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# Women and Nation Building



Editors

Dr. M. S. Gayathri Devi

Dr. Bhawana Asnani

Dr. Kanchan Awasthi

Dr. Aboli A. Kshirsagar



First Edition: 2022

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## **PREFACE**

*A woman is an architect of society. She establishes the institution of family life, builds the home, brings up the children and makes them good citizens. Her strength in totality contributes in the making of an ideal family, ideal society and an ideal state. Women's participation in nation-building is an important ingredient in achieving an equitable, peaceful and more prosperous society. Gender equity and women's inclusion play a central role both as a litmus test and as an active variable shaping a more democratic, stabilized and developed society.*

*This book is the compilation of esteemed articles of acknowledged experts providing a sufficient depth of the subject to satisfy the need of a level which will be comprehensive and interesting. It is an assemblage of variety of information about the role of women in various fields and sectors. With its application oriented and interdisciplinary approach, we hope that the students, teachers, researchers, scientists and policy makers will find this book much more useful.*

*The articles in the book have been contributed by eminent researchers, academicians and women activists. Our special thanks and appreciation goes to experts and research workers whose contributions have enriched this book. We thank our publisher Bhumi Publishing, India for compilation of such nice data in the form of this book.*

*Finally, we will always remain a debtor to all our well-wishers for their blessings, without which this book would not have come into existence.*

**- Editors**

**- Women and Nation Building**

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## **WOMEN ARE THE SYMBOL OF JOINT FAMILY**

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### **Abstract:**

In ancient Indian civilization, there used to be joint families. The specialty of providing support to the family is only in the joint family. The unity of the family is the sign of its strength. As it has been said - Unity is strength, that is, strength lies in unity. Whatever families are united, there is unity. Joint-family is the symbol of strength in difficult situations. The second wave of Corona created panic in the country. The figures show how important home isolation became in the second wave. Home-isolation proved to be a panacea for the joint family. In a joint family, the care of the patient, food and proper arrangements are made by the people of the family. The result of which was that the patients living in joint family in home isolation were mostly cured and were saved from the visit of hospitals. The families which were not joint and any corona positive came in them, then they had no option but to hospital. As a result, such families were torn apart by the second wave of corona. I would say only one thing that joint family is the best family. The second wave of Corona reminded the ancient Indian civilization and gave a lesson to the families to adopt the ancient Indian civilization and not the western civilization.

### **Introduction:**

A person is not alone in a joint family. There is a feeling of loneliness in families that are not united. There is stress in loneliness. Negative energy works under stress. Where there is no loneliness, positive energy works. Of course there is no tension. Corona can be defeated by positivity and people defeated. It means to say that joint family is stress free. Stress is the root of all disease. Women have an important role in the joint family. Women are the center of power of the joint family. The imagination of a joint family without women is meaningless. There is a verse in Sanskrit - 'Yasya puja naryastu tatra ramante devata:' That is, where women are worshipped, the gods reside there. The respect of women has been given a lot of importance in

Indian culture. As in Hinduism, Vedas give women a very important, dignified, high place. A beautiful description of women's education-initiation, modesty, virtues, duties, rights and social role is found in the Vedas. Vedas call her the queen of the house and give her the right to become the ruler of the country, even the queen of the earth. In the Vedas, a woman is sacrificial, that is, worshiped like a sacrifice. Devi, Vidushi, Saraswati, Indrani, Usha – the one who awakens everyone etc. have been given many respectable names. There is no restriction on women in the Vedas – she has always been called victorious and in her every work, cooperation and encouragement has been said.

In the Vedic period, women used to go from study-teaching to the battlefield. Like Kaikeyi went to war with Maharaj Dasaratha. By giving the girl the right to choose her own husband, the Vedas keep one step ahead of the man. Many sages are the seers of Veda mantras – Apala, Ghosha, Saraswati, Sarpragya, Surya, Savitri, Aditidakshayani, Lopamudra, Vishwavara, Atreyi etc. Glimpses of the nature of women in the Vedas - Yajurveda 20:9 (Both men and women have equal rights to be elected rulers). Yajurveda 17:45 (Women should also have an army. Encourage women to take part in the war). Yajurveda 10:26 (Let the women of rulers teach politics to others. Just as the king judges the people, so should the queen be the judge). Atharvaveda 11:5:18 (In Brahmacharya Sukta, it has been asked for girls to marry only after attaining celibacy and education. This hymn gives special importance to the education of girls like boys) Marry only after being a complete scholar and a young woman by the consumption of celibacy. Atharvaveda 14:1:6 (Parents give their daughter the gift of intelligence and knowledge while going to her husband's house. They give her a dowry of knowledge). If you have divine vision and get gold etc. from sky and land, then marry a suitable husband. Rigveda 10:85:7 (Parents should gift their daughter with wisdom and knowledge while going to her husband's house. Parents should also give dowry to their daughter; it should be a dowry of knowledge). Rigveda 3:31:1 (Like sons, daughters are equally heirs to her father's property). Some famous women like Devi Ahilyabai Holkar, Mother Teresa, Ila Bhatt, Mahadevi Verma, Princess Amrit Kaur, Aruna Asaf Ali, Sucheta Kriplani and Kasturba Gandhi etc. had illuminated their names in the whole world with their thoughts, words and deeds. Kasturba Gandhi played an important role in liberating the country by becoming the left hand of Mahatma Gandhi, shoulder to shoulder with him. Indira Gandhi influenced India and world politics on the strength of her determination. She is not just called the Iron-lady. Indira Gandhi did not lose heart despite the death of her father, husband and a son. Like a hard rock, she worked in her field of work.

### **Conclusion:**

Former US President Ronald Regan even called her a 'smart woman', because Indiraji was also an expert in politics as well as eloquence. Women in the family are the most burdened by the Corona crisis. But it came In the severe crisis of Corona, if anyone in the whole family faced the most trouble, then it is the woman of the house whose role suddenly increased greatly and not only her work in the house increased but also the unauthorized entry of other people in her jurisdiction increased. Everyone ordered him or got him to work. Everything was closed outside in the lockdown, so everyone was compelled to stay at home. The lockdown had increased the workload of women. Children are not going to school, either teach them at home or keep feeding new things or have fun, otherwise they will become fussy. Those who are elderly were most at risk of corona, their care is different. To prevent corona in the house with great ease, the family members decided not to let the house help and the working lady come. Then the work of cooking, washing dishes, sweeping, washing clothes all fell on the woman. Women are more alert and active in any crisis than men. Better manager and take care of the family and society with great courage even in bad situations, it is a different matter when the crisis does not last, then they get neglected again in both the family and the society. In this crisis of Corona, she took on some additional responsibilities. Women have a very proud and important role in Indian culture. India is the only country where the word goddess is used with women's names. Here the woman has been established as a symbol of Shakti, the conductor of Indian culture, the guardian of life values, the symbol of sacrifice, mercy, forgiveness, love, valor and sacrifice. She was given the recognition of Griha lakshmi. Hence we can say that women are the focal point of the power of joint family.

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Rig-Veda 10:85:7; Rig-Veda 3:31:1

Atharvaveda 14:1:6 (Parents give their daughter the gift of intelligence and knowledge while going to her husband's house.

Yajurveda 17:45 (Women should also have an army. Encourage women to take part in the war).

Yajurveda 10:26 (Let the women of rulers teach politics to others).

# **WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN POLITICS OF INDIA SINCE INDEPENDENCE - A POLITICAL ANALYSIS**

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## **Abstract:**

Since independence, women's representation in the Indian parliament and state legislatures has progressively increased. Women's rising presence in politics has been a source of concern in recent years. It is critical to recognise that the growing number of women is a positive sign that more women will participate in politics. With the emergence of new political parties that do not rely on family political patronage, party systems, or, more importantly, money and muscle power, a greater number of women entering the political fray can only mean positive signs for decision-making for a group that makes up half of the population. On the one hand, worldwide women's groups and academics have expressed alarm, and on the other, national and local women's groups and academics have expressed concern. Women's participation in politics is now widely viewed as a critical component of a healthy democracy. If half of the population does not participate in the political process, no democracy can be considered healthy. It is also becoming increasingly clear that simply voting is insufficient. It must be followed by widespread engagement in policy development and decision-making. This article is an attempt to examine how women have been represented in India's political arena since independence.

**Keywords:** Women's representation, women in politics, Indian democracy, political participation, Indian parliament.

## **Introduction:**

In the Indian Parliament, women's representation has progressively increased. Only 5% of the House of Representatives were women in the first election. That percentage has now risen to 14%. Since 1962, around 600 women have served in the legislature. Since 1962, approximately half of the 543 constituencies (48.4%) have never voted for a woman MP. At least one woman MP has been elected in 280 constituencies. The map below depicts how many women have been elected to the House of Commons over the years. To explore the data through

time, use the year slider. The freshly elected 17th Lok Sabha has the largest number of female Members of Parliament (MPs) since independence. According to PRS legislative research, the current Parliament contains 300 first-time MPs and 197 re-elected MPs for the second time in a row. Only 78 of the 716 women candidates who ran for office were elected, accounting for 14% of the House. This is an increase over 2014 when there were 62 female MPs in the Lok Sabha. This is also the period when the average age of a Member of Parliament has dropped dramatically. Only 12% of MPs are under the age of 40. In 2014, just 8% of the population fell into this age bracket. Women MPs, by the way, are six years younger than their male colleagues. The 17th Lok Sabha also has the most female members. In the Lok Sabha, women's representation has progressively increased. Only 5% of the House of Representatives were women in the first election. That percentage has now risen to 14%. In 1951, 22 women were elected to the Lok Sabha for the first time. The Lok Sabha currently has 66 members. It equates to a threefold rise in the number of women MPs elected to the lower house of parliament for 54 years and 16 Lok Sabha elections. Women now account for 12.2 per cent of the Lok Sabha, up from 5% in 1951. The increase in numbers, both in absolute numbers and percentages, has been consistent across time. The fall in numbers during the 6th Lok Sabha in 1977, the 9th Lok Sabha in 1989, and most recently the 14th Lok Sabha in 2004 are notable outliers. From 1991 until the present, the patterns show a significant and constant increase in Lok Sabha. The states having the highest number of elected women parliamentarians in India in 2019 are shown in this statistic report. With eleven women legislators respectively, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal were the states with the most, followed by Maharashtra with eight, Gujarat with seven, and Odisha with seven. According to a study, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, each with 11 candidates, have elected the most women MPs. Mayawati, the Bahujan Samaj Party's chief, and Mamata Banerjee, West Bengal's chief minister, are two well-known woman leaders in both states.

Following UP and Bengal, Maharashtra has eight female MPs, Odisha has seven, and Gujarat has six. Over 8,000 candidates were running in the Lok Sabha election, with over 700 of them being women. Seventy-eight of these women were elected to Parliament, a slight increase from the previous election in 2014 when 62 women were elected. Since 1962, 617 women MPs have been elected, 279 seats have elected at least one-woman MP, 264 constituencies have never chosen a woman, and 78 women MPs (14.3 per cent) were elected in 2019.

**Table 1: Representation of women MPs in parliament since independence in India**

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Women MPs</b>	<b>Parentage of Women MPs (%)</b>
1	1951	22	4.50
2	1957	22	4.45
3	1962	31	6.28
4	1967	29	5.58
5	1971	28	5.41
6	1977	19	3.51
7	1980	28	5.29
8	1984	43	7.95
9	1989	29	5.48
10	1991	39	7.30
11	1996	40	7.37
12	1998	43	7.92
13	1999	49	9.02
14	2004	45	8.29
15	2009	59	10.87
16	2014	66	12.15
17	2019	78	14

Source: Statistical report of Election Commission of India

The accompanying table indicates that, except for 1977 and 2004, the number of elected women members of parliament has increased since 1951. Women's representation in Indian politics has continuously increased, rising from 4.50 per cent in the 17 Lok Sabha general elections to 14.50 per cent in the 18 Lok Sabha general elections. Women now account for 14 per cent of the Lok Sabha, up from 5% in 1951. The increase in numbers, both in absolute numbers and percentages, has been consistent across time. The decline in numbers during the 6th Lok Sabha in 1977, the 9th Lok Sabha in 1989, and most recently the 14th Lok Sabha in 2004 are notable outliers. The table above depicts from 1991 to the present Lok Sabha, the patterns show a significant and sustained increase. The average percentage of women MPs (12.15%) is greater than the national average of women MLAs in state legislatures, which is a dismal 9%. Even while the percentage of women in the Lok Sabha has increased over time, it is still not a

figure to be proud of, especially when the optimum level should be at least 33 per cent. There is still a long way to go.

**Table 2: Male vs Female candidate in general elections party-wise percentage**

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Name of the Party</b>	<b>Male Candidates</b>	<b>Female Candidates</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	INC	87.47%	12.53%	100%
2	SP	87.50%	12.50%	100%
3	BJP	87.91%	12.09%	100%
4	AAP	88.57%	11.43%	100%

Source: ADR/ National Election Watch

The above table shows that various political parties fielded Male Vs Female Candidates at the national level in the 2019 General Elections, with the INC fielding 87.47 per cent Male Candidates and 12.53 per cent Female Candidates, followed by the SP fielding 87.50 per cent Male Candidates and 12.50 per cent Female Candidates out of a total of 100 per cent, and the BJP fielding 87.91 per cent Male Candidates and 12.50 per cent Female Candidates. Male Vs Female Candidates, on the other hand, were fielded at the national level with 91.07 per cent of Male Candidates and 8.91 per cent of Female Candidates in the 2019 General Elections, respectively.

**Women's parliamentary success rate vs men's:**

Another fascinating tale that emerges from the figures over time is the relative success rate of female contestants compared to male contestants. Women have consistently outperformed men in terms of success over time. The number of winners divided by the total number of contestants in that category is known as the success rate. In every election, women have had a higher success rate than men. The disparity has been fairly noticeable in recent years. Men had an 18% success rate in 1971, but women had a 34 per cent success rate, which was double that of men. For the current Lok Sabha, men had a success rate of 6.4 per cent and women had a success rate of 9.3 per cent. This could indicate one of two things: either woman had a better probability of winning from the seats they sat in, or tickets were allocated to women with a better chance of winning. In the 14th Lok Sabha, 52 women candidates were elected; in the 13th Lok Sabha, 52 women candidates were elected; in the 12th Lok Sabha, 44 women candidates were elected; and in the 11th Lok Sabha, 41 women candidates were elected. In the tenth Lok Sabha, 42 women

candidates were elected. In the 9th Lok Sabha, there were 28 women MPs, compared to 45 in the 8th Lok Sabha. In the previous Lok Sabha, a maximum of 37 women were elected. In both the first and second Lok Sabhas, there were 24 women MPs. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the biggest numbers of women have ever been elected.

A total of 724 women candidates ran across the country, with the Congress fielding the most women (54), closely followed by the BJP (53). The 17th Lok Sabha will have the largest number of female candidates since 1952, with over 14% female MPs. Uttar Pradesh had the highest number of women candidates, with 104, followed by Maharashtra. Sixty-four women candidates from Tamil Nadu, 55 from Bihar, and 54 from West Bengal have been nominated. Women candidates were elected in 22 states and one union territory in this election. According to the previous census, women account for 48 per cent of India's population, making the percentage of women lawmakers in Parliament 14.36% abysmally low.

### **Women Representatives from various states:**

Both Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal had 11 women elected, the most of any state. In Uttar Pradesh, the BJP had eight women and the Congress (INC), BSP, and Apna Dal each had one. Jaya Prada of the BJP lost by 1,10,388 votes against Azam Khan of the SP in the Rampur constituency in Uttar Pradesh. Khan has found himself in hot water during the election campaign by making sexist remarks about Jaya Prada. Smriti Irani defeated Rahul Gandhi by a large margin in Amethi, Uttar Pradesh. Banerjee's TMC had 40% female representation, with nine of them being elected to Parliament. Apart from these, two BJP women candidates in West Bengal were also elected. Maharashtra emerged in third place, with five BJP women candidates elected, as well as one each from the Congress, Shiv Sena, and an independent candidate. Odisha elected seven female candidates, five of whom were from the state political party Biju Janata Dal. The other two candidates are BJP members. Gujarat has six female MPs, all of them are members of the BJP. Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh each elected four women to the legislature. All four ladies in the former are members of the YSR Congress party. The BJP has four female parliamentarians in Madhya Pradesh.

Jharkhand, Karnataka, and Punjab each elected two female members of parliament. Jharkhand has two candidates, one from the BJP and one from Congress. An independent woman candidate and a Congress candidate both won in Karnataka. One from the Akali Dal and one from the Congress won in Punjab. Uttara khand, Telangana, Kerala, Haryana, Delhi, and Chandigarh, as well as a UT, each elected one-woman MP. Except for one TRS candidate in Telangana, all women candidates are from the BJP. Ramya Haridas is the state's second Dalit female MP, representing the Alathur Lok Sabha constituency in Kerala. Kerala continues its

2014 record of just electing one woman to the state legislature. In the eight northeastern states, which account for a total of 25 seats, In 2019, three women were elected, one more than in the previous general elections.

