



# Women Empowerment in 21<sup>st</sup> Era

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**Abstract:** In 21<sup>st</sup> Century concept of women empowerment is a burning issue in the present situation in India. In the field of science and technology we can see constant growth. at earlier time they were getting equal status with men. but they had faced some difficulty during post vedic and epic ages. Woman constitutes the family, which leads to society and Nation. Social and economic development of women is necessary for overall economic development of any society or a country. The role of women has also changed in the 21st century People who exercise a great deal of choice in their lives may be very powerful, but they are not empowered, because they were never disempowered in the first place. Today women is leading in every field and society whether it be sports, commerce and industry, education, health, politics, technology, navy, army, agriculture. Due to advancement in the field of science and technology and the active involvement of women in it we have been able to overcome the evils of our society which were prevalent in our religion, caste and territory and were danger for the world's peace. yet they not absolutely free some discrimination and harassment of the society.

**Index Terms:** concept of women empowerment, historical background, constitutional provision, scheme of women empowerment, empowerment of women in India.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Vedas reminds us that 'JATRA NARI PUJJANTE RAMANTE TATRA DEVATA,' that means wherever woman is respected, God resides there

“Man can never be a women's equal in the spirit of selfless service with which nature has endowed her”  
-Mahatma Gandhi

“THERE IS NO CHANCE FOR THE WELFARE OF THE WORLD UNLESS THE CONDITION OF WOMEN IS IMPROVED.”  
—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Empowerment of women has become one of the most important topics in the present context of India, as well as of the world. 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. The paradoxical situation has such that she was sometimes concerned as Goddess and at other times merely as slave.

### Women in India

Now the women in India enjoy a unique status of equality with the men as per constitutional and legal provision. But the Indian women have come a long way to achieve the present positions. The term Empowerment of women refers to the development of the spiritual, social, political, economic strength, decision making, rights and human dignity of all women. The women empowerment has been growing up day by day after the independence, as a result Indian women live in standard.

Women who were restricted to only house hold activities previously have now joined hands with men and are working in every field. She is a Doctor, Engineer, Politician, Professor, Architect and has even gone to space and created history in every field. They are entrepreneur, a good decision maker and a good manager, besides they are also a good wife and a good mother.

The rest part of the paper organized as follows. I. Introduction, II. Historical background in entrepreneurship, III. Constitutional Provision for Women in India, IV. Scheme of Women Empowerment, V. Obstacles faced By Women



Entrepreneurs in India, VI. **Empowerment Of Women In India**, VII. Top Most Women Entrepreneurs in India, VIII Government Policy for Women Empowerment.

## **II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

The focus of the concept of entrepreneurship, and then drive on to look at female entrepreneurship and related definitions. An important tool considered in allowing female empowerment and liberation is Female Entrepreneurship. Directing a literature review is a vital element of the research process. This paper looks at the literature around female entrepreneurs, concentrating on female entrepreneurship in India.

### **A. Entrepreneurship at 18th Century**

In the 18th century, the person with capital was differentiated from the one who needed capital. In other words, the entrepreneur was distinguished from the capital provider (the present day venture capitalist).

Many of the inventions developed during this time were reactions to the changing world, as was the case with the inventions of Eli Whitney<sup>2</sup> and Thomas Edison<sup>3</sup> (Lakwete, Angela. 2004; Albion, Michele Wehrwein. 2008).

### **B. Entrepreneurship at 19th and 20th century**

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, entrepreneurs were frequently not distinguished from managers and were viewed mostly from an economic perspective.

Richard T. Ely and Ralph H. Hes, briefly stated: "The entrepreneur organizes and operates an enterprise for personal gain. He contributes his own initiative, skill, and ingenuity in planning, organizing, and administering the enterprise. He also assumes the chance of loss and gain consequent to unforeseen and uncontrollable circumstances. The net residue of the annual receipts of the enterprise after all costs have been paid, he retains for himself. (Richard T. Ely and Ralph H. Hes, 1937).

"Female entrepreneurs are defined as those who use their knowledge and resources to develop or create new business opportunities, who are actively involved in managing their businesses, and own at least 50 per cent of the business and have been in operation for longer than a year" (Moore and Buttner, 1997 in Farr-Wharton and Brunetto, 2009: 2)

## **III. CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISION FOR WOMEN IN INDIA**

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The constitution of India has a great extent in favour of women for empowerment in India.

