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*Editor-In-Chief*

**Dr.B.Jyothi**

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## **About**

### ***International Journal Of English and Studies (IJOES)***

*International Journal Of English and Studies (IJOES) is a premier and trust-worthy international peer-reviewed journal in English and Literature. Guided by an editorial board which boasts of academically-rich and research-oriented experts in the field of English and Literature, the journal invites contribution of academicians and scholars from Literature and English studies. The journal is indexed in Google Scholar and Academia.*

*International Journal Of English and Studies (IJOES) welcomes papers in the domain of English Language and Literature. It encourages scholars and teachers of English and Literature to contribute their papers in the fields of Language and its research, Literature and its Applications, Creative Writing, Linguistics, Accent, Poetry, Criticism, Phonetics, Literary Criticism, Philosophy of Language, Theatre, Technical Communication, Culture Studies, Methodologies in Teaching and other topics related to English.*

### **Frequency:**

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**ICSSR Sponsored Two Day National Seminar  
23-24 June 2023**

**“Progress and challenges of Women in  
75 years of Independent India”**

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**Government Degree College for Women**

**Madanapalle, Annamayya Dist., Andhra Pradesh**

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## **Dr. Pola Bhaskar I A S**

Commissioner of Collegiate Education



### **FORWARD**

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I am immensely happy to know that Government Degree College for Women, Madanapalle is organizing ICSSR, sponsored National Seminar on **“Progress and challenges of women in 75 years of Independent India”**

At this juncture of 75 years of Azadi Ka Amruth Mahotsav, when the whole nation is commemorating, the efforts of the leaders of the freedom movement, it is appropriate to remember the achievements of women of the nation. The scarifies and contributions of women belonging to various fields helped the nation to move forward.

In this connection I appreciate the efforts of Women’s Degree College for Women facilitating a platform on thoughtful discussions on the progress and challenges of women in last 75 years of Independent India.

I hope this seminar will enrich the knowledge of scholars, intellectuals and students and will help to throw a light on the unresolved problems of Indian women.


**Dr. Pola Bhaskar I A S**

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### Message

I am delighted to note that Department of Telugu, Govt. Degree College (W), Madanapalle, is organizing a ICSSR sponsored 2 days National Seminar on "Progress and Challenges of Women in 75 years of Independent India". The topic of the Seminar is highly relevant as the Country is celebrating 75 years of Independence (Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav), wherein contribution of the Indian women for the National development will be reviewed and future challenges will be discussed. The topics identified for paper presentations are very extensive and covers almost all the fields where women can contribute to National development. Further, I am happy to note that selected papers presented in the Seminar will be published in UGC care list journal. I hope that the deliberations of the Seminar will be highly useful and motivates the younger generation. I appreciate the participants for their interest to attend the Seminar and present papers on such a topic of great relevance. Finally, I wish the organizers all the very best for the success of the Seminar with fruitful outcomes.

  
Dr. P. Babu  
RJDCE, Kadapa



**Dr.M.SUDHAKAR REDDY**

**Principal, SG Govt. Degree College**

**Piler, Annamayya Dist.**



**FORWARD**

It makes me immensely happy to write a forward to a great event of National Seminar on “Progress and Challenges of Women in 75 years of Independent India”. I Congratulate and appreciate the organisers for taking interest in organising a seminar on the gender related issues. On this occasion I feel that , the need for the seminar is very essential at the moment when India crossing its journey at this 75<sup>th</sup> milestone. So I convey my best wishes gor organising the seminar.

  
PRINCIPAL  
S.G.Govt. Degree College  
Piler, Chittoor(Dt)

**Dr.M.SUDHAKAR REDDY**

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& n' i' z' · k' o' s' i' s' !

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මෙහිදී මාගේ අධ්‍යයනයේ ප්‍රධාන අරමුණ වන්නේ මාගේ මවුපියාලියාගේ ජීවිතයේ සිදු වූ විප්ලවයන් සහ ඒවායේ හේතු සහ ප්‍රචාරය පිළිබඳව විමර්ශනය කිරීමයි. මාගේ මවුපියාලියාගේ ජීවිතයේ සිදු වූ විප්ලවයන් සහ ඒවායේ හේතු සහ ප්‍රචාරය පිළිබඳව විමර්ශනය කිරීම මාගේ අධ්‍යයනයේ ප්‍රධාන අරමුණ වන්නේ මාගේ මවුපියාලියාගේ ජීවිතයේ සිදු වූ විප්ලවයන් සහ ඒවායේ හේතු සහ ප්‍රචාරය පිළිබඳව විමර්ශනය කිරීමයි.

මාගේ මවුපියාලියාගේ ජීවිතයේ සිදු වූ විප්ලවයන් සහ ඒවායේ හේතු සහ ප්‍රචාරය පිළිබඳව විමර්ශනය කිරීම මාගේ අධ්‍යයනයේ ප්‍රධාන අරමුණ වන්නේ මාගේ මවුපියාලියාගේ ජීවිතයේ සිදු වූ විප්ලවයන් සහ ඒවායේ හේතු සහ ප්‍රචාරය පිළිබඳව විමර්ශනය කිරීමයි.

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**Smt. Vanaja Yarikipati**  
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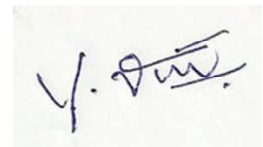
### **In the Words of Co-Convener**

History of Indian women is full of pioneers who have broken gender barriers and worked hard for their rights. Women constitute key role on the arch of the Indian society. Though the status of Indian women in the earlier periods is very low but the achievements of modern Indian women are uncountable. India has completed its 75 years as an independent nation. This successful journey of India includes the share of sacrifices and contributions of Indian women.

In the seven decades that followed, many have toiled to fulfil the vision of those who fought for freedom. India has undergone significant changes, both socio-economic and political, and seen successes on the global stage. But where do women, who constitute half of the country's citizenry, stand now in the fight for freedom, dignity, equal rights, and representation? As India celebrates the 75th anniversary of its Independence, there is a need to have a look at the status of women in contemporary India and what the changes to be still to be brought about to achieve gender parity in all the fields of life.

I hope this seminar will act as a catalyst to throw a discussion among the Academicians, Research Scholars and Feminist groups students to discuss and debate women problems in the public sphere without hesitation. I feel it's a great privilege to be part of this National seminar and I thank ICSSR, Principal, teaching and non-teaching staff of the college and the management of IJOES Journal for helping us to bring the seminar deliberations in the form of a book.

Thanking you all



**Vanaja Yarikipati**

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## Higher Education for Women in India: Some Achievements and Challenges

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### ABSTRACT

This paper constitutes the importance of higher education in the intellectual, social, economical, political and overall growth of women in a society. Women education has always been a concerning issues for Indian government as educated women plays a pivotal role in the development of the society as well as the country. Highly educated women is like sword having two edges where from one edge it solves the problem of social evils in the society and with the help of the other edge it equally contributes in the economical and political development of the nation.

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Keywords:- Higher Education, Gender disparity in Enrolment, GER, GPI ,Impact on Countries Growth.

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### INTRODUCTION

The hegemonic masculine ideology of the world had led to suffering of the 50% of the world population and deprived them of all the opportunities for their development. But in the recent era due to the rise of feminist ideas the status of women has gone through a drastic change. Women account for roughly half the world's population, perform two-thirds of the hours worked, receive one-tenth of the world's income, and have less than one hundredth of the world's property registered in their names. Female deprivation is particularly acute in the developing countries with high levels of poverty, though in affluent nations women also suffer low status due to conservative attitudes. Education in India plays a vital role in the overall development of the country. It is often proved that educated women promote education in their families. Furthermore, learned women can also help in the lessening of child death rate and expansion of quality population in the nation. In the modern era, women education is the replica of a Vedic model for instructive inspiration. With this varied history of the higher education system, the current system is primarily modeled after the British system. However, some of the technical institutions in engineering and management are modeled after the US system. The higher education system remains primarily the responsibility of the state governments, although the central government has taken the initiative in establishing and funding a few central universities and other institutions of national repute.

### Education for Women and Girls

Cultural attitudes, socioeconomic challenges, and other issues impact girls' ability to access education.

In many countries, the importance of women's education is not understood or prioritized. While education is a basic right for all, we have yet to achieve a world where women and girls receive the same opportunities for education that boys and men do. Cultural attitudes, socioeconomic challenges, lack of access to menstrual products, and more are just a few of the barriers girls face to accessing education.

### Join the Conversation

**On World Pulse, women are talking and connecting about Education and leading solutions to increase girls' access to education.**

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Starting a conversation on the importance of education for women is crucial in promoting gender equality and breaking down barriers that prevent women from accessing education. On World Pulse, women from across the world are speaking out on education and rising up to champion our right to learning.

[Join World Pulse to connect with Aysh and other women and girls' education advocates.](#)

Get Involved in The Discussion of Women in Education

[Join World Pulse today](#) and raise your voice on the topic of education. Whatever story you have to share about education and learning, we want to hear from you.

- Do you have a story about a person who helped you on your path to receiving an education?
- How about the challenges you faced while attending school? Tell us how you overcame them.
- We want to reach across all generations by sharing with young girls about the importance of education and learning. Tell us why education matters to you.
- Education doesn't just take place in a formal setting. We are open to all the lessons you have learned in life and the experiences that have shaped who you are today. "Join the World Pulse platform that provides encouraging conversation about women in education.

We encourage those who are facing educational problems to join our outlet for the discussion of solutions. It is critical that the importance of women's education in our society is heard and validated through stories, experiences, and movements. We hope that these educational stories are able to motivate and inspire you to accomplish educational successes for the greater good of women around the world.

## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

India is one of the few countries where women enjoy a comparatively better status than many women in other parts of the world. True Indian women face many problems and are subject to the same social pressures which women experience in other parts of the world. But relatively speaking, their situation is much better than what it used to be in the pre-independence era. The development of women in different aspects of life through the ages can be categorized in the following ways:-

1. Women's Education in Ancient India;
2. Women's Education in Medieval India;
3. Women's Education in Colonial India;
4. Women's Education in Modern India.

**1. Women's Education in Ancient India:-** Since from the ancient time women had possessed a bit lower position than men in the society due to the set of rigid social norms. But during Vedic periods their position was much better and they used to access the higher education but with the course of time she lost her importance. Women education in ancient India prevailed during the early Vedic period. Most of the Indian scriptures Rig Veda and Upanishads mention about several women sages and seers. However after 500 B.C, the position of women started to decline. But the Islamic invasion had restricted the freedom and rights of women.

**2. Women's Education in Medieval India:-** during medieval India after the introduction of Purdah system the condition of women education further deteriorated. Different religious (Hinduism ,

Islamic ,Christianity) conventions and customs had deteriorated her status further. Education in medieval India flourished during the Mughal rule from 1546-1848 where education system was under Ulama where education meant religious training of various subjects like medicine, Arabic literature, philosophy, grammar, history, law, administration and ethics. A sequences of socio-religious movements contributed to the development of women's education in the country. Many rulers like Iltutmish, Akbar etc. took several initiatives to make education available to the women of India. The ordered form of women education in India was incorporated in the early centuries of the Christian era.

**3. Women's Education in Colonial India:** - During the colonial era in India there was a revival of interest in women's education again. Various eminent leaders like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar had given special emphasized on the education of women. However on the other side Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, Periyar and Baba Saheb Ambedkar were those eminent leaders who worked for the upliftment and attainment of education for women of the lower castes. During the colonial period the institutional form of imparting learning was introduced in which women's education had witnessed an essential expansion. Then after various movements were launched to educate country's women. Furthermore, this journey progressed through the years and structured the modern Indian education system.

**4. Women's education in modern India:-**after the independence of India in 1947 the women education got a fillip. After independence government has taken various measures for providing education to Indian women. Women literacy rate seemingly rose in the modern days. Women education in India became a compulsory concern and female literacy has gone higher than male literacy. As a result of the various government measures undertaken during the three decades the growth of female literacy rate was more than male which was about 14.87% as compared to 11.72 % of that of male. While women literacy rate was 22% in 1971 which roused to 54.16% in 2001.

## **CONCLUSION**

Thus, from the above discussion we can conclude that-

1. Several States have shown 'zero' enrolment in some of the courses during 2007 08/2008 09 which is a matter of government to be noticed.
2. India possess about 20740740 total enrolments and about 436 universities which is not appropriate for so many students to study so She must rise its number of universities to overcome these problem of low GER and GPIs.
3. UTs had shown better trends then States.
4. The highly developed states still lags behind when its GPIs are considered.
5. Government target of increasing the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) from the present level of about 12% to 15% by the end of XI Five Year Plan and to 30% by the year 2020 must be executed seriously. And various new initiatives are being taken by the Government to increase the GER.

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A Concern for Development?



## “Mahasweta Devi a great literary icon: A Study”

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### Introduction:

India has a rich literary tradition, and there are numerous talented women writers who have made significant contributions to Indian literature. Indian women writers have made significant contributions to literature, showcasing their unique perspectives, experiences, and voices. From historical novels to contemporary fiction, poetry to social commentary, these writers have shaped the literary landscape of India and have gained international recognition for their works.

Indian women writers have often explored themes of identity, gender, social issues, cultural diversity, and the complexities of relationships. They have challenged traditional norms, pushed boundaries, and brought to light the experiences of women and marginalized communities. Here are some prominent Indian women writers across various genres.

1. **Anita Desai:** A renowned novelist, Desai has received several accolades, including being shortlisted for the Booker Prize multiple times. Her works often examine themes of family, gender, and the clash between traditional and modern values.
2. **Arundhati Roy:** An essayist, political activist, and novelist, Roy’s non-fiction writings tackle a wide range of social and political issues, including human rights, environmental degradation, and political corruption in India. Known for her novel “The God of Small Things,” which won the Man Booker Prize in 1997, Roy’s writing is characterized by its lyrical prose and exploration of social and political issues.
3. **Kiran Desai:** The daughter of Anita Desai, Kiran Desai won the Man Booker Prize in 2006 for her novel “The Inheritance of Loss.” Her writing explores themes of cultural identity, displacement, and globalization.
4. **Meena Kandasamy:** A poet, novelist, and activist, Kandasamy’s work addresses themes of caste, gender, and social justice. Her notable works include the novel “When I Hit You: Or, A Portrait of the Writer as a Young Wife.”
5. **Kamala Das:** A prominent Indian poet and writer, Das is known for her bold and confessional poetry. Her works often challenge societal norms and explore themes of love, desire, and female sexuality.
6. **Mahasweta Devi:** A Bengali writer and social activist, Devi’s writings highlight the struggles and oppression faced by marginalized communities, particularly tribal people and women. Her works include novels, short stories, and plays.

These are just a few examples of the many talented Indian women writers who have left an indelible mark on the literary landscape. Each writer brings her unique perspective and storytelling prowess, making Indian literature a vibrant and diverse field. Among Indian women writers Mahasweta Devi was a highly regarded Indian writer and social activist, primarily known for her works in Bengali literature.

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**Mahasweta Devi Personal life**

Mahasweta Devi, born on January 14, 1926, in Dhaka (now in Bangladesh), had a remarkable personal life alongside her literary and activist endeavors. Mahasweta Devi was born into a literary family. Her father, Manish Ghatak, was a poet and novelist, and her mother, Dharitri Devi, was a writer and social activist. Devi completed her early education in Dhaka and then moved to Kolkata for higher studies. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in English from the Presidency College, Kolkata, and went on to pursue a Master's degree in English literature from the University of Calcutta. Mahasweta Devi was married to renowned playwright and actor Bijon Bhattacharya. The couple had one son named Nabarun Bhattacharya, who later became a prominent writer himself. Unfortunately, Bijon Bhattacharya passed away at a young age in 1978.

Devi's personal life was intertwined with her activism and social work. She was deeply committed to fighting for the rights of marginalized communities, particularly tribal and Adivasi communities. She actively participated in protests, campaigned for land rights, and worked closely with affected communities to bring about social change. In addition to her literary pursuits; Mahasweta Devi also had an illustrious academic career. She served as a faculty member at various colleges and universities, including Bijoygarh College and Jadavpur University in Kolkata. She taught English literature and was highly respected as an educator.

Towards the later years of her life, Devi faced several health challenges. She suffered from various ailments, including diabetes and age-related complications. Despite her health struggles, she remained active in her writing and activism until her passing. Mahasweta Devi passed away on July 28, 2016, in Kolkata.

Mahasweta Devi's personal life was marked by her passion for literature, activism, and social justice. Her dedication to giving voice to the marginalized and fighting for their rights shaped not only her professional achievements but also her personal journey. She left a lasting impact through her works, leaving behind a legacy of compassion, courage, and a commitment to social change.

**Mahasweta Devi's notable works:**

Devi's writing focused on the struggles and hardships faced by marginalized communities, particularly tribal people, dalits (untouchables), and women. Her works were known for their powerful portrayal of social injustices and the exploitation of the oppressed. Devi's writing style was characterized by its raw and gritty realism, coupled with deep empathy and a commitment to social change.

"Hajar Churashir Maa" ("Mother of 1084") is a powerful and poignant novel written by Mahasweta Devi. Published in 1974, the novel explores the theme of loss, grief, and the struggle for justice. The story revolves around Sujata, a middle-aged mother who learns that her son, Brati, has been killed by the police during a political protest. Devastated by the loss, Sujata embarks on a journey to understand the circumstances that led to her son's death and to seek justice for him. As Sujata delves deeper into Brati's life, she discovers his involvement in revolutionary activities and his commitment to fighting against social injustices. Through her encounters with various individuals, including Brati's friends, comrades, and fellow activists, Sujata gains insight into the ideals her son held and the oppressive system he fought against.

The novel skillfully explores the themes of political resistance, activism, and the sacrifices made by individuals and their families in the pursuit of justice. Devi vividly portrays the pain, anger, and determination of Sujata as she navigates through the bureaucratic and oppressive system to demand accountability for her son's death. "Hajar Churashir Maa" not only highlights the personal tragedy experienced by Sujata but also serves as a critique of the political and social conditions

prevailing in India at that time. Through the lens of a grieving mother, Devi sheds light on the broader issues of state violence, authoritarianism, and the struggle for human rights.

The novel's title, "Mother of 1084," refers to the identification number assigned to Brati's dead body by the authorities. It represents the dehumanization of individuals reduced to mere numbers, emphasizing the impersonal and callous nature of the state apparatus."Hajar Churashir Maa" is considered one of Mahasweta Devi's most significant works, acclaimed for its powerful narrative, emotional depth, and social commentary. The novel stands as a testament to Devi's commitment to portraying the struggles and resilience of marginalized communities and their relentless pursuit of justice and equality.

"Aranyer Adhikar" ("The Occupation of the Forest") is a notable novel by Mahasweta Devi, published in 1977. It delves into the themes of exploitation, resistance, and the struggle for land and identity among tribal communities in India. The novel is set in the forests of Jharkhand, a region inhabited by Adivasi (indigenous) communities. It sheds light on the oppressive practices of landlords, moneylenders, and the government that exploit the tribal people and dispossess them of their ancestral lands.

The protagonist, Birsa, is a young Adivasi man who becomes a symbol of resistance against the powerful forces that seek to exploit and marginalize his community. Inspired by the historical figure Birsa Munda, who led a tribal revolt in the late 19th century, Birsa in the novel becomes a leader and organizer, fighting for the rights and dignity of his people. Devi portrays the struggles faced by the Adivasi communities as they confront the exploitation of their resources, cultural erasure, and the loss of their traditional way of life. Through vivid descriptions and powerful storytelling, she brings to life the beauty of the forest, the customs of the tribal communities, and the challenges they face in the face of encroachment by outsiders.

"Aranyer Adhikar" highlights the resistance movements and the struggle for self-determination among Adivasi communities. It examines the clash between the traditional and the modern, the tension between the rights of indigenous people and the interests of powerful entities. The novel not only addresses the socio-political issues faced by tribal communities but also explores the complexities of identity and the search for belonging. It sheds light on the cultural richness, knowledge systems, and ecological harmony that the Adivasi communities embody. Through "Aranyer Adhikar," Mahasweta Devi challenges societal norms, amplifies the voices of the marginalized, and exposes the injustices faced by tribal communities. Her work serves as a call for social change and raises awareness about the struggles and resilience of indigenous people in the face of exploitation and marginalization.

"Chotti Munda Evam Tar Tir" novel, published in 1980, sheds light on the displacement of tribal communities due to industrialization and their fight for survival and identity."Jhansir Rani" historical novel published in 1956, portrays the life and bravery of Rani Lakshmbai, a prominent figure in the Indian Rebellion of 1857.

Mahasweta Devi's short story "Draupadi" is a powerful and thought-provoking work that reimagines the character of Draupadi from the Indian epic Mahabharata. Devi's rendition of Draupadi offers a fresh perspective on the iconic figure, exploring themes of agency, gender, and societal expectations. In the Mahabharata, Draupadi is depicted as a noble and virtuous queen who becomes the catalyst for the epic war between the Pandavas and the Kauravas. However, in "Draupadi," Mahasweta Devi presents a different narrative, stripping away the mythical elements to focus on Draupadi's inner struggles and her complex relationship with the world around her.

"Salt" is a poignant and powerful short story written by Mahasweta Devi. The story delves into the lives of salt workers in a rural village and sheds light on their struggles, exploitation, and their fight for justice and dignity. In "Salt," Devi exposes the harsh realities faced by the salt workers,

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who toil under grueling conditions to extract salt from the saline lands. The story explores the socio-economic exploitation faced by the workers, who are trapped in a cycle of poverty and are subject to the whims of the salt mafia and corrupt landlords. The story captures the struggles and aspirations of the salt workers, highlighting their resilience and their refusal to accept their subjugation. It stands as a powerful testament to Devi's contribution to literature and her tireless efforts to bring about social change.

### **Mahasweta Devi writing style**

Mahasweta Devi's writing style is characterized by its raw and gritty realism, coupled with a deep sense of empathy and a commitment to social change. She tackles sensitive and often harsh social issues with an unflinching honesty, shedding light on the lives and struggles of marginalized communities. Devi's prose is powerful and evocative, often drawing from her deep understanding of the socio-political realities of India. She weaves vivid descriptions and employs rich imagery to create a strong sense of place and atmosphere in her narratives. Her writing captures the essence of the settings, whether it be the lush forests, the impoverished villages, or the bustling cities.

One of the notable aspects of Devi's writing style is her ability to give voice to the voiceless. She amplifies the stories and experiences of the marginalized, presenting their perspectives with sensitivity and authenticity. Her characters are often complex and multi-dimensional, reflecting the nuances of their social, cultural, and economic backgrounds. Through her writing, Devi delves into the intricacies of power dynamics, social hierarchies, and the impact of oppressive systems on individuals and communities. She skillfully portrays the struggles and resilience of her characters, often depicting their resistance against injustice and their quest for dignity and agency.

Devi's narratives are driven by a strong social consciousness and a deep concern for human rights. Her work challenges societal norms, exposes inequalities, and raises awareness about issues such as land rights, tribal rights, caste oppression, gender discrimination, and exploitation. She seamlessly blends fiction with real-world socio-political contexts, creating compelling narratives that provoke thought and inspire action.

Mahasweta Devi's writing style can be described as courageous, compassionate, and unapologetically honest. Her narratives are imbued with a sense of urgency, seeking to bring about positive change by shining a light on the voices and struggles of the marginalized and advocating for social justice.

### **Critical Review on Mahasweta Devi's works:**

Mahasweta Devi's literary works have garnered significant critical acclaim and have been widely studied and analyzed by scholars and readers alike. Her writings have been praised for their raw and powerful portrayal of social injustices, their empathy towards marginalized communities, and their ability to provoke thought and inspire action. Here are some key aspects of the critical reception of Mahasweta Devi's literary works:

1. **Social Realism and Advocacy:** Devi's works are often commended for their unflinching commitment to social realism and their portrayal of the struggles faced by marginalized communities. Critics appreciate her ability to depict the harsh realities of oppression, exploitation, and discrimination, providing a voice to those who are often silenced. Her works are seen as powerful tools of advocacy, shedding light on social issues and promoting social change.
2. **Empathy and Sensitivity:** Devi's writing is praised for its deep empathy and sensitivity towards the experiences and emotions of her characters. Critics highlight her ability to humanize and give agency to individuals from marginalized backgrounds, allowing readers

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to connect and empathize with their stories. This empathetic approach is seen as strength of her works, as it fosters a deeper understanding of social issues and challenges readers to confront their own biases and prejudices.

3. **Use of Regional Contexts and Identities:** Devi's works often explore the regional contexts of West Bengal and the struggles of tribal and Adivasi communities in India. Critics appreciate her attention to detail and her portrayal of the cultural, linguistic, and historical specificities of these communities. This regional focus is seen as an important aspect of her works, providing a nuanced understanding of the complexities and diversity of Indian society.
4. **Blending of Fact and Fiction:** Devi's writings often blur the boundaries between fact and fiction, incorporating elements of real-life incidents, historical events, and the experiences of actual individuals. Critics find this blending of fact and fiction to be a compelling aspect of her works, as it adds depth and authenticity to the narratives. It also highlights the interconnectedness of personal stories with larger social and political contexts.
5. **Critique of Power Structures:** Devi's works are often hailed for their incisive critique of power structures, be it the oppressive systems of caste, class, and gender or the exploitative forces of capitalism and colonialism. Critics note her keen observation and analysis of power dynamics, which she exposes through her characters' experiences and interactions. Her writings are seen as challenging dominant narratives and inviting readers to question established norms and hierarchies.

Mahasweta Devi's literary works have received critical acclaim for their social relevance, their empathy towards marginalized communities, and their critique of power structures. Her writings continue to be celebrated for their ability to provoke dialogue, inspire activism, and bring about positive social change.

**Awards:**

Mahasweta Devi's contributions to literature and social activism have been widely recognized and celebrated. She received numerous accolades and awards. Her works have been translated into multiple languages and continue to be studied and analyzed by scholars and readers worldwide. Mahasweta Devi was honored with the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1979 for her Bengali novel "Aranyer Adhikar". In 1996, Mahasweta Devi was conferred with the Jnanpith Award, one of the highest literary honors in India. She received this prestigious award for her overall contribution to Indian literature. Mahasweta Devi was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Award in 1997 for her "compassionate crusade through art and activism to claim for tribal peoples a just and honorable place in India's national life." This award, often referred to as the "Asian Nobel Prize," recognizes individuals and organizations that have made exemplary contributions to public service and social development in Asia.

In 2006, Mahasweta Devi was honored with the Padma Vibhushan, the second-highest civilian award in India. This prestigious award was bestowed upon her in recognition of her exceptional contributions to literature and social work. Devi received the Rabindra Puraskar, one of the most prestigious literary awards in West Bengal, several times throughout her career. She was recognized for her outstanding contributions to Bengali literature through her novels, short stories, and plays.

These are just a few of the notable awards that Mahasweta Devi received in recognition of her literary achievements and her tireless activism for the rights of marginalized communities. Her work continues to inspire and resonate with readers and activists alike, leaving a lasting impact on Indian literature and social discourse.

**Conclusion:**

Mahasweta Devi's writings, characterized by their powerful portrayal of social injustices, empathy towards marginalized communities, and critique of power structures, continue to resonate with readers and provoke thought and action. Through her works, Mahasweta Devi brought to the forefront the struggles faced by oppressed and marginalized individuals, particularly women, tribal communities, and Dalits. Her narratives shed light on their experiences, giving them a voice and agency. Devi's writing style, marked by its social realism, regional specificity, and blending of fact and fiction, captivated readers and brought attention to pressing social issues.

Beyond her literary achievements, Mahasweta Devi was an ardent social activist, actively advocating for the rights of the marginalized and working towards social change. Her writings and activism were intertwined, reflecting her deep commitment to addressing the injustices and inequalities that plagued Indian society. Mahasweta Devi's legacy extends beyond her literary achievements. She remains an inspiration for writers, activists, and individuals striving for a more just and inclusive society. Her courage, compassion, and unwavering commitment to social justice serve as a guiding light for future generations.

In summary, Mahasweta Devi's literary works and activism have left an indelible impact on Indian literature and society. Her writings serve as a testament to the power of storytelling and the potential of literature to challenge societal norms and bring about positive change. She will be remembered as a fearless writer, a champion of the marginalized, and a beacon of hope for a more equitable world. In conclusion, Mahasweta Devi was a literary icon and social activist who left an indelible mark on Indian literature.

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## Voicing the Voiceless: A Study on Arundhati Roy's Critique of Big Dams

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### Abstract:

The present article endeavors to analyze Arundhati Roy's concern towards poor people and those who are affected badly through construction of huge dams and dams related projects on the Narmada River in India. An attempt is made to bring home various contexts in which she is committed to stand by the poor particularly in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat in India. As she is a critic and activist-writer she is always ready to give voice for the welfare of the poor in general and Tribals in particular. Though the range of her activism is vast, we have taken up her concerns related to the poor and Tribals in the Narmada River Valley in India for this article. Besides welfare of humanity, she craves for protection of environment, fights against nuclear weaponization, against war and belligerent attitude of several countries, against big dams, against class and caste based bias in the world, against violation of human rights, etc. are also matters of concern for her. In this article, her attempt to bring justice to the poor and Tribals through her fight against the construction of big dams, against the provision of 2 inadequate compensation and rehabilitation facilities, against the violation of human rights is presented. In addition to her selfless service, her participation in various protests in support of the Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA), a resistance movement led by Medha Patkar, are also explored in the article.

**Key words:** Activism, violation of human rights, Tribals, Narmada Bachao Andolan, women writers, habitation, construction of big dams, displacements, environment.

Arundhati Roy is one of a very few prominent women writers in India who engages with the contemporary social issues. She imbibed the temperament of activism from her mother who was also a women's rights activist. Though her activism touches upon a great range of issues from India to many other countries the present article discusses her concern for welfare of Adivasis and common people only in the context of Narmada Valley Development Projects (NVDP). As an eco-conscious minded woman writer Arundhati Roy supports another woman activist Medha Patkar and her movement the NBA because they fight for a great cause to save the people from being thrown away from their natural habitations. Together, they fight against the construction of big dams which displace millions of people without rehabilitating properly. Due to construction and implementation of NVDP in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat it is not only the human beings that are affected a lot but also eco-system, the animals, the birds and the trees.

Though, Ms. Roy cares for protection and welfare of nature and human beings respectively; the leaders in India usually turn a deaf ear for her plea. As a result all her concerns fall on deaf ears. The leaders harangue the people with bombastic speeches but do not care for welfare of the poor and tribals who are victimized in the project. In this connection the words of Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of India, are very much pertinent, as he said regarding 3 the Hirakud project in 1948, "If you are to suffer, you should suffer in the interest of the country..." (Ctd. Roy,

My Seditious Heart 25). It is understood that the poor and Adivasis must sacrifice for welfare of the people of the country. But in return the poor and Adivasis get nothing from the government. Due to this reason, Ms. Roy fights for making the government provide adequate rehabilitation facilities and compensation. She fights against atrocities committed against the people. Moreover, she has gathered volumes of valuable information about the people and their sufferings in the forest along the river; displacement and atrocities undergone by the people due to the callousness of the corporate companies, police and security forces. She has decided to help Adivasis and the poor via projecting their woes and sufferings to the external world during construction of large dams and other projects in the valley. Arundhati Roy has criticized the government and the corporate companies who have caused unending suffering for the people by displacement through the police, courts, army and bureaucrats. She dares to call a spade a spade by discussing this as 'callous treatment' towards the people (Roy, The End of Imagination 109).

Ms. Roy appreciates dedication of activists of the NBA who have been striving hard for halting of construction of big projects as well as for the reconstruction and adequate compensation and rehabilitation facilities. Padam Nepal also appreciates the selfless service of the movement. He says, "[t]he NBA, which started as a struggle of the innocent, simple tribals has undergone a sea change in its course of over 20 years" (Nepal, How Movements Move? Evaluating the Role of Ideology and Leadership in Environmental Movement Dynamics in India with Special Reference to the Narmada Bachao Andolan 28). Women activists Medha Patkar and Ms. Roy and the movement have dedicated themselves to the service of the Tribals and poor people along the valley. They fight against big dams, but not small dams. They fight against 4 destructive constructions i.e. large dams which displace most of the people in the valley. Ms. Roy gives a catalogue of destructive things which are large or big in size and in concept:

We have to fight specific wars in specific ways. Who knows, perhaps that's what the twenty-first century has in store for us. The dismantling of the Big. Big bombs, big dams, big ideologies, big contradictions, big countries, big wars, big heroes, big mistakes. Perhaps right now, this very minute, there's a small god up in heaven readying herself for us (Roy, The Algebra of Infinite Justice 39).

Ms. Roy opines that small dams are useful because they do not displace many people and do not do much harm to environment but big dams do so as they displace millions of people and destroy millions of acres of land and forest.

Sardar Sarovar Project is one of the big dams which have been built on the Narmada River but the devastating and disastrous effects of it are not assessed either by Indian government or by the World Bank. Bradford Morse and Thomas R. Berger, the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman respectively to the Independent Review of the Sardar Sarovar dam and irrigation projects, were appointed to study the projects by the President of The World Bank Lewis T. Preston in 1991 and the report was released by them in 1992. They also opine the same as, "[t]he Bank and India both failed to carry out adequate assessments of human impacts of the Sardar Sarovar Projects" (9). Responsible government or authorities should assess advantages and disadvantages of big projects well before the construction starts. Otherwise, millions of people have to face devastating effects which can neither be repaired nor avoided. Ms. Roy has projected the pathetic condition of Ram Bai who was displaced during construction of the Bargi Dam on the Narmada River. The victim cried, "[w]hy didn't they just poison us? Then we 5 wouldn't have to live in this shithole and the government could have survived alone with its precious dam all to itself" (Ctd. Roy, The End of

Imagination 111). The helpless condition of Ram Bai is inexpressible. Like her, millions of people have been undergoing endless torture who lose everything they have i.e. properties, homes, lands, lives, habitation, culture, happy life, family bonding, social bonding, etc. The condition of the lady can be generalized and viewed as the representative example for the disaster created by government towards the poor and the tribals.

Politicians, bureaucrats and officials do not consider the lives of the poor because they consider their targets only and nothing else. Morarji Desai once remarked unkind words at a gathering of submergence area of the Pong dam in the year 1961, “[w]e will request you to move from your houses after the dam comes up. If you move, it will be good. Otherwise we shall release the waters and drown you all” (Ctd. Roy, My Seditious Heart 29). The leader might not be in a position to understand the pathetic condition of the poor and the Tribals. He might be thinking of his targets only by dislocating the people from the dam area. But, activist-writer Arundhati Roy feels very sad after knowing the helpless condition of the people. Though big dams displace millions of people and damage thousands of hectares of forest and land leaders in power do not consider the damages. Moreover, they praise the constructions. It is well known that Jawaharlal Nehru praised dams and compared them to temples, “Dams Are the Temples of Modern India” (Ctd. Roy, The End of Imagination 111). He has analyzed through his point of view only but not in general keeping the welfare of common masses.

The fruits of construction of big dams go directly into the accounts of banks of the rich and affluent people but not into the tiny pockets of the poor because the poor are not in a position to demand for their rights but watch helplessly. They can't raise their voices for demanding what they need. After construction of the dams the living sites of them will be submerged because they are not resettled properly. Ms. Roy grieves, “[p]eople were flushed out like rats from the land they had lived on for centuries. They salvaged what they could and watched their houses being washed away” (Roy, The End of Imagination 123). As compensation, the people must be given cash as well as land appropriately. In fact, most of the people who are affected are not paid adequate compensation. The government hasn't formed rehabilitation and reconstruction policies appropriately in the country. Due to the building of the big dams Adivasis and the poor lose everything they possess and the same can be applied to all the affected people. Though government neglects the people the activists in the NBA never neglect because the movement is formed from the victims of the projects too besides activists. It has brought together many alliances on to a single platform. Ranjith Dwivedi praises the effort of the NBA. He says that the movement opposed socially and ecologically harmful developmental projects along the Narmada River.

Ms. Roy appreciates that since 1988, the movement has been working very seriously against NVDP. It has encouraged many Tribals as well as common people to assert their rights. Besides Ms. Roy, Padam Nepal also appreciates the selfless service of the NBA and the Chipko movements. He says, “...both the movements have altered themselves in the face of state absorbing environment as one of the issues of development” (Nepal, Dynamics and Transformations of Environmental Movements in India: a study of the Chipko movements and the Narmada Bachao Andolan 265). The movement works for protection of human rights of the poor and Tribals. Pratyusha Basu also has identified the influence of the NBA even in foreign countries. She says, “[t]he Andolan has been willing and able to take its struggles to the overseas headquarters of the multinationals that are investing in the Narmada dams, seeking support from activists in the U.S., Germany and Japan” (108).

Ms. Roy welcomes all types of people in the world to help the people in the region. Then only the struggle becomes widespread and then the people will be helped out. She welcomes teachers, students, journalists, lawyers, sports persons, actors, singers, painters, doctors, etc. to fight for protection of the environment as well as for the lives of the poor. It is a war to establish peace in the hamlets of the Tribals in the forest. As an ecologist as well as a humanitarian she



opposes the construction of huge dams. But, she prefers non-violent fight rather than violent agitations. The NBA also leads the movement non-violently. Kothari Smitu says that many people from political opinion makers to the country's intelligentsia were mobilized non-violently following democratic principles (235). The non-violent mobilization really has influenced a lot. The World Bank has appointed a review commission to see on possibility of construction of the Sardar Sarovar Projects but the commission has declared that plans of the projects are flawed. The report disclosed the truth hidden behind the projects.

On declaration of the report the Governments of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh have announced that they couldn't provide the affected people with sufficient land and rehabilitation facilities. But, the government of Gujarat has continued the project with its plan. It has to occupy lands of Adivasis, fisher folk, farmers, common people, etc. but can't provide adequate compensation and rehabilitation facilities appropriately. Moreover, some people don't possess appropriate documents to their lands. Laurie Uytterlinde Flood also opines that the people do not receive adequate compensation and rehabilitation as they do not have formal title to the land they cultivate (17). Even though they do not have title they must be provided compensation sufficiently. They might have been cultivating the land for hundreds of years for generations 8 together. Moreover, they sacrifice everything they have lands, assets, river, etc. From now onwards they have to dislocate and work somewhere at new places where they do not have houses to live in. Sreya Maithra also opines that land acquisition leads to psychological as well as socio-cultural consequences for the people who lose lands. Moreover, the people lose their family and social bonding. Their political power is also destroyed by the displacement besides their livelihood (198). Sreya Maitra also says that every developmental project must accompany rehabilitation measures without fail (209). But, as Thomas R. Berger has said, India hasn't formulated a national resettlement and rehabilitation policy because it is considered the responsibility of government of states only, but not of central government (43). Whoever takes the contract of building of the big dams, the main victims are the poor and Adivasis. They have to undergo incessant torture due to construction of projects but the government doesn't care lives of them.

### **Conclusion:**

Ms. Roy has debated at length the human costs as well as environmental deterioration caused due to the construction of gigantic projects. She has anticipated humanitarian and environmental crisis that emerges due to the building of the projects. She stands in support of the people as a crusader against exploitation; she finds fault with flawed developmental policies in the Tribal areas along the Narmada River. She is brilliant and revolutionary in her outlook and her ideas are always thought provoking. She is hopeful about working for a brighter future for the people along the river. She states that the NBA is the biggest, finest and most magnificent resistance movement since the Independence of India (Roy, *The Shape of the Beast* 48). She has her reasons in supporting the movement and the people in it because most of the people in it are underdogs who need support. That's why she assists them. 9 One may argue or not with her dissenting ideas, but one can never doubt her sincerity and commitment for the common cause of a sustainable and secure future.

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## Progress of The Healthcare System: Role Of Indian Women

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### **Abstract:**

Post-independence India has many noteworthy achievements in the public health arena. In the last seven decades, the number of women joining medicine has shown a marked increase in various branches of healthcare in India. One sector where India has progressed significantly is the number of healthcare personnel. In the post-Independence era, a significant number of women joined the medical profession nationwide. Both the healthcare sector and women in the healthcare sector progressed substantially. This paper aims at assessing the progress of the healthcare system and the role of women in the healthcare sector of India since independence.

KEYWORDS: Healthcare sector, India, Seventy-five years, Independence, Women doctors.

### **INTRODUCTION:**

After freeing itself from the clutches of the British rulers, over the next decades, India had taken some crucial steps to improve healthcare accessibility and availability. More work has been done in this direction in the country. The healthcare system in India has evolved a lot since independence. After the independence of India, women have played an important role in the reconstruction of the country at all levels in all walks of life. Great strides have been made in the healthcare sector in India in the past 75 years.

### **PROGRESS OF THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM SINCE INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE:**

After the end of the British rule in India, there was both jubilation and worry. While the people were celebrating throwing off the yoke of colonial rule, there were also concerns about how the nation would find its way amidst all its troubles. Healthcare was one of the major issues. The lack of trained medical professionals in the country, low life expectancy, high infant mortality rate, and the inability of the majority of the nation's citizens to access proper healthcare were some of the major problems faced by the country. However, India managed to ensure that a greater percentage of its population could access healthcare. Post-independence India's most noteworthy achievement, in the public health arena, has been the decrease in death rates. In the last 75 years, India has improved tremendously with respect to life expectancy. In 1947, the expectancy of an average Indian citizen was around 32 years and it has increased to 70.19 years in 2022. The increase in life expectancy in the last 75 years has been over 100 percent.

Since gaining independence, India has launched several national programs to curb the menace of communicable diseases like Malaria, Tuberculosis, and AIDS. During the eradication era in the late 1950s and early 1960s, a spectacular achievement was witnessed on the malaria eradication front. India's success in Polio has been acclaimed around the globe. With respect to Leprosy, India is running one of the largest leprosy eradication programs in the world. India's performance in smallpox eradication has been commendable too.

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Since India became independent in 1947, the government has launched various policies and schemes to improve healthcare facilities in the country. One sector where India has progressed significantly is the number of healthcare personnel. The nation had only 61,840 doctors for its entire population in 1951. The number has increased to 13,08,009 in 2022. The present ratio of doctors to patients is 1:834 in India compared to the 1:1000 standard ratio set by the World Health Organization. Child mortality has always been one of the grave concerns in our country. India after independence has focused a lot on the health of mothers and children with programs such as Anganwadi, the Integrated child development scheme, etc. Thus, India's progress in the healthcare sector can be seen as progressive and creditworthy.

### **PRESENCE AND PROGRESS OF WOMEN IN THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM OF INDIA IN THE PAST 75 YEARS:**

During the freedom struggle and also after gaining independence the contribution of women was immense through their participation in various walks of life. In 1886, Dr. Anandibai Joshi of Pune became the first Indian woman to qualify as a doctor. In the post-Independence era, a significant number of women joined the medical profession nationwide. In India, women were accepted as full-fledged professionals at par with male doctors from the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, great progress has been made towards the equality of gender in medicine. Since independence government's policies to provide equal opportunities for women at work have provided an impetus for women's participation in the medical profession. Thanks to social awakening movements, centuries prior to independence have encouraged women to take up new social roles. Women felt concerned about their position in society due to emerging political consciousness, the spreading of modern education, cultural awareness, and social awakening. The Western impact has encouraged women to come out of the domestic sphere and earn like men. All these situations were succeeded by India's policies encouraging women's education. Women started getting education and showed increased interest in professional fields.

In India, women constitute about 51 percent of students joining colleges. Women are estimated to make up to 30% of doctors and more than 80% of nurses and midwives. Gender notwithstanding, a doctor stands out from the rest because their responsibility involves saving lives. In a country where most professions are still dominated by men, the medical field was no exception to the rule. Until a few names forced the world to think otherwise. The efforts of resilient female doctors, undaunted by patriarchy and male bias, have helped the Indian medical industry to grow into the gender-neutral space it is today.

### **PROMINENT WOMEN IN THE HEALTHCARE SECTOR OF INDIA:**

Anandibai Joshi, Kadambini Ganguly, Rukhmabai Raut, Haimabati Sen, Muthulakshmi Reddy, and Mary Poonen Lukose are six of India's first women physicians. Women doctors in India had risen to become great and are to be especially applauded. Many women doctors in India began with aspirations.

**Dr. Anandibai Joshi** was the first female Indian physician and the first Indian woman to have gained a degree in Western medicine. She qualified as a doctor by gaining a degree from Women's Medical College, Pennsylvania now known as Drexel University in the United States of America.

**Dr. Kadambini Ganguly** was the first female Indian physician to graduate and actually practice as a physician in Western medicine. She graduated from Bethune College, Kolkata, and became the first female graduate in the British Empire along with Chandramukhi Basu. She studied medicine at Calcutta Medical College becoming one of the few women (the other being Dr. Anandibai Joshi) to have qualified to practice Western medicine.

**Dr. V. Shanta** did her M.B.B.S. from Madras Medical College and went on to do an M.D. in Obstetrics and Gynaecology. Dr. Shanta joined the cancer institute in Chennai and worked to grow the hospital to its present stature as an affordable and accessible place for cancer treatment in Chennai. She is a member of the Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission of Health and a fellow of the National Academy of Medical Sciences. In 1986 she received the Padma Shri, in 2006 the Padma Bhushan, and in 2016 the Padma Vibhushan awards. She was also felicitated with the Ramon Magsaysay Award in 2005.

**Dr. Padmavathi Iyeris** often looked upon as the God of cardiology in India. Apart from being the first Indian woman cardiologist, she also created the first cardiology department in a medical institute and founded India's first heart foundation meant to spread awareness about diseases of the heart. Under her tutelage, Indian cardiology expanded by leaps and bounds.

**Dr. Indira Hinduja** pioneered the Gamete Intrafallopian Transfer (GIFT) technique which led to the birth of India's first GIFT baby on 4 January 1988. She also delivered India's first test tube baby on 6 August 1986.

**Dr. Jayashree Mondkaris** an Indian neonatologist at Sion Hospital, Mumbai. She is known for running Asia's first Human Milk Bank. **Dr. Ketayun Ardeshir Dinshaw** was a prominent personality in the field of Indian medicine and played a significant role in the evolution of modern cancer care in India, and the development of effective radiation therapy.

**Dr. Subhadra Nairis** an Indian gynaecologist, medical teacher, and social worker. She became the first gynaecologist to receive the Padma Shri.

**Dr. Neelam Kler** is a noted Indian neonatologist. She is known for her pioneering work on neonatal intensive care and ventilation.

**Dr. Shashi Wadhwa** is the dean of the All India Institutes of Medical Sciences, Delhi.

**Dr. Kamini Rao** has contributed immensely to the field of fertility and reproductive endocrinology. She has set up South India's first Semen bank and is credited with engineering South India's first Intra Cytoplasmic Sperm Injection Babies and through laser assisted hatching technique. She has set up the Milan Centre for reproductive medicine. For her services to the field of medicine, she received the Padma Shri in 2014.

**Dr. Gagandeep Kang** was the first Indian woman scientist to be elected as a fellow of the Royal Society. She has also conducted extensive research on the rotavirus and was the key scientist behind the development of Rotovac, a vaccine from Bharat Biotech International that targets diarrhoea. She was presented with the Infosys Prize for her research and discoveries. Dr. Kang is also known for combining her scientific discoveries with policy-making to deliver holistic results on many vaccines. Her work has led to her being hailed as the "vaccine godmother" of India.

## **CONCLUSION:**

Women's role in medicine and healing is evident throughout history, from the ancient world to the present day, in many different forms. Women are now transforming health services. Despite the variety of challenges that women face in medical professions, female physicians inspire and save lives every day. There is no shortage of smart, educated, talented women in India's health. They bring a different perspective to the table and this perspective is critical to improve health outcomes in India. Hence in these seventy-five years of independence, many women have contributed to India's healthcare immensely and India also progressed a lot in the healthcare sector and achieved gender neutrality in the healthcare arena.

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## **Role of Women In Indian Politics**

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A new dimension of women in politics emerged in recent years all over the world. More and more women have now been entering into politics. Conventional politics reflected male concerns and hence women were notably absent in politics.

Welfare policies had been constructed and reinforced women's traditional position as wives and mothers. Women have struggled over issues affecting them, especially their rights to property and vote in the 19th century and to abortion, equal pay and nursery provision in the 20th century. In India, reform movements before and after independence has helped women to gain some power in politics also. After independence they have achieved an unprecedented political break-through with the reservation of seats for them in panchayats and other public bodies.

It is heartening to note that Indian women were among the earliest to get their political rights (right to vote) without any political movement like in the United States and many Western countries. They were among the foremost to take active part in politics even in pre-independence times.

In India, political participation of women is not impressive when compared with men. This is the case in most of the countries across the world. However, women's political participation now is quite encouraging compared to the older times. Today it remains stronger than ever. But, in India, women who have decision making powers invariably hail from urban and elite groups. Even today, representation of women in Indian Parliament is far from satisfactory. Women have been demanding for more space in legislative bodies.

### Political participation

Political participation means exercising the right to vote, power sharing, membership of political parties, electoral campaigning, attending party meetings, holding party positions, contesting elections, co-decision making, co-policy making at all levels of governance of the state. Simply put, it is a process through which individuals play a role in political life deciding the common goals of the society and determining the best way to achieve it.

The root of political participation of women can be traced back to 19<sup>th</sup> century reform movements. Social reformers like Rajaram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Mahadeva Govinda Ranade, Behramji Malabari believed that social evils could be eradicated by raising consciousness and educating women.

### Pre independent political participation of women

The late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries witnessed the establishment of women's associations all over the country. These organisations took up the issues concerning women like right to vote etc. Three main organisations were established during this period. They are:

- The Women's Indian Association (WIA): WIA concentrated its work over religion, education, politics and philanthropy. Annie Besant became the first president of WIA along with Margaret Cousins.
- The National Council of women in India (NCWI): it was established in 1925 as a national branch of the International Council of Women. Due to its elitist nature, the NCWI failed to become a vital national organisation.

- The All India Women's conference (AIWC): AIWC materialised due to the dedicated work of Margaret Cousins and other women of WIA and it first met in Poona in January 1927. It worked for female education and opposed social customs that restricted female education such as child marriage and purdah.

### Participation of Women in post independent period

The foundation formed during the national movement helped women to participate in democratic process after independence. Various legal, social and economic measures were taken by the government of India to raise the status of women in India after independence. Women also began to participate in national and state politics.

The first assembly after independence saw the presence of very few women (about 2%). Women members included Masuma Begum, who later on became the Minister of Social Welfare, Renuka Ray, veteran social worker; Durgabai, a veteran Gandhian, Radhabai Subbarayan, who was appointed as a delegate to the first Round Table Conference. As per various accounts, men in the assembly listened carefully to the speeches made by women. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur became Union Health Minister in 1947. Sucheta Kriplani became the general secretary of Congress in 1959, labour minister of Uttar Pradesh in 1962 and subsequently Chief Minister of United Province in from 1963 to 1967. Vijayalakshmi Pandit was selected as a delegate to the UN and was appointed as ambassador to the erstwhile USSR in 1947 and later as ambassador to the US. She was also elected as president of the United Nations General Assembly in 1953.

In the subsequent elections, women started to hold 4-5% seats in the Lok Sabha till 1980s after which their numbers increased to 7-8%. In Rajya Sabha, women have held 7-10% of seats.

Representation of women in 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha is 61. This is the highest in history. Presently, Rajya Sabha has 29 women members. Six of the 23 Cabinet ministers in the present government are women, claiming almost a 25 per cent share.

### Constitutional provisions

The Constitution of India guaranteed justice-social, economic and political, liberty of thought, and equality to all citizens. Constitution provided for equality of women and called State to take measures to neutralize the socio-economic, educational and political disadvantage faced by women.

- Article 14: It guarantees equality before law and equal protection of law with in the territory of India.
- Article 15: It prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth. According to article 15(3), State can make special provisions for the benefit women and children.
- Article 16: Equality of opportunity for all citizens in matter relating to employment. No citizen can be denied employment on grounds of religion, race, cast, sex, decent, place of birth residence or any of them.
- Article 39: Article 39(a) provides for an adequate means of livelihood for all citizen. Article 39 (b) has provisions for equal pay for equal work for both men and women. Article 39 (c) has provisions for securing the health and strength of workers, men and women, and not to abuse the tender age of children.
- Article 42: It guarantees just and humane condition of work and maternity relief. Article 42 is in accordance with Article 23 and 25 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- Article 325 and 326: They guarantee political equality, equal right to participate in political activity and right to vote, respectively.



• Article 243 (D): It provides for the political reservation to women in every panchayat elections. It has extended this reservation to elected office as well.

In spite of the above provisions, participation of women in politics has not improved significantly. These are contradictory to the aims of the constitution.

### Challenges

Women who demonstrated their bravery during freedom movement found it difficult to make the gain ground in electoral politics due to the following reasons:

- Problem of party backing. The political parties are reluctant to provide more seats to women candidates. Women are not able to change social attitudes about women.
- Women have began to dislike the rough life offered by politics. While many are ready to endure the hardships provided by the political life, they have not been able to change the social stereotypes and attitudes about women's place in the society. Many women have expressed their dislike for political process and has opted for the gentler working atmosphere provided by social welfare work.
- Cultural environment puts maximum emphasis on men. Apart from it criminalization of politics and the political environment of instability and personality traits are the primary causes for marginal participation of women in politics.

### Need for political participation of women

UNICEF cites the following reasons for the political participation of women:

- Political participation of women has the potential to change societies.
- It can have impact on outcomes for women and children especially in the distribution of community resources.
- Their participation in peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction is important to ensure the safety and protection of children and vulnerable sections of populations.

### Global scenario

At the global level also, only a few countries have equal participation of women in par with men in politics. In countries like Germany, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland, women's participation in the decision making process is substantial. Sweden with 47% female participation has almost equal participation of women in Parliament followed by Cuba and Iceland.

Women's presence in parliament is highest in Nordic countries (42.5%), followed by America (22%), Europe (19.5%), Asia (18%), Sub-Saharan Africa (18%), the Pacific (15%) and lastly in Arab states (9.4%). Global debate the issue of political empowerment of women has become the agenda of various international conferences and symposiums. The issue came at the forefront at the time of the Fourth World Conference on Women held at Beijing in 1995. At the conference, it was declared that women's political participation is crucial for the general process of the advancement of women. This conference stressed the importance of women's political participation not only because of their points of view and talents, but also as a matter of their human rights.

### Way forward

- Political parties should come forward to increase women representatives. The absence of critical mass of women representatives has pushed women to the fringes in power sharing and has adverse impacts on thire overall political status.

- Gender stereotypes which perceive women as weak representatives should be changes through awareness and education. Efforts need to be taken to enhance the participation of women in governance in large numbers.
- Women’s Reservation Bill which reserves 33% of seats for Indian women at the legislatures has to be passed soon in the Parliament.
- Women’s leadership and communication skills need to be enhanced by increasing female literacy especially in rural areas. They should be empowered in order to break socio-cultural barriers and improve their status in the society.
- Women panchayati members have to be trained to analyse and understand their roles and responsibilities given in the 73<sup>rd</sup> amendment act.

Present the status and role of women in India have seen drastic changes over the past millennia. In ancient times, Indian women’s role was confined to the house and their families. In the Medieval period, the status of women was declined considerably. And in modern times, women started fighting for their rights and equality.

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## Inspiring Stories of Female Entrepreneurs In India

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As time changes, the rise of female entrepreneurs in India has shown that women in business are capable of matching the success of their male counterparts. Especially in a country that is deeply patriarchal in several areas, it's not just difficult but challenging for female entrepreneurs. Women here are still considered to be emotional, less ambitious, and not supposed to lead an initiative and turn it into a profit-making business.

But here's the fact – women are no longer held bound by this perception. They are equivalent to males when it comes to starting or running a profitable business. And we know this because we have seen it. Despite the increase, female entrepreneurs continue to face several unique challenges. These challenges often range from lower personal financial assets to gender discrimination and social taboos.

**Although the word entrepreneur is a gender-neutral term, it has long been reserved for men.**

While the success stories of these entrepreneurs are often chronicled, their hardships and struggles are rarely touched upon. Below, we'll list some female entrepreneurs in India who've defied norms, taken risks, faced obstacles and reached the pinnacle of success. The notable female entrepreneurs listed below come from different walks of life in India.

**All started from scratch or with very little support, whether it be finance or experience.**

Yet, they've all reached the peak of their career by changing the business landscape of India. Read on to see how these women touched upon lives with their sheer grit, determination and strength of purpose.

### **Falguni Nayar – Founder of Nykaa**

When it comes to talking about female entrepreneurs in India, it's hard to miss Falguni Nayar. Born and raised seeing her father running a small business, Ms. Nayar bid adieu to her position as the Managing Director of Kotak Mahindra Capital at the age of 50 to start her own business from scratch. That's how a future unicorn was born.

### **Moment of inspiration**

Ms. Nayar was an IIM Ahmedabad alumna for approx 20 years. She worked as a venture investor and merchant at Kotak Mahindra Group. After running the group's global operations in the US and UK, she started as the head of the institutional equity division. In 2005 she was appointed as the MD of Kotak Mahindra Capital. She took the leap of faith and left her job to start an online retailer of beauty products, Nykaa in the year 2012. She left her 'ideal' and 'secure' job behind to follow her passion at the age when most people start planning about retirement. She observed the market and found a gap. Drawing inspiration from real-life success like Ronnie Screwvala of UTV and Ajay Bijli of PVR Cinemas, she built the headquarters of Nykaa in Mumbai – the place she was born and brought up.

### **Aditi Gupta – Co-Founder of Menstrupedia**

Not every day do we get to see entrepreneurs who start their journey to make a change. A change that could actually help solve a real problem for millions of people. Such an entrepreneur is Aditi Gupta. Aditi's small initiative helped thousands of girls get an education about something Indians don't like to talk about openly, even today.

#### **Moment of inspiration**

By means of an Indian conservation family belief – a woman, during her menstrual period is prohibited to enter the kitchen or the place of worship. She is not allowed to cook or do various chores even at her own house.

While how absurd this sounds, it's a very common belief in the majority of rural and definite urban areas in India. Born and brought up in a very small city of Jharkhand in India, Aditi got her first period at the age of 12. Even at that tender age, she had to sleep in a separate area in her house, wash her clothes separately, and wasn't allowed to participate in any worship-related activity, every time she got her period. That's what Aditi wanted to change with her small yet effective initiative –

Aditi started Menstrupedia, a Hindi comic book with her husband Tuhin Patel in 2012. The whole idea behind that comic was to create awareness and knowledge about menstruation and hygiene.

#### **Notable success**

Within two years since the inception of Menstrupedia, Aditi was listed in the Forbes 20 under 20 list for her commendable job in breaking the taboos related to menstruation in India.

### **Vani Kola – CEO of Kalaari Capital**

Born in Hyderabad, Vani completed her graduation with a degree in Electrical Engineering from Osmania University. After graduation, she moved to the US and did her master's degree from Arizona State University. After completing her education, she began working in the tech industry with renowned companies like Empros, Control Data Corporation, and Consilium Inc. After continuing as an employee for over 12 years, she started her own venture, RightWorks, an e-procurement company in 1996.

After selling RightWorks in 2001, she started Nth Orbit, a company dealing with supply chain software development in San Jose. Later under this company, a software called Certus was developed which was purchased by PepsiCo.

#### **Moment of inspiration**

After working as an employee and then founding two companies, Vani decided to come back to India after 22 years and take on a new adventure in 2006.

#### **The same year, she started her journey as a venture capitalist.**

For a month, she traveled and met people around India to understand the Indian market. After extensive market research, Vani started noticing the signs of potential for growth in startups. The

same year she started Indo-US Venture Partners (IUVP), in partnership with New Enterprise Associates (NEA) alongside Vinod Dham. After four years of operations, she went solo and rebranded her firm as Kalaari Capital. Kalaari focused on investing in early-stage, tech-based startups across India. The company believed in investing in startups that:

- No other company is willing to invest in
- Have the potential to grow and become a leader in its niche

That's how Kalaari started to help new startups and also built its name in the industry.

### **Priya Paul – Chairperson of Park Hotels**

Priya Paul is considered one of the most successful female entrepreneurs in India and a legendary figure in the hospitality industry. She hails from a prestigious business family, After completing her graduation in Economics from Wellesley College in the U.S, Priya joined the family business at the marketing Division of Park Hotels. She initially reported to her father and Chairperson, Surrendra Paul. In less than two years, she became the Acting General Manager of The Park, New Delhi. However, in 1990, she lost her father in a tragic incident when the ULFA militants gunned down Surrendra Paul. Only one year before that incident, Priya's younger brother Anand died in a car accident. These incidents left a vacuum both in the family and at the workplace.

### **Moment of inspiration**

At a very young age of 23, and with very little experience, Priya was left to manage all three hotels of The Park – a huge challenge that she solemnly took up. Soon, she realized the hotels needed a major renovation and created a kind of revolution in India's hospitality industry.

### **Priya single-handedly introduced the concept of boutique hotels in India.**

Besides, trendy and contemporary designs and interiors – a sharp contrast to the country's archetypical 5-star properties – she introduced innovative concepts such as:

- Amusing corners for guests to hang out
- Themed lounges
- In-vogue restaurants

She also experimented with the menus and music. Her initiatives helped her hotel chain tackle the recession of the early 1990s.

### **Notable success**

Today, she owns a chain of six hotels across major cities including Kolkata, New Delhi, Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Visakhapatnam. This mompreneur is known for her innovation, strong will and spontaneity. She credits meditation as the tool that helps her stay calm and motivated. Priya is also a recipient of numerous prestigious awards, including the Padma Shri award given by the Indian Government in 2012.

## **5. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Founder of Biocon**

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Kiran graduated college in the late 1970s with a B.Sc. in Biology and Zoology. However, she aspired to follow in her father's footsteps later in life. Her father's work, as the head brew master for one of India's largest beer companies, inspired her to change her career. Shortly after, she headed to Australia to train as a brew master. Her intentions were to return to India and obtain a job with her newfound knowledge. However, the Indian brewing industry was heavily male dominated (still true today) and employers refused to offer her a job. In an interview with The Financial Times, Kiran recalls, "I was being politely told, 'we are very impressed with your qualifications, but this is not a woman's job.'" **Moment of inspiration** Undeterred and with little support, she decided to start her own venture and began building her own business from scratch. She understood that entrepreneurship was traditionally a male bastion and that the country wasn't kind to women in business, but she chose to persevere anyway.

Luckily, she met an Irish entrepreneur, Leslie Auchincloss, who was looking for an Indian partner to produce enzymes – a role that suited her interest in biology. Kiran launched Biocon India in 1978 as a joint venture with Ireland-based Biocon Biochemicals, retaining a 70% stake in the company. She started the business in the garage of her rented house in Bengaluru with a seed capital of Rs. 10,000. Today, Biocon is one of India's largest biotech companies, with a market capitalization of nearly \$7bn on the Bombay Stock Exchange. And Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw is India's first self-made Indian female billionaire, and an inspiration to hundreds of male and female entrepreneurs.

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Bottom of Form

### **Richa Kar, Co-Founder & CEO of Zivame**

Richa Kar was born in Jamshedpur and comes from a very conservative family. After completing her engineering from BITS Pilani, followed by a brief stint in the IT sector, she moved on to complete her master's from Narsee Monji Institute of Management Studies in 2007. Soon after, she worked at SAP Retail Consulting, a company that helped her gain valuable retail experience. One of her clients included the famous lingerie company, Victoria's Secret. This opportunity offered her a chance to research the Indian lingerie market, where she realized a social discomfort that was causing a myriad of issues for both women shoppers and retailers.

### **Moment of inspiration**

To solve this problem, she developed a business idea to help women understand their lingerie needs and get the right products without hassle. In 2011, she co-founded Zivame (meaning "radiance" in Hebrew) with her friend Kapil Karekar to put her ideas into play. Initially, she had to overcome several challenges including pushback from her family. The idea of talking about lingerie was a major taboo in India. Another big challenge was finding ways to finance her endeavor. In the initial phase, Richa borrowed Rs. 30,00,000 from friends and close family.

The founders started in a small office space. As the business grew, the company secured funding from investors including IDG Ventures, Kalaari Capital and Unilazer Ventures. In three years, Zivame grew from a small business to a team of more than 200 members. It is now one of India's leading online lingerie stores, making Richa one of the most influential female entrepreneurs.

### **Kalpna Saroj – Chairperson, Kamani Tubes**

Born to a Dalit family in Roperkheda village in Maharashtra, Kalpna was the eldest daughter of a police constable. She was married off at the age of 12 in a Mumbai slum, where she faced mental and physical abuse at the hands of her in-laws. She was later rescued by her father, where she left her husband and returned to her village to live with her parents. However, after being ostracized

by the villagers, a self-assured Kalpana moved back to Mumbai to live with her uncle's family at the age of 16.

### **Moment of inspiration**

From there, she started working in a garment factory to support her family. She successfully started a tailoring business using government loans for backward caste people and launched schemes to help the unemployed. Kalpana then entered into the real estate business and in a short period, earned Rs. 4 crore from the property business. She even ventured into film production.

### **Notable success**

Her most successful venture has been the revival of Kamani Tubes a sick company for more than two decades. She is credited with steering the company back to profits and is currently the Chairperson of the company. Kalpana got the prestigious Padma Shri Award for Trade and Industry in 2013. She was appointed to the board of directors of Bhartiya Mahila Bank, a bank primarily for women, under the Government of India.

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## The Origin of Healthcare for Women in India

**Dr. P. Jyoshna, Lecturer in Commerce,PVKN Govt. College (A) ,Chittoor.**

**P.Raveendranath Reddy, Lecturer In Horticulture, SVCR Govt. Degree College,Palamaner**

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Today women's health has become a significant platform for all to get on to. In addition to doctors, pharmaceutical industry, social organizations, women's groups, philanthropists and government bodies have decided to contribute time, effort and money to this worthy cause. There have been several slogans to promote health care for women like "Women's Health—Nations Wealth" and "Healthy Mother—Healthy Family". Many more such motivational messages have encouraged health professionals, especially the obstetricians and gynaecologists to participate in these programs. No doubt it has had an impact on our society and women's health has been improving steadily over the years. But to understand how and when this issue of women's health started being understood as a problem and soon became a challenge, we have to go back to the nineteenth century. That is why I call this "A story of the world of yesterday".

### Scenario in the Late Nineteenth Century

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However, many enlightened persons, social activists were deeply concerned. The country was governed by the British. Policies and budgets came from London. The British officialdom was also very sympathetic to the cause of Women's Health. Queen Victoria was reigning and was designated as "Empress of India" in 1876. She was deeply interested in India .

Queen Victoria (1819–1901).

It is said "She never visited India but, in many ways, India came to her". Her trusted aide was Munshi Abdul Karim. He regaled her with many stories about India. Visiting dignitaries, Maharaja's and Maharani's called on her. She welcomed them to her court and listened to their problems. She even learnt Hindi at the age of 86 years so that she could communicate easily with her subjects from India. They informed her about the poor condition of women's health. She promised to help and she actually did! She decided to send British women doctors to India. This was at a time when British women had just entered the medical profession against all odds and were struggling to establish themselves. Her sympathetic attitude changed the scenario.

In the year 1845 the first medical college in India was started in Mumbai. The Grant Medical College , which offered a licentiate course in modern medicine. Similar medical colleges were opened in Madras(Chennai) and Calcutta.

Sir J. J. Hospital 1845—original building.

Mumbai was known as Bombay then! The population of Bombay realized the value of medical science. Doctors were treated as "God" and started practicing in areas around Bombay and gradually into remote villages in the country side. This college was not open to women, for the first 18 years of its existence. It was only in 1885 that the gates were opened to women. 5 brave women entered the profession. They were not welcomed but were actually ridiculed as they entered the classrooms. At about the same time, women were admitted in Calcutta and Madras colleges also.

There were a handful of individuals who played a pivotal role and this epistle deals with the life and works of these contributors.



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George Kittredge (1833-1917): He was an American American Businessman working in Bombay

He was deeply concerned about the poor health status of women. He was a “compassionate capitalist” and believed that “great wealth involved social responsibility”. Capitalism and free enterprise had brought much prosperity to USA. Some compassionate capitalists felt duty bound to do social service nationally and internationally. Amongst them were Ford, Fullbright, Rockefeller and Kittredge in India.

His first objective was to begin a movement to collect funds for the worthy cause. It was called “Medical Women of India Fund of 1883 Contributions came from all over the world. This fund set up a scholarship fund for best woman graduate at MBBS examination of Bombay University. The student was also honoured with “Lady Reay Silver Medal” which was because of a donation from Lady Reay who was the wife of the Governor of Bombay. The student was also honoured with a silver medal from the President of India later in 1952 It was an incentive for women doctors to perform well and continue post graduate studies.

Dr. Edith PecheyPhipson (1845–1908)

Dr. Edith PecheyPhipson arrived in Mumbai in December 1885 and took charge as the 1st superintendent of Cama and Albless Hospital which opened in 1886Cama Hospital—Heritage building which still stands today.

It was a hospital run by the women doctors for women and children of Bombay, started by parsiphilanthropist. She learnt hindi (local language) fast. She had progressive ideas about women’s social status and went about promoting women’s empowerment. She lent support to campaign against child marriage, promoted equal pay for equal work and encouraged the education of young girls and started nurses training. She also got involved in other social and educational institutes as a member of Royal Asiatic Society of Bombay. She met and married Herbert Phipson in 1889. Incidentally he was also a member of Medical Women of India Fund. Unfortunately, she suffered ill health and developed diabetes. She gave 20 years of her life to improving the health care for women and children in Mumbai. During this time bubonic plague struck the city and her public health measures saved many lives.

PecheyPhipson and her husband returned to England in 1905. She continued her interest in improving the status of women. This time she championed the Suffragist movement. Her health let her down as she developed breast cancer and passed away in 1908.

Dr. AnandibaiJoshi(1865–1887): 1st indian woman doctor

A significant development at that time was the story of Anandibai Joshi who, against much opposition, went to USA and studied medicine. She was ostracised by the society for two unthinkable actions on her part. One was to get educated and that too in English language. And secondly to travel to a far-off country to learn medicine. She returned to India with a medical degree in 1886. Surprisingly on her return, the atmosphere had changed. She was welcomed with great jubilation. Telegrams and congratulations poured in. She was featured in Indian newspapers. Queen Victoria sent a personal congratulatory message to Anandibai and to the college which gave her the opportunity and scholarship. She was appointed “Physician in Charge” of the female ward of Albert Edward Hospital(today’s CPR hospital) in Kolhapur. This hospital is now affiliated to the medial college. Unfortunately, she fell ill with tuberculosis and succumbed to the disease at a tender young age of 22 years on February 26, 1887

KadambiniGanguly:

She was from Kolkata and was one of the first two female physicians from India. She was also the first South Asian female physician, trained in western medicine, to graduate in South Asia in 1886. She fought for women's rights

Dr. Annette Benson:

She was the next British medical doctor who succeeded Dr. Pechey Phipson as director and medical officer at the Cama and Albless Hospital. She was an able administrator and was deeply concerned about the working conditions of women doctors. With the idea of improving their condition, she formed the "Association of Medical Women in India" in 1907 and made it possible for women doctors to serve in the military hospitals during the 1st world war. The services were much appreciated. The Dufferin Fund was set up in 1887 and opened several Dufferin hospitals all over India to give modern obstetric care to women. The Lady Hardinge medical college for the medical education of women by women professors was started in Delhi.

In Bombay Cama and Albless hospital which was opened in 1886 with a heritage building continues to function today as a teaching hospital.

Jerusha Jhirad:

She was Cama hospital's first Indian superintendent from 1928 to 1947. She did monumental research on the health status of women. She was invited by the government to conduct a statistical enquiry in Bombay on maternal deaths in Bombay from 1937-1938. She was also the chairman of the "Maternity and Child Welfare Advisory Committee" of ICMR.

Dr. Jerusha Jhirad (1891-1984)

She has been the founder member of FOGSI, its first president, and founder editor of the journal of FOGSI. She was well respected by the British government and was decorated with the title of "Member of British Empire" (MBE). Her contributions were also appreciated by Government of India by conferring on her Padmashri in 1962. On her 80th birthday, a library was opened in Cama Hospital called "Jhirad Library". After her demise, her friends and well-wishers established an oration in her name which has become very prestigious with international and national orators.

In Bombay many maternity hospitals were set up by various communities for the welfare of women from their own communities. Some of these are Parsi lying-in hospital for Parsi women, Ruxmani hospital for Hindu women and Dholkawala maternity home for Muslim women. Indian doctors were well qualified and could take care of all the cases.

Dr. Ida Scudder:

She started a small medical dispensary and clinic for women in Vellore, near Madras (Chennai), with \$10,000 grant from Mr. Schell, a Manhattan banker in 1899. She started the Mary Taber Schell Hospital in 1902, and later in 1918 opened a medical school for girls only, with financial backing from Reformed Church in America. This school is standing tall even today as Christian Medical College, Vellore

But by the dawn of the twentieth century the tide had turned. Women doctors were looked up to and were given responsible jobs which saved many lives. Thus, in the 50 years from 1885 to 1935 there was tremendous improvement in the healthcare of women. A cadre of efficient Indian men and women doctors were ready to take over all the hospitals set up for the purpose. They were ready to take up the challenges faced by the earlier generations. It must be mentioned that several prominent gentlemen and powerful social organisations championed the cause of improving the status of women and making available modern health care. Thus, it became a social movement and had an impact of changing the attitude of people. From 1935 to 1945, the world was torn

asunder by the 2nd world war. India fought bravely with the British. At the same time India was fighting for “Swaraj” and to become an independent nation. All other social issues did not receive much attention. But the independence movement saw the rise of many competent women, freedom fighters, politicians and social workers. Women proved that, given a chance, they could contribute to the development of the nation.

### Post-Independence India

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Mahatma Gandhi wrote to RajkumariAmrit Kaur on October 21st, 1936. “If you women would only realise your dignity and privilege and make full use of it for mankind, you would make the world a much better place than it is. Now I am in search of a woman who would realise her mission. Are you that woman or will you be one?

She must have been motivated by those words. A decade later in 1947, after independence, the 1st health minister was RajkumariAmrit Kaur.

RajkumariAmrit Kaur (1889–1964). India’s first Health Minister.

She started attending to the problems of women’s health. India was one of the earliest nations to start “family planning” as a national programme in 1952. It gave a boost to the improvement of women’s health.

With the establishment of FOGSI in the year 1950, there was a national organisation of professionals devoted to the cause of women’s health.

By then society had changed and become more modernised. The need for ‘Zenana Hospitals’ was no longer felt. Men and women doctors joined the organisations on equal footing. In recent times the ratio of female doctors is increasing. In fact over the last 5 years, India has produced 4500 more female medical graduates than male ones . There is no more paucity of women doctors caring for women.

Many brilliant obstetricians and gynaecologists from India and FOGSI made their mark nationally and internationally. Obstetrics benefited most by the development of blood transfusion, antibiotics, and anaesthesia which all came post world war II. This helped to bring down the maternal mortality rate.

### International

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Internationally United Nations and World Health Organisation came into existence to promote the cause of women’s health worldwide.

The millenuim development goals (MDG) announced in the year 2000 gave clear goals and directions. Many states in India did reach the goals and many others made substantial gains. After 2015 sustainable development goals (SDG) were announced with a time line of 2030. It has a broader outlay with emphasis on non-communicable diseases. One of its goals is to reduce mortality due to cancer by 30%. Hence prevention of cancer in women has become an important issue for women’s health.

### Conclusion

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We are now completing two decades of the twentyfirst century. Much has been achieved, but much more needs to be done. There are many social factors which are intrinsically linked to health. Women’s empowerment is perhaps the most important one. Empowerment through health and

health through empowerment has also become a slogan. Social issues like girl's education, safety and abolishment of child marriages are being emphasised and taken care of. However, poverty, malnutrition and housing are problems which are difficult to solve. Society needs to pay more attention to gender disparity and encourage gender harmony. It may take a few more generations perhaps to achieve, but we are on the right path and just need to keep walking.

One fine day, women's health care may cease to be a special problem and it will just be a problem of "universal healthcare for humankind".

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## **The Role And Major Challenges Faced By Women Entrepreneurs In The Contemporary World**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Women are required to take out economic activities and support their households anywhere in the modern world when the cost of living rises. The majority of governments make particular allowances for women's advancement, and they work hard to maximize the potential of women's skills. When we use the word "women entrepreneur," we refer to the act of a woman owning a business or starting one, which strengthens her status in society and gives her more economic power. As a result, womanly entrepreneurs have had a significant influence on almost all economic sectors. The social structure of Indian society was changing as a result of women's improved educated status and diverse ambitions for a better life, which forced Indian women to alter their way of life. In every sphere of life, she has challenged man and prevailed over him, and entrepreneurship is no exception. They are confident, swaying, and risk-takers. They were able to compete successfully and survive thanks to their devotion, tenacity, and hard work. Women entrepreneurs must be adequately formed with entrepreneurial qualities and talents to face the shifting trends and challenges of the international marketplace, as well as to be capable of sustaining and pursuing brilliance in the entrepreneurial sphere. In this paper, an effort was made to research the role of women entrepreneurs and to study the major challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in the contemporary world.

Keywords: Women entrepreneur, Challenges, Women's Advancement, Contemporary World.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The economic and social demographics of India have been greatly impacted by the rise of women entrepreneurs in that nation. Millions of families have been lifted out of poverty thanks to women's engagement in the workforce, which has also helped create jobs. In modern industries like electronic manufacturing, where women constitute the majority of the workforce due to their high levels of productivity and leadership abilities, women rule. This work ethic and remarkable entrepreneurial abilities have also highlighted how crucial women are to the modern workforce.

Women have been applauded for their abilities and recognized for their potential in a variety of fields, including politics, international relations, law, academia, medical, engineering, and administration, but they have yet to be successful in the arena of entrepreneurship. Since the economic standing of women is now recognized as a key indicator of the progress of society, it is essential to remove barriers to women's entrepreneurship. This requires action from the government, legislators, the financial sector, culture, and the family. Women's entrepreneurial initiatives will make a significant contribution to economic emancipation. It is also essential for every country's economic stability and growth.

In practically all economies, the digit of women entrepreneurs is rapidly intensifying. Increasing responsiveness to women's roles and economic standing in the world has led to an increase in the latent market potential of women. Women are becoming more aware of their traits, rights, and workplace conditions as a result of the entrance of the media. Women may now be seen working in every industry, from pickles to telecoms, since the glass ceiling has been broken. For women to become successful business owners and to participate more actively in these activities, the right efforts must be made in all areas.

We may thus affirm that women are the foundation of the advancement of our nation. Through a range of activities, they eventually contribute to the national revenue of our nation. Additionally, it helps to increase the overall economic performance of our nation. The Indian government is working hard to encourage entrepreneurship in the contemporary world.

## **2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

**Singh and Riana (2013)** addressed the issues and difficulties experienced by women business owners in India and also examined the government's programmes for women. The primary goal of the study was to ascertain the situation of Indian women entrepreneurs. According to the survey, an increasing number of women are starting their own businesses, especially MSMEs, in contemporary India. A place for into the world that is controlled by males has been imprinted by Indian women; it was also noted in the study. It also shows that Indian women are capable of managing both domestic and professional obligations.

According to **Meenu Goyal & Jai Parkash (2011)**, "the lower class in India has obstacles and opportunities that have an impact on women's entrepreneurship. Their paper aims to investigate the notion of women entrepreneurs, the factors that lead to women starting their own businesses, the reasons behind their slow growth, suggestions for women's growth, and programmes for the promotion and development of women entrepreneurs in India."

**Sunil Deshpande, Sunita Sethi, Shodh, and Samikshaaur Mulyankan(2009)** demonstrated in their study that the positive and negative aspect of an enterprise and offer answers to the different issues that the women entrepreneur groups confront. In order to improve the status of women entrepreneurs, more emphasis should be placed on educating this segment of the population, raising awareness of the need for women to excel in the business world, and helping them recognize their strengths, significant role in society, and significant impact they can have on both their sector of the economy and the entire economy.

In her research, **Arakeri Shanta (2013)** found that women make excellent entrepreneurs and choose to pursue these careers since they can maintain a healthy work-life balance. The hurdles that women entrepreneurs confront from their families and society are numerous, despite the fact that we have a lot of successful female entrepreneurs in our nation and a male-dominated culture.