**A bleak picture of Indian women in Parliament:**

Going back to the early days after independence, the situation appears to have been more than dire. Women made up only 4.4 per cent of the first Lok Sabha. In 1977, the sixth Lok Sabha had the weakest proportion of women in Parliament, at only 3.5 per cent. Even though the number of women MPs climbed from 59 to 61 during the Modi administration, it is still well below the global average of 21.3 per cent. According to recent research undertaken by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), India is ranked 111<sup>th</sup> out of 189 countries with female parliamentarians. Even India's less developed neighbours, such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal, have over 100 million people. Even India's less developed neighbours, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal, have roughly 20%, 19%, and 30% women in their parliaments, respectively. The United States has 32% of the legislature, whereas Bangladesh has 21%.

**Women's Representation in Parliament Should Be Increased:**

With gender-based violence tearing the country apart and shocking apathy spreading among the political elite, it is suggested that more female participation in Parliament will put an end to it. Even during the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, most parties pledged to implement additional reforms and adopt legislation that is more 'women-friendly.' even though the current Lok Sabha has the most women, India needs to be more accommodating to induct more women MPs so that issues affecting women receive greater attention and are raised more regularly in Parliament. 'Although the current Lok Sabha has the most women, India still has to be more accommodating in inducting more women MPs so that issues affecting women receive more attention and are discussed more regularly in Parliament.' Whether it's establishing proposed rape crisis centres or enacting stricter anti-rape legislation, a stronger voice for women in the form of increased representation in Parliament would help push the stalled agendas forward.

**Conclusion:**

In a country like India, it is necessary that all sections of society participate equally in mainstream political activity, hence required actions should be done to promote it. It is essential to consider that the growing number of women is a positive sign that more women will participate in politics. With the emergence of new political parties that do not rely on family political patronage, party systems, or, more importantly, money and muscle power, a greater

number of women entering the political fray can only mean positive signs for decision-making for a group that makes up half of the population. Now, add to that a constitutional obligation to reserve 33 per cent of seats for women, and we're on our way to more gender equality. Otherwise, it'll be a matter of taking two steps ahead and one step back. Young Indian women, perhaps more than any other grouping today, embody aspiring India. If given a chance, they may breathe fresh life into our stale politics by focusing on basic requirements such as health, nutrition, education, and livelihoods.

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## **GENDER DIFFERENTIATION: FACTORS DISCOURAGING THE INVESTMENT IN PENSION PLANS FOR THE RETIREMENT PREPARATION**

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### **Abstract:**

**Purpose-** Purpose of this study is to analyze the factors discouraging the investment in the pension plans for the retirement on the basis of gender among the salaried class investors.

**Methodology** – A Well-structured questionnaire at 5 point Likert scale is used to collect the information and data. Sample element of this study is salaried class investors of Haryana state of India. Voluntary pension plans are the matter of consideration in this study. Percentage and t-Test is used to analyze the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Data is presented in tabulated and graphical format for the better understanding.

**Findings** – Researcher found that there is no significant difference between the male a female's thinking towards the factors discouraging them to invest in the pension plans for retirement. Both male and female are not interested to invest in pension plans due to the lower level of financial knowledge and lack of detailed information about the pension plans. Poor regulatory mechanism, poor grievances settlement, poor client services, poor claim settlement, lack of transparency and lack of innovative products are the main factors for the less interest for the investment in pension plans provided by the pension plans providers.

**Originality/Value** - This study provides the first review regarding the discouraging factors towards the investment in pension plans on the basis of gender in Haryana state of India. This study provides the platform for the further research and enhance the literature in this area. Originality/value of this research lies in its methodology to analyze the data.

**Keywords:** Gender Differences, Discouraging Factors, Investment, Pension Plans, Retirement, Haryana.

## **Introduction:**

### **Gender differences:**

Gender refers to “array of socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to the two sexes on a differential basis” (Carol Vlassoff, 2007). In the society there is always exist the gender differences in the form of education, social values and relationships, employment and income. So, gender differences in productivity and earnings across different sectors and jobs (World Bank Report, 2011). Men and women’s jobs differ greatly, across sectors, industries, occupations, types of jobs and types of firms (World Bank Report, 2011). India has the same situation for the gender differences in various sectors like education, social values, employment and income.

### **Retirement planning:**

Retirement is an important and crucial phase of human life. At the time of retirement, human shift from the working life to the life of rest and relief after working regularly and daily for long time. In the working phase of life, human is very energetic to do the work and able to earn income and maintain the standard of living. But in old age people do not have regular source of income. So, for the security of life in old age, people have to prepare for their retirement and save from the present earning for the future. Planning and preparedness for retirement is not an easy task, because it is an adjustment between the current expenditure of living and saving for future. These depends on the employment status, level of income, current needs of living and fulfil the social obligations and needs of future. Future needs depend on the living standard, life expectancy, health issues, family support and help during the retirement life. Nowadays family support is decreasing day by day, life expectancy is increasing, fertility rate is decreasing, children settled from native place to the other places. Due to all these reasons retirement planning becomes very essential for everyone. It is estimated that in 2050, 80% of the worldwide population above the age of 60 years will be reside in developing countries (United Nations, 2005). India is the one of the developing countries and old age population is increasing day by day. To secure the old age life, people save the money and invest it to the best investment option as per their requirements. Pension plans is the one of the investment options to secure the future life.

### **Pension plans:**

Pension system was started in India in 1871 by the British Government to protect its native employees. After that many other pension plans were offered by the Indian government and many amendments were made from time to time in pension system. Various Defined Benefit

(DB) and Defined Contribution (DC) pension plans are available for the citizens of India to invest their money and secure their future. Defined Benefit pension plans are provided by the employer and the number of benefits is calculated with the help of pre-defined formula based on the length of service, age of employee at the time of retirement and salary of employee. Defined Contribution Pension plans are employee funded schemes and he decide the amount of investment in a particular pension plan and government or employer also contributes the matching amount in employee's pension account. It is the mandatory or voluntary. In India, Defined Benefit (DB) and Defined Contribution (DC) pension plans are available in the form of Civil Service Pension, Employee Provident Fund Schemes, Public Provident Fund, Occupational Pension Schemes, Micro Pensions and National Pension Schemes (NPS) are provided by the government and many private pension fund managers like ICICI Pension Fund, HDFCPension Fund, LIC Pension Fund, State Bank of India Pension Fund, UTI Pension Fund, Kotak Mahindra Pension Fund, Aditya Birla Pension Fund etc.

#### **Review of Literature:**

- Joyce Prothero and Lee Roy Beach (1984) studied about the expectations-intention-action for the retirement decision. In this study expectation are used to predict the intention and intention is used to predict the action for the retirement decision making. Health, self fulfilment, finance, present job status are the most important factors. Those who acted on the basis of their expectations have more positive or negative Net Weight Utilities (NWUs) than those who were not predicted.
- Patricia J. Villani and Karen A. Roberto (1997) studied about the comparison of issues and factors that influence the retirement decision making of mid-life people and old men and women on the basis of psychological and personal factors. Researcher analyzed the data on the basis of health attitudinal and economic aspects and found that old women are facing more issues in retirement.
- Terry L. Gall *et. al.* (1997) examined the impact of retirement, check on change in adjustment across time and find the resources of short term and long-term adjustment in retirement and found that there is a positive impact of retirement on after life, psychological health and voluntary retirement were the predicators of short-term adjustment in retirement and internal locus of control was the long-term predicators of adjustment in retirement planning.
- Cornad Glass Jr. and Beverly B. Kilpatrick (1998) Studied about the gender comparison and financial preparation for retirement and found that male is high level saver than female. Men

invest for retirement, high saving and high income and invest in more risky investment options. Attitude and psychological factors of women affect and women may not have a high income as men. There is need of financial literacy for the men and women both.

- Maximiliane E. Szinovacz *et. al.* (2001) analyzed the relationship of family obligations and retirement decision and it is variate on the basis of gender, race and marital status. The researcher found that who have family financial obligations are not interested to retire and whose children are independent and have left household, are also not interested to take retirement and the decision of retirement is variate on the basis of gender, race and marital status. Black lady with single child is intended to retire but white lady and black men with single child is not interested to retire. To take care of ill spouse and numbers of disable family members, in this case men are more likely to retire. Unmarried and married childless persons are also not interested to retire.
- Jungmeen E. Kim and Phyllis Moen (2002) studied about the relationship between the retirement transitions and psychological well-being. The study had been done with the 458 sample of married male and female, the people who were in the initial stage of job and who were retired and who had just transitioned to retirement in last 2 years. The researcher found that relationship between the retirement planning and psychological well-being is temporal. Retirement in last two years is associated with higher moral and continuously retirement is the situation of depression for men.
- So- Hyun- Joo and Vanda W. Pauwels (2002) studied about the factors influencing the male and female workers' confidence about the retirement and the researcher found that the male as compare to female who are younger and have high level of education and income have positive attitude with less risk aversion and have higher level of retirement confidence.
- Donald C. Reitzes and Elizabeth J. Mutran (2004) studied about the stages of pre-retirement to the 24 months of post retirement and influence of social background, social psychological factors and gender on the retirement adjustment and the researcher found that in the earlier stage and voluntary retirement increase the positive attitude towards the retirement and after 12 months form retirement and bad health decreased the positive attitude for the retirement and effects of gender was limited on retirement.
- Joy M. Jacobs-Lawson *et. al.* (2004) analyzed the influence of demographic and psychological variables on the retirement planning on the basis of gender differences, how may they make efforts and time spent on retirement planning and found that female

consumed less time and do less efforts for planning than men. Researcher suggested that there should be separate plan for men and women.

- Jenny Onyx and Ellen Baker (2006) examined the thinking towards the various retirement plans. 200 sample size of public sector employee is taken for the study. The researcher found that both the women and men take the retirement in a positive way and think about their further personality development as retirement give more opportunities and development than decline. But this approach is more in women. There is no gender difference regarding the retirement but those with partners are likely to retire because of family responsibilities.
- Jasmina Petkoska and Joanne K. Earl (2009) examined the demographic and psychological variables affect the planning for retirement on the degree at which workers were engaging in health, financial, work planning for retirement. Goals are taken as consistent and positive determinant of planning. Women were more associated with the retirement planning as they were more positive health behavior and work planning behavior was negatively associated with income. Time perspective is also helpful to find the retirement planning behavior.
- Debra Grace *et. al.* (2010) studied about the gender difference towards the retirement planning and found that male and female have relatively different prospective regarding retirement planning. Male take the retirement life as a natural stage of life on which they have control and their main objective to maintain the life style in old age but women like to adopt a life course perspective and they concerned about the unseen obstacles that may be occur during the old age. They feel fear about the actual state of retirement life and shift their interest towards money, planning and government support.
- Jack Noone *et. al.* (2010) studied about the gender differences about the retirement preparedness and researcher found that perception towards the retirement planning and economic living status were associated with financial planning. However, women were still economically weak as compared to the men and this influence negatively on women's financial preparedness. So, retirement planning is matter of great concern for women.
- Barbara Griffinet. *al.* (2012) analyzed the utility of theory of planned behavior variables in retirement planning and also included the individual difference variables of proactivity and time discounting. The researcher found that some difference in the male and female behavior towards the retirement planning. Males are interested to do planning but female are facing greater difficulties in financing their retirement planning due to the lack of financial

knowledge, lower salaries, more employed on part-time job. So, they have less confidence and researcher suggested to increase the knowledge in female and build the confidence.

- Gargi Pant (2013) analyzed the awareness among the female faculty members towards investment for retirement planning and found that married women are more aware than unmarried women and women are interested to invest in less risky investment options.
- Annika E. Sunden and Brian J. Surette (2014) studied about the gender differences in the allocation of assets in retirement saving plans and found that marital status and gender are the key factors which affect the choice of investment decisions for the retirement planning. Some demographical, financial and attitudinal factors are controlled and important but these controls are imperfect. So, researcher interpreted the effect of gender and marital status on investment decisions. If single women invest in stock, then gets lower wealth on retirement. Social security reforms also affect the investment decisions.
- Sue Farrar *et. al.*(2019) studied about the retirement planning behavior and found that gender is statistically insignificant determinant to the retirement planning, when attitudinal and expectational are considered as independent variables. Financial literacy is not significantly affected the retirement planning.
- Karina Doorley and Anne Nolen (2019) examined the retirement planning determinants (financial literacy) within the pre-retired couples and found that men are more financial literate than women and that results more wealth and better retirement planning. But joint financial literacy results in more wealth and especially in real estate instead of individual decisions. But the financial literacy of the men plays an important role.

**Research gap:**

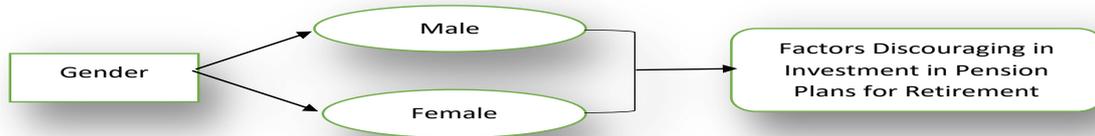
After studied the relevant Previous literature, the researcher found that many studies had been done at national and international level on gender differences and factors influencing the investment behavior of people towards the retirement planning. But the researcher is unable to find out the study which analyzed the factor discouraging to the salaried class people to invest the money in pension plans for retirement especially in Haryana state of India. To fulfil this gap and to analyze the discouraging factors for the investment in pension plans to salaried class people, researcher chooses this topic to do the furtherresearch and enhance the literature in this context.

**Objective of the study:**

The main objective of this study is to find the relationship between gender and factors discouraging the investment in pension plans for retirement among the salaried class investors. In this study voluntary pension plans are the matter of consideration. People have options to choose

the pension plans voluntarily to secure their future. This depends on the income level, savings and availability of the good pension plan providers and various services provided by them. So, the aim of this study is to find the discouraging factors towards the investment in voluntary pension plans.

**Conceptual model:**



**Figure 1**

**Hypothesis:**

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is significant difference between the Gender and Factors Discouraging the Investment in Pension Plans for retirement among the Salaried Class Investors.

**Research methodology:**

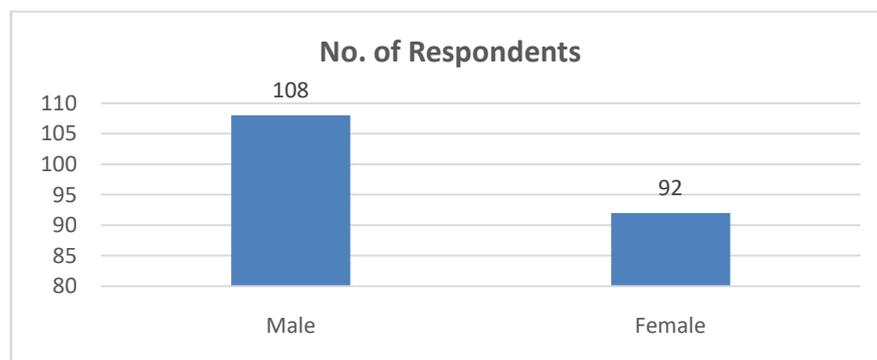
Primary and secondary data was used in this study. Sampling element is salaried class investor of Haryana state. Sample size is 200 respondents. Percentage and t-test was used to analyse the data. For effective analysis and easy understanding, the data is tabulated and show in graphs.

**Data analysis:**

**Table 1: Number of respondents:**

Particular	Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	108	54%
	Female	92	46%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data



**Chart 1**

**Interpretation:**

Sample size of this study is 200 respondents includes the salaried class investors of Haryana state. Out of the 200 respondents 108 are male and 92 are female which is the 54% and 46% respectively of the total.

**Table 2: t - test Statistics for Gender to Factors Discouraging the Investment in Pension Plans for Retirement among Salaried Class Investors**

Sr. No.	Variables	Male		Female		t Value	P Value	Stat Sig. (Yes/No)	Accepted/ Not Accepted
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.				
1	Fear of Fraud	4.0370	1.1267	3.9457	0.9985	0.602	0.548	No	Accepted
2	Mismanagement of Pension Providers	3.4537	1.0884	3.6522	0.9882	-1.340	0.182	No	Accepted
3	Poor Regulatory Mechanism	3.6389	1.1145	3.6630	0.9864	-0.161	0.872	No	Accepted
4	Lack of Information	3.9537	1.1551	3.8261	1.1730	0.773	0.440	No	Accepted
5	Lack of innovative products	3.8519	1.0921	3.6413	1.0009	1.412	0.160	No	Accepted
6	Poor grievances handling mechanism	3.6574	1.0779	3.5761	0.9634	0.558	0.577	No	Accepted
7	Portfolio manipulation	3.7222	0.9937	3.6630	0.9172	0.435	0.664	No	Accepted
8	Noncompliance of objectives of scheme	3.4537	1.0711	3.5761	0.9403	-0.851	0.396	No	Accepted
9	Poor timing of investment	3.7500	1.2314	3.6848	0.9130	0.429	0.668	No	Accepted
10	Lack of transparency	3.6296	1.1156	3.7065	0.9893	-0.512	0.610	No	Accepted
11	Poor client services	3.4815	1.2416	3.5652	0.9978	-0.529	0.598	No	Accepted
12	Poor claim settlement mechanism	3.6481	1.0878	3.5652	1.0196	0.553	0.581	No	Accepted

Source: Primary Data

**Interpretation:**

t-test statistics was applied for finding the relationship of gender and factor discouraging for the investment in the pension plans for the retirement with the help of various statements like “Fear of Fraud”, “Mismanagement of Pension Providers”, “Poor Regulatory Mechanism”, “Lack of Information”, “Lack of innovative products”, “Poor grievances handling mechanism”, “Portfolio manipulation”, “Non-compliance of objectives of scheme”, “Poortiming of investment”, “Lack of transparency”, “Poor client services”, and “Poor claim settlement mechanism”. The researcher found that the p value is greater than 0.05 (at 5 percent significance level) for all statements, which shows that there is significant difference between the male and female thinking towards the factors which discouraging them to invest in pension plans and they think differently. Male and female fear from fraud by the pension fund providers or managers. Both male and female are not investing in pension plans due to lack of detailed information about the pension plans and they have less financial knowledge about where to invest. Poor regulatory mechanism, poor grievances settlement, poor client services, poor claim settlement, lack of transparency and lack of innovative products are the main factors for the less interest for the investment in pension plans but there level of thinking is different as the mean value is different for male and female for all statements.

