

# WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY

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## Introduction:

Women empowerment in India is required to overcome situations of such types and to provide them with their independent role in Indian society. Empowering women is a necessary right of women. They should have proportional rights to contribute to society, economic.

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The Constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favor of women's, education, and politics.

Women empowerment is a critical aspect to achieving gender equality, where both men and women have equal power and opportunities for education, healthcare, economic participation and personal development.

The woman performs the role of wife, partner, organizer, administrator, director, re-creator, disburser, economist, mother, disciplinarian, teacher, health officer, artist and queen in the family at the same time. Apart from it, woman plays a key role in the socio-economic development of the society.

## Specific Laws for Women Empowerment in India

- The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976.
- The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961.
- The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956.
- The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961.
- The Medical termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971.
- The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987.

Respect the rights of others. Respect the cultural background and privacy of others. Treat others with dignity. Refrain from racial, sexual, homophobic or any other forms of harassment or abuse. Because women bring a perspective that values not only competition but also collaboration to organizations and teams. Because feminine values are an operating system of a modern, social, open economy.

Women's role has changed at an accelerating rate and has part in areas such as Politics, Professional Training Jobs, Medicine, Business and Law. Formerly they were not part of any political matter, but they have advanced in many aspects. For example, women have attained power and have been growing in political office. A large number of women around the world are unemployed, the world economy.

## Importance of Women Empowerment

- Women are as talented as men
- Women are equally competent
- Suffers a lot because of unequal opportunity for women at work places.

- Women empowerment helps to develop the society

Women exercise their right to vote, contest for Parliament and Assembly, seek appointment in public office and compete in other spheres of life with men. This shows that women in India enjoy today more liberty and equality than before. They have acquired more liberty to participate in the affairs of the country. Now, to bring women on equal footing with men, Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led NDA government has decided to rise the legal age of marriage of women to 21 fronts Status of women in India.

- .Population
- Health
- Literacy and Education
- Participation in Economy
- Participation in Decision making
- Social obstacles in women empowerment
- Related Resources

### Population

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- As per Census 2011, India's population was 121.06 Cr and the females constituted 48.5% of it.
- In 2011, the sex ratio (number of females per 1000 males) at all India level was 943 and the same for rural and urban areas are 949 and 929 respectively. The sex ratio for 0 - 19 age group was 908 while that of 60+ age group was 1033. The sex ratio in the economically active age group (15 - 59 years) was 944.
- Sex ratio in the age group 0 - 6 years has increased in rural from 906 in 2001 to 923 in 2011. However, the ratio has a decline in urban area in the same period.
- The women's mean age at marriage in 2017 at all India level was 22.1 years and the same in rural and urban areas are 21.7 years and 23.1 years respectively.
- As per National Sample Survey (July 2011 - June 2012), 11.5% households in rural areas and 12.4 % households in urban areas are female headed households.

### Health

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- In 2017, highest age fertility rate is recorded for the females belonging to the age group 25- 29 years at 157.1, while the age specific fertility rate stands at 137.1 for the age group of 20- 24 years. It also showed the age specific fertility rate for the age group of 20-24 years had decreased from 174.9 to 137.1 during 2014 to 2017.
- The Crude Birth Rate (CBR) in 2017 was 20.2 (Rural - 21.8 and Urban - 16.8) and General Fertility Rate (GFR) of 72.4 at all India level.
- In 2017, the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) was 2.2. TFR in rural was 2.4 and in urban 1.7. TFR was high for illiterate women both in rural and urban areas, higher among rural illiterate women and statistics reveal that improvement in educational level lowers the TFR.
- The life expectancy at birth for females during 2016-20 is projected to be 71.46 and for males - 68.37 .
- The Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) has declined from 167 in 2011-13 to 122 in 2015-17.
- In 2017, the Infant Mortality (IMR) of females was 34 while that of males was 32. The rate of decline in the IMR of females was faster than that of IMR among males.
- In 2017, urban mothers received more medical attention at the time of delivery as compared to rural mothers (urban : 94.4%, rural:77.4%).
- As per the NFHS 2015-16 (NFHS-4), the percentage of women who had at least four Antenatal Care (ANC) visits during their pregnancy is lowest in Bihar (14.4%) and highest in Andaman & Nicobar Islands (92%) followed by Kerala (90%).
- As per NFHS-4, female sterilization remains the most popular modern contraceptive method. Among currently married women age 15-49, 36 percent use female sterilization, followed by male condoms (5.6%) and pills (4.1%).

- As per the NFHS 2015-16 (NFHS-4), 3% of males and 5.1% of females in the age group 15-49 years were found to be obese.
- As per NSS 75th round (July 2017- June 2018) on Household social consumption on Health, the percentage of persons that reported as ailing (PPRA) in last 15-days period is 13.5% (Female) and 10.1% (Male) in urban areas, while the same percentage is 9.9% (Female) & 8.0% (Male) in rural areas.

