

# Women Empowerment: Under The Key Concepts of Saat Nischay Yojna

**Punam Sahani**

Research Scholar, Department of Political Science, Patliputra University, Patna

**Dr. Ansheeka Gupta**

Assistant professor, J.D. Women's College, Patliputra University, Patna

## ABSTRACT

*This paper attempts to analyses the key concepts of Saat Nischay Yojna to implement women empowerment in Bihar; enabling them to participate in economic, political and social sustainable development. Women play an important role in the economic and social development of a state or country. Women are family planners, trainers and labor suppliers, and they play an important role in the development of agriculture, industry and service sectors. Empowerment' means the ability of a person, which gives him the ability to take all the important decisions related to his life and decide what is right and wrong about himself. Women empowerment in Bihar is a special issue of the policies and schemes of Bihar government. Bihar Government has launched many schemes to promote women empowerment in Bihar; provide them employment opportunities and increase their self-confidence. After assuming power in Bihar in 2005, Nitish Kumar took many decisions to bring women into the mainstream. These decisions taken in the direction of women empowerment also greatly influenced the educational, economic-social and cultural structure of the state. In this series, Saat Nischay Yojna was announced in the year 2015. This paper mainly emphasises on how Saat Nischay Yojna is contributing to women empowerment and how it is helping in the development of women in Bihar. Under which education, economic empowerment, health and nutrition, social welfare, political participation and psychological inclusion are the major areas. Secondary sources have been used to write this article.*

**Keywords:** *Women Empowerment, Saat Nischay Yojna, Bihar, Employment, Education.*

## Introduction

Women empowerment in Bihar is a complex issue with both progress and challenges. Bihar is an economically and socially backward state, where women constitute about 47.86% of the total population. Challenges like dowry system, sexual violence, domestic violence, killing of girls in the womb, sexual exploitation at workplace, child marriage, rape etc. are widespread in Bihar, of which women are the victims. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen and empower this half of the population through various measures to ensure real participation of women in the all-round development of the state and to prevent incidents of crime and exploitation against them. The state has launched several initiatives to improve women's education, health care, and economic opportunities. Bihar became the first state which made arrangements for 50 percent reservation for women

in Panchayat and urban bodies in 2006. This decision changed the picture of 'Panchayati Raj' in the state. Mukhyamantri Balika Cycle Yojna and Mukhyamantri Balika Protsahan Yojna, launched in 2007 for girls of secondary and higher secondary classes, led to a huge increase in the enrollment of girls in schools. That year, for the first time in the history of the state, five times more girls enrolled in class nine than a year earlier. Mukhyamantri Nari Shakti Yojna was implemented in 2008, with the aim of providing recognition to women through economic, social and cultural empowerment. Through this scheme, emphasis was laid on personal development of women as well as multidimensional development of their talents, so that they can become self-reliant. In this series, we will try to know what facilities are being provided under the Saat Nischay Yojna and how women are being benefited and empowered.

## Women Empowerment

Women empowerment is a movement that seeks to eliminate social, economic, and political divisions between men and women. The term 'women empowerment' came into existence in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Empowerment itself means 'to give power'. Women have been considered a weaker gender throughout the world for thousands of years. Although India gained independence, women were still not given equal socio-economic status. Therefore, the Government of India and other non-governmental bodies work towards the overall development of women in our society.

The beginning of women empowerment is considered by the United Nations on 8 March 1975 as International Women's Day. Then in 1985, the women's empowerment initiative was taken at the International Conference on Women in Nairobi. The United Nations called the period from 1975 to 1985 the Decade of Women. Additionally, 2001 was recognised as the 'International Year for Women's Empowerment', which was also adopted by India.

The objective of women empowerment is to increase and improve the social, economic, political and legal power of women and to ensure equal rights to women, make them self-confident, live their lives independently with self-respect and self-dignity. This aspect envisages full participation of women in the decision making process that shapes their lives. Women

empowerment is necessary for the all-round development of the society. Here are some of the main types of empowerment that focus on different issues faced by women. Like social empowerment, educational empowerment, economic empowerment, political empowerment and psychological empowerment.