The crucial motivational elements for female entrepreneurs and their effects on their performance were found by **V Krishnamoorthy and R Balasubramani (2014)**. According to the study, the key entrepreneurial motivator variables are desire, expertise, capabilities, support from family members, market opportunity, liberty, and fulfillment. The study came to the additional conclusion that the entrepreneurial motivational factors of desire, expertise, skills and liberty had a major influence on business performance.

In line with **Priyanka Sharma Gurnani (2014)**, "At both the startup and operational stages, women business owners encountered several challenges, including a lack of funding and having to juggle two roles: one at their homes and another at work. The challenges faced by female entrepreneurs have decreased as a result of technological development and the proliferation

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of information technology. To transform the way society thinks and provide women a platform for entrepreneurship, technical advancements must be accompanied by a social revolution of the mind. Furthermore, the expansion of women's entrepreneurship may be significantly accelerated by boosting public, private, and other forms of institutional financial support for different types of female entrepreneurs across the economy."

**V. Gowri Lakshmi (2018)** in her study on the sector of women entrepreneurs is expanding globally. It is a priority for many foundations and civil society organizations, and it is on the agenda of the majority of multilateral organizations and international development agencies. An increasing body of research has shown that women come close to leadership and decision-making in company differently from males, may do healthier with specialized education and training programmes, and provide a unique perspective and influence to entrepreneurship. Despite having strong leadership skills, women entrepreneurs nevertheless confront several challenges that are affected by societal and economical considerations.

**Dr.Parul Sharda(2017)** stated that while achieving gender justice and equality are admirable objectives in and of themselves, it is critical to remember that enhancing female long-term poverty rates is not solely a women's concern. Women who are employed and earning a living have more agencies, which benefits men and children and is, reflected in improved human development indices.

**Chinmayee Sahoo (2020)** in their article analyzed that the nation's economy is divided into three categories: developed, developing, and undeveloped. According to statistics, it is well known that in economies with high levels of development, women are free to pursue their own businesses and are given the same priority as men. However, in economies with low levels of development, women face a variety of issues, despite the fact that governments often implement programmes to help them. Every day, the number of women is increasing in all fields and industries. As researchers, software developers, politicians, financial analysts, academics, legal professionals, medical professionals, and entrepreneurs, they have made more contributions than other. Therefore, it is abundantly obvious that women contribute significantly and in a crucial way to the economy.

In the words of **Mukta Goyal(2021)**, women significantly contribute to the country's economic development. Women are persistently pursuing their own entrepreneurial undertakings with innovative products and services that have been advantageous to society as a whole, despite several obstacles in their way. People used to believe that women began enterprises due to internal factors like fresh ideas, inventiveness, and the drive to take risks, rather than external factors like necessity, desperation, or the loss of their spouses.

As stated by **Pachorkar.S, Kawishwar.S & Sharda.P (2020)**, the world has positively embraced some changes in topical years, as a result of the rise in literacy rates, growing urbanization, advancement in education, standard of living, and other components, enabling women to be engaged and take positions on a comparable basis with men in almost all every sphere. As an outcome, women's entrepreneurship and empowerment have grown.As a result, women's entrepreneurship and empowerment have grown. Women entrepreneurs are defined as anyone who starts an enterprise based on their analytical skills, original ideas, and attitudes, and then combines these elements to effectively and successfully create, expand, organize, manage, direct, work, and maintain the setup.

### **3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To study the concepts of entrepreneur, entrepreneurship and Women entrepreneurship

- To depict the role of women entrepreneurs in the development of country's economy
- To analyze the motives of women entrepreneurs to enter into their own businesses
- To examine the major challenges faced by Women entrepreneurs in the contemporary context.

#### **4. METHODOLOGY OF STUDY**

This paper is based on in-depth secondary research of information gathered from several books, Regional & Global Journals, and public and commercial publications available on different websites and in libraries paying attention on various areas of Women Entrepreneurship. The case studies were gathered from secondary sources, such as blogs through the internet and newspapers.

#### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

##### **ENTREPRENEUR & ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

An entrepreneur is an individual who takes the initiation to organize a business and to take advantage of a possibility in their role as the decision-maker, determines where, when, and by how much of a product or service is going to be supplied. In addition to monitoring and controlling the business operations, an entrepreneur provides money to act as a risk taker. A solo proprietor, a partner, or the person who has the majority of shares in a corporation is typically the entrepreneur. The provided equation explains what an entrepreneur is genuinely like if that person wants to be one.

According to Schumpeter, an entrepreneur is “a person who establishes a novel idea into the economy, such as a production method that has not yet been tried and tested by experience in the manufacturing branch, a product that customers have not yet become familiar with, an entirely novel source of raw materials, new markets, or the like.”

Entrepreneurship is an approach by which a person or group of people take an advantage of a business prospect, either by creating an innovative artifact or method or by significantly enhancing an already existing products, service, or manufacturing technique. This procedure is often carried out by a new firm (a start-up firm), but it can also ensue in an accessible miniature business that makes a extensive revolutionize to its product or business model.

In simple terms, the following describes the term of entrepreneurship:

- Decision-making, invention, execution, future projection, becoming independent, and success are all aspects of entrepreneurship.
- The discipline of entrepreneurship has a theoretical underpinning and is the result of complex socioeconomic, psychological, technical, legal, and other elements.
- The procedure is unpredictable and hazardous.
- It incorporates resources in terms of money, technology, and human skill.
- Both large and small firms, as well as economic and non-economic activities, can benefit from entrepreneurship.
- While several entrepreneurs may have certain characteristics, each will also have some distinctive and individual attributes.



- Being an entrepreneur requires creativity.
- An entrepreneurial mindset is one that looks for possibilities, takes measured risks, and gains from starting a business.
- It entails the planning, development, and management of an enterprise.

## WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Women who initiate their own businesses are those who come up with the initiative, instigate the firm, assemble and integrate the many production aspects, run the business, take risks, and administer the economic ambiguity that comes with operating it.

In accordance with **the Indian government**, “a woman-owned and -controlled business is one that gives not less than 51% of provided employment to women and has a minimal financial stake of 51% in its capital.”

**J. Schumpeter** asserts that “women who create new ideas, set up, or adopt business effectively are known as women entrepreneurs.”

### What Motives Indian Women to Start Their Own Businesses?

Despite the fact that there are more women starting businesses, their proportion relative to the whole population is still rather low. The degree of women entrepreneurship in India is, nevertheless, rising due to a number of causes, including:

- *The context of entrepreneurship* Women engage in entrepreneurial activity because traditional employment does not provide them the freedom, autonomy, or challenge that comes with owning a firm.
- *Encouragement* Various sources of data indicate that women are not lacking in the drive to start their own businesses. Compared to their male peers, they frequently have greater inspiration to overcome startup obstacles.
- *Self-Empower* Indian women are currently gaining more authority. Legislation is being created step by step to provide them additional chances at various levels.
- *Social Aspects* There is a significant affirmative connection between population increase and entrepreneurship. More populace, regardless of gender, is forced into essential entrepreneurship due to increasing requirements and competitiveness for jobs.
- *Economic Situation* Favorable economic circumstances encourage women to engage in entrepreneurship. The degree of female entrepreneurship and economic circumstances are favorably correlated due to the lower financial resources required and increased availability of bank loans. Indeed, in a nation like India, there is a positive correlation between entrepreneurship and the extent of the unofficial economy.
- *Knowledge & Skills* The initiation of business has been greatly aided by a higher level of education. Not only the uneducated are launching firms; those with knowledge and skills are also taking advantage of lucrative chances.
- The majority of low-income women are likely to start their own businesses.
- Women with modest amenities are more inclined to start their own businesses.

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- Married women represent a large percentage of the entrepreneurs. Their husband encouraged them to embark on entrepreneurship.
  - The majority of spinsters have trouble getting funding to launch their businesses.
  - A significant portion of women join the corporate world with little to no schooling or training.
  - Due to financial need, many women start their own businesses.
  - The motivation behind sustainability and expansion is women's honesty and labour.
  - Security is more important to women business owners than development.
  - The mainstream of women wants risk reduction and income stability.
  - Lack of operating capital among women-owned businesses results in low profit margins.

### **WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA**

These business owners have established successful startups in India that have improved the quality of life of many of their residents. By sheer willpower and a tireless work ethic, they have overcome all obstacles and setbacks to start their own enterprises from beginning. The top women entrepreneurs in India are **listed here**:

<b>THE COMPANY/BRAND</b>	<b>NAME OF FOUNDER/CO-FOUNDER/CEO</b>
PEPSICO.	INDRA NOOYI
THRILLOPHILIA	CHITRA GURNANI DAGA
MOBIKWIK & ZAAKPAY	UPASANATAKU
MENSTRUPEDIA	ADITI GUPTA
BYJU'S	DIVYA GOKULNATH
LIMEROAD	SUCHI MUKHERJEE
NYKAA	FALGUNI NAYAR
BIOCON LIMITED	KIRAN MAZUMDAR SHAW
SUGAR COSMETICS	VINEETA SINGH
VLCC GROUP	VANDANA LUTHRA
YATRA ONLINE	SABINA CHOPRA
MAMAEARTH	GHAZAL ALAGH
SHOPCLUES	RADHIKA GHAI AGGARWAL
ZIVAME	RICHA KAR
JETSETGO	KANIKA TEKRIWAL
CASHKARO.COM	SWATI BHARGAVA

KINETIC MOTOR

SULAJJAFIRODIA MOTWANI

SHRI MAHILA GRIHA UDYOG LIJJAT PAPAD

JYOTI NAYAK

BALAJI TELE FILMS

EKTA KAPOOR

SHAHNAZ HERBALS

SHAHNAZ HUSSAIN

TIMES GROUP

INDU JAIN

**THE CONTEMPORARY CHANGES ARE BEING LED BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS****MAJOR CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS**

The fact with the intention of women entrepreneurs be often not given due consideration is one of the biggest challenges they confront. The belief that women-owned firms are less profitable, creditworthy, and inventive remains a barrier even though women have established a reputation as competent company owners in sectors including retail, personal services, and business services. In addition to this, women entrepreneurs also encounter the following challenges:

- 1. Financial problems** Families don't support female entrepreneurs. They are self-effacing to invest money into an enterprise started by a woman entrepreneur. Due to the lack of actual assets registered in their names, banks and other financial institutions may be reluctant to lend money to women entrepreneurs, and they are hesitant to lend money to unmarried women or girls because they are unsure of who will pay back the loan after the couple gets married—their parents or in-laws. Unmarried women feel humiliated by this and frequently abandon the goal of starting their own businesses.
- 2. Availability of raw material** The majority of women-owned businesses struggle with an availability of raw materials and other essential inputs. The high cost of raw materials and the difficulty of obtaining them with even a little reduction are other factors.
- 3. A difficult market** In order to spend an extensive amount of money on advertising and canvassing, women business owners need the organizational infrastructure in a difficult market. As a result, they must contend with fierce rivalry from organized businesses and their male competitors when it comes to selling their products. Women-owned businesses eventually fail as a result of such competition.
- 4. Familial Limitations** In India, caring for the children of the family and other members falls predominantly on the shoulders of the women. Man merely has a supporting role. Especially married women, she must carefully manage her work and family responsibilities. Her whole focus on her family means that she has little to no time or energy left over for her business. For women to start their own businesses, their husbands' support and acceptance appear to be prerequisites. In light of this, women's involvement into commercial activities is positively influenced by their spouses' educational level and familial status.
- 5. Education deficiency** Economic difficulties are mostly caused by education deficiency. Women lack understanding of business, technology, and the market due to their lack of education, especially if it is of a poor quality. In addition, women tend to have lower accomplishment drive due to lack of schooling. As a result, women face a variety of challenges while starting and managing businesses due to their lack of education.
- 6. Men-domination** In India, patriarchy among men is still rampant. The Indian Constitution mentions gender equality. However, in reality, women are viewed as abala (Indian ethos) or weak in every way. Men have misconceptions about the role, aptitude, and potential of

women, and they treat them as a result. In a word, women aren't treated equally to males in the primarily male-dominated Indian culture. This in turn causes a barrier for women trying to enter the professional world.

- 7. Marketing implications** Women entrepreneurs had a number of marketing implications while promoting their goods, including an adverse business location, a lack of transportation availability and fierce competition from established and prominent businesses.
- 8. Health issues** Tension, back pain, eyestrain, tiredness, and headache were the main health issues that plagued female business owners. According to research, women experience exhaustion due to a lack of relaxation and sleep as well as a challenging schedule.
- 9. Lack of industry knowledge** Many industrial fields like manufacturing are still considered to be men's domains. Women are lacking in the opportunity to utilize the industry acquaintances, systems, or knowledge needed to be successfully operating a firm. Additionally, there is still an overall lack of industry knowledge in these areas despite the ongoing dismantling of prejudices. The use of technology has also revolutionized how women are empowered to acquire the required abilities and information.
- 10. Ability to bear minimal risk** Indian women have a sheltered lifestyle. They have lower levels of education and are not financially independent. These factors all lower their capacity to accept the risk associated with operating a business. A successful entrepreneur must be willing to take risks.
- 11. Problems with productivity** The majority of women's productivity problems are interrelated to the scarcity of raw materials. One of the causes of the delayed development of women entrepreneurs is the lack of raw materials. Other production issues include the absence of technology or machinery, a lack of training resources and a manpower shortage, as well as the high cost of necessary materials.
- 12. Missing Mentors** Most women either stay at home to care for their families or work as paid professionals in the public or private sector. Consequently, a lot of ladies don't frequently encounter a work environment. They miss out on opportunities to network with business people. As an end result, this impacts their learning opportunities and access to critical resources and mentors.

### **IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY**

Women entrepreneurs nowadays are contributing significantly to the economy, trade, and industry and their latest foray into businesses. Women have already established their significant connotation in fields including political affairs, supervision, engineering, medicine, technology, social services, and edification. This is trustworthy in developed nations, and recently, they have begun functioning in these disciplines in our nation. In India, their preamble into enterprise is a comparatively new occurrence.

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR TRANSFORMING CHALLENGES INTO POSSIBILITIES**

To assist women entrepreneurs in maximizing possibilities and removing challenges, the following actions are advised.

- There should be regular inspiration, support, motivation, and collaboration with female entrepreneurs.
- Increasing women's knowledge of the different threats they encounter should be the goal of a significant awareness campaign spots to conduct business.
- Efforts should be made to raise the general quality of women's education as well as to establish suitable provisions for their teaching, internships, and personality development programmes in order to raise women's overall personality standards.
- Create training courses to aid employees in acquiring technical skills in a variety of areas, including leadership, administration, advertising, financial management, manufacturing,

compensation planning, and accountancy. This could inspire more women to launch their own enterprises.

- Promising chances for career advancement for women.
- It is important to provide women in business with loans at low rates of interest and other financial aid to ensure that they may pursue their careers in the sector. Financial institutions should provide additional funding support for both small and large-scale enterprises.
- Women should get ready to use the most recent technological breakthroughs to keep up with changing times. Women need to be trained and educated in order to develop competencies and proficiency in all facets of business, together with administration. Women may benefit from this in the employment progression and in building a unyielding business association.
- Making appropriate decisions in favor of women entrepreneurs and enacting a strong stance adjacent to regulations or procedures that hamper their pathway to economic growth.
- To establish discussion boards for discussion of challenges, queries, difficulties, and presenting inquiries about challenges or issues in their path to economic advancement.

## CONCLUSION

Women are increasingly participating in entrepreneurship, and it is frequently asserted that this puts us in a stronger position. In terms of the wealth, initiatives are being taken to guarantee that Indian women have equivalent chances in all spheres, and legislation guaranteeing equal involvement in politics along with providing equal opportunities and constitutional rights in terms of edification and employment has been put into place. More women throughout the world are starting and running successful businesses thanks to increasing economic conditions, financial possibilities, and suitable education and job experience. This will transform the standing of women in the respective societies in addition to having an effect on the economics of the nations where women own enterprises. As we start this new millennium, it's likely that this will be an era of the entrepreneurship in general and of the female entrepreneur in particular. The main goal was to demonstrate how valuable women are to the economy. These creative brains have the power to propel the economy to heights that mankind cannot fathom. India needs more active participation from women while shaping the future.

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## Progress of Health Care System: Role Of Indian Women

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines the progress of the healthcare system in India, with a specific focus on the role of women. Women have made significant contributions to healthcare delivery, empowerment, and community health in the country. Their roles as healthcare professionals, community health workers, advocates, and caregivers have been instrumental in improving maternal and child health, promoting health education, and shaping healthcare policies. Despite the challenges of gender disparities and limited healthcare access in rural areas, empowering women in healthcare is crucial for further advancements in India's healthcare system. Recognizing and supporting the valuable contributions of women will contribute to the development of an effective accessible and equitable healthcare system in India.

### INTRODUCTION

This study examines the progress of the Indian healthcare system with a specific focus on the significant role of Indian women. Women in India have played a crucial role in healthcare provision caregiving, and community health practices. Despite challenges such as limited infrastructure and healthcare disparities, Indian women have emerged as catalysts for change. They have increased their representation in the healthcare workforce taken on leadership roles and implemented initiatives to address pressing healthcare issues. Through case studies and success stories we highlight their transformative impact and explore strategies to further empower women in healthcare. By acknowledging and supporting their contributions we can foster a more inclusive and equitable healthcare system in India.

### HISTORY

Throughout the history of healthcare development in India, Indian women have played a significant role in various aspects of healthcare practices. They have been custodians of traditional healing systems possessing extensive knowledge of medicinal herbs, therapies and healing techniques. Women's expertise in Ayurveda a holistic healing system has been instrumental in promoting wellness and treating ailments. Additionally, they have served as midwives providing care during childbirth and supporting mothers and infants. Indian women have also been actively involved in community healthcare offering guidance, comfort and remedies for common ailments. Their approach to healthcare encompasses physical, mental and spiritual well-being. In recent years there has been a growing recognition of the historical contributions and potential of Indian women in healthcare. Efforts have been made to empower women through education and promote their active participation in the healthcare workforce. This has led to an expansion of their roles beyond traditional boundaries in medicine, nursing and other healthcare professions.

### CHALLENGES IN THE INDIAN HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

The Indian healthcare system encounters various challenges that affect its efficiency and accessibility. These challenges include limitations in infrastructure and resources, which result in inadequate healthcare services especially in rural areas. The system also struggles with responding effectively to public health emergencies due to insufficient infrastructure, resources and coordination. Accessibility and affordability issues persist particularly for economically disadvantaged individuals and those in remote regions due to high out-of-pocket expenses and

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limited insurance coverage. Cultural barriers and societal norms surrounding women's health such as menstruation and reproductive health contribute to stigmatization and limited access to comprehensive care. Gender disparities in healthcare access and utilization further exacerbate the issue as women face discrimination and lack decision-making power. Moreover, there is a shortage of healthcare professionals particularly in rural areas which hampers timely and quality healthcare provision. The burden of non-communicable diseases and lifestyle-related health issues is increasing attributed to factors like poor nutrition, sedentary lifestyles and limited health education. Addressing these challenges is essential to improve the effectiveness and accessibility of the Indian healthcare system.

## **EMPOWERMENT AND PARTICIPATION OF INDIAN WOMEN IN HEALTHCARE**

The empowerment and active participation of Indian women in the healthcare sector have been instrumental in addressing gender disparities, improving health outcomes, and promoting inclusive healthcare delivery. Several key aspects contribute to their empowerment and participation:

1. **Women-Centric Health Initiatives:** Specific initiatives and programs cater to women's health issues, focusing on reproductive health, maternal and child healthcare, genderbased violence prevention, and mental health support. These initiatives prioritize and address women's unique health concerns.

2. **Education and Skill Development:** Increased access to education and skill development opportunities has empowered Indian women in healthcare. Efforts to enhance literacy rates and provide vocational training have opened doors for women to pursue careers as doctors, nurses, healthcare administrators, and allied health professionals.

3. **Advocacy and Policy Engagement:** Women's voices and perspectives play a crucial role in shaping healthcare policies and advocacy efforts. Women-led organizations and networks work towards gender-sensitive healthcare policies, addressing women's health needs, and advocating for gender equity in healthcare access and outcomes.

4. **Representation in Healthcare Workforce:** The representation of women in the healthcare workforce has seen significant progress. More women are entering medical colleges, nursing schools, and other healthcare training programs, contributing to a more diverse and gender-balanced healthcare workforce.

5. **Leadership Roles:** Women have shattered barriers and assumed leadership positions in the healthcare sector. They lead hospitals, healthcare organizations, research endeavours and policy initiatives, making significant contributions to shaping the direction and policies of the Indian healthcare system.

6. **Community Health and Outreach:** Indian women actively participate in community health and outreach programs, driving initiatives at the grassroots level. They serve as community health workers, health educators, and mobilizers, promoting health awareness, conducting screenings, and facilitating access to healthcare services in underserved areas.

7. **Mentorship and Support Networks:** Mentorship programs and support networks provide guidance, mentorship, and networking opportunities for women in healthcare. These initiatives foster professional growth, empower women to navigate career challenges, and create spaces for collaboration and knowledge-sharing.

## **IMPACT OF WOMEN IN HEALTHCARE DELIVERY**

The contributions of women in healthcare delivery have a significant and wide-ranging impact on individuals' families and communities. Women play a vital role in maternal and child healthcare



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providing crucial support and education to mothers and promoting positive health outcomes. They are also at the forefront of primary care and preventive health practices promoting healthy lifestyles and early disease detection. Women actively engage in community health outreach serving as key connectors between healthcare providers and underserved populations. Their gender-sensitive care addresses the specific needs of women, ensuring compassionate and comprehensive healthcare. Women in healthcare excel in providing empathy and emotional support creating a nurturing environment for patients. They assume leadership and advocacy roles driving policy changes and championing equitable access to healthcare. Additionally, women contribute to healthcare innovations research and technology adoption driving advancements in the field. Recognizing and supporting the contributions of women in healthcare is essential for building inclusive and patient-centered healthcare systems.

## **POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK**

The policy and legislative framework in India play a crucial role in shaping the healthcare system and addressing key challenges. It includes the National Health Policy which guides healthcare planning resource allocation and service delivery to improve access, quality and affordability. Specific policies focus on maternal and child health aiming to reduce mortality rates through initiatives on safe motherhood immunization and early childhood development. Efforts are made towards achieving universal health coverage providing health insurance to economically disadvantaged populations through schemes like Ayushman Bharat. Policies addressing women's health and promoting gender equality such as the Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao campaign are also part of the framework. Digital health initiatives utilize technology to enhance healthcare delivery and accessibility including telemedicine and electronic health records. Regulations govern medical education and practice to ensure quality and accountability. Public health legislation addresses challenges like tobacco control and food safety. Additionally, the framework supports research and development to drive innovation in healthcare. Overall, the policy and legislative framework in India guide healthcare initiatives promote equity and foster advancements in the sector.

## **CASE STUDIES AND SUCCESS STORIES**

- National Rural Health Mission (NRHM): Launched in 2005, NRHM aimed to strengthen rural healthcare infrastructure, improve access, and reduce health inequities. It resulted in the establishment of sub-health centres, primary health centres, and community health centres, providing better healthcare services in remote areas. NRHM's impact includes improved immunization coverage, reduced maternal and infant mortality rates, and increased availability of essential drugs and equipment.
- Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) Program: The ASHA program is a community health worker initiative that has improved maternal and child health in rural areas. ASHAs, mostly women act as a link between the community and healthcare services. Their involvement has led to increased antenatal care, institutional deliveries, immunization rates, and awareness of healthcare practices at the grassroots level.
- Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY): JSY is a safe motherhood intervention that provides financial assistance to pregnant women to promote institutional deliveries. The program has significantly increased institutional deliveries leading to a decline in maternal and neonatal mortality rates. It emphasizes skilled birth attendance, improved access to emergency obstetric care, and awareness of maternal health.
- Pulse Polio Immunization Program: India's Pulse Polio Immunization Program aimed to eradicate polio by vaccinating children nationwide. Through extensive vaccination campaigns and community engagement, India successfully eliminated polio in 2014. The program showcased the power of targeted immunization campaigns and community participation in achieving disease eradication.
- Telemedicine Initiatives: Telemedicine programs have helped bridge healthcare gaps in remote and underserved areas. Initiatives by organizations like Apollo Hospitals and Narayana Health have established telemedicine networks, enabling virtual consultations, diagnosis and treatment. These initiatives have improved access to specialized care reduced travel time and costs for patients and facilitated timely

interventions in remote regions. • Successful Public-Private Partnerships (PPP): Collaborations between the government and private healthcare providers have improved healthcare services. The Public-Private Partnership in Chhattisgarh for example focused on upgrading public health facilities through collaboration with private providers. This partnership improved infrastructure service delivery and patient experience resulting in increased utilization of public healthcare services. • The Tamil Nadu Model: Tamil Nadu state has achieved significant success in healthcare through various innovative initiatives. These include Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and new-born Care (CEMONC) centres, providing round-the-clock emergency obstetric and new born care services, and the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme, offering cashless treatment to underprivileged populations. Tamil Nadu's efforts have led to improved health indicators and better healthcare access for its residents. These examples demonstrate the positive impact of targeted interventions, community engagement public-private partnerships and innovative approaches in improving healthcare outcomes in India. They serve as inspiring success stories that highlight effective strategies that can be replicated and scaled up to further enhance the healthcare system.

### **REMAINING CHALLENGES**

Addressing Remaining Challenges in the Indian Healthcare System: • Health Information Systems: Strengthen data collection, analysis, and interoperable electronic health records to improve the availability and utilization of health data for decision-making and research purposes. • Healthcare Infrastructure: Enhance facilities and resources, particularly in underserved areas, by investing in the construction and upgrading of hospitals, clinics, and medical centres. This includes ensuring access to essential medical equipment and supplies. • Healthcare Financing: Improve affordability by expanding insurance coverage and implementing innovative financing models such as community-based health insurance and public-private partnerships. This will help reduce out-of-pocket expenses and financial barriers to healthcare access. • Human Resources for Health: Address shortages and maldistribution of healthcare professionals, particularly in remote and rural regions. This can be achieved through increased recruitment training and retention strategies as well as incentivizing healthcare professionals to work in underserved areas. • Health Awareness and Education: Promote health literacy and healthy behaviors through targeted campaigns, community-based initiatives, and school-based programs. This includes raising awareness about preventive measures proper nutrition hygiene practices and the importance of regular health check-ups. • Health Inequalities: Implement interventions and policies to reduce disparities in access to healthcare services. This may involve improving transportation infrastructure, establishing mobile healthcare units, and developing strategies to reach marginalized populations, such as tribal communities and urban slums. • Technology Adoption: Embrace digital health solutions telemedicine and technology infrastructure to enhance healthcare accessibility, especially in remote areas. This includes improving internet connectivity, promoting the use of mobile health applications and facilitating teleconsultations for remote diagnosis and treatment. • Quality of Care: Enhance standards, regulation, and training to ensure the delivery of high-quality and safe healthcare services. This involves implementing accreditation systems, establishing quality control mechanisms and providing continuous education and training for healthcare professionals. Addressing these challenges will require a multi-faceted approach involving government policies partnerships with the private sector and civil society and active community engagement. By prioritizing these areas, the Indian healthcare system can become more effective, accessible, and responsive to the needs of its population.

### **DISCUSSION**

Addressing the challenges in the Indian healthcare system requires comprehensive efforts including improving healthcare infrastructure, increasing investment in healthcare resources promoting gender equality raising awareness about women's health issues strengthening the healthcare

workforce and implementing policies to ensure affordable and accessible healthcare for all. The empowerment and active participation of Indian women in healthcare are crucial for achieving equitable and patient-centered healthcare systems. Efforts should continue to focus on promoting women's education leadership development and targeted initiatives that address women's health concerns. By harnessing the potential of Indian women the healthcare system can benefit from diverse perspectives, improved gender equity, and enhanced healthcare outcomes for all. The impact of women in healthcare extends beyond individuals, contributing to healthier communities and improved healthcare systems. The policy and legislative framework play a vital role in guiding healthcare initiatives, promoting equity, and supporting research and development in the healthcare sector. By enacting effective policies, the government can address existing challenges and create an enabling environment for healthcare improvements. The case studies provided demonstrate successful interventions and approaches that have positively impacted healthcare outcomes in India. Collaborative efforts and sustained investments are essential to address these challenges and build an inclusive healthcare system that caters to the diverse needs of the population. The progress of India's healthcare system has been shaped by the active involvement of women. Their contributions have led to improvements in maternal and child health, increased health education and awareness, and policy reforms. However, challenges such as gender disparities and limited access to healthcare in rural areas remain. Empowering women in healthcare is crucial for further progress and ensuring a more effective, accessible, and equitable healthcare system in India. By implementing targeted strategies involving women in leadership roles and promoting gender equality India can continue to make strides in improving healthcare outcomes and ensuring that all individuals have access to quality healthcare services.

## CONCLUSION

The progress of the healthcare system in India, particularly with the involvement of Indian women has been commendable. Women have played a vital role in healthcare delivery empowerment and community health. However, several challenges remain such as inadequate infrastructure financial barriers healthcare workforce shortages and health inequalities. To overcome these challenges and build a stronger healthcare system it is crucial to focus on future prospects and implement recommendations. Embracing digital health technologies strengthening primary healthcare promoting preventive healthcare, enhancing rural healthcare and investing in research and innovation are promising avenues. Additionally fostering publicprivate partnerships empowering women in healthcare leadership strengthening health financing, and improving health governance are vital steps toward a more inclusive and resilient healthcare system. By adopting these future prospects and implementing the recommendations India can further improve healthcare access, quality and equity for its population. Collaborative efforts sustained investments and policy reforms will be instrumental in shaping a brighter healthcare future for India, with women at the forefront of progress. In conclusion, the role of Indian women in the progress of the healthcare system is significant and multi-faceted. Their contributions as healthcare professionals' community health workers advocates and caregivers have had a positive impact on healthcare delivery maternal and child health and health education. Recognizing and empowering women in healthcare will further enhance the effectiveness accessibility and equity of the Indian healthcare system.

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## Women in Education in India: Achievements and Challenges

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### Abstract:

Education is a fundamental right, not a privilege. To begin with, education is a fundamental right for everyone, and when we say everyone, we must remember that women should be included in this group. Education opens doors of opportunities for young women, especially when they cannot count on family wealth, property, or business connections. We cannot have such a big number of illiterate women in our society; it would be a great loss to us. Every girl and woman, whether rich, poor, young, elderly, married, single, widowed or of any other social position, has the right to an education. Nearly 63% of the world's 163 million illiterate youngsters are female. Despite the great expansion of educational opportunities worldwide during the past thirty years, women in most developing countries still receive less schooling than men. Yet there is compelling evidence that the education of girls and women promotes both individual and national well-being. An example is the strong links between a woman's education and her employment and income. Another is that better-educated women bear fewer children, who have better chances of surviving infancy, of being healthy, and of attending school. When women are deprived of an education, individuals, families, and children, as well as the societies in which they live, suffer. When women are adequately educated, everyone benefits. It is not only important to educate girls and women, but also it is necessary to provide them with basic facilities. This paper provides an account of the gender in education in India with an emphasis on what has been achieved and what are the challenges that hampers the desired progress.

**Abstract words:** Women's education, young women, Educational opportunities.

### Introduction

Education plays a crucial role in socialization of a person through transmission of norms and values. Women play a critical role in propelling a nation forward and guiding it towards growth. The women are an integral part in every society. But status and education of women are still backward than men. Around the world, 129 million girls are out of school, including 32 million of primary school age, 30 million of lower-secondary school age, and 67 million of upper-secondary school age. In countries affected by conflict, girls are more than twice as likely to be out of school than girls living in non-affected countries. Only 49 per cent of countries have achieved gender parity in primary education. At the secondary level, the gap widens: 42 per cent of countries have achieved gender parity in lower secondary education, and 24 per cent in upper secondary education.

The Indian constitution has granted equal rights and status to all irrespective of caste, creed and gender. But in practice, women have been deprived of their constitutional rights in various ways. They are becoming victims of various social injustice, and they are not being able to enjoy their due right and status in society.

Gender by definition is not restricted to girls alone as boys are also recipients of gendered constructions. Gender inequalities also affect the structure and management of education system, the practices and attitudes of teachers, learning material and the content of the curriculum.

Interventions in the education sector cannot solve the problems of gender inequality in society, yet education can have a major impact on the lives of girls and women. The governance and the issues related to the mechanism of justice and to create a balance has remained a subject of all studies pertaining to the gender education. On the basis of these studies, gaps are being filled, but still much needs to be done. As a matter of state policy and social justice a mandate to abolish the indifferences are already in place but participatory approach to yield desired results in these areas is vital in a male dominated society. Although the target on gender equality in education as per the Millennium Development Goals have not been achieved in full. But a lot is being done globally to address the disparities of gender in education.

### **Importance of Women Education in India:**

The low level of literacy has a severe influence not only on the lives of women but also on the lives of their families and the economic growth of their country. Numerous studies reveal that illiterate women have a high fertility and death rate, poor nutritional conditions, limited economic ability, and minimal autonomy within the home. A woman's lack of knowledge has a bad influence on her children's health and well-being. A recent investigation in India, for example, discovered that infant mortality was inversely associated with the mother's educational degree. Furthermore, the country's economic progress may be hampered by a lack of an educated populace. Educating an Indian woman creates a vital opportunity for the social and economic development of India. An educated Indian woman will yield a positive impact in the Indian society by contributing positively to the economy of both the country and the society. An educated woman reduces the chances of her child dying before the age of five. The chances of controlling the population are high as an educated woman is likely to marry at a later age as opposed to uneducated woman.

### **Historical background of women in higher education**

India is one of the few countries where women enjoy a comparatively better status than many women in other parts of the world. True Indian women face many problems and are subject to the same social pressures which women experience in other parts of the world. But relatively speaking, their situation is much better than what it used to be in the pre-independence era. The development of women in different aspects of life through the ages can be categorized in the following ways:

1. Women's Education in Ancient India;
2. Women's Education in Medieval India;
3. Women's Education in Colonial India;
4. Women's Education in Modern India.

#### **1. Women's Education in Ancient India**

Since from the ancient time women had possessed a bit lower position than men in the society due to the set of rigid social norms. But during Vedic periods their position was much better and they used to access the higher education but with the course of time she lost her importance. Women education in ancient India prevailed during the early Vedic period. Most of the Indian scriptures Rig Veda and Upanishads mention about several women sages and seers. However after 500 B.C, the position of women started to decline. But the Islamic invasion had restricted the freedom and rights of women.

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## 2.Women's Education in Medieval India

During medieval India after the introduction of Purdah system the condition of women education further deteriorated. Different religious (Hinduism, Islamic, Christianity) conventions and customs had deteriorated her status further. Education in medieval India flourished during the Mughal rule from 1546-1848 where education system was under Ulama where education meant religious training of various subjects like medicine, Arabic literature, philosophy, grammar, history, law, administration and ethics. A sequence of socio-religious movements contributed to the development of women's education in the country. Many rulers like Iltutmish, Akbar etc. took several initiatives to make education available to the women of India. The ordered form of women education in India was incorporated in the early centuries of the Christian era.<sup>3</sup>

## 3.Women's Education in Colonial India:

During the colonial era in India there was a revival of interest in women's education again. Various eminent leaders like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar had given special emphasis on the education of women. However, on the other side Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, Periyar and Baba Saheb Ambedkar were those eminent leaders who worked for the upliftment and attainment of education for women of the lower castes. During the colonial period the institutional form of imparting learning was introduced in which women's education had witnessed an essential expansion. Then after various movements were launched to educate country's women. Furthermore, this journey progressed through the years and structured the modern Indian education system.

## 4.Women's education in modern India

after the independence of India in 1947 the women education got a fillip. After independence government has taken various measures for providing education to Indian women. Women literacy rate seemingly rose in the modern days. Women education in India became a compulsory concern and female literacy has gone higher than male literacy. As a result of the various government measures undertaken during the three decades the growth of female literacy rate was more than male which was about 14.87% as compared to 11.72 % of that of male. While women literacy rate was 22% in 1971 which roused to 54.16% in 2001. Since 2010, India has a good female literacy rate. In 2010, the female literacy rate was 80.35%. With time eventually, the rate has increased. Between 2010-2021, the female literacy rate in India has increased by 14.4%. In 2021, the rate was 91.95%. On a year-on-year basis, the literacy rate increased by 0.6% in 2021./

## Challenges to Women Education

**Social factors:** Early marriages as per their social custom, girl children are not allowed to go outside the house and village because it is a social taboo, parents go to their workplaces and household activities are undertaken by the young female children, caring of younger ones at home, gender disparity at home, in society and earlier marriages in this region.

**Health factors:** frequent ill-health of the student especially female due to lack of nutritious food and unhygienic conditions in living areas.

**Economic factors:** Due to difficult financial conditions and social conditioning, families usually neglect girl education because which they are not employment ready.

**Negative parental attitudes:** Poor families are more likely to keep girls at home to care for younger siblings or to work in family enterprise. If a family has to choose between educating a son or a

daughter because of financial restrictions, typically the son will be chosen. Negative parental attitudes toward educating daughters can also be a barrier to a girl's education.

**Inadequate school facilities:** Another challenge to education in India is the lack of adequate school facilities. Many schools do not have enough classrooms to accommodate all of the school-age children. Furthermore, the classrooms that are available often lack of basic necessities such as sanitary facilities or water. Lack of latrines can be particularly detrimental to girls' school attendance.

**Shortage of female teachers:** Lack of female teachers is another potential barrier to girls' education. Girls are more likely to attend school and have higher education academic achievement if they have female teachers. This is particularly true in highly gender segregated societies such as India

**Gender gaps in university education:** Currently, a very small proportion of both men and women have a college education, just over 3 percent of men and 1 percent of women. Although a very small proportion of the Indian population attends college, women account for a third of the students at this level.

**Gender bias in curriculum:** As long ago as 1965, the Indian government agreed to rewrite text-books so that men and women would not be portrayed in gender- stereotyped roles. However, a study of Indian text-books done in the 1980's found that men were the main characters in the majority of lessons. In these lessons, men held high prestige occupations and were portrayed as strong, adventurous and intelligent. In contrast, when women were included, they were depicted as weak and helpless, often as the victims of abuse and beatings.

**Gap in upper primary and secondary schooling:** While female enrolment has increased rapidly since the 1990s, there is still a substantial gap in upper primary and secondary schooling.

**High drop-out rates:** Increased female enrolment is, compromised by persistently high rates of drop-out and poor attendance of girls relative to boys. Girls also constitute a large proportion of out-of-school children.

**Inter-state variations:** There are also considerable inter-state variations in gender parity. While the greatest surges in female enrolment have been achieved in the most educationally disadvantaged states such as Bihar and Rajasthan, these states still have a long way to go to catch up with the better performing states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Himachal Pradesh.

**Violence against women and security issues** is yet another reason.

## **Higher Education: Challenges being faced in India**

India faces several challenges in higher education. Some of the significant challenges are:

**Access and Equity:** One of the biggest challenges is providing access to quality higher education to a diverse population. Many students from disadvantaged backgrounds, mainly rural areas, face significant barriers to accessing higher education.

**Quality of Education:** Another challenge is the quality of education. Despite there being many higher education institutions in India, not all offer high-quality education. This leads to a mismatch between the skills required by the industry and the skills of the graduates.

**Funding:** Higher education in India requires significant funding, but the government's educational budget is limited. Many institutions of higher education struggle to secure funding for research and development, infrastructure, and faculty salaries.

**Faculty Shortage:** There is a shortage of qualified faculty in many higher education institutions, particularly in specialized fields. This shortage affects the quality of education and research.

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*Outdated Curriculum:* Another challenge is the outdated curriculum. Many higher education institutions have not updated curricula to keep up with industry requirements, technological advancements, and societal changes.

*Employability:* While higher education is expected to prepare students for employment, many graduates are unemployed due to a lack of practical skills, industry exposure, and soft skills.

Addressing these challenges requires significant reforms in the higher education sector, including increased funding, improved access and equity, quality assurance mechanisms, faculty development, curriculum reforms, and stronger industry-academia linkages.

## Conclusion

Women's education is becoming more popular in India. They are important belongings of vibrant humanity, necessary for national advancement. Thus, if we want to see a bright future for women in our country, education must be a priority. Moving from a weak position to exercising power is what empowerment entails. Women's education is the most powerful tool for altering society's attitude. Education also reduces inequities and serves as a tool to boost their standing within the family. Women's empowerment is critical for attaining long-term development.

Socio-cultural practices that function as impediments to women's empowerment must be addressed as soon as possible. The government and commercial investors are both investing in programs that encourage females' education. Today, India is witnessing a social revolution in which women are celebrated in all facets of life, whether at home, in employment, or in politics. In the next few years, India may see more women at the forefront. A strong education lays the groundwork for a brighter future. Therefore, it is necessary to pay more attention to women's education.

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## Social Status of Women In India after Independence

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### ABSTRACT

*During the post-independence India, improvements were made in terms of various areas that led to well-being of women within the society. There were formulation of many programs and schemes that had the main objective of bringing about progressive among women. Encouraging them towards acquisition of education and participation in the employment settings are the main aspects that promote women empowerment. In spite of initiation of the measures and policies, still in some of the rural communities, women are regarded as subordinates to men. One of the unfortunate areas is, throughout the country, women and girls are subjected to abuse and mistreatment. But with the advent of globalization and industrialization, women are acquiring development opportunities. The women, belonging to urban communities are mainly enhancing their livelihoods through acquisition of good education and acquiring employment opportunities.*

**Keywords:** Post Independent, Progression, Post-Independence, Status, Women

### INTRODUCTION

Women have been always fighting for their rights and position in society. They have several times urged for equality so that they can lead a life exactly on par with men. If talking about the women's status in Independent India, then it has been surely improved. The structural and cultural changes in India have brought into many opportunities for women in the fields of education, employment and politics. Such changes ultimately lead to a reduction in the exploitation of women as they have been granted equal status as men. The improvement in the status of women can be analysed in the light of major changes that have been taken place since Independence in the areas of legislation, economic sectors, social and cultural life and so on.

### CONSTITUTION AND LEGISLATION FOR WOMEN'S UPLIFTMENT

**Constitution of India** guarantees equal status to all citizens of India including women under **article 14** and does not distinguish or discriminate between a man or a woman. Moreover, article 15 empowers the government to make special provisions for women. Women are free to participate in all the religious, cultural, economic and political activities.

Furthermore, they have been entitled to vote and are provided with other special benefits. The constitution protects women against exploitation and ensures that they are given equal rights and opportunities being it any field.

#### LEGISLATION SAFEGUARDING WOMEN'S INTERESTS

- **The Hindu Marriage Act 1955** – The act provides women with equal rights to divorce and remarry. Also, the act prohibits polygamy, polyandry and child marriage.

- **The Hindu Succession Act, 1956** – The act provides women with the right and claim over parents property.
- **The Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956** – It provides a childless woman with the right to adopt a child and a divorced woman with the right to claim maintenance from her husband.
- **Special Marriage Act, 1954** – It provides women with the rights to inter-caste marriage, love marriage and is only permitted for the girls above 18 years.
- **Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961** – It protects women from exploitation by declaring taking of dowry an unlawful activity.

## **WOMEN IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION**

After Independence, the educational rights of women were promoted and they were made aware of the value of education. The ratio of women pursuing higher studies and taking education improved gradually since then. The government provided several benefits to women such as scholarship, loan facilities, hostel facilities etc. who wished to go out to pursue higher education. By getting such benefits a large number of women are able to pursue higher education today.

Separate schools and colleges have been established for women alone. Separate universities have been also established which are among the prestigious universities today and admits the girls obtaining merit ranks. There are many engineering and medical universities in India specially for girls which provides them with a great quality of education and help in enhancing their careers.

## **WOMEN IN THE ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT FIELDS**

The number of working women has also steadily increased. Women have been recruited in all posts such as teachers, doctors, nurses, advocates, police officers, bank employees in all major cities of India. Since 1991 women have been recruited into 3 wings of armed forces that are military, air force and naval force.

## **AWARENESS OF WOMEN REGARDING THEIR RIGHTS**

Women in Independent India have maximum rights but many of them are not conscious about their rights. Uneducated women have a lack of awareness of their rights. According to a study conducted by Prof. Ram Ahuja, it can be concluded that the level of awareness of rights depends upon these 4 aspects –

- Individual background of women
- The social environment of women
- The economic base of women
- Subjective perception of women

It can be also concluded that the majority of women are happy in their family life and leave important decisions to their menfolk discretion. They are not completely free from the hold of the traditional customs practised in society. Still many are being exploited, they are completely dependent on their spouses. Hence bringing about more and more legislation in order to ensure better opportunities to women is of no use unless there will be a big change in the Indian society and people's attitude towards women and women's role in society.

## **STRATEGIES FOR WOMEN DEVELOPMENT**

The national document which was prepared by the Government of India with an objective of enhancing and widening opportunities for women highlights the importance of 3 strategies-

- **Obtaining greater political participation of women** – The document mentions that **33% of seats** must be reserved for women in order to obtain effective participation in the field of politics.
- **Income generating schemes for women** – As per the document, income generating schemes must be introduced. Some of the schemes are – *IRDP, Jawahar Rozgar Yojana and TRYSEM.*
- **Increasing Female literacy level** – The government believed that proper coordination between governmental and non-governmental organisations will help in improving the literacy rate of women which will further help in making them self-reliable.

## **EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND THE 73RD CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT ACT, 1993**

**The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1993** was undertaken especially to give constitutional status to Panchayati Raj system and introduce it on a uniform basis. But apart from this it also plays a specific role in women empowerment. The framers of the 73rd constitutional amendment believed that the social and economic conditions of women could not be improved without granting them political power. The new Panchayati Raj was an effort to empower women at least at the village level.

### **One-third reservation of seats for women**

The 73rd amendment has made an effort to provide women with some special powers in all the 3 tiers of Panchayati Raj. As per the act, 1/3 of seats are reserved for women in addition to the seats reserved for SCs and STs. It was indeed a bold step. The rural women will also be now able to exercise some political power and play a role in decision making for village affairs.

## **A BRIEF ASSESSMENT OF THE 73RD CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT ACT**

The act has not brought about miraculous changes as expected. Though it has brought awareness on the part of women but to an extent only. Following drawbacks have been found after analyzing the impact of the Act's implementation-

- **Illiteracy** – Due to illiteracy in rural areas women are unable to assert themselves at different tiers of Panchayati Raj. On the contrary, they are forced to work according to the wishes of male members.
- **Corrupt bureaucracy** – As our bureaucracy is highly corrupt, it becomes very difficult for women to progress and achieve something in such circumstances.
- **Non-availability of women** – It is very difficult to find out an adequate number of women who are qualified and are aware of the rights as most of the women are illiterate and ignorant about their rights in the rural areas.

## FACTORS FACILITATING THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

According to **Doshi and Jain**, women are empowered by women emancipation, education, communication, media, political parties and general awakening. Some social, economic and political factors facilitate the empowerment of women are listed below –

- **Acknowledging women's rights** – Society should recognise that women are equally entitled to the rights and opportunities as men.
- **Freedom to take decisions and make choices** – Women must have the freedom to take important decisions of life such as when to marry, the number of children they should have and so on.
- **Access to education and employment** – Women can become stronger only with educational and economic power, mere expectations cannot help. Conditions must be created in such a way that women can easily get access to education and later on get employed. It will ultimately make women independent and self-reliable.
- **Opportunities for political participation** – Women must be granted political power and must be free to take part in the administrative process.

## REASONS BEHIND THE NEED FOR EMPOWERMENT

In a developing country like India where women are treated as a second-grade citizen and inferior to men, women empowerment is justified. Following are the main causes on account of which government decided to take such an initiative for women.

- **Education or literacy** – Among the other countries in the world, India is counted as one of the countries having a maximum number of illiterate people. Women are more illiterate as compared to men. Earlier they were denied going to schools and have education but now conditions are much more stable. Still, illiteracy is the biggest weakness of women. Providing them with educational facilities means empowering them so that they can enjoy their rights and contribute to the progress of the nation.
- **Health problem of women** – Poor health conditions of women is also a hindrance in their progress. The main reason for such health conditions is the traditional importance given to a male child neglecting the presence of a female child which leads to less care given to her. Another reason is that women are always taught to be shy and submissive.

This often makes women tolerating thus, they prefer to avoid complaining about something and rather suffer silently.

- Economic Exigencies of women – Indian women are economically weak since education was not given to them for years and property laws were also not in favour of them. They were dependent on men financially as all economic power used to be in the hands of men. Thus women require economic power to stand on their own legs on par with men.
- Atrocities against women – Women on all walks of life have been discriminated against men. They become victims of atrocities in a number of ways as there are cases of sexual harassment, molestation, kidnapping, dowry harassment and so on.

Thus women require empowerment of all kinds in order to protect themselves from all such atrocities and to preserve their purity and dignity.

## **RIGHTS AND PROTECTION TO WOMEN GIVEN UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA**

The **Indian Constitution** attempts to provide equal opportunities to women, protect their rights and ensure justice to them through the following provisions-

- **Right to Equality**– Constitution ensures equality to all its citizens including women.
- The Constitution ensures that **no discrimination** shall be made against any person on the basis of caste, class, creed, sex, race and place of birth.
- **No discrimination** shall be made on any grounds of discrimination including sex for **providing employment opportunities**.
- The State shall take the responsibility of providing **maternity benefits to women** employees.
- **Providing harmony and fraternity** to people doing away with all customs in respect of women.
- **One-third reservation of women in the panchayats** – There must be separate seats reserved for women in the panchayats with separate seats for women SCs and STs.
- One-third reservation for women in the presidential posts of the Panchayats – Reserving women seats for all posts at all the levels of panchayats.
- **One-third reservation in Municipalities** – Separate seats for women in all the town municipalities.
- **One-third reservation for women in the presidential posts of Town Municipalities**

## **CONCLUSION**

It can be concluded from the above discussion that women's status in Indian society has radically changed since Independence. Government after realising the situations of women and their worse position in the society took huge initiatives to bring about a change and improve the social, economic and political conditions of women. It cannot be said that the measures taken have been completely implemented in the society as still customs and traditions are given much

more importance in a country like India, still, a gradual change has been experienced by the women over these years and they have become much more independent and aware in today's time.

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## **“Achievements of Indian women in Space and Technology, Role of Anuradha T.K. in Space Science”**

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### **1. Introduction**

Indian women scientists have played a crucial role in the development of space and technology in India. Despite facing numerous challenges and societal barriers, these extraordinary women have made remarkable contributions, pushing boundaries, and breaking stereotypes along the way. Their expertise, dedication, and perseverance have been instrumental in shaping India's space program and technological advancements. Let's explore the significant roles played by Indian women scientists in this domain.

### **2. Contributions of Women Scientists**

First and foremost, Dr. Tessy Thomas, often referred to as the “Missile Woman of India,” has made exceptional contributions to India's defense and space technology. As the Project Director for Agni-IV missile, she led a team of scientists to successfully develop and launch the long-range ballistic missile. Dr. Tessy Thomas became the first woman scientist to head a missile project in India, and her work has been pivotal in strengthening India's strategic capabilities.

Another prominent figure in India's space program is Dr. Minal Rohit, who made significant contributions as a scientist in the Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM). She played a crucial role in the design and navigation of the spacecraft, ensuring its successful journey to Mars. Dr. Rohit's expertise and dedication were essential in making MOM India's first successful interplanetary mission.

Dr. Geetha Varadan, a distinguished scientist and engineer, has made substantial contributions to India's space and defense technology. She has been involved in the development of radar systems, electronic warfare systems, and communication systems. Dr. Varadan's expertise in signal processing and her leadership have been instrumental in enhancing India's defense capabilities.

Dr. Nandini Harinath, popularly known as the “Rocket Woman of India,” has been an integral part of several successful Indian space missions. She has worked as a Deputy Operations Director for missions such as Chandrayaan-1 and Mars Orbiter Mission. Dr. Harinath's contributions to mission planning, trajectory design, and spacecraft operations have been vital in ensuring the success of these missions.

In the field of astronomy and astrophysics, Dr. Priyamvada Natarajan has made groundbreaking contributions to our understanding of the universe. Her research focuses on black holes, dark matter, and the large-scale structure of the universe. Dr. Natarajan's work has earned her international acclaim and has advanced our knowledge of some of the most enigmatic phenomena in the cosmos.

Dr. Sulabha K. Kulkarni is a renowned scientist who has made significant contributions in the field of atmospheric science and weather forecasting. Her research has been instrumental in understanding the behavior of the monsoon and improving weather prediction models, which are crucial for agricultural planning and disaster management in India.

These are just a few examples of the remarkable achievements of Indian women scientists in the development of space and technology. Their contributions extend across various domains, including satellite technology, aerospace engineering, astrophysics, and defense systems. These women have not only excelled in their respective fields but have also become role models, inspiring young girls to pursue careers in science and technology.

### **3. Indian Government Support**

The Indian government and institutions have recognized the importance of promoting gender diversity and inclusivity in scientific fields. Initiatives such as scholarships, fellowships, and mentorship programs have been implemented to encourage and support women in pursuing scientific careers. Additionally, organizations like the Indian Women Scientists' Association (IWSA) provide a platform for networking, collaboration, and empowerment of women scientists.

It is crucial to continue fostering an environment that supports and encourages the participation of women in science and technology. By providing equal opportunities, promoting mentorship, and breaking down societal barriers, India can harness the full potential of its talented women scientists, ensuring continued advancements in space and technology for the benefit of the nation and the world at large.

### **4. Role of Anuradha TK**

India's space program has witnessed remarkable achievements over the years, thanks to the collective efforts of talented scientists and engineers. Among them, Anuradha TK, a prominent figure in the Indian space industry, stands as a shining example of dedication, perseverance, and brilliance. With her remarkable contributions and groundbreaking work, Anuradha TK has not only shattered glass ceilings but has also inspired a generation of young women to pursue their dreams in the field of space exploration.

Anuradha TK's journey in the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) began in the late 1980s. Born in a small town in Kerala, she developed a passion for science and technology from an early age. Her exceptional academic record led her to the prestigious College of Engineering, Thiruvananthapuram, where she pursued a Bachelor's degree in Electronics and Communication Engineering. Her thirst for knowledge and determination to make a difference in the world of space science propelled her to pursue higher studies at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, where she earned a Master's degree in Electrical Communication Engineering.

Anuradha TK's contributions to ISRO gained significant recognition when she served as the Project Director for the successful Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM), also known as Mangalyaan. This ambitious mission, launched in 2013, aimed to place an orbiter around Mars and study the planet's atmosphere and surface features. Anuradha TK's leadership and meticulous planning were instrumental in the mission's success, making India the first Asian country to reach Mars orbit and the fourth in the world. Her exceptional project management skills and technical expertise garnered praise from the international space community, further solidifying her position as a trailblazer in the field.

Apart from her remarkable achievements in space missions, Anuradha TK has been a staunch advocate for women's empowerment and gender equality in the science and technology sectors. Recognizing the gender disparities in STEM fields, she has been actively involved in initiatives to encourage more young women to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Anuradha TK firmly believes that diversity and inclusivity are essential for driving innovation and progress, and she has been a vocal proponent of creating a supportive environment for women in the space industry.



Anuradha TK's contributions to India's space program have earned her numerous accolades and recognition both nationally and internationally. She has received prestigious awards such as the Padma Shri, one of India's highest civilian honors, and the Women Achievers in Aerospace Award. Her inspiring journey has been featured in several publications, and she is often invited to deliver keynote speeches at conferences and seminars. Anuradha TK's story serves as an inspiration not only to women in India but to aspiring scientists and engineers around the world.

As India's space program continues to expand its horizons, Anuradha TK's legacy remains a guiding light for future generations. Her determination, intellect, and unwavering commitment to excellence have paved the way for numerous women to follow in her footsteps. By breaking barriers and challenging stereotypes, she has transformed the landscape of space exploration in India, making it more inclusive and diverse.

## 5. Conclusions

In conclusion, Anuradha TK's remarkable journey as a rocket woman in India's space history is a testament to the indomitable spirit of women in science. Through her groundbreaking work and unwavering dedication, she has not only left an indelible mark on India's space program but has also inspired countless young women to dream big and reach for the stars. Anuradha TK's story is a shining example of how passion, perseverance, and the pursuit of knowledge can propel individuals to achieve greatness and make significant contributions to society.

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## Women In Politics: Achievements And Challenges

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### INTRODUCTION :

As India celebrates 75 years of independence, it is imperative to acknowledge the crucial role women have played in shaping the political landscape of the nation. Over the years, women in India have made significant strides in the political arena, breaking barriers and challenging traditional gender norms. However, despite notable achievements, they continue to face numerous challenges that hinder their full participation and representation. This article explores the achievements and challenges faced by women in politics during 75 years of independent India.

**Historical Perspective:** When India gained independence in 1947, the political landscape was predominantly male-dominated. However, pioneers like Sarojini Naidu and Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit paved the way for women's participation in politics. In 1952, the first general elections saw 24 women elected to the lower house of Parliament. Since then, the number of women in politics has gradually increased, reflecting a more inclusive democracy. India is a country with a long and rich history of women in politics. From the early days of the independence movement, women have been at the forefront of the fight for equality and social justice. In the 75 years since India gained independence, women have made significant progress in achieving political representation.

### Achievements:

1. **Reservation and Representation:** The introduction of reserved seats for women in local government bodies, such as Panchayats and Municipalities, through the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution in 1992, significantly enhanced women's political representation at the grassroots level. This ensured their involvement in decision-making processes and the implementation of policies that directly impact their communities. By 2019, elected women M.P's had increased to 78, representing 14% of the total seats of parliament. This increase in representation is due in part to the passage of the Women's Reservation Bill, which reserves 33% of seats in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies for women.
2. **Prominent Women Leaders:** Independent India has witnessed exceptional women leaders who have held key positions in government. From Indira Gandhi, who became the first female Prime Minister in 1966, to Pratibha Patel, who served as the first female President in 2007, these trailblazers shattered glass ceilings and inspired countless women to pursue careers in politics.
3. **Legislative Reforms:** Over the years, several legal reforms have been introduced to address gender disparities and promote women's empowerment. Since 1947, the Parliament of India has passed several significant acts aimed at empowering women and addressing gender disparities. Here is a glance at some of the key acts:
  1. **The Hindu Succession Act (1956):** This act was a landmark legislation that brought significant reforms to inheritance laws for Hindu women. It recognized their right to inherit property, ensuring greater economic empowerment and gender equality within the Hindu community.

2. The Dowry Prohibition Act (1961): This act aimed to combat the social evil of dowry, which often led to harassment and violence against women. It made the giving, taking, or demanding of dowry illegal, with stringent penalties for offenders.
3. The Maternity Benefit Act (1961): This act ensured certain benefits and protections for women during pregnancy and after childbirth. It provides for paid maternity leave, medical allowances, and other benefits to support women's reproductive rights and maternal health.
4. The Equal Remuneration Act (1976): This act aimed to prevent gender-based wage discrimination by ensuring equal pay for equal work. It prohibits employers from discriminating against women in matters of recruitment, promotion, and salary.
5. The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act (1987): This act criminalized the practice of Sati, the act of a widow self-immolating on her husband's funeral pyre. It declared the practice illegal and punishable by law, reflecting the commitment to protect women's rights and dignity.
6. The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005): This act provides a comprehensive legal framework to protect women from domestic violence. It recognizes various forms of abuse, including physical, sexual, emotional, and economic, and ensures the provision of protection orders, shelter, and other support services to victims.
7. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act (2013): This act addresses the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace. It mandates the establishment of Internal Complaints Committees in organizations and provides mechanisms for reporting, investigating, and redressing cases of harassment.
8. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act (2013): This act was introduced in response to the widespread protests following the heinous gang-rape incident in Delhi in 2012. It amended several provisions of the Indian Penal Code and other laws to provide stricter punishment for crimes against women, including rape, acid attacks, and voyeurism.
9. The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act (2017): This amendment increased the duration of paid maternity leave from 12 weeks to 26 weeks, providing women with extended time to care for their newborns and ensuring their overall well-being.

These acts represent significant steps taken by the Parliament of India to safeguard women's rights, promote gender equality, and create a more inclusive society. However, there is still much work to be done to address the persisting challenges and ensure the full empowerment of women in all spheres of life.

#### 4. Top of Form

### **Challenges:**

1. Gender Bias and Stereotypes: Deep-rooted gender bias and stereotypes pose significant challenges for women in politics. Women often face prejudice and discrimination, with their capabilities and qualifications being questioned solely based on their gender. These biases can deter women from entering politics or pursuing leadership positions.
2. Lack of Support Mechanisms: The absence of adequate support mechanisms, including financial resources and institutional support, hampers women's political aspirations. The cost of campaigns, limited access to funding, and the absence of party support pose significant barriers for women seeking political office.

3. **Violence and Harassment:** Women politicians are frequently subjected to violence, intimidation, and harassment, both online and offline. This creates an environment of fear and discourages women from actively participating in politics. Addressing this issue requires robust measures to ensure the safety and security of women in the political arena.
4. **Low Representation at Higher Levels:** While women have achieved substantial representation at the grassroots level, their presence diminishes as they move up the political hierarchy. Women's underrepresentation in state assemblies and Parliament remains a pressing concern, highlighting the need for affirmative action and efforts to bridge this gender gap.
5. **Patriarchal attitudes and practices:** Patriarchal attitudes and practices can discourage women from participating in politics, and they can also make it difficult for them to succeed once they are in politics.

### **Conclusion:**

The achievements made by women in Indian politics in the 75 years since independence are commendable. The introduction of reserved seats, the rise of prominent women leaders, and legislative reforms have contributed to increasing women's political participation. However, significant challenges persist, including gender bias, lack of support mechanisms, violence, and low representation at higher levels. Addressing these challenges requires collective efforts from society, political parties, and policymakers to create a more inclusive and gender-equal political landscape. Empowering women in politics will not only enhance democracy but also lead to more comprehensive and effective governance that benefits all citizens of India.

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6. National Crime Records Bureau: [www.ncrb.gov.in](http://www.ncrb.gov.in)



## Integrated health of the girl child

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### **ABSTRACT**

This article discusses factors that affect the well-being and health of female children in India: sex ratio, literacy, food intake, morbidity, mortality, early marriage, maternal mortality, nutrition, prenatal care and delivery, family planning responsibilities, and access to health services. India has recognized within its Constitution and other government documents and programs equality for women, but practices lag behind principles. A National Action Plan was formulated for the period 1991-2000 for the girl child. Women themselves must change their attitudes about themselves and their female children. Several pilot programs have demonstrated the potential to empower girls to be outspoken, vocal, and enthusiastic. Girls in India are disadvantaged even before their birth. Patriarchal norms reinforce the view of girls as a bad investment. Women are blamed for not bearing a son, despite the evidence that males carry the deciding gender-specific chromosome. Tamil Nadu districts are known for their female infanticide. The declining sex ratio is attributed to the higher death rate among females younger than 35 years. Females until recently had a lower life expectancy than males. Sex ratios vary between states. The only state with a positive female sex ratio is Kerala. Males outnumber females by almost 10% in most of the northern and eastern states. Illiteracy among women is high in about 100 districts. Female school enrollment is 50% less than male enrollment. Females suffer from higher rates of malnutrition, morbidity, and death. Girls' adolescent growth spurt is delayed until 18 years. Maternal mortality accounts for the largest proportion of deaths among women of reproductive age. The most common reason for abortion is "too many children." Lower socioeconomic status is associated with lower nutrition. Women do not have control over their fertility. Women are limited in their access to reproductive health care.

If there is one issue that affects a Girl Child worldwide, they will tend to place their needs and health concerns last. When it comes to Girl Child care, it is important that the mother follows a healthy healthcare regime for herself.

It is well known that a Girl Child needs more nutrients like calcium, iron, proteins etc., in their childhood due to puberty and later in life menopause as they bring in a lot of hormonal and chemical changes in their body.

A Girl Child from her childhood should be made aware of the importance of having good health. A Girl Child should be taken care of in terms of her mental health, and there should be an emphasis on nourishing her body with the right amount of nutrients.

Our nation has proven to be one of the first countries to identify the importance of the health of the Girl Child and have paid attention to improving the overall status of the Girl Child in society in terms of medical and cancer treatment.

In 2005 the Government of India announced free and reduced-cost [education for girls](#). Families having two girls were promised a haircut of up to 50% on their education. Adding to this, the Government also introduced National Nutrition Policy in 1993 to provide adequate nutrition to Girl Child during adolescence.

As responsible citizens of society, we can also lend a helping hand towards this issue by starting a Girl Child campaign on Ketto rather than searching for suitable Crowdfunding Platforms.

A good nutritional diet plan for a Girl Child should look like having at least 3 servings of fruits and vegetables alongside dairy products like milk, yoghurt, cheese, butter and eggs, providing a source of calcium.

**Importance of a girl child:** According to the women and child development ministry, National Girl Child Day is meant to create awareness about the rights of a girl, support the nation's girl children, eliminate gender biases, and emphasise the importance of education, health, and nutrition.

The goal of this day is to transform people's perceptions of girls. The official theme for National Girl Child Day 2023 has not yet been announced by the government of India. However, the slogan for National Girl Child Day 2021 is "Digital Generation, Our Generation".

**National Girl Child Day 2023:** Slogans are, 1. Empower girls for a brighter tomorrow.

2. GIRL means Gift In Real Life.

**Rights of girl child:**The Juvenile Justice Act makes it illegal for parents and guardians of children to abuse, assault, neglect, or abandon a child. The Domestic Violence Act protects all females from any kind of physical, emotional, sexual, or financial abuse by family members

**Values of girls education:** Girls who receive an education are less likely to marry young and more likely to lead healthy, productive lives. They earn higher incomes, participate in the decisions that most affect them, and build better futures for themselves and their families. Girls' education strengthens economies and reduces inequality,They are also liable for the development and growth of a nation. However, the existence of the woman is for more important than men. Because without her we cannot think about our existence. So, to save humans from extinction we have to take measures to save girl child.

Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (Save girl child, educate girl child) is a Government of India scheme that aims to generate awareness and improving the efficiency of welfare services meant for women. The scheme was initiated with an initial corpus of Rs100 crore.

Values and Principles: a) Health equity. Health equity refers to the absence of unfair and avoidable differences in health status, access to health care, and healthy environments. Equity-based approaches strive for fairness and justice by eliminating differences that are unnecessary and avoidable. b) Community participation. Structural and genuine participation of communities and adolescents is essential for better results. It requires the design and enactment of policies, mechanisms, and opportunities for empowerment and engagement of these stakeholders in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of actions. c) Evidence-based and multi sectoral action. Programs, policies, and services to improve the health and well-being of women, children, and adolescents must be based on the best scientific evidence available and/or best practice consensus, and it must be tailored to the specific sociocultural context. Interventions beyond the health sector must be seen as core to national strategies on women's, children's, and adolescents' health. Health sector actions must be situated within a comprehensive and coordinated multisectoral response. The health sector provides leadership to mobilize and support the engagement of other sectors and stakeholders in the development of coherent and harmonized multisectoral actions to improve the health and well-being of women, children, and adolescents. d) Human rights, gender equality, and interculturality. The basic rights and freedoms to which all human beings are entitled include the right to enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in the Universal Declaration of

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Human rights, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. These rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. Gender equality in health means that women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full rights and potential to be healthy, contribute to health development, and benefit from the results. Intercultural approaches acknowledge the differences among ethnic groups between and within countries as well as the differences in their challenges and needs. These approaches promote intercultural health models that include the perspective of the ancestral and spiritual wisdom and practices of the members of the various ethnic groups and support the implementation of intercultural approaches to health systems and services. e) Life-course approach. This approach recognizes that positive and negative factors influence the trajectories and outcomes of an individual's health and development. These influences are the greatest when action occurs during sensitive periods of human growth and development and accumulate across the life course of individuals and across generations. f) Innovation and research. Scientific, technological, social, business, and financial innovations are needed to achieve transformative effects. Innovative solutions can be encouraged through investing in and nurturing the cycle of research, evidence, knowledge, policy and programming, and supporting the testing and scaling up of innovations. g) Accountability, transparency, and financial sustainability. Regional and national partners involved in the efforts to improve the health and well-being of women, children, and adolescents are accountable for their commitments and promises, for the effective use of resources, and for the outcomes of the health policies and programs they design and implement. Accountability mechanisms that are transparent and include all stakeholders must be put in place and adhered to. Achieving financial sustainability for women's, children's and adolescents' health will require a combination of increased government spending in line with GDP growth, incentivizing private sector investments in health, mobilization of external support, making better use of existing resources and improving efficiency, and adopting integrated and innovative approaches to financing.

Women's health is often confined to reproductive health. While critical, this focus is not sufficient to improve the health and well-being of women throughout the life course. This Plan of Action therefore proposes a vision for integrated and preventive health care and services that transcends fragmented approaches. In addition to interventions in childhood and through adolescence, the promotion of women's health requires a coherent approach that addresses the interplay of biological and social determinants of women's health, including the role of gender inequality in increasing exposure and vulnerability to risk and limiting access to health care and information. Women represent a growing proportion of older adults and face increasing levels of chronic non communicable diseases, including different kinds of cancers, among them those associated with ageing. Therefore, countries need to invest in strategies that address these conditions and foster healthy habits and practices at younger ages.

The Plan of Action will contribute to an improved response to the health needs of women throughout the life course.

There are significant differences within and between countries in the health of certain population groups, such as indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, less educated groups, those living in rural areas, those with disabilities, migrants, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons, and other groups. Research is needed to determine how and why these groups experience differential morbidity and mortality compared with other groups, and targeted, multisector efforts are needed to understand their specific health and well-being needs, and to implement strategies that respond to their needs.

Analyses of the social determinants of health have made it clear that the conditions in which women, children, and adolescents are born, grow up, develop, live, play, and work have a major impact on their health. Gender equality and education are predictors of well-being and

health at different stages of the life course. In women, higher levels of education have been associated with lower maternal mortality, lower poverty, and improved health status of their offspring. Specifically, education beyond the primary level has been identified as a critical determinant of health across the life course, including lower male mortality from injuries, lower female fertility, improved adult health, and increased survival of future children

Many forms of violence disproportionately affect women of all ages across the life course, including intimate partner violence; sexual and gender-based violence; child, early, and forced marriage; human trafficking; femicide; and sexual harassment, abuse, and exploitation in schools, workplaces, and public places. Violence, especially sexual and gender-based violence by an intimate partner, is the most common form of violence experienced by women and remains one of the greatest barriers to the achievement of gender equality, with far-reaching impacts on adolescent girls, impeding their education and increasing their risks of early marriage, early pregnancy, and contracting HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. WHO estimates that 30% of women in the Americas have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a partner, while 11% have experienced sexual violence by a non partner. An estimated 58% of children in the LAC region, or 99 million, experience physical, sexual, or emotional abuse

### **Conclusion**

Health care for Girl Child is a matter of international importance and needs to be addressed with utmost urgency. However, this won't be possible through sheer willpower alone. As an entrepreneur, we need to raise funds to tackle this crisis. However, it isn't an easy task to get a funding source without compromising the appeal of our projects to investors. There are numerous online platforms on which we can effectively start crowdfunding for our long-term project. Ketto is one such authentic platform that is safe and promising to use. So, don't assume what the girl child or the woman in front of you is going through. Ask her, and assure her that by speaking out, she will help remove the stigma about any given issue whether it's menstrual pain or mood swings or sexual harassment not just from her mind but also from yours. It is well known that a Girl Child needs more nutrients like calcium, iron, proteins etc., in their childhood due to puberty and later in life menopause as they bring in a lot of hormonal and chemical changes in their body. Our nation has proven to be one of the first countries to identify the importance of the health of the Girl Child and have paid attention to improving the overall status of the Girl Child in society in terms of medical and cancer treatment. Women, children, and adolescents are born, grow up, develop, live, play, and work have a major impact on their health. Gender equality and education are predictors of well-being and health at different stages of the life course.

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## Women Freedom Fighters in Rayalaseema and Their Role in Freedom Struggle

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### Abstract :

This article elucidates on the importance of participation of women in Freedom movement. It is acknowledged that many Freedom Fighters like, Mahatma Gandhi, Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, Sukhdev, Subhash Chandra Bose etc have participated in the freedom struggle of India. But, there are other women personalities who are left unnoticed the struggle, Particularly in the region of Rayalaseema. The women played pivotal role in bringing the struggle to the zenith through their selfish less hard work. Most of them walked through Gandhian way i.e., Non-violence. Thus, the present article going to the unsung heroines in the freedom struggle and praise their greatness.

Mahatma Gandhi undertook a tour of Andhra country in 1929 for about six weeks which had a great impact on the people and inspired them to fight the British. It also promoted the 'khaddar' Movement in the state. At his meetings Gandhiji was won't to address particularly the ladies saying "*Let there be Ramrajya in India once more. There can be no Ramrajya without Sita and I wish to see Sita imbibed In you all*".(Dr.Sarojini Regani's – 'Highlights of The Freedom Movement in Andhra Pradesh', Page No. 112) This greatly inspired the ladies in Andhra to participate in the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930 to 1933. Simultaneously, The Rayalaseema Women willingly entered jails braving great hardships. They were – Kesamma, Santabai, Venkamma, Uma bayamma from Anantapuram; Narasamma, Seshamma from Cuddapah; Janakamma, Narasamma, Anasuya Devi etc from Chittoor, Boyamma, Amaravathamma, Leeladevi etc from Kurnool districts.

**Keywords :** *Women, Rayalaseema, Freedom Movement, D.I.R, R.I, S.I, Gandhi, Anantapuram, Cuddapah, Chittoor, Kurnool.*

### Introduction:

The Struggle of India for freedom is unique in the history of the world. The honour of achieving independence through non- violence discarding the cult of the bullet goes to India alone and to Indians who accepted the Gandhian ideals of Truth and Non-violence. Unquestionably, It was also a period when Indian history became a part of world history making the emergence of Asian Nationalism. The Women have been playing magnificent role since Indus Valley Civilization (IVC). Thus, the Women ruled their states like men and fought for welfare of the people in their states. The women like, Razia Sultana(1236-40 A.D) from the Delhi Sultanates, Rani Rudrama Devi(1269-95 A.D) from the Kakatiya Dynasty, Didda Devi(Lohara Dynasty) from the Kashmir, Rani Durgawathi from the Gondwana, Chandbibi from the Ahmadnagar etc. Even in the Freedom Movement also they participated and had played key role. Large number of women participated and sentenced in to the jails in the freedom struggle. These women mostly participated in Non-cooperation, Civil Disobedience, Individual Satyagraha and Quit India Movement.

### **About Rayalaseema Region:**

The Rayalaseema region formed the south-western part of the present Andhra Pradesh with a definite topographic features, socio-economic development and political- historical antecedents comprising the districts of Anantapur, Chittoor, Kadapa and Kurnool with an extent of 67,340 sq.kms.,. However, it has been known to people as the Ceded districts. (earlier it had been, handed over to the British under the Subsidiary Alliance System concluded between the Nizam of Hyderabad and the British East India company(B.E.I.C) on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1800 till 1928(1). Hence, In that year(1928), **Gadicharla HarisarvothamaRao** described this area as Rayalaseema because the Raya ruled. In the same year ANDHRA MAHASABHA held under the chairman of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishna in Nandyal. In this Andhra Mahasabha approved the naming of Rayalaseema. Tirupathi Venkata Kavulu also described it as Rayalaseema in their poetry to this region as rayalaseema.

### **Women role in the Freedom Struggle in the Rayalaseema Region :**

The participation of the women in the freedom movement started with the entry of Mahatma Gandhi in the Indian Freedom Struggle. The advent of Gandhiji brought a new political force in the Indian horizon. Hence, between September and October 1921, Gandhiji undertook a tour of Rayalaseema accompanied by Konda Venkatappayya, Shaikat Ali etc. He toured Tirupati, Kadapa, Tadipatri, Kurnool and Ballari etc and motivated the people towards the struggle. The period from 1921 to 22 was an important one for women freedom fighters in India. Because it's the emergence of them in the struggle. Hence, the perusal of biographies of women participants in freedom struggle itself is evident that the women from coastal Andhra was more than the other regions. The number of women participation in the freedom struggle from coastal Andhra is 353, from Rayalaseema 19 and from Telangana 281 during the Non-cooperation Movement.

The Salt Satyagraha was a mass movement in Andhra. The women used to set out at dawn before the sun was up. Throughout the Movement of Civil Disobedience, women of Andhra had earned a unique place. The total participants of women from coastal Andhra region is 292, from Rayalaseema is 6 and from Telangana 5(2). The biographies of women participants from Rayalaseema region is evident for the participations in the struggle.

### **From Anantapuram District:**

**Kesamma, Illur** : She was Born in 1922. She was a resident of Illur in Anantapuram taluk. Kesamma had participated in Quit India Movement and was sentenced nine months. She was Confined on 2-12-1942 in the Vellore Jail.

**Santa Bai, Pratapagiri** : She was Born in 1905. She was a resident of Anantapuram. She was the wife of Rama murth. She participated in the individual Satyagraha movement and suffered three months imprisonment from 20-1-1941 in the Vellore Jail.

**Venkamma.R** : She suffered six months from 28-1-1943 in the Vellore Jail for her participation in the Quit India movement.

**Umabayamma, Karanam:**She was a resident of Settur, Kalyandurga taluk. She was sentenced on January 25,1941 to three months under Defence of India Rules(D.I.R) for offering individual Satyagraha and for inciting the people against the second World war. She suffered a term of imprisonment in Vellore and Cuddapah Jail.

### From Chittoor District:

**Anasuya Devi, Tamballapalli Nallapareddy:** She was Born in 1924 at Nellore. She was a resident of Tamballapalli, Madanapalle taluk. She was the wife of T.N. Raghunadha Reddy, who organised students in Madras to picketing the government offices in 1943 when she a student of the Queen Mary's College. She Suffered three months' imprisonment from 20-2-1943 to 19-5-1943 in the Vellore Jail for picketing the Egmore Magistrate's Court at Madras.

**Janakamma,V:** She was a resident of Nagari, Puttur Taluk. She was a daughter of K. Varadachary. She took part in the Individual Satyagraha Movement and Sentenced on 17-1-1941 to five months' imprisonment under the D.I.R.; Confined in the Vellore Jail.

**Narasamma,H:** She was a resident of Tirumalai, Chandragiri Taluk. She Shouted anti-war slogans on 21-1-1941 at Chandragiri during the Individual Satyagraha Movement. She was convicted on the same day by the Joint Magistrate, Chandragiri under the D.I.R.. She was Sentenced to imprisonment till the rising of the Court and to pay a fine of four annas, in default, to suffer Simple Imprisonment (S.I) for one day; The Magistrate himself paid the fine and thus deprived her of the privilege of going to jail for the sake of the country.

**Sakuntala, Tamballapalli Nallapareddy:** She was a sister of Anasuya Devi. She was born in 1927 and a resident of Tamballapalli, Madanapalle Taluk. She was the wife of Krishna Reddy. While studying in Queen Mary's College in Madras in 1943, She organised the Students' Movements in all the colleges in Madras. She was sentenced on 20-2-1943 to six months' S.I. for picketing the Egmore Magistrate's Court at Madras. She Suffered the imprisonment in the Vellore Jail.

### From Cuddapah District:

**Narasamma, Hardagiri :** She was a resident of Rayachoti. She was the wife of H.N.Simham. She Participated in the 1940 Individual Satyagraha Movement and Sentenced and fined by the Sub-Collector, Chandragiri. She took part in the Sub-Versive activities during the 1942 Quit India Movement who was arrested at Guntakal and missing since then.

**Seshamma, Veena:** She was Born in September 10, 1876, at Eppirala in Sidhout Taluk. She was the wife of Govindarajulu. She was a teacher and Propagated Khadi. She offered Satyagraha at Upparapalle in 1940. But, Fortunately she was not arrested. She died on December 23,1954(3).

### From Kurnool District:

**Amaravathamma, Sirdar:** She was a resident of kota Kurnool. She was a daughter of Yenumala Ankamma. She was the wife of Sirdar Nagappa, who participated in freedom struggle in Kurnool District. She along with him took part in the Individual Satyagraha movement and was kept in

kurnool Sub-Jail for two months as an under the trail prisoner before her conviction. She underwent ten months Rigorous Imprisonment(R.I) from January 25, 1941 in the Vellore Jail. She again participated in the Quit India Movement. and was arrested on October 26, 1942. She was sentenced on November 5,1942 for one year S.I. and was lodged in the Vellore Jail.

**Lakshmi Devamma:** She was a resident of Nandyal. She started anti-war slogans, and she was convicted under the D.I.R. by the joint magistrate, Nandyal, and was sentenced on February 11,1941 for three months R.I. She was kept in Vellore and Cuddalore Jails.