### Literacy and Education

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- As per Census 2011, the literacy rate at all India level was 72.98% and the literacy rate for females and males are 64.63% and 80.9% respectively. During the last decade, the highest improvement in literacy rate was observed for rural females (24%).
- As per NSS 75th Round (July, 2017- June, 18) the literacy rate for persons of age 7 years and above is observed as 73.5 and 87.7 in rural and urban areas respectively. The gender gap in rural is 16.5 while this gender gap is 9.4 in urban areas.
- As per NSS 75th Round (July, 2017- June, 18), 41.2 % of females in the age group 3 to 35 years are currently attending education and this percentage for males is 46.2 %. In the age group 3 to 35 years, 16.6 % females are never enrolled while 11.0 % males are not enrolled.
- During 2017-18, the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) at Primary level for females and males are 95.4 and 93.1 respectively; at upper primary level the corresponding figures are 95.9 and 86.6.
- In 2015-16, there are 93 girls per 100 boys in primary class, 95 in upper primary class, 91 in secondary class and 90 in senior secondary class.
- As per NSS 75th Round (July, 2017- June, 18), only 8.3% of the females of age 15 years & above by highest level of education have successfully completed graduation and above level of courses. While 12.8 % of males of age 15 years and above by highest level of education, have successfully completed graduation and above level of courses.
- As per NSS 75th Round (July, 2017- June, 18), only 4.5 % males and 3.1 % females are pursuing technical/professional courses. In urban, 8.3 % of male and 6.3 % females are pursuing technical/professional courses.
- The number of females per 100 males in University education in major disciplines was highest in Medicine (157.1), followed by Arts and Social Sciences (111.6), Science (89.1), commerce (85.9) and Engineering & technical (38.7).

### Participation in Economy

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- Periodic Labor Force Survey (PLFS) results indicate that the worker population ratio for females in rural sector was 17.5 and 51.7 for males in 2017-18. In Urban sector, the ratio is 14.2 for females and 53.0 for males. In both rural and urban areas, WPRs for females were considerably lower than WPRs for males.
- As per PLFS (2017-18), the unemployment rate for women in rural area was 3.8 as against 5.7 for men whereas it was 10.8 and 6.9 for women and men in urban areas in the age group of 15 years and above.
- Average wage/salary earnings received by female workers of regular wage/salary employees is still lagging behind the average earnings received by male workers in both rural and urban areas. Similar trend was also observed in average earnings received per day by casual laborers engaged in works other than public works.
- As per the data of Basic Statistical Returns of Scheduled Commercial Banks in India, in rural area 37.03 percent of the bank accounts are held by female population while in Semi Urban, Urban and Metropolitan areas, the percentage is around 34%. However, the proportion of amount held therein is greater in case of metropolitan females at 32.77% than that of female population of other areas.

### Participation in Decision Making

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- The percentage of women representation in Central Council of Ministers has decreased from 17.8 % in 2015 to 10.5 % in 2019

- There were 437.8 million women electors in Seventeenth Lok Sabha Election (2019) which had increased from 397.0 million in sixteenth Lok Sabha Elections (2014).
- In the 17th Lok Sabha, 14% of the total members are women (78 out of total seats).
- At all India level, the women participation in the State Assemblies was 11% against the total elected representatives in the State Assemblies.
- The highest number of female judges is 9 each in Madras, Bombay and Punjab & Haryana High Court. Only 9% of judges in Supreme Court are females.
- In March 2018, at all India level 44.37% of the elected representatives in Panchayati Raj Institutions are women.
- Percentage of Female Police Officers in India is a meager 7.02.

### Social obstacles in Women's Empowerment

- Share of Cruelty by Husband or his Relatives has reduced from 35% in 2015 to 27% in 2018. Out of total crime committed against women in 2018, 60% cases reported for Cruelty by Husband and Relatives (27%), Assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty (24%) and Kidnapping & Abduction (19%).
- In 2018, 66 % of the investigated cases of crime against women were disposed of by the police.
- As per the survey on Disability conducted by M/o Statistics & Program Implementation, percentage of differently-able person is higher for male than females at 2% in rural as well as urban areas. The highest percentage of type of disability found in females was locomotors disability..
- Aspects of Empowerment Women employees are assessed on the basis of ten important aspects related to empowerment. As the qualitative aspects related to the women employees are not directly measured. The empowerment of women employees is considering all the aspects to compare different categories of employees on a common scale.
  - The various aspects of Self confidence
  - Access to information sources
  - Ability to acquire skills
  - women empowerment are: Freedom to spend own income
  - Ownership of assets
  - Recognition of ability
  - Decision making
  - Freedom in mobility
  - Ability to make positive changes
  - Freedom in social involvement
- **Government Schemes for Women Empowerment The Government of India has been trying to empower the women through various -**
  - Beti Bachao Beti Padhao schemes
  - Schemes one stop centre schemes
  - Women helpline scheme
  - Rajiv Gandhi National crèche Schemes
  - Working women hostel
  - Ujjawala Schemes
  - SWADHAR Greh
  - Support to training and Employment Programme of Women
  - NARI SHAKTI PURASKAR
  - Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana
  - Mahila Police Volunteers
- **Conclusion :**

I want to underline the importance of the empowerment of women. Effective policies backed by action to accord them their due rights and equal opportunities will be critical to bolstering the overall work on preventing sexual violence against women and other citizens in conflict.

The women play a strategic role in the society and the economy. The status of women in India is rising. The government of India, by passing timely acts and implementing rules and regulations trying to empower the women. The effect of women employment on family and society is more evident in situations where women possess higher levels of employment and income. The empowerment of women employees is also higher when they are at high levels of employment. No doubt, the government of India has many weapons too tight for women empowerment.

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