### Saat Nischay Yojna

The Bihar Government has successfully implemented 'Saat Nischay Yojna' for the development in the field of education, health, welfare and development of backward and deprived classes. Taking these programs forward and based on the learning from the past, programs have been designed based on 'Inclusive Development' and 'Development With Justice' for the next five years. The Government is committed to empower the youth and women and make higher, occupational and technical education accessible to them. All these points have been combined to create the framework of 'Saat Nischay Yojna'. The goal of inclusive development, human development and development with justice cannot be achieved without the development and empowerment of women. Saat Nischay Yojna was launched in 2015 by the Chief Minister of Bihar, Shri Nitish Kumar to improve the condition of Bihar and empower women and youth. This Saat Nischay Yojna was so successful in its objectives that exactly five years later its second part was also brought, named Saat Nischay Yojna Part-2, which is even further ahead in its objectives and goals.

The main concepts of the Saat Nischay Yojna are following:

S. No.	Saat Nischay Yojna Part-I (2015-20)	Saat Nischay Yojna Part-II (2020-25)
1.	Aarthik Hal, Yuvao Ko Bal	Yuva Shakti – Bihar Ki Pragiti
2.	Aarakshit Rozgar, Mahilaon Ka Adhikar	Sashakt Mahila, Saksham Mahila
3.	Har Ghar Bijali Lagatar	Har Khet Tak Sinchai Ka Pani
4.	Har Ghar Nal Ka Jal	Swachh Gaon – Samridh Gaon
5.	Ghar Tak, Pakki Gali Naliyaan	Swachh Sehar – Viksit Sehar
6.	Shauchalay Nirmaan, Ghar ka Samman	Sulabh Samparktta
7.	Avsar Badhe, Aage Padhein	Sab Ke Liye Atirikt Swasthya Suvidha

**Table 1, source: Bihar vikas mission.**

### Women Empowerment Under The Key Concepts of Saat Nischay Yojna

#### 1. Aarthik Hal, Yuvao Ko Bal

Under this scheme, policies like Bihar student credit card, Mukhyamantri Nischay swayam sahayta Bhatta Yojna, Kushal Yuva program, Bihar startup

policy 2016, and free Wi-Fi facility in all universities and colleges have been included. Under Bihar student credit scheme, an education loan of Rs. 4 lakh is being provided to every 12<sup>th</sup> pass students, willing to go for higher education who otherwise is deprived due to financial reasons. Under mukhyamantri nischay

swayam sahayta bhatta scheme, unemployed youth between the age of 20-25 years who in search of employment, is being provided Rs.1000 per month for a maximum period of two years. Under the kushal yuva program, youth between the age of 15-28 who have cleared the class 10<sup>th</sup> exam or equivalent, receives basic training in language (Hindi & English) and communication skills, basic computer skills and soft skills. Under Startup scheme, favourable environment is being created in the state to set up industries and to promote entrepreneurship. Provisions for financial assistance, incubation center, funding, publicity, certification, etc. are the main components of the policy. Within the Nischay of Aarthik Hal Yuva Ko Bal, free Internet facility through Wi-Fi is provided in all government universities and colleges within the state.

This scheme is making a major contribution in the empowerment of girl students and daughters. Because it is common in Bihar that parents insist on educating their sons instead of their daughters. Many times this is also seen due to lack of money. But after the implementation of this scheme it has decreased. Apart from this, skill development programs have proved to be a milestone for them in rural areas also.

Thus, it can be said that through this scheme, women in Bihar are becoming economically self-reliant due to increase in education and skills. Due to which they are getting empowered in the fields of education, social, economic, psychological and decision making.

## 2. Aarakshit Rozgar Mahilaon Ka Adhikar

Under this scheme, 35 % horizontal reservation is given to women in all the Government services / cadres and in direct appointments of all types of posts. This decision has been implemented in all Government jobs in the state from February 2016. To ensure equal participation of women in all government jobs, 35 percent reservation is given to all females belonging to any category in Bihar. Due to this reservation policy, the representation of women in government jobs is continuously increasing. Another noteworthy initiative is the 50 percent reservation of seats for female teachers at the primary level. Thus, it can be said that through this scheme, women in Bihar are becoming economically self-reliant due to increase in reservation in government job. Due to which they are getting empowered in the fields of economic, social, psychological and decision making.

## 3. Har Ghar Bijali Lagatar

The purpose of this Nischay is to ensure the availability of electricity in every rural and urban household in the State Bihar. To achieve this goal, Mukhyamantri Vidhyut Sambandh Nischay Yojna is being implemented in the State under which Government ensures metered electric connection to all households in rural areas.