**Subbaratnamma Elkure:** She was a resident of Nandyal, Wife of Ellaya. She made anti-war propoganda. Who was convicted under the D.I.R. and sentenced on 04-03-1941 for three months R.I. and fine of Rs.1,0007. The fine was paid and she underwent the imprisonment in Vellore Jail. Her husband attended various national meetings at Nandyal and participated in the Civil Disobedience and Quit India Movements.

**Boyamma, Peram:** Boyamma was a resident of Dhone. Her mother was Bhagyamma. She was associated with Quit India Movement and was convicted under the D.I.R. She was underwent nine months R.I. from September 22,1942 in the Vellore Jail.

**Ramakka Ballekallu:** Ramakka was a resident of Adoni. She took part in the picketing of the police station on 14-09-1942 at the age of seventy five during the Quit India Movement was and later charged.

**Leeladevi, Chengi Reddy:** Leeladevi was a resident of Bogulu. Her father was Koti Reddy Peddareddy. She was the wife of the Bali Reddy. She participated in the Rayalaseema Riot Movement. She participated in the 1941 Individual Satyagraha and suffered Seven Months imprisonment.

## **Conclusion:**

The Indian National Movement would have been incompleated without the active participation of women. Mahatma Gandhi's guidelines were meticulously followed by the people of Andhra Pradesh and under him the freedom struggle became a mass movement. There was no suffragatte movement as such in India, as in England. Nevertheless, Andhra women too, unhesitatingly, marched abreast with men to face troubles and tribulations(4). Inspired by the call of Mahatma Gandhi, the women of Andhra played a very significant role in the Indian National Movement. Thousands of women participated in the Non Co-operation, Civil Disobedient and Quit India movements from Andhra. Hence, The Government did not want to arrest the women. They were afraid that the number of jails to accommodate them would not be enough.. ,to arrest the women volunteers, put them in a van and leave them in, out of the way, lonely places about 16 to 20 miles from the town, from where they had to walk back all the distance if they were to reach their homes. Inspite of these hardships the spirit of the women was not crushed(5). The women who participated in the freedom struggle were absolutely unforgettable personalities in India. especially, the women of Andhra.

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## Women Pioneers of Science & Technology in India

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The status of Indian women has been subject to many changes since India got independence. For years, women have suffered the injustice and prejudice of society. But today, with the changing times, **they have broken the shackles of gender stereotypes** and stood to achieve their dreams and goals. The contribution of Indian women to their country's progress after its independence cannot be overlooked. In recent years many women scientists have proved that they are in no way inferior to their opposite sex and reminded us that any field of study can beaced irrespective of one's gender. There are many acknowledged woman scientists in our country who have put India on the global map.

1. **E.K. Janaki Ammal:** Renowned Botanist & Plant Cytologist made significant contributions to Genetics, Evolution, Phytogeography and Ethnobotany. In addition, she was the first Director of the Central Botanical Laboratory at Allahabad, 1952.

2. **Bibha Chowdhary:** The first Indian Woman Physicist who worked on particle physics and cosmic rays. And also she was the first woman scientist at the TIFR (Tata Institute of Fundamental Research) in 1948.

3. **Kamala Sohonie:** First Indian woman to receive a Ph.D. in a scientific discipline. She discovered the enzyme 'Cytochrome C' which plays an essential role in the electron transport chain occurring in plants, human and animal cells for energy synthesis.

4. **Anna Mani:** First woman to join the Meteorological department in Pune, 1948. Her major contributions are in the field of solar radiation, Ozone and wind energy instrumentation.

5. **Kamal Ranadive:** Established India's first tissue culture research laboratory at the Indian Cancer Research Centre in Mumbai, 1960.

6. **Debala Mitra:** First Indian archaeologist served as Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India, 1981.

7. **Purnima Sinha:** An Indian physicist who did tremendous work in the field of x-ray crystallography of clay minerals.

8. **Asima Chatterjee:** The first woman to be awarded a Doctor of Science by an Indian University (Calcutta) in 1944. She was the first woman to be elected as the General President of the Indian Science Congress.

9. **Dr. Aditi Pant:** The first Indian woman to visit Antarctica in 1983 as a part of the Indian expedition to study Geology and Oceanography. She has worked at the National Institute of Oceanography and the National Chemical Laboratory.

10. **Dr. Indira Hinduja:** An Indian gynaecologist, obstetrician and infertility specialist with a doctorate degree in 'Human In -Vitro Fertilisation and Embryo Transfer' from the Bombay University. She pioneered the Gamete intrafallopian transfer (GIFT) technique resulting in the birth of India's first GIFT baby on January 4, 1988.

11. **Kalpna Chawla:** An astronaut and aerospace engineer, she was the first woman of Indian origin to go to space. She first flew on a Space Shuttle Columbia in 1997 as a mission specialist and

primary robotic arm operator. She then moved to the United States in 1982 and obtained a Master of Science degree in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Texas in 1984 and a Ph.D. in Aerospace Engineering in 1988. Chawla was one of the crew members who died in the space shuttle Columbia disaster on February 1, 2003.

12. **Anju Chadha:** An Indian Biochemist & a professor at Indian Institute of Technology Madras. She works in the fields of Biocatalysis and enzyme mechanisms, enzymes in organic synthesis, asymmetric synthesis using enzymes, Chirrotechnology, Green Chemistry and Biosensors.

13. **Priyambada Mohanty Hejmadi:** She is a scientist, academician and an Indian classical dancer of Odissi, art writer, and a biologist. She obtained a doctoral degree in Zoology from the University of Michigan.

14. **Susan Eapen:** An Indian Botanist. She is one of the pioneers in Transgenic Plant Research. She was the president of Indian Women Scientists' Association.

15. **Kamal Jayasing Ranadive:** She was an Indian Biomedical researcher known for her research on the links between cancers and viruses. She was a founding member of the Indian Women Scientists' Association.

16. **Qudsia Tahseen:** She is a Professor of Zoology at Aligarh Muslim University. Her areas of research include taxonomy and developmental biology of terrestrial and aquatic nematodes.

17. **Vijayalakshmi Ravindranath:** She is an Indian neuroscientist and a professor at the Centre for Neuroscience, Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore. She was the founder director of the National Brain Research Centre, Gurgaon and founder chair of the Centre for Neuroscience at Indian Institute of Science.

18. **Anuradha TK:** She has worked as a project director of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and specialised in communication satellites. She worked closely during the launches of the satellites GSAT-12 and GSAT-10 and was among the senior most women scientist at the organisation after being a part of it since 1982. Anuradha had led various Indian space programs and has received the ISRO Team Award 2012.

19. **Dr. Ritu Karidhal Srivastava:** As a Deputy Operations Director to India's Mars orbital mission, Mangalyaan she played a key role during the project. Fondly referred as the "Rocket Woman" of India, this Aerospace Engineer has received the ISRO Young Scientist Award in 2007 from former India president APJ Abdul Kalam.

20. **Muthayya Vanitha:** Being an Electronics System Engineer at ISRO, she worked on hardware testing and development. She later became a part of several projects including the Mangalyaan mission to Mars in 2013 at the organisation. She also became the first ever woman project director of the Chandrayaan-2 lunar mission of the ISRO. She also played a key role in several projects including Cartosat-1, Oceansat-2, and Megha-Tropiques.

21. **Moumita Dutta:** She is a Physicist who has been instrumental in the development of Mars Orbiter Mission and was also assigned to work as a project manager for the Methane Sensor for Mars. For her work, she was also awarded the ISRO Team of Excellence Award for the Mangalyaan.

22. **Nandini Harinath:** A rocket scientist at ISRO and she has worked as design deputy operations director for Mangalyaan and was among the leading women's team for the Mars Orbiter Mission.

23. **VR Lalithambika:** She is among the senior most scientists at Indian Space Agency and is currently the director of Indian Human Spaceflight Programme, Gaganyaan. She has been associated with



ISRO for over 30 years and has played an integral part in building and planning space rocket programs.

**24. Tessa Thomas:**

Known as Missile Women of India, she has taken the eminence of Indian women scientists to new heights, literally. She is the Director-General of Aeronautical Systems and the former Project Director for Agni-IV missile at Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), and also she is the first female scientist in India to head a missile project.

**25. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw:** She is a perfect role model for scientifically inclined younger women. She is the chairperson and managing director of Biocon Limited, a biotechnology company based in Bangalore, and the chairperson of the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore. An influential woman in STEM, Mazumdar-Shaw has greatly contributed to the areas of biochemicals and biopharmaceuticals.

All these names are proof that Indian women have played a significant role in the development of science and technology. The increased participation of women in science and technology will escalate the talent pool and will deliver excellent results in the future. It will also empower women and encourage them to choose their respective fields of science. It will also pave the way to understanding the importance and role of women in science, engineering, technology, and mathematics (STEM) will give birth to social role models and will encourage the future generation to pursue the same.

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## **Problems faced by tribal women in India and the measures taken by government to address these problems.**

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### **Abstract**

The tribal population in India numerically constitutes a small segment of the total population of the country but is a significant part of the population. According to 2001 census data, total population of Scheduled Tribes constitutes 8.2% of the total population of the country. Now it is increased to 8.6 percent according to 2011 census. Most of the Scheduled tribe people lives in rural areas and their population comprise 10.4 % of the total rural population of the country. India has the highest population of tribal in the world, 8.6% of India's population are inhabited by tribes according to 2011 census among which half of them are women. The problems faced by tribal women in India are many influenced with diversified factors, Even after 70 years of independence the tribal in India specially women face various problems in different aspects of their lives.

**Keywords:** UNEP, Exploitation, Malnutrition, Maternal Mortality, Polygamy, Vulnerable, Patriarchal mindset, Government measures,

### **Introduction:**

They are bound by culture customs like polygamy, live in relationship for example garasia tribe of Rajasthan, wife swapping for example dard tribes of Ladakh illiterate due to which they are unaware of their rights and fail to understand governments new programmes. Government has initiated schemes like Adivasi Mahila Sashaktikaran Yojana (AMSY) to improve literacy of Adivasi women superstition and false belief—they are being exploited like witch hunting which is highest in state of Jharkhand according to national crime record bureau (NCRB)

Exploitation due to many people tend to built projects on land inhabited by tribal with assurance of rehabilitation which is often neglected, such incidence makes life of women with responsibility of children vulnerable and prone to wildlife or to become victims of crime. They are more prone to disease because lack of trust in modern medicine and treatment and being not hygienic they become vulnerable to diseases, their customs like swapping wives also lead them to diseases, there has been tribal council developed in such area, national commission for schedule tribe and a separate tribal ministry to focus on tribes, efforts are being made to understand tribal customs and taking benefits from such tribes like Irula tribal which are specialized in snake catching are being used for catching snakes, Makodia tribe to catch monkeys. Honestly implementing government schemes like Vanbandhukalyan Yojana, Vanjeevan to ground level can help tribal people especially women to live a better quality life.

Issues facing tribal women in India Tribal have distinct culture, custom, language and social values. Mainland India is more or less based on patriarchal mindset but often in many tribal regions they are following matriarchal system. Eg: In Kerala, one tribe follows matriarchal system. TRIBAL WOMEN undergo double oppression as compared to male counterpart due to patriarchal community set up, distinct features of Tribal population like isolation, primitive economy, homogeneous society

and increasing encroachment by non some of the problems of tribal women are as follow absence of fix livelihood: Many tribal women are participating higher then the SC ST women but lack of fix income source and below poverty line, hence they are working in rural areas to survive there daily life.

Poor access of education: Since tribal people are poor and below poverty line they do not send their daughter to school and they think that girls can give hands in their work. Poor condition of health, lack of awareness of nutrition and requirement they suffer from many diseases specially during pregnancy time. The tribal region are geographically alienated. Non accessibility to many services make them most vulnerable, in general, but women in particular lack basic facilities for well-being ex- health, sanitation, nutrition, education. Social taboos of branding women the status of deity's and deploring her from physical and psychological needs. which is inhuman practice being followed, ex:Devaramma, Devdasi, etc.Lack of proper infrastructure even electricity has kept them in dark age, since human evolution. Witch branding and lynching, this is the most serious crime perpetrated against tribal women, who are frequently branded witches by community members (out of superstition, religious belief and patriarchal mindset) and hacked to violence and death. Polygamy though women in mainstream society have been largely protected from this menace, many of their tribal counterpart continue to face this problem out of cultural and religious sanctions. Tribal women have virtually no role to play in social and political spheres as they are poorly represented in political and civil spheres. Low literacy and poor health also hinder their progress. Land rights are not recognized much. They enjoy little rights over immovable property, with some exceptions in matrilineal societies.

Primitive Economy results in overburdening of women. They are exposed to wild animals, poisonous vegetation as a cost of survival (women are know to actively participate in economy) Cultural Practices. Numerous practices like genital mutilation are disastrous to the physical and mental health of women. Sexual Exploitation - A number of complaints regarding officials committing sexual offence have come to light. (especially Naxalite area) Isolation prevents women to take up education or benefit from government policies like maternity benefit, reservation etc.

Tribal councils have on several times used heinous punishments like gang rapes as diktats .Sexual exploitation by fake god-men , forest contractors & security forces, armed groups and in cities in prostitution as domestic help. Tribal migrants have low wages, bad work conditions malnutrition , unhygienic sanitation cramped housing., Malnutrition, anaemia, lack of access to healthcare , proper medicines , lack of literacy , education opportunities , low empowerment sense of independence. Generally tribal councils do not respect demands inputs from tribal women in matters of politics , land inheritance etc. heavy patriarchy, influence of feudalism., hard labour to fetch basic items such as biomass , water plant products. Displacements due to developmental forest conservation projects. Lack of awareness of laws , access to justice , schemes of govt, lack of jobs, absence of a strong feminist movement, language and integration problems

Vanishing old culture due to foreign influences and hence income earning opportunities like weaving , handicrafts, standards of tribal women is below the national average. Maternal mortality is high among them because of lack of institutional delivery and unawareness of government schemes. Lack of education leads to their social and physical exploitation. For Eg: Mass Tubectomy in Chattisgarh state led to death of several tribal women Unawareness about their social and political rights unable to understand the legal/social system of mainland India Unlike other women groups like rural farmer women and other they do not have avenues to set SHG Discrimination by others at various places, peoples were being racially discriminated Government measures. Many states have passed anti witch legislation and proposed stringent punishment, but witch hunting continues unabated. Government has reserved 33% seats for women in civic bodies. This applies even to tribal women. But as we have seen in case of NAGA women, that these rights are seldom recognized. Adivasi mahilasashaktikaran Yojana helps tribal women in undertaking any income

generation activity. Several fellowships and hostels have been arranged for better future of tribal women.

Tribal women enjoy a greater freedom in many areas, when compared to mainstream women. But they also face many peculiar problems due to tribal customary laws and traditions and patriarchal mindset. It is time government proper implement schemes meant for their empowerment.

. Displacement due to developmental activities harm women more than men. More than 70% displacement for development activity involves tribals. Poor Rehabilitation policy make them distressed and vulnerable. Implementation of forest rights act deprives tribal women from minor forest produce, hence jeopardizes their livelihood. They suffer from double disease burden, that is suffering from communicable and non-communicable diseases like hypertension, diabetes and so on. Malnutrition of lactating and pregnant women. The threat of extinction of some of the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group(PVTG).Literacy rate is one of the lowest among tribal women.

Even after 70 years of independence the tribal in India specially women face various problems in different aspects of their lives:

**Social:**

Most of the tribal communities are patrilineal society, where women are subjugated to men. Therefore they face different problems related to descent, inheritance, succession, marriage, divorce etc. Their role in decision making is either absent or very limited due to which they are exploited. Different social taboos like witch hunting, polygamy, women as a property exists making their life vulnerable. Lack of basic education, healthcare facilities, and awareness about their rights and govt programs to assist them keep them backward.

**Economic:**

while in tribal societies women generally participate equally with men in labor like agriculture, collection of forest produce etc .They suffer from unequal wages, exploitation at work place, lesser economic choices and freedom. Even land alienation and deforestation affect tribal women more.

**Political:**

a).Participation of women in their day to day political affairs is very low as most of the communities are headed by males.

b).At the state and national level too the participation of tribal women is not substantial.

The government has taken many measures to ipluplift women

MGNREGA has been launched to provide 100 days of work to rural people.

Indira Awas Yojana has been launched to house to rural people those who are below poverty line.

National Rural health mission has been launched to provide effective healthcare to rural population.

Reservation for women in Panchayat and Election .

UJWLA yojana States has also launched some specific scheme to tribal people.Marketing handicraft in fares

◆ Providing Skill cum education centers like Tejaswani Prject in Jharkhand.

Providing Scholarships and.Hostel Facilities.to tribal girls.

- ◆ Access to marketing, ex: women's part time job is to collect minor forest product like honey, resins, herb's etc this has brought income security among in many tribals
- ◆ PESA(Panchayath Extened to Scheduled Areas) extended to tribal areas are testimonial for the success of democratic decentralization besides 33% reservation Infrastructure facilities like providing toilets under SBM,etc

### **Conclusion**

Despite, all this measures there is still space occupied to bring social and a).The constitution provide various safeguards to the tribals like special provisions for the administration of Tribal areas, formation of tribes advisory council.

As per the Article 46 (promotion of educational and economic interests of SCs, and STs, for various reservations in education, politics and jobs government has enacted various laws to implement them.Central government along with state governments provide particular services for the upliftment of tribal women under various programs for free education, health care facilities, Ashram schools, scholarship, hostels etc.The different schemes run by govt includes: MSPs for minor forest produce, vocational training institutes, Scheme of Strengthening education among ST Girls in low literacy Districts

Although the efforts of govt has helped in the empowerment of tribal women, a lot more need to be done. For the start, their basic education, awareness about their rights and increased participation in the politics need to be focused more. economic upliftment.This can effectively brought with progressive legislation with implementation of the welfare programmes.

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## Social, Economic and Political Status of Indian Women in 75 years of Independent India

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### **Abstract:**

The social and political system in India is patriarchal, which considers women as secondary citizens which is making them submissive and exploitative. Though many changes happened in India during the last 75 years, still the status of women in India is not transformed as with the span of the nation transformed. Of course it will be falsified to say that the status of women is the same as at the time of the independence. So it is a transformation with contradictions. So this paper wants to highlight both achievements and challenges of women in India in these 75 years.

### **Introduction:**

Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru spoke these words almost 75 years ago, during his historic address on the eve of the day that brought us freedom from years under British rule. "To bring freedom and opportunity to the common man, to the peasants and workers of India; to fight and end poverty and ignorance and disease; to build up a prosperous, democratic and progressive nation, and to create social, economic and political institutions which will ensure justice and fullness of life to every man and woman," he said in his speech, called the "Tryst with Destiny." In the seven decades that followed, many have toiled to fulfil the vision of those who fought for freedom. India has undergone significant changes, both socio-economic and political, and seen successes on the global stage. But where do women, who constitute half of the country's citizenry, stand now in the fight for freedom, dignity, equal rights and representation?

As India celebrates the 75th anniversary of its Independence, I take a look at the status of women in contemporary India and what the numbers tell us about their freedom. The declining sex ratio has been a cause of worry for Independent India. The past two decades have seen positive signs with the ratio slightly improving to 943 per 1,000 men in 2011 from 933 in the 2001 census. The proportion of women exceeded men in 2021 for the first time in history. For every 1,000 men, there are 1,020 women, according to the Centre's National Family Health Survey (NFHS) data. The development made national headlines as many saw it as a confirmation of a 'demographic shift'. Experts, however, advised caution. They believed that the figure was not an accurate representation of India's sex ratio due to the small sample size, compared to the decadal census.

A UNICEF report titled 'Children in India' notes, "India is the only large country where more girls die than boys, with the inverse sex ratio at birth being 900 girls born for every 1000 boys. Globally 7 per cent more boys die under the age of 5 compared to girls but in India, 11 per cent more girls die under the age of 5. India is home to the largest number of child brides in the world." Gender disparity has gotten worse in India, with boys having better odds of survival than girls across religions, castes and classes. According to Census 2011, the child sex ratio dropped from 927 in 2011 to 914 per 1,000 males. Several factors like discrimination towards the girl child and sex-selective abortions, are responsible for the skewed ratio.

A U.N. report raises the issue of sex-selective abortions resulting in deaths in India. Eight women die from causes related to unsafe abortions each day in India, making unsafe abortions the third leading cause of maternal mortality in the country, according to the United Nations Population

Fund's State of the World Population Report, 2022. Over 65 per cent of abortions in India were classified as unsafe between 2007 and 2011. The NFHS 2019-21 further shows that more than one-fourth (27 per cent) of abortions were performed by women without any assistance at home.

India also accounts for 4.6 crore of the world's 14.26 crore "missing females" — yet another aspect of gender inequality. As per a United Nations report published in 2020, about 4.6 lakh girls in India were 'missing' at birth each year between 2013 and 2017. The U.N. report cited sex selection based on gender and post-birth female mortality as two main reasons behind the alarming number. The State of World Population 2020 defines missing females as those missing from the population at given dates due to the cumulative effect of postnatal and prenatal sex selection in the past.

### **Education :**

The literacy rate was below 20 per cent when the British left India. Over the years, India made significant progress and improved the overall rate to 74.04% (Census 2011). However, at 65.46 per cent, the female literacy rate is 20 per cent less than the global average rate of 87 per cent. The NFHS-5 report, which sampled a population of 7.24 lakh women and 1 lakh men in the age group of 15-49, found that the female literacy rate climbed to 72 per cent. Twenty-three per cent of women between the ages of 15-49 still had received no schooling, as compared to 11 per cent of men. More than one-fourth of rural women never attended school, while the number stood at 13 per cent for urban women.

Overall enrolment has increased over the years, but a lesser number of girls took admission than boys in primary, secondary and higher secondary levels between 2012 and 2021. According to the Unified District Information System for Education Plus, 14.2 per cent of girls dropped out at the secondary level in 2020-21, while 15.1 per cent dropped out in 2019-20. Family pressure to leave education, early marriage, and household responsibilities are some of the reasons girls drop out of school.

### **Healthcare :**

India performed the worst in the "health and survival" sub-index of the Global Gender Gap Index this year, ranking last among 146 countries. Government data shows that around 20 per cent of women of reproductive age are undernourished. Nearly 60 per cent of women between the 15-49 age group are anaemic, compared to 20 per cent of men. The number of anaemic women increased from 53 per cent in 2015-16 to 57 per cent in 2019-21.

The nutritional status of mothers has a direct impact on children. NFHS data reveals that children born to underweight mothers are more likely to be stunted or underweight than those born to mothers with a normal BMI or children whose mothers are overweight/obese. It also highlights the role of education. More than 45 per cent of children born to mothers with no schooling were stunted, compared with 26 per cent born to mothers with 12 or more years of schooling. Anaemia trends, as recorded in NFHS 2019-20

### **Women in the workforce:**

At a time when more women can join the workforce as an outcome of an increase in the female literacy rate, the opposite is happening as labour force participation of women drops sharply. About 9 per cent of women were employed or looking for jobs in 2021-22 — a decline from 15 per cent in 2016-17 — as per a report by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE).

The impact of the pandemic was severe for women as the unemployment rate shot up to 17 per cent, more than double the rate for men. This was corroborated in the World Economic Forum's



Gender Gap Report 2022 where India ranked 135 out of 146 countries. The report acknowledged the pandemic as one of the reasons and noted that the percentage of employed women has been quite low over the past decade, averaging 21 per cent between 2012 and 2021. The proportion of working-age women taking part in paid work dropped to 19.2 per cent in 2021 from 30.7 per cent in 2006.

Government data also shows that men continue to be more likely to be employed than women in India. In comparison to 75 per cent of men, around 25 per cent of women are currently employed, as per NFHS data. The last survey had shown an increase in the employment rate among married women (15-49 age group) from 31 per cent to 32 per cent, albeit a marginal rise that is unlikely to effect a significant change to transform the lives of women. Meanwhile, 98 per cent of married men aged 15-49 are employed.

Here are some more findings of the NFHS report that shed light on women's financial autonomy in India:

- Among working girls and women, 83 per cent earn cash, while 22 per cent do not receive any compensation. Fewer women are able to make independent decisions regarding their earnings. The survey shows that 18 per cent of married earning women make independent financial decisions. 85 per cent of married women who earn cash say they make decisions alone or jointly with their husband on how their earnings are to be used.
- The husband is the sole decision-maker regarding the use of a woman's earnings for 14 per cent of females.
- 79 per cent of women have a bank or savings account that they themselves use. Just a little more than 50 per cent of women in the age group have a mobile phone that they themselves use.
- 42 per cent of women own a house alone or jointly with someone.
- The percentage of employed women who earn about the same or more than their husband has decreased from 42 per cent (NFHS-4) to 40 per cent.
- 10 per cent of women make decisions about their health care alone, compared with one-third of men.

Literacy levels, the burden of marriage and social norms dictating the role of women in the public domain are some of the important drivers for lower participation in the workforce. Another reason is that majority of Indian women continue to be engaged in unpaid household work. Women continue to wait for greater autonomy over their life and financial freedom.

### **Crimes against women:**

The numbers tell a disturbing tale— not much has changed for a woman living in Independent India. Data shows that over the years, there has been an increase in cases of abuse, harassment, and sexual violence, including marital rape. Government data on crimes against women revealed that India reported a rape every 15 minutes on average in 2018.

Things have worsened in the digital age, with women getting harassed online. and morphed photos, abuse, and rape threats becoming common. Recent incidents have revealed how Muslim women are harassed through social media, with their photos being put for sale on apps. The NFHS data (2019-21) found that in India, around one-third of women have experienced physical or sexual violence. Thirty per cent of women between the age of 18 and 49 have experienced physical

violence since they were 15 years old and 6 per cent have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime.

(Above) Married women in India who identified the following individuals as those who forced them for the first time to have sexual intercourse or perform other sexual acts. Domestic violence against women marginally declined from 31.2 per cent to 29.3 per cent, but 32 per cent of married women experienced physical, sexual, or emotional spousal violence. Data revealed that over 95 per cent of married women in India who endured sexual violence identified their husbands or former husbands as the perpetrator. Over 90 per cent of those who endured sexual violence did not seek help from anyone. And those who did, never approach a lawyer to seek legal recourse. About 18 per cent of married women said they cannot say 'no' to their husbands even if they do not want to have sexual intercourse.

### **Representation in decision making :**

Not much has changed in seven decades as far as the representation of women in decision-making is concerned— Parliament remains a male-dominated institution. The stature of women in Indian politics can be ascertained from the fact that only 14 per cent of MPs in the current Lok Sabha are women. The global average is 25. India ranks 144 in a list of around 200 countries in terms of the percentage of elected women representatives in the Lower House of Parliament, according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Such is the gender disparity that representation of women in Lok Sabha has failed to breach the 20 per cent-mark in around seven decades of Independence. At 81 elected MPs, Lok Sabha currently has the highest number of women lawmakers elected to the 543-member House in history. The Upper House, meanwhile, has 33 women MPs out of a total of 245 (eight seats are vacant).

Not much has changed since the first Lok Sabha in 1952, when 24 women were elected. The number remain unchanged in the second Lok Sabha and increased to 37 in the third Lok Sabha (1962-67). The next three terms saw a drop in the number of women MPs. It crossed 50 in the 13th Lok Sabha when 52 women were elected. In the 16th Lok Sabha, 64 women were elected MPs. In 70 years, India has added less than 60 women MPs in Parliament since the first Lok Sabha.

Over the years, political parties have promised 33 per cent reservation to women multiple times but it has only remained a dream. Bills seeking to reserve one-third of seats for women in the Lok Sabha and the state legislative assemblies were first introduced in 1996 and three other times. But all four versions of the Bill lapsed.

The situation is no different in the Indian judiciary— earlier this year, the Chief Justice of India raised concerns about the low representation of women in the legal field. The CJ noted that women constitute around 30 per cent of the judges in the lower judiciary, 11.5 per cent in the high courts and only four sitting judges out of 33 in the Supreme Court are women. "The situation of women lawyers in the country is not any better. Out of 1.7 million advocates registered, only 15 per cent are women," he stated. Since its inception in 1950, the SC has seen only 11 women judges.

More than a 100 years. It will take India 132 years to reach gender parity, according to the Global Gender Report 2022 of the World Economic Forum. The report shows that gap reduced by four years since 2021 and the gender gap closed by 68.1 per cent, but there is a long way to go.

### **Conclusion:**

The Global Gender Gap Index considers four sub-indices — economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health & survival and political empowerment to measure gender parity.

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India "recovered" ground since 2021 in economic participation and opportunity, but the labour force participation shrunk for both men and women (-3 per cent). India also recorded a declining score on political empowerment due to the diminishing share of years women have served as head of state for the past 50 years, the report added.

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## **Role of Rural Women in the development of India: In 75 years of Independent India- A Review**

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### **Abstract:**

the real India lives in the villages. Villages are the life and blood for country's development. The women living in rural areas contribute for the development of Indian economy. Through their substantive farming and petty trading and farm works, they earn their small livelihoods. Since independence the empowerment techniques tried to brought them in to the mainstream of the Indian subcontinent. This paper tries to explore various fields where rural women are making their substantive efforts to make the nation grow forward with the bottoms approach with special reference to rural agrarian economy and its development.

### **Introduction:**

In rural India, the percentage of women, who own land and other productive assets are few. Majority of women are engaged in the agricultural sector, where they are required to carry out manual work. Women mostly are not skilled in terms of use of machines and these are put into operation by men.

### **Rural women :**

Rural women are found living in rural communities. They are mostly involved in subsistence farming, petty trading and of- the-farm works. They work very hard but earn very little. These women suffer discrimination because they are not allowed to have equal ownership of land with their male counterparts. Most of what they earn is also extracted from them by their husbands or male family members. They also work on the family farm without payment. They also contribute to the economic upkeep of the family.

Rural women are faced with diverse barriers to improving their lives socially and economically. These barriers include lack of access to credit, lack of health care and little or no education. They also face low skill jobs and unpaid labour. Due to the uncountable and unpaid works that rural women do, research is on-going to measure the rural women employment. This is in order to help design policies and programmes for rural women.

### **Rural Women : key to new India's agrarian revolution:**

Rural women are torchbearers for social, economic and environment transformation for the 'New India'. In India, Agriculture employs about 80 percent of rural women. Empowering and mainstreaming rural women workforce in agriculture can bring paradigm shift towards economic growth. It will enhance food and nutrition security and alleviate poverty and hunger. It's a winning strategy for achieving Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

India is celebrating and commemorating the progressive 75 years of India after independence with 'Azaadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' and promulgating mission of warranting women as "Empowered women- Empowered Nation". India is an agrarian economy with about 54.6 percent of total workforce engaged in agricultural and allied sector activities (Census 2011). Women are extensively engaged in the activities pertaining to agriculture and allied sector. The workforce participation

rate for rural females is significantly higher at 41.8 percent against urban women participation rate of 35.31 percent (MoSPI, 2017).

In India, reforms are underlined for holistic development of women, enabling socio-economic and health security. Since Independence, several government flagship schemes and programmes are initiated to improve rural women stature in society by creating livelihood opportunities and engagements in paid employments. Various schemes, such as the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Program (PMEGP), National Livelihoods Mission, Deen Dayal Upadhyay Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY), Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana I (PMMVY), etc. has made significant contributions in creating gender parity and socio-economic empowerment of women in India. Now, rural women have availing access to education, productive resources, capacity building, skill development, healthcare facilities and diversified livelihood opportunities through government beneficiary schemes.

### **Status of Rural women in India :**

India is the land of paradoxes. We worship Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth. We beseech her to bring us good fortune, good profits, good yield. We invite her to grace our homes to herald prosperity. Yet we do not think twice before abandoning our new-born girl child on the heap of garbage. Day-in and day-out girls and women in our society face domination and oppression. Women do not feel safe, they fear domestic violence, they fear rape, they do not feel secure even inside their homes.

Covid has aggravated the discrimination against women and the reported crimes against women have been all time high during the pandemic. Year 2020, which marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action, was intended to be ground-breaking for gender equality. Instead, with the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic even the limited gains made in the past decades are at risk of being rolled back. The pandemic is deepening pre-existing inequalities, exposing vulnerabilities in social, political and economic systems which are in turn amplifying the impacts of the pandemic. Across every sphere, from health to the economy, security to social protection, the impacts of COVID-19 are adverse for women and girls, simply by virtue of their gender.

Status of rural women reflects an even darker narrative. Out of 135 crore population of India, 65.13 percent lives in the rural setups and women constitute 48 percent of total rural population. 74.8 percent women are agricultural workers, but only 9.8 percent own a piece of land. 99 percent of households are male-headed. Though access to education has improved, those who are more educated remain unemployed because of the unavailability of formal jobs and low wages. It is also a fact that 81.3 percent of female workforce in India belongs to rural women, but women account for only 19.9% of the total labour force as per World Bank Data (2020).

It is well-accepted that rural women, apart from being the custodians of traditional knowledge, are key agents for achieving the transformational economic, environmental and social changes required for sustainable development in India. Despite women and girls' critical contributions to rural communities, rural women lag behind rural men and urban women on almost all global gender and development indicators for which data are available. Limited access to credit, healthcare and education are among the many challenges they face, which are further aggravated by the economic crisis and lack of food security that clutches their potential. Gender-based discrimination, social biases and stereotypes limit them into veils of inconspicuousness.

Empowering our rural women is the key not only to the well-being of individuals, families and rural communities, but also to overall economic productivity of the country. By providing equal and equitable rural services and infrastructure, it is possible to facilitate women's access to education, productive resources, and build on their knowledge, skills and abilities. Schemes like

MNREGA, Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana, Mahila Shakti Kendra, etc., aim to empower rural women with opportunities for skill development, employment, digital literacy, health and nutrition. Rural enterprises and SHGs are helping in progressing women towards financial stability, but the level of success required is much higher. During COVID, MNREGA was a life savior for women, but it is limited to only 100 days of job security. The main goal behind the introduction of various schemes is that it allows social and economic equity and builds self-esteem and confidence and a mechanism for many rural women to recognise their aptitude and potentials. But to make the scheme successful in empowering rural women, it is very necessary that they should participate in large numbers in the Gram Sabhas and voice their preferences and concerns regarding the implementation of government schemes. Despite seeing an improvement, there is a requirement to focus and make efforts to increase women's representation in local institutions and governance mechanisms and include them in decision-making within their households and communities.

We can no more ignore this large chunk of our powerhouse demographic dividend if we're planning to be trillion dollar economy. The present situation is adverse for rural women and is alarming for country's development goals. We have adopted the transformative Sustainable Development Goals as a roadmap to a more equitable, just and sustainable world by 2030. To fulfill these goals - particularly the goals on ending poverty and hunger, achieving gender equality and sustainable economic growth - we must recognize the continuum of women's work to include subsistence, care and livelihoods. Our rural woman, who is environmentally aware, financially independent, and digitally articulate, will eventually move towards harnessing the true potential of our demographic dividend and become an equal democratic voice in the country's political spectrum.

### **Development Goals for Rural Women:**

There are several development goals that can be set for rural women to improve their economic, social, and political status. These goals include:

#### **1. Access to Education**

- Provide access to education for rural women through the establishment of schools and training centres.
- Encourage girls to stay in school and complete their education.
- Offer adult education and vocational training programs to help rural women acquire new skills.

#### **2. Economic Empowerment**

- Provide women with access to credit and financial services to start and grow their own businesses.
- Promote entrepreneurship and provide training and support to help women start and manage small businesses.
- Encourage women to participate in agricultural activities and provide training and support to improve their productivity and income.

#### **3. Health and Nutrition**

- Provide access to healthcare services and information on health and nutrition.
- Promote healthy practices and provide training on hygiene and sanitation.

- Encourage women to participate in family planning programs and provide access to contraceptives.

#### **4. Political Participation**

- Encourage women to participate in local governance and decision-making processes.
- Provide training and support to help women develop leadership skills.
- Promote the inclusion of women in political processes and decision-making bodies.

#### **5. Gender Equality**

- Promote gender equality and combat discrimination against women.
- -Raise awareness on women's rights and encourage women to assert their rights.
- Provide training and support to help women tackle gender-based violence and harassment.

#### **Rural women contributing to economic development**

Rural women engage in both agricultural and off-agricultural economic activities to ensure their families' financial security by diversifying sources of income. They put their valuable efforts in framing by attaining knowledge of crop selection and agricultural practices. Even their off-farm work is now highly skilled and highly paid as compared to an earlier time. Rural women today share a significant contribution to men in both the agricultural and non-agricultural workforce of India.

With these alterations in rural settings, women in rural are progressing swiftly in supporting their husbands for raising and contributing to the household incomes. Today, in rural areas, women are performing almost equally in work and economic development as matched to men.

As per statistics, today, around 37 percent of the rural women make purchases on their own, and these numbers are getting up to 40 percent for working rural women.

About 84 percent of rural women travel outside their villages or town to district headquarters or a nearby city to make purchases and bring products home.

Further, 60 percent of the working rural women and 67 percent of the non-working rural women purchase branded products for their trustworthiness and reliability. Around 76 percent of rural women make impulse purchases in their own village or a nearby town.

#### **Conclusion:**

At this occasion the nation needs a special focussed, verified and deliberate effort to make the rural women more progressive and vibrant. Though the rural women are leaving impressive growth terms in terms of their employment, education and health still, it is though that they are excluded in the mainstream. They find space only on the discussions of the women empowerment. In reality they need to occupy more space when compared to any other gender groups.

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## Critical Analysis of Women Environmentalists in Major Movements on Conservation of the Natural Environment in Independent India

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### **Abstract:**

This paper critically analyses the contributions of women environmentalists in major movements focused on the conservation of the natural environment in independent India. The conservation efforts in post-independent India have witnessed the active participation of women, who have played significant roles in advocating the protection of diverse ecosystems, promoting sustainable development, and raising awareness about environmental issues. The paper examines five key movements that shaped India's environmental discourse: the Chipko Movement, the Appiko Movement, the Narmada BachaoAndolan, the Anti-Tehri Dam Movement, and the work of Vandana Shiva on ecofeminism.

The analysis highlights the pivotal role played by women in these movements, emphasizing their involvement in mobilizing communities, raising awareness, and challenging destructive practices. The Chipko Movement brought attention to deforestation through the courageous act of tree-hugging, primarily led by women from Himalayan communities. Similarly, women in the Appiko Movement actively campaigned against illegal logging and advocated for sustainable forest management in the Western Ghats region. The Narmada BachaoAndolan shed light on the ecological impact of large dam projects, with women at the forefront of resistance.

Furthermore, the paper explores the contributions of individuals such as Gaura Devi, Medha Patkar, and Vandana Shiva. These environmental leaders brought ecological concerns to the forefront and highlighted the interconnectedness between environmental degradation, social justice, and women's rights. Their work contributed to shaping the discourse on sustainable development and the need for gender-inclusive environmental movements.

Overall, this paper offers a critical analysis of the invaluable contributions of women environmentalists in major movements on the conservation of the natural environment in independent India. By recognizing and highlighting their efforts, the paper seeks to inspire further research and action to ensure inclusive and sustainable environmental concerns in the future.

**Key terms:** *Environmentalists, conservation of the natural environment, the Chipko Movement, the Appiko Movement, the Narmada BachaoAndolan, the Anti-Tehri Dam Movement, Ecofeminism.*

### **Introduction**

The conservation of the natural environment in independent India has witnessed the active participation of women environmentalists in major movements. These women have played a crucial role in advocating for sustainable development, raising awareness about environmental issues, and challenging destructive practices. However, a critical analysis of their contributions reveals both successes and challenges faced by women environmentalists in shaping India's environmental discourse.

### *Inclusion and Leadership:*

One significant aspect is the inclusion and leadership of women in environmental movements. Women have emerged as leaders and catalysts of change in movements like the Chipko Movement, Appiko

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Movement, and Narmada BachaoAndolan. Their active participation has challenged traditional gender roles and empowered women in rural and marginalized communities. However, a critical analysis reveals that women's leadership roles often go unrecognized, and they face barriers such as societal norms and limited access to resources.

#### *Grassroots Mobilization:*

Women have played a pivotal role in grassroots mobilization and community engagement. They have effectively organized rallies, protests, and awareness campaigns to protect natural resources and advocate for sustainable practices. The Chipko Movement is a prime example of women's direct action in protecting forests. However, a critical analysis highlights the need to acknowledge the unique struggles and perspectives of women from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds, ensuring their voices are heard and respected within the broader environmental movement.

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#### *Access to Resources and Representation:*

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Access to resources and representation remains a challenge for women environmentalists. Limited financial resources, lack of formal education, and cultural barriers often restrict women's active participation and leadership roles in major movements. Efforts should be made to provide equitable access to resources, training, and opportunities for women, enabling them to contribute effectively to conservation initiatives.

#### *Justice and Livelihoods:*

Women environmentalists have been instrumental in advocating for environmental justice and sustainable livelihoods for marginalized communities. They have highlighted the negative impacts of large-scale development projects, such as Environmental dams, on local ecosystems and communities. However, a critical analysis reveals that women's concerns regarding the displacement and loss of livelihoods are often marginalized or overlooked in the pursuit of economic growth and development.

### **The Chipko Movement: Women's Power in Protecting Forests**

In the Chipko Movement, women played a pivotal role in protecting forests and advocating for environmental conservation. Here are some notable women and their contributions to the movement:

1. Gaura Devi: Gaura Devi is recognized as one of the prominent leaders of the Chipko Movement. She led the historic Chipko protest in the village of Reni in 1974. Gaura Devi and the women of Reni hugged trees and prevented them from being cut down by loggers, inspiring the tree-hugging method of protest. Her courageous act brought attention to the ecological significance of forests and sparked a broader movement for environmental conservation.

2. Bachni Devi Bhandari: Bachni Devi Bhandari, a resident of the Garhwal region, actively participated in the Chipko Movement. She led protests and advocated for the protection of forests and natural resources. She highlighted the impacts of deforestation on local communities' livelihoods and emphasized the need for sustainable forest management practices. Shiva, Vandana. "Staying Alive: Women, Ecology, and Development." Zed Books, 2016.

3. Many other women in local communities: Countless women from various villages and communities actively participated in the Chipko Movement. They engaged in peaceful protests, tree-hugging actions, and community organizing to raise awareness about the importance of forests and the adverse consequences of deforestation. Women's involvement ensured that the movement had broad-based support and that the message of forest conservation reached all levels of society.

The contributions of these women and many others in the Chipko Movement were instrumental in raising awareness about environmental issues, challenging unsustainable practices, and advocating for the protection of forests. Their active participation and leadership inspired similar movements and paved the way for the recognition of women's roles in environmental activism in India and around the world.

“Women are the real architects of society, and they have proven their mettle in the Chipko Movement, emerging as powerful agents of change and guardians of our forests.” - Gaura Devi.

### **The Appiko Movement: Women's Leadership in Forest Conservation**

In the Appiko Movement, several women made significant contributions to the conservation of forests and the rights of local communities. Here are a few notable women and their roles:

1. Pandita Ramabai: Pandita Ramabai was an environmental activist and social worker who actively participated in the Appiko Movement. She raised awareness about the importance of forests and advocated for sustainable forest management practices.

2. Radha Bhatt: Radha Bhatt was a key leader in the Appiko Movement. She organized protests, rallies, and awareness campaigns to mobilize communities and protect the forests of Uttara Kannada.

3. Kaveri Bai: Kaveri Bai, a resident of Salkani village in the Uttara Kannada district, played a significant role in the Appiko Movement. She actively participated in protests and voiced concerns about the impact of deforestation on local communities.

4. Kamamma: Kamamma, a tribal woman from the Western Ghats region, actively engaged with her community to raise awareness about the ecological significance of the forests and the need for their protection.

5. Gowri Shankar: Gowri Shankar, a resident of Sirsi, was actively involved in organizing rallies and campaigns to highlight the environmental issues faced by the region and advocate for sustainable forest practices.

These women, along with many others, contributed their time, energy, and efforts to raise awareness, mobilize communities, and protect the forests in the Appiko Movement. Their dedication and leadership continue to inspire environmental activism and conservation in the region.

### **The Narmada BachaoAndolan: Women's Struggle for Environmental Justice**

In the Narmada BachaoAndolan (NBA), several women played crucial roles in advocating for the rights of affected communities and environmental conservation. Here are some notable women and their contributions to the movement:

1. Medha Patkar: Medha Patkar is a prominent social activist and one of the key leaders of the NBA. She spearheaded the movement and fought for the rights of those affected by the construction of large dams on the Narmada River. Her relentless efforts and hunger strikes brought international attention to the issues and influenced policy debates.

2. Arundhati Roy: Roy played a prominent role in the Narmada BachaoAndolan (NBA), a social movement in India advocating for the rights of those affected by the Sardar Sarovar Dam project on the Narmada River. She actively supported the movement, raising awareness about the displacement of local communities and the environmental impact of the project. Through her writings and activism, she contributed to the NBA's efforts to protect the rights of affected people and the preservation of the Narmada River.

3. Chittarooma Palit: Chittarooma Palit was actively involved in the NBA and played a significant role in organizing protests and raising awareness about the environmental and social impacts of dam projects. She also worked to document and disseminate information about the movement.

4. Kamla Yadav: Kamla Yadav, a resident of the Narmada Valley, became a vocal advocate for the rights of the affected communities. She actively participated in protests, public meetings, and marches, highlighting the hardships faced by people due to dam construction.

5. Bhagwati Patidar: Bhagwati Patidar, a tribal woman, actively engaged with her community and fought for their rights in the NBA. She mobilized local women, organized meetings, and voiced concerns about the displacement and loss of livelihoods caused by the dam projects.

6. Bachiben Rawat: Bachiben Rawat, a tribal woman from the affected villages, played a crucial role in organizing grassroots movements and raising awareness about the impact of dam construction on local ecosystems and communities.

These women and numerous others demonstrated immense courage, resilience, and leadership in the Narmada BachaoAndolan. Their contributions have been instrumental in shaping the movement and advocating for environmental justice and the rights of affected communities.

### **TheAnti-Tehri Dam Movement: Women's Resistance to Ecosystem Protection**

In the Anti-Tehri Dam Movement, women played significant roles in raising concerns about the ecological impact of the dam and advocating for the rights of affected communities. Here are some notable women and their contributions to the movement:

1. Sudesha Devi: Sudesha Devi was a prominent activist in the Anti-Tehri Dam Movement. She actively participated in protests, organized public meetings, and mobilized local communities to raise awareness about the environmental and social consequences of the dam construction. She voiced concerns about the displacement of communities and the destruction of natural resources.

2. Radha Behn: Radha Behn, also known as Radha Bhatt, was a dedicated environmental activist who played a vital role in mobilizing women in the Anti-Tehri Dam Movement. She organized protests, led awareness campaigns, and highlighted the ecological significance of the region.

3. Bhagwati Prasad: Bhagwati Prasad, a resident of the Tehri region, actively raised concerns about the adverse effects of the dam on the environment and local communities. She actively participated in protests and public demonstrations, advocating for the rights of those affected by the dam construction.

4. Sumitra Padia: Sumitra Padia, a passionate environmentalist, worked tirelessly to raise awareness about the ecological impacts of the Tehri Dam. She engaged with local communities, organized meetings, and workshops, and actively contributed to the movement's efforts to protect the environment and the rights of affected communities.

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These women, along with others, played significant roles in the Anti-Tehri Dam Movement, standing up against the environmental consequences of the dam and advocating for the rights of local communities. Their determination and activism made a substantial impact in raising awareness about the ecological significance of the region and the need for sustainable development practices.

### **Vandana Shiva and Ecofeminism: Intersections of Gender and Environment**

Ecofeminism is a philosophical and social movement that explores the intersection of environmentalism and feminism. It recognizes the links between the oppression of women and the destruction of the natural world. Ecofeminism advocates for a holistic approach to social and environmental justice, emphasizing the need for gender equality, ecological sustainability, and interconnectedness with nature.

In the realm of ecofeminism, there have been several notable women who have contributed significantly to the understanding of the interconnectedness between gender, environment, and social justice. Here are some influential women associated with ecofeminism:

Vandana Shiva: Vandana Shiva, an Indian scholar, and environmental activist has made substantial contributions to ecofeminism. She has written extensively on the relationship between women, ecology, and sustainable agriculture. Shiva emphasizes the need to recognize women's knowledge and practices in sustainable farming and highlights the importance of biodiversity conservation.

### **Progress and Challenges of Women in 75 Years of Independent India**

#### **Women's progress in environmental movements in independent India:**

Assessing women's progress in environmental movements in independent India reveals both significant achievements and ongoing challenges. Here is an assessment of women's progress in this context:

1. **Increased Participation and Visibility:** Over the years, there has been a noticeable increase in women's participation and visibility in environmental movements. Women have actively engaged in grassroots activism, advocacy, research, and policy-making related to environmental issues. Their contributions have helped shape the discourse and strategies of environmental movements, leading to a more inclusive and diverse movement landscape.

2. **Leadership Roles and Representation:** Women have assumed leadership roles in various environmental organizations, networks, and movements. Their leadership has been instrumental in driving change and addressing gender-specific concerns within the environmental movement. Women's representation in decision-making bodies and their presence in key positions have improved, although there is still progress to be made to achieve gender parity in leadership roles.

3. **Recognition of Women's Knowledge and Practices:** There is increasing recognition of the importance of women's knowledge and practices in environmental conservation and sustainable development. Traditional ecological knowledge held by women, especially indigenous women, has gained recognition for its contribution to biodiversity conservation, sustainable agriculture, and community-based resource management. Efforts are being made to incorporate and respect women's knowledge and practices in environmental policies and practices.

4. **Gender Mainstreaming in Policies and Programs:** The integration of gender concerns in environmental policies and programs has gained traction. National and state-level policies increasingly acknowledge the differential impacts of environmental degradation on women and recognize the need for gender-responsive approaches. Initiatives such as gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting, and gender impact assessments are being implemented to ensure the inclusion

of women's perspectives and to address gender inequalities in environmental decision-making processes.

5. **Challenges and Persisting Gender Inequalities:** Despite progress, gender inequalities persist within environmental movements. Women continue to face barriers and challenges in terms of access to resources, decision-making power, and representation. Discrimination, limited access to education and training, and cultural norms that perpetuate gender roles and stereotypes pose obstacles to women's full participation and leadership in environmental movements.

6. **Intersectionality and Inclusivity:** There is a growing recognition of the intersectionality of gender with other forms of inequality and the need for inclusive approaches. Efforts are being made to address the specific challenges faced by marginalized groups of women, such as indigenous women, women from marginalized castes, and women in conflict-affected areas. Intersectional approaches are important for addressing the diverse experiences and vulnerabilities of women within environmental movements.

7. **Engaging with Climate Change:** Women's roles and perspectives in addressing climate change have gained attention. Recognizing that climate change disproportionately affects women, initiatives are being developed to support women's resilience, participation, and leadership in climate adaptation and mitigation efforts. However, more efforts are needed to ensure that women's voices and perspectives are fully integrated into climate change policies and programs.

In conclusion, women's progress in environmental movements in post-independence India is notable, with increased participation, leadership, and recognition of their knowledge and practices. Efforts have been made to address gender inequalities and mainstream gender perspectives in policies and programs. However, challenges persist, and there is a need for ongoing commitment to address barriers and ensure the full inclusion and empowerment of women in environmental movements. Recognizing the intersectionality of gender with other forms of inequality and engaging with climate change are crucial aspects of advancing women's progress in environmental movements.

### **Challenges and gender disparities in the environmental movement**

Despite progress, several challenges and gender disparities persist within the environmental movement. These include:

1. **Limited Representation:** Women continue to be underrepresented in decision-making roles and leadership positions within environmental organizations and movements. This lack of representation hinders the inclusion of women's perspectives, priorities, and experiences in environmental policies and practices.

2. **Gender Bias and Stereotypes:** Gender bias and stereotypes persist within the environmental movement, perpetuating unequal power dynamics and limiting women's opportunities for engagement and advancement. Stereotypes about women's roles as caregivers or their perceived lack of technical expertise often result in their exclusion from certain sectors or projects.

3. **Unequal Access to Resources:** Women face unequal access to resources such as land, finance, and technology, limiting their ability to engage in environmental activities and initiatives. Limited access to resources hampers women's participation in decision-making processes and undermines their capacity to implement sustainable practices.

4. **Gendered Division of Labour:** Societal norms and expectations often assign women the primary responsibility for household chores, caregiving, and subsistence farming. This division of

labour restricts women's time, mobility, and capacity to engage in broader environmental activities, limiting their involvement in environmental movements.

5. **Limited Recognition of Women's Knowledge:** Women's traditional knowledge and practices in resource management and conservation are often undervalued or overlooked. This undermines the potential for leveraging women's expertise in sustainable environmental practices and hinders their meaningful participation in decision-making processes.

6. **Gender-Based Violence and Safety Concerns:** Women activists in the environmental movement face various forms of gender-based violence, including harassment, threats, and intimidation. These safety concerns disproportionately affect women and can deter their active engagement and leadership in environmental initiatives.

7. **Intersectionality and Marginalization:** Women from marginalized communities, such as indigenous women, women from lower castes, and women in conflict-affected areas, face compounded challenges due to intersecting forms of discrimination and marginalization. Intersectionality must be considered to address the specific barriers faced by these women and ensure their meaningful inclusion in the environmental movement.

8. **Inadequate Gender Analysis:** There is often a lack of gender analysis in environmental research, policies, and projects. This oversight leads to an incomplete understanding of the differential impacts of environmental degradation on women and men and undermines the effectiveness of environmental interventions.

Addressing these challenges requires concerted efforts to mainstream gender equality in the environmental movement. This includes promoting women's leadership and representation, challenging gender biases and stereotypes, ensuring equitable access to resources and opportunities, recognizing and valuing women's knowledge, addressing gender-based violence, and adopting intersectional approaches that consider women's diverse experiences and vulnerabilities. By addressing these challenges, the environmental movement can become more inclusive, effective, and responsive to the needs and contributions of all genders.

### **Recommendations for enhancing women's roles and participation**

To enhance women's roles and participation in the environmental movement, the following recommendations can be considered:

1. **Promote Gender Equality in Leadership:** Environmental organizations and movements should strive to achieve gender parity in leadership positions. This can be done by setting targets and implementing affirmative action measures to ensure equal representation of women in decision-making roles.

2. **Build Capacity and Provide Training:** Offer training programs and capacity-building initiatives specifically tailored for women in environmental fields. These programs can enhance their skills, knowledge, and confidence, enabling them to take on leadership roles and contribute effectively to environmental initiatives.

3. **Address Gender Bias and Stereotypes:** Raise awareness about gender bias and stereotypes within the environmental movement. Challenge and dismantle these biases by promoting inclusive and equitable work environments, encouraging diverse voices and perspectives, and recognizing and celebrating the contributions of women.

4. **Strengthen Networking and Mentorship Opportunities:** Facilitate networking platforms and mentorship programs that connect women in the environmental field with experienced

professionals and leaders. These opportunities can provide guidance, support, and career development pathways for women, fostering their professional growth and advancement.

5. Foster Inclusive Decision-Making Processes: Ensure that decision-making processes within environmental organizations and initiatives are inclusive and participatory. Create spaces for women's voices to be heard, valued, and integrated into decision-making at all levels. Encourage diverse perspectives and ensure that women have equal opportunities to contribute to strategic planning and policy development.

6. Promote Gender-Responsive Policies and Practices: Implement gender-responsive policies and practices that explicitly address gender inequalities within the environmental movement. This includes conducting gender impact assessments, adopting gender-sensitive indicators, and mainstreaming gender considerations in project design, implementation, and evaluation.

7. Encourage Collaboration and Partnerships: Foster collaboration and partnerships between women's organizations, environmental organizations, and other stakeholders. Collaborative efforts can amplify women's voices, leverage resources, and generate collective action for environmental sustainability and gender equality.

8. Recognize and Value Women's Knowledge and Contributions: Acknowledge and value women's knowledge, expertise, and contributions to environmental conservation and sustainable development. Incorporate women's traditional ecological knowledge and practices into environmental policies and programs, recognizing the unique perspectives and insights they bring.

9. Address Barriers to Access and Participation: Identify and address the specific barriers that hinder women's access to resources, opportunities, and decision-making processes. This includes addressing economic disparities, ensuring safe and supportive environments, providing childcare facilities, and addressing mobility constraints.

10. Promote Research and Data Collection: Support research and data collection on the intersection of gender and the environment. This will enhance the understanding of gender dynamics in environmental issues and contribute to evidence-based policymaking and programming.

By implementing these recommendations, the environmental movement can create a more inclusive, equitable, and effective space for women's participation, leadership, and contributions.

## **Conclusion**

Overall, the paper highlights the invaluable contributions of women environmentalists in major movements on the conservation of the natural environment in independent India. It underscores the need for continued efforts to address gender disparities, recognizes women's knowledge and perspectives, and promote their meaningful participation and leadership in environmental conservation and sustainable development.

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## Role of Indian Muslim Women In India's Freedom Struggle

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### Abstract:

India's freedom struggle has seen the rise and participation of Muslim women in large number. In spite of traditional barriers many women came forward and participated actively in the freedom struggle. The challenges they have faced in the process of participation in the national movement needs to be remembered and recognised. This paper is an attempt to highlight the contributions Muslim women freedom fighters in the India's freedom struggle. It is essential to remember those unsung daughters of Independence.

Key Words: Women Freedom Fighters, Muslim Women, contribution and role.

### Introduction:

As India celebrates 75 years of Independence the country often recalls those that were instrumental in the country's freedom struggle. But often those who aren't talked about enough evanesce into the archives of history. As men who took lead roles in the movement were put behind bars, the women ensured that the movement would not die down and the country attained the freedom a vast majority of its residents and citizens enjoy today.

The country's Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his Independence Day speech, on Monday, hailed women and the part they played during the times including, Rani Laxmibai, Jhalkari Bai, Durga Bhabhi, Rani Gaidinliu and Begum Hazrat Mahal among others. These are a few among the many names that are a part of the country's Independence struggle. Apart from Begum Mahal, who made it to the list of the PM's speech, today, Muslim women have made their mark in Indian history.

Abadi Bano Begum, Bibi Amtus Salam, Begum Anis Kidwai, Begum Nishatunnisa Mohani Baji Jamalunnisa, Hajara Beebi Ismail, Kulsum Sayani, and Syed FakrulHajiya Hassan are among those who are often forgotten or lost in public memory. We can examine the contributions of these women in detail.

Abadi Bano Begum (Born 1852- Died 1924)

Abadi Bano Begum was the first Muslim woman who actively took part in politics and was also a part of the movement to free India from the British Raj. Abadi Bano Begum referred to by Gandhi as *Bi Amma*, was born in 1852, in Uttar Pradesh's Amroha. Bi Amman was married to a senior official in the Rampur State, Abdul Ali Khan.

After the death of her husband, Bano raised her children (two daughters and five sons) on her own. Her sons, Maulana Mohammad Ali Jouhar and Maulana Shaukat Ali become leading figures of the Khilafat Movement and the Indian Independence Movement. They played an important role during the non-cooperation movement against the British Raj.

*Bi Amma*, despite her poor financial condition, from 1917-1921, donated Rs 10 every month to protest against the British Defense Act, after Sarojini Naidu's arrest. In 1917, Bano also joined the

agitation to release Annie Besant and her sons, who were arrested by the British after their failed attempts to silence her home rule movement in 1917, launched alongside, Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Despite being a conservative Muslim for the most part of her life Bi Ammah was one of the most prominent faces of Muslim women in India's freedom struggle. To get the support of women, Mahatma Gandhi encouraged her to speak in a session of the all-Indian Muslim league, she gave a speech which left a lasting impression on the Muslims of British India. Bano played an important role in fundraising for the khilafat movement and the Indian Independence movement.

**Bibi Amtus Salam (Died 1985)**

Mahatma Gandhi's 'adopted daughter' from Patiala, Bibi Amtus Salam was a social worker and his disciple who played an active role in combating communal violence in the wake of the partition and in the rehabilitation of refugees who came to India following the partition. She has on several occasions risked her life by rushing to sensitive areas during the communal riots in Calcutta, Delhi and Deccan. Bibi Salam was a Muslim inmate of the Gandhi ashram and had over time become an adopted daughter to Gandhi. After the Noakhali riots, an article published in The Tribune on February 9, 1947, noted that Amtus Salam's 25-day fast, which was intended to make offenders feel guilty, was one of the most significant outcomes of Gandhi and his disciples' actions. To protest the "negligence" of the state authorities in the effort to rescue kidnapped women and children, she sat on an indefinite fast at Dera Nawab in Bahawalpur.

**Begum Hazrat Mahal (Born 1820-Died 1879)**

An iconic figure of the 1857 uprising, Begum Hazrat Mahal fought against the British East India Company. Begum, the wife of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah, the ruler of Awadh, refused to accept any favours or allowances from the British. Begum, with the aid of her commander Raja Jailal Singh, battled the British East India Company valiantly. Muhammadi Khanum, the future Mahal, was born in Faizabad, Uttar Pradesh, in 1830. Gulam Hussain is her father. She had an early understanding of literature. The East India Company's destruction of mosques and temples to make room for highways served as the catalyst for her uprising.

When the British East India Company invaded Awadh in 1856 and her husband, the last Nawab of Awadh, was exiled to Calcutta, the Begum made the decision to remain in Lucknow along with her son, Birjis Qadir. On May 31, 1857, they convened in Lucknow's Chavaneighbourhood to declare Independence and drive the British out of the city. On July 7, 1857, Begum Hazrat Mahal proclaimed her son, Birjis Khadir, the Nawab of Awadh. She raised 1,80,000 soldiers and lavishly renovated the Lucknow fort as the Nawab's mother. She died there on 7 April 1879.

**Begum Anis Kidwai (Born 1906- Died 1982)**

A politician and activist from Uttar Pradesh (UP) named Anis Kidwai devoted most of her life to serving the newly Independent India, working for peace and the rehabilitation of the victims of the terrible partition of India. She represented the Indian National Congress (INC) in the Rajya Sabha from 1956 to 1962, serving two terms as a Member of the Parliament. Anis Begum Kidwai remained active during the Indian National Movement. Despite gaining independence in 1947, India suffered from country division. By then, her husband Shafi Ahmed Kidwai had been murdered by communal forces for his efforts to promote amity between Muslims and Hindus and to prevent

the split of the country. She was deeply devastated by her husband's passing. She visited Mahatma Gandhi in Delhi following her husband's passing as a result of this unfortunate tragedy.

In order to support and assist the women who were suffering similarly to her as a result of the country's separation, she began working with women leaders like Subhadra Joshi, Mridula Sarabhai, and others under the direction of Mahatma Gandhi. She also started rescue camps for the victims and supported them in all respects. They affectionately called her '*Anis Aapa*'. She penned her experiences during the division of the Nation in her book '*Azadi Ki Chaon Mein*'.

**Begum Nishatunnisa Mohani (Born 1884- Died 1937)**

Begum Nishatunnisa Mohani was born in 1884 in Awadh, Uttar Pradesh, and her notion of ultimate freedom was adopted by *Gandhiji*. Married to Moulana Hasrat Mohani, a tenacious independence warrior and the one who gave the phrase "*Inquilab Zindabad*" its origin. Begum, a fierce opponent of British authority, supported the then-hardliner of the liberation struggle, Bal Gangadhar Tilak. After his imprisonment for publishing an anti-British piece, she wrote to her husband, Hasrat Mohani, encouraging him and raising his spirits by saying, "Face the risks imposed upon you boldly. Do not give me any thought. No sign of weakness should come from you. 'Be careful'. Later, when her husband was in prison, she took over the publication of his daily, *Urdu-e-Mualla*, and engaged in various legal disputes with the government.

**Baji Jamalunnisa, Hyderabad (Born 1915- Died 2016)**

Baji Jamalunnisa, who actively participated in the Telangana armed conflict, passed away in this city on July 22 2016, at the age of 101. Jamalunnisa Baji was born in Hyderabad in 1915 and was a prominent advocate for racial peace and the independence cause. She began reading the banned journal "*nigar*" and progressive literature as a young child after being raised by her parents in a liberal/progressive environment. Despite being raised in the traditional religious traditions of the Nizam regime, a component of the British Raj, she actively participated in the nationalist movement. She continued to participate in the independence movement despite the oppressive rule of the Nizam and the British rule over her in-laws' objections.

Later, she met Maulana Hazrat Mohani (the man who coined the phrase "*Inquilab Zindabad*" and was known as "*Thunder Bolt*" in the Freedom struggle), who inspired her to join the anti-imperialist movement in the nation. She provided sanctuary to freedom fighters trying to avoid being arrested by the Imperial Government while being a communist. Despite lacking basic higher education, she was fluent in Urdu and English and founded the literary society *BazmeEhabab*, which held debates in groups on socialism, communism, and unreasonable customs.

She is buried at the Hazrath Syed Ahmed Bad-e-Pah dargah in First Lancer. She was the sister of Syed Akthar Hasan, a former MLA and the founder of Payam Daily, and was better known as "*Baji*". She was a close friend and member of the Communist Party of Maqdoom Mohiuddin. Baji was also a founding member of the Progressive Writers Association and the Women's Cooperative Society.

Mohammed Ismail Saheb's wife, Hajara Beebi Ismail, was a freedom warrior from Tenali in the Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh. Mahatma Gandhi had a significant impact on the pair, who committed themselves to the Khadi campaign movement. In the Guntur district, her husband Mohammed Ismail opened the first *Khaddar* Store, earning him the moniker "Khaddar Ismail." Tenali served as the Muslim League's headquarters during that time in the Andhra area, where it was particularly active. Since Hajara and her husband supported Gandhi, they encountered fierce hostility from the Muslim League. Despite her husband's repeated arrests for his involvement in the national movement, Hajara Beebi never lost spirit.

Kulsum Sayani (Born 1900- Died 1987)

On October 21, 1900, in Gujarat, Kulsum Sayani was born. She participated in the Indian National Movement and battled against social injustices. Kulsum and her father met Mahatma Gandhi in 1917. Since then, she has travelled Gandhi's path. Throughout the Indian National Movement, she advocated for social changes.

Dr. Jaan Mohamad Sayani, a well-known liberation fighter, was the man she wed. She participated actively in a number of events of the Indian Freedom Struggle, with her husband's backing. She began working with the illiterate and joined the Charkha Class. She also had a significant impact on the Indian National Congress's "*Jan Jagaran*" campaigns, which raised public awareness of social ills. Sayani's operations included the suburbs and the metropolis of Mumbai.

Syed FakrulHajiya Hassan (Died 1970)

Syed Fakrul Hajiyan Hassan, who not only took part in the Indian freedom fight but also urged her children to do so. She was born into a family that immigrated to India from Iraq. She raised her kids to be freedom fighters who later gained notoriety as the "Hyderabad Hassan Brothers. Hajiya wed Amir Hassan, who had relocated to Hyderabad from Uttar Pradesh.

She adopted Hyderabad culture as a result. Amir Hassan, her spouse, had a senior position in the Hyderabad government. He was required to travel to several locations as part of his employment. She noticed the suffering of women in India while on her visits. She put a lot of effort into the growth of female children.

She lived in Hyderabad, which was governed by the British, yet she actively engaged in the National Freedom Movement since she was a lady with strong national emotions. She burned foreign clothing at her Abid Manzil in Hyderabad's Troop Bazaar in response to the demand of the Mahatma Gandhi. She took part in the non-cooperation and Khilafat movements. She regarded each soldier in the Indian National Army as one of her children. Along with Smt. Sarojini Naidu, and FhakrulHajiya put a lot of effort into getting the heroes of Azad Hind Fouz released.

### **Conclusion :**

These are the many Muslim women who has given their life and blood for India's freedom. But many times, their sacrifices are not recorded and mostly unknown to the present generations. At

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this momentous occasion it is apt to remember those great daughters of nation and their contributions.

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## Role of Women entrepreneurs in the Economic Development: Contributions and Challenge in 75 years of Independent India – An overview

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### Abstract:

*Rural women entrepreneurs are the change makers in the economic development of the country. Many rural development programmes helped rural women to become self employed as well as helped the nation to strengthen the cottage and small-scale industries. The impetus and encouragement given by many financial assistance programmes helped rural to achieve the dream of becoming entrepreneurs. Usually, women inhibit to take up the challenging role of entrepreneurs as they think of financial constraints. But the positive discrimination activities of the governments all over the world has targeted to provide special monetary assistance to women to enlighten them as entrepreneurs. The efforts made by the government of India in these seventy-five years has succeeded in producing very strong entrepreneurs even form the most remote places of the country. This paper tries to focus on the role and contributions of rural women entrepreneurs after independence.*

### Introduction:

A few decades ago, due to the different Indian structures, thinking about **women rural entrepreneurs** in India was not just anachronistic, it was almost “impossible”. Even if there were probably women who were running companies or businesses, those ones were maybe covered by men’s activities or they looked so simply that they were almost “irrelevant”.

With the new millennial, due to the strong globalization (business or pleasure trips, social networks, movies, tv shows, music, platforms were to read, learn or share ideas but also thanks to people moving around the world, following tastes, passions, or opportunities), a better and faster economy, a more open and developed education, different social legislation but also a generational update, India, with his huge quantity of people has and is changing a lot.

One of the most evident aspects of this change is visible thanks to the formal entrance of women in the business world, and not just as workers, but as entrepreneurs, successful entrepreneurs in various activities though restrictions still, compared to the men, but it is exponentially higher compared to twenty or thirty years ago!

### Programs For Rural Women Entrepreneurs

Since the last part of the previous millennium, the Government of India decided to create **programs** to promote, help and resolve poverty and work solutions, one of the first ones was the Swarna Jayanthi Grama Swarozgar Yojana. With innovative measures to provide loans, with longer terms and different kinds of requirements, this program has helped a lot of women access funds, to develop new ideas or companies, or more simply to own new machines, new cars and new products. Another initiative that has helped a lot the developments, has been the **training method**, where several training options have been created to teach, form, and build knowledge and professions inside the women’s reality.

This is a list of several programs that India offers to women, to help them form themselves, to help them find jobs, and to help them become entrepreneurs:

## Programs For Women Entrepreneurs In India

- 1 Assistance for Rural Employment Guarantee Schemes;
- 2 IRDP: Integrated Rural Development Programme;
- 3 National Food for Work Programme (NFWP);
- 4 National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA);
- 5 Support and Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP);
- 6 Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)

### The Current State

- 1 Let's analyze some data now: the women-owned enterprises are growing exponentially in India and compared to all the closer States, it is also the country where they develop quickly.
- 2 This element could not be shocking, thinking about the number of Indians but when we estimate that between 13 to 15 million are businesses owned by women, this number is probably one of the highest all over the globe!
- 3 With the help of the different programs, with the global investors, with the development of new or more local banks but also with the higher level of education, the number in the last decade of women-owned businesses has increased from 14% to over 20% of the country.
- 4 As long as this number is increasing, India still has a big gap with a lot of other countries, compared to the percentage of women-owned businesses. Countries like Korea, Mexico, or Brazil have a lower number of activities but a more balanced percentage with men.
- 5 Another peculiar aspect is the fact that the majority of these businesses are made by a single person, seen through economic eyes this means lower employment because the country presents a lot of businesses, so potentially a lot of possible employers but the reality is that to take care, most of the time, is enough a single person; just the 15/20% of the companies have hired more than a person.
- 6 The last data that is really interesting is the fact that not always, even if it seems on documents, women own many businesses/activities. It has been calculated that between 10% to 30% are owned by a female name but the reality is there are or there are men running the company!

### Success Stories Of Rural Female Entrepreneurs In India:

#### Anita Devi: The Mushroom Lady Of Bihar

Anita Devi is one of the most successful women entrepreneurs in India who made her success growing mushrooms. She graduated at home studying science in two universities, Dr. Rajendra Prasad Central Agriculture University in Samastipur, Bihar, and GB Pant University of Agriculture



and Technology in Uttarakhand. She was looking to find solutions to earn money but also to increase the family situation – she needed to help her family as well as several villages in the area.

Chetna Gala Sinmha

Chetna Gala Sinmha is a social activist and entrepreneur woman who has worked through time finding ways to empower women from the poorest areas of India, especially the rural ones.

In 1997 she opened the first Bank for and by rural women with the name of Mann Deshi MahilaSahakari Bank. Talking about the numbers of this bank, only in 2018, the bank has provided over 50 million dollars to support women entrepreneurs' projects of any kind. She also created a foundation called Mann Deshi foundation who owns different activities like community radio, a school to help the rural women entrepreneurs in India in the business fields but also other institutions to help women to create and grow their projects.

*Prema Gopalan : The Swayam Shikshan Prayog Woman*

Prema Gopalan started her journey after the 1993 earthquake. That event destroyed the majority of Latur, the damage was unbelievable and the problems uncountable. She along with a few other people decided to do something, decided to fight to look for solutions and after a few months they have been able to create a group made by women from over one thousand villages to work on the reconstruction/rehabilitation of the area. After 5 years they completed the project, rebuilding everything that was destroyed.

She decided to create SSP with the aim to form women to work, to do anything, arriving to learn how to lead in a workplace as in a community facing a lot of problems like food, energy, agriculture, healthcare, etc.

Thinlas Chorol

Thinlas Chorol is an activist and entrepreneur from Ladakh. Since her childhood, she spent a lot of time living and exploring the area till the point where she started to work as a trekking guide. Considering the historical moment and the place this fact was really peculiar as weird: that kind of job mostly belonged to men! No matter what, with time and experience she built popularity, and more or less 10 years after in 2009 she founded her company: Ladakhi women's travel company. The company started as a trekking/tourism start-up, became year after year bigger till the point she decided to do a new step in her journey: it was no longer just a trekking company but a real organization able to help women to enter this world, to help them find jobs and places but also working more with the ecotourism.

Navalben Dalsangbhai Chaudhary

NavalbenDalsangbhai Chaudhary is an entrepreneur whose business is based on milk.

Originally from Gujarat, she has been able in the last years to create a good profit from milking buffalos and cows, she owns more or less 120/130 animals. After years she has been able to hire 15 people and her business is growing month after month.

Sobita Tamuli

SobitaTamuli is a really young entrepreneur who has been able to create a big business from what she had around. Married when she was eighteen she started to live a regular house life in a small

village in Assam. She was responsible for taking care of the house, taking care of the family but also about the plants and ground she had around. After a few years of this life, she realized that by mixing specific ingredients she was able to create stronger and more natural manure. A mixture of banana plants, dried and old leaves, dirt, khar, cow dung, and a few other natural elements. In a short period of time, she has been able to be noticed by a lot of local farmers, and slowly she obtained a lot of clients all over the region. Her business has not stopped in this field, recently she started a new one focused on Japis, the traditional conical hats of the area.

#### Pabiben Rabari : The Hard Jari Woman

Since her childhood, to help her family who was struggling, she has always worked without having the possibility to continue her studies. Working from home she had the possibility to learn directly from the maternal hands the traditional embroidery methods.

After years of work, she started to be more and more skilled, discovering all the time new ways to approach the different jobs she had to do. One day she ended up inventing the Hard Jari, a completely new and personal process of embroidery. Her products, made with this method started to be sold super fast and in big quantities, the bags she used to create took the name of Pabi Bag and in a few years, they became popular all over in and outside of India.

Nowadays her business counts more than 50 women working for and with her.

#### Godavari Satpute

Godavari Satpute is another example of a really talented Indian entrepreneur who has been able to create a business from “nothing”. Literally from nothing. Her talent has been so peculiar that she has been able to see inside waste materials something more, something else.

She founded Godavari Akashkandil, a company that uses those materials, in a way that recycles those elements to create unique paper lamps. Her working life as, the ones of other women in the same condition, started due to a need: the salary of the husband was not enough to support the whole family so she started to think about ways how to increase it.

After a first loan provided by a member of the family, she made the prototype and with that, she started to produce a small number of lamps. From there the business became bigger and bigger and now, her company has more than 50 women working full time and almost 30 others part-time (with a minimum number of men inside). She has expressed on a lot of occasions her desire to help other women who were living or are living the same reality she had in her past.

#### Anita Gupta

In 1993 Anita Gupta founded the BhojpurMahila Kala Kendra to help rural women entrepreneurs in India to have a better and higher education but also employment training.

She has used one of the most precious things in our lives to make a business: memories. Growing up she collected a lot of memories about several episodes in her life she never liked, episodes of oppression, episodes of iniquities, and injustice.

Finding the courage and the right help she decided to open a business focused on helping other women what she has struggled to have: education, work possibilities, independence.

This is one of the oldest Indian women's worker cooperatives launched in 1959. I decided to give space to this specific one because the cooperative is one of the oldest who manufactures several goods. It was created by seven women from Mumbai (JaswantibenJamnadas Popat, Parvatiben Ramdas Thodani, UjambenNarandasKundalia, Banuben. N. Tanna, LagubenAmritlalGokani, Jayaben V. Vithalani, and Diwaliben Lukka) who tried to find a solution to earn money with the skills they had. Nowadays the company has more than 40.000 employees and they are still working, with the same spirit, with the same mission of the first seven founders: being able to create jobs, to find solutions, to teach, and to promote or sustain women in the job industry.

**Conclusion :**

The success stories of these rural women are not only inspiring but also surprising. This makes us to realise the power of the rural women. The impression that , we usually have is that rural women are less intelligent, innocent and illiterate. But these women has proved that they are the strength of the nation and made India proud with their products.

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## A Study on Achievements and Challenges to Women in Education in India

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### Abstract

The socio-economic spectrum in India. Concern for girls' education in last few years has led to a considerable expansion of access at the primary level. But a great number of girls *especially in the rural areas drop out before they reach secondary or higher stages of education. Many enter in to matrimony and become young mothers before having the opportunity to realize their full potential. Removed from formal schools at the onset of puberty, those who are not married, take on household responsibilities. The ones who are able to resist social and pedagogic pressures to drop out and reach the level of college or university, take studies seriously as they know this privilege will vanish after matrimony. Many are not even able to peruse their goals of further education or choice of vocation. There is a need to develop gender –specific pedagogy and provide flexibility in the system of education, in which women could fulfill their aspirations, overcoming their domestic obligations. Higher education should prepare them to face a world of opportunities and challenges. This paper is main focus on the Achievements and Challenges to Women in Education in India*

**Key Words:** *Women, Education, Aspirations, Matrimony, Privilege*

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### Introduction

Developmental policies and programmes that do not address gender disparities miss critical developmental opportunities. Education of girls is vital not only on grounds of social justice but also because it accelerates social transformation. Promotion of gender equality in education is essential for human resource development. By educating a woman you educate the whole family. Given that a woman has the responsibility of the whole family on herself, an educated woman is better capable of taking care of the health, nutrition and education of her children and more so be an active agent in the social and economic development of the country. It is evident that economic success everywhere is based on educational success. Literacy is the basic building block of education. It is a basic component of social cohesion and national identity. It leads to an improvement in the depth and quality of public opinion, as well as to more active participation of the marginalized in the democratic process. No society has ever liberated itself economically, politically, or socially without a sound base of educated women. Education has a direct impact on women empowerment as it creates in them awareness about their rights, their capabilities and the choices and opportunities available to them. Studies have indicated that there is a strong correlation between female education and several developmental indicators such as increased economic productivity, improvement in health, delayed age at marriage, lower fertility, increased political participation, and effective investments in the next generation.

### Objectives

The main objective of this article as follows

1. To evaluate the achievements and challenges to women in education in India

## **Profiling Gender Gap in Education**

Gender gap has been well documented and analyzed by governmental agencies, international organisation, university departments, NGOs and individual researchers. Some recent publications that provide a panoramic view of this subject include, World Bank (1997), which charts the terrain occupied by primary organisations; Ramchandaran (1998), which provides the comparative perspective on girls and Women's education in South Asia; Shukla and Kaul (1998), Bhattacharya (1998), which looks more generally at the status of education in India; and finally Haq and Haq(1998), which analyses education within the context of human development in South Asia.