Some of these are mentioned below:

- In the constitution of India, Article No. 14 has declared 'equality before law' that means man and woman are equal. Article no 15(1) states that there should be no discrimination against any citizen on grounds only of caste, class, creed, race, sex and place of birth or region.
- Article no 15 (3) declares that the state would make any special provision in favour of women and children.
- Article no 16 states the equality of opportunity for all citizens in subject relating to employment or appointment to any office under the state.
- Article no 39 (a) states to pursue a policy of providing the minimum necessities of life to the citizen without discriminating between men and women. And Article No. 39(d) also adds the equal pay for equal work for both men and women only in organized sectors.
- Article no 42 declares to provide human conditions for the citizens to fulfil their occupational obligations. The state shall take it as its responsibility to provide maternity benefits for its women employees.
- Article no 39 (e) states that the health and strength of the workers, men and women and the tender age of children are not abused and the citizens are not forced by economic necessity to enter a vocation unsuited to their age or strength.
- Article no-51 (A) & (E) declares to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India and to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women.
- According to adoption Act "They should be equally shared between the sons, daughters and wife-except for the homesteaded land and it will be equally divided only when the sons want to divide it."
- Not less than 1/3 of the total number of seats shall be reserved for women in the panchayat and municipality (including the women belonging to the SCs and STs, Art. No-243 d (3), 243 D (4)).



#### IV. SCHEME OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

S. No.	Five Year Plan	Inspections on Women
1.	First Five-Year Plan (1951-56)	Visualized a number of welfare measures for women. Sets up the central and social welfare board for promoting welfare work.
2.	Second Five-Year Plan (1956-61)	Supported the development of women to work at the grass roots.
3.	Third and Fourth Five-Year Plans (1961-66 and 1969-74)	supported female education as a major welfare measure
4.	Fifth Five-Year Plan (1974-79)	emphasized training of women
5.	Sixth Five-Year Plan (1980-85)	recognized women's lack of access to resources as a critical factor impeding their growth
6.	Seventh Five-Year Plan (1985-90)	emphasized the need for gender equality
7.	Eight Five-Year Plan (1992-97)	focused on empowering women, especially at the grass roots level
8.	Ninth Five-Year Plan (1997-2002)	adopted a strategy of women's component plan
9.	Tenth Five-Year Plan (2002-07)	aims at empowering women through translating the recently adopted National Policy for Empowerment of Women (2001)
10	Eleventh Five Year Plan	encourage women in setting up their own ventures

#### V. OBSTACLES FACED BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA

In Indian context attitude towards the women are still conquered by the tough resistance from the male ego and the problem of Indian women pertains to her key responsibility towards family. From the beginning till the enterprise function, women entrepreneur comes across a series of problem. In rural areas women are considered as helpers. The main obstacles faced by women entrepreneurs are as follows:

1. The biggest turning point of a woman's life is marriage. She turned into a daughter-in-law from a daughter. The priority is also changed with this. The dream of a woman has ripped like a fruit. Expectation from the family and personal commitment are mostly a great barrier for succeeding in business career. In such circumstances, it will be very much complicated to focus and run their enterprise successfully. Because Indian women are much conscious about their family obligations compare to business responsibility.
2. Cast and religions dominator also hinder women entrepreneur. For this women entrepreneur cannot overcome the obstacle before them to grow and flourish. In rural areas, women face more social and political obstacle.
3. Though our constitution speaks of equality between sexes, male patriarchy is still the order of the day. Male dominated society destroys a female capability ability shows much less than male.
4. In our India 60% of total women are illiterate. They are far behind in the field of education. Due to lack of appropriate education, women entrepreneurs are in dark about the rapidly growing new technology, new methods of production, marketing techniques, and other governmental policy.
5. Different institutions in the financial sector expand their utmost support in the form of different incentives, loans etc. Many woman entrepreneurs do not aware of all these assistance provided by the institutions. Even the financial institutes are not coming forward to give financial assistance to women borrowers and for these more chances of business failure.
6. In the present market scenario the competition is too high; women entrepreneurs must survive in the market against the male counterpart who has enormous experience and capacity to adopt technology in running enterprises.
7. For running an enterprise risk-bearing capacity is essential. But a woman in India by character is very shy. Beside this due to non-adoption or slow adoption to changing technology also reduce their risk taking ability.
8. For an enterprise a good management is necessary. But many of women entrepreneurs are not efficient at all in some managerial functions like planning, staffing, directing, controlling, motivating, and coordinating. Therefore inadequate managerial ability of women becomes a problem for them to run the enterprise successfully.
9. Moving alone for business purposes are still seemed to be with suspicious eyes. Sometimes, younger women feel uncomfortable when dealing with men for work related aspects.
10. Since women cannot run here and there for promotion, supply and money collection, they have to depend upon the middle men for these activities. Middle men lean to exploit them in the excuse of helping. These result in less sales and lesser profit.
11. Self-motivation, self confidence are the key ingredients for a successful business. But women suffer with lack of self confidence because of their inborn nature.



## **VI EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN INDIA**

The concept of empowerment flows from the power. It is vesting where it does not exist or exist inadequately. Empowerment of women would mean equipping women to be economically independent, self-reliant, have positive esteem to enable them to face any difficult situation and they should be able to participate in development activities.