**Conclusion:**

The main purpose of this study is to find the relationship between the gender and factors discouraging for the investment in pension plans. Various statements were used to find the relationship between independent variable (gender) and dependent variable (factors discouraging the investment in pension plans). The researcher found that there is significant difference between the male and female’s reasons for the less interest to invest in pension plans. They have less financial knowledge and lack of information towards pension plans and investment strategies like how to invest, how much to invest, how to prepare the portfolio and where to invest. They fear from fraudulent behavior of some pension plan providers. Lack of transparency, poor regulatory mechanism, poor grievances handling mechanism, poor claim settlement ratio and poor client services are the main reasons to discouraging the salaried class investors to invest in pension plans but the discouraging factors are different towards the investment in pension plans for both male and female. Female needs the financial literacy towards the investment for future.

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## **INTRODUCING GODDESSES AS ROLE MODELS: A SELECTIVE EXAMINATION OF SOME SAHADHARMINI IDEALS IN GODDESSES**

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### **Introduction**

All the ways through the ages, Mythological and religious characters have enriched Indian and also Hindu religious philosophy utilising prolife generosity, that is also found in ideal role models laid down for a layperson. This impersonation of goddesses attributes as role models by an ordinary individual tries to establish a connection between the Divine and the human. In an attempt at investigating and exploring how Hindu Goddesses and mythological characters have influenced ordinary life and continued serving as epic role models in matters of authority and power. Here I begin with this submission that usually women in upper-caste Hindu society primarily have long been compared to goddesses in our society that at times may get wider and many faceted identity including Bharat Maa to woman as Devi and her various transformations. Although Goddesses as role models draw inspirations from Hinduism as a religion and a culture that has tremendous influence in shaping Hindu woman's mind-set at large, it depends on which particular role model is suitable or desirable to a specific class, caste or section of the people. In this case, society also offers the potential for a more powerful and liberating set of role models for contemporary women, or a submissive and a traditional one as a role model. And it leads to further clarification of the point that the term Goddess here is not meant in a generic sense as homogeneous in all cases.

In the Indian psyche, the paternal problem or feminism explores how we make Goddess the normal exception to the regular. Does it affect the actual situation of ordinary women? While studying Hindu mythology, it has been found that it is one of the few mythologies where male and female forms are given equal importance; that is how we find that gods cannot exist without goddesses and vice versa. From a Samkhya principle of Purusa and Prakriti, the male in Hindu mythology typically embodies the mind, and the female represents matter. So nature is feminine, and Goddess embodies nature and the mind, or the consciousness that responds to nature is embodied through male deities. What we commonly find that woman plays many dutiful roles as daughter, social person, wife, mother etc. and in these roles, she is never projected as singular.

Let us begin with the supposition that she is always in some relation. Beginning, with

ethics succeeding part focuses on some such role models beginning with woman and goddesses as *Shadharmini*. There is scope of the chapter for reinterpreting the meaning of the term *Sahadharmini* in a multifaceted way as per different socio-cultural contexts in society that look for some such goddess –role models. It is illuminating to show that male and female goddesses are counterparts to each other which will portray human life as a harmony also illustrated in how husband and wife are the ideal counterparts to each other in real life.

### **Woman in Vedic religion**

There is a possibility of one specific kind of role model that we may name as a complementary model, where both the male and the female counterparts, both the gods and the goddesses, remain complementary to one another. This model is usually described as the *Sahadharmini* model for woman. While examining a possible role model in a goddess that an ordinary family bound girl looks forward to imitating in her life also, she may look forward to this kind of *Sahadharmini* model. Male and female goddesses are counterparts to each other which will portray human life also illustrated in how husband and wife are the ideal counterparts to each other in real life. Along with the time, the Ideal gets diluted when the friendship and creative dialogue between the two counterparts, the God and the Goddess, the husband and the wife, become diluted when the one counterpart emerges dominating over the other. Normatively, there is respect in India for women and their role in society, as described in ancient Hindu scriptures. An interesting feature is that in ancient India, early Vedic period women could have multiple husbands, widows could remarry, and divorce was permitted where there was incompatibility or estrangement. To instil high ideals in humankind, Indian ancestors created an accumulation of goddesses who enjoyed equal status with their husbands.

The idea of equality was most effectively expressed in Vedas and which states that the wife and husband both regarded as being the one and the same halves of one common element. They are equal in every respect; therefore, both should join and take equal parts in all work, religious and secular. Even there is some injunction from the Vedas that no married man shall perform any religious rite, ceremony, or sacrifice without being united in by his wife. The wife is considered a partner in the spiritual state, so she was viewed as the life of her husband, and she is called, in Sanskrit, *Sahadharmini* or spiritual helpmate. Perhaps, no other scripture in the world has ever given the woman such equality with the man as the Vedas. The Hindu women of ancient times enjoyed equal rights and privileges with men, so women had an equal share and equal power with them in secular matters. And they have had the same right to possess property same as men. Even they could go to the courts of justice, plead their own cases, and ask for the protection of the law.

In brief, the prescriptions were that women must be honoured and adorned by their fathers, brothers and husbands if they desired good Womanhood and Spirituality are fortunes to perceive. Where women are honoured, the gods rejoice; however, when they are not observed, then all sacred rites prove fruitless. Where the female counterpart in grief, that family soon perishes wholly as a family always prospers when women are honoured.

The first literary tradition in the Indian subcontinent (and the oldest in the world) is that of the Vedic corpus. From the four Samhitas to the Upanishads, we find many interesting references to women in various roles. Some of these women have left their mark on the cultural heritage to this day and are remembered in various ritual and social contexts. Their names, stories, some highly revered hymns, and other interesting facts are mentioned in the Vedic corpus. Women referred to not only in the context of social roles but also as originators of many important hymns. Not only feminine and masculine but also various neuter characters and categories can be identified in the Vedic corpus. The Vedic literature has been classified as Early Vedic and Later Vedic. The Rig Vedic society and polity seems to be celebrating with life, and the agro-pastoral economy was enmeshed in close kinship ties. Women, as well as men, participated in society, economy and polity. Various natural phenomena are depicted as Goddesses, and they are offered prayers. While quantitative analysis highlights the predominance of Indra, Agni, Varuna and other male gods, the power and stature of the goddesses are equally well established. Not only in the context of the Divine but also in the descriptions of the temporal world, we have women making their own life choices and participating in the decision-making bodies. Women participated in all three Vedic socio-political assemblies like Sabha, Samiti and Vidhata. They had access to education and were even engaged in knowledge creation. They could choose to be brahmavadinis with or without matrimony. Hence, there is no reason to believe that they were only confined to home and hearth.

Gradually, the status changed away the Brahminical period that focused regarding caste, Varna etc. Uma Chakravarti has largely contributed about the women in ancient Hinduism and in this arena through re-interpreting the existing sources from radical perspectives on women. Literary texts which were not focused in the conventional histories have investigated the history of early India for signs of forms of patriarchy in the Indian past by bringing caste into her account of patriarchy in ancient India. The term she uses is “Brahmanical patriarchy”. Looking at ancient texts such as the Dharmasastras and including the Manusmriti, as well as subsequent Buddhist sources, Chakravarti reconstructs early Indian society from approximately 1000 B.C.

onwards. Social organisation is reconstructed through these texts to show how control over women by men was mediated through the creation of caste and class hierarchies and differences. Women were subordinated to men. Their behaviour, reproduction and sexuality were controlled and guarded by men. Additionally, women were seen as a private property of men, not having any existence of their own. There was a desire for sons, and the birth of a son was celebrated. The Brahmanical texts depict that women had no access to economic resources. A woman was valued for her role in reproduction alone. From the above passage, it is clear that texts like Manusmriti portray a picture of women who enjoyed no rights and were subordinate. T. S. Rukmani, however, attempts to understand if women had agency in early India. Her work has highlighted many interesting details. The author acknowledges the fact that though the patriarchal set up put women at a loss, there were instances where women found space to exercise their agency. She points out that though the texts like the Kalpasutras (Srautasutras, Dharmasutras and Grhasutras) revolved around the ideology of Dharma and there was not much space to express alternative ideas, still these works also find some scope to express ideas reflecting changed conditions. For example, there is a statement in the Apastamba Dharmasutra that one should follow what women say in the funeral samskaras. Stephanie Jamison believes that in hospitality and exchange relations, women played an important role. She says that the approval of the wife was important in the successful completion of the soma sacrifice. In a different review, it has been shown that women enjoyed agency in deciding what was given in a sacrifice, bhiksha, to a brahmacharin or to a sanyasin. The men had no authority in telling her what to do in these circumstances. Vedic society was the one that valued marriage immensely. In such contexts, Gender Perspectives if a woman chose not to marry, then it would point to her exercising choice in her decision to go against the grain and remain unmarried.

Gargi was a composer of hymns and has been called a brahmavadini (Rukmani, 2009). This term applies to a woman who was a composer of hymns and chose to remain unmarried, devoting herself to the pursuit of learning. Similarly, in the case of Maitreyi, she consciously opts to be educated in the Upanishadic lore, and Yajnavalkya does not dissuade her from exercising her choice. The statement in the Rigveda III, 55.16 that learned daughters should marry learned bridegrooms indicates that women had a say in marriage. Though male offspring is desired, there is a mantra in the Rigveda, recitation of which ensures the birth of a learned daughter.

Altekar refers to the yajnas like seethayajna, rudrayajna etc., that were to be performed exclusively by women. Some of the women were known for their exceptional calibre; for example, from the Rigveda Samhita, we find mention of women like Apala, Ghosha,

Lopamudra, Gargi, Maitreyi, Shachi, Vishwavara Atri, Sulabha and others. Women have not only been praised as independent individuals but also with reference to their contributions towards their natal or marital families. The Later Vedic literature shows the progression towards a State society with a change in the organisation of the society and polity. The chief comes to be referred to as Bhupathi instead of gopati. However, within the twelve important positions (ratnis) mentioned, the chief queen retains a special position under the title mahisi. The importance of the chief queen continued as gleaned from several references to them in the Epics, Arthashastra and even in coins and epigraphs from early historical times. The other Samhitas also refer to women sages such as Rishikas.

The wife is referred to as *Sahadharmini*. Brahmanas, of the texts dealing with the performance of the yajna (Vedic ritual), requires a man to be accompanied by his wife to be able to carry out rituals. For example, Aitareya Brahmana looks upon the wife as essential to the spiritual wholesomeness of the husband. However, there is a mention of some problematic institutions as well. Uma Chakravarti has pointed towards the condition of Vedic Dasis (female servant/slave), who is referred to in numerous instances. They were the objects of dana (donation/gift) and dakshina (fee). It is generally believed that from the post-Vedic period, the condition of the women steadily deteriorated. However, Panini's Ashtadhyayi and subsequent grammatical literature speak highly of women acharyas and Upadhyayas. Thus, the memory and practice of a brahmavadini continued even after the Vedic period. The Ramayana, Mahabharata and even the Puranas keep the memory of brhamavadini alive. Mention may be made of Anasuya, Kunti, Damyanti, Draupadi, Gandhari, Rukmini, who continued to fire the imagination of the poets. Since a woman taking sanyasa was an act of transgression, one can explore women's agency through such instances. In the Ramayana, Sabari, who was the disciple of Sage Matanga, and whose hermitage was on the banks of river Pampa was one such sanyasin. Such women find mention in Smriti literature and Arthashashtra. Kautilya's prohibition against initiating women into Sanyasa can make sense only if women were being initiated into sanyasa.

He advises the king to employ female parivrajakas as spies. Megasthenes mentions women who accompanied their husbands to the forest, probably referring to the Vanaprastha stage. Another category of literature called Shastras that comprises of sutras (aphorisms) and the smriti texts ('that which is remembered') becomes important in the post-Vedic period.

The textual traditions cover many subjects relating to the four kinds of pursuits of life referred to as purusharthas (namely dharma, karma, kama and moksha). In all these texts, we find very liberal values and freedom for both women and men. The setting up of a household is

seen as an ideal for men as well as women (though asceticism for learning is equally praised for both). For example, Apastambha Sutra opines that rituals carried out by an unmarried man do not please the devatas (divinities).

Similarly, Manusmriti provides that for three years shall a girl wait after the onset of her puberty; after that time, she may find for herself a husband of equal status. If a woman who has not been given in marriage finds a husband on her own, she does not incur any sin, and neither does the man she finds (MS IX.90-91). Thus, we see that women enjoyed choice in matters of matrimony. It is interesting to note that unmarried daughters were to be provided for by the father. In fact, the daughter is stated to be the object of utmost affection (MS IV.185). Should a girl lose her parents, her economic interests were well looked after. It was provided that from their shares, 'the brothers shall give individually to the unmarried girls, one-quarter from the share of each. Those unwilling to give will become outcastes' (MS IX.118). With regards to defining contemporary attitude towards women, Apastambha Sutra prescribed that one need to make way for a woman when she is treading a pathway. Later Dharmashastra also makes similar statements. Yagnavalkya smriti mentions that 'women are the embodiment of all divine virtues on earth.' However, there are several provisions that look problematic. On the one hand, we have reverence assigned to the feminine (divine and worldly) and important roles being played by them; on the other hand, we have questionable provisions and descriptions like the right to chastise them through beating or discarding.

A gender perspective gives us information on women who were engaged in economic activities of various kinds. They formed a part of both the skilled and the unskilled workforce. They were into professional as well as non-professional employment. Some of their vocations were related to their gender, while the others were not. There were female state employees as well as independent working women. Similarly, some of them were engaged in activities which, though not dependent on their biological constitution, are nonetheless categorised as women's domain, e.g. domestic services etc. Some of them were actual state employees, while some others were in contractual relations with the State. For example, we have female bodyguards and spies in State employment.

Jaiswal suggests that these women perhaps came from Bhila or Kirata tribe. Female spies were not only to gather information and relay it to the proper source but also to carry out assassinations. However, a closer look at some Hindu religious text shows that there were different classes of female spies engaged for different purposes. Amongst others, 'women skilled in arts were to be employed as spies living inside their houses' (KA I.12.21). Others were required to work as assassins (KA V.1.19, XII.5.48). Some were to play the roles of young and

beautiful widows to tempt the lust of greedy enemy (KA XIII.2.42). Female slaves formed an important part of the workforce both in the royal establishment and in the common households. In the royal establishment, 'female slaves of proven integrity' were to do the work of bath attendants, shampooers, bed-preparers, laundresses and garland-makers; otherwise, they were required to supervise the artists doing these jobs (KA I.21.13). Further, they were to offer garments, flowers and other cosmetics after first putting them on their own eyes, bosoms and arms (KA XXI.14-15). Thus, they were functioning not only as personal attendants but also as security checkers.

### ***Sahadharmini* emphasised the complementary nature of man and women**

In Vedic religion, women seemed to glorify goddesses status as power centres from whom even man emerged stronger and derived strength. In actual society, women were regarded as dutiful wife where Hindu women's position and role in society has been a topic of frequent change. In Vedic religion, which is often considered as the basis of present Hindu dharma, women were given the status of Goddess, and from their power emerged the male strength. Women regarded as dutiful wives and benevolent mothers, but also we can find various occurrences where women promoted and took steps for themselves against discriminatory law and customs of the society and also, on certain levels, seem to have gained equality with men. But in the present-day context, the most significant question lingers regarding the paradox in Indian Hindu women- that people of Devi worshippers worship their women or are it just religious imagery that often rejects the real picture. What is women's true space in Hindu society by taking into account Hindu goddesses, social customs and present-day conducts of the society?

It is manifest that male and female images were formed by the patriarchal, hierarchical Hindu Society. We have been subscribing to this myth and exploring its possible variants, and, in doing so, that have been keeping the myth alive. The woman is the mother who takes care of her children, patient, self-sacrificing, abundant in her gifts like the mother earth, she is Grihalaksmi, symbolising the prosperity of home and family, she is *Sahadharmini* identifying herself with the dharma of her husband, she is Sakti, the primal source of energy. But the moment the woman is seen to lead her own life, to act in conformity with her own nature and not according to the specifications of the role assigned to her, she loses favour with us, and she is damned. This situation thus leads to associate power also with womanhood to suitable in different times and gradually she changes as a Shakti, Male shaktis, the Great Goddess.

An early pre-vedic agricultural economy subjugated by the female. If we noticed that the Khasis of Assam their economy remains almost wholly agriculture-based and still retain the

matriarchal pattern, the woman enjoys social supremacy. Agriculture, since it was the discovery of the female, created conditions for the economic and, therefore, social supremacy of the female in its early stages. The later agricultural economy developed and passed into the hands of the male, but some of the cultural features of its early stages remained attached to it. The Indian masses, the controls of the soil, by and large, have stuck to the idea of the mother goddess.