## **Higher Education for girls in India**

Indian higher education system is one of the largest in the world. It consists of colleges, universities, institutions of national importance (such as Indian Institutes of Technology, Indian Institutes of Management and Indian Institutes of Science, etc.), and autonomous institutions with the status of deemed universities. In 2002-03, there were 300 universities; of which 183 were provincial, 18 federal, 71 deemed universities, and 5 were established through central and state legislation and 13 institutes of national importance. The enrolment was 9,227,833 (about 7.8% of the relevant age group). There were 436,000 teachers in 2002-03 as against 457,000 in 2000-01. Of these nearly 83% are in the affiliated colleges and 17% in the universities. Gender wise data is not provided by the UGC. However, the 2001-02, MHRD (2001-02) provides information on the women teachers in the 12 open universities which is 18.4% and 21.5% in the institutions offering correspondence courses. There has been phenomenal expansion of educational opportunities for women in the field of higher education both general and technical. Women education at the university-both college levels has been diversified and reoriented in tune with the changing requirements of the society, industry and trade. The number of women enrolled in institutions of higher education increased from 40,000 in 1950-51 to about 14,37,000 in 1990-91 recording an increase of more than 36 times over the forty-year period. And in the year 2004-05 the number increased to 3,971,407. Proportion of women entering higher education 1950-51 was 10.9 percent and in 2002-03 it was 40.04 percent. The number of women per 100 men in 1950-51 was 14 which increased to 67 in 2002-03.

## **Disciplinary Choices for women**

The relationship between availability of disciplinary choices and women's ability to access them are not directly related, nor are they dependent on women's academic achievement. The reasons cited for this are mainly due to social ethics. Large majority of women may be deprived of exercising free options in selecting subjects of their choice in school, as in case of girls, parents generally take the decision regarding the academic stream to be pursued. This decision is guided by the consideration that girls are not expected to work or earn before marriage and education is only an investment to fall back upon in case of the daughter becoming a widow or being deserted (Chanana 1998). The poor parents have another problem; even though they perceive the significance of education, many a times they are not able to finance it. Besides, there is lack of role models and socialization support at home. Women from these social categories are the most affected by the stratification of disciplines, programmes and institutions. Further, the social and economic disparities are reflected not only vis-à-vis caste and tribe but also at the regional level, i.e. in different provinces. Discipline boundaries not only limit choices but choices are further limited by future options of "life chances" of women. Higher Education is further denied to the disadvantaged groups and especially women from rural poor homes. Because of social and

economic reasons, parents may be unwilling to spend on education as well as the dowries of their daughters.

### **Public versus Private Education**

Until the liberalization of the economy in the early nineties, higher education was publicly funded by the federal/central and provincial/state governments. However, since 1991 the policies of the government have dramatically changed with regard to seemingly privileged position of higher education. The government began to remove public support to higher education and make it self financing while privatizing it. Higher education has also become a non merit good. However, Since the early nineties, private autonomous institutions were permitted to be set up on a liberal scale without a clearly defined policy to regulate the private institutions (Anandkrishnan 2004).

### **Recent Trends**

In recent times there has been a change in the aspirations of young persons. Both men and women are in a hurry to finish studies and start earning. Money making has become the most important value for them. For this reason, they prefer to take up courses which are linked to jobs and pursuing studies for academic purposes is no longer the aim. The revolution in values cuts across strata, i.e. young persons even from the upper and middle strata want to earn as early as possible. The daughters of city based professional parents have really undergone a sea change in their socialization. Parents are giving the best education to their daughters and expect them to be independent and follow careers. This revolution in values contrasts with those values which dominated prior to the nineties, i.e. education and its linkage to the job market early on in life

### **Conclusion**

Corrective measures must be taken to increase public awareness for the value of the girl child, to ensure their participation in programmes of Child development, health, nutrition and education and to create a positive environment to allow girls to develop into productive young women. The biggest challenge before the Government and NGO's is to create awareness and sensitization among people of all levels, especially in rural areas, about the special needs of women and girls. They need to be made aware that imparting education to women is a great service to society. This vital section of society has remained bound in the shackles and been deprived for far too long. There is a need for affirmative and real action in their favour which will ensure the women to right to food, shelter, health, education and employment. However, the recent changes and developments are kindling hopes for better and promising future.

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## Representation of Women in Indian Legislatures: A study on Challenges and alternatives to Women Reservation Bill

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### ABSTRACT:

Achieving the target of fair involvement of women and men in decision-making would provide a balance that more adequately represents society's nature and is required to improve democracy and society's proper functioning. Without the active participation of women and the inclusion of women's viewpoints at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equity, growth and peace cannot be accomplished. Such specific remarks correctly present the theme as to what exactly lawmakers want from the Women's Reservation Bill (WRB), which is spinning like a pendulum in Parliament's galleries. In India the past and future of WRB in a conflicting phenomenon. It is right time to have reflections on the WRB as the nation has completed the journey of democracy of 75 years. This paper theoretically examines need of women representation in the legislatures on the backdrop of the critical mass theory and also focusses on the challenges that are obstructing the bill to pass and also tries to analyse suggestions and alternatives studied by different political feminists in India.

### Introduction:

All the modern democracies are multicultural societies. So, for the effective opinion articulation from various groups in the nation, legislature or parliament should act as the mirror for the nation. i.e., every group i.e. gender, caste, religious, ethnic or any other category of should be equally and proportionally represented as per their presence and occupancy in the state. Parliament as institute not only represent different constituencies, identity groups and interest within a nation but also that they mirror society and that nation at large. So the representation system in the nation should be designed in such a way that every minority group of the nation should have a say on the policies of the nation and should be accompanied in the every step of the decision making process. To bring social change or to alter the social imbalances a particular amount of group should be represented in the parliament as per the critical mass theory of representation.

"Critical mass theory" in social movements refers loosely to any formal theory about how interdependent decisions accumulate into collective action or more narrowly to work in the tradition of Marwell and Oliver (1993). The term "critical mass" originates in nuclear physics, as the smallest amount of fissile material needed to sustain a nuclear chain reaction. As analogy or metaphor, the term has diffused into popular culture and social science and is widely used to refer to any context in which things change after a certain number of people get together or enter a setting. The term has been especially important in research and court cases about racial/ethnic or gender diversity in college admissions or employment (Addis 2007). Social movement activists and scholars often use "critical mass" in a loose metaphorical way to refer to an initial group of protesters or actors that is big enough to accomplish social change. *Critical Mass Bulletin* was the name given to the 1970s newsletter for scholars of collective behavior and social movements. An article written in the early 1970s bemoaned the lack of critical mass of scholars studying collective behaviour

Critical mass theory in gender politics and collective political action is defined as the critical number of personnel needed to affect policy and make a change not as the token but as an influential

body. This number has been placed at 30%, before women are able to make a substantial difference in politics. However, other research suggests lower numbers of women working together in legislature can also affect political change. Kathleen Bratton goes so far as to say that women, in legislatures where they make up less than 15% of the membership, may actually be encouraged to develop legislative agendas that are distinct from those of their male colleagues. Others argue that we should look more closely at parliamentary and electoral systems instead of critical mass

A central concept in research on women's political representation is the notion of 'critical mass'. It is frequently invoked to explain why women do not always appear to represent women once they are in political office. Gender and politics scholars and activists suggest that this pattern is due not to the inclinations of female office holders, but rather to the fact that there are fewer women than men in almost all elected assemblies.<sup>1</sup> They argue that women are not likely to have a major impact on legislative outcomes until they grow from a few token individuals into a considerable minority of all legislators: only as their numbers increase will women be able to work more effectively together to promote women-friendly policy change and to influence their male colleagues to accept and approve legislation promoting women's concerns.

Over the last twenty years, 'critical mass' has gained wide currency among politicians, the media and international organisations as a justification for measures to bring more women into political office (Grey, 2006; Krook, 2005). However, gender and politics scholars have become increasingly sceptical of the concept as they have discovered other relationships between the numbers of women elected and the passage of legislation beneficial to women as a group. One scholar finds, for example, that women make a difference – and, indeed, perhaps a greater difference – when they form a very small minority (Crowley, 2004). Another observes that an increase in the proportion of women elected actually decreases the likelihood that individual female legislators will act on behalf of women as a group (Carroll, 2001). These developments have precipitated a crisis of confidence in 'critical mass theory', leading many to question its continued utility and relevance as a concept in research on the substantive representation of women (Childs, 2004; Sawer et al., 2006).

The debate on 'critical mass' in women and politics research can be traced back to three seminal works, two by Kanter (1977a; 1977b) and one by Dahlerup (1988), which, respectively, analyse the experiences of women who form small minorities in the corporate and political spheres. Although both authors are concerned primarily with how women respond to dynamics of marginalisation in minority situations, each concludes with some speculations as to how these experiences will change as the number of women increases. These latter ideas form the nucleus of the critical mass concept as it has been taken up by subsequent researchers, who have in turn transformed the possibilities signalled by Kanter and Dahlerup into firmer expectations about the behaviour of women, which we label 'critical mass theory'.

The debate between substantive representation and descriptive representation: According to theorists of group representation, descriptive and substantive representation are intertwined, as the former is a prerequisite for the latter. Thereby, feminist analysis of representation complements mainstream political debates revolving around the questions "What is to be represented?" and "What is the relationship between the representative and the represented?" Women's representation by elected women is a major research arena for scholars of women and politics. Comparativists and politics scholars, as well as feminist theorists, have given extensive attention to the question of whether or not women's political presence in legislatures is necessary for advancing policies favourable to women. Recent research and theorizing have sought to identify the conditions under which women-friendly policy might be advanced and the explanatory links between women's parliamentary presence and public policy outcomes. A key potential explanatory model has been partially constructed on the concept of "critical mass": a threshold number (or percentage) of women in a legislature necessary for transforming the legislative context from one



in which women-friendly policy is unlikely to one in which the opportunities for women's policy success are increased

If, as Mansbridge asserts, women's descriptive representation improves women's substantive representation, do increasing numbers of women in legislatures result in more and better public policy for women? Is there a critical mass of elected women that, once achieved, accelerates their policymaking opportunities? If so, what mechanisms explain such a transformation? Should activist women target a specific critical mass as a political strategy for advancing favourable legislation. All these questions can be examined in the grounds of women reservation bill in India

### **The History of Women Reservation Bill in India:**

The issue of reservation for women in politics can be traced back to the Indian national movement. In 1931, in their letter to the British Prime Minister, submitting the official memorandum jointly issued on the status of women in the new Constitution by three women's bodies, leaders Begum Shah Nawaz and Sarojini Naidu wrote, "To seek any form of preferential treatment would be to violate the integrity of the universal demand of Indian women for absolute equality of political status."

The issue of women's reservation came up in Constituent Assembly debates as well, but it was rejected as being unnecessary. It was assumed that a democracy would accord representation to all groups. For instance, in 1947, noted freedom fighter Renuka Ray said, "We always held that when the men who have fought and struggled for their country's freedom came to power, the rights and liberties of women too would be guaranteed...". However, in the following decades, it became clear that this was not to be the case. As a consequence, women's reservation became a recurrent theme in policy debates. For instance, the Committee of the Status of Women in India, set up in 1971, commented on the declining political representation of women in India. Though a majority within the Committee continued to be against reservation for women in legislative bodies, all of them supported reservation for women in local bodies. Slowly, many State governments began announcing reservations for women in local bodies.

The National Perspective Plan for Women recommended in 1988 that reservation be provided to women right from the level of the panchayat to that of Parliament. These recommendations paved the way for the historic enactment of the 73rd and 74th amendments to the Constitution which mandate all State governments to reserve one-third of the seats for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions and one-third of the offices of the chairperson at all levels of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, and in urban local bodies, respectively. Within these seats, one-third are reserved for Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe women. Many States such as Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Kerala have made legal provisions to ensure 50% reservation for women in local bodies.

After local bodies, the next step was to ensure reservation in Parliament, but this has been a difficult fight. The Women's Reservation Bill proposes to reserve 33% of seats in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies for women. It was first introduced in the Lok Sabha as the 81st Amendment Bill in September 1996 by the Deve Gowda-led United Front government. The Bill failed to get the approval of the House and was referred to a joint parliamentary committee which submitted its report to the Lok Sabha in December 1996. But the Bill lapsed with the dissolution of the Lok Sabha.

In 1998, the Atal Bihari Vajpayee-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government reintroduced the Bill in the 12th Lok Sabha. After the Law Minister M. Thambidurai introduced it, an RJD MP went to the well of the House, grabbed the Bill and tore it to bits. The Bill failed to get support and lapsed again. The Bill was reintroduced in 1999, 2002 and 2003. Even though there was support for it within the Congress, the BJP and the Left parties, the Bill failed to receive majority votes.

(From left) Najma Heptullah, Maya Singh, Sushma Swaraj and Brinda Karat, celebrate the passing of the Women's Reservation Bill in the Rajya Sabha in 2010. | Photo Credit: MOORTHY R. V.

In 2008, the Manmohan Singh-led United Progressive Alliance government tabled the Bill in the Rajya Sabha and it was passed with 186-1 votes on March 9, 2010. However, the Bill was never taken up for consideration in the Lok Sabha and lapsed with the dissolution of the 15th Lok Sabha. At the time, the RJD, the JD(U) and the SP were its most vocal opponents. They demanded 33% reservation for backward groups within the 33% quota for women. JD(U) leader Sharad Yadav infamously demanded to know how short-haired women could represent "our women" (women from rural areas). In 2014, the BJP promised 33% reservation for women in its manifesto and repeated the promise in its 2019 agenda. But there has been no movement from the government in this regard.

Proponents of the Bill argue that affirmative action is imperative to better the condition of women since political parties are inherently patriarchal. Second, despite the hopes of the leaders of the national movement, women are still under-represented in Parliament. Reservations, proponents believe, will ensure that women form a strong lobby in Parliament to fight for issues that are often ignored. There is now evidence that women as panchayat leaders have shattered social myths, been more accessible than men, controlled the stranglehold of liquor, invested substantially in public goods such as drinking water, helped other women express themselves better, reduced corruption, prioritised nutrition outcomes, and changed the development agenda at the grassroots level. Esther Duflo, Raghav Chattopadhyay et al found that in States such as West Bengal and Rajasthan, while women leaders were often rubber stamps of their husbands or fathers, they were more likely to invest in goods that were important to the interests of women. Today, India has a high percentage of crimes against women, low participation of women in the workforce, low nutrition levels and a skewed sex ratio. To address all these challenges, it is argued, we need more women in decision-making. Third, proponents such as Brinda Karat argue that the discussion is not about a Bill alone, but about changing powerful, entrenched interests in India's polity. Professor Nivedita Menon writes that opponents of reservation for women argue that the idea runs counter to the principle of equality enshrined in the Constitution. They say that women will not be competing on merit if there is reservation, which could lower their status in society. Another point is that, women are unlike, say, a caste group, which means that they are not a homogenous community. Therefore, the same arguments made for caste-based reservation cannot be made for women.

**Conclusion:** women's interests cannot be isolated from other social, economic and political strata. Some argue that reservation of seats in Parliament would restrict the choice of voters to women candidates. This has led to suggestions of alternate methods including reservation for women in political parties and dual member constituencies (where constituencies will have two MPs, one of them being a woman). But some parties have pointed out that even these may not work as parties may field women candidates in unwinnable seats, or women

may contest the elections but not get voted to power, or they may get relegated to a secondary role. as men hold primary power as well as key positions in politics, some have even argued that bringing women into politics could destroy the “ideal family”.

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## The success stories of Women-owned Businesses Entrepreneurships in India

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### **Abstract:**

There is a strong belief among the conventionalists that a women can not run the business. This belief made business as the field of male dominated one. These specified or fixed gender roles further strengthened patriarchal tendencies and many times led the woman to be in the safe jobs like teaching and other soft jobs. This paper deals with the success stories of women who has chosen the challenging career as entrepreneurs and created wonders in the field. At this precious occasion India crossed 75 years as an independent nation this study is a noteworthy meaningful activity.

### **Introduction :**

There's a common thread in entrepreneurship across the world: the number of women entrepreneurs is growing. In India, that growth is significant – over the last ten years, the percentage of women-owned businesses has increased from 14% to 20%. Today, there are approximately 15 million women-owned businesses in the country across industries as varied as travel, SaaS, beauty, and finance. But who are the most successful and influential female entrepreneurs in India? In this series, we'll introduce you to 20 successful female entrepreneurs in India, all of whom also carry MBAs from business schools around the world. With their business education and passion for their industry, they all possess inspiring success stories.

### **1. Chitra GurnaniDaga, Co-Founder and CEO of Thrillophilia.com**

Chitra graduated with her MBA in Strategy and Leadership at the Indian School of Business in 2011 and used her degree to successfully launch her own business: Thrillophilia.com, a platform for travel experiences. She had previously worked as a software engineer for Infosys and SAP Labs, but her love for travel inspired her to start her own travel-focused startup.

Today, Thrillophilia is one of India's biggest travel booking platforms, with an estimated annual revenue of US\$74 million. For her services to the travel industry, including in expanding awareness of little-known travel experiences in India and elsewhere in Asia, Chitra has also been recognized by the Ministry of External Affairs in India.

### **2. Khushboo Jain, Co-Founder and COO of ImpactGuru.com**

Khushboo Jain and her husband, Piyush Jain, founded ImpactGuru in 2014, a crowdfunding website that helps patients who can't afford their medical expenses. The company is now the first female-led crowdsourcing platform in India and has helped over 25,000 patients to change their lives with valuable medical funds.

Before that, though, Khushboo spent over ten years in fashion marketing and branding. She gained an MBA from the Welingkar Institute of Management in 2010, specializing in marketing, and subsequently worked for high-profile brands, including Jimmy Choo and Hackett.

### **3. Farah Nathani Menzies, Co-Founder of The Mumum Co.**

Farah pursued her business education in the U.S., graduating with a bachelor's in International Studies and Business in 2001 and subsequently starting a career at Bain & Company. She went on to graduate with an MBA from Harvard Business School and continued to work as a business advisor before launching her startup in 2016.

She launched The Mumum Co. after struggling to find healthy snacks for her children in India. The brand quickly became a success, and in 2020, it was recognized as a Coca-Cola Golden Spoon Most Admired Start-Up. Farah also helped open up the conversation around how women can raise children and be entrepreneurs at the same time.

### **4. Shreya Lamba, Co-Founder of The Mumum Co.**

Before Shreya joined forces with Farah to develop The Mumum Co., she was also working in consultancy. Shreya gained a bachelor's and master's degree from the London School of Economics and started her career working for A.T. Kearney.

In 2008, she decided to pursue an MBA at INSEAD and transitioned into senior management at A. T. Kearney before quitting her job to pursue entrepreneurship. With The Mumum Co., Shreya helped raise multiple investment rounds and, since then, has also launched The Mommy Network, India's largest curated parenting community, which helps give new mothers in India a judgment-free network to ask questions and share advice with other mothers.

### **5. Sneha Choudhry, Co-Founder of Zolo**

Sneha was no stranger to entrepreneurship when she launched ZoloStays (now Zolo) in 2015. She had already founded two companies before she decided to fully focus her attention on her co-living and home rental booking platform. The company offers an alternative to often unaffordable long-term apartment rentals and helps foster local communities by enabling guests and residents to take part in local events.

In 2019, the company secured US\$30 million in Series B funding, increasing Zolo's net worth to over US\$100 million. Today, the platform is live in over ten cities across India and serves over 50,000 customers.

### **6. Hemalatha Annamalai, Founder and CEO of Ampere Electric**

Hemalatha started her business career in the late 1980s, working as a product manager. She pursued an MBA with a specialization in international marketing at RMIT University in Melbourne in 1995 and spent the next decade of her life writing code and selling software.

It was a phone call from her husband, who attended a conference in Japan in 2007, that set her on the path to founding her own company Ampere Electric, after realizing India needed an electric revolution in personal mobility. The company manufactures electric cycles, scooters, and three-wheelers and, in 2018, was valued at US\$16.28 million. As well as providing cleaner mobility to people living in rural locations in India, Hemalatha is also empowering women with her work: Ampere Electric's Trisul three-wheel vehicle was built specifically for the needs of women mill workers in Tamil Nadu.

### **7. SayliKaranjkar, Co-Founder and CBO of PaySense**

Fintech entrepreneur and angel investor Sayli started her professional career as an intern for Hewlett Packard in 2000 but has since worked for A.T. Kearney and AT&T. In 2015, she founded PaySense, a fintech startup that uses data science to help improve accessibility to loans in India. In particular, PaySense is helping young women in India get access to services like credit cards and loans in order to achieve career aspirations or help support their families through difficult periods.

Sayli gained her MBA degree from Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University in 2009 and specialized in strategy, international business, and marketing. Since founding PaySense, she has also invested in Indian startups such as Zimyo, FloBiz, and Wint Wealth. She also uses her status as an investor to talk about the difficulties and discrimination women solo entrepreneurs face in India.

### **8. Aditi Balbir, Founder of V Resorts**

Aditi started her career in the finance sector, working in private equity and M&A. In 2008, she pursued a postgraduate degree in management at the Indian School of Business, where she also spent time studying at Duke Fuqua School of Business. In 2012, she founded V Resorts, an innovative travel company that provides unique holiday experiences across India.

V Resorts quickly became a famed startup in India and was awarded the Best Upcoming Resort Chain award by Lonely Planet in 2016. In total, the startup raised US\$17 million in seed funding. Today, Aditi is also the founder of EcoRatings, a website that helps consumers make decisions about the sustainability of products, which is empowering Indian consumers to live more ethically.

### **9. Pranshu Patni, Co-Founder of Hello English**

In 2012, Pranshu launched Hello English, an online platform for language learning that, today, is one of India's leading educational apps, with over 50 million users. The platform won awards such as India's Best Mobile App and Google's Best of 2016 Apps, while Pranshu was awarded a Forbes 30 Under 30 title.

Pranshu started her career as a management trainee and business analyst and studied for an MBA with a specialization in finance at SVKM's NarseeMonjee Institute of Management Studies. For her services to education and improving English proficiency in India, Pranshu has also been awarded a Women Transforming India award from the United Nations.

### **10. Roshni Nadar Malhotra, Chairperson of HCLTech**

HCLTech is one of India's largest IT and consulting services firms, and today is worth US\$12 billion. When Roshni took over the chairperson role from her father in 2020, she became the first woman entrepreneur to lead a listed IT company in India. Roshni is also a trustee of the Shiv Nadar Foundation, an education NGO that helps establish programs and institutions related to rural education.

Roshni graduated with her MBA at Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University in 2008 before returning to India to join her father's company. Within a year, she was made executive director and CEO of HCL Corporation, a role she held until her promotion to chairperson. In 2022, Roshni placed number 53 on Forbes' World's Most Powerful Women ranking.

### **11. Richa Kar, Co-Founder of Zivame**

Richa Kar started her career in the IT sector, but the idea for the women's apparel company Zivame came to her after she completed her MBA at Narsee Monte Institute of Management Studies and started working for the retailer Spencer's. After finding a gap in the market for an e-commerce lingerie brand, she put all her savings into Zivame and launched it in 2011.

In May 2012, Richa received her first investment in Zivame worth US\$3 million. Since then, the retailer has gone from strength to strength, opening brick-and-mortar stores alongside growing the e-commerce business. Today, Zivame is worth US\$13.6 million, and the brand has helped dismantle taboos about lingerie shopping in India, ensuring every woman can find a comfortable product.

### **12. Tanvi Malik, Co-Founder of FabAlley and Indya**

Tanvi Malik did her MBA at MICA, Ahmedabad, graduating with a specialization in brand management in 2009 and joining Titan Industries as an assistant brand manager. In 2012, she left her full-time job to found FabAlley and Indya, two online marketplaces for women.

Recently, FabAlley generated an investment of US\$8.54 million from SAIF Partners, which helped launch the brand offline. In 2019, Tanvi appeared on Entrepreneur India's 35 Under 35 list, and in 2021, she also made Fortune India's 40 Under 40 list. She is known for her commitment to inclusivity in Indian women's fashion and introducing traditional Indian styling to the modern millennial Indian woman

### **13. Gurleen Kaur Tikku, Founder of HareePatti**

Gurleen launched the financial advisory firm Hareepatti in 2005 while studying for her MBA with a specialization in finance at the Institute of Management Technology, Ghaziabad. Since then, the company has grown to over 1,500 employees.

As well as gaining an MBA, Gurleen has also gained certified qualifications in financial planning and mutual fund distribution, making her one of the pre-eminent finance experts in India. With tools like HareePatti's blog and her social media platforms, Gurleen is ensuring that everyone in India has access to comprehensive and practical financial knowledge.

### **14. Vineeta Singh, Founder and CEO of Sugar Cosmetics**

Vineeta Singh started her business career with summer internships at ITC and Deutsche Bank, but after completing an MBA at the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad, she progressed to senior positions in industries as diverse as e-learning and HR.

In 2015, Vineeta founded her flagship company Sugar Cosmetics, which has grown into a beauty empire. Today, Vineeta's net worth is an estimated US\$36 million, and she features as an investor on the Indian business reality show Shark Tank India, which is helping to inspire more young Indian women to launch a career in entrepreneurship.

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#### **15. Neha Motwani, Co-Founder and CEO of Fitternity**

The idea for Fitternity came from Neha's personal frustration at not being able to decide which fitness classes to incorporate into her workout regime. Launched in 2013, today, the online booking platform boasts 10 million users across the website and app and an estimated yearly revenue of US\$16 million.

Before founding Fitternity, Neha worked in diverse roles across finance, risk, and HR. She also has an MBA from the Welingkar Institute of Management and Research. Today, Fitternity is one of India's biggest fitness search engines, empowering people to start their fitness journeys by making it as easy as possible to find a community.

#### **16. Kanika Tekriwal, Founder and CEO of JetSetGo**

Kanika founded her aviation startup at the age of just 22, making her India's youngest self-made entrepreneur. Her story becomes even more incredible when you learn that just as she was launching JetSetGo – an online platform for booking chartered planes and helicopters – she got cancer, setting her startup journey back by a year.

Kanika gained an MBA with a specialization in finance from Coventry University in 2011, two years before she founded JetSetGo. After successfully fighting cancer, Kanika put all her energy into making JetSetGo a success. Ten years later, Kanika has a net worth of approximately US\$50 million and has featured on Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia list.

#### **17. NaiyyaSaggi, Founder of BabyChakra and Co-Founder of The Good Glamm Group**

NaiyyaSaggi completed her MBA at Harvard Business School in 2012 after gaining a Fulbright Scholarship for the degree. She had previously worked as a business analyst for McKinsey but used her MBA to transition into entrepreneurship. Her first startup, BabyChakra – an online community platform for mothers – was launched in 2015, followed by The Good Glamm Group in 2021.

In the same year, The Good Glamm Group became India's first beauty commerce startup to hit unicorn status, with a valuation of US\$1.2 billion. Now, Naiyya's two startups are partners, and The Good Glamm Group is posting growth of 12% every year, while BabyChakra is viewed as one of India's biggest platforms for parenting advice and support.



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**18. Falguni Nayar, Founder and CEO of Nykaa**

Falguni studied for her MBA in finance at the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad, graduating in 1985. She began her career in the finance industry, working at equity brokerage Kotak Securities until 2012 when she found Nykaa, a beauty e-commerce website.

In 2020, Nykaa became the first Indian unicorn startup managed by a woman. Starting as an online marketplace, the brand has since expanded to brick-and-mortar stores, a YouTube page, and a magazine. In 2022, Falguni appeared at number 89 on Forbes' list of the World's 100 Most Powerful Women and at number 44 on India's 100 Richest list. Nykaa is the only retailer in India to sell some of the world's leading beauty brands like Charlotte Tilbury and Dermalogica, while the CSR side of the brand has supported organizations such as the Society for Nutrition, Education, and Health Action.

**19. Malika DattSadani, Founder and CEO of The Moms Co.**

Malika founded The Moms Co. in 2016 to bring natural, non-toxic baby products to mothers in India. The startup was founded on her own experience of moving from the UK back to India and not being able to find the cruelty-free, vegan-friendly products she wanted for her children. Thanks to her passion for ethical and non-toxic skincare products, The Moms Co. is the first Indian brand to receive accreditation from Safe Cosmetics Australia.

Before launching her startup, Malika worked in the banking industry and completed an MBA in finance at the Welingkar Institute of Management in 2008. In 2021, the brand was acquired by The Good Glamm Company and finished the year with a net revenue of US\$9.6 million.

**20. Indra Nooyi, Former Chair and CEO of PepsiCo**

When Indra Nooyi was made CEO of PepsiCo in 2006, she became one of only a few female CEOs in America. Today, she is one of the world's most powerful women, appearing on Forbes' list of America's Richest Self-Made Women with a net worth of approximately US\$320 million. Her innovative approach to design and management encouraged a rise in PepsiCo's share price, and she heralded a new focus on sustainability at the company.

Indra started her business career in India, studying for her MBA at the Indian Institute of Management Calcutta. Afterward, she moved to the US to study for a Master's in Public and Private Management at Yale School of Management. Indra worked for the Boston Consulting Group for six years and held senior roles at Motorola and ABB before joining PepsiCo as a Senior Vice President of Strategic Planning in 1994.

**Conclusion:**

These women proved to be successful as persons and also made their companies successful. It is appropriate the contributions of these women in the nation development.

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## **Social Justice and PRIs -The Role of Dalit Women Sarpanches in enhancing Local Democracy in India: A study at 75years of Independence**

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### **Abstract:**

The institution of democracy thrives to protect the rights of the marginalized sections. The constitution of India guarantees the rights and protections for safeguarding the welfare of the subaltern. As a part of constitutional provision, the 73<sup>rd</sup> amendment has reiterated political reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled tribes. It facilitated in recognizing the contributions of the marginalized in institutionalizing democracy at the grass root level. Since independence elected representatives from various Dalit groups have become part of the development and delivering their duties towards establishment of an equal and just society. Dalit women being marginalized at every step of the administration. as rightly said, she is “double Discriminated”. This paper tries to analyze the status of Dalit after the 73<sup>rd</sup> constitutional Amendment, which provide 33 percent reservation to women.

### **Introduction:**

The Panchayati raj system in India has designed in way towards observing the goal of social justice. It has provided the reservations for various subaltern groups like SC, ST and women. Though the rights for the Dalits are guaranteed by the constitution but still, many caste intricacies are hindering the process of democratization. Though Dalit sarpanches are getting elected by the due process of democracy, they are unable deliver their duties freely. The upper caste groups continue to dominate the affairs of the village, by undermining the real authority of elected Dalit sarpanches. In many village panchayats all over India Dalit sarpanches are facing insults and discrimination. Despite of these challenges Dalit sarpanches are discharging their duties successfully. This study particularly aims to study the contributions of Dalit sarpanches in enhancing the democracy at the grass root level.

### **History of PRIs in India**

Panchayati system was not a new system to India. It got mentioned in ancient Vedas. There are also evidences of local bodies that are present since ancient times in India. In modern times Lord Rippon was considered as the Father of Local self-government. In 1882 Lord Rippon introduced the concept of local self-government. Since then it has taken almost hundred years for the local self-government to get the sanctity of the Indian Constitution. This has brought tremendous opportunity for the people of marginalised to attire the dream of social justice. Reservation of seats and offices of the chairpersons for scheduled castes (SCs) and scheduled tribes (STs) in proportion to their population has the potential to radically change the socio-political structure of this country.

But the nature of Indian society which was built on the social hierarchy has remained as a hindrance in the way of democratisation of institutions at the local level. Caste based violences in the village panchayats are the social reality. But the support of judiciary and constitution has helped the Dalit sarpanches to discharge their duties successfully. Many dalit sarpanches are striving to make their villages as ideal ones. These contributions of the dalit sarpanches need to be recognised, studied and analysed. It will help in tackling the caste-based violence strategically. It will also bring a comprehensive account of Dalit sarpanches and their contributions. Dalit women sarpanches succeeded in bringing various land mark changes during their term as sarpanch in their respective villages. But still they face many insults and in the hands of men as well as caste patriarchies.

### **Structural Social Inequalities:**

The structural inequalities in Indian society still need to be adjusted. Although historically excluded groups and communities are now included in these decision-making bodies (more than 660,000 elected members, i.e., 22.5%, in the rural and urban local bodies are from SCs and STs), there has been a sharp increase in caste-based violence in the panchayats in the last 20 years. The dominant castes see panchayats as one of the tools for the lower castes to assert their rights. The prevailing trend is to weaken and destroy these instruments. It is evident that the upper castes that have been controlling the affairs of the village and the local community are yet to reconcile to the empowerment of Dalits, which has exacerbated tensions and inspired violence against these groups.

Unfortunately, while upper caste groups are committing atrocities against the lower castes, the latter do not have a supportive redressal mechanism. Since the police is not under the authority of panchayats, Dalits are being subjected to violence with the connivance of the state administration and the local police. There have been instances where high caste groups have challenged the reservation for SCs and STs in a court of law, and when this attempt failed, they announced a boycott of elections. There are also numerous cases of Dalits being used as proxies, and being coaxed to carry out the dictates of the dominant castes.

Even after coming to positions of power, elected Dalit representatives are restricted in effective exercise of their leadership; they do not get the power and status they deserve. Dalit members are made to sit outside the panchayat offices on the floor while the traditional village headmen occupy the chairs. This oppression is doubly so in the case of women Dalit members. Moreover, Dalit sarpanches are forced to give priority to activities favouring upper caste members. It is significant to study about the services of elected dalit sarpanches. This study indicates importance social justice measures initiated by 73<sup>rd</sup> amendment are procuring result or not.

If it is the sarpanch of a village is woman the situation is worse. They are discriminated as dalit and as well as being a woman. The following are the main challenges faced by dalit women. The reasons which are institutionalised since the centuries acting as amin obstacles in the part of the achieving social justice.

- **Failure of policies:**

- The policies are inadequate to minimize the handicaps and disabilities of the past and in reducing the gaps between them and the rest of the Indian society.
- Dalit women continue to suffer from a high degree of poverty, gender discrimination, caste discrimination and socioeconomic deprivation.

- **Violence:**

- Girls face violence at a younger age and at a higher rate than women of other castes. According to the National Family Health Survey by the age of 15, 33.2% scheduled caste women experience physical violence.
- The figure is 19.7% for “other” category women.
- The violence continues, largely due to a sense of impunity among dominant castes.

- **Political power does not help:**

- Even when Dalit women acquire political power, as when they are elected as sarpanches, there is often no protection against the social power that sanctions violence and discrimination against them.
- In a village with a Dalit woman sarpanch, a Dalit woman was burned, but no action was taken.
- **Attitude of dominant castes:**
  - There is a mind-set among the dominant castes that make them feel that they can do anything they want with dalit girls and that they will get away with it.
  - The discrimination faced by Dalit women at the cost of the Brahmanical obsession with “purity and pollution” has had a detrimental effect on all the dimensions of development.
  - Even today Dalit women along with their families are commonly clustered in segregated hamlets at the edge of a village or mohallas in one corner of the village, devoid of civic amenities, drinking water, health care, education, approach roads etc.
  - In urban areas their homesteads are largely found in slum bases normally located in very unhygienic surrounding.
  - The exploitation of them under the name of religious such as “Nude Worship,” practice of devdasi system and such other similar types of practices make them more submissive to violence, and discrimination.
  - The UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women has noted that Dalit women face targeted violence, even rape and murder, by the state actors and powerful members of the dominant castes used to inflict political lessons and crush dissent within the community.
- **Cases withdrawn and lack of justice:**
  - Very often cases are withdrawn and witnesses turn hostile because of pressure outside the system without adequate protection given to them.
  - Sanctioned impunity on behalf of offenders is a major issue in India, and the police often deny or purposefully neglect and delay Dalit women’s right to legal aid and justice. There is a consistent pattern of delay in report filing and irregularities regarding criminal procedures, which leads to widespread impunity and creates serious barriers to justice for Dalit women.
- **Workplace violence:**
  - The risky workplaces compounded with a lack of labour rights protection measures render migrants dalit women more vulnerable to occupational injury.
  - Further, the emerging problem of sub-contracting short-termed labour makes it more difficult for them to claim compensation when they are injured at work places.
  - Dalit women are most vulnerable to abuse and exploitation by employers, migration agents, corrupt bureaucrats and criminal gangs.

- The enslavement trafficking also contributes to migration of large proportion of dalit women.

**Conclusion:**

The obstacles in the way of achieving social justice faced by dalit woman can not be changed by a policy or by the activities taken up by the dalit women sarpanches. Though the 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment helped them to come out from traditional roles to attributing challenging roles but the still the change is inadequate to address the problem from the institution's caste and patriarchy. At his moment of 75years of independent to focus on this issue can help in improving status and conditions of Dalit women sarpanches.

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## Dalit women's Writing in Telugu During The Post independence Period

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“Dalit Writing in Telugu Literature can be traced back to three centuries though it wasn't known by the same name,” says Prof. Purushotham in one of his articles. In the last three decades, new emerging trends within India also included Dalit writings. Especially in undivided Andhra Pradesh, they flowed from BR Ambedkar's ideas questioned the left ideologies and condemned caste hierarchies.

It is necessary first to look for some clarity on who are dalits. There was recently a wide ranging debate on 'who are dalits' among literary friends. Some people argued that along with the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and backward castes, minorities and women should also be considered dalits. After some discussion, they came to the conclusion that only 'malas' and 'madigas' who belonged to the SC category should be considered dalit. In general, there is considerable confusion as to who are dalits. Notwithstanding the above debates, dalits could be defined as people who have been subjected to untouchability and denied social, economic, political and cultural rights. What is dalit poetry? Whose poetry is dalit poetry? These questions have also generated considerable debate.

Writing by dalits that is based on dalit consciousness will reflect the painful lived experiences of dalit people. The fact of being born a dalit alone is not enough to write dalit poetry. Dalit consciousness is a critical factor in dalit writing, The question of whether non-dalits can write dalit poetry has also come up from time to time. Writing by upper castes that expresses dalit reality in terms similar to that by dalit writers can be called sympathetic poetry. There is an unanimous view that only those who suffer oppression can adequately represent that oppression.

Dalit literature means the writing about dalit community or oppressed. This might be written by dalit or non-dalit. But writing of non-dalit is not accepted as 'Dalit literature' by dalit community. It is believed that one of the first Dalit writers in the history was MadaraChenniah, who was a cobbler saint in 11th century. He lived in the reign of Western Chalukya and was regarded by some scholars as the “father of Vachana Poetry”. There is another poet, who was Dalit by birth, DoharaKakkaiah but his only six confessional poems are being able to survive. Marathi Saint Chokhamela also explained the condition of oppressed through his poems (Abhanga) in 13th century. Actual Dalit Movement started in the sixty's decade by the motivation of great thinkers Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar and earlier by Mahatma Jyotiba Phule not particularly for dalit but for all suppressed communities including poor Indian farmers in British Rule. This movement got the spark from the 'Black Movement' of contemporary America.

Indian Dalit literature began as a concerted movement in the 1960s, though clannish elements were visible as early in the 11th century. It began in Marathi literature and later on infiltrated to Hindi, Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam and Tamil literatures. Dalit writers initiated a realistic, experience based and authentic literature which threatened the upper class hegemony in society and in literature. The anger, sorrow and the indomitable will and hope of Dalit protagonists were offered in a tongue, which is often denigrated as vulgar. The writers of different states in India share a collective relationship to a common cause, a common identity and a common political stance.

Historically Dalit literature goes hand in hand with Dalit liberation movement. One of the chief aims of Indian government since independence is to raise the living standards of the



Dalits. But, in spite of India's modernization agenda dalits have been deprived of their land, their home and their fundamental rights. In many states tribal lands are being taken over by plantations, dams, social forestry and ecotourism. Dalit caste organizations like 'Dalit Panthers of India' in Maharashtra, 'Dalit Mahasabha' in Andhra Pradesh, 'Dalit Sangharsha Samiti' in Karnataka, and 'Arundhatiyar' in Tamil Nadu were formed in response to mainstream atrocities. They demand for equitable shares in opportunities and reservation.

Most of the activists are good writers as well. Dalit issues are recorded in a variety of genres- autobiographies, novels, poetry and essays. Mulk Raj Anand with his pioneered the movement. Mahaswetha Devi, NamdeoDhasal, BasudevSunani, Bama, SharankumarLimbale, Lakshman Gayakwad, Sivakami, Poomani, Om Prakash Valmiki, Marku, Paul Chirakkarode and Arundhati Roy walked after him. Ka.AyothidassPandithar is the pioneer of the Dalit literature and Philosopher in India as well as south India. Dalit literature, a literature by this particular ethnic group, came into use in the 20th century in 1958, with the commencement of Dalit Conferences. Dalit literature is a literature with its prime focus on the social marginalization of the oppressed communities like Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and religious minorities. Dalit literature and dalit activism became rampant in the twentieth century especially in Maharashtra and Southern India. Autobiographies or self referential texts have always been powerful instruments for registering the presence of dalits. In Maharashtra, women dalit writers like ShantabaiKamble(MajyaJalmachiChittarkatha), Mukta Sarwagaud (Mitleli Kawada), Baby Kamble (JinaAamcha), Mallika Amarsheikh (Mala UddhwathaVhayachay), Kumud Pawde (Anthasphot) throw a light on dalit feminism through their autobiography. The condition of dalit women is analogous to the situation of black women in America. Dalit literature is a literature with its prime focus on the social marginalization of the oppressed communities like Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and religious minorities. Dalit literature and dalit activism became rampant in the twentieth century especially in Maharashtra and Southern India. Autobiographies or self referential texts have always been powerful instruments for registering the presence of dalits. In Maharashtra, women dalit writers like ShantabaiKamble(MajyaJalmachiChittarkatha), Mukta Sarwagaud (Mitleli Kawada), Baby Kamble (Jina Aamcha), Mallika Amarsheikh (Mala UddhwathaVhayachay), Kumud Pawde (Anthasphot) throw a light on dalit feminism through their autobiography. The condition of dalit women is analogous to the situation of black women in America. Dalit literature is a literature with its prime focus on the social marginalization of the oppressed communities like Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and religious minorities. Dalit literature and dalit activism became rampant in the twentieth century especially in Maharashtra and Southern India. Autobiographies or self referential texts have always been powerful instruments for registering the presence of dalits. In Maharashtra, women dalit writers like ShantabaiKamble (MajyaJalmachiChittarkatha), Mukta Sarwagaud (Mitleli Kawada), Baby Kamble (Jina Aamcha), Mallika Amarsheikh (Mala UddhwathaVhayachay), Kumud Pawde (Anthasphot) throw a light on dalit feminism through their autobiography. The condition of dalit women is analogous to the situation of black women in America.

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and deplorable gender bias. Dalit women's predicament is exactly the same with that of black women.

The Dalit women's literature began as a reaction against both the left and mainstream women movements. Dalit women writers have had to wait for their being noticed till Gogu Shyamala and Joopaka Subhadra brought out anthologies of Dalit women's writing. From the dalit women's perspective and based on their experiences as dalitwomen it is far more powerful and has a far greater impact than the writings of dalit male writers or upper caste women writers.

According to Uma Chakravarti, the four main facets in which a Dalit woman is exploited are with respect to water, education, sexuality, and the idea of untouchability and pollution. All these four facets are also brought out by the body of poetry. Dalit women are not allowed access to water resources. They are systematically denied education or else ill-treated in institutions. Upper caste men use Dalit women as devadasis, or as loose women, which they have free access to at any time. Ideas of purity and pollution force them into traditionally 'dirty' occupations such as fishing, manual scavenging, devdasi and so on.

In the modern age, a woman poet who has written verse in the ancient tradition is Kolakaluri Swaroopa Rani, She has been conferred the title of 'Kaviyatri Tilaka'. *Gangavataram, Sivatandavam, Chandragrahanam, Prabodham* are some of her important writings. Prominent women writers of Dalit literature in the Telugu language include Challapalli Swaroopa Rani, Joopaka Subhadra, Jajula Gowri, Swathy Margaret and Gogu Shyamala. These writers have primarily used poetry, short stories, essays and more to challenge the intersectional forms of oppression they faced.

In the words of Challapalli Swaroop Rani, "It has taken a long time for dalit women to overcome their oppression as women, as dalits and put creative use the gains of social and literary movements. There are of course common issues that bind dalit men and women, like untouchability and caste oppression. But women also suffer from patriarchal oppression. These concerns are constantly foregrounded in dalit women's poetry in Telugu and is evident in the form, content and the emotions that they express".

Dalit women's writing unravels for us a concern with caste oppression, gender oppression and class exploitation. Atrocities and physical exploitation are common in the lives of Dalit women. There has been tradition of insult imposed on dalit women for a long time. Dalit Women writers exposed and opposed the hard realities of this kind. They unraveled satirically the suffering of the oppressed castes to which they have been subjected to for generations,

The Dalit feminist writing and its specificity should be understood from the angle that dalit woman is a dalit among dalits as pointed out by Challapalli Swarooparani. The reality of dalit lives, the splendour of their life's work, their troubles, and their tears, all took the form of stories, or songs or poetry. However, a large part of the written and oral literature written and sung by dalit women for centuries has been stamped out by time.

The poetry by dalit women written from the dalit women's perspective and based on their experiences as dalit women is far more powerful and has a far greater impact than the poetry of dalit male poets or upper caste women poets. Dalit women's issues have less in common with dalit men's issues than with those of the upper caste women. If there is any soul in this country who subjected to all kinds of oppression and exploitation, it is the dalit woman. On one side she is oppressed by the caste system, on the other side she is subjected to gender oppression and class exploitation. She is a dalit among dalits. It is from this angle that we need to understand dalit feminist poetry and its specificity.

As in all kinds of history, in literary history too, the story of dalit and women's writing has languished in the dark depths of casteism. Although literacy levels are very low among dalits, every dalit 'wada' is an abode of literature, because art and literature are born of (the labouring class). The reality of dalit lives, the splendour of their life's work, their troubles, their tears, all take the form of stories, or songs or poetry. This is a truth that cannot be hidden. However, a large part of the written and oral literature written and sung by dalits for centuries has been stamped out by time.

S.K.Limbale stresses, "Dalit writers make their personal experiences the basis of their writing. Always prominent in their writing is the idea that certain notions have to be revolted against, some values have to be rejected, and some areas of life have to be strengthened and built upon. Because Dalit writers write from a predetermined certitude, their writing is purposive. They write out of social responsibility. Their writing expresses the emotion and commitment of an activist. That society may change and understand its problems - their writing articulates this impatience with intensity. Dalit writers are activist - artists who write while engaged in movements. They regard their literature to be a movement. Their commitment is to the Dalit and the exploited classes."

While dalit feminist poetry in other languages had developed faster and earlier in time, there are reasons for the slow development of dalit feminist writing in Telugu. It has taken this long for dalit women to surmount their oppression and put to creative use the gains of social and literary movements. Watching their men participate in struggles and write about their oppression dalit women have also learnt to give voice to their troubles. They chose their own idiom and language spoken in their colonies to write about issues hitherto branded taboo. Dalit consciousness among women found explicit expression in the powerful poetry that emerged subsequently. Initially poets were all concerned with welfare of Dalits in general and women in particular. Telugu Dalit women's poetry reflects not only social, economic exploitation but highlights sexual exploitation they face silently. The pain and hurt feelings find potent portrayal in moving poetry published by women.

There are of course common issues that bind dalit men and women together, like untouchability and caste oppression. This does not detract from the patriarchal oppression of dalit women. Poetry written by the Dalit women in Telugu is vibrant, specific and relevant. Many new voices are heard depicting the deplorable conditions in which they live, demanding redress of their grievances. Their efforts and sincerity deserve all compliments and commendation. Poetic excellence has been achieved in their writings.

Dalit feminist poetry still needs to spread out in many directions. So far, the articulation of caste has been much stronger and more powerful than the articulation of patriarchy. Finally, dalit women's writing has yet to move from poetry to short stories and novels.

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## **An Overview on National Policies for the Empowerment of Women : In the wake of Atmanirbhar Bharat**

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### **Abstract**

Women in India still face issues like feminization of poverty, inadequate investment in social sectors, rising violence against women, and stereotypical representation of women in society. Since the last National Policy for the Empowerment of Women in India was created in 2001, the idea of women's empowerment has evolved. Instead of only being welfare receivers, it is now necessary to involve them in the development process, providing welfare with a heavy dose of rights. For the purpose of expressing a vision for the empowerment of women, the Ministry of Women and Child Development formulated a new draft National Policy for Women in 2016. It serves as a general policy framework that directs different sectors to release more specialized, sector-specific policy documents. The goal of this strategy is to create a society where women may realize their full potential, engage in all aspects of life as equal partners, and have an impact on social change. As the long-term nature of issues affecting women in India, it is necessary to strengthen processes that support the holistic development of women by putting an emphasis on a coordinated approach for carrying out the policies of the relevant ministries and departments and by fostering an environment that is supportive of social change.

### **Key Words**

Women Empowerment, Social Change, Gender Equity , Gender Sensitization, Economic Empowerment of Women , Social Empowerment of Women.

### **Introduction**

The National Policy on Empowerment of Women adopted in 2001 states that “ All forms of violence against women, physical and mental, whether at domestic or societal levels, including those arising from customs, traditions or accepted practices shall be dealt with effectively with a view to eliminate its incidence. Institutions and mechanisms/schemes for assistance will be created and strengthened for prevention of such violence, including sexual harassment at work place and customs like dowry; for the rehabilitation of the victims of violence and for taking effective action against the perpetrators of such violence. A special emphasis will also be laid on programmes and measures to deal with trafficking in women and girls.”

### **Objectives**

The Objectives of this Paper are outlined below

- TO Overview the National Policies for the Empowerment of Women..
- To ensure mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the development process.
- To analyze the various Programmes and Policies of Economic Empowerment of Women.
- TO examine various Policies and Programmes of Social Empowerment of Women.

## **Research Methodology**

The present study is carried on by using secondary data. The secondary data has been collected from various sources viz ; Journals, Magazines, News Papers, Books and Websites.

## **Features of National Policy for Women**

There are some key features of this policy-

- The Pam Rajput Committee report, which the MWCD established in 2012 and which delivered its recommendations in 2016 along with a suggested national policy for women and an action plan to reduce violence against women, served as the basis for the policy in large part.
- Prenatal and maternal mortality will continue to be a top concern, with an emphasis on a coordinated referral transport system for safe deliveries and the provision of emergency obstetric treatment in challenging, remote, and isolated locations.
- In order to change the focus of family planning activities from female sterilisation to male sterilisation, it attempts to develop “a gender transformative health strategy”.
- It places a high priority on improving the nutrition of women of all ages and strengthening geriatric services to address the 8.4% of the population that are women over 60.

## **Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in the Development Process**

Policies, programmes and systems will be established to ensure mainstreaming of women’s perspectives in all developmental processes, as catalysts, participants and recipients. Wherever there are gaps in policies and programmes, women specific interventions would be undertaken to bridge these. Coordinating and monitoring mechanisms will also be devised to assess from time to time the progress of such mainstreaming mechanisms. Women’s issues and concerns as a result will specially be addressed and reflected in all concerned laws, sectoral policies, plans and programmes of action.

## **Economic Empowerment of women**

- **Poverty Eradication**

Since women comprise the majority of the population below the poverty line and are very often in situations of extreme poverty, given the harsh realities of intra-household and social discrimination, macro economic policies and poverty eradication programmes will specifically address the needs and problems of such women. There will be improved implementation of programmes which are already women oriented with special targets for women.

- **Micro Credit**

In order to enhance women’s access to credit for consumption and production, the establishment of new, and strengthening of existing micro-credit mechanisms and micro-finance institution will be undertaken so that the outreach of credit is enhanced. Other supportive measures would be taken to ensure adequate flow of credit through extant financial institutions and banks, so that all women below poverty line have easy access to credit.

- **Women and Economy**

Women's perspectives will be included in designing and implementing macro-economic and social policies by institutionalizing their participation in such processes. Their contribution to socio-economic development as producers and workers will be recognized in the formal and informal sectors (including home based workers) and appropriate policies relating to employment and to her working conditions will be drawn up. Such measures could include:

- **Globalization**

Globalization has presented new challenges for the realization of the goal of women's equality, the gender impact of which has not been systematically evaluated fully. However, from the micro-level studies that were commissioned by the Department of Women and Child Development, it is evident that there is a need for re-framing policies for access to employment and quality of employment. Benefits of the growing global economy have been unevenly distributed leading to wider economic disparities, the feminization of poverty, increased gender inequality through often deteriorating working conditions and unsafe working environment especially in the informal economy and rural areas.

- **Women and Agriculture**

In view of the critical role of women in the agriculture and allied sectors, as producers, concentrated efforts will be made to ensure that benefits of training, extension and various programmes will reach them in proportion to their numbers. The programmes for training women in soil conservation, social forestry, dairy development and other occupations allied to agriculture like horticulture, livestock including small animal husbandry, poultry, fisheries etc. will be expanded to benefit women workers in the agriculture sector.

- **Women and Industry**

The important role played by women in electronics, information technology and food processing and agro industry and textiles has been crucial to the development of these sectors. They would be given comprehensive support in terms of labour legislation, social security and other support services to participate in various industrial sectors.

- **Support Services**

The provision of support services for women, like child care facilities, including crèches at work places and educational institutions, homes for the aged and the disabled will be expanded and improved to create an enabling environment and to ensure their full cooperation in social, political and economic life. Women-friendly personnel policies will also be drawn up to encourage women to participate effectively in the developmental process.

### **Social Empowerment of Women**

- **Education**

Equal access to education for women and girls will be ensured. Special measures will be taken to eliminate discrimination, universalize education, eradicate illiteracy, create a gender-sensitive educational system, increase enrolment and retention rates of girls and improve the quality of education to facilitate life-long learning as well as development of occupation/vocation/technical skills by women. Reducing the gender gap in secondary and higher education would be a focus area.

- **Health**

A holistic approach to women's health which includes both nutrition and health services will be adopted and special attention will be given to the needs of women and the girl at all stages of the life cycle. The reduction of infant mortality and maternal mortality, which are sensitive indicators of human development, is a priority concern. This policy reiterates the national demographic goals for Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) set out in the National Population Policy 2000. Women should have access to comprehensive, affordable and quality health care. Measures will be adopted that take into account the reproductive rights of women to enable them to exercise informed choices, their vulnerability to sexual and health problems together with endemic, infectious and communicable diseases such as malaria, TB, and water borne diseases as well as hypertension and cardio-pulmonary diseases. The social, developmental and health consequences of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases will be tackled from a gender perspective.

- **Nutrition**

In view of the high risk of malnutrition and disease that women face at all the three critical stages viz., infancy and childhood, adolescent and reproductive phase, focussed attention would be paid to meeting the nutritional needs of women at all stages of the life cycle. This is also important in view of the critical link between the health of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women with the health of infant and young children. Special efforts will be made to tackle the problem of macro and micro nutrient deficiencies especially amongst pregnant and lactating women as it leads to various diseases and disabilities.

- **Drinking Water and Sanitation**

Special attention will be given to the needs of women in the provision of safe drinking water, sewage disposal, toilet facilities and sanitation within accessible reach of households, especially in rural areas and urban slums. Women's participation will be ensured in the planning, delivery and maintenance of such services.

- **Housing and Shelter**

Women's perspectives will be included in housing policies, planning of housing colonies and provision of shelter both in rural and urban areas. Special attention will be given for providing adequate and safe housing and accommodation for women including single women, heads of households, working women, students, apprentices and trainees.

- **Environment**

Women will be involved and their perspectives reflected in the policies and programmes for environment, conservation and restoration. Considering the impact of environmental factors on their livelihoods, women's participation will be ensured in the conservation of the environment and control of environmental degradation. The vast majority of rural women still depend on the locally available non-commercial sources of energy such as animal dung, crop waste and fuel wood. In order to ensure the efficient use of these energy resources in an environmental friendly manner, the Policy will aim at promoting the programmes of non-conventional energy resources. Women will be involved in spreading the use of solar energy, biogas, smokeless chulhas and other rural application so as to have a visible impact of these measures in influencing eco system and in changing the life styles of rural women.



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**National Policy for Women and its implementation**

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- At the national, state, and local government levels, in PSUs, corporations, companies, trade unions, NGOs, and community-based groups, it will be necessary to develop specific, attainable, and effective implementation plans.
- At the national, state, and municipal levels, interdisciplinary and multi-sectoral gender institutional architecture will be enhanced and streamlined to uphold women's rights and advance gender equality.
- The Ministry of Women and Child Development will serve as a focal point at the national level for efforts to realize constitutional and international obligations to social justice and gender equality.

**Conclusion**

Although the strategy aspires to empower women and attempts to take the interests of women into account, it remains silent on the subject of marital rape. In addition to more conventional programs for women's empowerment, the policy asserts that it acknowledges the complexities in gender roles brought about by "the new millennium and the dynamics of a quickly changing global and national scene."

However, passing laws on their own is insufficient. It is necessary to bring about changes in how society views women as well as in the behavior of men and boys and the institutions of the family and women's groups. Only after that will we be able to move on with giving women the same protections and rights as men.

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## Achievement of Indian women in science and technology and their challenges overview

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### **Abstract:**

Indian women in science and technology have made significant contributions to the fields of research, innovation, and technological advancements. This abstract provides an overview of the status, challenges, and achievements of Indian women in these domains.

**Purpose/Objective:** The objective of this abstract is to shed light on the representation and participation of Indian women in science and technology and to highlight their contributions and the challenges they face.

### **Methods/Approach:**

This abstract is based on a review of existing literature, research papers, and reports on the topic. It incorporates data and information from various sources to present a comprehensive view.

Indian women have made significant achievements in the fields of science and technology, breaking barriers and leaving a lasting impact on research, innovation, and technological advancements. Despite facing numerous challenges, women scientists and technologists in India have overcome societal biases and systemic barriers to excel in their respective domains. This introduction provides an overview of the notable achievements of Indian women in science and technology, highlighting their contributions and the transformative role they play in these fields.

Over the years, Indian women have made remarkable strides in diverse scientific disciplines. In the field of physics, notable names such as Dr. Rohini Godbole, a renowned theoretical physicist, and Dr. Archana Sharma, who played a vital role in the discovery of the Higgs boson particle, have contributed significantly to advancing our understanding of the universe. In chemistry, Dr. Indira Hinduja is renowned for her pioneering work in assisted reproductive technology, which has helped countless couples realize their dreams of parenthood. Dr. Tessy Thomas, often referred to as the "Missile Woman of India," has played a pivotal role in the development of indigenous ballistic missile systems.

Women in India have also excelled in mathematics, with Dr. Raman Parimala and Dr. Meena Mahajan making noteworthy contributions to the field. In computer science, Dr. Anita Borg, the founder of the Anita Borg Institute for Women and Technology, has been instrumental in promoting gender diversity and empowering women in technology. In engineering, women like Dr. Lalitha Vadlamani and Dr. Kalpana Chawla have left an indelible mark through their contributions to aerospace engineering and space exploration.

These achievements not only highlight the scientific prowess of Indian women but also underscore their resilience and determination in pursuing careers in science and technology. By breaking stereotypes and challenging societal norms, these trailblazing women have become role models, inspiring younger generations to pursue their passions and make their mark in the scientific world.

However, it is important to acknowledge that Indian women in science and technology continue to face unique challenges. These include gender biases, limited access to resources and opportunities, cultural expectations, and work-life balance issues. Efforts to address these challenges and create a more inclusive and supportive environment are crucial to foster the full potential of women in these fields.

In conclusion, the achievements of Indian women in science and technology are a testament to their intellect, perseverance, and unwavering dedication. Through their groundbreaking research, technological innovations, and leadership roles, they have not only enriched the scientific landscape but also paved the way for future generations of women. By recognizing and celebrating their accomplishments, we can encourage greater gender equality, diversity, and empowerment in science and technology, leading to a more inclusive and prosperous society.

**Results/Findings:** Indian women have made remarkable strides in science and technology, excelling in diverse disciplines such as physics, chemistry, mathematics, computer science, and engineering. They have made significant contributions to scientific research, technological innovations, and academic institutions. However, gender disparities persist, with women being underrepresented in leadership positions and facing barriers such as societal biases, limited access to resources, and work-life balance challenges.

**Implications/Significance:** Recognizing and addressing the barriers faced by Indian women in science and technology is crucial for promoting gender equality, diversity, and inclusive growth in

these fields. Encouraging more women to pursue careers in science and technology can lead to greater innovation, enhanced research outcomes, and overall societal development.

#### **Dr. Rohini Godbole (Physics):**

Dr. Rohini Godbole is a renowned theoretical physicist and professor at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in Bangalore. Her research focuses on understanding the fundamental particles and forces of the universe. She has made significant contributions to the field of high-energy physics, particularly in studying quantum chromodynamics and the Higgs boson. Dr. Godbole has been recognized for her work in advancing our understanding of the fundamental forces and particles that govern the universe.

#### **Dr. Archana Sharma (Physics):**

Dr. Archana Sharma is a particle physicist who has played a crucial role in the discovery of the Higgs boson particle at the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN). Her contributions to the Compact Muon Solenoid (CMS) experiment were instrumental in detecting the elusive Higgs boson, which led to the confirmation of the Standard Model of particle physics. Dr. Sharma's work has significantly advanced our understanding of the fundamental building blocks of matter.

#### **Dr. Indira Hinduja (Chemistry):**

Dr. Indira Hinduja is a renowned gynecologist and infertility specialist who is globally recognized for her groundbreaking work in assisted reproductive technology. She played a pioneering role in India's first successful in-vitro fertilization (IVF) and embryo transfer, leading to the birth of the country's first "test-tube baby." Dr. Hinduja's contributions have revolutionized infertility treatment and provided hope to countless couples struggling with fertility issues.

#### **Dr. Tessy Thomas (Engineering):**

Dr. Tessy Thomas, often referred to as the "Missile Woman of India," is a distinguished scientist and project director of Agni-IV, a long-range ballistic missile. She has been instrumental in the

design and development of various indigenous missile systems, significantly enhancing India's defense capabilities. Dr. Thomas is hailed for her contributions to aerospace engineering and her pioneering role as a woman in a traditionally male-dominated field.

**Dr. Raman Parimala (Mathematics):**

Dr. Raman Parimala is a prominent mathematician known for her significant contributions to algebraic geometry and number theory. Her research focuses on quadratic forms, algebraic groups, and Galois cohomology. Dr. Parimala's work has advanced our understanding of complex mathematical concepts and has been published in prestigious journals, contributing to the broader field of mathematics.

**Dr. Meena Mahajan (Mathematics):**

Dr. Meena Mahajan is a renowned computer scientist and mathematician known for her contributions to theoretical computer science. Her research interests include computational complexity theory, algorithms, and formal methods. Dr. Mahajan's work has resulted in the development of efficient algorithms and techniques, impacting various areas of computer science and mathematics.

These are just a few examples of the many accomplished Indian women who have excelled in science and technology. Their groundbreaking research, innovations, and leadership serve as an inspiration for future generations and highlight the significant contributions of women in these fields.

**Conclusion:** Indian women have made notable achievements in science and technology, yet there is a need for continued efforts to overcome gender disparities and create an inclusive environment. Initiatives promoting mentorship, equitable opportunities, and supportive policies can foster the advancement and representation of Indian women in these crucial fields, ensuring a brighter future for science, technology, and society as a whole.

Certainly! Here are the notable achievements of some Indian women in science and technology, highlighting their contributions and breakthroughs in their respective fields

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## Progress And Achievements of Rural Women In India

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### ABSTRACT

*The general condition of the rural Indian women and the impact of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) on the overall empowerment of the rural women. MGNREGS is for the rural people, including rural women, who are unskilled or semi-skilled. Several provisions, like availability of drinking water, shade, first-aid, crèche at the working site have made this scheme unique. Crèches are helping the rural mothers as they do not have to depend on others at home to take care of the children. Usually, the elder daughter takes on the responsibility of the younger siblings at home when the mother is away for work. This facility has relieved the elder daughters from this duty and they can attend school. This flagship programme of the Government of India has been criticized from several quarters. However, some positive intentions of the ground-level officials and the awareness of the beneficiaries can really bring in a revolution in the lives of Indian rural women. This paper is focus on the study area Progress and Achievements of Rural Women in India*

**Key Words:**Rural, Women, Responsibility, Guarantee, Scheme

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### INTRODUCTION

India is a country which attained independence in 1947, but the rural-urban divide and the rich-poor divide are still plaguing India. 68.84 per cent of the Indian population lives in villages. There are 6, 40,867 villages in India. According to 2011 census, the populations of rural women who are literate are 58.8 per cent. (Census, 2011) According to the “2007 Revision of World Urbanization Prospects” by the United Nations, India would continue to have the largest rural population in the world until 2050. (Hindustan Times, 28.2.2008) There are several issues which are creating difficulties in the lives of Indians, like rising crimes against women, increasing poverty, corruption, nepotism, lack of transparency in the official functioning, bureaucratic hassles, criminalization of politics, criminal-politician-bureaucratic entente etc. However, the common Indian citizen is striving to get two ends meet.

### LIFE OF INDIAN WOMEN

India is a country of contradictions. On the one hand, women are worshipped as deities, without whose blessings, work cannot be initiated. On the other hand, crimes against women and girls are increasing day by day in India. It is sad that in many cases, the perpetrators are known to the victims. The perpetrators could be among relatives, neighbors, friends etc. This increasing mistrust can create havoc in the Indian societal pattern. The patriarchal norms are so entrenched in the Indian society that it is very difficult to pull oneself out of this conundrum. When girls are born in most Indian families, they are not welcome, at times, even by their mothers. They lament that a son could have been a real asset for the family. Upbringing of girls is an expensive affair, where there is only loss as the girl gets married off and will serve the grooms’ family throughout her life. In India, the life of a woman changes a lot after marriage. She leaves her parents’ house after marriage and starts living with the groom’s family. Since childhood, she is socialized into thinking that she has to take up the food habits, dress, rituals etc of the new family. So, happily or grudgingly, she evolves her identity according to the demands of the groom’s family and the groom.

Majority of rural Indian women do not have the right to choose their partner. It is always decided by the family elders and the marriage is arranged with an endogamous group, where caste plays a very important role. If the girl wishes to marry someone from other caste or tribe, the traditional leaders of the villages oppose. In states like Haryana, there are Khap Panchayats, or traditional village elders who provide punishments to both the adult girls and boys of the same village and caste, who falls in love and marries. According to the Khap leaders, marrying someone within the village or caste is equal to marrying a sibling. They act as kangaroo courts and punish them even by awarding deaths. In many cases, the brutality of such crimes is not even opposed by the parents. Such is the power of these Khap Panchayats that the elected Members from these constituencies do not oppose them for fear of losing the vote bank in the area.

## **OBJECTIVE**

The main objective of this article as follows

1. To evaluate the progress and achievements of rural women in India and to study the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act- A Wage Employment Scheme

## **ACHIEVEMENTS OF RURAL WOMEN IN INDIA AND MGNREGS ACT A WAGE EMPLOYMENT SCHEME**

NREGA is the most significant act in the history of Indian polity in many ways like grass-root level participation of every citizen and beneficiary through democratic process, multi-layered social audit and transparency mechanism by involvement of civil society, comprehensive planning at village level towards sustainable and equitable development etc. Important salient feature of the Act is to improve the quality of life of rural households who are vulnerable to out-migration in search of daily wage employment by channelizing the wage workforce towards developmental activities at the village level itself. (IAMR, 2009) It is a powerful instrument for ensuring inclusive growth in rural India through its impact on social protection, livelihood security and democratic empowerment. The Act was notified in 200 districts in the first phase with effect from February 2nd 2006 and then extended to an additional 130 districts in the financial year 2007-2008 (113 districts were notified with effect from April 1st 2007 and 17 districts in Uttar Pradesh (UP) were notified with effect from May 15th 2007). The remaining districts have been notified under MGNREGA with effect from April 1, 2008. In October 2009 the name of the scheme was changed to MGNREGA. ([www.nrega.in](http://www.nrega.in))

Goals of MGNREGS are social protection for the most vulnerable people living in rural India, livelihood security for the poor through creation of durable assets, improved water security, soil conservation and higher land productivity, drought-proofing and flood management in rural India empowerment of the socially disadvantaged, especially women, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, through the processes of a rights-based legislation, strengthening decentralized, participatory planning through convergence of various anti-poverty and livelihoods initiatives, deepening democracy at the grass-roots by strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions and effecting greater transparency and accountability in governance

Women in rural areas from families living below the poverty line were a target group of the scheme. In India, the 73rd Amendment in 1992 has brought in reservation in Panchayats. 30 percent of the seats are reserved for rural women. In MGNREGS also, it has been stated that there should be minimum 30 per cent of the women beneficiaries. In many states, they have gone beyond the minimum number. In some villages, the whole government scheme is being carried out by the women in the village as all the male members are engaged in other work. This belief in themselves that they can run their families and the village, has created a boost in their self-esteem. The challenges may come in, but rural women are ready for it. The rise in the confidence level has helped them to go ahead in many fields. Traditional and modern media should be utilized

for awareness building among the workers. The awareness building methods should be carved so that it is well understood by the wage workers. Most of them are illiterate or have studied up to primary schools only. So, the awareness messages should be in the form of short films, animation slides, posters, etc.

Traditional media such as folk songs, puppet show etc should be properly utilized to get the message across to the community. The views of the Ministry of Rural Development, state governments, non- governmental organizations and others have already started working on this aspect. The views of the National Institute of Rural Development, State Institute of Rural Developments and professionals should be well analyzed to generate good quality material with acceptable standards.

The safety net provided by the scheme has helped rural India cope with the frequent distress and natural disasters. The combined effect of expanded agricultural production, demand for labour from the construction sector and the effect of MGNREGA has led to tightening of the market for agricultural labour and a steady rise in real wages, which has helped the landless improve their standard of living. A very positive outcome of this Act is the issue of gender parity. Studies have showed that a silent revolution is taking place among rural women due to MGNREGA. Wage disparities are being reduced and women are being visible in the public sphere to take up work and interact with banks, post offices and government officials. This has done wonders for boosting their self-confidence and improving their empowerment level, including their say in financial matters of the household. (Shilling Times, 15.7.12) MGNREGS, was always conceived as a 'green' scheme'. It is supportive of regeneration of the rural natural resource base through the creation of employment opportunities related to water conservation, flood control, drought proofing, irrigation and forestation should be encouraged. (www. ruraldiksha.nic.in)

## **CONCLUSION**

To make the scheme successful in empowering rural women, it is very necessary that they should participate in large numbers in the Gram Sabha (open rural assembly) and voice their preferences and concerns regarding the implementation of government schemes, including, MGNREGS. The opportunity of right to livelihood should be properly made use of. Indian Constitution had not given the right to work as a justiciable right. But, it was in 2005 that the Indian Parliament passed the law on Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) to provide the right to work to Indian citizens of rural areas. Rural Indian women are stepping out of their private space and making a contribution in building infrastructure in the village, other than empowering themselves. The Government of India has provided an opportunity to rural women to live with dignity and honor and equal footing with the rural man. Earlier, the contribution of the rural women was invisible to the people with patriarchal mindsets. MGNREGS is trying to empower the invisible lifeline of rural community. For making their lives successful and meaningful, Indian rural women have also to put in 100 percent initiative. Otherwise, the scheme may fail as any other government project, with all its loopholes. If implemented successfully, it can become a role model for all developing countries.

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## **Women Empowerment through Entrepreneurship**

### **A Study in Gadwal Revenue Division of Telangana State**

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“Our Mothers, Wives, Sisters, and Daughters must actively participate in the progress of our State’s Economic Development.” Dr.MRN

The ability to lead and control one’s own life is all that empowerment is, and women now play a crucial part in our society. They inevitably and invisibly contribute. It goes without saying that the objective of eradicating poverty cannot be accomplished without the involvement of the general public, who play a crucial role in the advancement of all developmental initiatives. Women who start, plan, and run their own businesses are referred to as women entrepreneurs. An enterprise owned and controlled by a woman with a maximum financial interest of 51% of the capital cannot be referred to as a woman entrepreneur by the Government of India.

The entrepreneur is both a key to and a crucial component of economic development. In India, women make up about half of the population. If given the chance, they can demonstrate their superiority in any endeavour. However, they were largely restricted inside the four walls of the home over the ages owing to social and other causes, thus their strength and potential went unappreciated and unaccounted for. Women entrepreneurs have made substantial contributions to the economy in nations like Canada, Great Britain, Germany, Australia, and the United States, whereas their counterparts in this region of the world have lagged behind due to historical factors. They continue to live in isolation relative to the number of women in the nation. To make room

The data presented above shows unequivocally that a woman can contribute significantly to economic growth by embracing the role of an entrepreneur. Notwithstanding their numerous issues, women entrepreneurs now have new prospects thanks to a variety of policies that support their involvement in the development process. Opportunities abound, especially for educated and urban women who are able to enter any field. The sectors that are primarily intended for female participation, especially in the service industry, are waiting to be exploited. Several successful examples of female entrepreneurs exist and should be imitated. The three requisites of the moment are desire, skill, and dynamism. Women’s entrepreneurship development will assist the nation on many different socioeconomic levels.

Women play a crucial role in all facets of human existence and make substantial contributions to the growth of the family, society, and nation. To be empowered is to invest with strength. One of the top priorities for national growth has been women’s empowerment. Empowerment is a multifaceted process, and different definitions of the idea have been offered. Economic empowerment includes having the ability to earn money, bargaining collectively for financial gains, having control over the means of production, participating in decisions that have an impact on the economy, and developing management abilities. Several income-generating activities, such as kalankari, tailoring, dairy, small businesses, pot and pickle making, handicrafts, bead making, and others, empower women.

Many examples of individual entrepreneurs whose inventiveness sparked the industrialization of numerous countries may be found throughout the history of women entrepreneurs. The industrialization of their nations was brought about by businessmen like Belton in the eighteenth century, Henry Ford, and Emil Ratheneau in the twentieth century. Women-owned businesses are the sector of the US economy

that is expanding the quickest. According to data from the US Bureau of Statistics, women entrepreneurs controlled 26% of enterprises in 1980 and 32% in 1990. By the year 2000, it would reach 50% if this tendency were to continue.

In a culture, the formation of female entrepreneurs is greatly influenced by economic, religious, cultural, psychological, and other variables. For emerging nations like India, the presence of entrepreneurs, particularly women entrepreneurs, is essential to achieving industrialization and achieving quick, all-around, regionally and socially balanced economic growth. Also, it assists in utilising their innate skills and serves as a solution to many issues they encounter, including dowry death, social marginalisation, poverty, unemployment, and an over-reliance on male family members.

I. Objectives

1. Investigate the socio economic circumstances of the sample respondents.
2. To evaluate the advancement of female entrepreneurs in the research field

II. Methodology

The current study is being carried out in Gadwal Town’s Mahabubnagar district. Gadwal was given its well-known name after the Gadwal Sarees. Because of its historical significance, it is well-known. It was formerly one of the “SAMSTHANS.” Gadwal, also known as Nadigadda, is situated between the Krishna and Thungabhadra rivers. The fort that Raja Krishna Ram Bhupal gifted now houses the MALD Government Degree College, Government Women’s College, and Government Junior Colleges. In addition to this, the Gadwal, Alampur, and Atmakur Mandals have access to irrigation under the Indira Priyadarshini Jural Project. The historical significance of the well-known Telugu film “Arundati” to Gadwal Samsthan. I’ve chosen a variety of female entrepreneurs in Gadwal. The female business owners are involved in a variety of revenue-generating activities.

**A. Trading:**Sarees and women’s accessories, fruit and vegetable stands, and pan shops are examples of businesses that engage in trading.

**B.Manufacturing:** Creating beedis, agarbathi, lace, coir, bamboo crafts, weaving coconut leaves, and manufacturing rope are some examples.

**C.Service Sector:** Services include tutoring, salons, labs, courier services, computer centres, educational institutions, medical facilities, and construction labour.

3. The socio economic circumstances of the sample respondents:

They were divided into various groups based on their individual traits, such as caste, religion, age, education, marital status, and family structure, in order to define the socioeconomic and demographic profile of the sample. Family size, occupation, housing type, land information, savings, income, and employment information of the study area’s chosen sample of respondents

The socio economic Conditions of Sample Respondents

Caste

SC- 13	ST-5	BC-30	OC-12	Percent
21.66	8.34	50.00	20.00	100.00

Religion

Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Others
73.25	9.25	17.50	Nil
			100.00

**Age**

Below 25	26-30	36-45	46 & above	
12.25	28.63	42.50	16.62	100.00

**Education**

Illiterate	Primary	Secondary	College	
51.78	28.20	15.52	4.50	100.00

**Marital Status**

Married	Unmarried	Divorcee/Deserted	Widow	
64.65	3.25	18.60	13.50	100.00

**Type of Family**

Nuclear	Joint	WomenHeaded	
69.20	23.90	6.90	100.00

**Size of Family**

1-4	5-7	8 & above	
48.89	33.33	17.78	100.00

**Occupation**

Cultivators	Agri.Labour	Rural Artisan	Others	
10.83	43.33	16.67	29.17	100.00

**Type of House**

Hut/KuchaPucca	Colony House	Rented House	RCC	
15.69	36.88	34.66	12.77	100.00

**Land Particulars**

SC	ST	BC	OC
1.00	0.55	2.5	4.00

**Savings**

SC	ST	BC	OC
No savings	No savings	Positive savings	Positive savings

**Income Details**

Below1000	1000-2000	2000-3000	3000 - 4000	
13.69	38.88	28.66	18.77	100.00

**Employment details**

0-100	101-180	181-240	241 & above	
9.18	20.28	44.42	26.12	100.00

**Source: Primary data**

According to their caste, the sample respondents were divided into four groups: SC, ST, BC, and OC. The majority of women (i.e., 50% of respondents) are from the BC group since they actively participate in income-generating activities and make up a larger share of the population in the Mahabubnagar District of the Gadwal Revenue division.

In order to determine the women’s religion, they were divided into three groups: Hindu, Muslim, and Christian. Hinduism (83.25%) is the religion practiced by the majority of women, followed by Islam (9.25%) and Christianity (7.50%).

The women were divided into four age groups—below 25 years, 26–30 years, 36–45 years, and 46 years and above—in order to determine their ages. The majority of women are in the 26-45 age bracket (71.13%), followed by those 46 and older (16.62%), and those under 25 (12.5%). This data shows that women have passed the productive age range but are still working despite having responsibilities in their families and a need for increased income to meet those obligations.

The women were divided into four groups based on their level of education: illiterate, primary, secondary, and college. According to the report, 51.78 percent of respondents are illiterate, followed by those with only a primary level of education (28.20%), a secondary level (15.52%), and a college level (4.50%) of education. As a result, proper measures must be done to ensure that they are literate, as literacy has been identified as a key factor in an individual’s socioeconomic growth.

The women were divided into four groups in order to determine their marital status: Married, Unmarried, Divorcee/Deserted, and Widow groups. According to the study, the majority of women are either married (64.65%) or divorced/deserted (18.60%), widowed (13.50%), or unmarried (3.25%).

The women were divided into three groups—Nuclear Family, Joint Family, and Women Headed Household—in order to determine the kind of family they belonged to. According to the survey, the majority of women (69.20%) belong to nuclear families, followed by joint families (23.90%) and households headed by women (6.90%).

The women were divided into four groups based on the size of their families: 1-4 size, 5-7 size, and 8 & above size groups. According to the study, the majority of women belong to families with 1 to 4 people (48.89%), followed by families with 5 to 7 members (33.33%), and families with 8 or more members (17.78%).

When it comes to the respondents’ occupations, women who were responders were active in agricultural labour (43.33%). Others and Rural Artists (16.67%)

The ladies were divided into four categories—Hut/Kucha, Colony house, leased house, and RCC—in order to analyse the type of residence they lived in. According to the survey, the majority of women, or 71.54%, lives in both rental homes and colonies.

More than 40% of the female respondents admitted that they don’t own any land. Yet, 30% of the women admitted that they had between a half and a full acre of land, while the remaining ladies owned between 2-4 acres.

After engaging in various income-generating activities, the majority of women have seen an increase in their income of more than Rs 2,000 to 3,000 per month, followed by Rs 3000 & above and below Rs 1000/- per month. nearly all of them have

Women engaging in various activities were divided into 4 categories: below \$1,000, \$1,000 to \$2,000, \$2,000 to \$3,000, and \$3,000 and above in order to examine the specifics of their income. According to the report, the majority of women earn between \$1,000 and \$3,000, followed by \$3,000 and over (18.77%) and below \$1,000 alone (13.69%).They were divided into 4 groups: 0-100 (9.18%), 101-180 (20.28%), 181-240 (44.42%), and 241 & above from (26.12%) in order to investigate the specifics of employment. The report clearly explains that the majority of women work 101–240 man-days per week.The women were questioned again in order to learn more about their finances. The majority of the ladies reported that their current total savings are between Rs. 1000 and Rs. 1500. Also, one-fourth of the ladies concurred that their savings totaled no more than Rs. 750. The specifics of the respondents’ line of activity are shown in Table 1 below.