Uninterrupted supply of electricity is essential for the development of the people of any area. Because in today's time all small and big works are done with electricity only. Be it industrial sector, infrastructure sector, education, health, domestic work, water supply, small and micro industries, electricity is very important for everyone. Therefore, it is important that electricity also provides the basic infrastructure for women's development.

## 4. Har Ghar Nal Ka Jal

This Nischay aims to provide clean pipeline water to every citizen of Bihar without any discrimination. This Nischay is an unflinching endeavor to provide clean drinking water in the homes of approximately 2 crore households in the State through concerted co-operation of the people of every village and locality in Bihar.

This scheme has changed the picture of Bihar. Water is a very important thing from household work to other family works. And since women are mostly engaged in domestic work, they are most affected by water problems. But this scheme has brought self-reliance and change among women. Pure drinking water is also proving beneficial for better health. With tap water reaching homes in rural areas, their water problems have been solved, because earlier one had to go out for water and depend on others. Because, not everyone had their own hand pump or water source. Now having water available at home also saves her time, which she can use in other productive activities.

## 5. Ghar Tak, Pakki Gali Naliyaan

Under this Nischay, pakka lanes are being constructed to all the houses located in the rural and urban areas of the state. Apart from this, the habitations of 100 to 249 population are also being linked with all weather roads.

This scheme is related to basic infrastructure development in rural and urban areas of the state. This scheme is necessary because the roads remain

operational in all seasons and it benefits not only men but also women.

### 6. Shauchalay Nirman, Ghar Ka Samman

Provision of toilet in every house is being made to make Bihar, free of open defecation, healthy and clean. All urban and rural families of the state are being encouraged for regular use of toilets by bringing about collective behavioral changes. This scheme has resulted in successful self-reliance and respectable life among women. Because women were most affected due to lack of toilet at home. It is seen as a matter of safety as well as respect for women. The situation was even worse in rural areas, where toilets were considered a symbol of wealth. But now that toilets have been built in all the houses, this feeling has also changed. Now women are moving towards living a dignified and safe life. Due to which they are getting empowered in the fields of social, health, and psychological.

### 7. Avasar Badhe, Aage Padhein

The State Government aims to provide better opportunities of technical and professional skill based education in the State. In order to achieve the objectives of this Nischay integrated institutions of Management and Technical education is being established at the district and sub-division level. Under this scheme, One GNM institute in every district, One Para Medical Institute in every district, One Polytechnic Institute in every district, One Women Industrial Training Institute in every district, One Engineering College in every district, One Nursing college in all medical colleges, One ANM Institute in every sub-division, One Government Industrial Training Institute in every sub-division, Five more new Medical colleges in the state.

The main objective of launching this scheme by the Bihar government is to provide the benefit of higher education and skill training to the children of economically weaker section of the families of the state. So that the youth are able to get employment. The government believes that higher education will develop in future with the help of this scheme. Besides, the number of skilled workers will also increase in the state. When we talk about youth, it also includes females.

This scheme is making a major contribution in the empowerment of girl students. It observed that with the increase in girls education, the fertility rate also drops.

Also, educated women are more open to family-planning concepts as a modern social norm. Thus, it can be said that through this scheme, women in Bihar are becoming economically self-reliant due to increase in education and skills. Due to which they are getting empowered in the fields of education, social, economic, political, health, psychological and decision making.

### 8. Sashakta Mahila, Saksham Mahila

A special scheme will be launched to promote entrepreneurship among women under which a grant of 50 percent of the project cost up to a maximum of Rs 5 lakh and an interest-free loan up to a maximum of Rs 5 lakh will be given to the enterprises set up by them. At the same time, to encourage higher education, unmarried women will be given financial assistance of up to Rs 5000. Rs 25,000 on passing Intermediate.

This scheme is directly related to women empowerment and self-reliant. Making a major contribution in the empowerment of women. Apart from this, 'Yuva Shakti, Bihar Ki Pragiti', 'Swachh Gaon Samridh Gaon', 'Swachh Sehar- Viksit Sehar' 'Sulabh Samparktta', 'Sab Ke Liye Atirikt Swasthya Suvidha', 'Har Khet Tak Sinchai Ka Pani, concepts are also included somewhere for the social, economic and political empowerment of women. At the same time, they are seen contributing majorly to education, health, and psychological empowerment too.