In Vedic religion, women seemed to glorify the status of goddesses as power centres from who even man emerged stronger and derived strength. In actual society, women were regarded as dutiful wife where Hindu women's position and role in society has been a topic of frequent change. David Kinsley comments: "It must require a phenomenal level of illiteracy and prejudice to cite ancient Indian tradition as a reason to discriminate against women" (Kinsley,1986). For, the indisputable truth is that Hinduism must be one of the very few religions in the world that both in philosophy and mythology accord status of absolute equality to women and philosophy, the highly evolved Shakta tradition equates Shiva with Parvati, in her form as Shakti. This is more in line with the polytheistic Hindu pantheon's role models that provide revered images of women as unique and yet complementary to those of male deities. More cementing and integrating concepts like *Sahadharmini* emphasised the complementary nature of man and women. Indian tradition has always valued the spirit of cooperation and toleration at all levels, including the domestic domain. One ideal role model is that of the *Sahadharmini* model.

The Hindu woman as life partner has a fourfold character: she is ardhagini, one half of her husband. And symbolically speaking, *Sahadharmini*, an associate in the fulfilment of human and divine goals; saharmini, a part of all her husband's action and sahayogini, an absolute co-operator in all his endeavours. Husband and wife together are called dampati, joint owners of the household, sharing work in terms of their biological, psychological and individual dharma. The former provides the seed (bija) and the latter the field (ksetra) for its fructification so that humans could be continued in the cosmic process of evolution. Both have the joint responsibility of helping their children grow in all respects, but the contribution of the wife is always immense. Although that was a late position, initially, this model provided scope for harmonious relations between the two. Will Durrant has mentioned and lets us know, "Women enjoyed far greater freedom in the Vedic period than in later India. She had more to say in the choice of her mate than the forms of marriage might suggest. She appeared freely at feasts and dances and joined with men in religious sacrifice. She could study, and like Gargi, engage in philosophical disputation. If she was left a widow, there were no restrictions upon her remarriage." (Durrant, 1935, pp 401). So we can find equality between girl and boy during the religious period. This proved that Gargi was a dialectician and philosopher of a high order.

Whereas the religious life (*dharma*) of a man was usually described in terms of his class (*varṇa*; i.e., according to his membership of the priestly, ruling, mercantile, or servant class) and stage in life (*āśrama*; i.e., according to whether he was a religious student, a married householder, a hermit, or a renunciate), of a woman-focused solely on the cultural expectations of the good wife (*strīdharmā*). Shalini Shah, in her article 'On gender wives and Pativratas' the words refer to essay it was suggestive of the view that R.C. Majumdar, in his essay 'Ideal and position of Indian Women in domestic life (1953) as follows that during the marriage rituals in Rig Veda and in the fully developed form in the Grhyasutras, do not enjoy the obedience upon the wife. However, this division was based on karma and dharma when a man was associated more with the public domain and female than mostly with nurturing and culturing; accordingly, roles were divided between husband and the wife, that did not keep room for a dominated dominating relationship that Hegel characterised as master-slave inequality. Although at a later phase, the *Sahadharmini* Ideal appeared more a contract than a dialogue.

Unlike the pseudo-Vedic attempt of a few scholars in mediaeval India, which prove that Daughter is an unwelcome member of the family, early Vedic literature draws a very positive image of daughters and women. Women's position gradually deteriorated as the Vedic ideals of unity and equality began to vanish off as time passes by. During Smritis, women were bracketed with the Shudras. Achla Sharma, in her article Status of women: A social-historical analysis in different ages of Indian society, quoted that, according to Baudhayana, "A father who did not give his daughter in marriage before her first menstruation incurred the guilt of one procuring abortion (a grave sin, worse than many kinds of murders) for every menstrual period in which she remained unmarried". However, there are some references in smriti like in Manusmriti that women should everywhere be worshipped as Goddess. He also takes the opposite position that women should be in control by her father, husband and son. According to Manusmriti, "Bride was one third the age of the groom; thus a male of twenty-four should marry a girl of eight years, i.e. Nagnika" (Sharma, 2014).

On the contrary, some literature was totally against of early marriage of a girl child, as example. Sati system was prevalent in this period. This might be the main reason that women often immolated themselves on the husband's funeral pyres. Widow had suffered a lot; she was an ascetic, sleeping on the ground and eating once a day simple meal, wearing no ornaments or coloured garments. The widow had to maintain this austere regimen to the end of her days in the hope of being remarried to her former husband in her consequent births.

## **Woman as Pativrata not as dominant ideology consequent times though not as a dominant ideology in the Vedas**

Generally, the word Pativrata is acquainted from Vedic scriptures, which defined as an adjective representing a woman wholly faithful to her husband. If we continue with the Vedic period, it has found that Pativrata was not the Vedic tradition's dominant ideology. In its early phases, Vedic literature was more resilient with determining the uniformity of husband and wife. They were equally and unified while doing the tasks like safeguarding the home and the act of ritual as has been copiously mentioned in the texts. In Vedic literature, the primary notion of woman is *Sahadharmini*, rather than Pativrata. Hence a woman was understood as the necessary and obligatory ritual partner of her husband. The husband was as imperfect without her as she without him. But the recent scholars of Hindu literature and tradition take it as a point to be debated, though literature is remarkably known for these unifications for generations.

Ancient Indian literature exhibits a uniform spirit of reverence for womanhood, and Vedic religion does not deny any right to women, not in the least the religious (Chaudhuri, 1956; pp1). A woman had a clearly defined ritual role in the Vedic sacrifice, and her participation in the ritual was an essential requirement. In this way, she was associated with ensuring the solemnity and success of the sacrifice as the man. Apart from Vedic paradigms, the process of change is evident everywhere. The evolution in the theoretical place of womanhood mirrors these broader intellectual and social existences. Women thus go from being the partners and supporters of their husbands in religious life, which indeed in the Vedic world is all of life, to being their uncritical servants and devotees. Pativrata Dharma is thus an embryonic ideology that becomes grafted over the older paradigm of the *Sahadharmini* woman and exercises a powerful ideological appeal. It is seen rapidly emerging as the dominant ethic, considering prior ethics into its own title. While more ancient practices continue to be recorded in the text, the increasing supremacy of the Pativrata dogma is evident in the moral aims of the text. The depreciation of women's roles in the conjugal relationship coincides with the attenuation of women's roles in the ritual orb. Whereas in Vedic times, women were indispensable participants in the sacrifice, even if in passive rather than active modes increasingly. Where women clearly did perform various rites, these reflect the evolving mood that women's religious lives should be located around their husbands. In classical Hinduism, it became common to refer to marriage as the upanayana for girls and think of the husband as the guru. These formulations reflect the ethos of the pativrata creed that husbands possess both intellectual and religious priority over their wives. In living in humble service of their husbands, women hope not only to propitiate them as they would a deity but also to learn from them, be intellectually formed by them. This is a very different ethic from

that of sahadharma, where husband and wife are conceived as complementary partners with different roles, together responsible for maintaining order in the universe through their ritual activities. A host of congruent cultural practices achieves the purposes of Pativrata dharma from every angle of society- public, media, ritual, social convention, even law; she is beamed images of Pativrata woman. She is that gigantic model of virtuous womanhood in whose image she must shape herself. Even in this age of urbanisation, globalisation, and increasing sexual equivalence in the public globe, all promise change. The Pativrata woman is a profoundly internalised peaceful identity for Hindu women, armoured through the current boulevards of the present era. Though hidden in the western group, the Pativrata woman reign as the reserved ornamentation of this genre of presenters, readers, writers and through her enticing fashion sense, she magnifies and bolsters the Pativrata ideals for new generations.

### **Complementary to one another as Ardhanareeshwara**

Advocates of the Hindu religion believe their Gods to possess both male and female elements that are integral to their origin. God is shown as 'ardhanarishvara' or 'God who is a half-woman. Interestingly there are subtle conceptual differences and sophistication when terms as gods and goddesses are used in the Hindu pantheon. It sometimes overcomes the usual male-female dichotomy where God is shown as 'ardhanarishvara'. The mother is considered a thousand times more venerable than the father. There was no restriction in the ancient Hindu society that sons must always be named after their father. Numerous heroes of Hindu tradition are frequently addressed as sons of their mothers. Generally speaking, mothers had a free hand in administering home and family affairs. Some women from the high class were not only highly educated but took an active part in intellectual discourses (Singh, 2009).

Another reason for connecting dharmic role models for the prophet character of modern society is that there was scope for interpreting Dharma in a positive sense, and very often, it helped to provide better scope for women's emancipation and empowerment. A careful inspection of Hindu religious texts, social customs and laws make it abundantly clear that our Dharma grants a very high status to women. She and her male partner form a pair together, or rather, the husband and wife form one whole. It is a convention rather than religion that has halted Hindu women's growth on many accounts. Though it cannot be denied that over the centuries, many vices have crept into the Hindu society, which has negatively impacted women's condition, these can only be altered through internal reforms. Evil customs such as dowry, female infanticide /sex-selective abortions, child marriage etc., are not only regressive but also criticise the Hindu religion and culture. It becomes the duty of the Hindu husband to treat his

better half on equal footing. Indian women also desire little respect and just treatment at the hands of the society that they are very much a part of it (ibid, pp 90).

Ardhanaareeshwara, is the union of Shiva and Shakti in one body. And the form denotes, male and female principles work together as equal partners in the universe. In the Hindu pantheon of gods and goddesses, every God has a goddess. Other instances reiterate that already has mentioned the status of woman as *Sahadharmini* in ancient India; women occupied a vital position. The concept of Ardhanaareeshwara, where God is depicted as half-man and half-woman, is a concrete example to support the view that how men and woman are complementary to one another this argument. And, one can find a comparable Goddess for each God. In many philosophical versions, God is referred to as Tat, meaning 'It', which means that God is beyond gender.

The notion of Prakriti and Purusha is one of the most significant aspects of Hindu philosophy. This has been a matter of dialogue from time ancient, what with different schools of philosophical thought, understanding it in different ways if we analyse the concept on this Prakriti and Purusha phenomenon, and defining its origins and reality right from Indian mythology to how it is still very much valid in the present-day world.

Indian mythology is probably the most all-encompassing in the world. The reason being, several beliefs of Hindu philosophy are explained by means of modest, interesting and educative mythical stories. These stories sometimes even explain high philosophical and ethical principles by the approach of representation. However, a mythological story may sound modest at first glimpse, but a deeper level of those analyses reveals the true wealth of philosophical content it has to offer by those. Corresponding to everything else, Indian mythology explains this very perplexing concept of Prakriti and Purusha. And makes us understand in the humblest way, and along with that contributions are there also by way of tales and stories of yore. We now examine one of the most oft-repeated stories of Lord Ardhanarishvara and find out how this complicated Prakriti-Purusha concept is explained by way of mythology. The Ardhanarishvara, which signifies that Prakriti and Purusha in complete harmony. The conception of Ardhanarishvara pre-eminently illuminates the aspects of Prakriti and Purusha and male-female as complementary to one another. Ardhanarishvara, the Neutral One, is an aspect of Lord Shiva, whose representation is half man and half woman. The image embodies a transgender entity. It portrays how the female principle of Goddess Shakti is inseparable from the male principle of Lord Shiva. The Shaktas (devotees of Shakti Goddess) and the Shaivas (devotees of Shiva) of the Tantra school of thought both believes in the Divine Union of Shakti with Shiva as the Ultimate Reality. The neutral form of the Ardhanarishvara represents this concept of Oneness or wholeness. It is that

which goes far beyond all perceptions of duality and from whose womb all existence began. The Ardha-Nari, which literally means 'half woman, is considered in Indian mythology to be the Soul of the World. All the creation starts from Him, life is created from Him, and death is considered as a reoccurrence back to His Kingdom, only to appear yet again arrayed in another entity.

Hence, there is no perishing of any being; it is all only a part of a much larger procedure of the cycle of life itself. The Shaktas consider the Shakti (Goddess) as the main source of all creation. So they contemplate Goddess Ardhanarishvari to be the Supreme Creator, who divided Her own body into half man and half woman. The Ultimate One should be female, as it is the female species that gives birth to all being. They also believe that this Supreme Goddess is at the centre of all creative processes in this world. The Shaktas depicts the Goddess producing Shiva from Her own form, thereby balancing her own feminine qualities with masculine ones. Philosophers agree that it is not much significance debating if God is masculine or feminine and meet up to the common point that the inner meaning of the form of the Ardhanarishvara. God is essentially energy that activates all being, and all else associated with that icon are mere symbolism and nothing more. In an article written by Saipriya Viswanathan (2008), Ardhanarishvara - the Dual Nature of the Cosmos, that it is to be understood here that the concept of Ardhanarishvara is not merely a combination of the male and female genders. Infact it, in reality, exists in order to educate the Sadhak about nonduality between male and female. And moreover teaches to break free from the malicious cycles of base human emotions, biases and other common idiocies and eccentricities.

The Rig Veda put forwarded a beautiful explanation for this concept of Ardhanarishvara. It says that in Aadikaala, that is during the very beginning, there was only One and Unique non-manifest supremacy. This power existed without breath, without emotion and without thought, and there was nothing beyond the One. Without its proper knowledge, there only darkness and inconscience ruled. Then the Universal Supremacy created its own energy, and it leads to rise to the Supreme One, who then gave rise to the whole with a mere thought by springing from its Mind. And this One Being felt the desire to grow numerous. This is where the phrase 'Ekoham Bahusyami', comes to be. This means, 'That which I only am, shall manifest as many'. This was the desire of the Power to emanate forth in the form of Shakti, creating a multitude, and also to emanate as Shiva, to witness that multitude in action.

Male and female are the two completely opposite, yet complementary, forces of Shakti and Shiva as Prakriti and Purusha, respectively. Here, Shiva is the Transcendent One, the Sat-chit-ananda, who merely observes and is unmoved by events occurring in creation. Shakti, on the

other hand, does not depend on him to perform her functions, but she needs his power to sustain and maintain her creation. So though Shakti is not co-existent with the Purusha, that is, Shiva, she requires his presence to keep the cosmos functioning smoothly. Shiva, though he wields unlimited power, cannot create the universe without the Eternal Life Force of Shakti to back him. Therefore, the concept of Ardhanarishvara clearly conveys the fact that Prakriti (Shakti) and Purusha (Shiva) are nought without each other, and one cannot exist and function in the absence of the other. It also shows that the male is as much female as the female is male. This means that masculinity and femininity are merely attributes working to create the entire bigger picture of the world.

### **Goddess complementary to God**

A woman in the role of wife subjugates a position of primacy in ancient Hindu tradition. Some illustrations from Hindu mythology provide insights into the transcendent journey that they made during their lifetime and how they are being perceived in contemporary India. India, a land of vast spiritual, social and cultural diversity, has shown the power of women in an infinite way. The infinite potential of women shakti has been seen in Sita, Draupadi, Durga, Kali, Saraswati, Lakshmi, Kamakhya goddess and several other Goddesses. Goddess has expressed the deep and boundless potential of the human personality. When women have identified with these mythological characters, they have examined, understood and deepened their own concerns, values and identities. In the senses of women, Goddess Sita is a capable, independent woman who met every challenge with strong, feminine grace and archetypal audacity. Goddess Durga is referred to as all-powerful and Kali as the destroyer of evil. Lakshmi symbolises wealth and is highly revered by both men and women. The consorts of the three gods of the Hindu trinity Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva - Saraswati, Lakshmi and Parvati, respectively, were their men's strengths. They were complementary to their male counterparts.

Women occupied a very important position in ancient India. It is a philosophy whose only words for strength and power are feminine, which is Shakti. All male power comes from the feminine. Knowledge, intelligence, rhythm and coordination are all essential requirements for any creative activity. These aspects are personified womanhood and religiousness. Saraswati, the Goddess of knowledge, learning, music and fine arts and without the grace of Saraswati, Brahma cannot do the creation and would not be regarded as the Creator of the universe. Any preservation movement needs plenty of resources, mainly fiscal resources and here Lakshmi, the Goddess of Wealth. She is an essential companion to Vishnu. Shiva, as Destroyer, requires abundant power and energy. This is what Parvati, or Durga or Shakti as she is called, provides. It is only the Hindu tradition that delivers, even at the theoretical level, this picture of the male and

female principles working together as equal partners in the universe. This togetherness or complementary concept is carried further to its logical climax in the form of Ardhanaareeshwara, formed by the fusion of Shiva and Shakti in one body. And each occupying one half of the body, denoting that one is incomplete without the other. Shakti is female; in Hinduism, it generally symbolises all power. So, the female signifies the entirety of the power, and the male is imaged as the mediator of the female. Shiva, this great power, is the moon god. Parvati, his consort, is the sun power. And although the worship in the masculine-oriented action systems in India is directly to Shiva, it is the Goddess Kali, who is finally worshipped. In Hinduism, Kali is the great divinity. The Hindu goddess Kali is shown standing on the prostrate form of Shiva, her spouse. She waves the sword of death, that is, divine discipline. In this background, the chapter keeps its focus on the development of the concepts that keep room for providing highly philosophical and abstract conceptions on the one hand and deeply personal and religious attachment with this role model on the other hand.