**Table-1 Respondents Line of Activity:**

Line of Activity	Number	Percent
Trading	32	53.34
Manufacturing	13	21.66
Service Sector	15	25.00
Total	60	100.00

**Source: Primary Data**

Table 1 shows that 25 percent of respondents work in the service sector, which includes training centers, schools, beauty salons, tuition centers, and other institutions. The remaining 53.34 percent of respondents are involved in the manufacturing of food products, clothing, and women’s accessories, as well as dealers, vegetable shops, photo studios, Xerox, computer centers, and labs. Table 1 clearly demonstrates that the trading sector employed more than half of the respondents, who were then employed in the service sector.

**IV.Employment pattern:**

Without a doubt, any financial help, when used appropriately, creates prospects for lucrative work in the household’s income-generating activities.

**Table-2 Employment Details of the Respondents (Man days)**

Respondents	MonthlyEmployment	Percent
7	9	11.66
15	17	25.00
23	19	38.33
10	23	16.67
5	15	8.34
60	16	100.00

Source: Primary Data

According to Table 2, each respondent had an average of 16 days of employment every month. 33 responders in total received 21 days of employment. The distribution of sample respondents by caste is seen in table 3 below.

**Table-3Caste wise Average Household Employment Generation**

<b>Caste</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Average Employment</b>	<b>Total Employment</b>
SC	13	210	2370
ST	5	180	900
BC	30	245	7350
OC	12	270	3240
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>13860</b>

Source: Primary Data

Table 3 shows that there are more man-days of employment in the BC and OC communities than in the ST and SC communities. This is because most members of the ST community move about a lot and depend mostly on the monsoons, seasonal crops, and looking for manual labour.

## **V.Income Pattern**

The possibility for work can be assessed by the quantity of income produced in income-generating activities because there is a symbolic connection between income generation and job chances.

**Table-4 Monthly Income of the Respondents**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Monthly income</b>	<b>Percent</b>
7	Up to 1000	11.66
15	1000-2000	25.00
23	2000-3000	38.33
10	3000-4000	16.67
5	4000 & above	8.34
60		100.00

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4 clearly demonstrates that only 63.33 percent of female entrepreneurs made between 1000 and 3000 rupees. Women entrepreneurs make between \$3,000 and \$4,000 on average (16.67%), followed by those making under \$1,000 (11.66%). Table 5 provides statistics on average monthly employment by caste.

**Table-5Caste-wise Average Monthly Income of the Respondents**

Caste	Number	AverageIncome	TotalIncome	Percent
SC	13	2500	32500	17.67
ST	5	1500	7500	4.07
BC	30	3200	96000	52.17
OC	12	4000	48000	26.09
Total	60	2800	184000	100.00

Source: Primary Data

Table 5 shows that while entering the ST society, 17.67% of SC women entrepreneurs make only \$2500 per month. 4.07 percent earned 1500, followed by the OC community’s average monthly income of 4000 and the BC respondents’ 3200. The average monthly income for all localities was 2800. The average income for the OC and BC castes is substantially higher than for the SC and ST castes in Table 4.

## 6. Expenditure Trends

People are often believed to work both productively and unproductively to better the quality of their life anytime they are able to earn a suitable wage. It is true that income has a positive impact on consumption spending in general and specifically on social, health, and educational functions. The comments gathered from sample respondents demonstrate that rural areas are accurate. It has been observed that a large amount of the income created was used for home expenses, which are necessary to survive in a society with a better standard of living, and that rural women primarily consider social standing while spending their income.

**Table-6: Expenditure Pattern**

Caste	Agriculture	Household	EducationHealth	Income yielding assets	Unproductive Expenses	Self Needs	Family Debt	Total
SC	9.00	27.00	9.00	19.00	21.00	4.00	11.00	100.00
ST	Nil	51.00	Nil	Nil	43.00	Nil	6.00	100.00
BC	19.00	16.00	15.00	19.00	9.00	15	7.00	100.00
OC	8.00	11.00	23.00	35.00	3.00	20.00	Nil	100.00

Source: Primary Data

According to the sample respondents’ perspectives, as shown in Table 6, they utilized the revenue they received as a result of the credit in a constructive manner. Caste-based spending patterns reveal that 27.00% of respondents from the SC community spent their income on home expenses, while just 20% went towards unproductive expenses. 19% from Income-Generating Assets 11% is owed to family members 9 percent of them said they spent money on their children’s education and health, while only 4 percent of their income went towards self-reported needs. When they first arrived in the ST community, 43% of their revenue was used for unproductive purposes, meaning that the majority of them were inebriated and engaged in gaming, pan, and beedi. Apart from this 51% of income spent on family requirements, they won’t spend money on things like education, health, assets that generate income, and self-needs.

The majority of the revenue earned before moving to the BC community was proportionately spent on all necessities. The next category is OC caste expenditures on self-needs, household purposes, assets that generate income, and education and health.

All communities (SC, ST, BC, and OC) in the chosen respondents clearly demonstrate that a significant portion of the income generated was spent on household expenses, which are required to live in a society with a better standard of living, and rural women are thinking social status to spend income exclusively.

## **VII.Conclusion**

Today, the adage “entrepreneurs are born, not made” makes little sense. Many pieces of evidence indicate that they were made effectively. Government and non-governmental organizations must play a crucial role in the success of the women’s entrepreneurship movement. There is an urgent need to re-orient a lot of things, starting at the most basic level. For example, more vocational courses specifically for women are needed, as are entrepreneurship studies in business and management curricula. Global understanding of the contribution that women may make to the process of economic growth has grown in recent years. Undoubtedly, there is a commercial revolution taking place across the country, and women play a significant role in it, even though it is still in the early stages of development. The status of women in society and the economy is being improved. The country will reap numerous socioeconomic benefits as more women become business owners.

## **VIII.Suggestions**

The investigator has made the following recommendations for women who are involved in various income-generating activities in light of the empirical study: • Measures should be taken to increase the participation of women from SC and ST communities in order to help them improve their income and living standards since they are the most disadvantaged socially and economically.

- Literacy has been identified as the key to an individual’s socioeconomic growth, so it is important to take the necessary steps to ensure that they are literate.

- To make it easier for women who want to start their own businesses, banks’ policies should be more lenient and accommodative.

- Training programmes should be set up for them with sufficient demonstration and knowledge about the resources, raw materials, etc.

- Women need to be made aware of the manufacturing conditions, marketing circumstances, middlemen’s abuse of them, and their own debt.

- In order to take use of women entrepreneurs’ managerial abilities, the government must offer them all the resources they need, including funding, partnerships, training, etc.

- Women’s contributions to entrepreneurship should be studied using contemporary information technology.

- Women should be exposed to market transactions in their communities. A better understanding of the market’s potential and consumer contact would enhance the products’ quality and make them more consumer-ready.

- Subsidized marketing facilities, including transportation, affordable pricing, etc., should be developed for burgeoning business owners.

- It is necessary to organize awareness campaigns to raise public understanding of the local raw materials, resources, marketability, etc.

- The mass media should also be active in promoting the initiatives and programmes that encourage female entrepreneurship.



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## **Role of the Communist women in Colonial period**

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In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, religious and social renaissance movements emerged in British government of India. Due to the emergence of numerous emotional feelings, a shift in women's way of thinking, and a heightened sense of self-awareness, women were ardent participants in the nationalist period's resistance to the British government. Thus, the women were participating and organized women's associations in which they discussed numerous things and problems to solve. During the reign of the British, women were the primary victims of exploitation. Due to the imposition of heavy taxes by the British government, women, who played a significant role in the agricultural sector, particularly from the time the seed was sown to the harvest, were unable to pay the taxes and thus limited their farming. Also, along with males, women played an important role in handloom industry. However, as a result of British industrialization, the handloom business in India was confronted with challenging circumstances. Also, along with males, women played an important role in handloom industry. However, with the British industrialization, the handloom sector in India endured severe and tough conditions. Women contribute financially to the family by working in cottage industries. However, as a result of the British government's actions and attitude, the cottage industries lacked impetus and closed down. As a result of British rule, women were denied the ability to support themselves financially.

Child marriages, widow marriages, and veiling were other prevalent societal evils against women throughout that time period. Women were forced to combat such economic and social injustice. As a result, it was necessary to combat the all above problems and also British imperialism. In addition, women needed to be educated on subjects like as voting rights, property rights, education rights, they need women toilets, hospitals, abolished polygamy, and they want gender equality. The Congress party had developed alliances with women prior to launching a campaign against social and economic injustice by the women groups. Who were joined that groups , then they paid to one rupee to join these women's groups . At that time, however, only women from wealthy families such as landlords, zamindars, wealthy individuals, and officials who could afford a rupee membership fee joined women's associations.

Even women who come from low-income families feel as though they should become members of women's organizations and work to better the lives of other women through those organizations; however, these women are unable to pay even a single rupee for membership. However, at the same time, under the influence of communist and socialist parties in Andhra, women such as mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters who were family members of those party leaders came forward and actively participated in public service. Additionally, under their influence, common women also came forward to participate in public service. Women from the party leaders' families, such as the mother, sisters, wife, and daughter, would visit the homes of other villagers' family members and educate the women living in those communities about the need of gender equality. In addition to this, they gathered women to fight the prevalent social norms of the period. As a result, a great number of women came forward, organised themselves into groups, and got involved in public service. Therefore, the "Krishna Zilla MahilaSangham" was the first women's association to be established in Andhra. It was established in the year 1936.

VallabhaneniMahalakshamma, Manikonda Suryavathi, NagellaRajeshwaramma, and YakumuruSaubhadramma were the founding members of the Krishna District Women's Association. After thereafter, there was a gradual increase in the number of women's organisations. Communist

Party leaders and women's association members occupied the top positions in every area of activity, and they were able to successfully carry out campaigns. Those who persevered through it all and worked diligently and patiently toward the advancement of women in each and every community and. Not only did the members of the Communist Women's Association comfort them that there were solutions to their difficulties, but they also bolstered their confidence in their ability to find those solutions.<sup>1</sup>

After hearing the theory presented in the schools that were held in Kothapatnam and ManthenaVariPalem, only a small number of ladies became cognizant as a result of their attendance. The party came to the conclusion that all of the women needed to be educated in philosophy, political science, socio- economic conditions, and so many problems faced by the British government. Because of that, With the initiative of the Communist Party, a lot of efforts were made to prepare the women from the families of the party, training classes on women's issues, national and international politics and world wide knowledge to prepare them as producers and activists of the women's movement. the Communist Party desired to establish a specialised school for all women so that it could direct them down the route to progress.

In 1943, a school was established in Vijayawada for that purpose. That school was attended by women from all areas of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana to strengthen their theoretical and political understanding. In addition to the women, their family members also came for the security for long distance areas, they were also attended the classes and gained the knowledge. Students at the school were also educated about the conditions of the society, policies of the British government, the economic climate, the family system. Some students of this school's have studied in 30 days, others have 60 days, while yet others have 5 months. After completion of their class and hearing its theories, they joined the Communist Party. Likewise, the men who accompanied the women were similarly impressed by communist ideology, joining the party and dedicated themselves to social services. <sup>2</sup>

#### **Political economical school in katurvillage :**

Katuri Village School in 1942, political studies classes were established in the village of Katuru. In her book Na Memoni, NagellaRajeswaramma explains that she, Manikonda Suryavathy, and others attended these classes. She also lists the teachers that taught at the school. Comrades Chandra Rajeswara Rao, MakineniBasavapunnaiah, and MukkamalaNagabhusanam taught national and international subjects as instructors. MakineniBasavapunnaya was an outstanding individual who applied Marxism and Leninism to Indian circumstances. He stated that if MukkamalaNagabhusanam were to deliver a lecture, those in the vicinity would also be interested in attending. All of the pupils were really interested in and able to comprehend the zamindari system and the police, who are ostensibly on the side of the people, and how they are causing problems for the people. In addition, Chandra Rajeswara Rao instructed women in the essential self-defense skills. NagellaRajeswaramma claimed that he taught self-defense using stick samu, karate, and military practise. Thus, we understand that by establishing such schools, the country's socio-economic, political, and topical challenges, as well as self-defense techniques, will strengthen the women's courage <sup>3</sup>.

#### **political classes inJupudi village and Tenali town**

According to the KollaVenkaiah , in 1941 Political schools for women classes were held in Jupudi village and Tenali town in Guntur district. Kolla Venkaiah was in charge of these two schools. The police turned their attention to the Tenali school in the final stage. Kolla Venkaiah used to explain the national movement in the political schools held in the district. In September 1941 Kolla Venkaiah wrote and published the book "Military forces of various countries, Russo-German War" <sup>4</sup>.

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**Impact school on other aspects**

This school's influence in Vijayawada created the groundwork for the state's women's movement. State, district, and mandal political and economic schools have been organised under the aegis of the Communist Party since that time. The women's movement extended to numerous districts through this school. Among them are Visakhapatnam, Ananthapuram, and Kadapa, among others.

IdukalluSadashivam was among the first generation communist party leaders from the Anantapuram area. Knowing that school would be held, he told his fiancée that he would get married after attend that political school in Vijayawada and gaining knowledge in every field. After attended that political class he married Rajamma, both were serviced for communist party, she was also one of the prominent women leader in Anantapuram district. It is also known that Idukallu Rajamma conveyed what she learned there to the people of the Anantapur region, enlightened them, and encouraged the formation of women's associations and the continuation of the activities through her lectures.

After that above mentioned women's and other women's like V. K. Narayana Reddy's wife Parvathamma, N. Siva Ramireddy's wife Kondamma, GajjelaMallareddy's wife Savitamma, Chandra Savitri, KondapalliKoteswaramma, Manikonda Suryavathi, NagellaRajeshwaramma, Tapi Rajamma, VemulapalliSatyavathi, all women organization members (leaders' mothers, elder sisters, wives, Sisters and their children) were actively participated well in the movements<sup>5</sup>.

The aforementioned conclusions demonstrate how women's groups view politics, national and international issues, women's unique difficulties, social distance, and civil conflicts. Gradually, it becomes clear that they contributed equally to the formation of the party alongside the men. As evidence, women became involved in all sectors, participated in cultural events, and contributed significantly to the communist party's propagation. Women's cultural initiatives such as Burrakatha, dramas, street drama, Harikatha, and other cultural events were primarily responsible for the Communist Party's rapid spread during that time period<sup>6</sup>.

**Revival of ancient art forms ( Prajanatyamandali )**

During that period, the lives of women was unhappy because to numerous social and economic restrictions, as well as traditions and orthodox beliefs. In such circumstances, communist party women organised several women's associations and collaborated to bring about change among women in every village; they were successful. In addition, women entered society and staged protests and strikes for the resolution of their issues. Similarly, in order for the people to swiftly comprehend the social injustices and disparities in the society, not only through meetings and words, but notably through cultural programmes, they endeavoured to provide this information to the public quickly and achieved great success. Cultural art forms such as burra katha, kolatam, street drama, oggu katha, jamukula katha, etc. were utilised to express the main elements of society to the people in the form of a story. Particularly the social reformers of the 18th and 19th centuries used the story's ingredients to create dramas that greatly influenced the public. Consequently, the communist party has flourished among the populace.

Ex :In GurjadaApparao's Kanya Shulkam, the communist party emphasised in the guise of a drama the losses inflicted to women by child marriage, the disgrace they confront in society if their husband dies, and the agony they endure as child widows. Moreover, by describing the prostitutes and their way of life, it was demonstrated that they possess humanity and moral principles. Thus, communist artists played their parts in dramas to successfully instil these ideas in the hearts and minds of the audience through creative forms.

The communist leader and her husband KondapalliSeetharamaiah, invited KondapalliKoteswaramma to act as a prostitute for the first time in Kanya Shulkam drama. She informed her husband KondapalliSeetharamaiah, that if she played such roles in dramas, society

would look down on her and find her repulsive, as she explains in her book *NirjanaVaradhi*. KondapalliSitaramaiah and MaddukuriChandram dispelled her concerns and persuaded her to assume the post. In addition, they informed him that if he can perform the role in the drama to move the hearts of the audience, that was I felt greater joy, happiness, and fulfilment. Since then, KodapalliKoteswaramma has played numerous roles in plays and remained in people's minds, as seetaramaiah explained to koteswaramma<sup>7</sup>

These cultural and folk art forms inspired the people to take part in the national movement by inspiring them with awareness. They would portray the characters in such a way that the social and economic issues of the time would reach the emotions of the audience through drama. As a result, these dramas captured the hearts of the people, and as a result of the societal themes, the communists rapidly gained popularity among the people. Ex: *Idi lokam* (this is world) , *Mana bhumi* (Our land), *Rakta kanniru* (Red tears) and *Mundadugu* ( Forward step)<sup>8</sup>

*Idi Lokam*-(It is world):(Drama on Bengal Famine theme):

When there was a famine in Bengal and the people faced a number of challenges, communist authorities decided to assist them in some manner. As part of this, it was envisioned that the people of all regions would be made aware of the drought and their suffering. It was believed that the cultural dream could be easily communicated to the public through drama , and it was also determined to use the money produced from that drama performances and rupees to benefit the people of Bengal. To financially support the people of Bengal, they ate the bare requirements, performed plays to clothe them, and collected and distributed the money and donations they received. The drama "*Idi Lokam*," which was staged during these times, captivated the audience and gained their hearts..

In that drama, KondapalliKoteswaramma portrayed a young woman. In the meaning of about that drama was ,early days a young woman was unable to survive in the village owing to drought and terrible starvation, but she believed she might find work in the city. Due to drought, she was unable to obtain a work or food in the city. Unable to withstand the hunger, she sold her body and used the money to feed herself. The young woman's task is to sell her body and express the misery and sorrow she experiences amid hunger pangs. In the play, the young woman does not know what to answer when people ask her name, and she fears that if she reveals it, it will harm her family's reputation in the area. KondapalliKoteswaramma played the remarkable role of the young woman who recalls the events that caused her body to come to life and declares, "to survive but to die" ( *jivachhavamu*) and who endured the struggle. Her performance brought audiences to tears and touched their hearts. The people of Andhra felt that one of their family members had suffered greatly, therefore they generously presented Bengal with money ,groceries, food , cloths etc.

For this part, KondapalliKoteswaramma got the first prize. She reported that while the Russian authorities did not speak Telugu, they grasped the significance of the young woman's involvement in the play and presented Koteswaramma with numerous gifts. Consequently, the communist campaigners utilised the cultural arts to convey to the populace through play the most vital features of society<sup>9</sup>

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## Challenges to Women Leadership in the Local Administration: A brief Review on Panchayati Raj Institutions in India

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### Abstract:

The establishment of panchayati raj systems since the 90s has enhanced substantial thrust to the course of decentralisation and has a greater implication on India's system of governance. With the evolution of the democratic process, the traditional community's metamorphosis has always been linked with disputes. In 1992, the 73rd Constitutional Amendment gave the panchayats the status of local self-government; they are implemented to ensure economic progress and social justice is carried out. These institutions look forward to elevating infrastructural amenities, authorising the weaker sections to commence the development process in rural India. In contemporary times, panchayati raj's concept is occasionally laced with a political agenda for strategic and economic reasons. Panchayati raj's institutions have been benevolent in recognising actual beneficiaries to obtain paramount advantage out of these schemes. However, various components such as casteism, factionalism, and rivalries hamper these institutions' performance. The failure to identify these hurdles and deficiencies have led to subsequent problems in its implementation. The study gives an overview of the origin, composition, and various issues within this intuition. In addition, it aims to identify the roles of women in the existing patriarchal society and its ardent influence threatening the very shackles of democracy. It is truly a vision our father of the nation envisaged bringing out the essence of democracy through people's power.

### Introduction

The idea of local government has been prominent in India since the ancient period. History has showcased that there exist some traces of Village Panchayats in the form of village communities. Over the years, invaders have established and ravaged empires; however, these villages have preserved their identities. Villages were considered an economic and an administrative unit; the village headmen were recognised as government representatives.

Rural development has been a significant concern for policy planners since the 1950s. In 1952, the Community Development Programme (CDP) was intimated. It was a programme introduced for rural reconstruction. It is outlined based on rural life being an organic whole, and no development in any sector was feasible unless a simultaneous attack was made on all sectors. However, due to the lack of people's participation and initiative, the CDP had failed to achieve its objectives.

The Balwant Rai Mehta Committee identified the requirement for initiating democratic institutions at the foundation level called panchayat to ensure people's engagement in executing rural development programmes.

Further, the Ashoka Mehta committee had been commissioned to understand the role of panchayat raj and the means to achieve accelerated growth and rural development. The committee gave several recommendations for the growth and expansion of the panchayat raj system in India, primarily based on decentralisation principles. One of the significant suggestions by the Ashoka Mehta committee was the formation of constitutional status for the panchayat raj systems. In 1966, India adopted a new plan of action for agricultural development and reforms based on the

usage of high yielding varieties of wheat and paddy supported by a policy of remunerative prices to the farmers. This policy is outlined on the basis that the lack of economic growth embeds poverty. Over the years, the essence of the Panchayati Raj System as an effective instrument for people's participation has been emphasised by the reflection of several committees such as the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee in 1957, Ashok Mehta Committee in 1977 and much more, after years of deliberations the 73rd Amendment to the constitution came in 1992. With this huge development, this Amendment provided the foundational constitutional framework for democracy at the grass-root level.

The Panchayath Raj system is a three-tier structure it consists of i) Zilla Panchayath ii) Taluk Panchayath iii) Gram Panchayath. Strengthening the institutions of Panchayati raj and economic reforms have been crucial policy development since the 1990s. Both of these aspects are essential for the advancement and progress of our society, providing easy access to services to the community. The need for local self-governance at the foundational level has paved the way to the 73rd and 74th constitutional Amendments.

### **Panchayat Raj**

The XIth Schedule of the Constitution states the power and authority of the panchayat that may enable the functions of these institutions. These laws equip for the devolution of powers and responsibilities upon Panchayats to achieve economic development and social justice and execute the schemes entrusted to them. It must be noted that the term for panchayat is five years from the date of appointment and commencement of their first meeting unless dissolved sooner.

### **Issues**

#### **Absence of Conceptual Clarity**

The deficiency in understanding the role, concept and the primary objectives the members of the panchayat are intended to fulfil. For some, it is merely an administrative agency; for others, it is a charter of rural local government. This lack of clarity could hamper the effectiveness of the process, subsequently leading to confusion and ambiguity.

#### **Lack of Computer-based knowledge and Infrastructure**

In some instances, the lack of skills in relation to computer usage leads to quick diminishing standards of efficient working. The government initiated the e-panchayat project in about 360-gram panchayats. However, these districts lack infrastructure and have poor broadband internet connectivity. The project of e-governance is to provide citizen-centric services electronically, maintain a database on the assets of the gram panchayats, and effortlessly access gram panchayat data and services transparently.

#### **Poor Coordination among Different Administrative Bodies**

There is a deficiency of proper cooperation and coordination between the people and the officials. In addition, the Gram Pradhans experience shortcomings due to poor coordination among different administrative bodies. The failure of officials to perform their duty effectively and efficiently has resulted in delayed developmental activities and underutilization of funds. Furthermore, The



Panchayati Raj bodies experience several administrative hurdles such as politicization of the local administration, absence of coordination and differences between the popular and bureaucratic officials, lack of good opportunities, promotions and incentives for those involved in the administration etc.

### **Proxy Presence: Female Gram Pradhans**

Previously, women who were assumed to be weak and vulnerable are currently empowered. However, they will take time to get used to the system and cope with their new status. During this time, men and other bureaucrats are likely more likely to misuse or abuse their power.

Female pradhans are more likely to be influenced by the family members to stand for the polls and post winning; most of the work is handled by the male family members. On the face, the women won the election but are indirectly being controlled by the male members. The male members took care of the matter and answered people's queries whilst the females continued their household chores.

### **Panchayat Raj and political parties:**

Panchayats are regarded and considered to be a ground for political games and rallies. It is generally viewed as extended arms of the ruling political parties in the state. Moreover, the state government permits the panchayats to function to their advantage and not in accordance with ideals of democratic decentralization.

Furthermore, differences can arise between politicians and bureaucrats. The implementation of the 73rd Amendment has mitigated the power and authority enjoyed by the bureaucracy. There is a stark contrast in their understanding and approach, between the Pradhan's and bureaucrats.

MLAs, ministers, and bureaucrats have felt intimidated due to the fears of losing power in the process of delegation of powers to the Panchayati Raj institutions. It has been seen that higher political members have become hostile towards lower political figures due to the lack of experience or understanding and other failings. They would take the opportunity to malign the functioning of the Panchayati Raj. In addition, the MLA's and MP's are threatened because the careers of the local level politicians are likely to elevate. Hence the confrontation between the local politicians and the decentralization process.

### **Role of Women in Panchayati Raj**

The 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendment has brought significant changes that promote equal access and increased engagement of women's in politics. About one-third of total Constituencies have been reserved for women. It also ensures and enhances women's participation in public life. It strives to achieve National policy for women at the foundational level. The commencement of the reservation system in the Panchayati raj institutions empowers women and elevates women's economic, social, and political status in society. It enables liberalisation from the traditionally male-dominated society and brings in a fresher perspective in good governance. The reservation system encourages women's participation in the political framework. It has brought in some positive results and better outcomes in education, health, increase in family income.

This transformation in the system had remarkable results bringing lakhs of women in Panchayats for leadership. The adoption of this Amendment has led the Panchayati Raj system to recognise women's rights, a significant step to bring the unseen potential of women to governance. It enables women's engagement in planning, decision-making, execution of the necessity in the village Panchayats. Women representatives have exhibited their prowess and can adapt and learn managing funds, efficient community-based development, etc. Despite such positive outcomes, women are greatly excluded from the PRI and local governance structures.

Some issues still exist, such as proxy politics, power-brokering, and gender-based discrimination. The women sarpanch have had to counter extreme violence for challenging subsisting power centres in their communities. It is also observed that the male family members utilise the position of the women in their families to stand for the polls and upon the men can control the PRI through the women.

According to Palanithurai (1994), the candidates feared that the women from upper caste and wealthy sections would oppose the reserved category women and would not like the surge in the number of women representatives from weaker sections to local government bodies in Tamil Nadu. There are about thirty types of discrimination and unsolicited practices of untouchability against Dalits in the four villages he chose to study. According to him, Dalit women panchayat leaders were not permitted to visit the gram panchayat office nor manage and control the gram Sabhas. Their husbands were managing office work as proxies. In the district of Agra, Uttar Pradesh, women have been on the sidelines due to various factors such as illiteracy, proxy candidature, low status of women in family and society, poverty, etc. In addition, the issue of caste-based violations of human rights continues to exist, resulting in the exploitation of Dalits, specifically in rural India. Several such problems exist; it is the duty of the citizens to progress and adopt a more progressive approach towards women. These issues can be removed when we accept women empowerment and change the traditional path of thinking.

## **Conclusion**

The institution of Panchayat Raj is a milestone in the journey of administrative institutions at the grass-root level. Panchayats have played a notable role in the development of the rural areas in India. The system of Panchayati Raj has faced several hurdles that have been addressed above. However, it is high time that specific corrective action should be taken to ensure a truly representative form of governance. These issues can be combated, but it requires cooperation by the people to accept these changes. The still prevailing traditional thought system must be slowly eradicated for people to understand the meaning of this system truly. Primarily, there should be recognition of the issue that prevails in society. There must be aware of the intricacy of the problems faced; further publicity and its acknowledgement in parliament during the question hour can be considered. Funding must be adequate in order to run these institutions effectively and smoothly. There must also be accountability at all administrative levels in order to hold corrupt officials responsible.

In addition, in various states in India, PRIs is viewed as a platform to provide social justice through the mechanism of dispute resolution, making it accessible, cost-effective, participatory. The dispute resolution function of PRIs is a part of the constitutional directive to make justice accessible to everyone. It mitigates the burden on the judiciary and provides faster access to justice. Furthermore, dispute resolution forums have also been initiated at the various levels of panchayat that function under the jurisdiction of the Panchayats. Also, the focus must be on the training and development of human resources to eliminate any conceptual inconsistency. Women's role in the panchayat

must be recognised and not taken over by the male family members; the reason for implementing the reservation policy would truly be a failure. Instead, they need to work towards elevating the overall participation of the community. Hence, there is a need for specific reformation in the policies and laws to truly achieve the people's participation in this system of governance.

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## Progress And Achievements of Rural Women In India

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### ABSTRACT

Rural women in India have made significant achievements in various areas, serving as the backbone of agricultural activities. They actively participate in crop cultivation, animal husbandry, and allied agricultural endeavors, leading to increased productivity and improved food security. Self-help groups (SHGs) have played a vital role in empowering rural women by providing them with a platform for saving money, accessing credit, and engaging in income-generating activities, fostering financial independence and entrepreneurial skills. These women have shown remarkable entrepreneurial spirit, establishing successful businesses in sectors such as handicrafts, textiles, food processing, and small-scale industries, contributing to income generation and employment opportunities in rural areas. Access to education has also improved for rural girls through government initiatives, leading to enhanced literacy, informed decision-making, and community development. Rural women actively participate in improving health and sanitation, engaging in government health programs, promoting hygiene practices, and disseminating health-related information, resulting in increased healthcare awareness, reduced maternal and infant mortality rates, and improved sanitation facilities.

Positive developments have been witnessed in the political participation of rural women through the reservation of seats in local self-government institutions, enabling them to engage in decision-making processes and advocate for rural community welfare. They have been at the forefront of grassroots activism and social initiatives, initiating community-driven programs addressing education, health, sanitation, environment, and women's rights, leading to positive changes and empowered communities. Government schemes and programs specifically targeting rural women's empowerment, such as the National Rural Livelihood Mission, Mahila Kisan SashaktikaranPariyojana, and Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, have contributed to enhancing the socio-economic status of rural women, providing skill development opportunities, and promoting gender equality. These achievements underscore the resilience, determination, and invaluable contributions of rural women to India's development.

However, despite their significant progress and contributions, rural women still face challenges that need to be addressed for comprehensive and sustainable development. By addressing these challenges, India can further empower rural women and ensure inclusive growth for all.

### Introduction

*"I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved."*  
- Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

Rural women are pivotal agents in driving the transformative economic, environmental, and social changes necessary for sustainable development. Empowering them is not only crucial for the welfare of individual families and rural communities, but also for overall economic productivity, given the substantial presence of women in the global agricultural workforce. With their unwavering dedication to fulfilling multiple roles each day, women undeniably form the bedrock of any society.

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The vision of a new India places great importance on rural regions, recognizing their immense potential to accelerate economic progress. Recent initiatives targeting the well-being of rural women reflect a core objective of achieving self-reliance and self-sufficiency for the nation. These measures have opened pathways for improved access to education, productive resources, capacity building, skill development, healthcare services, and diverse livelihood opportunities. They have transformed the rural ecosystem and facilitated the socio-economic empowerment of women in India.

Rural women assume a vital role in the development and sustainability of rural communities worldwide. Often serving as the linchpin of agricultural production, food security, and economic growth in rural areas, their contributions are indispensable. Over the years, significant strides have been made in empowering rural women and enhancing their overall welfare. Nonetheless, numerous challenges persist, impeding the realization of their full potential. This essay will delve into the accomplishments of rural women and shed light on the enduring obstacles they confront.

### **Progress and Achievements of Rural Women in India**

Rural women in India have made remarkable strides across various domains, contributing significantly to the holistic development of rural communities. Here are noteworthy achievements of rural women in India:

1. **Education and Literacy:** Access to education has witnessed substantial improvement for rural women, equipping them with knowledge and skills to enhance their lives. Government initiatives and non-governmental organizations have diligently worked towards increasing school enrollment rates among rural girls, resulting in a significant rise in literacy and educational opportunities for rural women.
2. **Economic Empowerment:** Rural women have exhibited tremendous progress in economic empowerment. Microfinance programs and skill development initiatives have opened doors for them to establish their own businesses and generate sustainable income. This newfound economic independence has played a pivotal role in poverty reduction and household stability.
3. **Agricultural Productivity:** Rural women are pivotal contributors to agricultural production. Enhanced access to technology, training, and resources has bolstered their productivity and efficiency. Mechanization and the adoption of modern farming techniques have alleviated their physical workload while amplifying agricultural output.
4. **Health and Nutrition:** Efforts have been dedicated to improving the health and nutrition of rural women. Increased accessibility to healthcare services, immunization programs, and maternal healthcare facilities has resulted in a notable reduction in maternal and child mortality rates. Educational campaigns focusing on nutrition and hygiene have positively impacted rural communities.
5. **Political Participation:** Rural women's active involvement in politics has witnessed remarkable growth, affording them a voice in decision-making processes. Quota systems and affirmative action policies have been instrumental in promoting their representation in local governments, fostering a more inclusive and equitable governance structure.
6. **Agriculture and Farming:** Rural women serve as the backbone of agricultural activities in India. They actively engage in crop cultivation, animal husbandry, and allied agricultural endeavors. Their expertise and hard work have significantly contributed to heightened agricultural productivity and improved food security in rural areas.

7. **Self-Help Groups (SHGs):** Self-help groups have played a vital role in empowering rural women across India. These groups provide a platform for women to unite, save money, access credit, and engage in income-generating activities. Through SHGs, rural women have attained financial independence, improved their livelihoods, and cultivated entrepreneurial skills.
8. **Women Entrepreneurs:** Rural women in India have showcased exceptional entrepreneurial spirit. They have successfully established and managed businesses in diverse sectors such as handicrafts, textiles, food processing, and small-scale industries. These women-led enterprises have not only generated income but also created employment opportunities within rural areas.
9. **Education and Literacy:** Access to education has witnessed remarkable improvement for rural girls in India, owing to various government initiatives and awareness campaigns. As a result, a greater number of rural women are receiving formal education, acquiring literacy skills, and pursuing higher studies. Education has empowered them to make informed choices, develop critical thinking skills, and contribute to the development of their communities.
10. **Health and Sanitation:** Rural women have played an instrumental role in advancing health and sanitation within their communities. Actively participating in government health programs, disseminating health-related information, and promoting hygiene practices, their efforts have led to heightened healthcare awareness, reduced maternal and infant mortality rates, and improved sanitation facilities in rural areas.
11. **Political Participation:** Rural women's political engagement has witnessed positive developments in India. The reservation of seats for women in local self-government institutions, known as Panchayati Raj, has facilitated increased representation and participation. Women have actively contributed to decision-making processes, addressing community concerns, and advocating for the welfare of rural communities.
12. **Grassroots Activism and Social Initiatives:** Rural women have emerged as leaders in grassroots activism and social initiatives. Initiating community-driven programs focusing on education, health, sanitation, environment, and women's rights.

India, a land of immense diversity, exhibits a stark rural-urban divide, which manifests in distinct challenges faced by women. While women across the country encounter discrimination and inequality, the struggles experienced by urban and rural women differ significantly. Rural women bear the brunt of acute poverty, compounded by their heavy reliance on agriculture and limited access to land rights. This combination hampers their economic productivity. Although rural women have higher workforce participation rates than their urban counterparts, the majority find themselves in low-income jobs within the unorganized sector, agriculture, or allied activities. Within the agricultural sector itself, women play a vital role, comprising nearly 70 percent of the total workforce. Regrettably, their contributions often go unrecognized, and their work remains predominantly manual and devoid of mechanization. This raises the question: why aren't rural women transitioning into more productive sectors of the economy? The answer lies in the dearth of work opportunities available to them beyond agriculture. Without significant strides in economic empowerment, the long-awaited social and political empowerment of rural women will remain elusive. It is imperative that concerted efforts be made to address these challenges. Enhancing economic opportunities for rural women, expanding their access to education and skill development programs, and creating an enabling environment for their participation in diverse economic activities are essential steps toward empowering them. By dismantling barriers and fostering inclusivity, we can ensure that rural women become key drivers of

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progress, unlocking their full potential for the betterment of themselves and their communities.

### **Challenges Faced by Rural Women in India**

1. **Low Literacy Rates:** The inadequate level of education among rural women stands as a significant hurdle, impeding their participation in developmental activities. Illiteracy restricts their involvement in decision-making processes, both at the family and village levels. Census data from 2011 reveals the vulnerable state of women's education, with rural women exhibiting lower literacy rates compared to their urban counterparts. Furthermore, limited accessibility to digital literacy compounds their vulnerability to discrimination. To address this issue, the government has launched initiatives like the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Abhiyan, a comprehensive campaign aimed at transforming societal attitudes towards girl's education. Additionally, the Ministry of Women and Child Development has established Mahila Shakti Kendras (MSK) to promote digital literacy at the gram panchayat level.
2. **Lack of Skills:** Rural women predominantly engage in agriculture and household enterprises, resulting in minimal participation in skill training programs. Consequently, they have limited opportunities in sectors such as construction, trade, and transportation. The Deendayal Upadhyaya Antyodaya Yojana—Ajeevika, initiated by the Government of India, addresses this issue through two noteworthy components. Firstly, the Deendayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushal Yojana aims to skill impoverished rural youths, with one-third of the beneficiaries being women. Secondly, the Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Yojana focuses on improving the status of women in agriculture and expanding empowerment opportunities.
3. **Limited Accessibility and Support:** Rural women face challenges regarding credit access, extension services, and land inheritance rights, which confine them to agricultural labor with meager subsistence wages. Moreover, there is a lack of linkages between farm and non-farm activities, resulting in limited involvement of women in agriculture-related initiatives. The government has taken steps to address these issues by promoting the formation of women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs) under the National Rural Livelihood Program (NRLM), providing formal credit facilities. Additionally, the Ministry of Women and Child Development established Rashtriya Mahila Kosh, a fund that offers hassle-free micro-credit to women in the informal sector. To enhance market accessibility for women entrepreneurs, the government launched Mahila e-Haat, a digital marketing portal.
4. **Lack of Convergence of Schemes:** The presence of numerous women-centric schemes scattered across various ministries hinders comprehensive development efforts and optimal resource utilization. The Mission for Protection and Empowerment of Women is a step towards converging these schemes, ensuring equal access to healthcare, quality education, vocational guidance, social security, and digital literacy at the gram panchayat level.
5. **Vulnerability to Climate Change:** Rural women are disproportionately affected by climate change, facing distinct challenges due to their heavy reliance on natural resources for livelihoods. Initiatives like the Pradhan Mantri Ujjawala Yojana, which provides free LPG connections to rural women, contribute to reducing their vulnerability by creating smokeless kitchens and improving their overall health.
6. **Gender Inequality:** Deep-rooted gender norms and cultural barriers perpetuate gender inequality, limiting the progress of rural women. Discrimination in resource access, land ownership, and inheritance rights pose significant challenges, while limited control over productive assets and decision-making power restricts their economic and social advancement.

7. Limited Access to Services: Rural women face difficulties accessing essential services such as healthcare, education, clean water, and sanitation. Geographical remoteness, inadequate infrastructure, and transportation issues compound their challenges, further underscoring the need to improve service accessibility.
8. Violence and Exploitation: Rural women are particularly vulnerable to various forms of violence, including domestic abuse, sexual harassment.

**Conclusion:** The challenges confronting rural women in India necessitate the implementation of multifaceted strategies. Primarily, the promotion of gender parity and the protection of women's rights through fortified legal frameworks and robust awareness campaigns are imperative. Enhancing access to high-quality education and tailor-made vocational training programs specifically designed for rural women will bolster their skill sets and enhance their prospects. Facilitating economic empowerment entails ensuring greater financial inclusion, improved credit accessibility, and targeted support for women entrepreneurs. Furthermore, guaranteeing enhanced healthcare services, comprehensive health education, and robust social support systems are vital for their overall well-being. Augmenting political participation and representation, coupled with expanded access to technology and information, will provide rural women with avenues for empowerment. Collaboration among stakeholders and forging partnerships between governmental bodies, non-governmental organizations, and community-based groups will be instrumental in effectively addressing these challenges. Through the implementation of comprehensive strategies, India can foster the empowerment and advancement of rural women, thereby creating more inclusive and equitable rural communities. It is essential to recognize that the empowerment of women is an ongoing process, particularly considering India's historical backdrop of gender discrimination. The government acknowledges the necessity for a multidimensional battle against the prevailing gender inequality in rural Indian society. The recently introduced National Policy for Women in 2016 acknowledges the myriad issues faced by women and strives to work towards the specific development of rural women. However, it is vital to move beyond policy documentation and program frameworks as the real challenge lies in their successful implementation. To achieve holistic empowerment for rural women, it is crucial to ensure the convergence of all women-related schemes through a unified approach. It is important to note that diversity exists even among rural women, with challenges varying for women belonging to different socio-economic backgrounds and marginalized groups. Therefore, a one-size-fits-all approach cannot serve as a panacea. It is crucial to understand that women's empowerment is not a discretionary undertaking but an urgent necessity. In fact, the first year of the new millennium, 2001, was declared the "Women Empowerment Year" precisely because empowering half of our population is not only vital for individual and familial well-being but also for the economic productivity of the nation.

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## Resilient Heroines: Portrayal of Strong Female Characters In 21<sup>st</sup> Century Telugu Cinema

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### Abstract:

This paper examines the portrayal of strong female characters in 21st century Telugu cinema, focusing on their resilience and impact on storytelling. The analysis encompasses a range of films, including blockbusters and critically acclaimed works, that have contributed to the representation of powerful women in the industry. By exploring the characterizations, motivations, and journeys of these heroines, the study aims to shed light on the evolving role of women in Indian cinema and their influence on societal perceptions. The paper employs a qualitative approach, drawing on textual analysis and contextual interpretation to highlight the multifaceted nature of these characters. Themes such as agency, leadership, balancing responsibilities, and breaking stereotypes are explored to understand how these heroines defy traditional norms and embody strength and determination. The findings underscore the significance of these portrayals in empowering women, inspiring audiences, and shaping the narrative landscape of Telugu cinema. The research contributes to the growing body of literature on gender representation in Indian cinema and offers insights into the evolving dynamics of female characters in the entertainment industry.

**Key words:** Strong female characters, Telugu Cinema, gender

### Introduction:

The Telugu film industry in the 21st century has given rise to remarkable female characters who are revered not only for their looks, charm, and beauty but also for their unwavering strength and resolute attitudes. These characters have garnered an immense fan following and acceptance from the audience, breaking the mold set by conventional Telugu cinema and paving the way for a new generation of heroines who captivate viewers with their commanding screen presence. While other Indian film industries often portray women as mere objects of beauty and symbols of love, Telugu cinema has presented unforgettable, strong-willed female characters that have left a lasting impact on the audience.

With the phenomenal success of the movie RRR, Telugu cinema has achieved global recognition in recent years. As a regional film industry with a global perspective, the expectations of the audience towards Telugu cinema have risen, demanding the creation of characters who are not only strong and powerful but also possess depth. The journey of Telugu cinema dates back to the 1940s, when creativity and technical excellence have always been integral to its identity. Even timeless classics like Maya Bazaar (1950) are still praised today for their remarkable technical effects and captivating storytelling. Telugu cinema has consistently maintained high standards in terms of production quality, entertainment, and engaging storylines. From its early days, Telugu cinema has showcased strong women characters, even during times when religious plays and male-dominated plots were prevalent. Although instances of inequality and injustice towards female characters have existed, the Telugu cinema industry has continuously strived to develop robust female characters. In fact, women who watch these movies often find inspiration in terms of fashion, language, personality, and decision-making.

**Resilient heroines of 21<sup>st</sup> century Telugu Cinema:** In the 21st century, Telugu cinema has seen the emergence of several powerful and memorable female characters. These characters

have broken stereotypes, challenged societal norms, and brought depth and complexity to the narratives. Through a comprehensive analysis of various films from the 21st century, the paper highlights the diverse range of female characters portrayed on screen. These characters embody intelligence, determination, compassion, and the ability to navigate complex situations. They are not mere support systems for male protagonists but independent individuals with their own goals, dreams, and struggles. Here are some great women characterisations of 21<sup>st</sup> century that has created everlasting impact on audience:

### **The Powerhouses of Telugu Cinema:**

In the realm of 21st century Telugu cinema, the portrayal of resilient female leads who skilfully balance state affairs and family matters has been consistently remarkable. Sivagami, portrayed by Ramya Krishnan in the film “Baahubali,” serves as a prime illustration of a powerful woman who gracefully handles her responsibilities, embraces love, nurtures her family, and exudes immense dignity, loyalty, and respect.

Arundathi stands as a flawless embodiment of royalty and courage, serving as a shining example. This young and enchanting girl, cherished by her family, undergoes a remarkable transformation into a formidable warrior, determined to rescue her abducted people from the villainous Pasupathi, an Agora. Even after 14 years, the film remains unforgettable for its portrayal of the character Arundathi, leaving a lasting impression.

Tamannaah’s portrayal of Lakshmi in “Syeraa Narasimha Reddy” showcases yet another impactful character. Lakshmi, who is captured by the British as a means to apprehend Narasimha Reddy, demonstrates immense strength as she valiantly preserves her dignity. In a daring act, she sacrifices herself by setting fire to the explosives using her saree, reducing the entire troop to ashes. This powerful sequence remains etched in the memory of viewers, highlighting the remarkable portrayal of Lakshmi by Tamannaah.

In the film “Bheemla Nayak,” Nitya Menon’s portrayal of Suguna defies conventional notions of a housewife, showcasing a unique blend of confidence, humor, magnanimity, and determination. This character embodies a perfect balance of these qualities, breaking stereotypes and presenting a refreshing and resilient perspective.

“Kousalya Krishnamurthy” is a Telugu film that revolves around the story of Kousalya, a young woman passionate about cricket. Despite facing societal challenges and gender stereotypes, Kousalya pursues her dreams of becoming a professional cricketer. The film beautifully showcases her journey, highlighting her perseverance, dedication, and love for the sport. Kousalya Krishnamurthy serves as an inspiring example of a female protagonist breaking barriers and excelling in a male-dominated field.

### **Supportive Partners:**

Samantha’s portrayal of Sravani in “Majili” is widely acclaimed and celebrated for her exceptional performance in portraying the intricate emotions of love, responsibility, and dignity within a relationship. While Sravani may initially appear as a conventional and traditional housewife, her character transcends societal norms, representing the universal emotions experienced by individuals in love, regardless of their gender, race, or creed. Samantha’s depiction of Sravani beautifully captures the essence of these emotions, resonating with audiences and earning high praise.

The character of Sarah in “Jersey” is brilliantly crafted, showcasing her remarkable maturity in maintaining a balance between her relationship and raising a child. Sarah’s character is portrayed with finesse, highlighting her ability to navigate the complexities of her personal life while fulfilling

her responsibilities as a mother. Her portrayal resonates with viewers, showcasing the strength and grace with which she handles the challenges that come her way.

Rama Lakshmi, portrayed by Samantha Akkineni, is a significant character in the film "Rangasthalam. Rama Lakshmi is portrayed as a strong-willed and independent woman. She is confident, outspoken, and has a compassionate heart. She evolves from a carefree village girl to a mature woman who understands the importance of fighting for justice and equality.

In the movie "Dhruva," the character of Ishika plays a crucial role in providing unwavering emotional support to Dhruva throughout his journey. She is depicted as an equally intelligent, balanced, thought-provoking, and resourceful individual. Her presence in the film adds depth and complexity to the narrative, highlighting the importance of a strong and supportive partner in times of adversity.

Independent and ambitious young women:

In the movie "PelliChoopulu," the character of Chaitra, portrayed by Ritu Varma, is a significant and engaging presence. Chaitra is depicted as an independent, ambitious, and modern young woman. She aspires to pursue her own career and dreams, rather than conforming to societal expectations or traditional gender roles. Her character challenges stereotypes and showcases the determination and drive to carve her own path in life.

Keerthy Suresh, in Miss World, plays the lead role of Samyuktha, a young woman with entrepreneurial aspirations. The film follows her journey as she establishes her own tea business and faces various challenges in a male-dominated industry. The character resonates with many young ambitious women who are not supported by the family and fight alone in the society chasing their dreams.

In the film "Chi La Sow," Anjali, portrayed by Ruhani Sharma, is a pivotal character who brings a refreshing perspective to the story. She is a strong-willed, independent woman who challenges societal norms and expectations. She is not interested in conforming to traditional notions of marriage and instead seeks a partner who understands and respects her ambitions.

In the film "Godavari," Seeta, portrayed by Kamalinee Mukherjee, is a significant character with a nuanced and impactful role. The notable aspects of Seeta's character are her journey of self-discovery and breaking free from societal expectations. She challenges the norms and restrictions imposed upon her, demonstrating her independence and embracing her desires and dreams.

### **Action Heroines:**

In the epic film "Baahubali: The Beginning" and its sequel "Baahubali: The Conclusion," Tamannaah Bhatia played the role of Avanthika. Avanthika is introduced as a fearless and skilled warrior belonging to a rebel group called the Kuntala kingdom. She is determined to avenge the injustice done to her people by the tyrannical ruler Bhallaladeva. Avanthika's character is marked by her strong will, bravery, and unwavering dedication to her cause.

In the Telugu film "Rudhramadevi," Rudrama Devi, portrayed by Anushka Shetty, is a central character based on the real historical figure of Queen Rudrama Devi, who ruled the Kakatiya dynasty in the 13th century. Rudrama Devi's character is portrayed with strength, determination, and a deep sense of duty towards her kingdom. Throughout the film, Rudrama Devi's character grapples with personal conflicts and emotional struggles. She yearns for acceptance and faces challenges related to her gender identity. Her determination to prove herself and earn the respect of her people and the nobility becomes a driving force in her character arc.

In Samantha's movie "Yashoda," it is an action-packed film that sensitively explores the topic of surrogacy. Yashoda, a pregnant woman, bravely confronts a host of adversaries, not only to protect her sister but also to champion the cause of numerous women. The movie combines thrilling action with a poignant exploration of evil deeds done on the name of surrogacy.

### **Mother Figures:**

Mother figures in Telugu cinema play significant roles in shaping the narrative and impacting the lives of the characters around them. They often embody love, sacrifice, wisdom, and guidance, serving as pillars of strength and support.

In the film "Ala Modalaindi," Gautham's mother is a significant character who contributes to the narrative and adds depth to the story. Gautham's mother is portrayed as a caring and supportive figure in his life. She is depicted as a strong, independent woman who is dedicated to her family and their well-being. One of the notable aspects of Gautham's mother's character is her wisdom and guidance.

Rajyalakshmi in "Aa Naluguru" - Rajyalakshmi is a compassionate and selfless mother who instills values of kindness and humanity in her children. Her character in the film depicts the inner conflict faced by a mother as she is torn between the choices of prioritizing her children or her husband.

Basi Reddy's wife in 'AravindaSamestha' is depicted as a loving and devoted wife who stands by her husband through thick and thin. She showcases unwavering loyalty and dedication towards her family, particularly her husband. The tragic loss of her son pushes her to the breaking point, causing her to question her husband, Basi Reddy, and the circumstances surrounding their family. Furthermore, her character showcases the importance of unity and peace. Beyond all the bad that happened in her family, she stands with Veera Raghava Reddy to establish the lost peace in the village.

### **The Struggling Women:**

The struggling women of Telugu cinema portray characters who face various challenges and adversities in their lives. These characters represent the resilience, determination, and strength that women possess in the face of difficult circumstances.

Saroja, portrayed by Anushka Shetty in the movie "Vedam," is a significant character whose story highlights the struggles and resilience of marginalized women in society. Throughout the film, Saroja faces numerous challenges and societal stigma associated with her line of work. However, she maintains her dignity and remains unwavering in her pursuit of a better future. Her character brings attention to the hardships faced by sex workers and the prejudice they encounter.

In the film "Size Zero," Sweetie, played by Anushka Shetty, faces several problems related to body image and societal expectations. Sweetie is subjected to body shaming from various people, including her own family and society at large. She struggles with low self-esteem and a deep desire to conform to societal beauty standards. The film explores Sweetie's journey towards realizing that true happiness and self-worth come from embracing oneself and challenging beauty standards.

In the movie "Vakeel Saab," the portrayal of women characters is significant and multifaceted, highlighting their strength, resilience, and agency. The sensitive topics like molestation, rape, social injustice, gender attitudes and prejudices towards women are empathetically determined. Vemula Pallavi, Zareena and Divya Nayak stand as the exemplary figures for the problems faced by women in various places.

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**Conclusion:**

In conclusion, the paper “Resilient Heroines: Portrayal of Strong Female Characters in 21st Century Telugu Cinema” has examined the powerful and impactful representation of women in Telugu cinema. Through an analysis of various films, it becomes evident that the portrayal of strong female characters in these movies has been a remarkable and significant development in the industry. The paper has highlighted the diverse range of female characters who have defied conventional norms and expectations. These characters exhibit resilience, determination, intelligence, and agency, effectively challenging societal stereotypes and gender roles. They are not merely passive recipients of their circumstances but active participants in shaping their own destinies. The portrayal of strong female characters in 21st-century Telugu cinema has been a significant step towards gender inclusivity and equality. These characters have shattered stereotypes, showcased the strength of women, and contributed to a more progressive and inclusive cinematic landscape. As Telugu cinema continues to evolve, it is evident that the representation of resilient heroines will continue to play a vital role in shaping the industry and inspiring generations to come.

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## Women Pioneers of Progress: In Post Independent India

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### Abstract:

Indian history is full of women pioneers, who reached the heights of progress despite of many odds. The post independent India has facilitated women to come out from the traditional barriers and provided equal status with men. Many women have taken the opportunity reached the ideal point in their chosen fields. So this highlights the achievements of first woman in India, in various fields. At the moment 75 years it is apt to memorize their efforts which made the nation proud.

### Introduction:

According to Indian culture, a woman is believed to be a superpower. This superpower has earned a lot for our country and has been a pioneer in all revolutions in the past. Although traditional roles of women in India were limited to household, they played a major role in the upliftment of society. In the past, women have created leaders like Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Some of the leaders like Rani Lakshmi Bai have also defended our country and set an example for others to follow. Be it any field, from politics to space, Indian women have set records and left a benchmark for others to follow. However, some women have created history by being the first ones to achieve certain records and heights in various fields. We have listed below some of the First women in All Fields in India. You can go through the list and get inspired by these women.

### Pratibha Patil (First Women President of India)

India's 12th President took oath on July 25, 2007, and created history by becoming India's first Women President. Also, a member of the Indian National Congress, Pratibha Devisingh Patil, was nominated by United Progressive Alliance. She is even popular for being the first woman Governor of Rajasthan and she was also a lawyer.

Pratibha Patil was closely associated with the Gandhi family, which made her Sonia Gandhi's favorite which aided in bringing her name forward for the post of President in 2007. She took the position in 2007 and continued for five years before Pranab Mukherjee took command.

In 1962, at the age of 27, she was elected to the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly for the Jalgaon constituency. After that she won in the Muktainagar (formerly Edlabad) constituency on four consecutive occasions between 1967 and 1985, before becoming a Member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha between 1985 and 1990. In the 1991 elections for the 10th Lok Sabha, she was elected as a Member of Parliament representing the Amravati constituency. A period of retirement from politics followed later in the decade.

Patil had held various Cabinet portfolios during her period in the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly and held official positions in both the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha. In addition, she had been the president of the Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee for a few years. Also, she held office as Director of the National Federation of Urban Co-operative Banks and Credit Societies and as a Member of the Governing Council of the National Co-operative Union of India.

On 8 November 2004 she was appointed the 17th Governor of Rajasthan, the first woman to hold that office'

Patil set up Vidya Bharati ShikshanPrasarak Mandal, an educational institute which runs a chain of schools and colleges in Amravati, Jalgaon, Pune and Mumbai. She also set up Shram Sadhana Trust, which runs hostels for working women in New Delhi, Mumbai and Pune; and an engineering college for rural students in Jalgaon district. She also co-founded a cooperative sugar factory known as Sant MuktabaiSahakariSakharKarkhana at Muktainagar.

In addition, Patil founded a cooperative bank, Pratibha MahilaSahakari Bank, that ceased trading in February 2003 when its licence was cancelled by the Reserve Bank of India. Among other failings, the bank had given illegal loans to her relatives that exceeded the bank's share capital. It had also given a loan to her sugar mill which was never repaid. The bank waived these loans, and this drove it into liquidation. The government liquidator of the bank, P. D. Nigam, said, "The fact that relatives of the founder chairperson (Pratibha Patil) were among those indiscriminately granted loans and that some illegal loan waivers were done has come up in our audit." Six of the top ten defaulters in the bank were linked to her relatives. The INC claimed that Patil had not been involved with the bank since 1994 but The Indian Express reported that it had official documents showing her involvement as late as 2002.

### **Indira Gandhi (First Woman Prime Minister, First Bharat Ratna Winner)**

She was the first woman Prime Minister of the country and served for three consecutive terms, and was assassinated during the fourth term, which started in 1980. Gandhi played a major role in the freedom struggle as she led the formation of 'Baal Chakra Sangh' and 'VanarSena' to get assistance from the children at the time of the Non-Cooperation Movement.

From 1964 to 1966, she held the position of the Minister of Information and Broadcasting. Afterward, from January 1966 onwards, she became the Prime of India. During this time, she was also the Minister of Atomic energy. Additionally, she is associated with many organizations, such as Kasturba Gandhi Memorial Trust.

Gandhi's first eleven years serving as prime minister saw her evolve from the perception of Congress party leaders as their puppet, to a strong leader with the iron resolve to split the party over her policy positions, or to go to war with Pakistan to assist Bangladesh in the 1971 liberation war. At the end of 1977, she was such a dominating figure in Indian politics that Congress party president D. K. Barooah had coined the phrase "India is Indira and Indira is India."

Her domestic initiatives did not necessarily reflect favourably on Indian women. Gandhi did not make a special effort to appoint women to cabinet positions. She did not appoint any women to full cabinet rank during her terms in office. Yet despite this, many women saw Gandhi as a symbol for feminism and an image of women's power

**Sarojini Naidu (First Woman Governor)** Civil Rights, anti-imperialistic ideas, and women's emancipation are some of the important issues that Naidu works for. She is a poet and political activist who is popular for her contribution to India's freedom struggle. Her poems were so impressive that Mahatma Gandhi called her the 'Bharat Kokila'. She was also given the title of 'the Nightingale of India'.

Sarojini Naidu was born in Hyderabad. She belongs to a Bengali Family and was fond on poems. She found her interest in the Indian National Congress' movement for independence. After which, she joined the Indian Nationalist movement as she was inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's idea of Swaraj.

### **Meet Anna Rajam Malhotra, India's 1st Woman IAS Officer**

Anna Rajam Malhotra was the first Indian woman IAS officer post-independence. From 1951 to 2018, Anna Malhotra served in the state of Madras under chief minister C Rajagopalachari. She worked on numerous initiatives throughout her lengthy and fruitful career, eventually joining Rajiv Gandhi's team for the 1982 Asian Games.

In 1951, after passing her civil service written examinations, she received a call for an interview. The discussion turned out to be just the beginning of the many issues she would later face as a woman in a male-dominated field. The interview panel had asked Anna to choose the foreign or central services because they were "more appropriate" for women. But she persisted and joined the Madras cadre of the civil service.

### **Kiran Bedi (First Woman IPS Officer of India)**

Kiran Bedi is a popular woman and a role model for many young girls in India. 'The first woman Indian Police Service Officer' title is earned by her. United Nations Civil Police Adviser is the position held by Bedi in 2003, and she was the first Indian to do so. Moreover, she is also a social activist and tennis player. From May 28, 2016, onwards, she held the office of the Governor of Puducherry till February 16, 2021. Navjyoti and the Indian Vision Foundation are founded by Bedi to promote adult literacy, counseling for women, primary education, and vocational training for women. Bedi is a true inspiration for young women in India. As a tennis player, she has also won many Asian Championships.

### **Chonira Belliappa Muthamma India's 1st Woman IFS Officer 1949**

For many Indian women, and particularly those of us who have served, or serve, in the Indian Foreign Service (IFS), the life of ambassador Chonira Belliappa Muthamma, or "Muthu" as she was affectionately known, is legend.

Muthamma was born on January 24, 1924 in Virajpet, Karnataka. Her father, who was a forest officer, died when she was too young. Nonetheless, her journey is an inspiration for many, how she courageously fought for her rights and ensured she got what she truly deserved. She is majorly remembered for her successful and effective efforts for gender equality in the Indian Civil Services.

### **Sucheta Kriplani (First Indian Woman Chief Minister of a State)**

Holding the office of the CM of Uttar Pradesh from 1963 to 1967, Sucheta Kriplani became the first Indian Woman Chief Minister of a State. She was also associated with the Indian Freedom Struggle and Politics. The state employees started a 62-day long strike during her reign; handling this situation was one of her greatest achievements.

**Rajkumari Amrit Kaur (First Health Minister of India)** A popular activist and politician in India, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur's full name was Dame Rajkumari Bibiji Amrit Kaur. Despite being belonging to a noble family, Kaur left her comforts to take up social welfare activities. Holding the office of Health Minister of India in 1947, she became the first Indian woman to do so. Holding this position, she came to be known as the First Woman Cabinet Minister of India. Apart from these achievements, she was a popular personality in the Independence of India.

### **Meera Sahib Fatima Bibi (First Woman Supreme Court Judge of India)**

Born on April 30, 1927, Bibi was the first woman to attend the higher judiciary and become Supreme court Justice in India. A former Supreme Court Judge and a member of the National Human Rights Commission of India, Justice Fatima Bibi is the first Indian woman to be a Supreme Court Judge. Another position that glorified her success was that of the Governor of Tamil Nadu. While attending



law school, there were only five women in her class, and this number later dropped down to three. However, Fatima was self-motivated and went on to give the Bar Council of India Exams, which she topped.

### **Nirja Bhanot (First Woman who got Ashoka Chakra)**

Neerja Bhanot became the first woman to have been awarded the Ashoka Chakra for bravery during a plane hijack. She died while saving the lives of the passengers of Pan Am Flight 73. She lost her life just two days before her 23rd birthday in 1968. She is the youngest recipient of the Ashoka Chakra, awarded to her posthumously. In addition, there are several accolades in her name received from the United States government and Pakistan government. Inspired by her heroism, Ram Madhvani has directed the 2016 film 'Neerja', which is her biopic depicting her life and the incident.

### **Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit (First Indian Woman Ambassador at United Nations)**

A diplomat and politician in India, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit hailed from a political family which was prominent in India. 'First Indian woman Ambassador to the United Nations' is the title credited to her. Pandit was also the 6th Governor of Maharashtra. She was the sister of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and as the most important diplomat of India, she was sent to London. This happened after she served as Nehru in the Soviet Union.

Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit (18 August 1900 – 1 December 1990) was an Indian freedom fighter, diplomat and politician. She served as the 8th President of the United Nations General Assembly from 1953 to 1954, the first woman appointed to either post. She was also the 6th Governor of Maharashtra from 1962 to 1964. Noted for her participation in the Indian independence movement, she was jailed several times during the movement.

In India, she served as Governor of Maharashtra from 1962 to 1964. She returned as a member of parliament for 1964 to 1968 with her election victory in Phulpur. Pandit was a harsh critic of Indira Gandhi's years as Prime Minister especially after Indira had declared the emergency in 1975.

Pandit retired from active politics after relations between them soured. On retiring, she moved to Dehradun in the Doon Valley in the Himalayan foothills. She came out of retirement in 1977 to campaign against Indira Gandhi and helped the Janata Party win the 1977 election. She was reported to have considered running for the presidency, but Neelam Sanjiva Reddy eventually ran and won the election unopposed.

In 1979, she was appointed the Indian representative to the UN Human Rights Commission, after which she retired from public life. Her writings include *The Evolution of India* (1958) and *The Scope of Happiness: A Personal Memoir* (1979).

### **Meira Kumar first woman speaker of Lok Sabha**

Meira Kumar made history in the Lok Sabha when she was unanimously elected its Speaker and thus became the first woman to occupy one of the high Constitutional posts.

Meira Kumar, (born March 31, 1945, Patna [now in Bihar state], India), Indian diplomat, politician, and government official who served as speaker of the Lok Sabha (lower chamber of the Indian parliament) from 2009 to 2014, the first woman to hold that position.

Her father, Jagjivan Ram, was prominent in the Indian independence movement and was a longtime crusader for social justice. He served in the union government as minister of defense from 1977 to 1979 and deputy prime minister briefly in 1979. Her mother, Indrani Devi, also was an advocate of independence and was a social worker.

In 1973 Kumar entered the Indian Foreign Service, where she served for more than a decade. After postings to Madrid and London, she decided in 1985 to enter politics, encouraged by her father and by Rajiv Gandhi, then prime minister of India. She ran in a by-election for a seat in the Lok Sabha from a constituency in Uttar Pradesh state, defeating two other Dalit candidates—one of whom, Kumari Mayawati, would later become the first woman Dalit chief minister of an Indian state.

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## Achivements And Challenges To Women In Education

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### ABSTRACT

Education is a purposeful activity directed at achieving certain aims, such as transmitting knowledge or fostering skills and character traits. These aims may include the development of understanding, rationality, kindness, and honesty. Various researchers emphasize the role of critical thinking in order to distinguish education from indoctrination. Some theorists require that education results in an improvement of the student while others prefer a value-neutral definition of the term. The methodology of teaching is called pedagogy. Education is supported by a variety of different philosophies, theories and empirical research agendas. There are movements for education reforms, such as for improving quality and efficiency of education towards relevance in students' lives and efficient problem solving in modern or future society at large, or for evidence-based education methodologies. A right to education has been recognized by some governments and the United Nations. The ancient education focused on imparting ethics like humility, truthfulness, discipline, self-reliance, and respecting all creations to the students. The education was mostly imparted in ashrams, gurukulas, temples, houses. Sometimes pujaris of the temples used to teach students. In a slightly different sense, education may also refer, not to the process, but to the product of this process: the mental states and dispositions possessed by educated people. Education originated as the transmission of cultural heritage from one generation to the next. Education is continues process which goes on whether school keeps or not. People learn anything before they enter the school followed by continuity outside the classroom. They keep on learning even in the formal education comes to an end. Even during the hours of formal schooling the students learn much outside which does not constitutes a part of the planned curriculum. The student secures a great deal of education from the church, political discussion and also from magazines, newspapers, radio and television which are employed as a means of educating. Today, educational goals increasingly encompass new ideas such as the liberation of learners, skills needed for modern society, empathy, and complex vocational skills. The reasons are many for girls education the barriers to girls' education are like poverty, child marriage and gender-based violence vary among countries and communities. Poor families often favour boys when investing in education. In some places, schools do not meet the safety, hygiene or sanitation needs of girls. Types of education are commonly divided into formal, non-formal, and informal education. Formal education takes place in education and training institutions, is usually structured by curricular aims and objectives, and learning is typically guided by a teacher. In most regions, formal education is compulsory up to a certain age and commonly divided into educational stages such as kindergarten, primary school and secondary school. Non formal education occurs as addition or alternative to formal education. It may be structured according to educational arrangements, but in a more flexible manner, and usually takes place in community-based, workplace-based or civil society-based settings. Lastly, informal education occurs in daily life, in the family, any experience that has a formative effect on the way one thinks, feels, or acts may be considered educational, whether unintentional or intentional. In practice there is a continuum

from the highly formalized to the highly informalized, and informal learning can occur in all three settings. For instance, homeschooling can be classified as non formal or informal, depending upon the structure. Regardless of setting, educational methods include teaching, training, storytelling, discussion, and directed research. In ancient India, both formal and informal ways of education system existed. Indigenous education was imparted at home, in temples, pathshalas, chatuspadis and gurukulas. There were people in homes, villages and temples who guided young children in imbibing pious ways of life. So the primary subject of education was the mind itself. According to the ancient Indian theory of education, the training of the mind and the process of thinking, are essential for the acquisition of knowledge. So the pupil had mainly to educate himself and achieve his own mental growth.

**Key Words:** Education, Formal, Non-formal, Informal, Primary Education, Right to Education, Right to women Education, Achievements, challenges.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Education in its broadest, general sense is the means through which the aims and habits of a group of people lives on from one generation to the next. Generally, it occurs through any experience that has a formative effect on the way one thinks, feels, or acts. In its narrow, technical sense, education is the formal process by which society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills, customs and values from one generation to another. In ancient India, both formal and informal ways of education system existed. Indigenous education was imparted at home, in temples, pathshalas, tols, chatuspadis and gurukuls. There were people in homes, villages and temples who guided young children in imbibing pious ways of life. In a gurukul, students had to memorize lessons that were taught orally. After completing their education, the students paid guru dakshina according to their means. The students led simple and highly disciplined lives in gurukul. The examination was oral one. The student was required to give oral answers in a congregation of scholars. If he satisfied them, he was given a degree. The main active of education was to equip the students with a good quality of education. The education mostly focused on the enrichment of culture, character, and personality, development, and cultivation of noble ideals. The objective was gaining the mental, physical, and intellectual personality of students, to make the students future-ready and survive in any situation.

During the ancient period, the state government and the people did not interfere in designing curriculum, payments of fees, regulation of teaching hours. There was a strong bonding between teacher and student. Every student was allotted with one teacher and more emphasis was given to the student-teacher relationship, each student used to meet teachers personally to learn and gain instructions from them. During ancient times, royal families, as well as kings of states, used to donate their wealth to improve the education system and quality. The syllabus was designed in accordance with the demands of that era. At that time students used to leave their houses and went to live with their gurus until their education was completed. During the early Vedic period, women's education was also given more emphasis. The education focuses on the physical and mental development of students. The course duration was about 10–12 years, as there were no books so students used to memorize all things, memory played a crucial role during learning. The education was imparted in forests away from cities and peoples to give students a pleasant and silent environment of study.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The main purpose of this paper is to convey what all the things need to adopt in our current education system from ancient and medieval times and also some new trends associated with it. The paper is mainly focused on Ancient system, including sub-sections such as Importance of society in ancient Educational system, Curriculum, Skill Development, Values, Role of Women Education, Educated Women Lead the Nation beliefs and Habits, Methods of learning, Meanings used in those days, advantages, and disadvantages of the education system, Result and Discussion.

### **Role of Women Education**

Secretary Clinton has said that the empowerment of women in business and government represents perhaps the most consequential long-term opportunities to promote sustainable development, democracy and economic growth. Women's Education has assisted in improving the quality of life for women. Veritably, women's history is an extensive one filled with struggle, strife, barriers, discrimination, demands, change and opposition. While women's history is filled with opposition, clearly, women's education has led the way to women's empowerment. Care givers, nurturers, and providers by nature, women's education has expanded the role of women to include such descriptions as mentors, motivators, educators and leaders.

### **Educated Women Lead the Nation**

The women of any country have an important contribution in the progress of that country. It is the women who are capable of building such children who may lead the country to the path of progress and prosperity. Educated women make the family and the society cultured. To fight against the socially constructed gender biases, women have to swim against the system that requires more strength. Such strength comes from the process of empowerment and empowerment will come from the education. Recently, the concept of empowerment has been tied to the range of activities, undertaken by and for women in different areas, education included Importance of Society in ancient Educational system

In those days the society played an important role in educational system like giving places for educational buildings, lands for construction of universities, temples, gurukulas, etc., for teaching purposes. At that time knowledge was considered as sacred one and no fee was collected from the students. Contributions towards education were considered the highest form of donation. All members of the society contributed in some form or the other. Financial support came from rich merchants, wealthy parents and society. This form of free education was also prevalent in other ancient universities like Valabhi, Vikramshila and Jagaddala. At the same time in the south of India, agraharas served as centers of learning and teaching. South Indian kingdoms also had other cultural institutions known as Ghatika and Brahmapuri. A Ghatika was a centre of learning including religion and was small in size. An agrahara was a bigger institution, a whole settlement of learned Brahmins, with its own powers of government and was maintained by generous donations from the society. Temples, Mathas, Jain Basadis and Buddhist Viharas also existed as other sources of learning during this period. Many travelers from various regions having different climates and cultures began to visit parts of India from early times. The Indian education system continued in the form of ashrams, in temples and as indigenous schools. During the medieval period, maktabas and madrassas became part of the education system. During the pre-colonial period, indigenous education flourished in India. This was an extension of the formal system that had taken roots earlier. This system was mostly religious and spiritual form of education. Tols in Bengal, pathshalas in western India, chatuspadis in Bihar, and similar schools existed in other parts of India. Local

resources via donations supported education. References in texts and memoirs inform that villagers also supported education in southern India. As we understand, the ancient education system of India focused on the holistic development of the students, both inner and outer self, thus preparing them for as free and not centralized. Its foundations were laid in the rich cultural traditions. India thereby helping in the development of the physical, intellectual, spiritual and artistic aspects of life holistically. Our present day education system has a lot to learn from the ancient education system of India. Therefore, the stress is being laid on connecting learning to the world outside the school. Today educationists recognize the role and importance of multilingual and multicultural education, thereby connecting the multicultural education, thereby connecting the ancient and the traditional knowledge with contemporary learning.

### **Empowerment is a Development Process**

Empowerment means moving from enforced powerlessness to a position of power. Education is a cardinal means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to fully participate in the development process. Education is a critical area of empowerment for girls and women.

### **Challenges to Women Education**

- **Negative parental attitudes**

Poor families are more likely to keep girls at home to care for younger siblings or to work in family enterprise. If a family has to choose between educating a son or a daughter because of financial restrictions, typically the son will be chosen. Negative parental attitudes toward educating daughters can also be a barrier to a girl's education.

- **Inadequate school facilities**

Furthermore, the classrooms that are available often lack of basic necessities such as sanitary facilities or water. Lack of latrines can be particularly detrimental to girls' school attendance.

- **Shortage of female teachers**

Lack of female teachers is another potential barrier to girls' education. Girls are more likely to attend school and have higher education academic achievement if they have female teachers. This is particularly true in highly gender segregated societies such as India. Currently, women account for only 29 percent of teachers at the primary level (MHRD 1993). The proportion of teachers who are female is even lower at the university level, 22 percent of instructors (CSO 1992).

- **Gender gaps in University education**

Currently, a very small proportion of both men and women have a college education, just over 3 percent of men and 1 percent of women. Although a very small proportion of the Indian population attends college, women account for a third of the students at this level (MHRD 1993).

- **Gender bias in curriculum**

As long ago as 1965, the Indian government agreed to rewrite text-books so that men and women would not be portrayed in gender-stereotyped roles. However, a study of Indian text-books done in the 1980's found that men were the main characters in the majority of lessons. In these lessons, men held high prestige occupations and were portrayed as strong, adventurous and intelligent. In contrast, when women were

included they were depicted as weak and helpless, often as the victims of the abuse and beatings. Curriculum plays an essential role in the education system. It was dynamic and not static; it was made up of different stages. The fundamental goal of building a good curriculum was to develop students physically and mentally. The education was totally through orals and debates, and the exams were conducted every year. The education system of the ancient period focused on subjects like warfare, military, politics, religion.

### **SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

Technological improvement has boosted the economic growth in India. Science and technology have an important role in the economic development of India. Compared to other developed countries, India has more youth manpower. Proper education will play a significant role in making youth future-ready and increasing economic growth by providing skilled persons which will also boost industrial development. In the modern era of education, every institution or university is adapting new teaching methods using their teaching methodologies. Indian education is the biggest and well-known education systems in the world. During ancient education, there were 5 big well-known universities like Takshashila, Nalanda, Vallabhi, etc., which focus on the all-round development of students and those in the medieval period there exists 2 institutions madrasah and maqtab which mostly focus on building student religious and leaders of the future. In modern education, there are well known autonomous institutes like IITs and IIMs which are famous all around the world.

### **VALUES, BELIEFS AND HABITS**

During ancient education, students live away from their parents, their education comprises of subjects like physical education, mental education, politics, economics, etc. They were shaped in a way that they can live in any condition considering how difficult the situation will be. Medieval education also followed the same protocol as ancient education in spite that their education mostly focuses on religion. In today's modern era of big institutes like the Indian Institute of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institute of Management (IIMs), everything is changed like the living standard of students, curriculum, all-round development. The principle objective of the student has been to just achieve its goal and be successful. Only the big institutes like IITs, IIMs, and some other private and aided universities have adopted modern methods of learning. There is a difference in curriculum, teaching methods, and living standards of students in every institute. The syllabus of the current education system is not industry-oriented and also not according to new upcoming trends. The main objective of education is mostly theoretical and not practically implemented. So during ancient education there was value-added education which brings beliefs in the student community and learn good habits which is useful for their future generation.

### **WORDS USED IN THOSE DAYS**

<b>WORDS</b>	<b>MEANINGS</b>
Purushartahs	Human goal, an object of desire
Artha	For economic security
Kama	Sensuous aesthetic satisfaction
Chatuspadis	A resting place with four pillars around

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Moksha	Spiritual welfare
Dharma	Moral and social order
Upanayana	The formal admission ceremony
Ashrama	Home where he would receive education
Dvijya	Twin born
Parisads	An assembly
Arthasahtra	Political science or statecraft
Vedas	Knowledge, collection of poems or hymns
Puranas folklore of varying date and origin.	Sanskrit sacred writings on Hindu mythology and
Yoga and is the method of achieving union	To yoke or to unify or integration of personality,

**UNIVERSITIES IN ANCIENT INDIA**

- Taxila
- Mithila
- Nalanda
- Vallabi
- Vikramasila
- Jagaddala
- Odantapuri
- Nadia
- Madura
- Kanchi
- Benares

**ADVANTAGES OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM**

Students were taught to appreciate the balance between human beings and nature. Teaching and learning followed the tenets of Vedas and Upanishads fulfilling duties towards self, family and society, thus encompassing all aspects of life. Education system focused both on learning and physical development.

**DISADVANTAGES OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM** The ancient education system was lacking in the technological sector hence they knew very little about the technology we have today. The ancient



education system was confined to education locally hence knowing everything about every place possible on earth was a bit difficult at that time.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION** :Education is the process of receiving or giving systematic instruction, especially at a school or university. Formal education takes place in education and training institutions, is usually structured by curricular aims and objectives, and learning is typically guided by a teacher. In most regions, formal education is compulsory up to a certain age and commonly divided into educational stages such as kindergarten, primary school and secondary school. Non formal education occurs as addition or alternative to formal education. Informal education refers to a lifelong learning process, whereby each individual acquires attitudes, values, skills, and knowledge from the educational influences and resources in his or her own environment and from daily experience. Primary Education is compulsory to all the citizens of India. A right to education has been recognized by some governments and the United Nations. During the ancient period, the state government and the people did not interfere in designing curriculum, payments of fees, regulation of teaching hours. There was a strong bonding between teacher and student. Every student was allotted with one teacher and more emphasis was given to the student-teacher relationship, each student used to meet teachers personally to learn and gain instructions from them. At that time students used to leave their houses and went to live with their gurus until their education was completed. During the early Vedic period, women's education was also given more emphasis. The education focuses on the physical and mental development of students. The course duration was about 10–12 years, as there were no books so students used to memorize all things, memory played a crucial role during learning. Women education is very important to the society because if a female educates the entire family will educate and all of them will become responsible citizens of the country. Educating a woman uplifts her life as well as the quality of her life and her entire family. It is a fact that any educated woman will definitely support the education of her children especially a girl child and provide a better guidance to her children. An educated woman in a society like India will assist in reducing the infant mortality rate and control the blossoming of the population. The education was imparted in forests away from cities and peoples to give students a pleasant and silent environment of study. This type of education system is needed in present days because of pollution, radiation, high technological gadgets the present generation is not concentrating on studies. Finally this leads to the lack of development of the country in all the aspects. The popular UNESCO slogan says, "Educate a man and you educate an individual; educate a woman and you educate a family". Education can play a vital role in bringing about the desirable behavioral changes among the women and make them well equipped in terms of knowledge, competence and capacity to deal with different educational problems.

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## Whispers Unheard: Unveiling the Silent Voices in History

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### Abstract

This paper examines the status of women in ancient and modern India, with a particular focus on early marriages and prostitution. By delving into historical accounts and contemporary issues, the study aims to shed light on the challenges faced by women and the societal attitudes that perpetuate these practices.

The ancient Indian civilization, deeply rooted in traditional customs and cultural norms, witnessed the prevalence of early marriages. This paper analyzes historical accounts to understand the reasons behind this practice and its implications for women's empowerment in ancient India. Factors such as societal expectations, economic considerations, and the subjugation of women contribute to the perpetuation of early marriages.

Turning to modern India, the paper explores the persisting issue of early marriages despite legal reforms and increased awareness. It examines how factors such as poverty, illiteracy, and deeply ingrained patriarchal norms continue to perpetuate this practice, hampering women's education, personal growth, and overall well-being.