### Analysis

To analyse the Saat Nischay Yojna towards women empowerment, since its launch in 2015, the Saat Nischay Yojna Part 1 and Part 2 have made significant progress towards their goals. Some of the major results in terms of women empowerment are as follows:

- The school enrollment rate increased from 82.7% in 2015–16 to 97.6% in 2020–21, while the school dropout rate fell from 9.9% to 1.6%.

- According to a report by the Bureau of Police Research and Development published in January 2020, 25.33 percent of Bihar Police were women. This is the highest number in any state and almost double the national average of 10.3 percent. Till 2015 this figure was only 3.3 percent.

- Due to reservation, the total number of teachers employed today is 3 lakh 51 thousand, out of which about 2 lakh teacher posts are women.

● Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's argument was that if all girls get educated at least up to intermediate, then not only will the birth rate reduce, but they will also gain confidence and become self-reliant. According to the report of Bihar Economic Survey, 2021, a significant decline has been seen in the birth rate of Bihar. It was 4.4 in 2001, which will be 2.5 in 2021 and if this trend continues, it will fall to 2 in 2031.

● The Life expectancy at birth (LEB) for the total population in Bihar was 69.5 years in 2016–20, which is 3.7 years higher than 65.8 years in 2006–10. LEB for women has also increased by 18 years between 1981-85 and 2016-20. In the recent period, between 2001-05 and 2016-20, LEB for women has increased by 5 years. So, this is another result of better policy implementation.

● Gross Enrolment Ratio is considered another good indicator of the empowerment of women. As per DISE data, the GER for girls in elementary classes in Bihar has increased by 6.40 percentage points, by 16 percentage points for secondary, and by 23 percentage points for higher secondary between 2012-13 and 2021-22. It is also remarkable that GER for girls from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes also shows a huge jump. In some cases, the GER for girls is even higher than the overall GER.

The schemes launched by the Bihar government for the upliftment of women have proved to be very beneficial, but illiteracy, poverty, male chauvinistic mentality and social evils still remain obstacles in their development. Society should also contribute in eradicating it.

### Conclusion :

In conclusion, the Saat Nischay Yojna is a testament to the power of visionary governance. With its Saat Nischay aimed at holistic development, it is setting the stage for a brighter and more prosperous future for Bihar. By addressing critical sectors like infrastructure, education, healthcare, women's empowerment, agriculture, employment, and urban development. Ultimately it can be said that Saat Nischay Yojana is necessary for the overall development of the society as well as women empowerment. Under which it indicates women's social empowerment, educational empowerment,

economic empowerment, political empowerment and psychological empowerment. The 'Yojna' is paving the way for positive change that will resonate for generations to come.

### Bibliography:

1. Bhangе, C.B. et al. (2021). Various dimensions of women empowerment in India. New Delhi, India: Bharti Publications.
2. Bhaumik, S.K. (2024). Development with justice: The Bihar experience. Abingdon, England: Routledge. pp. 248-259.
3. Bihar Vikas Mission. Available at: <https://bvm.bihar.gov.in/> (Accessed: 27 July 2024).
4. Datta, Amrita. (2023): Migration and Development in India: The Bihar Experience. Routledge.
5. <https://m.bihar.punjabkesari.in/bihar/news/saat-nishchay-yojana-changed-the-picture-of-every-village-1884753> (Accessed: 27 July 2024).
6. <https://narendrakumar.org/blog/women-empowerment-in-bihar/> (Accessed: 28 July 2024).
7. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/368460948\\_Assessing\\_Sustainable\\_Development\\_Goals\\_through\\_Social\\_Progress\\_Index\\_for\\_Bihar](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/368460948_Assessing_Sustainable_Development_Goals_through_Social_Progress_Index_for_Bihar) (Accessed: 29 July 2024).
8. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/362279114\\_women\\_empowerment](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/362279114_women_empowerment)
9. Malhotra, G. (2021). 'Breaking barriers: Empowering women farmers in Bihar', India, Heifer International. Available at: <https://www.heifer.org/blog/breaking-barriers-empowering-women-farmers-in-bihar-india.html>
10. M.D., A.M., Ranjana Das. (2020). 'Four ways to empower women in Bihar', Business Line. Available at: <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/blink/know/making-bihar-great-for-its-women/article33030417.ece>
11. Mitra, S. and Bhattacharyya, H. (2018). Politics and governance in Indian states: Bihar, West Bengal and Tripura. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Co.
12. Singh, U.K. (2022). Human development in Bihar, India: Experiences of millennium development goals. Singapore : Springer.