This is well illustrated, and the life of the great Advaita philosophers Sankaracharya, who developed the highest concept of Nirguna Brahman, also composed very personally devotional hymns to the goddesses. The focus on the divine creative feminine force is important as it is known by Hindus as Shakti. We have to believe this knowledge is important because it demonstrates how women can maintain positions of power without distressing an established patriarchal tradition of society.

The book *Hindu Goddesses Beliefs and Practices* (2009) by Lynn Foulston and Stuart Abbott acts as a general primer on the subject. Foulston and Abbott give in-depth explanations of the three main elements associated with the Devi: Shakti, Maya, and prakrti. Shakti is defined as "power, ability, and strength". Tantric regarded women as Shakti. Man uses Shakti, and he became too the owner of Shakti. In Tantric school, the whole way of interpreting women will change as seen as power centre may be spiritual or intellectual. Later we will find this power will be a more specialised sense, some parts will be more power centres than others. Accordingly, the representation of women's body parts in yantras, chakras, and others will try to capture their particular body parts as power centres more vividly. For example, a Sadhaka may be required to focus his whole attention or concentration on a particular Yantra or diagram like the Yoni, the grave or even some other parts of the body as fluids, menstruation blood, etc., which may be required for some kind of extreme Tantric Sadhana. Even later on, the corpse of the dead body can also be seen as a power centre that may lead to meditation on the corpse (shav Sadhana). The

point is women here, especially a bleeding woman, fertile women will be seen especially powerful Shaktis in comparison to men.

Women are also seen as powerful not only for her womanly attributes but also for her men like abilities to fight with men and to aggressively kill the demon-like any other men will do in war heroically. Sita, who appears in the epic Ramayana, the Goddess that is most often put forth as exemplifying an ideal Hindu wife Sita is loyal to her husband Rama, even to the point of death. Another submissive goddess is Durga's tamed avatar, Parvati. Like Sita, Parvati also exemplifies the ideal Hindu wife through her mythology. To obtain the love of her consort Shiva, who is a devoted ascetic, Parvati leaves her lavish lifestyle to meditate for decades alone. Her commitment to her meditation finally forces Shiva to acknowledge Parvati's utter devotion to him. David Kinsley notes that "goddess mythology to a great extent is probably a means by which the Hindu tradition has thought about sexual roles and sexual identity"(Kinsley,1986). Here we see actuality termed role preferred in a patriarchal role as ideal. Thus these are obedient and ideal.

Power bears on chastity as equal with the power of tapas as also there is the power of Truth (satya) and others, chastity too came to be regained as to be a virtue, for a general philosophical understanding if we compare it as one of the virtue ethical terms in the context of Aristotelian virtue ethics, this remains a gradually acquired virtue in a particular context only not in general, also understandable from an Aristotelian virtue ethical perspective. Virtue should not be something that is in extremes, that it ultimately leads to disintegration and disharmony, then stability and pro-life eudemonia rather transforming by extreme positions what is life to death like situation, a euthanasia. Thus any virtue of being good must take a middle path in between destruction and extreme obsession for both sides. That way, chastity understood as pativrata as a virtue sought to serve its purpose that is seen in the sanctity of marriage as an institution attached in Vedic and also post vedic society that was hoped to safeguard stability of such institutions counting on loyalty and mutual trust as one of the main capitals. The concern remains despite some flexibility in understanding towards the true meaning of some such terms used context wise even within the so-called patriarchal family structure. That Rama, the ideal god-man in the Epic, himself remains concerned about Sita's chastity despite she being forcefully kidnapped by Ravana and making her a captive. That way, we can see these accidental disturbances in Rama-Sita's life could not lead to disintegrations of the sanctity of the institution of marriage. Because even after Vanavasa and of all trials they remain Sahadharmi(nis) to one another, dutiful parents to their children, the ideal daughter in law in Dasaratha's family, so that even in the coronation and in Yajgya that Rama had to perform his Shadharmini Sita's presence was mandatory. Even in

case of her physical absence for some reason, a replica of Sita was made to sit by Rama's side.

This shows that sometimes certain virtues may have greater roles to perform in a particular context that a flexible and symbolic interpretation of certain terms may be possible. In the case of Sita's exile, we have seen that for Rama, Sita remains chaste, as a role model, Ram thus remains remain an ideal *sahadharmini* even though he put her in trials but more as a *prajaranjaka* ideal role model for kings for his subjects that took upper hand over his personal relations time and again. Within this role model king in a democratic setup, where people decide what kind of husband role he should play to his wife, it was a picture of a fully committed ideal king dedicated to the will of his people who in turn will follow his works and deeds as ideals to be followed for them too. Rama had to unwillingly succumb to the pressure still waiting that the section of the people of Ayodhya, who remained still insensitive not very educated or with refined taste and sensitivity and not very refined in their public treatment of their better-halves, will one day appreciate and realise that a woman, Sita, can remain chaste and retained her *Sahadharmini* virtues by keeping loyal to her better half till her death, that her own position cannot be denied by any external force no matter how powerful that force came to her . That her own self-willed suicidal possibility remained a threat that she used against Ravana's power was clearly reciprocated by her otherwise always a loving and caring counterpart Rama. However public mind being mostly less reflecting and less sensitive differed in their interpretation and this is how at times individual's own sense of right and wrong become hijacked by strong mob power or majoritarianism. But Rama still remaining an ideal husband as *sahadharmini* even in Hindu mindset, patiently walked and hoped for a change in the outlook of may not refer common page. This justifies how Rama is adored both as ideal king and representative of his people and also an ideal husband that for him he remained loyal to Sita only all in his life and in death also as per Hindu marriage vows.

Here chastity could be taken to mean that when one of the counterparts particularly the wife never violates the vow of ideal *Sahadharmini* herself, she ideally remains true to her husband through thick and thin. Even in her difficult time, it was Rama only who is in spirit was always with her, not the person Ravana who tried to take her away from Rama. As per Rama's understanding, Sita remains chaste and *Sahadharmini*, and with his sole focus, she will overcome any physical trial or ordeal right from imprisonment to *agnipariksha*. However, Rama's symbolic interpretations of chastity differed from their very literal and rigid interpretation of the term (e.g. news of rape victim accepted by husband). Related to this, we may also refer to some newer interpretation of conjugal partnership in a modern setup. That will also lead to concepts like

living together as partners without taking the vows of marriage etc. that are on the one hand threats to the stability of the institute and sanctity of marriage, family etc. but also a modern way of experimenting with some such terms as understood by the new generations in difficult times and so on. Here, of course, there is no question of safeguarding the sanctity of marriage as an institution because marriage is seen here as a temporary contract, so long both the partners remain agreeable to one another in temperament, taste and others. Thereby the question of chastity is no virtue in this context. However, it is better if one remains committed so long as the relationship continues. But in the case of marriage, especially a Hindu marriage. The religions and the sanctioning social part remain so great that breaking loyalty means becoming unchaste in this regard that appears almost impossibility, a vice-like as it will also lead to seriously touch upon religious, social and other expectations and objectives what so ever.

Hinduism regards man and woman as the two halves of the eternal Being. Both constitute a vibrant, existential part, quite imperfect and imperfect and incomplete in itself. Usha Kapoor (2005), in her article, mentions the Vedic woman status, that in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, Prajapati, the primordial God, divides himself into two-man and woman, the symbols of cosmic polarity deriving sustenance from the same source. In the cosmic scheme, man represents Purusha (the Person, Spirit) and woman Prakriti (Nature, Primal Matter), both of whom unite to keep the world going. So goes the Vedic verse: 'I am He, you are she; I am song, you are verse; I am heaven, you are earth. We two shall here together dwell becoming parents of children.

Women traditional period of Hinduism was quite learned in the Vedic lore. Draupadi and Tara were the famous brahmavadini and also skilled at narrating spiritual syllables. Moreover, additional women sages were there like Oghavati, Arundhati, and Sulabha possessed a thorough knowledge of the Vedas and imparted religious knowledge even to rishis. The spiritual attainments of Savitri and Anusuya have become legendary. In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, one meets women of wisdom such as Maitreyi and Gargi. There has been a famous conversation between king Janaka and the sage Yajnavalkya that about the formerly abandoned wealth for wisdom. And the latter entered into a debate with sage Yajnavalkya at the court of King Janaka. Much later, Bharati, the wife of Mandana Misra, carried forward the tradition by acting as a critic in the ethical and philosophical discussion between her husband and Shankaracharya. When she found her husband losing the discussion, she insistently told Shankaracharya that his conquest would be complete only if he could defeat her since she constituted her husband's better half.

Manusmriti regards women as a precious unit of the family and society. But refutes them complete freedom due to their physical vulnerability. He, however, differentiates between the

noble and virtuous and the degenerate women, and like other smṛti Karas, criticises those who are dishonest, indecisive, sensuous, immodest, quarrelsome and loose. There has mentioned that day and night women must be kept in dependence upon males, and if they attached themselves to sensual enjoyments, they must be kept underneath one's regulator. Manusmṛiti suggests capital punishment for killers of women, exempts pregnant and older women from paying fines and suggests that as a matter of courtesy, they should be given precedence when crossing the road.

We have seen from above examples that the adherence of the pativrata dharma by women is not comparable to master-servant relation and subordination. Conjugal dependability is significantly valued in the Hindu custom, and it leads to family harmony and bestows occult influences. A woman who comprehends the Lord in her husband and makes him her very life. And cannot depart from the pathway of virtue, and virtue is supremacy itself. There are many illustrations of Hindu women who, as life companions, made abundant sacrifices, experienced trials and misfortunes, and sometimes showed their thaumaturgy powers born of chastity.

Hindu women as life partner by Dr Usha Kapoor (2005), where she tried to focus on the notion that Hinduism concerns man and woman as the two halves of the eternal Being and each constituting a vibrant, existential part but quite incomplete in itself without the other halves. She has put down that partner in Faith is the Meaning of *Sahadharmini*, and tried to jot its strong base by mentioning the Vivekananda's quote as the sage (woman) placed her hand on the head of Sita and said: 'It is a great blessing to possess a beautiful body; you have that. It is a greater blessing to have a noble husband; you have that. It is the greatest blessing to be perfectly obedient to such a husband; you are that. You must be happy.' Sita replied, 'Mother, I am glad that God has given me a beautiful body and that I have devoted a husband. But as to the third blessing, I do not know whether I obey him or he obeys me. One thing alone I remember, that when he took me by the hand before the sacrificial fire-whether, it was a reflection of the fire or whether God himself made it appear to Me-I found that I was his and he was mine. And since then, I have found that I am the complement of his life, and he of mine.'-*Swami Vivekananda, 'The Women of India'*.

But regarding the meaning of the word *Sahadharmini* may be literal and symbolical. People are often confused with the term are misunderstood. If we go with the literal meaning, then it will lead to our understanding limited. When we go for the literal sense, then the touched and untouched concept has come up. So certain times, it can be taken as symbolically like in Sita Rama, *Sahadharmini* redefined Chastity but not literally as explained here.

In Hinduism, there is clear expectations towards the performance of a woman in society exist that the role of a wife in marriage is not only socially but also religiously defined. In Hinduism, role models are given, Rama's wife Sita and Krishna's mistress Radha, as Narayand's wife Lakshmi, As Siva's wife Parvati, as kali, as Durga. An explanation has to be made by having a closer look at the relationships between the mythological couples. Those relationships strongly emphasise the commitment and pledge of a woman to a man. In the Ramayana, Sita is defined as constantly concerned with her husband's wellbeing, reputation, and will. To please him, she acts generously and sometimes even shows an incapability to operate since Rama didn't confirm her deeds. Thus, these benign goddesses have been represented as the 'ideal' Hindu wives and daughters, faithful and obedient. At the same time, women must surrender to their husbands, fathers, and other males in positions of power. But here it is in some of the case of their children that mothers may express masculine traits such as aggression and dominance. For instance, aggression may be expressed by a woman seeking to protect her children. Aggression and dominance may also be conveyed by a woman when she must discipline her children, especially her daughters. Discipline is one means by which a mother indoctrinates the Hindu patriarchal ideology in her daughter.

An article, The role model wives in Hinduism, by Kati Neubauer (2008), tries to explore the nature of Sita as *Sahadharmini*. Only one time Sita makes a decision herself and puts the norms of society above the word of her husband, she immediately gets in trouble. By stepping outside the area restricted by her husband to give food to a hermit, she gets captured by Ravana and causes trouble for her husband and even might disgrace him (Pattanaik 90, 1, e.g. Ramayana). But in her devotion to her husband, she refuses to be rescued by Rama's ally, Hanuman, because, on the one hand, she would have to touch another man and by that disgrace Rama and on the other hand, she would take Rama's chance away to free her to protect his dignity. Also, she claims she could defend herself by burning Ravana with the fire of her chastity but refuses since Rama disapproved of this option (Kinsley,1997, pp 73). In Ramayana, Sita is always thinking about their mate first and are almost unable to take action without seeing the will of their partners. A *Sahadharmini*, or complementary is the principle in a male-female association, is the selfless love of a woman towards a man, displayed in Sita's obsessive concerns about Rama regardless of his action towards her.

*Sahadharmini* is the division of labour. It's like the present-day social status demand for women. This kind of division of labour was according to aptitude and capacity. The wife took part in household activities, and husbands used to go to work. Here the concept of equality does

not come as inequality as household activities are also important to run a family. *Sahadharmini* is the co-partner of Dharma. Dharma stands for duty, not the Kama.

### **Contemporary notions have changed the concept of *Sahadharmini***

When Hindu society started dominated by Brahmanical concepts, then the concept of *Sahadharmini* has changed. According to lifestyle and needs, the idea also varies as we know. When Priests came into the scenario, the 'purity of women' specifically for the upper caste Brahmins is to maintain the 'purity of caste'. Women's general subordination was essential in this stage because it was only then that the mechanism of control upon women's sexuality could be effective. In the case of Hindu culture, the design of the patriarchal caste-class structure was mapped out by the Brahmins, 'pativrata' and *Sahadharmini*, and the specific dharma of Hindu wife then became the beliefs by which women accepted and even aspired to chastity and wifely fidelity as the highest expression of their selfhood. Thus the 'Stridharma' or 'Pativrata dharma' has taken as a theoretical device to take control over women's sexuality through the institutions like purdah, arranged marriage, pre-puberty marriage, widowhood which are 'naturalised' in Indian caste structured society. Acceptance of these norms given by priests' class, reflected how they had victimised women in a structured society, which give them an explicit reward of caste and class.

The firm belief of the day was that only a male heir could save his parents from the cycle of rebirth. Since a daughter left her parental home after marriage, it was the son who was left with the responsibility of caring for parents in their old age. This added further value to the sons. A woman's place was the home, and her primary responsibility was to bear sons and ensures the continuity of the family lineage. A husband's rights over his wife were total, and he had the freedom to go for another marriage if his wife failed to beget sons. A woman was kept constantly under male control and lost her right to seek knowledge. Over some time, marriageable age was also lowered. Though there within this changed nature of patriarchy, her motherhood, instead of being her glory and pride, made her permanently dependent on others, economically, politically, socially, and culturally. Instead, her sole identity now would depend on her functional part, her ability to reproduce a male child. She is adored for her motherly role, no doubt, but the Mother Goddess herself underwent various transformational phases till she re-claimed her lost power as the Great Goddess with more focus on her warrior traits and Shakti and her heroism.

As her womb, instead of being glorified for her femininity and creativity, remains to be magically controlled aiming at more productivity, particularly of more male members into her dynasty, and thus disrobes her of all joy of motherhood, this kind of post-Vedic phase of

patriarchy created problem for a woman against which specific feminist paradigm shift was looked for in a feminine way. But the later trend of masculinising Shakti, irrespective of the power centre, is the Male or the Female deity, as it is the power of Shakti that energizes all, sacred as well as secular, the gap widened between the powerless mortals and the supra-powerful Divine, who is now elevated to a level of 'beyond male-female' symbolically but more in line with focusing entirely on the masculinist traits at the cost of transcending the feminine ones. Unlike her previous recognitions of glory in motherhood or her feminine characteristics, although it remained a complimentary with no feminine ones as well, the ideas that nurtured such values were '*sahadharmini*', the ideals that encouraged such traits were femininity even in male gods and masculinity even in female gods, but both in a balanced and dialogue. Now under changed patriarchy of priest Vedic Brahmanical era, gradually everything, including the womb, fertility, blood of any kind, all attained power centric magical centrality only.

Thus we have seen that the changes in time to concepts like *Sahadharmini*, Pativarata, etc., have also come to be emancipated in many different ways, which sometimes lead to male domination or domination of the powerful one instead of giving equal roles to both the relational terms. In place of liberal kind of patriarchy that we have seen where man praised women for their motherly and wifely roles. But also treated her equally as his friend, companion and at times philosopher and guide at a different moment of life as he is to her. Later, the wife, instead of *Sahadharmini* came to be seen as a man as woman is essence of man and then men end in survive a prophet and the husband as the master, the one who owns his wife, the way he owns his house and properties. We can also refer to a certain new way of looking at the relationship with changed terminology closure to the legal concept of property ownership or master-slave domain etc. Here we may refer to changing patterns of addressing husband even in the Bengali language when he will be addressed more as 'Karta-babu'(my master lord). Than classical term 'swami' or 'pati' etc. The present work seeks focus The Goddess as role models. And Here more than Sita, Lakshmi, she will be dependent on her master and the person who owns her. Therefore, her in modern times Lakshmi is more seen and prayed as *dhana Lakshmi* only, the 'dowery' she will carry with her will add value in her although earlier time her presence itself was celebrated into the household as the presence of Lakshmi herself. Even if she is Sita or Lakshmi in this changed perspective, she is praised for more material benefits that will bring with her, and so instead of this one should follow that in marriage institution both can contribute to their better material comfort and future as per demand of the time but that does not mean that an unproductive wife remains valueless in comparison to a working wife in modern society.