Furthermore, the research investigates the state of prostitution in both ancient and modern India, examining the socio-cultural factors that contribute to its existence. Throughout history, women have been subjected to exploitation and forced into this profession due to factors such as poverty, lack of opportunities, and gender-based discrimination.

By highlighting the parallel between early marriages and prostitution, this paper aims to reveal the persistent challenges faced by women in different societies and periods. The study emphasizes the need for comprehensive societal reforms, education, and empowerment initiatives to address these issues effectively.

**Keywords:** women's status, early marriages, prostitution, ancient India, modern India, empowerment, gender-based discrimination.

### Whispers Unheard: Unveiling the Silent Voices in History

In order to develop a thorough comprehension of and status of women in a specific historical era, it is vital to analyze their role within the wider material culture of that society. Failing to do so can lead to incorrect interpretations, as can be particularly observed when examining early Vedic civilization. Indian scholars have generally noted with deep satisfaction and pride that the condition of women in the Vedic age was much better than that of the women in another primitive community or in ancient Greece. Anthropologists have shown that even in hunting societies, which subordinated women to men in certain respects, men didn't exercise the amount of control over women as they did in class societies.

But, around 1000 B.C., there was a notable decline in the status of women which coincided with the increased establishment of private property and commodity production. During this time, various societies transitioned from communal or tribal systems to more structured and stratified societies.

The consolidation of private property led to the emergence of wealth accumulation and inheritance, which played a significant role in reshaping social dynamics. As property became more valuable, it

became necessary to establish rules and regulations to pass it down through generations. This resulted in the development of patriarchal systems where men held primary ownership and inheritance rights.

Commodity production, particularly agricultural advancements, also played a role in the decline of women's status. As societies shifted towards settled farming, labour became more specialized, with men predominantly engaged in ploughing, hunting, and other physically demanding tasks. This division of labour led to the perception that men's contributions were more essential to survival and prosperity.

Furthermore, the rise of early civilizations and city-states brought new forms of governance, which often reinforced patriarchal structures. As societies became more complex, leadership roles were frequently restricted to men, further marginalizing women. Additionally, the advent of written language and formal legal systems solidified these inequalities, as laws were often biased towards favouring men in matters of property, marriage, and inheritance.

“The ways men live their common lives affect mightily the ways they understand the meaning of that life. A comprehensive understanding of the true nature of Women's status in society can be obtained only when we study the role they play in the productive process and the control they exercise over the means of production.

Gradually, women like other marginalized groups in society are regarded as ‘silent voices of history’, perhaps, because women had little or nothing to do with its creation. They have been excluded both as actors and as authors from featuring in history as they should and remain one of its most neglected subjects.

The article explores the historical and contemporary decline of women in different spheres of life. It highlights various examples to support its viewpoint.

The decline in women's education, the prevalence of pre-puberty marriage, and numerous institutional and conceptual factors during that period collectively contributed to the establishment of male superiority and the subjugation of Indian women. The pinnacle of this decline can be seen in the Law of Manu, which explicitly states that “in childhood, a woman must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, and when her lord is dead, to her sons. A woman must never be independent.” Additionally, the Code of Manu emphasizes that a woman's role is to tend to her husband and worship him as a deity. Manu Shastra is so strongly rooted in society and in man's genes that even after hundreds of thousands of years men rule and women obey.

### **Early marriages:**

During the Epic period, there was a growing demand for early marriage. The writers of the “Dharmasutras,” who thrived from 400 BC to 100 AD, began advising that girls' marriages should not be delayed long after puberty. By the second century AD, it appears that giving girls away in marriage even before reaching puberty had become a common practice. “Yajnavalkya” specifically insisted that girls should be married before reaching puberty; otherwise, their guardians would be considered guilty every month for the potential destruction of an egg.

Later, the concepts of female chastity and the strict monogamous marriage took deep roots in Hindu society, which seemingly emerged due to economic developments that favored male dominance. It draws a parallel to Engels' observation in “The Origin of the Family” that monogamous marriage mainly regulates women's behaviour while men continue to engage in polygamy.

As it is important to acknowledge that the dynamics of marriage and gender relations in Hindu society are complex and cannot be generalized across all regions and time periods. While it is true

that certain communities or classes may have enforced strict norms of female chastity and monogamous marriages, this does not necessarily imply a direct influence on economic development. Other factors such as religious beliefs, cultural values, and social hierarchies also contribute to such practices.

The truth is that monogamy in India primarily applies to women while men can practice polygamy is not universally accurate. While polygamy has existed historically in some Hindu communities, it has been legally restricted and socially frowned upon in modern times. Monogamous marriages are increasingly common, and both partners are expected to maintain fidelity.

### **Women as Commodity**

The concept of women as chattel or commodity for man's enjoyment is borne out by the inclusion of women pretty and young in large numbers in any list of gifts given to men in return for a favor or as market respect. Thus she is part of Daksina, fees to a sacrificial priest At Yudhisthira's horse -sacrifice women were sent by other kings as a donation to make up a necessary part of the entertainment. Yudhisthira himself pretty maids to guest kings; he is even said to have given away hundreds of thousands of pretty girls as did King Sasabindu of old at his horse sacrifice.

According to Kirit K .Shah , she was a woman without a family in the recognized sense of the term with neither paternal ties nor affinal ones, and yet she had her own family world.

In heaven, heroes are rewarded with a large number of beautiful girls. The same idea is also seen in classical Sanskrit literature. In the 60 Kumarasambhava, Raghuvamsa, Kiratarjuniya, and in Sisupalavadha," in Subandhu and Bana we have references to courtesans as a prestigious decoration of a royal palace and an indispensable part of city life. Bhaguri calls her puramandana an ornament of the city. Thus her status was that of an inanimate object of enjoyment, it was sub-human and subject. Courtesans sometimes did perform several other functions. In the Mahabharata, they participated in the victory celebrations. They even played a political role as spies whose duty it was to seduce important men who were potential sources of vital political information, to collect such information and supply it to the relevant officers through the superintendent (ganikadhyaksa). Their role as temptresses is emphasized in the Valtaka Jataka. The names of various types of courtesans give us an inkling of their roles. Thus the devavesya was the temple dancer, something like the Greek hierodules; the vajavesya served the king; while the brahmavesya or tirthaga visited holy places or pilgrimages.

### **Prostitution**

Prostitution, often referred to as the world's oldest profession, has indeed been documented throughout history. While the Rigveda, one of the oldest sacred texts in Hinduism, does not explicitly mention prostitution, it does contain references to courtesans and women associated with sexual activities.

The first notable references to prostitution as a profession in India can be found in the literature that followed the Rigveda, dating back a few centuries. These texts include the Dharmashastra, which is an ancient legal treatise, and the Kamasutra, a renowned philosophical and erotic Hindu text. There are various myths and legends regarding the origin of prostitution, Ksemendra says that wicked mothers give their daughters enjoyment and are abandoned by men to others. Vatsyana in his Kamasutra gives detailed instructions on how a chaste girl should be seduced cleverly until she yields to a man's lust. Presumably when such an abandoned woman was forced to adopt prostitution as a profession. In later Vedic times we hear daksinas, sacrificial fees to officiating priests. Such fees included horses, cattle, gold, and also women of various categories.

Gradually, there arose a section of women in the society who, either because they could not find a suitable husband or because of early widowhood, unsatisfied married life, and other social pressures especially if they had been violated, abducted, or forcibly enjoyed and so denied an honorable status in society or had been given away as gifts in religious or secular events such women were frequently forced to take up prostitution as a profession. And when they did so, they found themselves in a unique position. They constituted the only section of women who had to be their breadwinners and guardians. Prostitution continued to be recorded and acknowledged in various societies across different time periods. It's important to recognize that attitudes towards prostitution have varied throughout history and among different cultures. In some cases, prostitution was tolerated and regulated to varying extents, while in others, it was frowned upon or prohibited.

**Conclusion :**

In both ancient and modern Indian societies, there have been instances where women have been treated as commodities and suppressed in the name of culture. In contemporary Indian society, there are still several societal issues that question the status of women. Here are some of the key challenges:

1. Gender-based violence: India continues to face problems like domestic violence, dowry-related violence, honor killings, and female foeticide. These incidences highlight the deep-rooted perception of women as subordinate and disposable, leading to the violation of their rights and safety.
2. Gender wage gap: Despite legal protections, women in India experience a significant wage gap compared to their male counterparts. This disparity in income suggests a systematic devaluation of women's labor and skills, contributing to economic inequality and limiting their financial independence.
3. Patriarchal societal norms: Traditional gender roles and expectations prevalent in Indian society often restrict women's access to education, career advancement, and decision-making autonomy. These norms reinforce the perception of women as dependent on male authority, denying them equal opportunities and hindering their overall empowerment.

These challenges highlight the need for ongoing efforts to promote gender equality, raise awareness about women's rights, and implement effective policies and interventions to address these issues in Indian society.

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## **Green Politics And Women: An Analysis Of The Role Of Women In Environmental Movements**

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### **Abstract:**

Many studies on women and environment have proved that women are major actors in natural resources management and they are prominent contributors to environment rehabilitation and conservation. In addressing some key environmental problems women play a major role. Women through their roles as farmers and as collectors of water and firewood have a close connection with their local environment and often suffer most directly from environmental problems. As primary victim of the environmental degradation women actively participated in many environmental movements. Women have recorded successes in solving environmental problems all over the world. In India, the women realized that degradation of productive land has led to the erosion of top soil; the choking of water drainage was causing salinity and loss of food crops. They collectively leased degraded land and revived them through traditional farming. In three years 700 acres of land were restored to productive use, they are more concerned about environmental protection and ecological preservation.

This paper tries to analyse the role of women in many environmental movements across the world with special reference to India.

### **Introduction:**

The term green politics is used to denote the political perspective of environmental issues. All the environmental movements are political in nature and the movements many times organised against the actions of the state. So all the environmental movements can be studied and analysed under the head of green politics. In the process of ecological protection many groups and individuals protested against state's capitalistic tendencies which ultimately led to the destruction of forests specifically and causing ecological imbalance in general. Green politics analyses many issues regarding destruction of forests, climate change, international meetings on the climate change and local and national level protests and their intricacies it also discusses the role of individual and group actors at the local, national and international level and their influence in formulating a public policy. In general it deeply looks over the concepts like common property rights, individual duties towards nature and anti-capitalist methods to protect the environment and sustainable development.

Green politics plays a major focus on study social affinity of the man with the nature. All the species on the earth including man had a specific relation with nature. As they depend on the environment for their livelihood all the individuals have a special affiliation with the nature. Women as an interest group have a major role in conservation of nature. Because of their connectivity with the nature is more evident when compared with other groups. Women through their roles as farmers and as collectors of water and firewood have a close connection with their local environment and often suffer most directly from environmental problems. The problems like depletion of water resources, deforestation, climate change, adverse monsoon changes etc. directly affect women. They affect the activities of women and their roles in private and public spheres as well. Ancient scriptures in India equate women with the nature. They denote man as 'purusha'

and women as 'prakruthi'. According to the mythology the combination of 'purusha' and 'parakruthi' has led to the emergence of life on the earth.

As the form of the nature women play a major role in protecting the environment and sustainable development. A major change has taken place in the roles of women since 20<sup>th</sup> century. From mere house wives they became bread earners. This change forced women to think from the perspective of sustainable development. So they led many movements for environment protection and sustainable development. Some major movements led by women in India and other parts of the world can be discussed in further parts. Before going to analyse the role of women in environmental movements it is proper to know about the concept of environmental movement and sustainable development.

**Chipko movement**, also called **Chipko andolan**, nonviolent social and ecological movement by rural villagers, particularly women, in India the 1970s, aimed at protecting trees and forests slated for government logging. The movement originated in the Himalayan region Uttar Pradesh in 1973 and quickly spread throughout the India Himalayas. The Hindi word *chipko* means "to hug" or "to cling to" and reflects the demonstrators' primary tactic of embracing the trees to impede the loggers.

With the conclusion of the Sino-Indian border conflict in 1963, the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh experienced a growth in development, especially in the rural Himalayan regions. The interior roads built for the conflict attracted many foreign-based logging companies that sought access to the region's vast forest resources. Although the rural villagers depended heavily on the forests for subsistence—both directly, for food and fuel, and indirectly, for services such as water purification and soil stabilization—government policy prevented the villagers from managing the lands and denied them access to woods. Many of the commercial logging endeavours were mismanaged, and the clear cut forests led to lower agricultural yield erosion, depleted water resources, and increased flooding throughout much of the surrounding areas.

In 1964 environmentalist and Gandhian social activist Chandi Prasad Bhatt founded a cooperative organization, Dasholi Gram Swarajya Sangh (later renamed Dasholi Gram Swarajya Mandal [DGSM]), to foster small industries for rural villagers, using local resources. When industrial logging was linked to the severe monsoon floods that killed more than 200 people in the region in 1970, DGSM became a force of opposition against the large-scale industry. The first Chipko protest occurred near the village of Mandal in the upper Alaknanda valley in April 1973. The villagers, having been denied access to a small number of trees with which to build agricultural tools, were outraged when the government allotted a much larger plot to a sporting goods manufacturer. When their appeals were denied, Chandi Prasad Bhatt led villagers into the forest and embraced the trees to prevent logging. After many days of those protests, the government canceled the company's logging permit and granted the original allotment requested by DGSM.

With the success in Mandal, DGSM workers and Sunderlal Bahuguna, a local environmentalist, began to share Chipko's tactics with people in other villages throughout the region. One of the next major protests occurred in 1974 near the village of Reni, where more than 2,000 trees were scheduled to be felled. Following a large student-led demonstration, the government summoned the men of the surrounding villages to a nearby city for compensation, ostensibly to allow the loggers to proceed without confrontation. However, they were met with the women of the village, led by Gaura Devi, who refused to move out of the forest and eventually forced the loggers to withdraw. The action in Reni prompted the state government to establish a committee to investigate deforestation in the Alaknanda valley and ultimately led to a 10-year ban on commercial logging in the area.

The Chipko movement thus began to emerge as a peasant and women's movement for forest rights, though the various protests were largely decentralized and autonomous. In addition to the characteristic "tree hugging," Chipko protesters utilized a number of other techniques grounded in Mahatma Gandhi's concept of satyagraha (nonviolent resistance). For example, Bahuguna famously fasted for two weeks in 1974 to protest forest policy. In 1978, in the Advani forest in the TehriGarhwal district, Chipko activist Dhoom Singh Negi fasted to protest the auctioning of the forest, while local women tied sacred threads around the trees and read from the Bhagavadgita. In other areas, chir pines (*Pinus roxburghii*) that had been tapped for resin were bandaged to protest their exploitation. In Pulna village in the Bhyundar valley in 1978, the women confiscated the loggers' tools and left receipts for them to be claimed if they withdrew from the forest. It is estimated that between 1972 and 1979, more than 150 villages were involved with the Chipko movement, resulting in 12 major protests and many minor confrontations in Uttarakhand. The movement's major success came in 1980, when an appeal from Bahuguna to Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi resulted in a 15-year ban on commercial felling in the Uttarakhand Himalayas. Similar bans were enacted in Himachal Pradesh and the former Uttaranchal.

As the movement continued, protests became more project-oriented and expanded to include the entire ecology of the region, ultimately becoming the "Save Himalaya" movement. Between 1981 and 1983, Bahuguna marched 5,000 km (3,100 miles) across the Himalayas to bring the movement to prominence. Throughout the 1980s many protests were focused on the Tehri dam on the Bhagirathi River and various mining operations, resulting in the closure of at least one limestone quarry. Similarly, a massive reforestation effort led to the planting of more than one million trees in the region. In 2004 Chipko protests resumed in response to the lifting of the logging ban in Himachal Pradesh but were unsuccessful in its re-enactment.

**Narmada BachaoAndolan** was started to oppose the construction of dams and other projects on river Narmada which flows through the states of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Sardar Sarovar Dam in Gujarat is one of the biggest dams on the river and was one of the first focal points of the movement. It is one of the many dams under the Narmada Dam Project whose main aim is to provide irrigation and electricity to people in these states.

Their mode of campaign includes court actions, hunger strikes, rallies and gathering support from notable film and art personalities. Narmada BachaoAndolan, with its leading spokespersons Medha Patkar and Baba Amte, have received the Right Livelihood Award in 1991.

In 1985, after hearing about the Sardar Sarovar dam, Medha Patkar and her colleagues visited the project site and noticed that project work being checked due to an order by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India. The reasons for this was cited as "non-fulfillment of basic environmental conditions and the lack of completion of crucial studies and plans. The people who were going to be affected by the construction of the dam were given no information but the offer for rehabilitation. Villagers weren't consulted and weren't asked for a feedback on the assessment that had taken place. Furthermore, the officials related to the project had not even checked the land records and updated them. While World Bank, the financing agency for this project, came into the picture, Patkar approached the Ministry of Environment to seek clarifications. She realized, after seeking answers from the ministry, that the project was not sanctioned at all and wondered as to how funds were even sanctioned by the World Bank. After several studies, they realized that the officials had overlooked the post project problems.

Through Patkar's channel of communication between the government and the residents, she provided critiques to the project authorities and the governments involved. At the same time, her group realized that all those displaced were given compensation only for the immediate standing crop and not for displacement and rehabilitation.



As Patkar remained immersed in the Narmada struggle, she chose to quit her Ph.D. studies and focus entirely on the Narmada activity. Thereafter, she organized a 36-day solidarity march among the neighboring states of the Narmada valley from Madhya Pradesh to the Sardar Sarovar dam site. She said that the march was “a path symbolizing the long path of struggle (both immediate and long-term) that [they] really had”. The march was resisted by the police, who according to Patkar were “caning the marchers and arresting them and tearing the clothes off women activists”.

Within the focus of the NBA towards the stoppage of the Sardar Sarovar Dam, Patkar advised adding the World Bank to its propaganda. Using the right to fasting, she undertook a 22-day fast that almost took her life. Patkar’s actions did force the World Bank to set up The Morse Commission, an independent review of the project. Their report clearly stated that the Bank’s policies on environment and resettlement were being violated by the project. The World Bank’s participation in these projects was canceled in 1993.<sup>1</sup> Before the World Bank could pull out, the Indian Government did.

She undertook a similar fast in 1993 and resisted evacuation from the dam site. In 1994, the Narmada Bachao Andolan office was attacked reportedly by a couple of political parties, and Patkar and other activists were physically assaulted and verbally abused. In protest, a few NBA activists and she began a fast; 20 days later, they were arrested and forcibly fed intravenously.

Sardar Sarovar Dam’s construction began again in 1999 after the construction was allowed and was declared finished in 2006. It was inaugurated in 2017 by Prime Minister [Narendra Damodardas Modi](#). Since construction in 2017, the height has been increased from 138 meters to 163 meters.

### **Conclusion:**

Environmental movements led by women played a great impact on the public policy and found to be major issue on the mainstream discussions. Though India has never experienced rise of any feminist movements, women participation in large number in environmental movements can be observed that ecofeminism in has emerged long back in the 1770’s with the emergence of Bishnoi Movement and sacrifice of Amritha Devi. Eco feminist movements in Indai are stronger and radical in nature when compared to the other parts of the world. Indian women in the cases either Chipko Movement or Narmada Andolan have been persistent in their efforts.

Environmental movements all over world which led by the women were succeeded in making government to listen their voices and struggling up to the maximum to protect the environment. Women as the agents in the promotion of sustainable development continue to fight to get their equal share by fighting against patriarchy and power intricacies.

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## **Smtrukmini Devi Arundale's contribution To Indian Classical Dance, Music And Arts**

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At the time of the century were born a few pioneers in India, who have played an epoch making role in the world of dance, one among them is Smt. Rukmini Devi Arundale. She was born to the Engineering and Sanskrit scholar Sri A. Neelakantashastry and his wife Smt Seshammal as the sixth child in the family in the sacred city of Madhurai at twelve noon on Pournima Tithi (full moon day) on 29<sup>th</sup> February 1904 in a Brahmin family, which was considered ominous by astrologers who cast her horoscope! Maybe this is what has given her very sensitive, intuitive approach to her life.

Smt Rukmini Devi Arundale (1904-1986), who was a rare breed and a multi-faceted personality, who was a great visionary and dared to step into the modern sensibility by taking tips from the age old traditional institutions and transforming the Devadasi concept into an aesthetic revolutionary form of spectacular and trend setting dance known as Bharatanatyam.

She is a pioneer in many ways. For a Brahmin girl to learn and perform Bharatanatyam, in those days was a revolutionary step. She had a vision to pass on this beautiful art form for the future generation and for this she established 'Kalakshetra' in 1936. This institution which was established before independence, during post-independence this institution has produced many dance dramas, aesthetic changes in the art form and trained many artists.

Smt. Rukmini Devi's father was a member of Theosophical society and a follower of Annie Besant. She was very much influenced by this society from her childhood. Her father initiated her into Theosophical Society. Since she has a good voice, her father encouraged her to peruse Music. When she was young she was not at all interested in dance. It did not mean anything to her. In those days even to see dance was considered a sin. She herself sometimes gets surprised how her destiny led her to be a dancer.

### **Marriage a turning point in her life:**

At the age of 16 young Rukmini in 1920 got married to Dr. George Arundale, who came over from England to Chennai to assist Dr. Annie Besant at the Theosophical Society. Dr. Arundale was a Bishop and an educationist. He was much senior to Rukmini. Their marriage was performed in Mumbai with consent with Dr. Annie Besant, though there was opposition from public in Chennai.

Along with Dr. Arundale, Smt Rukmini took interest in the activities of Theosophical Society and travelled extensively throughout the world, exposing herself to the best of the performing and visual arts. She was elected as the President of the All India Federation of Young Theosophists in 1923. In 1925 she became the President of the World Federation of the Young Theosophists.

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**Inspiration from Anna Pavlova:**

Along with Dr.Arundale, Smt Rukmini Devi visited Britain, Australia, East Indies and other countries and witnessed Anna Pavlova's dances several times. She was greatly influenced by her performances and decided to learn dance. In 1929 Anna Pavlova entertained to learn Ballet from Cleo Nordi of Pavlova's group.

**Vision towards the dance 'Bharatanatyam':**

In 1932, Smt. Rukmini Devi saw for the first time a performance of Bharatanatyam at the Music Academy by Smt. Rajalakshmi and Smt. Jeevaratnam, conducted by Meenakshisundaram Pillai. After seeing the performance she was overwhelmed by the beauty of the form and decided to study it.

Smt. Rukmini Devi's life took a different and dramatic turn when she was chosen to lead the World Mother Movement. This was a great responsibility; she saw the art of Bharatanatyam then called 'Dasiattam' and 'Sadir'. The people did not accept this art were looked down upon as women of easy virtue and social taboo. When Smt. Rukmini Devi made up her mind to study the dance, the art of devadasis was forbidden by the Anti-Nautch Social Reform movement and banned by the British government in 1911. She first studies privately under Gowriamma, a devadasi attached to the Mylapore temple and later on under Sri Meenakshisundaram Pillai, who in the beginning refused to teach a Brahmin girl. Seeing her inclination and ability to dance, he relented and came over to Chennai to teach her.

In 1932 December 27, Smt Rukmini Devi presented the art of Bharatanatyam during the Diamond Jubilee year of the Theosophical Convention Society. In 1935 she also performed Bharatanatyam on behalf of International Theosophical Society at Adayar before a crowd of more than 2000 people. After seeing her presentation, many of the audience convinced at her belief that such an art form should be made available not only to a few but to many more. She not only possessed aesthetic sensibility in the art of Bharatanatyam, she even performed abroad and made welcome changes in the art of presentation of her solo dance.

She made a most aesthetic improvement in the performance of dance along with the musicians. She made the musicians to sit on one side of the stage, instead of following the dancer standing behind her and playing musical instruments and singing as was the practice till then. She was the one to introduce the Veena instrument in place of bagpipe and the clarinet. She even arranged for a black backdrop whereby the figure and the costume of the dancer would become aesthetically appealing. Smt Rukmini Devi was the designer of what today the dancers of Bharatanatyam wear. The credit of today's costume for Baratanatyam goes to Smt Rukmini Devi.

**Credit to the Theosophical Society:**

The credit for giving helping hand to Smt Rukmini Devi goes to Theosophical Society, where it has propagated the art of dance and music, more that of art of dance. It has also supported Smt Rukmini Devi to put her aesthetic thoughts in colour sense, selection of traditional ornaments, costumes, choice of the lyrics, emphasizing devotion in place of lurid which changed the climate

of performing dance and interests in public taste to shift their vision from the devadasi to the true art of Bharatanatyam.

### **Revolutionary step by establishing a Dance School:**

Smt Rukmini Devi took a revolutionary step on 6<sup>th</sup> January 1936 by establishing a school to teach dance. Initially the institution was named as International Academy of Arts; this was started in the spacious grounds of the Theosophical Society. After two years it was renamed as Kalakshetra.

Over the years it developed its own unique KalakshetraBaani which stands out today as an outstanding school. The inherent dignity of the form, posture, alignment, angashuddha is salient features of kalakshetra style. Beside Bharatanatyam, Kathakali was also given important and masters in that field were resident teachers like AmbuPanikar and ChanduPanikar. Not only great gurus from different forms, great musicians like VeenaKrishnamachariar, Tiger Varadachariar, MudicondaVenkataramalyer, Papanasam Sivan, KalidasNeelakantalyer and Mysore Vasudevachar were the permanent teachers in Kalakshetra.

### **First Hurdle in her life:**

After the death of Dr.Arundale on 12<sup>th</sup> August 1945, Smt Rukmini Devi experienced a lot of difficulties, Dr Arundale used to stand as pillar beside her for her commitment and vision. She moved from Theosophical Society grounds shifting the Kalakshetra along with other units to a nearby ground. She slowly gathered hundred acres of land and started constructing cottages for training of dance and music, painting and craft. She also started Besant Theosophical High School and the Maria Montessori School for Children etc. She even started Kalamkari unit where the traditional patterns has become way for vegetable dye research.

In 1947, during Independence time she performed her first dance drama Kalidasa'sKumarasambhavam. Later on she produced many dance dramas.Smt Rukmini Devi Arundale started Dance and Music Diploma courses at Kalakshetra with the affiliation with the Madras University and offered certificates to the students who passed the courses. She had the dedication and vision and also a dedicated team which include Sankar Menon, Dr.Padmasini, Kamala Trilokikar, PeriyaSarada. She even learned Nattuvangam on an unexpected occasion when the noted Dandayuthapani Pillai refused to accompany her for a dance performance. She trained Kamalarani, the musician and vocalist to study it and achieved freedom from the dependence upon the traditional nattuvanars.

Smt Rukmini Devi not only was interested in the field of Dance and music, she was also interested in the field of education, love for animals, and supported the vegetarian movement and overall was a real parliamentarian. She was elected as the as the member of Rajayasabha successfully in the year 1952 and introduced the Bill for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals that was later on became the law. She was so deeply involved in the movement for bringing awareness in the public to get converted to vegetarians. She invited a group of young foreigners who had interest in vegetarian movement in India and later on they became vegetarian. Smt Rukmini Devi was the Chairman of the Animal Welfare Board and actively participated in the World Vegetarian Congresses for several years.

Rukmini Devi Arundale performed at many prestigious platforms in India and abroad, she was bestowed with honours for her invaluable contribution in the field of culture and other social movements.

- She was awarded Padma Bhushan by Government of Indian in the year 1956
- SangeetNatakAkademi Award in 2956
- Queen Victoria Silver Medal of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, London in 1958
- World Federation honoured in the year 1959
- She was made the Chairmen of The Animal Welfare Board in 1962
- She was awarded Fellowship of the SangeetNatakkademi 'PraniMita' in 1968
- She was honoured D.Litt from RabindraBharathi University, Calcutta in 1969
- Awarded Deshikottam from Vishvabharati University (Shanthinikethan) in 1972
- Hounred with D.Litt from Indira Kala Sangeet University, Khairagarh, Madhya Pradesh.
- Awarded ThanipperumKalaingar (Doctorate) from TamilnaduEyal Isai Manram in 1980
- Received Honorary Degree of Doctor of Humanities by Wayne State University in 1980
- Given Rabindranath Tagore plaque by Asiatic Society in 1982
- Received honorary Doctorate Degree by the Benaras Hindu University
- Warded kalidasSamman by the Madhya Pradesh Government in 1984
- Awarded Mankar, U.S for services to Animals in 1984

**Passing away of the great Legendary:**After a prolonged illness Smt Rukmini Devi Arundale passed away on February 23, 1986, living a legacy in the field of Dance, Music and other arts in the Indian culture. After passing away of the legacy, the Kalakshetra is transformed into a Foundation supported by the Government of India with sound financial aid, without any interference from bureaucrats. The foundation has members from different walks of life; the aims ad ideals of Kalakshetra are maintained. All efforts are made to preserve its sanctity and its spirit as visualized by Smt Rukmini Devi Arundale.

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When Rukmini Devi started this institution, the traditional fine arts of India had fallen into bad repute due to neglect. She had pioneered by creating an environment, both mental and physical changes from the age old traditional institutions to the modern sensibility. The stage presentation by her was visually beautiful and aesthetically pleasing. She had choreographed 26 dance dramas including the famous Ramayana series.

She along with her stalwarts in all fields of activity especially in dance and music, taking inspiration from several great devoted teachers and students and students who turned out to be leaders of the present scenario which is the living testimony and dream and aspirations in the making of Kalakshetra. Smt Rukmini Devi Arundale's contribution to the Society has left a permanent imprint on our culture. By declining politely the President ship of India offered by the then Prime Minister Morarji Desai, she was convinced that her services were needed more in the field of art rather than in RashtrapathiBhavan. Her vision in the contribution of Kalakshetra with aims and ideals still maintained as a living testimony to Smt Rukmini Devi's dream and aspirations for the beautiful patron of arts she has versioned about. Kalakshetra has produced many great artists in Dance and Music. All these artists are continuing her vision in spreading the Bharatanatyam through their contribution. Some of the notable women dancers who trained in Kalakshetra during post-Independence are RadhaBurnier, Yamini Krishnamurthy, Jayashree Narayanan, Leela Samson, Shanta Dhananjayan, Anita Ratnam, Ananda Shankar Jayant, AkkineniAmala.

**Key Words:**

Bharatanatyam, Independence, Post-Independence, India, Culture, Kalakshetra, Gurukula, Devadasi, Tradition, Education, Rukmini Devi, Dance, Music, Arts & Culture



## Women entrepreneurship in India during post independence era:

### A Retrospect

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#### Abstract:

Women entrepreneurship is gaining importance in India. In the wake of economic liberalization and globalization. The policy and institutional frame work for nurturing entrepreneurial skills, imparting occasion education and training has widened the horizon for economic empowerment of the women. However, women constitute one third of the economic enterprise there are scores of successful women entrepreneurs. Both in economic and social fields in India. Thus, a stage has been already set for social take-off of women from a low development path to an accelerated. Pace in achieving higher level of self sustaining economic growth in the wake of new economic policy 1991. Women entrepreneurship has been getting, growing recognition over the past two decades. Across the world. Women entrepreneurs not only generate new jobs. For themselves but also for others they provide society with different solutions to management organization and business problems.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, investigation, innovator, leadership, GDP, mobilization.

#### Introduction:

Entrepreneurship person who carrier entrepreneurship business is called an entrepreneur is one of the important segments of economic growth. Basically, an entrepreneur is a person who is responsible for getting up a business or an enterprise. In fact, he is one who has the initiative, skill for innovation and who looks for high achievements. He is a catalytic agent of change and works for the good of people. The entrepreneur is a critical factor in the socio-economic change he is the key man who envisages new opportunities, new techniques, new lines of production, new products and co-ordinates all other activities.

#### Objectives of the Study:

- To examine the factors responsible for motivating women become entrepreneur.
- To study the problems faced by women entrepreneurs.
- To analyses the impact of assist by government on womens entrepreneurship.
- To evaluate the programs policies involvement of support agencies in women entrepreneurship.

#### Research Methodology:

The study secondary data has been collected through various reports, research papers, books, official records of financial institutions. For collect related data for my research work.

#### Review of Literature:

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature an women entrepreneur and work life balance which will provide a theoretical background of relevant study.

**Dharani & Premalatha (2022):** Said the basic aspiration of self-help groups to strengthen women economically and socially. The Govt encourage the SHGs for manufacturing products and to



engage in many service oriented business. The women in the SHG also prove them as a successful entrepreneur in doing the business.

**Amith (2021)** : noted in this article as entrepreneur is the key to India's development. It is important as it utilized. Local sources, employment and rural development. This paper study the impact of financial development, economic development on entrepreneurial development measurement by product per MSME is positively influenced by financial development in long run.

**V. Sumita and Preethi (2020)**: In their study role of women entrepreneur in India they have become successful entrepreneur in various business activities. These women entrepreneurs are assertive persuasive and willing to take risk.

**Daniel (2019)**: This study several reasons for learning the corporate world is dis-content with work environment, gender related problems and seeking of flexibility in work. She plays various roles in the family as a wife, mother, daughter, and care-taker.

### **PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN ENTERPRENEURS IN INDIA:**

Women entrepreneurs in India face a variety of challenges that are unique to their gender. They are common challenges and problems faced by female entrepreneurs while starting a business in India.

#### **Lack of Social Support:**

Most women business owners don't get the social support they require to kick start their business from families, peers and immediate ecosystems. Lack of mentorship from the business community is also one of the main challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in the country.

#### **Poor funding Prospect:**

As unfair as it might sound, the funding scene in India has massive gender biases. Women led businesses in the country lack access to capital due to the prejudices of investors and other factors.

#### **Lack of access to Professional networks:**

Limited access to professional networks is another one of the basic problems of women entrepreneurs in India. According to the Google-Bain Survey, female business owners are less integrated with formal and informal networks. The survey further indicates that over 45% of urban small business owners suffer due to insufficient avenues of network development.

#### **Lack of an entrepreneurial environment:**

Entrepreneurship is a long journey that involves a lot of learning, unlearning and unskilling. An environment that exudes a strong entrepreneurial spirit is crucial for a person to become a successful business owner. However, many women often suffer from the lack of such a productive environment.

#### **Limited Mobility:**

Limited mobility is one of the basic problems of women entrepreneurs in India. They cannot travel alone or stay at hotels for business purposes without worrying about safety. All these factors come together to restrict the mobility of female business owners.

**Low RBK-Bearing Ability:** In order to invest in and run a successful business, the entrepreneur needs to be able to bear some inherent risk. Women often do not have financial freedom and do not have practice in making independent decisions. They also lack confidence in their avers. This

is gradually changing as with each passing generation women are taking charge of their finances and mitigating the risks.

#### **Limited industry knowledge:**

Many industry sectors such as manufacturing are still seen as men's forte. Women do not have access to the industry contacts, mechanism and know-how those are necessary for running the business successfully.

#### **GOVT INITIATIVES TO WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA:**

- Bharathiya Mahila bank business loan
- Mudra Yojana scheme
- Dena Shakti scheme
- Udyogini scheme
- Cent Kalyani scheme
- Mahila Udyam Nidhi Scheme
- Women entrepreneurship platform (WEP)

#### **Suggestions:**

- Facilitating financial support to women and providing loans at low interest rate, to motivate women.
- Certain policies and rules are required to be made for women's empowerment.
- Forums must be established where prospective women entrepreneurs can talk and chat with successful entrepreneurs and discuss their queries and share knowledge.
- Government can run training programs for women, at nominal or no fees to train them regarding the operation of machinery and other equipments.
- Information, knowledge and application of business and technology tools that would enable them to scale.
- Building profitability and innovation in their business models.

#### **Conclusion:**

It can be concluded that women entrepreneurs faced multiple problems among the problems economic problems is main higher prospects are indicated by women entrepreneurs and within the service sector corporate industries have the shows higher prospects to women. It can be said that today we are in a better position wherein women participation in the field of entrepreneurship is increasing at considerable rate, efforts are being taken at the economy as well as global level to enhance women's involvement in the enterprise sector. This is mainly because of attitude change, diverted conservative mindset of society to modern one, during and risk-taking abilities of women support and cooperation by society members, changes and relaxation in government policies, granting various up-liftmen schemes to women entrepreneurs etc.

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## Women Empowerment In Indian Society After Independence

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### ABSTRACT

*Women's empowerment can be defined to promoting women's sense of self-worth, their ability to determine their own choices, and their right to influence social change for themselves and others. It is the process of guarding them against all forms of violence. Women empowerment involves the building up of a society, a political environment, wherein women can breathe without the fear of oppression, exploitation, apprehension, discrimination and the general feeling of persecution which goes with being a woman in a traditionally male dominated structure. Women constitute almost 50% of the world's population but India has shown disproportionate sex ratio whereby female's population has been comparatively lower than males. As far as their social status is concerned, they are not treated as equal to men in all the places. In the Western societies, the women have got equal right and status with men in all walks of life. But gender disabilities and discriminations are found in India even today. This paper will focus on the place of women in the society of India.*

**Keywords:** Women empowerment, political environment, Indian society, independence

### INTRODUCTION

Women constituted the key role in the arch of Indian society. No doubt the Rig Vedic Women in India enjoyed high status in society and their condition was good. Even the women were provided opportunity to attain high intellectual and spiritual standard. But from enjoying free and esteemed positions in the Rig-Vedic society, women started being discriminated since the Later-Vedic period in education and other rights and facilities (Saravanakumar, 2016) [7] . Indian society doubts that we are in the midst of a great revolution in the history of women. The voice of women is increasingly heard in Parliament, courts and in the streets. While women in the West had to fight for over a century to get some of their basic rights, (Altekar, 1983) [1] like the right to vote, the Constitution of India has given women equal rights with men from the beginning (Devandra, Kiran, 1985) [3] . The Ancient and medieval status of women in modern Indian society regarding Equality, Education, Marriage and Family life, Race and Gender, Religion and Culture is maintained or deteriorated.

### WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Women's empowerment defined in several ways, including accepting women's viewpoints or making an effort to seek them, raising the status of women through education, awareness, literacy, and training. Empowerment is about change, choice and power. It is a process of change by which the individuals and groups with little or no power gain the power and ability to make choices that affect their lives. Women empowerment is a stage of acquiring power for women in order to understand her rights and to perform her responsibilities towards oneself and others in a most effective way.

**WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN INDIAN SOCIETY** Empowerment of women would mean equipping women to be economically independent, self-reliant, have positive esteem to enable them to

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face any difficult situation and they should be able to participate in development activities. For the beneficiaries of the women, the government has been adopted different schemes and programs i.e. the National Credit Fund for Women (1993), Food and Nutrition Board, Information and Mass Education etc. The most positive development last few years has been the growing involvement of women in the Panchayati Raj institutions. There are many elected women representatives at the village council level. Women are also involving in human development issues of child rearing, education, health, and gender parity. Many of them have gone into the making and marketing of a range of cottage products-pickles, tailoring, embroidery etc. The economic empowerment of women is being regarded these days as a sine-quo-nonof progress for a country; hence, the issue of economic empowerment of women is of paramount importance to political thinkers, social thinkers and reformers.

## **WOMEN RIGHTS IN INDIA**

The guideline of equivalence status of women is cherished in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The constitution provides equity to women, yet in addition enables the State to make provisions of positive discrimination in favour of women. Some of the significant articles are as per the following:

- Equality before law (Article 14).
- No Discrimination by state on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them (Article15(i))
- Special provision by state in favour of Women and Children (Article 15(3))
- Equality of opportunity in matters relating to employment (Article 16)
- Securing adequate means of livelihood for men and women equally [Article 39(a)]
- Equal pay for equal work [Article 39(d)]
- Promoting justice on basis of equal opportunity and to provide free legal aid [Article 39(A)] Renounce practices derogatory to women [Article 51(A)(e)]
- 1/3 reservation for women in Panchayats [Article 243(D)] and in municipalities [Article 243(T)]
- Right to Property to Women [Article 300(a)]

## **Legislations**

- Abolition of Sati Act,1829
- Special Marriage Act,1954
- Hindu Succession Act,1956
- Dowry Prohibition Act,1961
- Maternity Benefits Act, 1961
- Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971
- Domestic Violence Act, 2005
- Sexual Harassment Bill, 2010

**GOVERNMENT SCHEMES FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT** The Government programmes for women development began as early as 1954 in India but the actual participation began only in

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1974. The Government of India has over 34 schemes for women operated by different department and ministries. Some of these are as follows;

- Integrated Child Development Services 1975.
- Rastria Mahila Kosh 1992-1993
- Mahila Samridhi Yojana 1993.
- Indira Mahila Yojana 1995.
- Women Entrepreneur Development programme given top priority in 1997-98.
- Dhanalakahmi 2008.
- Integrated Child Protection scheme 2009.
- Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescence Girls 2010.
- Creches care centre for the children of working and ailing mother.
- Short Stay Homes.
- Mahila Samakhya being implemented in about 9000 villages.
- Hostels for working women.
- Swayasjdha.
- Swadhar.
- National Mission for Empowerment of Women.
- Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women.
- The Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme for Children of Working Mothers.

**CONCLUSION:** Women empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social, educational, gender or economic strength of individuals and communities of women. Women's empowerment in India is heavily dependent on many different variables that include geographical location (urban / rural) educational status social status (caste and class) and age. Policies on Women's empowerment exist at the national, state and local (Panchayat) levels in many sectors, including health, education, economic opportunities, gender based violence and political participation. The Empowerment of Women has become one of the most important concerns of 21st century not only at national level but also at the international level. Government initiatives alone would not be sufficient to achieve this goal. Society must take initiative to create a climate in which there is no gender discrimination and women have full opportunities of self decision making and participating in social, political and economic life of the country with a sense of equality.

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## **Rights To Women In India After Independence**

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### **ABSTRACT**

During the post-independence India, improvements were made in terms of various areas that led to well-being of women within the society. There were formulation of many programs and schemes that had the main objective of bringing about progressive among women. Encouraging them towards acquisition of education and participation in the employment settings are the main aspects that promote women empowerment. In spite of initiation of the measures and policies, still in some of the rural communities, women are regarded as subordinates to men. One of the unfortunate areas is, throughout the country, women and girls are subjected to abuse and mistreatment. But with the advent of globalization and industrialization, women are acquiring development opportunities. The women, belonging to urban communities are mainly enhancing their livelihoods through acquisition of good education and acquiring employment opportunities.

### Status of Women in Post-Independence India

Dr. Radhika Kapur

#### Abstract

During the post-independence India, improvements were made in terms of various areas that led to well-being of women within the society. There were formulation of many programs and schemes that had the main objective of bringing about progressive among women. Encouraging them towards acquisition of education and participation in the employment settings are the main aspects that promote women empowerment. In spite of initiation of the measures and policies, still in some of the rural communities, women are regarded as subordinates to men. One of the unfortunate areas is, throughout the country, women and girls are subjected to abuse and mistreatment. But with the advent of globalization and industrialization, women are acquiring development opportunities. The women, belonging to urban communities are mainly enhancing their livelihoods through acquisition of good education and acquiring employment opportunities. The main areas that have been taken into account in this research paper include, status of women in post- independence India, empowerment of women, gender issues in post-independent India,

political participation of women and problems of working women. Keywords: Empowerment, Gender Issues, Political Participation, Progression, Post-Independence, Status, Women Status of Women in Post-Independence India

Dr. Radhika Kapur

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During the post-independence India, improvements were made in terms of various areas that led to well-being of women within the society. There were formulation of many programs and schemes that had the main objective of bringing about progressive among women. Encouraging them towards acquisition of education and participation in the employment settings are the main aspects that promote women empowerment. In spite of initiation of the measures and policies, still in some of the rural communities, women are regarded as subordinates to men. One of the unfortunate areas is, throughout the country, women and girls are subjected to abuse and mistreatment. But with the advent of globalization and industrialization, women are acquiring development opportunities. The women, belonging to urban communities are mainly enhancing their livelihoods through acquisition of good education and acquiring employment opportunities.

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**Keywords:** Post Independent, Globalization, Industrialization, Employment opportunities, Women Empowerment.

## INTRODUCTION

Women have been always fighting for their rights and position in society. They have several times urged for equality so that they can lead a life exactly on par with men. If talking about the women's status in Independent India, then it has been surely improved. The structural and cultural changes in India have brought into many opportunities for women in the fields of education, employment and politics. Such changes ultimately lead to a reduction in the exploitation of women as they have been granted equal status as men. The improvement in the status of women can be analysed in the light of major changes that have been taken place since Independence in the areas of legislation, economic sectors, social and cultural life and so on.

Women in Independent India have maximum rights but many of them are not conscious about their rights. Uneducated women have a lack of awareness of their rights. The level of awareness of rights depends upon these 4 aspects

- Individual background of women
- The social environment of women
- The economic base of women
- Subjective perception of women

It can be also concluded that the majority of women are happy in their family life and leave important decisions to their menfolk discretion. They are not completely free from the hold of the traditional customs practised in society. Still, many are being exploited, they are completely dependent on their spouses. Hence bringing about more and more legislation in order to ensure better opportunities to women is of no use unless there will be a big change in the Indian society and people's attitude towards women and women's role in society.

**Constitution of India** guarantees equal status to all citizens of India including women under **article 14 and** does not distinguish or discriminate between a man or a woman. Moreover, article 15 empowers the government to make special provisions for women. Women are free to participate in all the religious, cultural, economic and political activities.

The **Indian Constitution** attempts to provide equal opportunities to women, protect their rights and ensure justice to them through the following provisions-

- **Right to Equality**– Constitution ensures equality to all its citizens including women.
- The Constitution ensures that **no discrimination** shall be made against any person on the basis of caste, class, creed, sex, race and place of birth.



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- **No discrimination** shall be made on any grounds of discrimination including sex for **providing employment opportunities**.
  - The State shall take the responsibility of providing **maternity benefits to women** employees.
  - **Providing harmony and fraternity** to people doing away with all customs in respect of women.
  - **One-third reservation of women in the panchayats** – There must be separate seats reserved for women in the panchayats with separate seats for women SCs and STs.
  - One-third reservation for women in the presidential posts of the Panchayats – Reserving women seats for all posts at all the levels of panchayats.
  - **One-third reservation in Municipalities** – Separate seats for women in all the town municipalities.
  - **One-third reservation for women in the presidential posts of Town Municipalities**

Furthermore, they have been entitled to vote and are provided with other special benefits. The constitution protects women against exploitation and ensures that they are given equal rights and opportunities in any field.

#### ***Legislation safeguarding women's interests***

- **The Hindu Marriage Act 1955** – The act provides women with equal rights to divorce and remarry. Also, the act prohibits polygamy, polyandry and child marriage.
- **The Hindu Succession Act, 1956** – The act provides women with the right and claim over parents' property.
- **The Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956** – It provides a childless woman with the right to adopt a child and a divorced woman with the right to claim maintenance from her husband.
- **Special Marriage Act, 1954** – It provides women with the rights to inter-caste marriage, love marriage and is only permitted for the girls above 18 years.
- **Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961** – It protects women from exploitation by declaring taking of dowry an unlawful activity.
- **73rd Constitution Amendment Act, 1993**

**The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1993** was undertaken especially to give constitutional status to Panchayati Raj system and introduce it on a uniform basis. But apart from this it also plays a specific role in women empowerment. The framers of the 73rd constitutional amendment believed that the social and economic conditions of women could not be improved without granting them political power. The new Panchayati Raj was an effort to empower women at least at the village level.

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**One-third reservation of seats for women**

The 73rd amendment has made an effort to provide women with some special powers in all the 3 tiers of Panchayati Raj. As per the act, 51 of seats are reserved for women in addition to the seats reserved for SCs and STs. It was indeed a bold step. The rural women will also be now able to exercise some political power and play a role in decision making for village affairs.

The act has not brought about miraculous changes as expected. Though it has brought awareness on the part of women but to an extent only. Following drawbacks have been found after analysing the impact of the Act's implementation-

- **Illiteracy** – Due to illiteracy in rural areas women are unable to assert themselves at different tiers of Panchayati Raj. On the contrary, they are forced to work according to the wishes of male members.
- **Corrupt bureaucracy** – As our bureaucracy is highly corrupt, it becomes very difficult for women to progress and achieve something in such circumstances.
- **Non-availability of women** – It is very difficult to find out an adequate number of women who are qualified and are aware of the rights as most of the women are illiterate and ignorant about their rights in the rural areas

**STRATEGIES FOR WOMEN DEVELOPMENT**

The national document which was prepared by the Government of India with an objective of enhancing and widening opportunities for women highlights the importance of 3 strategies-

- **Obtaining greater political participation of women** – The document mentions that **33% of seats** must be reserved for women in order to obtain effective participation in the field of politics.
- **Income generating schemes for women** – As per the document, income generating schemes must be introduced. Some of the schemes are – *IRDP, Jawahar Rozgar Yojana and TRYSEM.*
- **Increasing Female literacy level** – The government believed that proper coordination between governmental and non-governmental organisations will help in improving the literacy rate of women which will further help in making them self-reliable.

**CONCLUSION**

It can be concluded from the above discussion that women's status in Indian society has radically changed since Independence. Government after realising the situations of women and their worse position in the society took huge initiatives to bring about a change and improve the social, economic and political conditions of women. It cannot be said that the measures taken have been completely implemented in the society as still customs and

traditions are given much more importance in a country like India, still, a gradual change has been experienced by the women over these years and they have become much more independent and aware in today's time.

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## **Role of Women Entrepreneurs in building the future of India: with special reference to Economic Development**

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### **Abstract**

Women entrepreneurs are developing more substantial and their contributions should not be undervalued in Indian economy. These women entrepreneurs play an important role in the Indian economy and have a significant effect on it by generating employment, accelerating development, and fostering prosperity. As per recent statistics, women comprise 14 percent of total entrepreneurs in India which works out to 8 million. Also 10 percent of all formal enterprises are owned by women. About 20.37 percent of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises industry in India is made up of women led businesses, which also employ about 23.3 percent of the labour population. Between 13.5 and 15.7 million businesses are owned by women, who also hire between 22 and 27 million individuals. They are thought of as the economic foundation of India.

This paper draws up on the Role of Women Entrepreneurs in making the future of India towards economic growth.

### **Key Words**

Women Entrepreneurs, Economic Growth, Women Workforce, Equitable Society, Employment, Women -led Business.

### **Introduction**

Women entrepreneurs and their increasing presence in India have significantly influenced the social and economic demographics of the country. The participation of women in the labour force has helped millions of families to pull out of poverty and has led to job creation. Women are well known for their leadership skills and hence dominate in new-age industries such as electronic manufacturing, where more than 50% of the employees are women because of their high-precision work and better productivity levels. This attitude towards work and commendable business skills have also emphasized the importance of women in the modern workforce.

In India 20.37% of women are MSME owners which account for 23.3% of the labour force. They are considered to be the backbone of the economy. According to McKinsey Global, India can potentially add US\$ 700 billion to global GDP by increasing women's participation in the labour force. The percentage of women working in the manufacturing and agriculture sectors is higher than that of men. These sectors are usually credited with helping families come out of poverty and contributing to higher household income. Moreover, literacy rates among women grew at 8.8% in FY21, which further highlights the bright prospects of the country.

### **Objectives**

This paper is a literature review on the recent progress made in the field of Women Entrepreneurship in India by examining the following objectives:

1. To evaluate the challenges faced by the women entrepreneurs in India.

2. To examine the role of women entrepreneurs in India's economic development.
3. To elucidate the measures need to initiate women entrepreneurship development in India.

## Research Methodology

The present study is carried on by using secondary data. The secondary data has been collected from various sources viz ; Journals, Magazines, News Papers, Books and Websites.

### Concept of Women Entrepreneurship:

Women entrepreneurs may be defined as a woman or a group of women who initiate, organise and run a business concern. Schumpeter – “Women entrepreneurs are those women who innovate, initiate or adopt a business activity”. Government of India – “A woman entrepreneur is defined as an enterprise owned and controlled by a woman having a minimum financial interest of 51 percent of the capital and giving at least 51 percent of the employment generated in the enterprise to women.”

Frederick Harbison – “Any women or group of women which innovates, initiates or adopts an economic activity may be called women entrepreneurship”.

In short, women entrepreneurs are those women who think of a business enterprise, initiate it, organise and combine factors of production, operate the enterprise and undertake risks and handle economic uncertainty involved in running it.

According to Government of India, “A Woman enterprise is the one owned and controlled by a woman having minimum financial interest of 51% of the capital and giving at least minimum 51% of generated employment to women”. According to J. Schumpeter, “Women who innovate, initiate or adopt business actively are called women entrepreneurs.”

### Characteristics Of A Successful Woman Entrepreneur

**1. Self-confidence :** To be a successful women entrepreneur, one must have self-confidence. Self-confidence is the belief that one can achieve anything one wants. It is a crucial characteristic of successful women entrepreneurs because it allows them to take risks and push themselves beyond their current capabilities. Self-identity makes it easier for women to pursue their dreams and businesses.

**2. Perseverance :** Successful women entrepreneurs exhibit perseverance as a characteristic. They persist in their goals, even when faced with setbacks or difficult times. Perseverance is essential to success in any field, but it is essential for women Entrepreneurs, who often face additional challenges and obstacles. While many factors contribute to success as an Entrepreneur, one of the essential qualities is perseverance. Successful female entrepreneurs understand that they will only achieve their goals after some time and are willing to work hard throughout the process. They don't give up easily, no matter how tough the challenge may seem.

**3. Leadership :** Leadership is a crucial characteristic of successful women entrepreneurs. It is the ability to guide, motivate and direct people to achieve a common goal. Leadership skills are essential when it comes to being a successful woman entrepreneur. It is because leading a team and managing resources effectively is vital for success. While some leadership attributes are innate, it is also possible to learn them. One of the most important things a woman entrepreneur can do is develop strong relationships

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with her team members. It means listening and empathizing with them while setting clear expectations and communicating effectively.

**4. Creativity** :Creativity is one of your key selling points as a successful woman entrepreneur. It's no secret that being creative can be a critical component of business success, and it's something women are known for at work. Creative thinking is essential in developing new ideas and solutions, so many see it as a vital characteristic of a successful woman entrepreneur.

**5. Resourcefulness** : Resourcefulness is a common characteristic of successful women entrepreneurs. They are typically able to think outside the box, develop innovative ways to solve problems and be versatile in their approach to work.

It is a strength when starting a business, as it allows them to be flexible and innovative in their approach to problem-solving. Additionally, being resourceful allows women entrepreneurs to adapt quickly to changing circumstances. For instance, if their business model changes or they face new competition, they can quickly adjust without undergoing extensive restructuring or layoffs.

**6. Adaptability** : Successful women entrepreneurs are known for their adaptability. An adaptable woman can easily adjust to changing circumstances and be able to move quickly and confidently to take advantage of opportunities. They can shift gears and change their plans when needed to succeed. This trait is essential for any businessperson but particularly important for women entrepreneurs who often face challenges and obstacles.

**7. Organizational Skills** : Organizational skills are essential for any successful women entrepreneur. A successful women entrepreneur demonstrates her organizational skills when organizing and managing tasks, keeping track of deadlines, and establishing and maintaining communication with team members.

**8. Communication and Networking Skills** : Successful women entrepreneurs typically have strong communication and networking skills. These skills are essential for building successful partnerships and managing relationships with others, both within their businesses and outside of it. They must communicate their ideas, goals, and plans effectively to others and keep track of multiple projects simultaneously.

**9. Passion and Determination** :Passion and determination are two essential characteristics of successful women entrepreneurs. Passion refers to a burning desire to achieve something, while determination is the mental strength and perseverance needed to see a goal through to completion. These qualities are essential for any individual but are particularly important for women entrepreneurs, who often face unique challenges in their fields.

## **Role of Women Entrepreneurs in India's Economic Development: Discussion**

The world is now an 8-billion-strong community, with India having the second-largest population after China. A salient feature in India's population story is the unique advantage of a demographic

dividend. This dividend, if utilised effectively, can fuel the country to become a global powerhouse. However, India's growth story, by and large, has been male-dominated. Unfortunately, the job creation rate has outpaced the population growth rate, resulting in widespread unemployment and underemployment. Entrepreneurship is a viable solution to bridge this gap since it generates livelihood for the youth and contributes to economic development.

It is noteworthy that neither has improvement in social demographic parameters led to a subsequent boost in women's participation in the workforce nor has it led to their development. As a matter of fact, India has among the lowest participation of women in the workforce. A study by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy has shown that women graduates are 3.5 times more likely to be unemployed than their male counterparts. These figures are expected to exacerbate over time without any remedial action. A Bain and Company report on Women Entrepreneurship predicts that India's working-age population will reach one billion by 2030 with the entry of 54 million women into the workforce, necessitating 400 million jobs for women alone.

The role of women's entrepreneurship becomes paramount in addressing the unemployment problem, contributing to their vertical mobility and economic development. Mainstreaming of women's entrepreneurship is known to generate a multiplier effect by enabling more conscious reproductive choices, higher education and better health for self and family. Moreover, the role of women is paramount to promoting empathy-led institutions which are people-centric and focus on efficiency.

It is heartening that some efforts have been made in this direction. For instance, the Ministry of Micro Small Medium Enterprises mandates that government departments and public sector undertakings must aim at 25% procurement from the MSME sector, of which 3% must be women-owned. Moreover, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, in collaboration with GIZ, provides incubation and accelerating programs for women micro-entrepreneurs to start new businesses and scale up existing businesses as part of the economic empowerment of Women Enterprises and Start-up by women scheme. The past few years have also witnessed the rise of women-centric incubators, accelerators and venture capital firms. Ventures such as She Capital, Womennovator, and Built by Girls are empowering women by enabling the ecosystem to scale up their businesses.

However, India ranks abysmally at 41 out of 43 in female entrepreneurial activity in the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2021. India is home to the largest number of women enterprises than any other country; however, these are only 20% of the overall number. So, where does the challenge lie?

At the heart of this problem is limited access to finance. Women need access to diverse and customised products that cater to their requirements. Moreover, procedural requirements such as collaterals and excessive documentation limit their access to loans. Being a male-dominated society, men are primary owners of asset titles, which hinders women's ability to use them in finance. Gendered stereotypes which consider household duties as women's primary responsibility, low financial literacy and limited access to mentorship and support opportunities are other challenges.

Blended finance mechanisms such as a first loss default guarantee, a mix of seed capital and debt at a lower interest rate is a positive step in this direction. Sensitisation of the investor community to gendered financial access and capacity building for women entrepreneurs in terms of incubation and acceleration opportunities will go a long way in mainstreaming women entrepreneurship in India. There is also a need for appropriate datasets to allow tracking and benchmarking of competitive women-owned enterprises across regions. Replicating effective mentorship models across the country is the best way to benchmark best practices and learn from them. The role of government-led initiatives powered by public-private partnerships will strengthen the institutional support for women entrepreneurs. Moreover, encouraging a culture of celebrating role models through ICT and national campaigns across various channels would be vital if we were to power the women-led entrepreneurial revolution. The road ahead may be daunting but worthwhile in the long run.

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**Measures for Development of Women Entrepreneurs**

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Right efforts on all areas are required in the development of women entrepreneurs and their greater participation in the entrepreneurial activities. Following measures can be taken into account for effective development of women entrepreneurs.

1. Consider women as specific target group for all developmental programmes.
2. Better educational facilities and schemes should be extended to women folk from Government part.
3. Adequate training programmes on management skills to be provided to women community.
4. Encourage women's participation in decision making.
5. Vocational training to be extended to women community that enables them to understand the production process and production management.
6. Skill development to be done in women's polytechnics and industrial training institutes.
7. Districts Industries centers and single window agencies should make use of assisting women in their trade and business guidance.
8. Involvement of Non Governmental organizations in women entrepreneurial training programs and counseling.
9. A women entrepreneurs guidance cell setup to handle the various problems of women entrepreneurs.

**Conclusion**

Women's contributions to the process of growth and development have been taken into account. Our culture needs to adjust its mentality about the place of women entrepreneurs. This will result in the creation of a welcoming environment where women will emerge and display their talents.

Today, our government is more concerned with the entire economic advancement of women, and as a result, female entrepreneurship has risen to the top of the list of policy priorities.

As entrepreneurship is becoming the backbone of the economy. Promotion of women entrepreneurship has a great impact on country's poverty reduction and economic development.

There are more women with administrative and engineering skills than ever before. However, a significant portion of these technically qualified women choose not to work because of pressure from their families. To use these women's talents, which would otherwise go unused, it is vital to encourage plans for them to become entrepreneurs in the twenty-first century.

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## **Empowerment Issues And Achievements of Rural Women In India**

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India is a land of contradictions. On the one hand women are worshiped as goddesses, without her blessing, the work cannot be started. On the other hand, crimes against women and girls are increasing day by day in India. Accused in most cases it is painful for the victims to know. Offenders may be relatives, neighbours, friends etc. This is growing mistrust can wreak havoc on the Indian social pattern. Patriarchal norms are so entrenched in Indian society that it is very difficult to get out of this entanglement. In most Indian families when girls are born, sometimes even their mothers do not welcome them. They lament that a son would have been a real asset to the family. Raising a girl child is a very expensive affair.

There the loss is as much as the girl gets married and she serves the groom's family for the rest of her life. In India, a woman's life changes a lot after marriage. She leaves her parents' house after marriage and starts living with the groom's family. From childhood, she has to adopt the new family's food habits, clothing, customs, etc got into thinking. So, happy or grudgingly, the groom's family and She develops her identity according to the demands of the groom.

Rural women in India have made remarkable progress and achieved significant milestones in various aspects of life. Rural women are key agents for development. They play a key role towards achievement of transformational Economic, Environmental and Social changes required for sustainable development .But limited access to Credit, Health care and Education are among the many challenges they face. These are further aggravated by the global food and economic crises and climate change. Empowering them is essential, not only for the well-being of individuals ,families and rural communities, but also for overall economic productivity, given women's large presence in the agricultural workforce worldwide .They make significant contributions to agricultural production, food security and nutrition ,land natural resource management and building climate resilience.

The following are some areas where they have excelled:

**Education:** Rural women in India now have better access to education. Initiatives like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and the Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (BBBP) campaign have been implemented by the government to promote girls' education. Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao was launched by the Prime Minister on 22<sup>nd</sup> January,2015 at Panipat, Haryana. Consequently, the literacy rate among rural women has increased, empowering them to pursue higher education and acquire skills for improved employment opportunities. India's Constitution guarantees free primary education for both boys and girls up to age 14.Girls enrolment has increased along the decade long trajectory of increasing female enrolment in schools. This was witnessed across all ages including higher secondary.

**Entrepreneurship and Microfinance:** The entrepreneurial spirit of rural women is commendable as they have established their own businesses. Self-help groups (SHGs) and microfinance institutions have played a crucial role in empowering these women by providing financial support, training, and mentorship. Through these initiatives, women have been able to start small enterprises, generate income, and contribute to the economic growth of their communities.

Microfinance is a banking service provided to low-income individuals or groups who otherwise would have no other access to financial services. Microfinance allows people to take on reasonable small business loans safely, in a manner that is consistent with ethical lending practices.Microfinance works effectively in empowering women by increasing their courage and

also those of self-esteem and lets you avail of the formation of different networks with those of other women in their community. The study found that MFIs play a significant role in enhancing micro-entrepreneurs. MFIs provide loan services, consultation, training, and business monitoring services. The study found that most of the respondents (51.67%) identified that a high-interest rate is a strong barrier in impeding entrepreneur development.

One of the objectives of microfinance is to enhance women's empowerment and to generate employment opportunities by promoting self-employment that consequently improves the social well-being of poor people

**Women's Self-Help Groups:** Women's Self-Help Groups have been instrumental in empowering rural women in India. These groups provide a platform for women to come together, share experiences, learn new skills, and collectively work towards their social and economic progress. Activities such as savings and credit, livelihood generation, health and sanitation programs, and advocacy for women's rights are carried out by these groups. Self-Help Groups (SHGs) are innovative organizational setup in India to uplift women, to provide economic freedom and welfare. All women in India are given chance to join any one of SHGs for and they can be a potential entrepreneur and skilled worker. India has around 2.5 million self-help groups operating in rural areas. 8-10 women join together and work as a group in remote areas of the country. A registered or unregistered SHG comprises a group of micro entrepreneurs partaking homogeneous social and financial backgrounds, all voluntarily joining together to agreeing to contribute to a common fund and to meet their needs. Members of the group accumulate available resources to become financially stable, taking loans from banks and make everybody in that group self-employed. Rural women entrepreneurs can avail loan under National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) scheme up to Rs. 3 lakh from banks at the rate of 7 per cent interest per annum and they also get further subsidy of 3 per cent interest of timely repayment. There has been an inspiring growth of microfinance activities in India over the past decade majorly contributed by Self Help Group (SHG) Bank Linkage programs that originated in the 1980s.

SHGs are linked with banks in availing loans. The Self Help Group (SHG) Bank Linkage Programme (SBLP) was formally launched in the year 1992 by National Bank for Agriculture Research and Development (NABARD) and supported by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Micro-financing is supported by self-help groups with minimum procedures at their door steps. It also enables people to be sensible about their expenditure, income and saving pattern and helps them in improving their standard of living. Microfinance organisations use a group structure to dispense their loan to their clients. This structure for micro financial services evolved particularly in Latin America, India and Bangladesh and NABARD made it popular in India. Thus there are many alternatives of using group for financial intermediation. Self Help Groups are savings and credit groups and accessibility of loans from banks which helps them to meet their credit needs of income generation through self-employment.

This study focuses on the role of microcredit through self-help groups in rural women empowerment and satisfaction. The study tries to understand the satisfaction level of rural women entrepreneurs in utilizing the benefits of micro credit. Some of the women entrepreneurs join self-help groups based on various interests, therefore their interests towards joining SHG is also focused. Role of SHG, perception of rural women entrepreneurs on micro credit is studied.

**Agriculture and Farming:** Women play a crucial role in India's rural agricultural sector. They actively participate in various agricultural activities such as sowing, harvesting, and post-harvest processing. Organizations and government initiatives have focused on improving women's access to resources, credit facilities, training, and technology, enabling them to enhance productivity and income in agriculture.

Rural women perform numerous labour intensive jobs such as weeding, hoeing, grass cutting, picking, cotton stick collection, separation of seeds from fibre, keeping of livestock and its other associated activities like milking, milk processing, preparation of ghee, etc. In India, Agriculture employs about 80 percent of rural women.

DFS has six schemes namely Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), Atal Pension Yojana (APY), Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) and Stand-Up India (SUPI) for financial inclusion and entrepreneurship development of people.

**Health and Sanitation:** Rural women in India have witnessed progress in accessing healthcare services and improving their overall well-being. Initiatives like the National Rural Health Mission aim to strengthen healthcare infrastructure in rural areas. Awareness campaigns on maternal and child health, family planning, and sanitation have contributed to better health outcomes for rural women and their families. Women face higher risk of malnutrition, retardation in growth and development, disease, disability and even death in the age group between 14-45 years. Women face higher risk of malnutrition, retardation in growth and development, disease, disability and even death in the age group between 14-45 years. Female children though biologically stronger when born than their counterparts have morbidity and mortality rates higher than the males. Improve sanitation facilities by providing toilets and latrines that flush into a sewer or safe enclosure. Promote good hygiene habits through education. Proper hand washing with soap and water can reduce diarrhoea cases.

**Political Participation:** Over the years, rural women's political participation has increased significantly. They actively engage in local governance bodies like Panchayati Raj Institutions, with reserved positions for women. This has provided them with a platform to voice their concerns, participate in decision-making processes, and influence policies that directly impact their communities.

**Legal Empowerment:** Various efforts have been made to empower rural women through legal measures and awareness campaigns. Laws such as the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, the Dowry Prohibition Act, and the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act have provided rural women with legal protection and recourse against different forms of discrimination and violence.

Despite these accomplishments, it is crucial to acknowledge that challenges persist, including gender-based violence, unequal access to resources, and deeply rooted patriarchal norms. Nonetheless, the progress made by rural women in India stands as a testament to their resilience, determination, and the transformative power of empowerment initiatives aimed at improving their lives.

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## Women In Politics: Achievements And Challenges

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### Abstract:

The development of any country depends on the status of women in that country and the level of gender equality in parliamentary politics is determined by the proportion of women in that country's legislature. With a female population of over 66 crore, India is one of the largest and most robust parliamentary democracies in the world. But Women have always faced hardships in a male-dominated society. Political participation is one of the major issues facing women in our country today. Women are not getting proper political participation in our country. This situation must be changed. It is the responsibility of all to strengthen women in our country not only socially, economically and mentally but also politically.

This paper aims to examine the political participation of women in our country, opportunities given to women in the constitution and the low representation of women in the legislatures, especially the Lok Sabha. This paper also makes appropriate suggestions for increasing the representation of women in the legislatures,

**Key words:** Gender equality, Legislature, Parliamentary democracy, Political participation.

### Introduction:

Due to the social norms and beliefs of the patriarchal system, women in India have historically been marginalized and exploited. Social reform movements have been successful in promoting the welfare and empowerment of women. Despite these positive developments, there is still a long way to go before women's political participation in India reaches parity with men. Women still face significant barriers to political participation, including discrimination, violence and lack of access to resources. In addition, implementation of these laws and initiatives is often inadequate, and social attitudes and cultural biases continue to discourage women from entering politics and leadership roles.

Overall, the journey of women's political participation in India has been slow but steady, marking both progress and setbacks. However, with increasing efforts to promote gender equality and growing recognition of the importance of women's political participation, there is hope that this journey will lead to a more inclusive and representative political scene in India.

### Political participation of women in our country:

Many women leaders such as Indira Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi, Sushma Swaraj, Jayalalithaa, Mayawati and Mamata Banerjee have made significant contributions in Indian politics, rising to key leadership positions, heads of states and Prime Ministers of India. Achieving gender equality in politics in India is not a one-size-fits-all solution, but a multi-pronged approach that involves changes in the electoral system, greater financial support for women candidates and a change in social attitudes towards women in politics. It aims to create an inclusive political landscape that is representative of the population it serves and to enable women to participate fully and equally in the political process. There is a growing movement to promote gender equality and increase women's participation in politics, with many grassroots organizations working to support women's political aspirations.

**Constitutional safeguards for women in our constitution:** The Constitution guarantees that women have the same rights as men, and prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex. Women have the right to education and the state is directed to make efforts to provide free and

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compulsory education to children up to the age of 14. Women have the right to vote and participate in the political process, and are entitled to be represented in the government. Women have the right to own and inherit property, and are protected against discriminatory inheritance laws.

Women have the right to work and choose their occupation, and are entitled to equal pay and working conditions as men. Indian law provides for the protection of women from domestic violence, and the government is required to take measures to protect women from such violence.

Women have the right to seek remedies for any violation of their rights through the courts, and can challenge any discriminatory laws or practices. Article 15(4) allows the state to make special provisions for women and children. Women are entitled to Maternity Relief under the Maternity Benefit Act, of 1961. The Constitution guarantees the right to live with dignity and freedom from exploitation to all citizens, including women.

These rights, along with other laws and policies, aim to empower and protect women in India.

The Election Commission of India has also taken steps to increase women's participation in the electoral process, encourage women to register to vote, and promote women's representation in the electoral process as polling officers.

### **Women in local politics**

The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments were introduced in 1992 to provide more opportunities for local level planning, effective implementation and monitoring of various social and economic development programs in the country. One of the most important features of these amendments was the provision of one-third seats in local body elections to women. This policy has led to a significant increase in women's political participation at the local level and currently 20 of India's 28 states have increased reservation to 50 percent.

### **Important constitutional provisions:**

**Article 14** - Men and women shall have equal rights and opportunities in the political, economic and social spheres.

**Article 15(1)** - Prohibits discrimination against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, etc.

**Article 15(3)** - Special provision allowing the State to discriminate in favor of women.

**Article 16** - Equal opportunities for all citizens in public appointments.

**Article 23**- Prohibits Trafficking in Human and Forced Labour

**Article 39(a)** - The State directs its policy towards securing to all citizens and women, equally, the right to livelihood.

**Article 39(d)** - Equal pay for equal work for both men and women.

**Article 42** - The State shall ensure just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief.

**Article 51 (a) (e)** - Renunciation of practices degrading to the dignity of women

**Article 300 (A)** - Right to property

**Challenges in Women’s Representation:**

Social stereotypes, male-dominated political party structure, family responsibilities, lack of resources and various institutional barriers prevent women from contesting and winning state or parliamentary elections. The patriarchal mindsets that plague India’s male-dominated party structures make it difficult for women politicians to win party nominations to stand in parliamentary elections. Women politicians are constantly subjected to insults, inappropriate comments, abuse and threats of abuse, making it very challenging to participate and contest elections. Women candidates receive fewer tickets from political parties because it is still widely believed in the political community that they have less chance of winning elections than men. Female members of political dynasties are also likely to be assigned “safe” seats, seats held by a male relative where their success is almost guaranteed.

Election campaigns in India are very demanding and time consuming. Because of their responsibilities for family and childcare, women politicians often struggle to fully engage. In fact, research shows that having a supportive family is essential for women leaders to pursue a full-fledged political career. Financing campaigns is another obstacle as many women depend on their families for financial support. The cost of contesting parliamentary elections is very high and substantial financial resources are required to mount a serious effort. There is also the danger of criminal politics, in which strength is more important than intelligence. As a result, women are more inclined to contest reserved seats, which are known to be less competitive and therefore less influenced by money and muscle.

**Women’s Representation in Parliament**

Despite a large increase in the number of women participating in elections, data on women’s representation in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha indicate that the proportion of women representatives has remained low in comparison to their male counterparts.

The table below shows how low the representation of women in Parliament is.

YEAR	LOK SABHA				RAJYA SABHA			
	SEATS	No. of	women MPs	% of Women MPs	SEATS	No. of	women MPs	% of Women MPs
1952	499		22	4.41%	219		16	7.31
1957	500		27	5.40%	237		18	7.59
1962	503		34	6.76%	238		18	7.56
1967	523		31	5.93%	240		20	8.33
1971	521		22	4.22%	243		17	7.00
1977	544		19	3.49%	244		25	10.25
1980	544		28	5.15%	244		24	9.84
1984	544		44	8.09%	244		28	11.48
1989	517		27	5.22%	245		24	9.80
1991	544		39	7.17%	245		38	15.51
1996	543		39	7.18%	223		19	8.52
1998	543		43	7.92%	245		15	6.12

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1999	543	49	9.02%	245	19	7.76
2004	543	45	8.29%	245	28	11.40
2009	543	58	10.68%	245	22	8.98
2014	543	62	12.15%	245	31	12.7
2019	543	78	14.44%	245	25	10.00

**Source:** 1. Indian Polity by M. Lakshmikanth - Fifth Edition 2. Dr Jayaprakash Narayan (Lok Satta, Hyderabad) Dhirubhai Sheth (Lokayan, Delhi) Yogendra Yadav (CSDS, Delhi) Madhu Kishwar (Manushi, New Delhi).

### **What can be done to improve women's representation in legislatures?**

Women's representation in legislatures can be improved by taking the following steps

1. By increasing the literacy rate.
2. By reserving certain seats for women in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.
3. Statutory commitment to ensure a fair proportion of women in elected bodies.
4. **The Women's Reservation Bill**, which proposes to reserve 33% of the seats in the Lok Sabha and state legislatures for women, should be passed and implemented immediately.
5. Political parties should also provide adequate representation to women members.
6. By organizing a public seminar on women's political participation:
7. Workshops should be conducted at village level through voter education
8. By training women candidates in campaign skills
9. By mobilizing a media campaign promoting women's political participation.

### **The End:**

Women should be given more opportunities in the political field. Reforms in the political sphere are urgently needed. There should be more awareness campaigns to inform women on the importance of maintaining political power at higher levels and diversifying leadership positions. Women need to be more involved in politics and hold key high positions in order to eliminate corruption and the ongoing discrimination against women in the country.

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## **Government Initiatives for Developing Women Entrepreneurship in India : An Overview**

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### **Abstract**

Women entrepreneurs are crucial to the economic growth of any country, which can be realized only by encouraging equality and increasing opportunity for women in all walks of life. Women secure higher than the Men in key skills related to a business enterprise viz., team work, problem solving and orientation. Women in India run around 8 million enterprises constituting about 14 per cent of the total entrepreneurs. The figure may not be encouraging, when we see that women constitute 48.95% of the population but the situation is in a way promising as 35.5% of start ups have women as Directors and 58% of entrepreneurs started their business at the age of 20 to 30 years. Ministry of Women and Child Development has been working to remove all inequalities for women to become successful entrepreneur's and to create conducive environment for providing support in different areas, where they have been facing difficulties due to explicit reasons such as , access to finance, access to latest skills and technology, access to market and business skills. A large number of programmes has been undertaken by different Ministries of Government of India for encouraging entrepreneurship in the country. Hence, a modest attempt has been made to study the "Government Initiatives for Developing Women Entrepreneurship in India".

### **KEY WORDS**

Women Entrepreneurship, National Policy for Women, Economic Empowerment of Women, Employment Programmes, Government Schemes.

### **Introduction**

The emergence of entrepreneurs in a society depends to a great extent, on the economic, social, religious, cultural and psychological factors prevailing in the society. In the advanced countries of the world, there is a phenomenal increase in the number of self-employed women after the World War II. In the U.S., women own 25 per cent of all businesses, even though their sales on an average are less, than two-fifths of those of other small businesses. Women are no longer confined to the hearth and home. The entrepreneurial capacity of women has made a mark in many areas and women have entered the industrial segment, too. It is time to foster and harness the entrepreneurship of women in a big way. According to the second census of small-scale industries, women entrepreneurs accounted for 7.7 per cent of the total small-scale enterprises in India. Though their share is less than 10 per cent, the heartening feature is that it is steadily increasing. A stage is set for social take-off for women from a low development path to an accelerated pace is achieving a higher level of self-sustaining economic growth. Women entrepreneurs have to graduate from a state of dependence of subsidies/concessions to that of seizing opportunities as they emerge in an open and competitive modern economy. Women are now more cognisant about their existence, roles and rights. Women entrepreneurs are those who explore new paths of economic involvement and contribution. Women entrepreneurs have been making a significant

impact in all segments of the economy in Canada, Great Britain, Germany, Australia and the United States. The areas chosen by women are retail trade, restaurants, and hotels, education, cultural, cleaning, insurance and manufacturing.

## **Objectives**

The objectives of this paper are ;

- To know the initiatives taken by the government for promoting Women Entrepreneurship in India.
- To analyse various policies and programmes undertaken by the government for encouraging Women Entrepreneurship.

## **Research Methodology**

The present study is carried on by using secondary data. The secondary data has been collected from various sources viz ; Journals, Magazines, News Papers, Books and Websites.

## **Entrepreneurship : Definition and Meaning**

According to GOI, “An enterprise owned and controlled by a woman having a minimum financial interest of 51% of the capital and giving at least 51% of the employment generated in the enterprise to women.”

According to Kamal Singh, “A women entrepreneur can be defined as a confident, innovative and creative women capable of achieving self-economic independence individually or in collaboration, generates employment opportunities for others through initiating, establishing and running the enterprise by keeping pace with her personal, family and social life.”

According to Ruhani J. Alice, “Women entrepreneurship is based on women participation in equity and employment of a business enterprise.”

Thus, women entrepreneurs are those who think of business enterprise, initiate it, organize and combine the factors of production, operate the enterprise, undertake risks and handle economic uncertainty by having a controlling interest in that particular enterprise.

## **Government Initiatives to Promote Women Entrepreneurship in India**

There are different schemes and initiatives through which the government of India is giving funding and support to women entrepreneurs:-

### **1) The Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP)**

The Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) was launched by NITI AYOOG with the motive of providing an ecosystem for upcoming young women entrepreneurs across the country. NITI AYOOG has partnered with SIDBI to promote and implement this initiative. Apart from providing services such as free credit, mentorship, funding support to women entrepreneurs and corporate partnerships, WEP also provides entrepreneurs a platform to share their entrepreneurial journey, stories and experiences. Entrepreneurs who are at the ideation stage of their startups can register under the scheme to avail of its benefits.

## **2) Bharatiya Mahila Bank**

The Bharatiya Mahila Bank was founded with the motive of providing financial assistance to underprivileged women who want to start their own business. In 2017 it was merged with the SBI. In the manufacturing sector, the bank is offering loans as high as 20 lakhs to the women entrepreneurs. The Bharatiya Mahila Bank has the authorization to issue a loan up to 1 Crore without any collateral to be paid. Apart from the manufacturing sector, this bank has permission to give loans to Small scale enterprises and in the retail sector.

