female Literacy Rate (2001) (i)	Female Dropout Rate (1998-99) (ii)	Girls Enrolled (1999) (iii)
Classes		I-V	I-V
Andhra Pradesh	51.17	47.03	45.64
Assam	56.03	42.43	45.46
Bihar	33.57	62.00	35.66
Gujarat	58.60	33.98	44.61
Haryana	56.31	15.59	45.49
Himachal Pradesh	68.08	31.0	47.73
Karnataka	57.45	33.46	46.68
Kerala	87.86	-6.83	48.67
Madhya Pradesh	50.26	27.89	42.57
Maharashtra	67.51	25.73	46.76
Orissa	50.97	47.90	44.09
Punjab	63.55	21.82	45.63
Rajasthan	44.34	57.99	33.75
Tamil Nadu	64.55	16.18	48.29
Uttar Pradesh	42.98	55.98	37.41
West Bengal	60.22	54.15	45.87
India	54.28	41.34	43.16

Source: (i) Provisional Population Totals, Paper 1 of 2001 Page 126, Census of India. (ii) and (iii) Sixth All India Educational Survey, NCERT, 1999, Vol. 4, Table IS132, Pages 127-130.

TABLE A-10.3
Women and Health

States	ANC (i)	PNC (ii)	INS.D (iii)	Nut. A (iv)	Wom.L.Ex (v)
Assam	15.8	25.5	17.6	69.7	NA
Bihar	6.4	10.0	14.7	63.4	58.0
Gujarat	25.0	10.4	46.4	46.3	62.0
Haryana	20.8	15.7	22.3	47.0	64.0
Himachal Pradesh	30.2	21.2	29.0	40.5	64.7
Karnataka	41.5	35.3	51.1	42.4	63.9
Kerala	64.9	27.4	93.0	22.7	75.6
Madhya Pradesh	10.9	10.0	20.4	54.3	54.6
Maharashtra	31.0	29.8	52.8	48.5	65.8
Orissa	21.4	19.2	22.9	63.0	56.2
Punjab	31.7	20.3	37.5	41.4	68.4
Rajasthan	8.3	6.4	21.7	48.5	59.4
Tamil Nadu	50.8	53.0	79.8	56.5	64.4
Uttar Pradesh	4.4	7.2	15.7	48.7	56.0
West Bengal	19.7	31.6	40.4	62.7	62.8
India	20.0	16.5	33.6	51.8	60.9

Source: (i), (ii), (iii), (iv) National Family Health Survey (II) 1998-99. (v) National Human Development Report, Planning Commission, India, March 2002.
Note: ANC-Ante Natal Check-Up. PNC- Post Natal Check-Up. INS.D-Institutional Delivery.
Wom. L. Ex— Women Life Expectancy, IMR -Infant Mortality Rate. CMR -Child Mortality Rate.

TABLE A-10.4
Women and Political Participation

States	Rajya Sabha (i)	Lok Sabha (ii)
Andhra Pradesh	2 (11.11)	5 (11.90)
Assam	2 (28.57)	2 (14.28)
Bihar	2 (9.09)	3 (7.5)
Gujarat	1 (9.09)	2 (7.69)
Haryana	Nil	2 (20.00)
Himachal Pradesh	1 (33.33)	Nil
Karnataka	1 (8.33)	1 (3.57)
Kerala	Nil	1 (5.00)
Madhya Pradesh	1 (6.25)	3 (10.34)
Maharashtra	1 (5.26)	4 (8.33)
Orissa	1 (10.00)	3 (14.28)
Punjab	Nil	2 (15.38)
Rajasthan	1 (10.00)	4 (16.00)
Tamil Nadu	1 (5.55)	2 (5.12)
Uttar Pradesh	1 (2.94)	7 (8.15)
West Bengal	3 (18.75)	4 (9.52)

Source: (i) State-wise data is as on 29 August 2000, (Rajya Sabha) Secretariat Statistical Abstract India, 2000.

(ii) www.goindia.gov.in

TABLE A-10.5
Women and Security

States	Crime Against Women (per million persons) (i)	FCL (ii)		FHH (iii)	
		R (per 1000)	U (per 1000)	R (per 1000)	U (per 1000)
Andhra Pradesh	121.97	359	105	121	100
Assam	118.78	23	78	84	103
Bihar	38.98	46	19	96	83
Gujarat	89.27	51	19	90	79
Haryana	119.41	17	4	81	58
Himachal Pradesh	139.42	84	11	220	222
Karnataka	74.51	212	34	139	119
Kerala	95.76	10	4	251	218
Madhya Pradesh	206.97	108	25	60	78
Maharashtra	173.81	129	17	98	79
Orissa	110.35	83	28	93	86
Punjab	35.81	9	4	95	77
Rajasthan	208.16	355	65	85	63
Tamil Nadu	72.03	224	70	150	139
Uttar Pradesh	77.40	49	19	97	65
West Bengal	86.77	42	65	78	115
India	—	115	38	104	94

Source: (i) Economic and Political Weekly 27 October 2001. National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) averages 95 to 97.

(ii) K.P. Kannan, Economics of Child Labour, Deep & Deep Publication Pvt. Ltd, 2001. (NSS data).

(iii) National Sample Survey Organisation Report No. 458: Employment and Unemployment Situation in India 1999-2000.

Note: Number of female-headed households per 1000 households and average household size by sex and states, 1993-94.

FCL- Female Child Labour, FHH- Female-Headed Households.