It seems only natural that the modern Indian woman should rediscover the Goddesses of her culture as a means of empowering herself. These images belong to her as part of her cultural heritage. The modern woman has to use the Goddesses as tools of an all-powerful, all-enduring feminine energy. Religion is an exploratory path in the journey of self-exploration. It is a process of looking inwards and establishing a deep level of honesty with the self. The sexual core of an individual is the seat of great power and energy, and the spiritual path is to unleash this power to transcend into higher realms of supreme bliss. It may be stated that the term '*Sahadharmini*' may convey a variety of meanings to women in its cultural and historical contexts. These may range from possession, asceticism, obligation, compassion, and transcendence. The examination of the term *Sahadharmini* in work is undertaken within the context of traditional texts and its various contexts. However, it is clear that gender differentiates the paths, expressions and attributions to woman, both at the individual and at the societal levels.

However, there is one common point in Indian texts and contexts, quite irrespective of language and region. This one characteristic that is noticeable both by men and by women is the archetypal mother figure. Not the terrible mother, but the shakti giving, sustenance giving, stable figure of security representing Indian womanhood in person. The eternal mother is a familiar figure appearing in both the world of female writers as well as male writers. This archetypal mother is a reality in the Indian social scene. She holds the world together, supplies moral courage to the men, just as she once supplied milk to her children for basic sustenance. This is the one point where writers all over India agree, across time and region, sex and language; this makes the duality even more apparent.

### **Conclusion:**

Although along with changes in time and the socio-cultural conditions, the original meaning of specific terms such as *Sahadharmini*, pativrata idea that provides sanctity to institutions like family and marriage keep room for further flexibility in widening its scope and significance as per the situation, within the changing scenario, the whole question is do we need a goddess as role models appear meaningless, a redundant question that has lost its value in the current period. The exploration will choose role models with changing time, our sight of understanding of marriage, partnership, and any other relation more as a fashion. Still looking for some different kind of stability over and above the material foundation of such relations, do we need to be sole partners in marriage, then do we need Goddess as a role model for women and complementary gods for men, or do some concepts such as soul partners appear to be

metaphysical only? Is there any scope for re-interpretation of our life partners and relationships in terms of friendship and companionship as Aristotle once laid down as ideals for role models to imbibe in them, the profound virtue ethics looked for as the ideal relationship over and above one being a citizen of a state that safeguards the right of any partnership legally and constitutionally only.

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## WOMEN EMPOWERMENT ENSHRINED IN CONSTITUTION AS A TOOL FOR NATION BUILDING IN EQUAL INDIA

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*“I like the religion that teaches liberty, equality and fraternity” – B R Ambedkar*

*“Gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building good governance.” - Kofi Annan*

*“If you want something said, ask a man: if you want something done, ask a woman.” – Margaret Thatcher*

*“I hate to say there are female and male ways of dealing with power because I think each of us has a male and a female part. But based on my own experience, women will tend to be inclusive, to reach out more, to care a little more.” – Christine Lagarde*

*“Women will have achieved true equality when men share with them the responsibility of bringing up the next generation.” – Ruth Bader Ginsburg*

*“There's nothing a man can do, that i can't do better and in heels” — Ginger Rogers*

*“Our Matru Shakti is our pride. Women empowerment is very crucial to our development.” – Narendra Modi*

### **Abstract:**

The principle of Gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution right from its Preamble and goes further through the Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and deeply rooted in the Directive Principles. The Constitution grants equality to the Indian women and also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of the marginalized females. Within the framework of a democratic polity, our laws, socio-economic policies, plans and goals have targeted to achieve women's advancement in allwalks of life. Indian democracy has ratified international conventions and human rights instruments, which are the commitment to secure equal rights for women. However, over the years women aresubjected to gendered restrictions but through their political and social activism and struggles, sheis gearing towards ensuring equality and justice across all sectors of society.The feminist movement and a

widespread network of Non-Government Organizations with strong grass-roots presence and deep insight into women's concerns have contributed remarkably in inspiring initiatives for the empowerment of women. Astonishing efforts are made to promote societal awareness on gender issues and women's right to equality and humanly treatment. The three pillars of democracy i.e. Executive, Legislative and Judicial wings of the State along with the fourth pillar i.e. the Media have significantly contributed in promoting women's equality and their empowerment, so that the nation marches forward towards an Equal India and achieves the prosperity of our country, which the constitution makers have envisioned i.e. an Equal India - where men and women have an equal position.

This research paper by way of conceptual, descriptive and non-empirical method of research aims to study the impact women have on challenging the status quo on gender issues, efforts made on changing the narrative to ensure social, economic and political justice for herself to stand up against various forms of society-imposed restrictions on them and defeating the innumerable discriminations to her. The research also throws insights on in what ways since the days of Indian freedom struggle, the women in India played a prominent role in every walk of life, such as nation building, empowerment of society, educating masses, taking the nation forward on the path of development. The research work concludes and summarizes that the Indian Women have exceeded to significant positions in socio-political and economical arena playing their roles with utmost excellence.

**Keywords:** Gender Equality, Women Empowerment, Nation Building, Equal India, Non-Government Organizations, Marginalized, Positive Action.

### **Introduction:**

Gender Equity and Women's inclusion both play a central role and act as a litmus test to the progress of a society towards an egalitarian world. Equal participation of both the genders in the social, economic and political arena beginning from the grass-root level is active variable in shaping a just, democratic, stabilized and developed society. "Incorporating women in the nation-building process as early on as possible will help make these improvements happen sooner."

Both, Men and Women should realise the power and charisma of women, what proposition she can achieve in the race for progress for them, their family, society, economy and the nation. Female share half the population and plays equally as the building blocks of the nation's development. In the words of, Martin Luther King, Jr. "A mother's place is inside her home, but she should also make certain, she gets outside that home enough to help worthwhile

crusades and actively mould the country her children will live in. She, therefore holds a key position and her role in shaping the fate of the nation must be recognised and respected.”

Today's modern confident women are educated and have repudiated their social inhibitions and fears. They have proved to the world that they are highly equipped to compete their male-counterparts in personal as well as professional spheres of life. They are successful as homemakers as well as professionals, academicians, bureaucrats, politicians etc.

**Role of women in nation-building:**

Women across the globe have proved themselves as competent, scholar, dynamic, vibrant, sincere and perfect in almost every aspect of polity, social affairs, economic, financial, business and administration etc. They have demonstrated their efficiency and perseverance to face all odds, challenges and obstacles and manifested their genius, efforts and role in shaping development exhibiting indistinguishable capabilities, in a male dominated society. Today's educated and modern women have shed away their inhibitions and fears. They have shown to the world that they are highly equipped to compete in personal and professional spheres. They are successful both as homemakers as well as professionals, academicians, bureaucrats, politicians, etc.

Women have a great role to play in the progress of a country with her long lasting and far-reaching connect with physical as well as mental life. William Ross Wallae celebrated the women-hood and praised pre-eminent feminine force and mother-hood in his poem “*What Rules the World*”. The refrain from this poem has become a commonly used proverb “*The Hand That Rocks the Cradle Is the Hand That Rules the World*” which means that “In woman is hidden the revolutionary energy which can establish paradise on this earth.”

Women are the companions of men, the magnificent creation of God, a multidimensional personality with the power of munificence, adjuce strength, veracity and broad mindedness. Gifted by God with equal mental ability and embodiment of love and affection, she has a significant protagonist in the evolvment for the humanity. The responsibilities squared by the women in the society are the correct measure and appropriate index of its civilizational attainment. In the literary work of Gurudeo Rabindranath Tagore women are portrayed in avatar of confident, outspoken and strong characters playing vivid roles on societal canvas. In his words “Woman is the builder and moulder of a nation's destiny, though delicate and soft as lily, she has heart, stronger and bolder than that of a man, she is the supreme inspiration for man’s onward march.”

The dawn of freedom and the Indian freedom movement witnessed remarkable positive turn for the Indian women. Feminist movement in India started while India was struggling to get free itself from the colonial rule i.e. the British Raj. Many women joined the independence movement to shoulder the responsibility with their male counterpart. In 1857 which is considered as the beginning of Indian movement for freedom, Rani Laxmibai the queen of the Maratha princely state of Jhansi is an epitome of bravery, resistance and courage displayed by a woman in India. Savitribai Phule, Capt. Laxmi Sehgal, Mahadevi Verma, Sarojini Naidu, Mira Ben, Vijay Lakshmi Pandit, Aruna Asaf Ali were a few women, who not only joined but successfully played important role in our struggle for independence. These feminist along with masses of women set exemplary display of courage, determination and capabilities of the woman. The prominent Indian leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Rajendra Prasad realized the urgent need and importance of women's emancipation. They realized the importance of upliftment of women and their equal status as of men in political, economical, domestic, educational opportunities in India for progress and significant advancement of our country in any field. They gave clarion call for women's participation in the freedom movement.

To provide women more wide scope of participation in the economic interest of the country, the government has implemented major programmes such as Mahila Smirdhi Yojna, Women's development Cooperation, Mahila Bank etc. By the effective implementation of literacy mission and government plans, the female literacy rate has significantly increased.

Women in independent India are successfully playing significant role, as doctors, engineers, judges, scientists, diplomats, legislators, ministers, president and even as a prime minister. Smt. Indira Gandhi had held the office of Prime Minister of India for more than a decade in high esteem the world over. Smt. Vijay Lakshmi Pandit became the first women President of the United Nations General Assembly. Woman in India have really become into their own, playing important role in every field demolishing myth that "higher fields and positions were only meant for men". Women have held their modesty up and proved to be more vibrant, dynamic, sincere and perfect for all positions, status, office and stream of opportunities. Modern women occupy top ranks; attain immense success in all the fields such as sports, politics, performing arts, police, administration, medicine etc. They have proved themselves not only equal but also better than their male counterparts. These women have shaped their own destiny as well as the country's destiny in such an efficient manner that made the whole society is proud of them. Large number of Indian women attained dignity, individuality and respect in their respective field across the world, setting new icon and standard of excellence. Mother Teresa, P.T. Usha, M.S. Subbulakshmi, Ms. Kiran Bedi, Dr. Padamvati, Mrs. Sushma Swaraj, Medha Patkar,

Indira Nooyi, Kalpana Chawla, Roshini Sharma, Arunima Sinha, Arati Saha, Mithali Raj, Smt. Pratibha Patil, Mrs. Kiran Bedi, Anjali Gupta, Justice M. Fathima Beevi, Sania Mirza, Sania Nehwal, Sarla Thakral, Mary Kom, Bachendri Pal, Priya Jhingan, Durga Banarjee, Kiram Mazumdar Shaw, Vandana Luthra, Nirmala Shantiraman, Nita Ambani, Ziya Modi, Falguni Nayar, Sonali Banerjee and Pramilla Kalhan have become legendary names in different fields of their work. Recently, India had its first-three women air force pilot of the country, which is another milestone achieved by the woman. Whether, it is media or social issues or science research or stock exchange, or foreign affairs, sports women have shown their ability of decision-making, hard work and professionalism in all spheres. They have been successful in the roles of professionals, academicians, bureaucrats and politicians.

Women's patience and politeness make them better contenders than their male counterparts. Today's modern and educated women have shed away their inhibitions and fears. They are actively participating in the personal and professional sphere. Role of women in modern India can be called as phenomenal.

On the one hand, they are perfect homemakers and on the other hand, they have been successful in the roles of professionals, academicians bureaucrats and politicians. The modern Indian women have honed their skills and have jumped into a battlefield of life fighting against social restrictions, emotional ties, religious boundaries and cultural clutches.

**For women as an equal contributor in equal India following provisions are mentioned herein:**

**Constitutions Aspirations:**

The Constitution of India incorporates the feminist jurisprudence and aims to achieve gender equality in the true sense. Although the term gender equality is specifically not mentioned but it is integrated in the text and spirit of the Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles of State Policy. The Constitution not only guarantees women's empowerment but also encourages the State to adopt various measures of equality and empowerment in favour of women. The Constitution of India makes gender equality a human right.

**Constitutional Provisions:**

Article 14, Article 15, Article 15(3), Article 16, Article 39(a), Article 39(b), Article 39(c) and Article 42 of the Constitution are of specific importance in terms of gender equality and equality in the general sense. Mentioned below are some of the articles-

**Article 14-** Article 14 of the Indian Constitution parleys about equal status or equality before the law. Every person has been given equal status before the law and the State cannot deny the equal protection before law.

**Article 15-** Article 15 prohibits all discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex and place of birth, but this Article enables the state to take positive action and enables them for making special provisions for women and children.

**Article 16-** Article 16 states that state shall provide equal opportunity for all its citizens in the matters of employment or appointment to any office.

**Article 39** – According to Article 39 of the Constitution, it provides for equal pay for equal work and the State shall make sure that men and women have an equal right to an adequate livelihood, there is equal pay for men and women, the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and the material resources are distributed to serve a common purpose.

**Article 42**– This article casts duty on the State to secure humane conditions for work and for maternity relief for women workforce, to assure return on work and human treatment during their pregnancy and related matters.

### **Legal Provisions:**

Apart from these constitutional provisions, certain Acts have emerged more or less from these constitutional provisions, which are as follows:

The legal provisions are broadly classified into two categories which are:

#### **1. Crimes identified under Special Laws**

- The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976
- Under this Act, the employer must give equal pay or remuneration to men and women for the same work. No employer can, while recruiting, training or transfer, for the same work, or for the work done can discriminate between men and women.
- The Criminal Law Amendment Act, 2013
- The Criminal Law Amendment Act, 2013 came into force on February 3, 2013 on the recommendation of the Verma Committee Report. This Act added some new offences such as acid attack, sexual harassment, voyeurism, stalking all of which have been incorporated in the Indian Penal Code.
- Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2013
- The issue was first brought to light in the Vishaka's case in 1992, where protection from sexual harassment of women at their place of work was considered to be as the duty of the employer, court passed certain specific direction which are later incorporated in the

legislation for the same. It is held by the Hon'ble Court that harassment of women at their place of work violates their fundamental rights guaranteed under Articles 14, 15 and 21 of the Constitution of India.

### **The Women's Reservation Bill**

The Women's Reservation Bill or the Constitution's 108th Amendment Bill, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2020 is a pending Bill in which India plans to reserve 33 percent of all seats in the Lower house of Parliament of India, the Lok Sabha, and in all state legislative assemblies for women. The Rajya Sabha or the Upper House of Parliament has not yet voted on this Bill.

### **The Hindu Succession Act, 1956**

Under the Hindu Succession Act, 1956, amendment was made in 2005 leading to the removal of discriminatory provisions. Under the Act, females are granted ownership of all property acquired either before or after the signing of the Act, abolishing their "limited owner" status.

### **The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961**

An amendment was made in 2017 to the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961. Under the Act, paid maternity leave for women employees with less than two surviving children, from the original twelve (12) weeks to twenty-six (26) weeks was extended. The amendment further provided working mothers who have adopted a child below the age of three months, to take 12 weeks of maternity leave from the date of receiving the child and also allowed mothers to work from home after completing 26 weeks subject to their mode of work and employer's consent.

### **The Special Marriage Act, 1954**

The Special Marriage Act, 1954 provides for a special form of marriage irrespective of religion, or faith that the other party believes in. This Act replaced the Old Act of 1872.

### **The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961**

This Act prohibits the payment or acceptance of dowry as a consideration for marriage. Asking for or giving of dowry can be punished by imprisonment of up to six months, a fine of up to Rs. 15000 or the amount of dowry, or imprisonment up to 5 years.

## **2. Crimes Identified under the Indian Penal Code**

- Rape (Section 375);
- Kidnapping and abduction (Section 363-373);
- Molestation (Section 354);
- Sexual Harassment (Section 509);
- Importation of a girl (up to 21 years of age);

- Cruelty (Section 498A);
- Dowry Deaths (Section 304B).

### **Judicial interpretation and activism:**

#### **1. Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan (1997)**

In this *case*, the court laid down ‘The Vishaka Guidelines’ which were later converted into the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. This case pertains to a woman Bhanwari Devi who was gang-raped by five men as revenge on her for attempting to terminate the marriage of an infant and to fight against the male ego in Rajasthan which was part of her job. The Court held that sexual harassment was a clear violation of rights under Articles 14, 15, 19 and 21 of the Indian Constitution.

#### **2. Air India v. Nargesh Meerza (1981)**

In this case, an inclusive reading of Article 14 was done by the Supreme Court and it was decided that employment cannot be denied to any person on the grounds of sex. For inflight services, stress was laid on the height of the youth, appearance, and glamour quotient of the employees.

An aviation company called Air India regulated that the air hostesses should retire if they reach the age of 35, conceiving a child, or on marriage whichever occurs earlier. These conditions were derogatory and offending and hence challenged in the court and were later struck down.