### **3) Dena Shakti Scheme**

This loan scheme is a solution for all women entrepreneurs who want to make a business out in the manufacturing and food processing sectors. Under the scheme women, entrepreneurs have sanctioned loans up to 20 lakhs under the category of housing, retail, and education. The scheme also provides concessions of 0.25 percent on the interest rates.

### **4) Mudra Yojana Scheme**

This is one of the top schemes launched by the government of India to enthusiastic women entrepreneurs who are looking to start a small business with minimum efforts such as beauty parlours, retail shops or tuition centres. The scheme does not require any collaterals but it is divided into several schemes that target different stages of businesses. For businesses in the initial stage the maximum loan granted is INR 50,000. For well-established businesses, the scheme offers loan amount which varies from INR 50,000 to 5 Lakhs. And, lastly for well-established businesses looking to expand its operations and geographical presence the scheme offers loans up to 10 lakhs.

### **5) Annapurna Scheme**

This is one of the first schemes introduced by the government of India to uplift the condition of women entrepreneurship in India way back in the year 2000. At present, the scheme is offered by the Bharatiya Mahila Bank. Under this scheme, the government of India provides women entrepreneurs in the food, beverage and catering industry, loans up to INR 50,000. The best part is that the Interest rate of this loan varies according to the market rates.

### **6) Shree Shakti loan for women entrepreneurs**

This is a unique scheme run under SBI to support women entrepreneurship by providing certain concessions. To avail the scheme women entrepreneurs have to first enroll themselves in the Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) – a training program initiated to develop entrepreneurial skills and skills that are required to run a business successfully. This scheme enables women to avail loans at a concession of 0.005 percent on loans exceeding 2 lakhs.

## **Encouraging Women Entrepreneurship-Current Policies and Programmes**

The following policies and programmes have been undertaken are encouraging Women Entrepreneurship in India

### **1. Start up India Programme**

was launched in February 2016 and over the period it had become the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest start-up ecosystem in the world, providing handholding, funding support, incentives, industry –academic partnership to provide conducive environment for start ups in the Country. A corpus fund of 10,000 crores has been earmarked for the programme to build a strong ecosystem by nurturing innovation and start-ups. 10% of the corpus fund is reserved for women led start-

ups.Thiswouldactascatalystincreatinganenablingenvironmentforinnovations start-ups to flourish, having a multiple effect on employment generation and socialtransformationleading togrowth.

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**PrimeMinister’sEmploymentGenerationProgramme(PMEGP)EmploymentGenerationProgramme.**

theschemebeingimplementedbyKhadiandVillageIndustriesCommission as the nodal agency through KVIC Directorates, State Khadi and Village industriesBoard (KVIBs), District Industries Centres and Banks. It is credit linked subsidy scheme topromote and set up MSME’S and togenerateemployment in rural and urban areas. Forsettingup new enterprises, subsidy level in the Programme to special categories ,including women, is25%and35%inurbanareasandruralareas,ascomparedto15%and25%inrespectiveareasforGeneral Category

**3. Udhya Shakti Portal for Women Entrepreneurs:**An initiative of Ministry of Micro, Smalland Medium Enterprises, launched onthe eve of International Women’s day 2018, for nurturingsocialentrepreneurshipcreatingbusinessmodel,revolvingaroundlowcostproductsandservices. It caters to theneed of around 8 million Indian women and others to start, built andgrow business and provide assistance for preparing business plan, incubation facility, trainingprograms, providing mentor, market survey facility etc. Project with maximum cost of Rs.25lakhs are covered under the Scheme (Rs.10 lakhs cost is for service based projects). The portalhas been incessantly involved in revolutionizing the role of women outside the four walls of theirhome.

**4. Economic empowerment of Women Enterprises and Start-up by women in collaborationwithaGermanBasedDevelopmentAuthority**isaninitiativeofMinistryofSkillDevelopment and Entrepreneurs and provide incubation and accelerating program for womenmicro entrepreneurs to start new business andscale up existing enterprises. At present, theprojectis in operation intheStates of Assam,Rajasthan and Telangana.

**5. Stand up India Scheme:** As part of MSME Policy, the Program was launched in 5<sup>th</sup> April2016 for facilitating credit to women entrepreneurs with an objective of providing loans rangingfrom Rs.1 lakhs to Rs.1 Crore to at least one woman entrepreneur by one Bank each. . In case ofnon-individualenterprisecoveredundertheScheme,51percentofthesharecapitalandcontrolling stake should be that of the women. The scheme focus on only SC/ST and womenentrepreneurs.

**6. CreditGuaranteeFundTrustforMicroandSmallEnterprises(CGTMSE):**SmallIndustries Development Bank ofIndia (SIDBI) and Ministry of Micro, Small and MediumEnterprises launched the scheme to make available collateral-free credit to the micro and smallenterprisesector.Boththeexistingandthenewenterprisesareeligible tobecoveredunderthe scheme. for which a Trust named Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises(CGTMSE) to implement the Credit Guarantee Fund Scheme for Micro and Small Enterpriseshasbeen established to providecredit facilities up to Rs 200 lakh per eligible borrowercoveredprovided they are extended on the project viability without collateral security or third partyguarantee.

**7 . Micro & Small Enterprises - Cluster Development Programme :**The Ministry of Micro,Theobjective of the scheme is to support the sustainability and growth of MSEs by addressingcommon issues such as improvement of technology, skills & quality, market access, etc, capacitybuilding through formation of self help groups, consortia, set up Common Facility Centres (fortesting, training, raw material depot, effluent treatment, complementing production processes, et)WomenOwnedenterprisesaregiven specialconsideration in alltheprogrammes.

## **Conclusion**

All these initiatives have one thing in common; they were designed keeping in mind the objective of strengthening the position of women entrepreneurs in this country. However, the appropriate implementation of these schemes is easier said than done. The motive behind such initiatives and schemes has always been positive and if implemented successfully it has the potential to change the entrepreneurial landscape in India.

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## Achievements and challenges to women education in Indian Society

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### Abstract:

This paper constitutes some challenges & achievements of women in education. Women education is always being a concern issues, Government has taken many measures and improved many schemes for women education. The women proving themselves in getting education in all fields of STEM (science, Technologies, Engineering & Mathematics). This paper aims at to aware about the social evils which are restricting the literacy of women. Men are more likely to be educated on a global average, although higher literacy rate scores for women are widespread in many countries.

### Introduction:

Nowadays, the importance of women education is growing day by day. An Educated women can lead her life independently. The education for women is not only important for her employment but also important for her survival in day today life. Women literacy rate raising in the modern days, women literacy rate was 22% in 1971 which increased to 54.16% in 2001. To get education women have to face many challenges like gender discrimination, poverty, unhygienic conditions etc. Though they have so many obstacles but still women are getting so many achievements by their education.

Status is a social position one occupies in a society with its associated advantages and obligations. Being a part of the social web, this position is linked naturally to other social positions. In a purely sociological sense, status does not imply any grading, ranking or hierarchy among different social positions. However, the very fact that a particular social position carries certain benefits, privileges or power and these positions are related to each other, some status positions are seen as superior to others. It is in this context that the status or position of women is seen as inferior to that of men in any given society. Each or status position is expressed in terms of a Role. Role denotes a set of expectations and obligations associated with a particular status position within a group or social situation. The expectations and obligations entailed by a role are in terms of activities and qualities. (GOI, CSWI, 1974) In short, while status defines who a person is, role defines what such a person is expected to do.

**Challenges:** only 49% of countries have achieved gender equality in primary education, 42% in lower secondary education and 24% in upper secondary education. The following are some challenges which are facing by women in education.

- **Gender-bias:** The sex-discrimination in the education system affecting both men & women during and after their educational experiences.it a well known fact that some religious systems are restricting women to get higher education only the cause is that gender discrimination. In some communities their relegious system didn't allow them to go outside to get education. The gender-bias is become the social evil for getting education. Women have to fight with this social evil if she want's education if she want to go outside.
- **Poverty:** In developing Countries, the poverty is become another social evil towards women education. Because, the poverty forced women for earning side. Many women are not allowed for getting education because of their financial conditions. In developing countries, the poor people percentage is higher, their financial conditions and social conditions may force them for earning.

- **Early Marriages:** The early marriages are also become the one reason that women are not allowed to get higher education. A married women are always worried about their family conditions. So, they may not show interest towards their education, even some relegious systems are forced women to get early marriage , poverty is also one of the reason for early marriage. Thus, the early marriage is a social evil that restricting the girl to get higher education.
- **Sexual harassments:** when someone is sexually harassed in school, it may lead to stop her education at school level this may effect on other girl's education. In all fields women get harassed by opposite gender, this social evil become a fear in the minds of girls and parents, thus, this social evil is also become an reason for restricting women education.
- **Unhygienic conditions:** only 47% of schools in India had separate, functional restrooms for girls to manage their menstrual cycles. At the growing stage of girls the menstrual cycle is very hard period for girls to manage this period they need some sanitation facilities and hygienic conditions. Lack of sanitation and hygienic conditions girls are stopping their education at school level. The unhygienic conditions are the major challenge facing by women.

**Achievements:** women had played a crucial role in shaping the academic landscape. Despite facing many challenges, women have proven themselves their excellency in all STEM fields i.e., Sciences, Technologies, Engineering & Mathematics. The UNESCO believes that having more women in STEM fields is desirable. Givi Spangnolo is the first women who gets graduation from the university of Palermo in Italy. The first women to earn a medical degree was Elizibeth Blackwell in 1849. Then, women have continued to make medical profession. In India Anandi Gopalrao Joshi was the first Indian female doctor of Western medicine. Not only in medical field but, in all other fields the gender gap has been reduced to get education. Many women are become professionals in all STEM fields. They are showing their excellency and proficiency in all fields.

**Conclusion:** women literacy rate raising in the modern days. Women education got important. In India women education become a compulsory concern and female literacy has gone higher. As a result, government has take many measures to provide education to women, the growth of female literacy rate was more than male literacy rate which was about 14.87% as compared to 11.72% of that of male. While women literacy rate was 22% in 1971 which increased to 54.16% in 2001. Men tended to receive more education than women in the past, but the gender gap in education has reversed in recent decades.

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## Women and Health: A Review on common Health problems of women in India

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### Abstract:

With the second-largest population in the world, India is home to over 1.3 billion people. At an average of two children born per woman in 2018, the country's birth rate stood at 18.6 for every thousand inhabitants. The average life expectancy has seen a consistent increase since the 1920s and was around 69 years in 2019. However, this was still lower than the global average of around 72 years. That same year, the country's death rate was recorded at about 7.3 deaths for every thousand inhabitants. Infant mortality has also been on a steady decline over the years due to increased attention to providing special newborn care units, routine immunization and access to basic mother and child care facilities. Moreover, female infanticide and gender-selective abortions have seen a relative decline in the country ever since government regulations made such procedures illegal. This paper tries to explain common health problems faced by Indian women.

### Introduction:

**Women's health in India** can be examined in terms of multiple indicators, which vary by geography, socioeconomic standing and culture. To adequately improve the health of women in India multiple dimensions of wellbeing must be analysed in relation to global health averages and also in comparison to men in India. Health is an important factor that contributes to human wellbeing and economic growth.

Currently, women in India face a multitude of health problems, which ultimately affect the aggregate economy's output. Addressing the gender, class or ethnic disparities that exist in healthcare and improving the health outcomes can contribute to economic gain through the creation of quality human capital and increased levels of savings and investment.

**Gender bias in access to healthcare** : The United Nations ranks India as a middle-income country. Findings from the World Economic Forum indicate that India is one of the worst countries in the world in terms of gender inequality. The 2011 United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report ranked India 132 out of 187 in terms of gender inequality. The value of this multidimensional indicator, Gender Inequality Index (GII) is determined by numerous factors including maternal mortality rate, adolescent fertility rate, educational achievement and labour force participation rate. Gender inequality in India is exemplified by women's lower likelihood of being literate, continuing their education and participating in the labour force.

Gender is one of the main social determinants of health—which include social, economic, and political factors—that play a major role in the health outcomes of women in India and access to healthcare in India. Therefore, the high level of gender inequality in India negatively impacts

the health of women. Studies have indicated that boys are more likely to receive treatment from health care facilities compared to girls, when controlled for SES status.

The low status of—and subsequent discrimination against—women in India can be attributed to many cultural norms. Societal forces of patriarchy, hierarchy and multigenerational families contribute to Indian gender roles. Men use greater privileges and superior rights to create an unequal society that leaves women with little to no power. This societal structure is exemplified with women's low participation within India's national parliament and the labour force.

Women are also seen as less valuable to a family due to marriage obligations. Although illegal, Indian cultural norms often force payment of a dowry to the husband's family. The higher future financial burden of daughters creates a power structure that favours sons in household formation. Additionally, women are often perceived as being incapable of taking care of parents in old age, which creates even greater preference for sons over daughters.<sup>[12]</sup>

Taken together, women are oftentimes seen less valuable than men. With lower involvement in the public sphere—as exemplified by the labour and political participation rates—and the stigma of being less valuable within a family, women face a unique form of gender discrimination.

**Amartya Sen** has attributed access to fewer household resources to their weaker bargaining power within the household. Furthermore, it has been found that Indian women frequently underreport illnesses. The underreporting of illness may be contributed to these cultural norms and gender expectations within the household. Gender also dramatically influences the use of antenatal care and utilisation of immunisations.

**Problems with India's healthcare system :** At the turn of the 21st century India's health care system is strained in terms of the number of healthcare professionals including doctors and nurses. The health care system is also highly concentrated in urban areas. This results in many individuals in rural areas seeking care from unqualified providers with varying results. It has also been found that many individuals who claim to be physicians actually lack formal training. Nearly 25 percent of physicians classified as allopathic (mainstream medical) providers actually had no medical training; this phenomenon varies geographically

Women are negatively affected by the geographic bias within implementation of the current healthcare system in India. Of all health workers in the country, nearly two thirds are men. This especially affects rural areas where it has been found that out of all doctors, only 6 percent are women. This translates into approximately 0.5 female allopathic physicians per 10,000 individuals in rural areas

A disparity in access to maternal care between rural and urban populations is one of the ramifications of a highly concentrated urban medical system.<sup>[17]</sup> According to Government of India National Family Health Survey (NFHS II, 1998–1999) the maternal mortality in rural areas is approximately 132 percent the number of maternal mortality in urban areas

The Indian government has taken steps to alleviate some of the current gender inequalities. In 1992, the government of India established the National Commission for Women. The commission was meant to address many of the inequalities women face, specifically rape, family and

guardianship. However, the slow pace of change in the judicial system and the aforementioned cultural norms have prevented the full adoption of policies meant to promote equality between men and women

In 2005 India enacted the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM). Some of its primary goals were to reduce infant mortality and also the maternal mortality ratio. Additionally, the NHRM aimed to create universal access to public health services and also balance the gender ratio. However, a 2011 research study conducted by Nair and Panda found that although India was able to improve some measures of maternal health since the enactment of the NHRM in 2005, the country was still far behind most emerging economies

Health problems of tribal women

The high incidence of breast lumps among Adivasi women of Adilabad in Telangana has created apprehension of more serious health impacts for this remote population. "Leave alone breast cancer or any other type of carcinoma, even routine mammarian infections were unknown among indigenous people belonging to the Gond, Pardhan, Kolam and Thotti," points out Dr. Thodsam Chandu, the District Immunisation Officer, himself a Gond

Malnutrition and morbidity

Nutrition plays a major role in an individual's overall health; psychological and physical health status is often dramatically impacted by the presence of malnutrition. India currently has one of the highest rates of malnourished women among developing countries. A study in 2000 found that nearly 70 percent of non-pregnant women and 75 percent of pregnant women were anemic in terms of iron-deficiency. One of the main drivers of malnutrition is gender specific selection of the distribution of food resources

A 2012 study by Tarozzi have found the nutritional intake of early adolescents to be approximately equal. However, the rate of malnutrition increases for women as they enter adulthood. Furthermore, Jose et al. found that malnutrition increased for ever-married women compared to non-married women

Maternal malnutrition has been associated with an increased risk of maternal mortality and also child birth defects. Addressing the problem of malnutrition would lead to beneficial outcomes for women and children.

Breast cancer

India is facing a growing cancer epidemic, with a large increase in the number of women with breast cancer. By the year 2020 nearly 70 percent of the world's cancer cases will come from developing countries, with a fifth of those cases coming from India

Much of the sudden increase in breast cancer cases is attributed to the rise in Westernisation of the country. This includes, but is not limited to, westernised diet, greater urban concentrations of women, and later child bearing. Additionally, problems with India's health care infrastructure prevent adequate screenings and access for women, ultimately leading to lower health outcomes

compared to more developed countries As of 2012, India has a shortage of trained oncologists and cancer centres, further straining the health care system.

#### Maternal health

The lack of maternal health contributes to future economic disparities for mothers and their children. Poor maternal health often affects a child's health in adverse ways and also decreases a woman's ability to participate in economic activities Therefore, national health programmes such as the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) and the Family Welfare Programme have been created to address the maternal health care needs of women across India.

Although India has witnessed dramatic growth over the last two decades, maternal mortality remains stubbornly high in comparison to many developing nations As a nation, India contributed nearly 20 percent of all maternal deaths worldwide between 1992 and 2006 Factors contributing to high maternal mortality rates are often associated with utilization of antenatal care (ANC) prior to and during childbirth. Barriers to seeking care include delays in the decision to seek care, arrival at a medical institution, and provision of quality care Autonomy and empowerment are correlated with the decision to seek care; women who are more actively involved in their family's decision-making processes are able to choose to utilize maternal care resources As a result, ANC utilization is lower for Muslim women and women in joint families Custom may also dictate that maternal care is unnecessary particularly during the first trimester which has the lowest rates of ANC utilization.

#### HIV/AIDS

As of July 2005, women represent approximately 40 percent of the HIV/AIDS cases in India The number of infections is rising in many locations in India; the rise can be attributed to cultural norms, lack of education, and lack of access to contraceptives such as condoms. The government public health system does not provide adequate measures such as free HIV testing, only further worsening the problem.

The current mortality rate of HIV/AIDS is higher for women than it is for men As with other forms of women's health in India the reason for the disparity is multidimensional. Due to higher rates of illiteracy and economic dependence on men, women are less likely to be taken to a hospital or receive medical care for health needs in comparison to men This creates a greater risk for women to suffer from complications associated with HIV. There is also evidence to suggest that the presence of HIV/AIDS infection in a woman could result in lower or no marriage prospects, which creates greater stigma for women suffering from HIV/AIDS.

#### Reproductive rights

India legalised abortion through legislation in the early 1970s. However, access remains limited to cities. Less than 20 percent of health care centres are able to provide the necessary services for an abortion. The current lack of access is attributed to a shortage of physicians and lack of equipment to perform the procedure

The most common foetus that is aborted in India is a female one. Numerous factors contribute to the abortion of female foetuses. For example, women who are highly educated and had a first-born female child are the most likely to abort a female. The act of sex-selective abortion has contributed to a skewed male to female ratio. As of the 2011 census, the sex ratio among children aged 0–6 continued a long trend towards more males. The preference for sons over daughters in India is rooted in social, economic and religious reasons. Women are often believed to be of a lower value in society due to their non-breadwinner status. Financial support, old age security, property inheritance, dowry and beliefs surrounding religious duties all contribute to the preference of sons over daughters. One of the main reasons behind the preference of sons is the potential burden of having to find grooms for daughters. Families of women in India often have to pay a dowry and all expenses related to marriage in order to marry off a daughter, which increases the cost associated with having a daughter.

#### Cardiovascular health

Cardiovascular disease is a major contributor to female mortality in India. Indians account for 60% of the world's heart disease burden, despite accounting for less than 20% of the world's population. Indian women have a particular high mortality from cardiac disease and NGOs such as the Indian Heart Association have been raising awareness about this issue. Women have higher mortality rates relating to cardiovascular disease than men in India because of differential access to health care between the sexes. One reason for the differing rates of access stems from social and cultural norms that prevent women from accessing appropriate care. For example, it was found that among patients with congenital heart disease, women were less likely to be operated on than men because families felt that the scarring from surgery would make the women less marriageable.

#### Mental health

Mental health consists of a broad scope of measurements of mental well-being including depression, stress and measurements of self-worth. Numerous factors affect the prevalence of mental health disorders among women in India, including older age, low educational attainment, fewer children in the home, lack of paid employment and excessive spousal alcohol use. There is also evidence to suggest that disadvantages associated with gender increase the risk for mental health disorders. Women who find it acceptable for men to use violence against female partners may view themselves as less valuable than men. In turn, this may lead women to seek out fewer avenues of healthcare inhibiting their ability to cope with various mental disorders.

One of the most common disorders that disproportionately affect women in low-income countries is depression.<sup>1</sup> Indian women suffer from depression at higher rates than Indian men. Indian women who are faced with greater degrees of poverty and gender disadvantage show a higher rate of depression. The difficulties associated with interpersonal relationships—most often marital relationships—and economic disparities have been cited as the main social drivers of depression. It was found that Indian women typically describe the somatic symptoms rather than the emotional and psychological stressors that trigger the symptoms of depression. This often makes it difficult to accurately assess depression among women in India in light of no admonition of

depression Gender plays a major role in postnatal depression among Indian women Mothers are often blamed for the birth of a female child. Furthermore, women who already have a female child often face additional pressures to have male children that add to their overall stress level

Women in India have a lower onset of schizophrenia than men However, women and men differ in the associated stigmas they must face.<sup>[45]</sup> While men tend to suffer from occupational functioning, while women suffer in their marital functioning The time of onset also plays a role in the stigmatisation of schizophrenia Women tend to be diagnosed with schizophrenia later in life, oftentimes following the birth of their children The children are often removed from the care of the ill mother, which may cause further distress

### **Suicide**

Indian women have higher rates of suicide than women in most developed countries. Women in India also have a higher rate of suicide compared to men.<sup>1</sup> The most common reasons cited for women's suicide are directly related to depression, anxiety, gender disadvantage and anguish related to domestic violence

Many of the high rates of suicide found across India and much of south Asia have been correlated with gender disadvantage. Gender disadvantage is often expressed through domestic violence towards women The suicide rate is particularly high among female sex workers in India, who face numerous forms of discrimination for their gender and line of work

### **Domestic violence**

Domestic violence is a major problem in India. Domestic violence—acts of physical, psychological, and sexual violence against women—is found across the world and is currently viewed as a hidden epidemic by the World Health Organization The effects of domestic violence go beyond the victim; generational and economic effects influence entire societies. Economies of countries where domestic violence is prevalent tend to have lower female labour participation rate, in addition to higher medical expenses and higher rates of disability Approximately one third of Indian women experience intimate partner violence (IPV) during their adult years

The prevalence of domestic violence in India is associated with the cultural norms of patriarchy, hierarchy, and multigenerational families Patriarchal domination occurs when males use superior rights, privileges and power to create a social order that gives women and men differential gender roles The resultant power structure leaves women as powerless targets of domestic violence. Men use domestic violence as a way of controlling behaviour In a response to the 2005-2006 India National Family Health Survey III, 31 percent of all women reported having been the victims of physical violence in the 12 months preceding the survey. However, the actual number of victims may be much higher Women who are victimised by domestic violence may underreport or fail to report instances. This may be due to a sense of shame or embarrassment stemming from cultural norms associated with women being subservient to their husbands Furthermore, underreporting by women may occur in order to protect family honour

A 2012 study conducted by Kimuna, using data from the 2005-2006 India National Family Health Survey III, found that domestic violence rates vary across numerous sociological, geographical

and economic measures The study found that the poorest women fared worst among middle and high-income women Researchers believe that the reason for higher rates of domestic violence come from greater familial pressures resulting from poverty. Additionally the study found that women who were part of the labour force faced greater domestic violence. According to the researchers, working women may be upsetting the patriarchal power system within Indian households

Men may feel threatened by the earning potential and independence of women and react violently to shift the gender power structure back in their favour One of the largest factors associated with domestic violence against women was the prevalence of alcohol use by men within the households. A 2005 study conducted by Pradeep Panda and Bina Agarwal found that the incidence of domestic violence against women dropped dramatically with women's ownership of immovable property, which includes land and housing.

**Conclusion :**

Women health is the key indicator in the gender index. Based on the maternal mortality rate and infant mortality rate the progress of the nation can be measure. Neglecting women health may have negative impact on the growth rate of the country. At this time 75 years independence it is need of the hour to focus on the providing effective health care mechanism for maitaing health of the all the women of the country.

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## Political participation and representation of Women in India

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### Abstract:

A truly representative democracy seeks adequate representation of women in politics. India is the largest and one of the most resilient parliamentary democracies in the world. Women's representation in India's Parliament has improved since independence. It is an important metric to evaluate progress in bridging gender inequalities in the country. Women, who constitute almost one-half of the world's population (49.58 percent), have historically been politically marginalized in both developed and developing nations. This paper wants to examine the status of women's representation in the legislature in the world, with specific reference to India. This paper also wants to highlight the reasons and remedies to be addressed to increase the levels of women representation.

From the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, however, social movements have succeeded in effecting widespread reforms. The charter of the United Nations Organization (UNO, started in 1945) supported women's rights. With the rise of feminist movements of the 1960s and '70s, the UN General Assembly in 1979 adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), often considered as an International Bill of Rights for women. In the Convention, Article 7 upholds women's right to hold political and public office. In 2000, UN member states adopted the Millennium Declaration and outlined eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to be achieved by 2015, which included promoting gender equality. In January 2016 the initiative was extended to pursue 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of which Goal 5 seeks to "achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls", ensuring "women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life."

Politics is considered as the field of the men, all throughout the world the tendency is common that, less women are found to be represented in all the legislatures of the world. Though the reservation Bill which proposed for 33 percent of seats for women, it is still pending in the Lok Sabha for approval. In this context it is necessary to have a glance at the statistics that indicate the need for the reforms in the electoral system.

### Global Averages

	Lower chamber and unicameral	Upper chamber	All chambers
<b>Total no. of MPs</b>	37,248	7,062	44,310
<b>Men</b>	27,423	5,255	32,680
<b>Women</b>	9,823	1,807	11,630
<b>Percentage of women</b>	26.4%	25.6%	26.2%

### The present status of Women representation in politics worldwide.

From the above table we can draw the following conclusions.



- **Representative governments increased but women count remains low:** According to UN Women, as of September 2022, there were 30 women serving as elected heads of state and/or of government in 28 countries (out of a total of 193 UN member states).

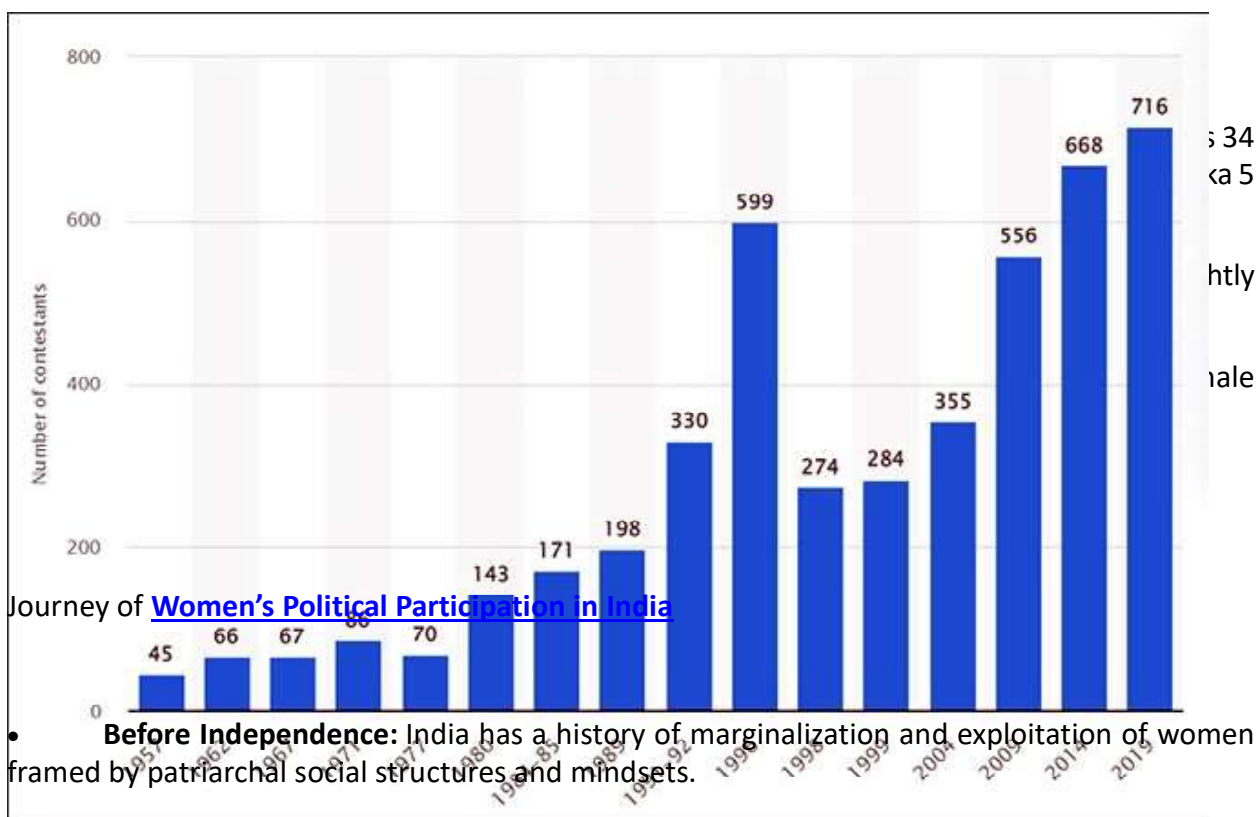
- **Dichotomy in active participation:** There is the dichotomy between the rapid increase of women’s participation as voters in elections and other political activities, and the slow rise of female representation in Parliament.

- **Global average women representation:** As of May 2022, the global average of female representation in national parliaments was 26.2 percent.

- **Above average representation:** The Americas, Europe, and Sub-Saharan Africa have women’s representation above the global average;

- **Below average representation:** Asia, the Pacific region, and the Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA) region, are below average.

**Varied representation within Asian countries:**



- **Before Independence:** India has a history of marginalization and exploitation of women framed by patriarchal social structures and mindsets.

- **Beginning of social reforms and participation in Freedom struggle:** The Indian freedom movement, starting with the *swadeshi* in Bengal (1905-08) also witnessed the impressive participation of women, who organized political demonstrations and mobilized resources, as well as occupied leadership positions in those movements.

- **Post-Independence:** After India attained independence, its Constitution guaranteed equal status for men and women in all political, social and economic spheres.

- **Equality guaranteed by The Constitution:**

- Part III of the Constitution guarantees the fundamental rights of men and women.

- The Directive Principles of State Policy ensure economic empowerment by providing for equal pay for equal work by both men and women, humane conditions of work, and maternity relief.
- Any Indian citizen who is registered as a voter and is over 25, can contest elections to the lower house of Parliament (Lok Sabha) or the state legislative assemblies; for the upper house (Rajya Sabha) the minimum age is 30.
- Articles 325 and 326 of the Constitution guarantee political equality and the right to vote.
- **Reservation for women in local bodies:** In 1992, the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> amendments to the Constitution provided for reservation of one-third of the total number of seats for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and municipal bodies.

**[\* File contains invalid data | In-line.JPG \*]**

## Three main parameters to assess women's participation in politics in India

1. **Women as Voters:** In the last Lok Sabha election of 2019, almost as many women voted as men a watershed in India's progress towards gender equality in politics which has been called a "silent revolution of self-empowerment The increased participation, especially since the 1990s, is attributed to a number of factors.
2. **Women as Candidates:** Overall, however, while women candidates in parliamentary elections have increased over time their proportion compared to male candidates remains low. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, of the total of 8,049 candidates in the fray, less than 9 percent were women.
3. **Women's Representation in Parliament:** Although women's participation as voters in elections has increased significantly, the data on women's representation in both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha suggests that the proportion of women representatives has remained low in comparison to their male counterparts **The highest proportion of women representatives elected to the Lok Sabha** so far was in the 2019 elections, and it was **less than 15 percent of total**

The number of women candidates and MPs varies greatly across states and parties.

- In the present Lok Sabha (17<sup>th</sup>), **Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal have the highest numbers of women MPs.** In terms of percentage, **Goa and Manipur** had fielded the **highest proportion of women candidates.**

Why female representation in Parliament and state legislatures remained low?

- **Inaccessibility of Institutions:** Election records show that most political parties, though pledging in their constitutions to provide adequate representation to women, in practice give far too few party tickets to women candidates. A study found that a large section of women who do get party tickets have family political connections, or are 'dynastic' politicians. With normal routes of accessibility limited, such connections are often an entry point for women
- **Notion of women less likely to win:** It is still widely held in political circles that women candidates are less likely to win elections than men, which leads to political parties giving them fewer tickets.

- **Challenging Structural Conditions:** Election campaigns in India are extremely demanding and time-consuming. Women politicians, with family commitments and the responsibilities of child care, often find it difficult to fully participate
- **Highly vulnerable:** Women politicians have been constantly subjected to humiliation, inappropriate comments, abuse and threats of abuse, making participation and contesting elections extremely challenging.
- **Expensive electoral system:** Financing is also an obstacle as many women are financially dependent on their families. Fighting parliamentary elections can be extremely expensive, and massive financial resources are required to be able to put up a formidable contest. Absent adequate support from their parties, women candidates are compelled to arrange for their own campaign financing this is a huge challenge that deters their participation
- **Internalized patriarchy:** A phenomenon known as ‘internalized patriarchy’ where many women consider it their duty to priorities family and household over political ambitions.

Why women participation in law making process is so important?

- **Political empowerment:** Legislative representation is fundamental to political empowerment, enabling participation in the law-making process. Legislatures play a vital role in raising debates and discussions on various aspects of governance and in exacting accountability from the government.
- **Shows the status of gender parity:** Women’s representation in the national parliament is a key indicator of the extent of gender equality in parliamentary politics.
- **Women bring different skills to politics:** According to Political scientist, Anne “women bring different skills to politics and provide role models for future generations; they appeal to justice between sexes.
- **Facilitates specific interests of women in policy:** Their inclusion in politics facilitates representation of the specific interests of women in state policy and creates conditions for a revitalized democracy that bridges the gap between representation and participation.
- **Highly effective and less likely to be criminal and corrupt:** Study found that, women legislators perform better in their constituencies on economic indicators than their male counterparts also women legislators are less likely to be criminal and corrupt, more efficacious, and less vulnerable to political opportunism.

Way ahead

It should be made legally obligatory for every registered political party to give one-third of the total number of party tickets it distributes at every election to women. The Representation of People Act, 1950, will have to be amended to enable this strategy. Second, if the party-level reform proves difficult, the Women’s Reservation Bill 2008 which mandated reservation of one-third of parliamentary and state assembly seats for women will have to be revived.

Conclusion

The organic shift to opening up spaces for women in Indian parliamentary politics has been slow. More women are needed in these platforms to transform the discourse on governance and policy-making, and bring India closer to becoming a truly inclusive and representative democracy.

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## Achievements of Indian Women in Science and Technology

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### Abstract:

Historically, the presence of women in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics remains mostly marginal. Despite the infrastructural and financial support availed from the government and non-governmental bodies, under-representation of women in the field of education has not changed over the years. Also, no information about the current status of women in Science and Technology is available in the public domain. In this article, we address this lack of information by collecting data from eminent institutions throughout India. The under-representation of women in the science and technology community is depicted, primarily highlighting the male-dominated technology-driven Indian institutions. This paper wants to focus on the Indian women who succeeded in the field of science and technology. This paper also highlights achievements they have made for the development of nation.

According to the United Nations, women constitute merely 14% of the total 280,000 scientists, engineers, and technologists in research development institutions in India. While in the research programmes, women account for a third of the PhD awardees. The following Indian women created history with having a successful career in science and technology.

### **Bibha Chowdhuri**

Physicist Bibha Chowdhuri is one of the early contributors of science — and has a ‘star’ named after her. In December 2019, the star which is nearly 340 light years away from us, was named ‘[Bibha](#)’ to honour Indian women’s contribution in science. Chowdhuri, who was known for her work on elementary particle physics and cosmic rays, was also the [only girl student](#) in her master’s course in Physics in 1934. She completed her post graduation from Calcutta University, after which she was actively involved in research projects in Physics. She has also worked with Vikram Sarabhai, who is referred to as father of India’s space programme.

### **Irawati Karve**

Irawati Karve is the first female Indian Anthropologist, who made her way in the male dominated discipline in the Indian society. Her multidisciplinary work includes storytelling and philosophy. Her famous book *Yuganta* was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Award for Marathi in 1968 — making her the first female author in the state to receive it.

She studied anthropology at a time when it was still unusual for women to study anthropology as it required diverse research across cultures. Later on, she served as the founding members and head of the anthropology programmes at various colleges. She founded the Department of Anthropology at the University of Pune in 1963 and also held the post of the Vice-Chancellor of SNDT University.

In fact, the Department of Anthropology, Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Bhavan of Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) also has a museum called ‘[Irawati Karve Museum of Anthropology](#)’, preserving the Indian cultural values.

### **Kamal Ranadive**

One of the early cancer researchers of India, [Kamal Ranadive](#) was among the initial few scientists to claim that breast cancer has a relevance with heredity. She studied Botany and Zoology at Fergusson College to become one of the leading women scientists in the country and has over 200 research papers to her name.

She also founded the Indian Women Scientists' Association (IWSA) in 1973. The Association, today, even provides hostel and daycare facilities to its women researchers.

### **Rajeshwari Chatterjee**

When scientific research was still in nascent stage, [Rajeshwari Chatterjee](#) became the first woman engineer in India. She later did her master's in mathematics. In 1953, she was also the only woman faculty at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc). Chatterjee has worked in the field of microwave engineering. She was awarded several recognitions including Mountbatten prize, J.C Bose Memorial prize and Ramlal Wadhwa Award for her research and teaching work at the Institute of Electronics and Telecommunication Engineers. She also practiced Radio Frequency Measurements at the National Bureau of Standards in Washington D.C, under government of India

### **Raman Parimala**

Raman Parimala was an Indian mathematician known for her contribution to algebra. Parimala has several awards to her name — Bhatnagar Award, Srinivasa Ramanujan Birth Centenary Award, TWAS Prize — and was also a member of the Indian Academy of Sciences and American Mathematical Society. She also worked as a professor at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Mumbai.

### **Anna Mani**

Anna Mani was an Indian meteorologist and physicist who worked on theories like solar radiation, ozone and wind energy instrumentation. In 1940, she was awarded a scholarship at the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore where she worked under the great professor C V Raman, researching the optical properties of ruby and diamond. She has published five research papers and later retired as the deputy director general of the Indian Meteorological department in 1976.

### **Janaki Ammal**

Janaki Ammal was the first woman botanist and also one of the first women scientists to receive the Padma Shri in 1977. She researched the chromosomes of flowering plants, sugarcane varieties, and hydro-electric projects. In fact, *Magnolia Kobus* Janaki Ammal is a flower named after her.

### **Kadambini Ganguly**

Gynecologist by profession, Kadambini Ganguly was one of the first two women in India to have a college degree — and the first Indian to practice medicine. She worked as a doctor till she was 61.

She was also the first female speaker at the Indian National Congress.

Asima Chatterjee was the first Indian woman to be awarded a doctoral degree in science from an Indian university. She studied at the University of Calcutta and was the first woman president at the Indian Science Congress. She was also awarded prestigious awards including Padma Bhushan for her contribution to science. Her other recognitions include S S Bhatnagar award, C V Raman award, and the P C Ray award. She worked in the field of medicinal chemistry and natural products.

#### **Archana Sharma**

Archana Sharma was an Indian woman botanist, a Cytogeneticist, Cell Biologist and a Cytotoxicologist. She was the founding editor of *The Nucleus*, which is an international journal of Cytology. She researched chromosomes of reproductive plants, pesticides and other environmental agents. She was also associated with the government of India across departments including the Science and Engineering Research Council of the Department of Science and Technology, Environmental Research Council of the Ministry of Environment and Forests and the Ministry of Human Resource Development.

#### **Darshan Ranganathan**

Darshan Ranganathan was a pioneer in organic chemistry and one of the early female students at the University of Delhi. She did multiple research fellowships and published several research papers and books in organic chemistry

She was also honoured with fellowship at the Indian Academy of Sciences in 1991. She was awarded with the Third World Academy of Sciences Award (TWAS) in Chemistry in 2000 for her achievements in bio-organic chemistry, particularly supramolecular assemblies, molecular design and chemical simulations.

#### **Conclusion:**

The efforts and contributions has made the nation take pride in the field of science and technology. So it is high time to review after 75 years oof independence that why still women are lagging behind in making remarkable progress in the field of science and technology.

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## Women Empowerment in Science and Technology in India

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### Abstract:

Science and Technology have been an integral part of Indian civilization and culture. Over the years Indian women have overcome the traditional mind-sets and have excelled in professions like teaching, medicine, engineering, information technology, biotechnology, nuclear science, space science and many such specialized fields in the domain of science and technology. Their contribution to socio-economic development as employer and employee, getting recognized and honoured in public, private sectors. This paper analyses the various government programmes offered for increasing women scientists and also try to focus on the success stories of various women scientists who hail from India.

### Introduction:

Women empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social or economic strength of women in diversified streams. It involves the empowered developing confidence in their capacities. A multidimensional social process that helps women to gain control over their own lives and give contribution in strong nation building by their knowledge and skills in various fields of science and technology. Women are becoming aware of their rights and trying best to improve and upgrading their intellectualism & positive value assertion to create own definition of herself and view herself as a complete human being with strong liberal values without any gender discrimination.

### Programs For Women Empowerment in Science and Technology

Women Scientist Scheme (WOS)' under KIRAN provides career opportunities including fellowships to unemployed women scientists and technologists, especially those who had a break in career, for pursuing research in frontier areas of science and engineering.

### Programs For Women Empowerment In Science and Technology in India

#### Women Scientists Programs:

1. Scientific & Engineering Research Technology Development International S&T Cooperation  
2. S&T for Socio Economic Programme Technology Missions Division Women Scientists Programs

3. Women Scientists Programs

4. Standing Committee for promoting Women in Science [PDF] 229.78 KB

Gender Advancement for Transforming Institutions (GATI)

Women in India face several challenges in moving up the academic and administrative ladder due to systemic barriers and structural factors. Gender equality in scientific laboratories and institutions of higher education is not only about numbers but also about various micro and macro level factors operating at institutional level. There exist various policies and enabling environment in different institutions in India but a common approach or guiding principles to bridge the gender gap is still lacking. In science and technology sector it is difficult to assess and evaluate the merit of existing process/procedures from gender lens. This clearly demonstrates a need for multi

stakeholder interventions. While gender equality in science is an important consideration, it is also in the larger interest of scientific progress and society.

Considering the need of gender advancement in STEMM area at institutional level, the GATI program is now launched by the Department of Science and Technology (DST). The GATI was one of the three initiatives of DST announced on 28 February 2020, the National Science Day, by the Hon'ble President of India at a celebratory programme dedicated to Women in Science held at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi.

DST is inviting Expression of Interest to participate in the pilot of GATI. Universities, and other S&T Institutions are invited to participate in pilot of Gender Advancement for Transforming Institutions (GATI) launched by Government of India. GATI is a novel pilot programme envisioned in mission mode to promote gender equity in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine (STEMM) domains.

Notification for Provisional Submission of Proposals in all the programmes under KIRAN (Knowledge Involvement in Research Advancement through Nurturing)]559.31 KB

All the programmes under KIRAN (Knowledge Involvement in Research Advancement through Nurturing) Scheme of DST are under review and may be modified to some extent. Therefore, submission of new proposals under different programmes is allowed only provisionally w.e.f. 01.01.2019 till further notice. The proposals under consideration are also subject to the outcome of the review process.

#### **Women Scientists Scheme:**

Women are an important section of the workforce, more particularly in the science & technology (S&T) domain. However, a large number of well-qualified women get left out of the S&T activities due to various circumstances which are usually typical to the gender. The challenges faced by them are several but most often the "break in career" arises out of motherhood and family responsibilities. To address such issues, Department of Science and Technology (DST) launched "Women Scientists Scheme (WOS)" during 2002-03. This initiative primarily aimed at providing opportunities to women scientists and technologists between the age group of 27-57 years who had a break in their career but desired to return to mainstream.

Through this endeavour of the Department, concerted efforts have been made to give women a strong foothold into the scientific profession, help them re-enter into the mainstream and provide a launch pad for further forays into the field of science and technology.

#### **Category of Fellowships:**

Under this scheme, women scientists are being encouraged to pursue research in frontier areas of science and engineering, on problems of societal relevance and to take up S&T-based internship followed by self-employment. Following three categories of fellowships, with research grants, are available for Indian citizen:

Women Scientist Scheme-A(WOS-A): Research in Basic/Applied Science

Women Scientist Scheme-B (WOS-B): S&T interventions for Societal Benefit

Women Scientist Scheme-C (WOS-C): Internship in Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) for the Self-Employment

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The Current Status The current scenario of women empowerment is very disbalance across the various segment of the society. Literacy plays a crucial role in promoting women's right, achieving empowerment , enhancing overall livelihood and social status of women.

Success Stories of Indian women in science and technologies:

**Tessy Thomas:** Tessy Thomas, known as the 'Missile Woman' of India is the Director General of Aeronautical Systems and the former Project Director for Agni-IV missile in Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). She is the first woman scientist to head a missile project in India. She has contributed in guidance, trajectory simulation and mission design at the DRDO. She designed the guidance scheme for long-range missile systems, which is used in all Agni missiles. She was conferred with Agni Self-reliance award in 2001.

**Muthayya Vanitha :** Muthayya Vanitha is the Project Director of Chandrayaan-2. She is the first woman to lead the interplanetary mission at ISRO. She was promoted from Associate Director to Project Director of the mission. She hails from Chennai and is an electronics system engineer from the *College of Engineering, Guindy*, to lead the interplanetary mission at ISRO. She was promoted from Associate Director to Project Director of the mission. She hails from Chennai and is an electronics system engineer from the College of Engineering, Guindy. She has worked at ISRO for over three decades. She started as a junior engineer in hardware testing and development and has risen up the ladder steadily. She has occupied several roles such as leading the Telemetry and Telecommand Divisions in the Digital Systems Group of ISRO Satellite Centre, and has been the Deputy Project Director for several satellites including Cartosat-1, Oceansat-2, and Megha-Tropiques. .

**Kamakshi Sivaramakrishnan:** Kamakshi Sivaramakrishnan technology is onboard NASA's New Horizon mission, which is probing Pluto. It is NASA's farthest space mission. She is responsible for building the algorithm and the chip that is responsible for bringing information from Pluto, whose existence as a planet was being questioned. The chip on board the spacecraft collects signals and sends them back to the space station which is three billion miles away.

**Mangala Mani:** The 'polar woman of ISRO', Mangala Mani is ISRO's first woman scientist to spend more than a year in the icy landscape of Antarctica. The 56-year-old had never experienced snowfall before she was selected for the mission. In November 2016, she was part of the 23-member team that went on an expedition to Bharati, India's research station in Antarctica. She spent 403 days at the southernmost continent operating and maintaining ISRO's ground station.

**Dr Priyadarshini Karve:** Dr. Priyadarshini Karve is an award-winning scientist who is on a quest to help rural women lead a better lifestyle. Despite being born in Pune, Priyadarshini grew up in Phaltan, a small hamlet in Maharashtra where she witnessed the effects of air pollution on farmers and animals. She also understood that people battling indoor air pollution are usually poor, who live in a congested home. Thus began her quest to convert organic waste into fuel. In the last two decades she has developed several clean cooking technologies that has helped several women,

and she has helped in the replacing of several thousands of polluting stoves with sustainable ones. In order to combat air pollution Priyadarshini designed the Bharatlaxmi stove and 500 households from Nandal village in Satara district got the stove in in 2013. The village had decreased smoke by 80% and fuel consumption by 30% all thanks to her.

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## **Women Empowerment through Entrepreneurship A Study in Gadwal**

### **Revenue Division of Telangana State**

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“Our Mothers, Wives, Sisters, and Daughters must actively participate in the progress of our State’s Economic Development.” Dr.MRN

The ability to lead and control one’s own life is all that empowerment is, and women now play a crucial part in our society. They inevitably and invisibly contribute. It goes without saying that the objective of eradicating poverty cannot be accomplished without the involvement of the general public, who play a crucial role in the advancement of all developmental initiatives. Women who start, plan, and run their own businesses are referred to as women entrepreneurs. An enterprise owned and controlled by a woman with a maximum financial interest of 51% of the capital cannot be referred to as a woman entrepreneur by the Government of India.

The entrepreneur is both a key to and a crucial component of economic development. In India, women make up about half of the population. If given the chance, they can demonstrate their superiority in any endeavour. However, they were largely restricted inside the four walls of the home over the ages owing to social and other causes, thus their strength and potential went unappreciated and unaccounted for. Women entrepreneurs have made substantial contributions to the economy in nations like Canada, Great Britain, Germany, Australia, and the United States, whereas their counterparts in this region of the world have lagged behind due to historical factors. They continue to live in isolation relative to the number of women in the nation. To make room

The data presented above shows unequivocally that a woman can contribute significantly to economic growth by embracing the role of an entrepreneur. Notwithstanding their numerous issues, women entrepreneurs now have new prospects thanks to a variety of policies that support their involvement in the development process. Opportunities abound, especially for educated and urban women who are able to enter any field. The sectors that are primarily intended for female participation, especially in the service industry, are waiting to be exploited. Several successful examples of female entrepreneurs exist and should be imitated. The three requisites of the moment are desire, skill, and dynamism. Women’s entrepreneurship development will assist the nation on many different socioeconomic levels.

Women play a crucial role in all facets of human existence and make substantial contributions to the growth of the family, society, and nation. To be empowered is to invest with strength. One of the top priorities for national growth has been women’s empowerment. Empowerment is a multifaceted process, and different definitions of the idea have been offered. Economic empowerment includes having the ability to earn money, bargaining collectively for financial gains, having control over the means of production, participating in decisions that have an impact on the economy, and developing management abilities. Several income-generating activities, such as kalankari, tailoring, dairy, small businesses, pot and pickle making, handicrafts, bead making, and others, empower women.

Many examples of individual entrepreneurs whose inventiveness sparked the industrialization of numerous countries may be found throughout the history of women entrepreneurs. The industrialization of their nations was brought about by businessmen like Belton in the eighteenth century, Henry Ford, and Emil Ratheneau in the twentieth century. Women-owned businesses are the sector of the US economy that is expanding the quickest. According to data from the US Bureau of Statistics, women entrepreneurs controlled 26% of enterprises in 1980 and 32% in 1990. By the year 2000, it would reach 50% if this tendency were to continue.

In a culture, the formation of female entrepreneurs is greatly influenced by economic, religious, cultural, psychological, and other variables. For emerging nations like India, the presence of entrepreneurs, particularly women entrepreneurs, is essential to achieving industrialization and achieving quick, all-around, regionally and socially balanced economic growth. Also, it assists in utilising their innate skills and serves as a solution to many issues they encounter, including dowry death, social marginalisation, poverty, unemployment, and an over-reliance on male family members.

### I. Objectives

1. Investigate the socio economic circumstances of the sample respondents.
2. To evaluate the advancement of female entrepreneurs in the research field

### II. Methodology

The current study is being carried out in Gadwal Town's Mahabubnagar district. Gadwal was given its well-known name after the Gadwal Sarees. Because of its historical significance, it is well-known. It was formerly one of the "SAMSTHANS." Gadwal, also known as Nadigadda, is situated between the Krishna and Thungabhadra rivers. The fort that Raja Krishna Ram Bhupal gifted now houses the MALD Government Degree College, Government Women's College, and Government Junior Colleges. In addition to this, the Gadwal, Alampur, and Atmakur Mandals have access to irrigation under the Indira Priyadarshini Jural Project. The historical significance of the well-known Telugu film "Arundati" to Gadwal Samsthan. I've chosen a variety of female entrepreneurs in Gadwal. The female business owners are involved in a variety of revenue-generating activities.

**A. Trading:** Sarees and women's accessories, fruit and vegetable stands, and pan shops are examples of businesses that engage in trading.

**B. Manufacturing:** Creating beedis, agarbathi, lace, coir, bamboo crafts, weaving coconut leaves, and manufacturing rope are some examples.

**C. Service Sector:** Services include tutoring, salons, labs, courier services, computer centres, educational institutions, medical facilities, and construction labour.

### 3. The socioeconomic circumstances of the sample respondents:

They were divided into various groups based on their individual traits, such as caste, religion, age, education, marital status, and family structure, in order to define the socioeconomic and demographic profile of the sample. Family size, occupation, housing type, land information, savings, income, and employment information of the study area's chosen sample of respondents

#### The socioeconomic Conditions of Sample Respondents

##### Caste

SC-13	ST-5	BC-30	OC-12	Percent
21.66	8.34	50.00	20.00	100.00

##### Religion

Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Others	
73.25	9.25	17.50	Nil	100.00

**Age**

Below 25	26-30	36-45	46 & above	
12.25	28.63	42.50	16.62	100.00

**Education**

Illiterate	Primary	Secondary	College	
51.78	28.20	15.52	4.50	100.00

**Marital Status**

Married	Unmarried	Divorcee/Deserted	Widow	
64.65	3.25	18.60	13.50	100.00

**Type of Family**

Nuclear	Joint	WomenHeaded		
69.20	23.90	6.90		100.00

**Size of Family**

1-4	5-7	8 & above		
48.89	33.33	17.78		100.00

**Occupation**

Cultivators	Agri.Labour	Rural Artisan	Others	
10.83	43.33	16.67	29.17	100.00

**Type of House**

Hut/KuchaPucca	Colony House	Rented House	RCC	
15.69	36.88	34.66	12.77	100.00

**Land Particulars**

SC	ST	BC	OC	
1.00	0.55	2.5	4.00	

**Savings**

SC	ST	BC	OC	
No savings	No savings	Positive savings	Positive savings	

**Income Details**

Below1000	1000-2000	2000-3000	3000 - 4000	
13.69	38.88	28.66	18.77	100.00

**Employment details**

0-100	101-180	181-240	241 & above	
9.18	20.28	44.42	26.12	100.00

**Source: Primary data**

According to their caste, the sample respondents were divided into four groups: SC, ST, BC, and OC. The majority of women (i.e., 50% of respondents) are from the BC group since they actively participate in income-generating activities and make up a larger share of the population in the Mahabubnagar District of the Gadwal Revenue division.

In order to determine the women’s religion, they were divided into three groups: Hindu, Muslim, and Christian. Hinduism (83.25%) is the religion practiced by the majority of women, followed by Islam (9.25%) and Christianity (7.50%).

The women were divided into four age groups—below 25 years, 26–30 years, 36–45 years, and 46 years and above—in order to determine their ages. The majority of women are in the 26-45 age bracket (71.13%), followed by those 46 and older (16.62%), and those under 25 (12.5%). This data shows that women have passed the productive age range but are still working despite having responsibilities in their families and a need for increased income to meet those obligations.

The women were divided into four groups based on their level of education: illiterate, primary, secondary, and college. According to the report, 51.78 percent of respondents are illiterate, followed by those with only a primary level of education (28.20%), a secondary level (15.52%), and a college level (4.50%) of education. As a result, proper measures must be done to ensure that they are literate, as literacy has been identified as a key factor in an individual’s socioeconomic growth.

The women were divided into four groups in order to determine their marital status: Married, Unmarried, Divorcee/Deserted, and Widow groups. According to the study, the majority of women are either married (64.65%) or divorced/deserted (18.60%), widowed (13.50%), or unmarried (3.25%).

The women were divided into three groups—Nuclear Family, Joint Family, and Women Headed Household—in order to determine the kind of family they belonged to. According to the survey, the majority of women (69.20%) belong to nuclear families, followed by joint families (23.90%) and households headed by women (6.90%).

The women were divided into four groups based on the size of their families: 1-4 size, 5-7 size, and 8 & above size groups. According to the study, the majority of women belong to families with 1 to 4 people (48.89%), followed by families with 5 to 7 members (33.33%), and families with 8 or more members (17.78%).

When it comes to the respondents’ occupations, women who were responders were active in agricultural labour (43.33%). Others and Rural Artists (16.67%)

The ladies were divided into four categories—Hut/Kucha, Colony house, leased house, and RCC—in order to analyse the type of residence they lived in. According to the survey, the majority of women, or 71.54%, lives in both rental homes and colonies.

More than 40% of the female respondents admitted that they don’t own any land. Yet, 30% of the women admitted that they had between a half and a full acre of land, while the remaining ladies owned between 2-4 acres.



After engaging in various income-generating activities, the majority of women have seen an increase in their income of more than Rs 2,000 to 3,000 per month, followed by Rs 3000 & above and below Rs 1000/- per month. nearly all of them have

Women engaging in various activities were divided into 4 categories: below \$1,000, \$1,000 to \$2,000, \$2,000 to \$3,000, and \$3,000 and above in order to examine the specifics of their income. According to the report, the majority of women earn between \$1,000 and \$3,000, followed by \$3,000 and over (18.77%) and below \$1,000 alone (13.69%).They were divided into 4 groups: 0-100 (9.18%), 101-180 (20.28%), 181-240 (44.42%), and 241 & above from (26.12%) in order to investigate the specifics of employment. The report clearly explains that the majority of women work 101–240 man-days per week.The women were questioned again in order to learn more about their finances. The majority of the ladies reported that their current total savings are between Rs. 1000 and Rs. 1500. Also, one-fourth of the ladies concurred that their savings totaled no more than Rs. 750. The specifics of the respondents’ line of activity are shown in Table 1 below.

**Table-1 Respondents Line of Activity:**

Line of Activity	Number	Percent
Trading	32	53.34
Manufacturing	13	21.66
Service Sector	15	25.00
Total	60	100.00

**Source: Primary Data**

Table 1 shows that 25 percent of respondents work in the service sector, which includes training centers, schools, beauty salons, tuition centers, and other institutions. The remaining 53.34 percent of respondents are involved in the manufacturing of food products, clothing, and women’s accessories, as well as dealers, vegetable shops, photo studios, Xerox, computer centers, and labs. Table 1 clearly demonstrates that the trading sector employed more than half of the respondents, who were then employed in the service sector.

**IV.Employment pattern:**

Without a doubt, any financial help, when used appropriately, creates prospects for lucrative work in the household’s income-generating activities.

**Table-2 Employment Details of the Respondents (Man days)**

Respondents	MonthlyEmployment	Percent
7	9	11.66
15	17	25.00
23	19	38.33
10	23	16.67
5	15	8.34
60	16	100.00

Source: Primary Data

According to Table 2, each respondent had an average of 16 days of employment every month. 33 responders in total received 21 days of employment. The distribution of sample respondents by caste is seen in table 3 below.

**Table-3Caste wise Average Household Employment Generation**

<b>Caste</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Average Employment</b>	<b>Total Employment</b>
SC	13	210	2370
ST	5	180	900
BC	30	245	7350
OC	12	270	3240
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>13860</b>

Source: Primary Data

Table 3 shows that there are more man-days of employment in the BC and OC communities than in the ST and SC communities. This is because most members of the ST community move about a lot and depend mostly on the monsoons, seasonal crops, and looking for manual labour.

## **V.Income Pattern**

The possibility for work can be assessed by the quantity of income produced in income-generating activities because there is a symbolic connection between income generation and job chances.

**Table-4 Monthly Income of the Respondents**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Monthly income</b>	<b>Percent</b>
7	Up to 1000	11.66
15	1000-2000	25.00
23	2000-3000	38.33
10	3000-4000	16.67
5	4000 & above	8.34
60		100.00

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4 clearly demonstrates that only 63.33 percent of female entrepreneurs made between 1000 and 3000 rupees. Women entrepreneurs make between \$3,000 and \$4,000 on average (16.67%), followed by those making under \$1,000 (11.66%). Table 5 provides statistics on average monthly employment by caste.

**Table-5Caste-wise Average Monthly Income of the Respondents**

Caste	Number	AverageIncome	TotalIncome	Percent
SC	13	2500	32500	17.67
ST	5	1500	7500	4.07
BC	30	3200	96000	52.17
OC	12	4000	48000	26.09
Total	60	2800	184000	100.00

**Source:** Primary Data

Table 5 shows that while entering the ST society, 17.67% of SC women entrepreneurs make only \$2500 per month. 4.07 percent earned 1500, followed by the OC community's average monthly income of 4000 and the BC respondents' 3200. The average monthly income for all localities was 2800. The average income for the OC and BC castes is substantially higher than for the SC and ST castes in Table 4.

## 6. Expenditure Trends

People are often believed to work both productively and unproductively to better the quality of their life anytime they are able to earn a suitable wage. It is true that income has a positive impact on consumption spending in general and specifically on social, health, and educational functions. The comments gathered from sample respondents demonstrate that rural areas are accurate. It has been observed that a large amount of the income created was used for home expenses, which are necessary to survive in a society with a better standard of living, and that rural women primarily consider social standing while spending their income.

**Table-6: Expenditure Pattern**

Caste	Agriculture	Household	EducationHealth	Income yielding assets	Unproductive Expenses	Self Needs	Family Debt	Total
SC	9.00	27.00	9.00	19.00	21.00	4.00	11.00	100.00
ST	Nil	51.00	Nil	Nil	43.00	Nil	6.00	100.00
BC	19.00	16.00	15.00	19.00	9.00	15	7.00	100.00
OC	8.00	11.00	23.00	35.00	3.00	20.00	Nil	100.00

**Source:** Primary Data

According to the sample respondents' perspectives, as shown in Table 6, they utilized the revenue they received as a result of the credit in a constructive manner. Caste-based spending patterns reveal that 27.00% of respondents from the SC community spent their income on home expenses, while just 20% went towards unproductive expenses. 19% from Income-Generating Assets 11% is owed to family members 9 percent of them said they spent money on their children's education and health, while only 4 percent of their income went towards self-reported needs. When they first arrived in the ST community, 43% of their revenue was used for unproductive purposes, meaning that the majority of them were inebriated and engaged in gaming, pan, and beedi. Apart from this 51% of income spent on family requirements, they won't spend money on things like education, health, assets that generate income, and self-needs.

The majority of the revenue earned before moving to the BC community was proportionately spent on all necessities. The next category is OC caste expenditures on self-needs, household purposes, assets that generate income, and education and health.

All communities (SC, ST, BC, and OC) in the chosen respondents clearly demonstrate that a significant portion of the income generated was spent on household expenses, which are required to live in a society with a better standard of living, and rural women are thinking social status to spend income exclusively.

## **VII.Conclusion**

Today, the adage “entrepreneurs are born, not made” makes little sense. Many pieces of evidence indicate that they were made effectively. Government and non-governmental organizations must play a crucial role in the success of the women’s entrepreneurship movement. There is an urgent need to re-orient a lot of things, starting at the most basic level. For example, more vocational courses specifically for women are needed, as are entrepreneurship studies in business and management curricula. Global understanding of the contribution that women may make to the process of economic growth has grown in recent years. Undoubtedly, there is a commercial revolution taking place across the country, and women play a significant role in it, even though it is still in the early stages of development. The status of women in society and the economy is being improved. The country will reap numerous socioeconomic benefits as more women become business owners.

## **VIII.Suggestions**

The investigator has made the following recommendations for women who are involved in various income-generating activities in light of the empirical study: • Measures should be taken to increase the participation of women from SC and ST communities in order to help them improve their income and living standards since they are the most disadvantaged socially and economically.

- Literacy has been identified as the key to an individual’s socioeconomic growth, so it is important to take the necessary steps to ensure that they are literate.

- To make it easier for women who want to start their own businesses, banks’ policies should be more lenient and accommodative.

- Training programmes should be set up for them with sufficient demonstration and knowledge about the resources, raw materials, etc.

- Women need to be made aware of the manufacturing conditions, marketing circumstances, middlemen’s abuse of them, and their own debt.

- In order to take use of women entrepreneurs’ managerial abilities, the government must offer them all the resources they need, including funding, partnerships, training, etc.

- Women’s contributions to entrepreneurship should be studied using contemporary information technology.

- Women should be exposed to market transactions in their communities. A better understanding of the market’s potential and consumer contact would enhance the products’ quality and make them more consumer-ready.

- Subsidized marketing facilities, including transportation, affordable pricing, etc., should be developed for burgeoning business owners.

- It is necessary to organize awareness campaigns to raise public understanding of the local raw materials, resources, marketability, etc.
- The mass media should also be active in promoting the initiatives and programmes that encourage female entrepreneurship.

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## Green Politics And Women: An Analysis Of The Role Of Women In Environmental Movements

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### Abstract:

Many studies on women and environment have proved that women are major actors in natural resources management and they are prominent contributors to environment rehabilitation and conservation. In addressing some key environmental problems women play a major role. Women through their roles as farmers and as collectors of water and firewood have a close connection with their local environment and often suffer most directly from environmental problems. As primary victim of the environmental degradation women actively participated in many environmental movements. Women have recorded successes in solving environmental problems all over the world. In India, the women realized that degradation of productive land has led to the erosion of top soil; the choking of water drainage was causing salinity and loss of food crops. They collectively leased degraded land and revived them through traditional farming. In three years 700 acres of land were restored to productive use,they are more concerned about environmental protection and ecological preservation.

This paper tries to analyse the role of women in many environmental movements across the world with special reference to India.

### Introduction:

The term green politics is used to denote the political perspective of environmental issues. All the environmental movements are political in nature and the movements many times organised against the actions of the state. So all the environmental movements can be studied and analysed under the head of green politics. In the process of ecological protection many groups and individuals protested against state's capitalistic tendencies which ultimately led to the destruction of forests specifically and causing ecological imbalance in general. Green politics analyses many issues regarding destruction of forests, climate change, international meetings on the climate change and local and national level protests and their intricacies it also discusses the role of individual and group actors at the local, national and international level and their influence in formulating a public policy. In general in deeply looks over the concepts like common property rights, individual duties towards nature and anti-capitalist methods to protect the environment and sustainable development.

Green politics plays a major focus on study social affinity of the man with the nature. All the species on the earth including man had a specific relation with nature. As the dependents on the environment for their livelihood all the individuals bare a special affiliation with the nature. Women as an interest group have a major role in conservation of nature. Because of their connectivity with the nature is more evident when compared with other groups. Women through their roles as farmers and as collectors of water and firewood have a close connection with their local environment and often suffer most directly from environmental problems. The problems like depletion of water resources, deforestation, climate change, adverse monsoon changes etc. directly affect women. They affect the activities of women and their roles in private and public spheres as well. Ancient scriptures in India equate women with the nature. They denote man as 'purusha'

and women as 'prakruthi'. According to the mythology the combination of 'purusha' and 'parakruthi' has led to the emergence of life on the earth.

As the form of the nature women play a major role in protecting the environment and sustainable development. A major change has taken place in the roles of women since 20<sup>th</sup> century. From mere house wives they became bread earners. This change forced women to think from the perspective of sustainable development. So they led many movements for environment protection and sustainable development. Some major movements led by women in India and other parts of the world can be discussed in further parts. Before going to analyse the role of women in environmental movements it is proper to know about the concept of environmental movement and sustainable development.

**Chipko movement**, also called **Chipko andolan**, nonviolent social and ecological movement by rural villagers, particularly women, in India the 1970s, aimed at protecting trees and forests slated for government logging. The movement originated in the Himalayan region Uttar Pradesh in 1973 and quickly spread throughout the India Himalayas. The Hindi word *chipko* means "to hug" or "to cling to" and reflects the demonstrators' primary tactic of embracing the trees to impede the loggers.

With the conclusion of the Sino-Indian border conflict in 1963, the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh experienced a growth in development, especially in the rural Himalayan regions. The interior roads built for the conflict attracted many foreign-based logging companies that sought access to the region's vast forest resources. Although the rural villagers depended heavily on the forests for subsistence—both directly, for food and fuel, and indirectly, for services such as water purification and soil stabilization—government policy prevented the villagers from managing the lands and denied them access to woods. Many of the commercial logging endeavours were mismanaged, and the clear cut forests led to lower agricultural yield erosion, depleted water resources, and increased flooding throughout much of the surrounding areas.

In 1964 environmentalist and Gandhian social activist Chandi Prasad Bhatt founded a cooperative organization, Dasholi Gram Swarajya Sangh (later renamed Dasholi Gram Swarajya Mandal [DGSM]), to foster small industries for rural villagers, using local resources. When industrial logging was linked to the severe monsoon floods that killed more than 200 people in the region in 1970, DGSM became a force of opposition against the large-scale industry. The first Chipko protest occurred near the village of Mandal in the upper Alaknanda valley in April 1973. The villagers, having been denied access to a small number of trees with which to build agricultural tools, were outraged when the government allotted a much larger plot to a sporting goods manufacturer. When their appeals were denied, Chandi Prasad Bhatt led villagers into the forest and embraced the trees to prevent logging. After many days of those protests, the government canceled the company's logging permit and granted the original allotment requested by DGSM.

With the success in Mandal, DGSM workers and Sunderlal Bahuguna, a local environmentalist, began to share Chipko's tactics with people in other villages throughout the region. One of the next major protests occurred in 1974 near the village of Reni, where more than 2,000 trees were scheduled to be felled. Following a large student-led demonstration, the government summoned the men of the surrounding villages to a nearby city for compensation, ostensibly to allow the loggers to proceed without confrontation. However, they were met with the women of the village, led by Gaura Devi, who refused to move out of the forest and eventually forced the loggers to withdraw. The action in Reni prompted the state government to establish a committee to investigate deforestation in the Alaknanda valley and ultimately led to a 10-year ban on commercial logging in the area.

The Chipko movement thus began to emerge as a peasant and women's movement for forest rights, though the various protests were largely decentralized and autonomous. In addition to the characteristic "tree hugging," Chipko protesters utilized a number of other techniques grounded in Mahatma Gandhi's concept of satyagraha (nonviolent resistance). For example, Bahuguna famously fasted for two weeks in 1974 to protest forest policy. In 1978, in the Advani forest in the Tehri Garhwal district, Chipko activist Dhoom Singh Negi fasted to protest the auctioning of the forest, while local women tied sacred threads around the trees and read from the Bhagavadgita. In other areas, chir pines (*Pinus roxburghii*) that had been tapped for resin were bandaged to

protest their exploitation. In Pulna village in the Bhyundar valley in 1978, the women confiscated the loggers' tools and left receipts for them to be claimed if they withdrew from the forest. It is estimated that between 1972 and 1979, more than 150 villages were involved with the Chipko movement, resulting in 12 major protests and many minor confrontations in Uttarakhand. The movement's major success came in 1980, when an appeal from Bahuguna to Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi resulted in a 15-year ban on commercial felling in the Uttarakhand Himalayas. Similar bans were enacted in Himachal Pradesh and the former Uttaranchal.

As the movement continued, protests became more project-oriented and expanded to include the entire ecology of the region, ultimately becoming the "Save Himalaya" movement. Between 1981 and 1983, Bahuguna marched 5,000 km (3,100 miles) across the Himalayas to bring the movement to prominence. Throughout the 1980s many protests were focused on the Tehri dam on the Bhagirathi River and various mining operations, resulting in the closure of at least one limestone quarry. Similarly, a massive reforestation effort led to the planting of more than one million trees in the region. In 2004 Chipko protests resumed in response to the lifting of the logging ban in Himachal Pradesh but were unsuccessful in its re-enactment.

**Narmada Bachao Andolan** was started to oppose the construction of dams and other projects on river Narmada which flows through the states of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Sardar Sarovar Dam in Gujarat is one of the biggest dams on the river and was one of the first focal points of the movement. It is one of the many dams under the Narmada Dam Project whose main aim is to provide irrigation and electricity to people in these states.

Their mode of campaign includes court actions, hunger strikes, rallies and gathering support from notable film and art personalities. Narmada Bachao Andolan, with its leading spokespersons Medha Patkar and Baba Amte, have received the Right Livelihood Award in 1991.

In 1985, after hearing about the Sardar Sarovar dam, Medha Patkar and her colleagues visited the project site and noticed that project work being checked due to an order by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India. The reasons for this was cited as "non-fulfillment of basic environmental conditions and the lack of completion of crucial studies and plans. The people who were going to be affected by the construction of the dam were given no information but the offer for rehabilitation. Villagers weren't consulted and weren't asked for a feedback on the assessment that had taken place. Furthermore, the officials related to the project had not even checked the land records and updated them. While World Bank, the financing agency for this project, came into the picture, Patkar approached the Ministry of Environment to seek clarifications. She realized, after seeking answers from the ministry, that the project was not sanctioned at all and wondered as to how funds were even sanctioned by the World Bank. After several studies, they realized that the officials had overlooked the post project problems.

Through Patkar's channel of communication between the government and the residents, she provided critiques to the project authorities and the governments involved. At the same time, her group realized that all those displaced were given compensation only for the immediate standing crop and not for displacement and rehabilitation.

As Patkar remained immersed in the Narmada struggle, she chose to quit her Ph.D. studies and focus entirely on the Narmada activity. Thereafter, she organized a 36-day solidarity march among the neighboring states of the Narmada valley from Madhya Pradesh to the Sardar Sarovar dam site. She said that the march was "a path symbolizing the long path of struggle (both immediate and long-term) that [they] really had". The march was resisted by the police, who according to Patkar were "caning the marchers and arresting them and tearing the clothes off women activists".

Within the focus of the NBA towards the stoppage of the Sardar Sarovar Dam, Patkar advised adding the World Bank to its propaganda. Using the right to fasting, she undertook a 22-day fast that almost took her life. Patkar's actions did force the World Bank to set up The Morse Commission,



an independent review of the project. Their report clearly stated that the Bank's policies on environment and resettlement were being violated by the project. The World Bank's participation in these projects was canceled in 1993.<sup>1</sup> Before the World Bank could pull out, the Indian Government did.

She undertook a similar fast in 1993 and resisted evacuation from the dam site. In 1994, the Narmada Bachao Andolan office was attacked reportedly by a couple of political parties, and Patkar and other activists were physically assaulted and verbally abused. In protest, a few NBA activists and she began a fast; 20 days later, they were arrested and forcibly fed intravenously.

Sardar Sarovar Dam's construction began again in 1999 after the construction was allowed and was declared finished in 2006. It was inaugurated in 2017 by Prime Minister [Narendra Damodardas Modi](#). Since construction in 2017, the height has been increased from 138 meters to 163 meters.

### Conclusion:

Environmental movements led by women played a great impact on the public policy and found to be major issue on the mainstream discussions. Though India has never experienced rise of any feminist movements, women participation in large number in environmental movements can be observed that ecofeminism in has emerged long back in the 1770's with the emergence of Bishnoi Movement and sacrifice of Amritha Devi. Eco feminist movements in Indai are stronger and radical in nature when compared to the other parts of the world. Indian women in the cases either Chipko Movement or Narmada Andolan have been persistent in their efforts.

Environmental movements all over world which led by the women were succeeded in making government to listen their voices and struggling up to the maximum to protect the environment. Women as the agents in the promotion of sustainable development continue to fight to get their equal share by fighting against patriarchy and power intricacies.

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## Women's Political Leadership In Panchayats – Empirical Studies

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P. Manikyamba (1989)<sup>1</sup>, in her study of Andhra Pradesh found that socio-economic backgrounds in general and political background in particular are important factors that determine the nature and level of participation of the women representatives in panchayat raj structures. The study reveals that education and participation are interrelated. Economic position is another important factor that determines the extent of participation, poor women members participation found insignificant. Regarding age, the extent of participation of young and middle aged is generally more than that of the old aged. Awareness and participation are closely related. Political background played active role in the level of participation. Membership in other institutions did not contribute to greater level of participation. Personal interest and commitment are closely related with active participation. Caste and gender relevance was found in the selection of members than in participation. From this study it is found that the large numbers of women are from upper caste, the cooption method was not much helpful for poor women from depressed classes, Manikyamba, realizing the fact strongly supports the reservation policy.

Chandrasekhar and Anand Inbanathan (1991)<sup>2</sup> in their study in Karnataka found that the traditional status (of women) in society is an important factor that hampers the functioning of the women in panchayats. They were economically dependent on the men, and they also had to defer to the wishes and decisions of the men of their families or local leaders and had little scope for independent action in the PRIs. In addition, they were also constrained by relatively poor education, and most of them were new to active politics. They found difference in increasing participation of ZP members after achieving 3 years of experience (1987 to 1990) in their office. This study shows the upper caste dominance in women representation, women from Lingayat and Vokkaliga communities' best utilized the 25 percent of the reservation for women in PRIs through 1983 Act in Karnataka. Presence of SC's is minimal. The presence of STs is even poor. As a whole reservations are helpful in bringing the women in large numbers into decision making bodies.

Dilip K. Ghosh (1997)<sup>3</sup>, in his study in a West Bengal district found that, rural women participate in large number irrespective of caste, creed and religion. Education and age are determining factors in participation. The profiles of the elected women had shown that large number come from the agricultural sector as their occupation. He found poor Muslim women very active in panchayat affairs inspite lack of political experience. The study revealed that education status of women members are comparatively lower vis-à-vis male members. This sometimes crates barrier in effective interaction which shapes the participation.

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### (Footnotes)

1. P. Manikyamba (1989), "Women in Panchayat Raj Structures", pp. 63-64.
2. B. K. Chandrasekhar and Anand Inbanathan (1991), "Profile and Participation of Women Zilla Parishad and Mandal Panchayat members: The Case of Karnataka", pp.576-588.
3. Dilip K. Ghosh (1997), "Grassroot Women Leaders: Who are they? A study in West Bengal District", pp. 291-311

K. Jayalakshmi (1997)<sup>1</sup>, based on the field study conducted in Andhra Pradesh, states that reservations in panchayat ensures entry for all sections and thus visualizes as the harbinger of equality and social justice. Further, it is found that reservation has merely brought in a quantitative change in the gender participation rather than ushering a qualitative developmental effort. The study highlights upper caste male interference in panchayat affairs and their legitimacy from villagers.

Snehlata Panda (1997)<sup>2</sup> study in Orissa reveals that 3 phases of institutional training to women representatives explored good results. Though women entered into the politics reluctantly due to family/ party decision showed great maturity in outlook, enthusiasm, increasing political consciousness, role perception and responsibilities in third phase. She states that women entered into politics due to the mandatory provision of 33 percent. Most of the women are having non-political background and entered politics due to persuasion by their family members or pressure from the village community or pressure from political party and some members entered due to personal interest.

O.P. Bohra (1997)<sup>3</sup>, states that a recent study of Panchayati raj in Haryana has reviewed the progress of some 100 elected women over two years and indicated the beginning of discernible revolution. A majority of the elected women Panches, including younger women were illiterate when elected to office. After two years in office they demand literacy skills and generally feel the need of education for their daughters. This is clearly an outcome of reservations for women in the decision making process. Now, within two years, many of the female Panches were calling the shots, organizing quorums, exercising their judicial powers and reorganizing development work.

S. Govinda Gowda(1998)<sup>4</sup>, in a case study in Karnataka found that younger and educated women representation is more in developed taluk than in backward taluk. Political participation of women members was found to be more intensive in voting, election campaigns, and attending party meeting than in membership drive of the party, functioning as election /counting agents and organizing party meetings. The voting of women members was very much influenced by the family members and the local leaders. Study also revealed that those women who were elected unanimously belonged to the economically well-off families or families having had hold on the village life for a long period. Study shows that political status of women, which comprises the political awareness, political linkage and political participation of women members of the developed taluk was relatively higher than their counterparts in the backward taluk. Study revealed a significant, positive relationship between education, and household income of women members on the one hand and their political status on the other. Govinda Gowda concludes by saying “young, educated women members from economically better-off families irrespective of caste and landholding had higher level of political status.

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**(Footnotes)**

4. K. Jayalakshmi (1997), “Empowerment of Women in Panchayats – Experiences of Andhra Pradesh”, pp. 369-378.

<sup>2</sup> Snehlata Panda (1997), “Political Empowerment of Women: A Case of Orissa”, pp. 663-672.

<sup>3</sup> O.P. Bohra (1997), “Women in Decentralized Democracy”, pp. 673-683.

<sup>4</sup> S. Govinda Gowda (1998), “Women in Panchayati Raj Institutions: A Case Study in Karnataka”, pp. 669-679.

Nirmala Buch (2000)<sup>1</sup> explains her research finding of the studies conducted in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. A study in Haryana noted how most government officials look to the male kins of elected women to attend meetings. A study in Madhya Pradesh noted positive results. Her studies disproved myths about women's disinterest in politics, political connectivity, proxy membership, because many members gained assertion and heading towards political empowerment. Nirmala Buch argues not only on women's effective leadership but also on their performance capability.