The number of women in India is nearly 50% of its total population. Indian women are being empowered in the various field of the society effectively. Indian women working as teachers, professors, doctors, nurses, advocates, judges, managers, administrators, police officers, bank employees, clerks, typists, telephone operators, receptionists and personal assistants are found in almost all major cities in our country. And in some of the cities women do not hesitate to work as bus conductors and drivers, police constables, auto rikshwo drivers etc.

## **VII. TOP MOST WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA**

There are top most women entrepreneurs in different zone in our India. Some examples are Dr. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw (Chairman & Managing Director of Biocon Ltd.), Indra Nooyi (CFO, Pepsico), Neelam Dhawan (Managing Director, Microsoft India), Naina Lal Kidwai (Group General Manager & Country Head-HSBC, India), Indu Jain (Chairperson (former), Times Group), Priya Paul (Chairperson of Park Hotels), Simone Tata (former Chairperson of LAKME, Chairperson of Trent Limited), Mallika Srinivasan (currently the Director of TAFE- Tractors and Farm Equipment), Chanda Kochar (MD & CEO-ICICI Bank), Sulajja Firodia Motwani (JMD-Kinetic Motors), Ekta Kapoor (JMD & Creative Director, Balaji Telefilms), Ritu Kumar (Fashion Designer), Shahnaz Hussain (CEO, Shahnaz Herbals Inc), Jyoti nayak (President Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad), Ravina Raj Kohli (Founder & Executive Director, JobCorp), Preetha Reddy (Managing Director of Apollo Hospitals), Keya Seth (Founder of Keya Seth's Aromatherapy) etc.

Indira Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Aruna Asaf Ali and Lata Mangeshkar had been awarded "Bharat Ratna", the national highest award, for the contribution in their fields. And some other women are acting as IAS, IFS and IPS officer in different departments of the central Government of India very successfully.

## **VIII. GOVERNMENT POLICY FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**

Government policy has been promoting women's self development and empowering women in the various field of the society. The schemes or programmes which have been implemented by the Indian Government are as follows:

- Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS)
- Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY)
- Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY)
- Rastriya Mahila Kosh (RMK)
- Mahila Samridha Yojana (MSY)
- Self help Group (SHG)
- National women's commission(NWC)
- State women's commission
- Kanyashri Prokalpa (West Bengal)
- Employment cum Production Centers
- Women's Development Corporation
- Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)
- Jawarhar Rozgar Yojana (JRY)
- Training of Rural Youth and Self-Employment (TRYSEM)
- National Credit Fund for Women (NCFW)
- Food and Nutrition Board (FND)
- Information and Mass Education (IME)
- Institute for Providing Vocational Training for (IPVTW)
- Women National Training Institute(WNTI)
- Social Assistance Schemes etc.

## **IX. SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSION**

The country of India has grown up by leaps and bounds after the independence, where education is concerned, the gap between women and men is severe. Right efforts are required in the improvement of women entrepreneurs and their greater contribution in the entrepreneurial activities. Women entrepreneurs need to be given assurance, freedom, and



mobility to come out of their absurdities. The following actions are recommended to authorize the women to grab different opportunities and face challenges in their business.

- (i) Awareness program must be conducted on a huge scale for increasing awareness among women,
- (ii) There must be a constant attempt to inspire, motivate women entrepreneurs,
- (iii) By arranging unlimited vocational training to women community to understand them the production process and production management,
- (iv) Proper training programs must be organized to develop professional competencies in managerial, leadership, financial, production process, profit planning, marketing, maintaining books of accounts and other skills. These all will encourage women to start business,
- (v) Educational institution should tie up with various government and non-government agencies to support in entrepreneurship development,
- (vi) Various schemes plans must be provided by the government to develop entrepreneurs in the state. E.g. the Prime ministers Rozgar Yojana, Community Development Programme (CDP), Scheme of Discriminatory Interest Rate, Rural village industries scheme etc,
- (vii) The financial institutions should lend their hand to provide more working capital assistance both for small scale venture and large scale ventures,
- (viii) NGOs and government organizations must spread information about policies, plans and strategies on the improvement of women in the field of industry, trade and commerce. Women entrepreneurs should employ the various schemes provided by the Government,
- (ix) Workshops and seminars should be organized frequently for women entrepreneurs to make their relations more cordial.
- (x) Government should recognize the successful or growing women entrepreneurs and award them. This recognition and publicity will motivate other women entrepreneurs. And last but not the list a good support from their family can encourage women in entering business.

It's difficult for a woman to start and run a business in India as there are lots of obstacles. But if they got their family support fully, the obstacles come down to half of it. And for the rest of half she can overcome easily. By passion, daring and dedicated efforts women can start the business. Government has introduced certain programs and scheme to develop women entrepreneurship. The awareness among the women about education must be increased so future of women entrepreneurs is light in India.

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