#### **3. Laxmi v. Union of India (2015)**

Amidst increasing acid attacks, the Supreme Court was called out to issue directives and suggest ways to prevent such attacks. The Court instructed the Governments at both levels to prohibit the unauthorised sale of acids across the nation. This decision paved the way to enforce harsher punishments for people involved in such crimes.

#### **4. Vineeta Sharma v. Rakesh Sharma (2020)**

In this case, the Supreme Court held that daughters will have equal coparcenary rights in the Hindu Undivided Family by their birth and cannot be excluded from inheritance irrespective of whether they were born before the amendment of 2005 to the Hindu Succession Act, 1956.

Comparison of provisions for Gender Equality in India and other nations

India has always been a gender-sensitive society and this has been a matter of concern. The current social structure in India states that women are still considered inferior to men. Moreover, India’s rank in the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Index 2020 is 112th out of the 153 total countries covered. According to the report, India has slipped by 3% in

offering equality of opportunity to men and women. Iceland topped in this ranking index with 88% of the gap closed, while India who ranked 112<sup>th</sup> closed only 66% of the gender gap. The major sectors contributing to this gender gap index are education, health, economy, labour force participation, and politics. India's ranking, being so low, shows that men are still encouraged more than women.

To compare India with a close ally USA on these dimensions, the US spends much more on education and the health sector than India. Women in the US get better opportunities than Indian women. This shows the negative impact gender inequality has on Indian women. Even India's immediate neighbours except for Pakistan performed better in the WEF's Global Gender Gap Index 2020. In comparison with other countries, there is strong support for gender equality around the globe. Amongst the countries surveyed, the majority of them agree that women should have equal rights to men. These countries include The UK, The US, France, Germany, etc.

### **Issues and Barriers:**

India's low rank at the 'WEF's Global Gender Gap Index report' shows that there is a need for work to be done at the grass-root level. Culture and traditions play an important role in igniting gender inequality. A cultural parental preference for a son automatically leads to poor consequences for daughters. In many parts of the country today, customs like sati, child marriage still exist and no one is even aware of all this. To achieve gender equality, solutions should be implemented targeting gender-based violence and discrimination; also creating awareness especially in the rural areas and remote villages is a must.

Women have generally been looked down upon with disdainful contempt. All sorts of strictures have been inflicted upon them, reducing their status to a mere play thing or a slave of man's whims, a mere creature to remain dumb and just obey. They have been confined to the hearth and home. But time and again women have shown streaks of courage, will-power and ability to handle responsibilities both inside and outside the house. Women have time and again proved that they are equal to men in every field.

### **Suggestions and Recommendations:**

The paper suggests that the women must be treated at par with their male counterparts. Despite all the contributions made by the women in the different spheres, the ground realities are extremely different. A considerable pay disparity still exists between both the sexes across the all

job market. Even today, there are quite a handful of women who have been able to make it to the top of the ladder only because the female employees are always less considered and not given proper opportunity in comparison to their male counterparts.

The Indian Constitution provides provisions for equality as a basic right of all the citizens of this country, but the disparity still exists in the mind-set of the patriarchal societal setup. Girl child is still not welcomed in the family and are considered as a social and economic burden to the family. The Government, the Judiciary, and other authorities have time and again implemented various measures and programmes to prevent gender discrimination but, this still the shallow thinking of the mass has not changed and people even now also consider practising female foeticide. These factors negatively contribute to the constitutional goal of achieving absolute gender equality and an egalitarian setup in a country like India continues to be a huge challenge.

It is high time that the society and men change its attitude towards the women and acknowledge that their contribution are of grave importance in overall development process, which needs to be acknowledged and applauded. On the professional front, women need to be provided equal opportunities with their male counterparts, banishing disparity between men and women. Participation of women in politics, education, business and professional work should be encouraged. Swami Vivekananda has rightly quoted "There is no chance for the welfare of world unless the condition of women is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly on only one wing". By strict implementation of penal laws, the crime against women may be controlled by creating deterrent effect. All these measures sound ambitious and stable; however, the main crux of improving gender-based equality lies in changing the mindset and the thinking of the people. The woman herself needs to understand her potential and break down the barriers around her, instead of looking for a role model, she needs to become a reference point for others.

In order to make optimum use of our vast woman-power, we must liberate them from social taboos and societal bindings. Mere legislation cannot emancipate the women; a radical change in our mental make up and our social structure is required.

### **Conclusion and Summary:**

It can be said with a sense of pride and confidence that the future of women in India is quite bright and that our prosperity will be in men and women walking hand and hand in an Equal India. Napoleon was right when he said that by educating the women we educate and uplift the whole nation. Women in India have now become more aware of their rights for higher position at work, at the same time being a perfect housewife at home. This is the glorious state at

which women have reached today. Only elevating presence of women on the top can help bring in a semblance of order in the present situation. Emotional, affectionate, caring and yet firm, woman is the perennial source of inspiration for man in the odyssey of life.

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## **FEMINISTIC ROLE IN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION**

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### **Introduction:**

Environment which consists of both biotic and abiotic elements is deeply connected to us. We are very closely related to our environment. Environment is that which shape us, make us what we are today. Our ability, skill or even our behavior, to some extent depends on our environment. Without a good or proper environment we cannot survive, or it would be very difficult to survive for long. So, it is our duty or responsibility to respect, nurture and develop our environment.

In the ancient period man was under nature or dominated by environment. But in modern era man has controlled over nature and exploited it fully for his selfish benefits. And as a consequence we are suffering very much now. Global warming is increasing day by day, sea water level is increasing and environmental pollution is increasing day by day. Many people die due to these reasons and also face several health issues. But in postmodern period people has realized the severe effects of environmental exploitation and the importance of environmental or natural conservation.

It is impossible for us to live without using the resources from environment. But the most important thing is that we should use the resources of our environment in a moderate way so that our next generations can use the resources for their needs and the balance be maintained in the environment.

It is the responsibility of every man and woman to conserve our environment. But it is seen that naturally women are more caring or nurturing to the environment than men. Women are more close to the environment as they have to collect water, woods, and foods also (specifically in rural areas or underdeveloped countries), they are more dependent on nature and consequently, understand the value of environment and its conservation.

The paper tries to discuss the feministic role in environmental conservation in Indian domain.

### **Importance of environmental conservation:**

Generally, excess and deficiency of anything, are both harmful. We live within environment and very much dependent on it. We use both biotic and abiotic components of our environment to fulfill our needs. But to use these resources in extreme amount or in an exploiting manner just to attain comforts in our daily life is not acceptable in any way. This is completely unethical and must be abandoned. The exploitation of nature in return affects us in many ways. The polluted environment and deforestation makes people poor in health. Due to pollution we can see many new diseases which are the matter of concern. Again, it can affect the food chains of humans and animals. It also affects the atmosphere of the earth, specifically damages the ozone layer. Conservation of environment will benefit human species and also the other living species. Thus, we can say that exploitation of our environment would make the earth uninhabitable for us. In such a situation respect towards nature is the prime solution or demand. Viorica Torii Caciuc refers to J. B. Callicott, "He states that each time humans get involved in a project, be it personal or public, they must evaluate the impact on the environment, than they must choose the actions that will increase the diversity, integrity, beauty, stability, health, and wellbeing of the biotic community or of the whole ecosystem" (Caciuc, 2014). Coexistence between human and nature is very important. Both need each other for its development and survival. So, we need to balance between human and nature. It is modernization or industrialization which basically does harm to the nature for financial profit and special comfort and luxury.

It cannot be said that wanting comfort or luxury is completely wrong, but the thing is that we need to balance the relation between human and nature. And for this we strongly need environmental ethics. Environmental ethicist J. J. Kassiola says, "The fate of our planet and all of its living inhabitants lies in the balance" (Kassiola, 2003). For a better world and better future of us we need to make change in modernity and its social values. It is usually stated or thought that environmentally consistent values and activities have the chances to harm us more – economically. But Kassiola emphasizes environmentally consistent values and asserts, "Such 'environmentally sound options' may indeed hurt corporate profits in the short run, but where will corporate profits be after a global environmental catastrophe? Will there be more jobs for citizens and opportunities for corporate profits in the economy and after a disaster such as flooding of coastal cities as a result of global climate change?" (Kassiola, 2003).

In present time, people have become concerned about the complexities due to the exploitation of nature. So, they are now concentrated on sustainable development of the resources of our environment. Sustainable development of the resources is necessary for the

future generations so that they also can use those for fulfilling their vital needs. Conservation of environment is very much necessary for us as we get everything necessary for our survival or existence from environment. Oxygen, Food, water, shelter, medicine, and various other commodities that we use in our daily life we get from our environment or nature. So, life without nature is unthinkable.

Again, environmental conservation is very important for the protection of wildlife. Only in a healthy ecosystem wildlife can survive, otherwise it would become very hard for them to survive and also many animal species will be extinct easily. This world belongs to every living and non-living. So, it is their right to live in this world within the ecosystem they are able to survive. As we, human beings, are the most superior animal so, it is our responsibility to take care of them. Superiority does not mean to be the owner of this world rather it means to take responsibility for taking care of the world and everything which belongs to it. If you are a taker then you must learn to be caretaker. As we take our needs from environment, it is our duty and responsibility to take care of it.

#### **Eco-feministic role for environmental conservation:**

Eco-feminism is the feministic movement which equates woman and nature. According to it, human civilization has been dominating and exploiting nature similarly as men have been dominating women since old time. The dignity of women and nature are overlooked by the men which is not good for our society and the world. Man must learn to respect woman and nature. Only then there will be balance in the society and in the environment. Balanced position implies a healthy environment or atmosphere. Only a healthy atmosphere can provide us healthy life.

Women of India have very crucial role in agriculture and its allied fields which contribute in the conservation of nature or environment. Women of India play very active role in agricultural aspects which fosters the development of the environment. Basically, the women of rural area are involved in agricultural activities and various other allied works. These activities include weeding, sowing, transplanting, irrigation, plant protection, harvesting etc. They play a key role in ensuring food security and protecting the local biodiversity which maintains the balance between human and nature. Rural people have a special love and respect for trees and nature. Mostly, Women depend on environment for their household requirements. So, the loss of environment directly affects the life of women. "Throughout history men have looked at natural resources as commercial entities or income generating tools, while women have tended to see the environment as a resource supporting their basic needs" (Sharma and Kaushik, 2011). Hence, Indian women do not destroy environment, rather nurture it and maintains the development of it. They live in nature and with nature, and consequently, are more sensitive towards nature or environment. Indian women respect nature or environment and even worship it.

They actually do not make any harm to the nature. It is modernization or industrialization which basically does harm to the nature for achieving financial profit and special comfort and luxury.

There are various eco-feminist movements for the conservation of environment where Indian women have played very crucial role. These are –

**Chipko Movement:**

This movement can be said to be inspired from the movement held in 1731 A. D., where Amrita Devi from Khejarli village of Jodhpur district, Rajasthan sacrificed her life to save the trees of her village. She holds a tree and stuck herself to it which means in Hindi ‘Chipko,’ and then she was cut as per the order of then Maharaja (Great King). And then her daughters, husband and other villagers came to protest in the same way and one by one 363 people were killed and the trees were saved from cutting due to the strong protest.

This movement was revived in 1973 and a proper direction to it was given by SunderlalBahuguna. And womenfolk of Uttarakhand contributed very much to this movement including Bachni Devi, Gaura Devi, Suraksha Devi, Virushka Devi and others of then Uttar Pradesh.

**Silent Valley Movement:**

Silent Valley movement was a social movement to protect the evergreen tropical forest of Silent Valley which is situated in the Palakkad district. This movement was started in 1973. This movement was launched against the decision of the government to construct a dam for hydroelectric power project in the Silent Valley. The poet and environmental activist Sugathakumari was one of the most active campaigners of the Silent valley movement. The valley was declared as Silent Valley National Park in 1985 as the result of several protests and active role played by women.

**Appiko Movement:**

This movement is similar to the Chipko Movement and was launched in 1983 in Karnataka. This movement also was a movement for forest conservation which was launched by women and youth of Karnataka region. This movement was against some governmental policy which could be the reason of deforestation in South. The role of women, specifically Adivasi women was very commendable in that movement.

**Narmada Bachao Andolan:**

Narmada Bachao Andolan is a social movement which was led by MedhaPatkar in 1985 around the Narmada River. The farmers, native tribes, environmentalists and human right activists also played very crucial role in this. This movement was against the disastrous Narmada Valley dams’ project which could be the cause of the destruction of local habitat or ecosystem.

In this movement women played very active role and they were even ready to sacrifice their lives to save the great Narmada River.

Thus, we can see that how Indian women have actively participated in various environmental conservation movements. Again, it is not the case that Indian women have participated in environmental movements only but they also play important role in the conservation of environment in their daily lives. They are very close to it and understand its value very well.

### **Conclusion:**

We got know about the importance of nature or environment in our lives. Without a proper or healthy environment no one can live in this world. Only a healthy environment can provide us a healthy life. Oppression or exploitation of environment in turn makes our lives impossible. We must learn to respect each and everything existing in this world. Our relation to the nature or environment must be friendly. Only then we can live in this world with peace and harmony. As everything in this world has its inner value, we should have respect for them and try to coexist with them.

Women are always seen to be of nurturing character; and they take care of the environment also. Their role in the conservation of environment is pivotal. We must have respect for our environment. We can expect good quality fruits from a tree only when we take care of it properly. Thus, we can expect some good results or benefits from our environment when we nurture it with deep responsibility. It cannot be said that wanting comfort or luxury is completely wrong, but the thing is that we need to balance the relation between human and nature. For this, we need to change our value systems and perspective towards nature.

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**MINORITY STATUS OF MUSLIM WOMEN IN SOUTH 24 PARGANAS (WB):  
A HISTORICAL REVIEW**

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**Abstract:**

The Muslim society in India with particular reference to the women of South 24 Parganas (WB) are negligible causing immense loophole in our insight and understanding the Muslim society from empirical point of view. Because of this fact, we hardly know about their society, economy, social structure, social organization, culture, social problems, social change and developmental processes, gender studies of the Muslim society. The present paper is a modest attempt to examine the socio-economic situation of the largest religious minority population compared to other religious minorities of the state generally, and the status of Muslim women of South 24 Parganas in particular. An attempt has also been made to highlight the socio-economic backwardness prevailed among this group of people from historico-religious perspective and to find out the factors contributing as a bottleneck in their development and social change.

**Keywords:** South 24 Parganas, Muslim Women, Minority, Backwardness, Development.

**Introduction:**

The Muslims of South 24 Parganashitherto remains unexplored for this we have very insufficient and little awareness about their society in general and the situation of Muslim women in particular in comparison to the women in other religious groups due to the social scientists, scholars, academicians, planners and policy makers, researchers and social activists etc. who have not paid as their much attention to the Muslims. It is estimated that one-fourth of the total population of South 24 Parganas are Muslims by religion and are the biggest and principal minority of the state comprising about ninety six percent to the total minority population of the state and about twenty five percent population of this state are belongs to the Muslim community, according to 2001 census report of India, inhabiting in all the districts of West Bengal in various quantity. There are twelve such districts where the Muslims represent about twenty five percent to the respective district's total population and at the same time as in

the districts like North Dinajpur, Malda and Murshidabad their population represents more than fifty percent to the total population of the respective districts.

Muslims have been found most educationally backward religious minority community at national level and for which the Government of India acknowledged them National Educationally Backward Minority in 1993 nevertheless the destiny of the Muslims of Indian has not changed in the last sixty two years of independence when they are again found most underprivileged section of the country by the Sachar Committee Report of 2006.

Despite the fact that overall progress of any nation or state is not possible without considering its women irrespective of their caste, color and creed as they represent about half of the population. The Muslim women of South 24 Parganas are lagged behind the mainstream on all human development indicators since independence due to various external and internal factors. They have not received ample attention of the academicians, Government and also social workers although there is an acute need to undertake researchers in order to find out the factors contributing as a bottlenecks in their development and social change and their multifarious problems specific to Muslim women . They are still remained socially, economically and educationally towards the back when change is the assortment of today. Empowerment of women implies their better position in socio-political and economic spheres. Muslim women's empowerment is crucial as they continue to be victimized by traditional social structure, social systems and social institutions of the community when modernization of women in India is a potential medium. The educational backwardness of majority of the Muslim women is one of the crucial factors for their way behind, employment and economic empowerment is also indispensable for raising status in social hierarchy and social change. Therefore, lack of education, economic dependency, poverty and ignorance of their rights has made them further vulnerable to exploitation.