G. Palanithurai (2002)<sup>2</sup> from his previous documentation on women representatives in Tamil Nadu, classifies the problems faced by the women representatives under two broad categories (i) problems that are related to personal and family limitations and social structure (education, age, poor income levels, mobilization of villagers, gender discrimination, lack of communication skills, money and muscle power in politics). (ii) problems that arise due to the attitudes of the officials and political interference (MP's and MLA's interference, government officials outlook towards women as merely dummy candidates entered into politics just because of reservations, etc.). Palanithurai also classifies the women representatives into different kinds of leaders in terms of their skills, orientation, attitudes and psychological make up. They are aggressive leaders, leaders with moderate skills and capacities, leaders with aspiration, leaders with a mood of withdrawal and leaders without an idea of their changed roles. He states that although women from different backgrounds, classes and communities have assumed the role of people's representatives, the patriarchal attitudes, lack of political experience and administrative knowledge, and a plethora of social structural limitations under which women function in these institutions have become big impediments in the performance of their expected responsibilities.

P. Manikyamba(2003)<sup>3</sup> based on her field studies, supplemented by various other studies, highlighted the success stories of many women leaders like Fatima Bee (Kalva), Sudha Patel (Changa), Padma (Neelamangalam), Koeli(Nimuchana), Kesair Bai, Sita Mahalakshmi, Vijayalakshmi, Kamala Mahto (Bandaom), Srinivasa Kumari (Tadepalli), etc. All women Panchayats are successful in some states, like West Bengal and Maharastra, but discouraging in Andhra Pradesh.

Manikyamba emphasizes that the male dominating social settings, including the political are strongly against the sharing of power by men and women. Proxy rule, bureaucratic attitude are the major impediments that hinder the participation of the women representatives in Panchayats.

B. Devi Prasad and S. Haranath (2004)<sup>4</sup> found that caste prejudice, lack of education and awareness, political differences gender bias, proxy membership and no role in decision making as the major factors

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**(Footnotes)**

8. Nirmala Buch(2000),” Panchayats and Women”, pp. 34-41

9. G. Palanithurai (2002), “Impediments to Empowerment of Women: Experiences of elected women representatives in Panchayats in Tamil Nadu”, pp. 37-49.

10. P. Manikyamba(2003), “The Numbers Dilemma: Success Stories and Manipulative Mechanisms”, South Asian Journal of Socio Political Studies.

11. B. Devi Prasad and  
S. Haranath

(2004), “Participation of Women and Dalits in Gram Panchayat”, pp. 297-318

affecting the participation of the women elected members. They found that training needs of the panchayat representatives should be addressed, to prepare them for better functioning.

Bidyut Mohanty(2006)<sup>1</sup> based on numerous micro studies by others and a field study by Institute of Social Sciences, states that the standards of the political institutions at the grassroots level has not been lowered as a result of women's reservations and on the other hand the development process has been engendered to some extent. She also states that being in the panchayats the women themselves have been involved in the task of the local development (in turn fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals) in a big way and have assumed the role of leadership in Asia in spite of being the beginners in the political process. Bidyut says that 'those who argue that the women coming to panchayats are all proxy women forget to analyze their socio-economic background. She also says that, critics assume that all the men who work on behalf of women are corrupt and want to grab power, but in reality it may not be true. She supports the Mathew's view that the proxy women syndrome is seen only in the first one or two years of the tenure, gradually women become independent, as studies conducted in Karnataka shows (Mathew, 2002)

V. Vijayalakshmi (2007)<sup>2</sup>, in her study in Karnataka found that there is a significant difference in the political interest levels and participation among representatives who were illiterate and those above school levels. She found that barring a few representatives, women were unwilling candidates either as surrogates for male family members who could not contest as the constituency was reserved for women, or contested at the behest of male incumbents of political party positions. As a result most of them could not function independently. She further clarifies, these women owed their allegiance to caste leaders, local elites and party functionaries, without whose support they would not have contested and won elections. She says that the factors which influence the selection of women candidates, in turn influence the functioning of the women. Political parties chose candidates generally who belonged to the families of male incumbents in political positions/elites, where education and personal capabilities were not a criteria. She says that selection of the women candidates considers the factors contributing to greater dependence on male members and/or party representatives. These factors included women candidates who were economically backward, the numerical preponderance of the caste to which the candidate belonged: and the political background of the family. Women from the families of party workers who would not go against the views of dominant individuals were preferred. Also, it was mentioned that it was easy to keep weaker candidates dependent. Vijayalakshmi strongly believes that the nature of participation of women is strongly determined by the social and political environment.

Charanjeev Singh and others (2007)<sup>14</sup> based on their empirical study in Himachal Pradesh, they found that male representatives have considered the provision of reservation for women in PRIs as a welcome step

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**(Footnotes)**

12. Bidyut Mohanty(2006), "Women and Panchayats in India : Creating a New Space for Leadership in Asia"

13. V. Vijayalakshmi (2007), "Difference and Identities: Women and Political Participation", pp. 429-444.

14. Charanjeev Singh, R. K. Sharma and Puja Sharma (2007), "Diminishing Male dominance and Resurgence of Women Leadership in Panchayati Raj Institutions: An Empirical Study of Himachal Pradesh", pp. 238-266.

and also a step forward in achieving the social justice and equality. Study reveals that the visionary view point of the male representatives regarding women empowerment through reservations in PRIs, strengthened the very idea that provision of reservation will lead to political empowerment of women and will also go along way in reducing the male domination in the arena of politics. In the study majority of male representatives strongly agreed to the view that success of PRIs depend on the coordination between the male representatives and women representatives and their working together is essential for the development of their area.



## Achievements And Challenges To Women Ineducation

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### Abstract

Women education is very important for the proper social and economic growth of the country. Both men and women are like two sides of the coin and run equally like two wheels of the society. So, both are important element of the growth and development in the country thus require equal opportunity in the education. The problem of women's education in India is one which attracts our attention immediately. In our country, due to conservative traditionalism, women's status has, through ages, been considered to be lower than that of men. The female education in India is very necessary for the future of the country as women are the first teachers of their children means future of the nation. If educations of the women are getting ignored, it would be the ignorant of bright future of the nation. Lack of women education weakens the powerful part of the society. So, women should have full rights for the education and should give proper education.

**Key words:** Women Education, Empowerment, Opportunities, Challenges.

### Introduction

Education is one of the most significant means for empowering an individual or community in general, and women and girls in particular. Level of educational attainment and literacy rate are indicators of general development of any society. Gender equality and empowerment of women are indispensable for achieving prosperity and sustainable development. Women education is very important for the country to fully develop. It is like an effective medicine to cure a patient completely and provide health back. Educated women are the weapons who yield positive impact on the Indian society through their contribution at home and professional fields. They are the reason of improved economy in the country as well as society. An educated woman has capability to handle her home and professional life. Education exposes people to new thoughts and ideas and provides necessary skills. Women power is an epoch-making factor in the economic growth of any country. By educating a woman you educate the whole family. Given that a woman has the responsibility of the whole family on herself, an educated woman is better capable of taking care of the health, nutrition and education of her children and more so be an active agent in the social and economic development of the country. It is evident that economic success everywhere is based on educational success. Education has a direct impact on women empowerment as it creates in them awareness about their rights, their capabilities and the choices and opportunities available to them.

Women are main backbone of our society. But in the country like India women are facing several difficulties for taking their education and most of them are neglected and deprived from education. Main problems in women education are domestic duty, social factors, conserve action mentality, lack of Girls school or co-educational school, lack of adequate educational facilities, & women teachers, lack of supervision & proper guidance, lack of adequate incentives, defective curriculum, child marriage & unmatured pregnancy,

women trafficking etc. Women in India are considered as burden for their parents and husbands for their thinking.

### **Achievements**

#### **Importance of Women Education in India.**

Educating an Indian woman creates a vital opportunity for the social and economic development of India. An educated Indian woman will yield a positive impact in the Indian society by contributing positively to the economy of both the country and the society. An educated woman reduces the chances of her child dying before the age of five. The chances of controlling the population are high as an educated woman is likely to marry at a later age as opposed to uneducated woman.

#### **Lack of Security**

Though the successive governments have worked to provide Indian women a safe and secure environment at home and also at work, still a lot remains to be done. Women working even in the safest cities of the country, lack the courage to transit alone during late night hours. Girls going to school in rural areas are pestered and eve teased. Such incidents are also responsible for high female school dropout rate. It is the responsibility of the government and the society as well to ensure a girl's safe transit to school, ensuring her education.

#### **Advantages of Women**

Following is the brief description of the advantages of women/female education in India

1) Social Development Educating women could be the key to remove many social evils of Indian society- dowry system, female infanticide and workplace harassment etc. An educated woman changes the future generations.

2) Economical Development Educating women will definitely lead to the economical development of the nation as more women join the work force.

3) High Living Standard An educated woman will contribute financially for the needs of her family and relatives. Two earning parents provide better growth prospects for the children as well as a raised living standard of the family.

4) Social Recognition A family with educated women enjoys a good social status and is honoured more than others. An educated woman conducts appropriately in the society earning laurels for the family and making it proud.

5) Improved Health and Hygiene An educated woman recognizes the health hazards to her family and knows how to deal with them. She knows how to feed and nurture her children, telling them about good and bad hygiene.

6) The Commission reaffirms that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Optional Protocols thereto, as well as other relevant conventions and treaties, provide an international legal framework and a comprehensive set of measures for the elimination and prevention of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls and the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.



7.The Commission also reaffirms the international commitments made at relevant United Nations summits and conferences in the area of gender equality and the empowerment of women, including in the Programme of Action at the International Conference on Population and Development and its key actions for its further implementation.

8.The Commission acknowledges the important role played by regional conventions, instruments and initiatives and their follow-up mechanisms, in their respective regions and countries, in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls

#### Higher Education

- Higher education of women through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) Mode
- Post School Diploma (Polytechnics etc.) : To provide financial assistance for the construction of women hostel in the existing polytechnics.
- The University Grants Commission (UGC) has launched a number of schemes to encourage the enrolment and promotion of girls in Higher Education.
- Day Care Centres in Universities and Colleges
- Post Graduate Indira Gandhi Scholarship for Single Girl Child for Pursuing
- Higher and Technical Education. Construction of Women's Hostels for Colleges
- Development of Women's Studies in Universities and Colleges
- Scheme of Capacity Building of Women Managers in Higher Education
- Post-Doctoral Fellowships for Women

#### Challenges to Women Education

Negative parental attitudes Poor families are more likely to keep girls at home to care for younger siblings or to work in family enterprise. If a family has to choose between educating a son or a daughter because of financial restrictions, typically the son will be chosen. Negative parental attitudes toward educating daughters can also be a barrier to a girl's education.

#### Inadequate school facilities

Another challenge to education in India is the lack of adequate school facilities. Many schools do not have enough classrooms to accommodate all of the school-age children. Furthermore, the classrooms that are available often lack of basic necessities such as sanitary facilities or water. Lack of latrines can be particularly detrimental to girls' school attendance

**Major Challenges as Regard Women in Power and Decision Making** There is urgent need for women to organise their political activism consistent with overall strategy that will enhance their participation in public policy formulation in order to achieve a women's agenda. It is necessary to continue to make a claim for improvement in the system but at the same time to assume that the representation of women's interest and perspectives are likely to find expression in Government when women gain more equal access.

1. Increased mobilisation, consciousness raising training in leadership and governance for women to begin to take the forefront in politics; increased participation in both local and central government.
2. Enhance women's political representation through sensitisation of party executives and legislators
3. Required too is the acceptance of the differential manner in which society has been structured historically and willingness of key players and advocates to influence the transformation of the power hierarchy that exists. This requires continuous public sensitisation/consciousness raising
4. Continue to lobby for gender sensitive research and gender impact on global and domestic policy.

#### **Disparity in education:**

women are neglecting during childhood and gender bias of people generally goes towards male child. For the want of a male child an unborn girl is killed even before she gets a change to see the world. Thus, the murdering of an unborn girl child is termed as female foeticides which is a common picture in almost all the villages.

#### **Early marriage:**

Early marriage is common problem since many years in India especially for poor and middle-class family in rural and urban areas. Girls Childs are getting married before attaining full mental and physical maturity. So maternal mortality is common in that area. In rural India almost 70% of girls are married before they are 18. Nearly 56% of married girls bear children before they are 19.

#### **Problems related to employment:**

Women are facing more problem in searching their suitable work. They have to tolerate exploitation and sexual harassment in the work areas. They are given more work and hard tasks by their boss intentionally and they have to prove their devotion, seriousness and sincerity towards work time to time.

#### **Unbearable Conditions**

Women who are uneducated more prone to divorce and desertion by their husbands on any stage of life. They have to live whole life with fear of divorce. In some cases they have to finish their life because of unbearable conditions.

#### **Conclusion**

Women contribute a large portion of human life. India is now a leading country in the field of women education. Empowerment of girls and women is essential for achieving sustainable development. Women empowerment plays a vital role for country's development because women cover a great percentage of country's population. Without women, one cannot think life. So women welfare is necessary for society and country's development and growth. An educated woman can educate her whole family and thus whole country. The Women's Bureau has been collaborating with a number of agencies/organisations to improve its capacity to deliver its mandate and focused activities on gender. There is room for improved alliances and involvement of all sectors since gender is a cross cutting issue.

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## Strategies and challenges of indian women in The 21<sup>st</sup> century

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*The status of women in India has been subject to many great changes over the past few millennia. From equal status with men in ancient times through the low points of the medieval period, to the promotion of equal rights by many reformers, the history of women in India has been eventful.*

**Keywords:** Certain inequities -equal rights -self-development - rest –recreation –  
education – personal – hygiene - self maintenance.

The status of women in modern India is a sort of a paradox. The modern Indian women have honed their skills and jumped into a battlefield of life fighting against social restrictions, emotional ties, religious boundaries and cultural clutches She can now be seen working on par with men in every field. As compared with past women in modern times have achieved a lot but in reality they have to still travel a long way. Their path is full of roadblocks. The women have left the secured domain of their home and are now in the battlefield, of life, fully armored with their talent. They must avail themselves of the educational opportunities provided and learn to empower themselves.

### GENDER EQUITY AND DEVELOPMENT

In India, of approximately 32 per cent of the population in work force, 50 per cent are men and only 10 per cent women. Of these 10 per cent women, 15 per cent are in Agriculture and only 5 per cent in the professions outside agriculture. These inequities in the nature of work performed are compounded by the fact that asset ownership of women is near zero. A study of time disposition of men and women in work in a selected rural area suggests that as compared to men, women spend one-third the time on self development that is rest, recreation, education, personal hygiene and self maintenance.

Certain inequities against women are sometime eulogized as tradition, good behaviour, and upkeep of “values” which forces young people to follow a pre-defined stereo typed role.<sup>1</sup>All these and other situations which are at the root of social and economic inequities against women call for strengthening of social and economic infrastructure that surrounds and helps women. This includes extensive state and public support for female education, health nutrition, skill formation and asset transfers in favour of females particularly early in their age, so that they are not seen as a burden from day one.

That we begin this important conference with a discussion on women’s issues and their role in development, I consider it a very good augury for a World Conference on Poverty, Development and Collective Survival, Private and Public Responsibilities. There can be no eradication of poverty-nor development Nutritional Management, if better half of humanity is left out of the scheme of things, either intended for poverty alleviation or accelerated development with equity. such a situation, neither private nor public responsibilities would have been honoured.<sup>2</sup>

Women also have a special interest in collective survival, because the burden of readjustment consequent upon wars or even degradation of nature largely falls upon them. Women, therefore, have a very important stake in the theme of this conference and its outcome. Furthermore, since women represent one of the most important and stable institution that humanity has given to itself i.e. the family their

upliftment will most certainly benefit all members of the family including children and not to forget-women.

### **WOMEN: NOW AND THEN**

Nomination of three Indian elite class girls for Ms. World titles cannot cover the misery that more than 80% of the women go through every day in India. The National Commission for Women (NCW) in India has recently released a report on rapes in India, titled as, 'Rape-A legal study.' It is a significant step in the wake of recent spurt in the incidents of rapes throughout India. Though the Report deals with the problem of rape in India, the authors also express their concern about the overall status of women in our society.<sup>3</sup>

They seem to have arrived at the following conclusion in the Prologue of the Report itself, "in India, in ancient times, women had enjoyed an able position in the household and in society. As the 'queen of the household, her position was envied by her counterparts elsewhere. Unfortunately, constant invasions by foreign elements from about 8th century changed the scenario to the detriment of women. Her vulnerability to abuse by the invading hordes bestowed upon man a responsibility to protect her and from thence developed the inherent dominant role of the male within the family fold and her inevitable dependence on the male.<sup>4</sup> Long years of invasion and infliction of crime on her resulted in many protective measures. The direct effect of this state of affairs was perforce, keeping women within the four corners of the home and consequential enforced illiteracy which has been, by and large, her lot since then."

Unfortunately, this kind of thesis is not only over-simplification of a very serious issue of perpetual injustice being done to women not only in India but throughout the world but also means running away from finding a way out to stop atrocities against women. Is it not true that society like Chinese or Japanese, which were never subjugated, don't have a better record to show historically, so far as, the gender equality is concerned? In our case, long before the arrival of the 'invaders' in 8th century, women like Darupadis were not only put on bet but also disrobed publicly by the kinfolk.

We had kings like Ravan who enjoyed kidnapping helpless and pious women like Sita, and innumerable other good kings in our mythological epics maintaining 'harems' with innumerable wives. Shri Shiv Mahapuran not only equated women with death, degeneration, snake, poison and destructive fire but also concluded, "there is no bigger sinner than women. Women are the roots of sin, you must know."<sup>5</sup>The story of historical injustices to women in India or elsewhere is yet to have a pause, and is, too complicated to be wished away to some invaders' misdeeds only. It is true that Arabs and later Mughals who came to our lands from the western route in no respect believed in gender equality. It really was a matter of great irony and shame that these followers of Islam which normatively promised basic human rights to women more than 14 hundred years back were practitioners of a rigid patriarchal Islam.

However, it is also true that the denigration of women has been a universal and perpetual phenomenon. The plight of women transcended the geographical, religious, cultural, ideological and civilizational barriers. It is true that before the advent of agriculture women enjoyed a better status but with the rise of feudal society they were gradually turned into serfs or objects of pleasure. The four Vedas are a great testimony of this changing scenario. It is high time that organizations like NCW instead of wasting time on futile and questionable theses take a serious note of highly objectionable popular religious literature debasing women being circulated these days by organizations like Geeta Press, Gorakhpur and others. This kind of literature is easily available in every nook and corner of the country including the

government allotted stalls at all major railway stations both in Hindi and English. Geeta Press publishes mass religious literature espousing the 'Hindu way of life' for women with titles like, 'How to Lead a Household Life,' 'Nari Shiksha,' and 'StriyonKeLiyeKratayya Shiksha'. They have a bulky edition even preaching Sati. In the following are some of the samples from this literature.

"What should the wife do if her husband beats her and troubles her?" the answer is, "the wife should think that she is paying her debt of her previous life and thus her sins are being destroyed and she is becoming pure." "Is Sati pratha (viz. The tradition of wife being cremated with the dead body of the husband on the funeral pyre) proper or improper?" The answer to this query provided in one of these books reads, "a wife's cremation with the dead body of her husband on the funeral pyre is not a tradition. She in whose mind truth and enthusiasm come, burns even without fire and she does not suffer any pain while she burns. This is not a tradition that she should do so, but this is her truth, righteousness and faith in scriptural decorum." A Hindu woman must commit suicide because, "a Sati woman snatches her husband from the hands of Yamdoot and takes him to Swarglok (paradise)." This stream of literature openly decries equal rights between men and women, working women, co-education and upholds purdah.

Interestingly, Muslim clergy does not lag behind in pouring out this kind of anti-women literature for Muslim women in India. The 'Islamic' literature which is in circulation makes horrible reading and is available in many regional languages. Some of these books are titled as 'MusalmanBiwi' and 'MianBiwiKeHaqooq'. One of these books even has a chapter, 'Right to Batter Wife' which reads, "husband may use the stick to beat the wife but he should avoid hitting her on the face or cause deep scar." The authors of such literature quote scriptures after scriptures to convey the message that a woman must treat her husband as master and herself as slave.

Those of you who think that "DahiBahlay and Kababs from Delhi are better than the ones from Karachi", please pay attention to what is happening here and assess whether the status of women in India is something to be proud of or not. Nomination of three Indian elite class girls for Ms. World titles cannot cover the misery that more than 80% of the women go through every day in India.

#### **WOMEN 21ST CENTURY IN INDIA:**

Throughout ages women in India have faced gruesome atrocities. One side of history shows the faith among the Indians about "Shakti" or the "Women Power" to be the strongest energy. The other side of history is colored in black, grey shades of dowry, child marriage, sati and other related mal practices. Hinduism defines woman to be a man's half-batsman. It is clearly indicated and symbolized through "Shiv-Shakti" that a man is incomplete without a woman. Holy Books have preached equality of both sexes. But even in today's ultramodern India the situation remains the same as it was centuries ago.

The face and style of women exploitation has changed from visible to invisible. However, the cruelty and extent is unchanged. In earlier times, where women were prohibited from pursuing education, today, educated women are exploited at home and at their workplaces. Physical exploitation of women has its prominence in the rural areas of the country while urban women face mental torture that sometimes even extends to physical torture. Modern educated women have become independent but their responsibilities have increased. A modern Indian woman has to provide income as well as has to perform household duties to support her family. During marriage a woman's family background and property still plays a major role for acquiring a good alliance.<sup>6</sup>

So, the question remains whether have women really acquired independence through education or have become scapegoats to new kinds of exploitation. The answers to these questions are difficult. Education surely makes us aware of our rights but social conditioning makes us believe the unacceptable norms of the society to be our duties. A divorcee woman or a widow still finds it difficult to find a worthy alliance. But it still works for a man under similar conditions. Even if the woman is the sole income provider of the household and the man has proven to be incompetent, she is expected to be a socially correct “good wife”. Female feticides have increased in the metropolitan cities due to advancement of science and technology while infanticides continue to grow in rural areas. The modern policy of countering population explosion and family planning has become an excuse for those who prefer sons over daughters. A wife is discarded; a daughter-in-law is abolished for not giving birth to a boy child. Although it is scientifically proven, that it is the man who is the sole determinant of the sex of the child to be born. A girl child’s education is interrupted and she is diverted towards much “feminine” educational courses.

While a male child is encouraged to pursue his desired professions under the pretext that he will take the household responsibility on growing up. Whether he really does or does not, yet he is prioritized for being the “heir” who will carry on the family surname. Even if it was Kalpana Chawla and Indira Gandhi who actually proved to be the “heirs”, it is beyond the understanding of the male dominated Indian society. Marriage is security for a woman and it might be an easier way of accumulating wealth for a man. Parents of a girl child educate their daughter and accumulate wealth for finding a “better groom” for her. Still, her income generating capacities are tested by the boy’s parents. If she qualifies in terms of property, education, income only then she has a chance to get a good husband.<sup>7</sup> If she lacks in the first and the last category then her chances can be reduced to nil. Even her beauty cannot compensate for it.

Beauty of a woman has the last of all priorities during matchmaking. However, it becomes a potential determinant if a man is highly-educated and earns extremely well. Then, no matter his own looks and age he is considered deserving to get a beautiful, well-earning, and highly educated girl belonging to a well-settled family. This gender bias is prevalent in workplaces as well. A talented and intelligent woman faces mental abuse from her male seniors who consider her as to be a potential threat to their designation.

Physical abuse and exploitation is present to some extent in glamour industries. But predominantly, women face the glass ceiling effect. Despite of talent and skills a woman employee gets less number of promotions and her wages are often lesser than her male colleagues. Child marriage and sati are still prevalent in states like Rajasthan. Denying a girl her right to live and to live happily are heinous crimes of the same nature. But sadly, even in the 21st century India, women struggle to find their right place. Dowry deaths have not become a talk of past nor has woman’s secondary status elevated to equal. The change that has happened is only that the picture is hidden, sometimes behind the close doors and sometimes underneath a dark region imperceptible to the naked eye.

#### **CONTEXT OF GENDER EQUALITY IN INDIA:**

For several reasons India is an interesting country to study in the context of gender equality. Although China has a larger population, it is fair to say that India is the country in which the highest number of women suffers discrimination. India is also an example of failed attempts to implement pro-women policies. Since independence, the Indian government has imposed several laws to protect women, which for the most part have not been applied. Consequently, India has been named “a good example of a country with an abyssal gap between policy and practise”(Rhodie, 1989). India is therefore a prime example to illustrate the limitations of a sound legal framework. Finally, India is characterised by the

impact of religion on the status of women. In many cases, Hinduism (accounting for some 80% of the population) is more important than the official laws and regulations. Similarly for the Muslim population the Islamic code is frequently the reference.

**FAMILY CODE:**

The State has fought against child marriage since the 19th century and the legal age of marriage for girls has been raised continuously: from 12 in 1891, 14 in 1929, 15 in 1955, and finally to 18 in 1976. However, a high percentage of women married before the age of 20 shows that the law is not respected. An estimated 30 percent of girls between 15 and 19 years of age are currently married, divorced or widowed. What is more, in rural areas in the North, more than 50% of women are believed to be married even before the age of 15 (C. Morrisson 2004).

Polygamy is legal for Muslims and it also exists to some extent among Hindus, particularly in cases where the first wife has not given birth to any sons. Repudiation is also legal for Moslems. For persons of other religious beliefs, the divorce proceedings have been equal for men and women since 1976. Divorce by mutual consent is legal but in reality, any woman who initiates a divorce is condemned by the public opinion. For that reason, divorces are very rare. The father alone detains parental authority in Hindu and Muslim families. His authority is partially limited only in educated and urban families. In the event of divorce, the law assures some equality with regards to child custody, but any advantages granted to the mother in this aspect are rarely exercised as divorces are not common practice. The old Hindu traditions privileged men in matters of inheritance: only sons-not daughters - could inherit their parents. After independence, however, these traditions were abolished by law. But in the North, nothing has really changed and women are still deprived of inheritance. Contrary to laws passed by the Indian Union, several local states allow the exclusion of widows and daughters for land inheritance.

**CIVIL LIBERTIES:**

Women are not free to move in the villages of the North and suffer severe restriction of their movement in the South. In the North the tradition of the purdah prevails except in large towns: 80% to 85% of women do not have any freedom. Purdah imposes at the same time the veil and reclusion at home: the wife must ask permission to go to the village market or to visit friends. Before the 10th century purdah did not exist. The Muslim invasion at that time lead the Hindu husbands to enforce this practise because they feared Muslims who imposed the purdah on their wives. But the purdah is less respected in large towns: in Delhi nearly half the women can move freely. In the South, Muslims ruled only for a short time during the 18th century. As a consequence, purdah affects less than half the women in this region. Restrictions on freedom of dress only affect 50-60% of women if the following facts are taken into account: in the villages of the North the obligation to wear of a veil and reclusion are always linked, but in the South the obligation of the veil is less frequent. On the other hand, freedom of dress prevails often in towns.

**INDIAN PERSPECTIVE OF STRATEGIES AND CHALLENGES:**

For centuries, women in this country have been socially and economically handicapped. They have been deprived of equal participation in the socio-economic activities of the nation. The Constitution of any country is supreme law of the land and is followed absolutely, subject to the limits provided in the solemn document itself. So much is the importance of the Constitution that if a statutory law is in conflict with it, the same would be "unconstitutional" and void in nature. The Constitution is organic and living in



nature. It is also well settled that the interpretation of the Constitution of India or statutes would change from time to time. Being a living organ, it is ongoing and with passage of time, law must change. New rights may have to be found out within the constitutional scheme. It is established that Fundamental Rights themselves have no fixed content; most of them are empty vessels into which each generation must pour its contents in the light of its experience. The attempt of the court should be to expand the reach and ambit of the Fundamental Rights by process of judicial interpretation.<sup>8</sup>

To sum up, our society is male dominated both economically and socially and women are assigned, invariably, a dependent role, irrespective of the class of society to which she belongs. It must be appreciated that a nation that does not respect its women cannot be described as a civilized nation at all. Such a nation cannot grow and develop and will ultimately perish due to its own rudimentary and tyrannical dogma. Thus, the national consensus should concentrate on betterment of women by suitably empowering them. The plight of the women, however, cannot be improved till they are duly represented in the “power structure” of the nation. In a democratic country the voice of women can be heard only to the extent they are sharing the power structure in the supreme governance of the country.

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## Higher Education In Contemporary India With Special Emphasis On Dalit Women Of Andhra Pradesh

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### ABSTRACT

*Women seem to be invisible in Indian society. They are being subjected to social, psychological, physical and domestic violence and other forms of atrocities, suppression and deprivation. Almost most of women depend on agricultural operations. Though women are the best resource managers they are being paid less. The women in agricultural sector face problems of patriarchal culture and values, caste discrimination and economic exploitation. Hence it is time to create a space for women, to educate and to empower them to stand and struggle against violence meted out to them. Space should be given for women to make their own decisions. Women must equally share power with men at all levels and hence the need to work for the empowerment of women.*

**Keywords:** Dalit women- neglected- financial incentives-higher education: problems, issues, strategies:

The situation of Dalit women in India needs special attention. They are one of the largest socially segregated groups anywhere in the world, and make up 2% of the world's total population. Dalit women are discriminated against three times over: they are poor, they are women, and they are Dalits. Dalit women constitute half of the ca. 200 million Dalit population, and 16.3 of the total Indian female population. The traditional taboos are the same for Dalit men and Dalit women. However, Dalit women have to deal with them more often. Dalit women are discriminated against not only by people of higher castes, but also within their own communities. Men are dominant in Dalit communities. Dalit women also have less power within the Dalit movement itself. Women are active in large numbers in the movement but most leadership positions in the organizations, local bodies and associations have until now been held by men.

In India, according to the Census Report of 1991, Dalit women constitute 49.96% of the 200-million-strong Dalit population in India and 16.3% of the total female population of India. They number 80.5 million people, i.e. 8 out of every 100 citizens in the country, and 8% of the total Indian population. The literacy rate for Dalit women is only 23.6%. Vulnerably positioned at the bottom of the caste, class and gender hierarchies, Dalit women are victims of deprivation, exploitation and violence. Not only do they face endemic violence and discrimination (due to both caste and patriarchy), but the vast majority of crimes against them go unreported, unregistered and unpunished (the conviction rate is less than 1%). Moreover, they face violence and exploitation not only from the dominant castes, but also at home within their own families and communities.<sup>1</sup> Dalit women have a drop-out rate of 54% at primary-school level, which rises significantly as they move up to secondary school. The poverty rate among Dalit women is 36.2% as compared with 21.6% among non-Dalit women. 94% of Dalit women are engaged in the unorganized, self-employed sector (farm/wage workers, domestic helpers, etc.), marked by overwork, low wages, non-payment of equal wages and the absence of social security or maternity benefits.<sup>2</sup>

The present position seems to be better with reference to the rate of literacy among Dalits. The literacy rate is 31.48% for boys and 10.93% for girls. Dalits women belonging to the creamy layer of the society are better with good education and socially and economically they are well off like other high castes. They are fully aware of the welfare schemes provided by the Government and their percentage is very low when compared with the total dalit population. In rural areas, the first generation girls from SC need the attention of Government and other organization. Mostly the teachers of the locality provide information to them about the welfare schemes. In many Dalit associations executive positions are occupied by male members whereas very poor representation is made by women in their pasts. The women are not properly informed about the Government schemes and there is an urgent need to get a feedback about the welfare schemes where lot of money is spent for the development of Dalits. The funds are not utilized properly for their upliftment. Many of the schemes go unnoticed because they are not popularized properly.<sup>3</sup>

The coaching programmes conducted by the Government for Dalit women are beneficial in training many women to compete in the competitive exam. These programmes also do not reach the needy Dalit women because they are cornered by the very few creamy Dalit women. This should be monitored properly and the schemes should be reached by the most deprived and constantly struggling Dalit women. Because these dalit women are neglected by socially advanced communities and also by the better off among the Dalits, which leads to an unhealthy socio-economic condition. There should be some scientific basis to pick up the poorest and they should be equipped with facilities.<sup>4</sup>

There are some pre-examination coaching centers giving trainings for Dalits which are doing very good service to train them in vocational line, for competitive exam, in medical and engineering field, railway recruitment boards, bank recruitment, etc.

#### **Higher education was entrusted:**

Higher education was entrusted with the responsibility of protecting the constitutional provisions for positive discrimination. The commitment to broaden the student base was reflected in the financial incentives provided to Dalit and adivasi students. Higher education has occupied a dominant position in independent India since it was perceived as a promoter of economic growth, technological development and a tool of equal opportunity and upward social mobility. This helped in giving importance to social justice around the issues of caste, tribe, class and gender. There has been a careful articulation of education for equality for women which is reflected in the educational policy in post independence India. Since 1991, the policies of government have dramatically changed the otherwise privileged position of higher education. The govt. began to talk of setting aside public support to higher education and to make it self-financing while privatizing it. Higher education has also become a non merit good. Private institutions have been permitted to be set up on a liberal scale without a clearly defined policy to regulate them.<sup>5</sup>

#### **Accessing higher education:**

This article has tried to demonstrate that Dalit women are disadvantaged in higher education. This has been substantiated on the basis of their enrollment in higher education although several other dimensions could have been selected for illustrating their educational backwardness. Each of these categories are not monolithic and educational disadvantages vary within as well as across these categories. This situation exists in spite of the Constitutional provisions in favour of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes as well as for Muslims. The official documents such as the reports of the various committees and commissions appointed by the Government of India since independence have reflected a consistent view

about education as the major instrument of social mobility and advancement for the weaker sections. The latest policy document, namely, National Policy on Education 1986, devotes a section to the role of education in promoting equality. It underscores the twin dimensions of education, namely, removal of disparities and equalization of educational opportunities. Strategies are outlined separately for women, the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and minorities. However, their specific needs and suggested strategies are neither integrated nor an overall comprehensive framework provided for the education of all the disadvantaged groups.

While the immediate 'productive' function of poor children keeps them out of schools or pulls them out of schools at an early age, the support provided by girls to release their mothers for work is a major hindrance. Added to that is the social prejudice against educating girls which is affected by gender ideology and the focus on their reproductive function. Social prejudices and hostility to girls' education were widespread in the early twentieth century. The notion that an educated girl would become a widow and that only immodest girls learnt to read, write, sing and dance were the commonest. Or that educating a girl was like putting a knife in her hand and a literate girl became a dushta or wayward.<sup>6</sup>

### **Women in Higher Education:**

This section of the paper deals with the data on enrollment of women and men in higher education, of women across faculties/disciplines or subjects and their presence across various levels. It also lays emphasis on the difference in their enrollment in general and professional education. Starting from 1950-51 when the proportion of women was 10.9 percent to 40.04 percent in 2002-03, the increase has been significant. In other words, there were 14 women per 100 men in 1950-51 which increased to 67 in 2002-03. Thus the proportion of women entering higher education has increased rapidly from 16,85,926 (32%) in 1991-92 to 40 % (36,95,964) of all students in 2002-03. There have been also shifts in women's choice of disciplines in higher education. There are also wide disparities in enrollment by region, caste, tribe and by gender. The differences have an impact on women from the disadvantaged groups.<sup>7</sup>

The UGC has given reservation for seats in colleges for SC students 25%, ST 7.5%, which is highly beneficial. Also relaxation in marks for 5% is given to all dalit students in admission. Financial assistance in the form of fellowships is given to Dalits. Rs. 3,600/- is given per JRF to continue research studies at the University level. There are special SC/ST cells at the University for effective implementation of the Government orders and to improve the condition of University level dalit students.

There are some of the suggestions for effective implementation of the various welfare schemes for the Dalit students.

1. The communication gap between the educational institution and the social welfare department should be reduced.
2. District wise computer database of the male and female dalit students is very essential to provide necessary facilities to them.
3. Pamphlets with details about the welfare schemes should be distributed to the students, Supply of books to the Dalit students.
4. Incentive scholarship should be given to deserving and meritorious girls to encourage them for higher education.

As per the educational survey by the Government of India in 1981 the literacy rate among Dalit women is 35.91 percent. As per my personal survey, they usually study till the primary level and gradually drop out from high school. Still 2 to 5 percent of the Dalit women students prefer to enroll for university education. They are very conscious about their children's education, especially converted Dalit women like Buddhists and Christians. The other Hindu Dalits are not so conscious about education. There are many reasons for this attitude. Those who have engaged themselves in traditional work like sweeping, nursing, etc., say their only aim is to earn a livelihood. Secondly, unemployment is a grave problem.

The education of girls is a common problem among Dalits except among the Buddhists and Christians. If at all some of them try for higher education they are detached from their caste brethren. There are very few names of Dalit women who work for the upliftment of women of their caste and their education.<sup>8</sup>

Being uneducated, the Dalit women, in general have the least sense about health and general hygiene. As a mark of respect to Babasaheb Ambedkar guidelines for the welfare of the society, majority of them have accepted the programme of family planning. Neo-Buddhist women are well oriented with regard to immunization and infectious diseases, nutrition and sanitary reforms, though they may be illiterate

#### **Enrollment in general and Professional Education:**

The programmes in higher education are divided into those of general subjects such as Arts which include Social Sciences and Humanities; Pure Sciences, Professional courses such as Engineering, Medical science, teacher education, agriculture, law etc. They are also divided into masculine and feminine disciplines. Arts, Social sciences, Humanities, Teacher Education have been viewed as feminine disciplines. On the other hand, Commerce, Law, Engineering are masculine subjects. Medical science has not been a masculine discipline in India unlike in the western countries. In India like in the rest of South Asia, the practice of female seclusion enjoined the treatment of women patients by women doctors. This required training women doctors, thereby enabling them to enter the medical profession<sup>9</sup>. The proportion of women in some of the masculine disciplines was very less soon after independence and remained so till the 1980's with the exception of Commerce. Science, a masculine discipline provides an interesting insight on disciplinary choices of young men and women. The proportion of men in Science subjects was 80-90% in 1980-81 which has come down to 59.8% in 2002-03.

The differential importance of general science for women and men over time has to be understood as a background to shifts in disciplinary choices in the recent past. The proportion of women in Science decreased from 33.3 percent in 1950-51 to 28.8 % in 1980-81. Science has never been the first preference for young women whose parents considered marriage much more important than higher education. A Science degree required a longer investment of time and other resources and thus was not desirable. Prior to 1990's, education and its linkage to the job market early on in life was only for those men who needed jobs and was certainly not for women. These days' young women and men like to earn as soon as they can, even while in school. The revolution in values cuts across upper and middle strata, who want to begin earning as soon as possible. The daughters of city based professional parents, especially if they do not have brothers, have really undergone a great change. The parents are giving the best education to their daughters and expect them to be independent and follow careers. In this changed scenario, the priorities of women have also changed. They too want professional education and are therefore entering

into masculine disciplines. The two simultaneous trends of clustering/concentration and dispersal can be seen in the enrollment of men and women in higher education.

### **Gender Equality:**

Female infanticide is more prevalent among the uneducated dalit families. Educational development among SC women is very marginal because only girls were not sent to school because of the responsibilities at home.

Therefore the gender discrimination starts at the very early stage in the life of a dalit girl. Normally girl children are retained at home to look after the siblings. Another thing is the compulsory marriage of the girls at very early age after which the education is stopped. Generally in the male-dominated society, polygamy is allowed and more so in many dalit families. Because of this the position of the women deteriorated. Joint family system, polygamy, property structure, early marriage, and permanent widowhood were hurdles for the development of all women in early period. But in the twentieth century, after the Mahatma Gandhien movement to educate women, slowly changes occurred in the position of women. But here, rural women were more blessed than urban women because divorce and remarriage were allowed for them. Mainly Sudras (i.e. low caste people) allowed divorce and remarriage for their women.<sup>10</sup>

Gender, class and region this brings us to a comparison of the enrollment of men and women within these disadvantaged groups. The enrollment of Scheduled Caste women is proportionately closer to that of all Scheduled Tribe students. For example, the participation in arts and humanities of all Scheduled Tribe students is 2.79 percent while it is 2.13 percent for Scheduled Caste women students. The representation of Scheduled Tribe students and of Scheduled Caste women is 0.60 percent each in research programmes. In engineering/architecture courses there is a difference since Scheduled Tribe students form 1.32 percent and Scheduled Caste women are only 0.39 percent of total enrollment. In general the proportions of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe women have either remained steady or declined. The enrollment of Scheduled Tribe women is indeed appalling. In all faculties they constitute less than one percent of total enrollment. Thus while women of both groups fare badly in comparison to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe men, the Scheduled Tribe women are more handicapped. Furthermore, the difference in the enrollment numbers of women in three categories i.e. the non Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe, the Scheduled Caste women and women from the Scheduled Tribes is very significant. For instance, there are 646,709 non Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe women in arts as compared to 35,294 and 13,252 from the last two categories respectively. Their numbers in medicine are 26,261, 2529 and 526 respectively. Thus, women who do not belong to the disadvantaged sections i.e., the non Scheduled Caste/Tribe are better represented in terms of numbers. Again, in all faculties their proportion is far more than the women in the last two categories. Medicine is an exception where the Scheduled Caste women have the highest percentage (35.2 percent) of non- Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe women while the proportion is lowest (19.9 percent) at the doctoral level. The higher percentage of Scheduled Tribe women in research has to be understood in view of the very small number of Scheduled Tribe men and women (247) in research. Moreover, the women from weaker sections too are beginning to enter commerce faculties while in the engineering and related subjects, all women are a very small minority.<sup>11</sup>

Therefore, there are certain similarities in the trends relating to women, on the one hand, and to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students on the other. Yet there are differences too especially if we exclude Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe women who suffer from more acute handicaps. This has to be understood in the context of class which cross-cuts gender while in the case of these weaker groups

caste overlaps with class. When class overlaps with gender and caste/tribe as in the case of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe women then they suffer maximum disparities.

**Discrimination in Higher Education:**

Intolerance, prejudice and harassment towards Dalits are not only found at the elementary school level. Several incidents have occurred in institutions of higher education where discrimination is practiced by senior upper-caste students, teachers, faculties, and administrations. The caste bias manifests itself in the way teachers ignore Dalit students and unjustly fail them in exams, in social exclusion and physical abuse, and in the unwillingness of the university administration to assist Dalits and support them. As a grave consequence of this harassment, a disproportionate number of Dalit students have committed suicide.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, in India alone, 18 Dalit students have committed suicide in one of the country's premier institutions between 2008-2011, and this number only represents the official cases. Counting all the Dalit students whose families did not protest against the incessant discrimination that eventually led to suicide, the number is likely to be much higher.<sup>13</sup>

**Legislation: Case stories of Dalit children in India - Victims of caste discrimination:**

A survey by Navsarjan Trust, India reveals that teachers, local governments, and community members routinely subject the children of manual scavengers to discrimination and forced labour as part of their daily experience of attending school and living in their communities. The survey - Voices of Children of Manual Scavengers – is based on interviews with 1,048 children between the ages of 6 and 17 in the state of Gujarat. Together with Navsarjan's groundbreaking report Understanding Untouchability it forms the basis of this briefing document - compiled by IDSN in February 2011. In many affected countries, the practice of caste discrimination is explicitly prohibited as per their constitutions. However, most of these countries fail to take specific legislative action to address the issue. India is the exception, and over the years several legislative measures and affirmative action have been taken to ensure the rights of the country's large Dalit population, including reservation policies and quotas. There are good examples of how affirmative action measures have benefitted the most marginalized. For instance, the primary school tuition fee has been abolished for Scheduled Castes, and incentives such as free textbooks, uniforms and stationary are provided for Scheduled Caste children. Out of 43,000 scholarships for talented children from rural areas, 13,000 have been given to Scheduled Caste children.<sup>14</sup>

Unfortunately, implementation of such measures continues to be highly inadequate. Below are examples of the non-enforcement of special measures and barriers to effectively improving the educational status of the Dalits in India:

- ∅ Reservation policies and quotas for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in India only apply to public schools, and not private schools. Moreover, the Dalits who have converted to for instance Christianity and Islam still cannot benefit from these provisions.
- ∅ In higher educational institutions 15% of seats are reserved for Scheduled Castes. This is also the case in technical educational institutions. However, in technical and professional courses in higher education, some reserved seats remain unfilled.
- ∅ Universities often fail to follow the guidelines set up for Dalit students by the University Grant Commission (UGC) (Government of India).

The widespread discrimination against Dalits throughout the entire educational system indicate that more needs to be done by affected governments to ensure implementation of laws, programmes and quotas.

The 1992-93 Annual report from the Ministry of Welfare shows 1,236 reported cases of rape on Dalit women and the National Commission for SC/ST shows that approximately 10,000 cases of human right violations on Dalits are reported every month. But what is even more disturbing, is that only one out of ten of the cases are reported annually whilst, nine go unreported. In addition to this, according to the Human Right watch Report, approximately 115 million children are in slavery and 2.6 million children are held as bonded labourers<sup>15</sup>. After fifty-five years of India's independence and despite the excellent laws in place to protect Dalit women, they are still suffering unimaginable atrocities from the high caste Hindus. It is believed that thousands of these cases go unreported and unpublicized because the poor Dalits that live in rural areas, who are the worst victims, have no control on power, wealth, justice, police and the media<sup>16</sup>. The only way these Dalit women can escape the viscous cycle of poverty, abuse and oppression is through education. Through education more Dalit women can come to know their basic human rights and they can then raise an even stronger voice against abuse and exploitation from the upper castes.<sup>17</sup>

Many of the Dalit NGO's are involved in establishing schools, scholarships, and basic supplements to Dalits in the rural parts of India. NGO's such as the Ambedkar Centre for Peace and Justice and the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights are involved in bringing the plight of the Dalit people to the attention of the international community and to document and publicize human rights abuse. The longterm objectives are to enfranchise Dalits as full citizens of their society and eliminate caste-based discriminations.

#### **Present Status of Women in Andhra Pradesh:**

The present position is better because of education, literacy rate for boys 31.48%, girls 10.93%. Now they have lot of self respect, aware of their rights, organisations to voice their feelings. The creamy layer is well aware of the Government welfare schemes. Among SC Dalits executive positions in associations are occupied only by men, very poor representation by women. Feedback about the welfare programme is very essential.

Andhra Pradesh is best place for world class education. Education plays a key role in success of human life. Education in Andhra Pradesh is provided in various streams such as Arts & social science, law, engineering, medical, commerce or journalism and mass communication. Andhra Pradesh is blessed with numerous institutes and colleges which extend hands in making Andhra Pradesh a very literate state. Not only government, but also private institutes are located in Andhra Pradesh. Education system in Andhra Pradesh is designed in such a way that not only the Aspirants within the state prefer to study but also the Aspirants from outside the state prefer Andhra Pradesh as the best place to study. Even scholarships are provided to the deserving candidate to pursue higher studies in Andhra Pradesh.

The curriculum of various courses in Andhra Pradesh is designed by experienced and well versed professors and lecturers of Andhra Pradesh universities. Through different modes education is delivered to the students such as regular mode, distance mode and online mode. Institutes in Andhra Pradesh also invite renowned companies for campus recruitment through active placement cells.

The local women have been linked to the women's forum at the mandal (cluster of villages) level, which works against the violation of women's rights, atrocities and domestic violence against women. The members of the working groups, farm workers and marginal farmers were linked to the mandal agricultural workers' union, which is registered under the Trade Union Act and promotes rights and economic development of its members through negotiation and advocacy with government and other agencies. Marginalized communities gained power in the watershed institutions, discrimination against women decreased. Women formed self-help groups, have developed income-generating activities as groups, and now earn equal wages<sup>18</sup>



Even the employed dalit women are engaged in occupations and considered inferior. Because of this, Dalit women are rarely employed in households as cooks or housemaids. For instance, nearly 95% of sweepers, known as safaiwala, in the twin cities of Hyderabad are dalit women. A campaign by landless women to put unused land into productive hands is gaining momentum. In a ground-breaking bid to empower women and end hunger among oppressed communities in Andhra Pradesh, over 25,000 applications for land have been filed by Dalit women.<sup>19</sup>

Recognize Dalit women as a distinct category among women and accordingly make disaggregated data on Dalit women available in census reports, action taken reports, and progress reports and while reporting to international treatise bodies. Evolve national and state level perspective plans for mainstreaming Dalit women in developmental programmes, market enterprises, financial allocations, reservation in education and employment and health facilities. Ensure proper representation of Dalit women in statutory bodies and committees, vigilance and monitoring bodies and undertake capacity building programmes to promote their active participation.

**Andhra Pradesh Education System:**

Andhra Pradesh education system is divided into different levels such as pre-primary level, primary level, elementary education, secondary education, undergraduate level and postgraduate level. Primary or elementary education is the foundation and later to it the students can get into secondary level, undergraduate level and post graduate level which is the higher education levels. Telugu is the regional and official language of Andhra Pradesh. Other linguistic groups speak Urdu and Hindi. Government of Andhra Pradesh has launched many projects to eradicate illiteracy. Number of institutes spread in Andhra Pradesh to provided qualitative education. Andhra Pradesh is the first state to have computerized government administrative set up.

A project by name Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan as been set up by government of Andhra Pradesh which purely believe in providing free education to the drop outs. To make aware of education, from this Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan had announced incentives in the form of cash prizes of Rs. 25,000, Rs. 10,000 and Rs. 5,000 to the first three toppers at the district level respectively.

Status of Indian women is highly disadvantageous compared to their counterparts in most countries in the world. It begins from womb and follows her till the tomb - female foeticide, female infanticide and low nutritional level because of sheer neglect of a female from birth, through adolescence to youth and poor health arising out of it, early marriage and unsafe motherhood, lack of medical attendance of childbirth and poor health, low level of illiteracy, discriminatory socio-cultural values and attitudes, beliefs and practices towards female which compound the already precarious condition of females especially in large parts of rural India where three quarters of our population live.

Though there is a clear preference for sons, the data from NFHS - 2 conducted in 1998 – 99 in Andhra Pradesh, shows some favorable trends for girls. NFHS – 2 states that despite the existence of certain amount of son preference, there is an increasing tendency to limit the family size with two children even when they are daughters. It also states that son preference is relatively weak in urban areas, among literate women, and among women whose husbands have at least completed high school. Son preference does not vary much by religion, but scheduled caste and scheduled tribe women show more son preference than women from other backward classes. Strong son preference combined with female foeticide and infanticide can lead to demographic imbalances. Even otherwise, due to poor nutritional care, low resistance to disease, subsequent ill health and lack of proper medical attention is also a major cause of loss of girl's

life. It is an accepted finding that majority of the women seek medical care only when they are critically ill to carry out their regular work.<sup>20</sup>

Finally, Higher education was almost free during the first four decades since it was publicly funded, but women have not achieved an equal access. It has also been denied to or made almost impossible for the women from disadvantaged groups to gain entry because of social and economic reasons. There is a need to deconstruct the inequitable impact of globalization. Pure Sciences, social sciences, arts and humanities, the disciplines preferred by women remain confined to the public institutions. Though women are doing professional courses, many of them are not even working especially after marriage. It is important to create a broad-based database on higher education which is gender sensitive. Information about students namely about their enrollment, discipline they have joined, discipline, specialization and institution are imperative for understanding of any system. Research on higher education deserves support so that a quantitative database can be supported by qualitative inputs. It would help in making plans for the future course of action and the research policy.

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## **‘Subjugation To Celebration ‘ Bama’s Works ——A Critical Analysis**

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This paper is an analysis of Dalit marginalization, discrimination and humiliation from common tradition of life especially the tragic condition of Dalit women in Indian society. Dalit literature is a genre of Indian writing that focuses on the lives ,experiences, and struggles of Dalit community.Dalit writers are an important writers of Indian writing in English and other languages of India.It is about the oppressed classes and caste of India.

“Bama” A renowned Dalit writer has been recognized as the voice of the voiceless. She published”Karukku”.Her prominent works areAn autobiography, sangati and vanmannovels. These are originally written in Tamil and have been translated in to English language. One of her books (Karakku) has won the crossword (Translation) book award in 2000.

An attempt has been made to focus on the various challenges faced by Dalit women in India.Bama ,a contemporary Tamil Dalit writer’s work” Karukku” has been analysed.The theme of her texts is taken as to whether it builds up a resistance against the oppression the women face in their day to day life.An insight has been attempted in to the work of Bama to highlight the oppression faced by Dalit women.

**Key Words: Marginalization, Discrimination ,Humillation,Community,Dalit,Experiences etc.**

In all countries across the globe, there are communities which continue to be marginalized and deprived of their rights due to their location within the society determined by class, race, ethnicity, gender and skin colour. In India, caste determines one’s social status and Dalits or untouchables remain the most oppressed and exploited social group in the country. Though the Constitution of India has enshrined several provisions for Dalit communities to safeguard and promote their socio-economic status in order to bring them back in the mainstream of population, the exclusionary mechanism of entrenched hierarchical social relations have brought differential outcomes for the Dalits, especially the women. They have to bear the triple burden of deprivation in terms of caste, gender and poverty. Dalit women are forced to enter the labor market at a very early age in order to sustain their families. Traditionally allocated menial and stigmatized works are generally assigned to them. Better paid and dignified jobs continue to be out of reach for them through a systematic denial of rights to higher education, skill training, assets and other productive resources. This process of systematic denial further ensures their exclusion from socio-political scenario and keeps them restricted to the bottom of the society as invisible citizens.

Caste has played an instrumental role in raising issues related to the more marginalized among women. In a highly hierarchical society, women belonging to the lower castes have lesser access to public fore, which is compounded by their gender. The Dalits and the marginalized are still colonized by the feudal lords, the elites without freedom from caste discrimination. Indians have driven out the colonizers but not the ones who are discriminating Dalits. For Dalit women, they are also coerced to be victimized in the patriarchy. Dalit women are bearing the burden of double-day caste and the division of labor based on sex. Dalit women are demeaned and degraded and their body is a free terrain of colonization by men

from other communities. Dalit women are a deprived section and at the lowest level of economic and educational structures. They are poor, illiterate, sexually harassed, face caste violence and exploited. Doubly, triply or multiply discriminated, Dalit women face a lot of struggles on a daily basis; otherwise just being overwhelmed by those surges of discrimination up to them. Without being struggling, Dalit women would be just left in despair.

Historically, oppression has been and continues to be a serious issue of concern in both developed and under developed countries. The composition of Indian society, with its hierarchies and power structures, is an ideal place to better understand the experience of oppression and the lives of the exploited. In India, the combined effects of the caste system, class inequality and patriarchy result in the smarginalization of more than half the population. Women throughout the established hierarchy and members of the lower castes and classes have historically carried the impact of oppression generated by the Indian social structure. A noteworthy hallmark of the caste system is its framework of social preference. In Indian society, Brahmins are placed at the top of the social hierarchy and Dalits (formerly known as untouchables) are relegated to the bottom.

Dr. B. R Ambedkar in his writings on the riddle of women has explained in detail how Manu has deprived the status of women by curbing their liberty and equal rights. He was willing and very keen to bring certain changes in the Hindu Law for the betterment of women. In 1952, when he was a Law Minister in J.L.Nehru's cabinet, he tried to bring an amendment in Hindu Law such as adoption, guardianship, divorce, Hindu Marriage, Widow Re-Marriage and property rights to women. But due to strong opposition by the traditional caste Hindus, the bill was not accepted in the parliament and ultimately Dr. Ambedkar had to resign from Nehru's Ministry.

In India, women cannot be treated as a 'single' unit. Caste-gender intersectionality plays a crucial role in determining one's status in the society, and the status is maintained for the lifetime through the process of 'caste-endogamy' ( Mukherjee&Sabharwal, 2015).

### **AMBEDKAR AND DALIT WOMEN MOVEMENT IN INDIA**

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar has encouraged women across all social groups to be educated, mobilized and participate in public life to put an end to caste hierarchy (**Zelliot, 2005**). After Independence, neither the women organisations nor Dalit activists addressed the caste and gender intersectionality(**VimalThorat, 2001**). Dalit movement became 'masculinised' and women activists started treating women as a homogenous group (**SharmilaRege, 1998, page: 42**). "Women's lives in India and the world over are circumscribed by what can be termed as five 'P's: Patriarchy, Productive resources access inadequacy, Poverty, Promotion advancement insufficiency and Powerlessness" (**HemaLataSwarup, 1993**).

From 1980 onwards, caste identity started playing a significant role in the political arena, social sciences and feminist discourses. Two distinct paths of feminism were identified, the first one is upper caste or SAVARNA and the second one is Bahujanwadi or ASAVARNA feminism. The second one is also known as Phule-Ambedkarite feminism which believed in getting social justice through "Education, Organisation and Agitation" (**Rege, Sharmila,2010**). In the 1980s, young Dalit feminists formed MahilaSansad in Mumbai and in mid-1990s, the Dalit feminist literary movement was started by Samvadini Dalit StreeSahityaMaanch. In 1995, Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women accepted that indigenous women face some specific problems due to their social status.

After 1995, many organisations like National Federation of Dalit Women (NFDW), All India Dalit Women Forum and Maharashtra Dalit MahilaSangathan etc. came up and started addressing the issues of women empowerment from socially marginalised communities. In 2003, Dalit BahujanMahilaVicharmanch publicly set aflame the Manusmriti at the historic ChaityaBhumi(**Rege, Sharmila, 2006**) and revived the Ambedkarite movement for women empowerment.

## **MAIN CHALLENGES FOR DALIT WOMEN**

**1. Access to resources:** Throughout the world, women are engaged in all levels of the economy. They are farmers, land managers, and guardians of the forests. Through activities of livelihoods women play a vital role in agriculture, especially subsistence agriculture, seed production and post-harvest management, animal husbandry, fishery, natural resource management, and energy management. These are activities that provide subsistence to families and communities by taking care of basic necessities such as food, water, fuel, homes, healthcare and social security. Productive resources are the key and important considerations for every kind of existing livelihood activities. Resources may be economic (land and credit), political (participation governance and decision making at community level), or social (education, skill building, training). Right to access is the opportunity to use, manage and control resources. Productive resources are important and very critical to women because the right to food does not only mean or stop at just feeding the hungry, getting the stomach full and making the world free from hunger. For women, especially those from marginalized communities, it is getting increasingly difficult to access these resources due to biased customary laws and patriarchal norms, and is perpetuated by gender blind policies which have exacerbated the obstacles that women confront and made them vulnerable to food insecurity—malnutrition, chronic hunger and starvation .

**2 Poorliteracy rate :** Till some years ago, many Dalit women were ill-treated and educationally backward in spite of the facility of free education. Most Dalit women are given a chance of finishing their education at the primary level. They are discouraged from getting married and raising a family when they are in the age of 12-15 yrs. The reasons for the high rate of illiteracy among Dalit women are many.

**The following are the main reasons:**

- a) Discrimination from the family to send girls to schools.
- b) Fear of insecurity in the villages.
- c) Lack of physical facilities like accommodation, school, transport and medical facilities.
- d) The girls were forced to take care of the house hold chores when the parents are away at work.
- e) Working to earn for the family prevent the girls from attending school.
- f) Because of the sick and unemployed parents, girls were forced to work.
- g) Many were forced to get married at a young age, which stops schooling.
- h) The social restriction is that the girls should stop education after marriage.
- i) In some areas, there are complaints from Dalit women teachers of misbehavior, blackmail and exploitation by the male staff of other high caste people.
- j) Fear of alienation of girls from their environment as a result of education is another factor

for low literacy level among SC girls. If the education levels improved, the marriage prospects of the girls dropped due to the increase in dowry. Therefore, many parents wish to withdraw the girls from schools.

**3. Political Participation and Empowerment:** Dalit women are politically marginalized, but rural Dalit women are given even less of a voice in the decision-making process. In India, there is a quota system or the reservation system in force for Dalits to have seats in the local panchayat or to protect their rights (town assembly). But the role being played by Dalit women is consistently subordinated to their male counterparts. Dalit women who attempt to utilize their power in the panchayat are met with male and dominant caste backlash, pressure and sometimes violence. Many a times Dalit women are told they are not even allowed to sit on a chair but must take their place on the floor. In the majority of instances, a Dalit woman has no ability to exercise her rights and voice her concerns in the panchayat because her husband represents her and makes the decisions while she is forced to stay at home until he can usurp the panchayat seat for himself.

**4. Violence against Women, Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation:** Dalit women suffer from both gender and caste-based violence. The UN Special Rapporteur mentioned on the violence done against women and has noted or seen that Dalit women face targeted violence very harshly, even rape, and murder being attempted and done, by the state actors and powerful members of the dominant castes like upper caste and used to inflict and spread political lessons and crush dissent within the community." Gender inequality sanctified by religious and cultural norms subordinates women and reinforces the patriarchal order, allowing for violence against them to be carried out within their own homes and communities as well. Dalit women face verbal, physical and sexual violence in the public and private domain. In the private domain, Dalit women are assaulted for not being dutiful wives, not bearing children or male children specifically or not bringing enough dowry into the marriage. Dalit women face violence from community members, complicit police personnel, their in-laws and their families. Between norms of female subjugation and cultural norms regarding the "natural" caste hierarchy, women are constantly assaulted and taken advantage of. Further, due to their low socio-economic status, Dalit women are often the victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation. Dalit women's sexual and bodily integrity are threatened and violated, even from a young age. Dalit women are victims of social, religious and cultural practices like Devdasis and Jogins. In the name of these practices, village girls are married to God by their helpless parents. These girls are then sexually exploited by the dominant upper caste landlords and rich men who think doing this is a work which requires immense power and they show their power and direct them to trafficking and prostitution.

#### **BAMA AS A PIONEER OF DALIT LITERATURE.**

Dalit literature is a literature written by Dalits, who are oppressed by Indian Caste system. It forms an important and distinct part of Indian literature. Dalit literature was emerged in the 1960s, with Marathi language and soon appeared in Hindi, Kannada, Telugu, Bangla and Tamil languages. Dalit literature began to appear in India with the English translations of Marathi Dalit writing. *An Anthology of Dalit literature*, edited by Mulk Raj Anand, Leonor Zelliott, and *Poisoned Bread*. Translations from Modern Marathi Dalit literature originally published in three volumes and later collected in a single volume edited by Arjun Dangle, both published in 1992, were perhaps the first books that popularized the genre throughout India. But the origins of Dalit writing can be traced back to Buddhist literature. Using autobiography as a literature genre, writers showed their personal experiences of caste discrimination, taking its existence underliable

for the middle classes. The genres like fiction, poetry and drama largely autobiographical in the hands of Dalit writers. In the 80s and 90s, a group of Hindi writers like Om Prakash Valmiki, Mohandas Naimishray and KanwalBharti had to fight a hostile literary establishment to carve out a unique space for Dalit literature. Several Dalit writers and critics have called Dalit autobiographies 'narratives of pain'. The plot is often strung together by a series of painful events that are outcomes of caste discrimination. In fact, the shared pain is what binds the community together. The contemporary Dalit autobiography has become tools of political assertion for contemporary Dalit writers, the real challenge lies in creating a fine balance between the idea of inclusion and the necessity of resistance. Dalit literature has expanded the horizon of Indian literature and criticism and transformed people's preferences. Dalit literature has awakened many new social strata and made new literary contributions. Equality, freedom and social justice are the basis of Dalit literature. Dalit has been humiliated and exploited for thousands of years. Dalit is rejected by high caste ashuman. The touch of Dalit, the shadow of Dalit and the voice of Dalit treated as impure. Dalit lived out of village, out of city and in separate sections. Dalit cannot enter in the temple of high caste, Dalit cannot drink water in the river bank of high caste Dalit cannot cremate a dead body in the graveyard of high caste. Dalit cannot marry, cannot eat and cannot live with the high caste. He was only slave. He has no rights. Many writers, their thinkers, social reformers and political figures gave their contribution in the Dalit literature movement like B.R. Ambedkar, M.K. Gandhi, Rettaimalai Srinivisan etc. As an exponent of Dalit Feminism, Bama has found Karukku the right way to explore the sufferings of Dalit women. Bama was born in 1958 as Faustina Mary Fatima Rani in a Roman Catholic family. She is a Tamil Dalit woman writer who has contributed many literary works to Dalit literature such as novels, short stories, poems etc. She rose to fame with her autobiographical novel Karukku, she has written about the gender and caste discrimination faced by them even if they attain good education. In Karukku, the main philosophy of human life is clearly revealed. It does not mean in which religion the person is born, it means that in which way he is grown. The society is having a blind eye on Dalits Bama has got double depressed after she has joined in convent. Being a poor Dalit Christian woman, she has learnt the gospel and possesses the wish of helping and serving poor as they have learnt that Jesus himself born in a cattle shed and died for the poor, ugly, disgusting sinners. We are surprised to hear about nuns through Bama who could not possess such love in the Bama raises many questions to society she asks, Are Dalits not human beings? Do they not have common sense? Do they not have such attributes as a sense of honour and self respect? Are they without any wisdom, beauty, dignity? What do we lack?" (Bama, 27) Karukku means palmyra leaves, with their serrated edges on both sides, are like double edged swords. By felicitous pun, the Tamil word karukku, containing the world having embryo or seed also means freshness, newness. Bama draws attention to the symbol and refers to the words in Hebrews (New Testament), "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two edged sword, piercing to the division the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Hebrew, 4:10) The protagonist of the novel is never named. The events of Bama's life is not arranged according to a simple, linear or chronological order, as with most autobiographies, but rather reflected upon in different ways, repeated from different perspectives, grouped under different themes, for example, work, games and recreation, education, belief etc. It is her driving for integrity as Dalit and Christian that shapes the book and gives it polemic. Bama's Karukku focuses on two aspects namely caste and religion that caused great pain in Bama's life. The book describes Bama's life from childhood to adulthood. The first person narrative expresses the traumatic experience of caste discrimination from the stand point of Dalit women, when Bama was studying third standard she has seen the discriminations in her locality. He came along, holding out the pocket by its string, without touching it. I stood that thinking to myself, if he holds it like that, won't the package come undone, and the vadai fall out? The elder went straight up to the Naicker, bowed low and extended the packet towards him, cupping the hand that held the string with his other hand. Naicker opened the parcel



and beganto eat the Vadais(13)Bama remembers her experience asa farm worker, even though Bama went toschoool, she worked as a labourer for dailywages to meet her expenses. There is alsodouble vessel system. Dalits were asked tostand away from the vessels of the Nacikerswhere they give leftovers:I Know I should not touch theirgoods or chalets; I should never come closeto where they were, I should always standaway to one side. These were their rules. loften fell paired and ashamed....(46)Bama lights on as incident that tookplace in her college hostel that was heartbreaking incident for her. She made arequest to her warden for leave to attend herbrother Gautamani’s communion grounds. Her plea was rejected.But the warden granted leave for the uppercaste students without any query. Bamaargued with the school authorities with anarrogant voice: “...there cannot bedifferent rules for different castes, only thesame rules for everyone.”(19)At last shewon justice and she went home.Bama gives importance to womenidentity. Women were restricted fromcertain freedom and assaulted by upperAn International Peer-Reviewed Journal ; Volume-th anopen face.

Bama embraced Christianity toserve the Dalits. Karukku challenges theoppressors who have enslaved anddisempowered the Dalits, on the other hand,it reiterates the need for a society with

ideals such as justice, equality and love.Dalit can be empowered and can gainhuman dignity. Bama passes through manyemotional encounters and experience. Thewhole process is a trait of discovery whichmakes her a selfmade woman.

## **CONCLUSION**

Bama:s” karukku “ gives us an insight into the atrocities faced by Dalit women.The following measures need to be taken towards upliftment of the Dalit Community.

### **Empowerment of Dalit Women**

1. Equal status for men and women to be ensured.
2. Castism leading to dalitism to be curtailed.
3. Special emotional support to the dalit community to be extended.
4. Social programs and legislations for welfare of women to be implemented
5. people need to modernize their way of thinking
6. women participation in politics to be encouraged.
7. women’s economic enhancement programs should be launched for their income generation and self-reliance.
8. Dalit women’s employment opportunities should be ensured.
9. Massive awareness against caste discrimination should be escalated.
10. Strict legal action should be implemented in the case of caste discrimination and abuses. One-step solution to the issue of Dalit and Dalit women rights does not exist.

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## **The Success Stories Of The Women Who Reached The Pinnacles**

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India is celebrating this year as Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav commemorating the 75<sup>th</sup> year of Independence. The contribution of women in various fields and their struggles needs to be recorded without which it would be incomplete. Women are always fearless like a lioness. Women possessed a lot of courage and intense patriotism and raised their voices against British rule. In this paper, we are going to limelight a few of the pioneers who laid a path to the new millennium and gave inspiration to many people

### **Indira Gandhi**

Mrs. Indira Gandhi became India's first Women Prime Minister from 1966-1977. In 1971, she became the first woman to receive the Bharath Ratna award. Indira Priyadarshini was born on November 19<sup>th</sup> 1917 in Allahabad, British India. She was an Indian politician who served for three consecutive terms (1966-1977) and the fourth time until she was assassinated in 1984. She was also named by Time Magazine as the "Women of the Millennium." Among the most powerful women who defined the last century in 2020.

### **Sarojini Naidu**

First Women Governor Sarojini Naidu was born in Hyderabad in 1879 and completed her education at Kings College of London and Cambridge University. She was inspired by M.K. Gandhi whom she met in 1914. She was also active in securing Women's Rights and Indian Independence. Sarojini Naidu was one of the well-known personalities in different fields. She was a leader, politician, poet etc. She was well known as "The Nightingale of India." In 1917, she established the Women's Indian Association, she played a great role in Salt Satyagraha of

1930. Later she was appointed as Governor of Uttar Pradesh and became the first woman to achieve this position. She was a well-known poet and wrote the play "Maher Muneer" at the age of 12. The Golden Threshold, The Bird of Time was also written by her.

### **Sucheta Kripalini**

Sucheta Kripalini was born in Ambala, Punjab in 1908. She worked as a professor of Constitutional History at Benaras Hindu University. She was one of the few women elected to India's constituent assembly. When she became the first woman Chief Minister in 1963, she represented the Kanpur constituency. She was part of the Indian Constitution sub-committee. She founded the All-India Mahila Congress in 1940. She also served as Minister of Labour, Community Development, and Industry in Uttar Pradesh. She wrote a book called "An Unfinished Autobiography" in which she mentioned the incidents that happened in her childhood and how she started to take her initial steps in politics, leading her to be a part of the Indian National Congress.

### **Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur**

Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur was a princess of Kapurthala state in North Central India in 1887. She has completed her Master's from Oxford University. She was familiar with the cause of the Independence movement as her father Raja Sir Harnam Singh was associated with Indian National Congress.

After joining the struggle for independence, she left her privileges and had a simple life. She was a social reformer who opposed child marriages and the tradition of wearing purdah. She companioned the abolishment of the Devadasi System. She co-founded the All-India Women's Conference in 1927, to secure women's rights and education for women and children. As a first health minister, she was an active member in to fight against the spread of malaria and has the Lion share for the BCG vaccine program for Tuberculosis. She founded the Indian Council of Child Welfare and was Chairperson of the Indian Red Cross Society for 14 years. She actively worked for the establishment of AIMS.

### **Vijayalakshmi Pandit**

Vijayalakshmi Pandit was born with the name Swarup Kumari Nehru in August 1900. She was the younger sister of Jawaharlal Nehru. She received her law degree from Howard University. After getting married she changed her to Vijayalakshmi Pandit. She was an active member of the Indian Independence Movement and was imprisoned many times. Later she was elected twice to the Union Provinces Legislative Assembly and became the first women Cabinet Minister in pre-Independence India. She was nominated to lead a delegation to the United Nations in 1946 and after India got Independence, she was the first ambassador to the Soviet Union. She was appointed as the ambassador to the United States in 1949. She was also the President of the UN General Assembly and a member Aligarh Muslim University Executive Council. She was also appointed as Indian Representative to UN Human Rights Commission. Her writings include The Evolution of India and The Scope of Happiness, A Personal Memoir.

### **Meera Sahib Fatima Beevi**

Meera Sahib Fatima Beevi was born in 1927 in Pathanamthitta, Kingdom of Travancore, Kerala. She was graduated from Government Law College, Thiruvananthapuram. In the early stages of her career, she was enrolled as an advocate and she also topped the bar council exam in 1950. She began her career in Lower Judiciary in Kerala. She was promoted to sub-ordinate judge and then worked as Chief Judicial Magistrate, District and Sessions Judge. She was later appointed as High Court Judge of Kerala. Subsequently, she became the first women Supreme Court judge from October 1989 to April 1992. Later she was appointed as Governor of Tamil Nâdu, served as Chairman of the Kerala Commission for Backward Classes and member of the Human Rights Commission. She was awarded the Bharat Jyoti award, she also received D.Litt and Mahila Shiromani Awards.

### **Pratibha Patil**

Mrs Pratibha Patil became the first woman president of India and held the office, from July 2007-2012 as the 12<sup>th</sup> President of India. She was born and raised in Maharashtra and completed her Political Science and Economics studies. After starting her journey in a political career, she worked in various positions like Deputy Minister, Cabinet Minister, Deputy Chairman, Chairman, Governor of Rajasthan, and President

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of India. She received the "Order of Aztec Eagle Award" in 2019 which is the highest Civilian Award of Mexico for foreigners.

**Kiran Bedi**

Kiran Bedi became the first woman IPS officer and, she was appointed as the United Nations Civil Police Advisor. She was born on 9<sup>th</sup> June 1949 in Amritsar, Punjab. She graduated from the Government College of Women and in the same year, she won NCC Cadet Officer Award. She is an active Tennis player and won many awards at National Level. She along with her colleagues founded Navjyoti Delhi Police Foundation. She started India Vision Foundation in 1994. She was also a part of the Anti-Corruption Movement accompanied by Anna Hazare. Later she was appointed as Lieutenant Governor of Pondicherry. She wrote many distinguished books like Fearless Governance, Galti Kiski, Demand for Swaraj and many more. She received prestigious awards like the Asian Region Award, Pride of India award, the United Nations Medal for Outstanding Service, Nomura Award for Humanitarian Work.

**Neeraj Bhanot**

First Woman who got Ashoka Chakra. Bhanot was born in Chandigarh in 1963 and brought up in Mumbai. She completed her graduation from St. Xaviers College, Bombay. She was the Senior Cabin Crew Member of the flight which was hijacked by four armed men on September 5<sup>th</sup>, 1986. She was shot dead by the terrorists while helping the passengers to escape from the aircraft. She was the youngest recipient of the most prestigious award, Ashoka Chakra. She also received multiple awards from the Government of the United States. In 2004, Indian Postal Service released a stamp commemorating her. She left a legacy of courage and inspired many generations with her bravery.

**Kalpana Chawla**

Kalpana Chawla was born on March 17<sup>th</sup>, 1962 in East Punjab, India. She was an Indian-born American astronaut and engineer. She was the first woman of Indian origin to go to space. In 1997, she first flew on the space shuttle Columbia as a mission specialist and the primary robotic arm operator. She died on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003 when the space shuttle Columbia broke up on re-entry into Earth's atmosphere. All the astronauts were killed on board. The legacy of Chawla has lived on and inspired young people across the world to consider careers in space flight.

**Reita Faria Powell**

Reita Faria Powell was born in Bombay, British India in 1943. She was a physician and the winner of the Miss World Pageant in 1966. She won the award Miss Bombay, Eve's Weekly Miss India and the Miss World title in the same year. She completed her MBBS degree at Grant Medical College later she went to study at King's College Hospital, London. Reita was also a judge at Miss Femina Miss India 1998. She won the Miss World crown by beating 51 country delegates and she is currently settled in Dublin, Ireland.

**Sushmita Sen**

Sushmita Sen was born in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh in 1975. Before crowning the Miss Universe title,

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she was awarded Femina Miss India in 1994. Then, in the same year, she bagged the Miss Universe title and became The First Indian woman to receive it. She was also one of the Miss Universe judges, in 2016, later she pursued her career in acting and received many awards in the respecting field. She also won the National Award for Social Welfare and Women's Empowerment, the Mother Teresa Award for social justice, the Women of Substance Award and many more.

### **Surekha Shankar Yadav**

Surekha Yadav was born in Satara, Maharashtra in 1965. She was well known for "India's First Women Loco-Pilot (Train Driver) in 1988." She has completed her diploma in Electrical Engineering. She was Asia's First Motor Woman to pilot Deccan Queen. In 2021, she drove a special train (from Mumbai to Lucknow) with a women's crew to celebrate International Women's Day and she was also the first woman to drive the semi-high-speed Vande Bharat Express train. She received many awards like the Women's Achievers Award, Prerna Puraskar Award, Award for First Lady Loco pilot on Indian Railways etc.

### **Karnam Malleswari**

Karnam Malleswari was born in Andhra Pradesh in 1975 and began weightlifting training at the age of 12. Before winning an Olympic medal, she won several honours in her domain, including the Asian Weightlifting Championships in Korea, and the World Championships in China. She was a two-time Olympic champion in weightlifting with 29 international medals, including 11 gold medals. She has also received the Arjuna Award, Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award, Padma Shri Award, and other honours. She later won the bronze medal, becoming the first Indian woman to earn an Olympic medal. She was also the first Indian weightlifter to win an Olympic medal.

### **HimaDas**

Hima Das was born in the year 2000 in Assam. She was born into a farming family and was the youngest of five siblings. In 2018, she competed in the Commonwealth Games in Australia and won the World U-20 Championships in Finland. She became the first Indian sprinter to win a gold medal at an international track tournament. She continues to shatter national records and has won numerous awards at the Asian Games, Poznan Grand Prix, Kladno Meet, and other events. She became a civil servant in 2021 and is currently employed as a Deputy Superintendent of Police in Assam.

### **Mithali Dorai Raj**

Mithali Dorai Raj, born in Rajasthan in 1982, is a Bharatnatyam dancer. She gave up dancing in the early phases of her career to pursue cricket. Mithali captained the Indian women's squad in the "Women's World Cup 2005." She also topped the ICC World Rankings in 2010, 2011, and 2012. She has played 12 Test matches, 230 ODIs, and 89 T20s so far. She is the only woman player to score a century in her debut match. She is the first woman to achieve a double century in a Test match. She became the first Indian batsman to hit 200 runs in 20-20 Internationals in 2018. She is also the only female cricketer to score over 6,000 runs. She is also the first Indian woman player to amass more than 2000 runs in T20 international cricket. She is the first player to have twice guided India to an ICC ODI World Cup final. At the age of twenty-two, she was awarded the Arjuna Award for her cricketing achievements and announced her retirement from international cricket in June 2022.

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**Chungneijang Mary Kom**

Chungneijang Mary Kom was born in Manipur in 1982. Mary Kom has always been interested in sports since childhood. She left her village at fifteen years old to attend the Imphal Sports Academy. Her ex-wrestler father encouraged her after learning about her state boxing championship victory in 2000. She earned silver at the Asian Women's Boxing Championship and gold at the AIBA Women's World Boxing Championship in 2008. She also won a gold medal at the Asian Indoor Games in 2009, held in Vietnam. She is the only woman to win the World Amateur Boxing Championship six times. She is the first female boxer to win a medal in each of the first seven World Championships. She is the only boxer to have won eight World Championship medals. She was also called the Magnificent Mary. In 2014, she became the first Indian female boxer to receive a gold medal at the Asian Games. At the Commonwealth Games, she won the first gold medal for an Indian female boxer. In 2020, she received the Padma Vibhushan Award.

**Bachendri Pal**

Bachendri Pal was born in Uttarakhand in 1954. She began mountaineering with her companions at the age of twelve. She was a mountaineering instructor at the National Adventure Foundation. Pal was a member of India's fourth Everest expedition in 1984. As the first Indian woman to climb Mount Everest, she made history in 1984. Upon reaching the summit, she led the Indo-Nepalese Women's Mount Everest Expedition, 1993; The Great Indian Women's Rafting Voyage, 1994; and the First Indian Women Trans-Himalayan Expedition, 1997. She wrote the book "Everest: My Journey to the Summit." She received

numerous honours, including the Gold Medal for Excellence in Mountaineering, the Padma Shri, the Arjuna Award, the Guinness Book of World Records, the Padma Bhushan, and many others.

**Conclusion:**

The contribution of women left an indelible mark in the history of freedom struggle and there are many women who fought against all odds and broke the glass ceilings. Many more thrilling sagas are unrecorded. Very few are included in this article. Kudos to all those unsung heroes who inspired and influenced the upcoming generations and plunged themselves into the roads not taken to make the difference.

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