Since the 1930s this term has been applied to social groups that are oppressed or stigmatized on the basis of racial, ethnic, biological, or other characteristics. Louis Writh, for example, defines a minority group as „a group of people who, because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in the society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination. However, seen in these terms, a minority group could in fact constitute a numerical; majority in any society-for example Blacks in South Africa. It might be more useful, therefore, to distinguish between groups which are actually a minority in numbers and those which are marginal in terms their access to power.<sup>1</sup> A minority is a group of people subjected to prejudice and discrimination in a given society. Minority groups are not necessarily numerically

small groups; they are simply victims of differential and unequal treatment. In the United States, blacks are a minority, numerically and sociologically. But in South Africa under the apartheid system, blacks were the majority group, a predominant majority that was discriminated against by a small group of whites who had the power. In India or West Bengal, the government makes a distinction between minorities and weaker sections. Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Zoroastrians, and jains, as well as the handicapped and the elderly are treated as minorities. Note that these are all numerically smaller groups. But Dalits, tribals, and backward classes are treated as weaker sections. Women are also categorized as weaker sections whether or not they are numerically small. Therefore, it appears that weaker sections actually mean minorities or groups who suffer discrimination and unequal treatment.<sup>2</sup> Minority Right has been a problematic issue for international law to handle. Although international law primarily deals through the medium of states and minorities generally have no locus standing, the treatment which minorities receive from their states has increasingly become a matter of international concern. International law, however, has historically found it difficult to deal with the problems around minorities. Like the poor, the weak and the inarticulate, minorities have historically fallen victim to persecution and genocide. Even in the contemporary period of relative tolerance and rationality, minorities are often subjected to persecution, discrimination and genocide. The stance of international law remains tentative and extremely cautious, for minorities pose questions of a serious nature; they exist in myriad forms, with their own social, political, cultural and religious particularities.<sup>3</sup> has pointed out, from the Constitution of India, 1950, e.g., Articles 30, 350-A and 350-B, that in India, the National Constitution of 1950 or any other Constitutional document does not define the word Minority.<sup>4</sup> The Constitution only refers to Minorities and speaks of those based on religion or language. In the constitution of India, the Preamble as amended in 1976 declares the State to be Secular, and this is of special relevance for the Religious Minorities. Equally relevant for them, especially, is the prefatory declaration of the Constitution in its Preamble that all citizens of India are to be secured liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship and equality of status and opportunity. By constitution India is secular, democratic and republic. It gives recognition to all religions professed by the citizens of India and also gives recognition to group identities as such. The constitution of India guarantees to all citizens of India the social, economic and political justice; liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; equality of status and opportunity; and seeks to promote fraternity among Indians in order to assure the dignity of individuals and the unity of the nation.

The constitution deals with the Fundamental Rights and gives assurance to all citizens of India that no discrimination will be permitted on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, Article-15. This acquires significance in the case of Muslims on the ground of their position as a religious or cultural minority in India. The constitution also assures equality of opportunity to all in the matters of employment under government, Article-16. It gives freedom of speech, expression, residence, acquisition and disposal of property, practice of profession, free association and free movement, Article-19, gives the right of freedom of religion Article-25, protects the cultural and educational rights of the minorities ,Article-29. All these provisions also acquire significance when applied to the Muslim community, who constitutes one of the important cultural minorities of the country. Every Muslim citizen of India is individually a member of a distinct religious community, which together with other religious communities constitute the Indian nation. Therefore every Muslim citizen of this country individually and Muslims as a whole collectively are the part of Indian nation.<sup>5</sup>

Muslims are mostly self-employed and their share in regular paid jobs is low. The Hindu population is relatively better employed in regular salary-paying jobs in urban areas. The work participation of Muslim females is extremely low. The landholding is better among Hindus than Muslims, and Muslims work on non-agricultural occupation in substantial proportions in rural part of India. Muslims, are, by far, the least educated when compared with Hindus and Christian populations in India.<sup>6</sup> W. W. Hunter states that, “....earlier it was impossible for a well born Musalman to become poor; at present it is almost impossible for him to continue rich”.<sup>7</sup> Any assessment of the socio-economic conditions of Muslims in South 24 Parganas needs to recognize that, like other minorities, issues faced by Muslims are multifaceted as they simultaneously face problems relating to security, identity, and equity. And the interplay of these dimensions is at the core of the socio-economic and political processes that the community is exposed to on a daily basis. An empirical exploration of these multidimensional issues is typically hampered by the non-availability of relevant hard and unbiased data. Such data constraints are typically more severe for security and identity-related concerns.<sup>8</sup>

The education commission, Ministry of Education, Government of West Bengal, stated that it is the responsibility of the educational system to bring different social classes and groups together to promote the emergence of an egalitarian and integrated society. But unfortunately the educational development is very poor in South 24 Parganas(WB). Various efforts have been taken in the post independent period to spread education among the masses. But result is not very satisfactory, especially in the context of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, minorities and other backward communities or weaker sections.<sup>9</sup> Enrolment rates at the primary level have risen

considerably, but many of the students who enroll drop out and only a very small number manage to get beyond the primary stage. Gender inequality in education is one important aspect of educational disparity. Inequality and differences between communities is another critical aspect of this broader phenomenon of disparity in India. Though the census reports remain silent on the educational status of Muslims, it is well known that the literacy and educational levels of Muslims is below the national average.

The educational backwardness of Muslim women is a matter of particular concern, especially the high drop-out rate, resulting in subsequently fewer proportions of them managing to complete high school, and even less availing of higher education. Not surprisingly, Muslim women account for the lowest levels of educational attainment.<sup>10</sup> There is also a common belief that Muslim parents feel that education is not important for girls and that it may instill a wrong set of values. Even if girls are enrolled, they are withdrawn at an early age to marry them off. This leads to a higher drop-out rate among Muslim girls. Our interactions indicate that the problem may lie in non-availability of schools within easy reach for girls at lower levels of education, absence of girls' hostels, absence of female teachers and availability of scholarships as they move up the education ladder.<sup>11</sup> Muslims in South 24 Parganas are facing two major problems—education and employment which are essential for the socio-economic development of human beings. It is evident that Muslims in West Bengal as well as Muslims in South 24 Parganas are lagging behind in terms of quantitative and qualitative education.

It is evident that the condition of Muslims in South 24 Parganas in the field of education is very poor, even poorer than SCs/STs. Again, women's education among Muslims in the state is lower than men. It is seen that the educational status of Muslims in South 24 Parganas, like other parts of the State, is also depressing. Among various reasons, the major reasons for educational backwardness among the Muslims are poor economic condition, limited number of government and government aided schools in Muslim areas and lack of job opportunities of the educated people in the community. Perhaps Muslim women are lagging behind in education because of socio-cultural pattern of the family and the society, the negative attitude towards girls education and are lack of infrastructural facilities for education in Muslim concentrate areas. Muslims have limited access to far off school. Need of the hour is to provide job oriented education and also to set up sufficient number of technical schools for male and female separately in the Muslim concentrated areas.<sup>12</sup>

Predominantly rural, the Muslim population in the South 24 Parganas is engaged in agricultural pursuits, a very large number of them work as agricultural labour and many others

suffer from unemployment and under-employment. Facilities for education are awfully inadequate and to the extent they are available, they are beyond easy reach of their overwhelmingly large number, because of the cost involved. Impelled to resort to self employment for their survival a substantial number specializes in a few crafts like carpentry, needle and zari works, tailoring, embroidery, paper crafts and the occupation of gold smith etc. and such odd jobs like rickshaw pulling, which draw them to cities including Delhi and Bombay. Kolkata provides very limited scope for their presence in the city is not quite significant. Day labourers, including women from poverty stricken families from suburban areas, arriving to the city every morning, largely through local trains quite often get grossly exploited. The sad tales of their sufferings deserve serious attention.

The presence of Muslims from rural areas of South 24 Parganas, in the city is so negligible that a few educated Muslim youth, arriving to the city in search of employment do not find accommodation in suitable areas, and under situational pressure have to change their name for obtaining place to live in non-Muslim areas.

These and similar other social facts go to explain the overall prevailing social situation.<sup>13</sup> The societal pluralism of India, as fortified by the unique Constitutional concept of secularism, raises the need for the protection and development of all sorts of weaker sections of the Indian citizenry-whether this weakness is based on numbers or on the social, economic or educational status of any particular group. The Constitution, therefore, speaks of Religious and Linguistic Minorities, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes and makes- or leaves room for making-for them special provisions of various natures and varying import.<sup>14</sup> On the completion of five decades of independence, women in Muslim communities face considerable challenges as citizens of West Bengal and as members of west Bengal largest minority. Their poor socio-economic status reflects a lack of social opportunity which, though not a feature exclusive to Muslim women, is exacerbated by their marginal status within an overall context of social disadvantage for most West Bengal women.

According to government reports, Muslim women are among the poorest, educationally disenfranchised, economically vulnerable, politically marginalized group in the country or WB State.

A lack of information on Muslim women contributes to the reinforcement of cultural stereotypes, serving to obfuscate their life experiences and struggles. Consequently, the notion that Muslim women's status in South 24 Parganas is attributable to certain intrinsic, immutable Islamic features or that their social status derives solely from Muslim laws is widely prevalent.

In a context where the Shari's is used to justify women's subordination, it is imperative for Muslim women in South 24 Parganas to enter the discourse on the Shari's with reference to personal law, and challenge their historic marginalization from religious knowledge.

The lack of social opportunities for Muslim women is a crucial issue needing urgent action. An improvement in literacy rates would directly influence Muslim women's socio-economic and political status as citizens of South 24 Parganas (WB).

The acknowledgement of the universality of women's rights by the international community is relevant to the debate on Islam and women's rights, particularly with reference to women's rights in the family.<sup>15</sup> Observing a general lack of knowledge about the meaning and implications of being a minority the author is critical of the people who discourage revealing the facts of extremely bad socio-economic condition of the Muslims for fear of making them unnerved. Revealing truth is necessary for creating awareness leading to the solution of the problem.

Quoting reports of the national Family Health Survey it is shown that Muslim Women are seven times behind Hindu women in high school education and in post-high school they are nine times behind them. Muslims in rural South 24 Parganas are predominantly engaged in agriculture, a very large number of them are agricultural labour. They also specialize in several handicrafts. Predominantly much smaller number of Muslims from The South 24 Parganas has come to live and work in this difficulty they have to change their name to conceal; their identity.

Over 75% of Muslims in Calcutta (South 24 Parganas) live in bustees, large areas of their abode have been acquired by the authorities and they have been seldom resettled in the area developed. They are the victims of the wrong notion of being a floating population. Nearly 80% are either born in the same bustee, or in Calcutta or in West Bengal. 4 percent of the total numbers of children are enrolled in recognized schools and a total of 9% attend same sort of school recognized or unrecognized and 91% do not have any school to attend. Those enrolled hardly complete school education and 90% of the enrolled get dropped out. Child labour is rampant.

Occupational structure of the Muslims in Calcutta, South 24 Parganas differs sharply from that of the Hindus. Their bustees are the hub of a number of handicrafts besides providing them space to live. Action programme to improve the overall condition has to keep in mind both economy and education because of their interdependence.<sup>16</sup>

### **Conclusion:**

Despite the fact that a good number of the studies mostly advocates towards the Islamic theology, ideology, historical perspectives, religious reformatory movements, laws, and the like, social scientists like sociologists and social anthropologists, academicians, researchers, scholars, social activists, planners and policy makers etc. have not paid much attention to the Muslims in general and the women of their society in particular as it deserves. While, in recent past very insignificant amount of studies were in print but those are too tiny to fill the gap of our insight and understanding about the people under study and because of which we hardly be acquainted with the dynamics of Muslim society, social structure, and social organization, social problems, social change, culture, subsistence economy, process of development and last but not the least on the subject of gender studies of the Muslims societies.

By reviewing the overall circumstances of the Muslim women of South 24 Parganas (WB) it has been observed that the situations are very pitiable almost in every facet of development. In respect of educational attainment, participation in gainful jobs, economic and political empowerment the women in Muslim society are most marginalized, underprivileged, secluded and are in a state of hardship and lagged behind the mainstream which retarded them in normal progress in the field of education, economy, politics, knowledge and culture. It is a visible fact that the educational status of the Muslims with particular reference to the women is very low, inadequate and negligible due to complex panorama of educational problems among the Muslim women of South 24 Parganas (WB) where historical, situational, educational and socio-cultural variables are together playing the key roles to perpetuate the situation in the contemporary time when modernization is the order of the day. Moreover the Ranganath Misra Commission Findings and the Sachar Committee Report in addition have revealed the fact that Muslims are socio-economically, educationally, politically and culturally underprivileged and way behind the mainstream Indian society.

The multifaceted strange troubles faced by them are coupled with anxieties pertaining to security question, identity perception, discrimination and justice. The economic backwardness of the Muslim women is a recurring and enduring process as it is leading to social and educational backwardness and in turn is resulting in their economic backwardness further. Again the consequential result of educational backwardness creates a sort of social and cultural setting among them which perpetuates the elements of orthodoxy and tradition boundness among the Muslims of South 24 Parganas (WB). One thing is conspicuous that Muslims as a whole have been suffering from the apparent prejudice and deprivation in almost every section of the society. These people are at the lowest platform of the society and have need of affirmative action.

The prime thing which is necessary for socio-economic development of the women in Muslim society is their awareness, spontaneous motivation and their participation in different developmental programmes for their progress in the given society. Like other backward communities in India, the backwardness of the Muslims women in their society is a national crisis and should be documented as a setback of the entire territory so that the nation as a whole act together to get rid of this menace.

Again last but not the least despite the fact that the plight of Muslim women of South 24 Parganas (WB) is much worse than other social groups, in recent times due to impact of a mixture of factors which are well thought-out to be the paramount for the progress of any social group irrespective their colour, creed, sex, race etc. such as modernization, urbanization, westernization, globalization, changes in socio-economic facet, democracy, opening out in the means of communication, proper allocation and utilization of Government infrastructure, mass media, spread of education, lawful enactment regarding the marginal section of the society like Muslim, their society is gradually undergoing changes in advancing towards masculinity and femininity coming out from their frustration, low level of aspiration, fear psychosis and traditionboundness nature, inferiority and minority complex. All these characteristics which had kept these people immobilized and retarded from the normal progress in social ladder for long time starving from social change and upward vertical and horizontal mobility are now giving the way to improvement and empowerment of both Muslim men and women of South 24 Parganas (WB).

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## **WOMEN AND NATION BUILDING**

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### **Abstract:**

Since the glorious days of our freedom struggle, Indian women have played a key role in every field of life such as in empowerment of society, nation building, taking the nation forward on the development path and leading the country in the cleanliness drive. Women have found themselves in very significant positions and played their roles with utmost excellence. Present study is undertaken to know the role of women in nation building, Indian government role in women empowerment, and socio-political role of women. The present study is mainly based on secondary data, collected from government reports, books and online journals.

**Keywords:** Women empowerment, WWD, IRDP, SGSY, DWCRA

### **Introduction:**

In traditional Indian society, women were confined to the four walls of houses performing household activities. Even a distinction was made between men's at work and women's at work, particularly that of the women with family responsibilities. Majority of women entrepreneurs are engaged in the unorganised sectors like agriculture, agro based industries, handicrafts, handlooms kitchen activities and other cottage based industries like basket making, chair making, crates making etc.

Empowerment strategies are varied and refer to those strategies which enable women to realize their full potentials. They consist of greater access to knowledge and resources, greater autonomy in decision making, greater ability to plan their lives, greater control over the circumstances that influence their lives and finally factors which would free them from the shackles of custom beliefs and practices. Unless they themselves become conscious of the oppression meted out to them and show initiative to push forward it would not be possible to change their status much. Some of the empowerment mechanisms could be identified as follows.

- Better health care for herself and her children
- Literacy and higher education
- Greater work participation in modernized sector

- Higher age at marriage
- Opportunities for higher positions of power including Governance.
- Necessary financial and services support for self employment
- Self reliance self respect and dignity of being a woman.
- Complete knowledge of her rights and above all

Several measures have been introduced to encourage women education. Incentives have been provided for larger enrollment of Girls in schools and higher seats of learning. Reduction in fees, Provision of bicycles, scholarship, lap top, tab, exclusive schools and colleges for girls and many more literacy programs like each one teach one, project approach, continuing education approach are other measures. The percentage of literacy has been risen, more girls are enrolled in technical education, like medical line, engineering, management etc. They are proving their merit in competitive examination.

In India rights of women of public employment recognized under articles 16(1) and 16(2) of the constitution, grant the right of equal opportunities in respect to employment to men and women without any distinction.

Women of the modern days are shifting to towns and cities. There is education and economic independence and doors are open giving them access to areas where they are growing and blossoming as an individuals in their own right.

Women are seen not only in schools, colleges but also in the military and defense field. Law, science, medical and even in aeronautics and space exploration. Women proved herself that they are also equally contributing towards nation development.

### **Indian government role in women empowerment:**

The first few plans followed a welfares approach and treated as women as recipients of aid. The first five year plan focused its attention on the problem of high infant and maternal mortality and then undertook steps to develop school feeding schemes for children and creation of nutrition sections in the public health departments and maternity and child health centers. The focus of second five year plan was on the problems of women workers. Hence policies were initiated for equal pay for equal work, provision of facilities for training to enable women to compete for higher jobs and expansion of opportunities for part time employment. The main thrust of the third plan was the expansion of girl's education. On the social welfare side the largest share was provided. For expanding rural welfare services and condensed courses of education for adult women. The fourth plan continues to emphasize women's education. The fifth plan gave priority for training of women in need of care and protection, women from low income family's needy women with dependent children and working women. During this period

a separate bureau of Women's Welfare and Development (WWD) was set up in 1976 as part of the erstwhile department of social welfare in order to intensify the country-wide efforts launched during the international year of the women. The Bureau was entrusted with the major responsibility of implementing the National Plan of Action for women besides coordinating the activities relating to women's welfare and development.

The sixth plan for the first time in India's history contained a separate chapter on Women and Development. To make the International Women's Decade a success it emphasized on three strategies via economic independence, educational advancement and access to health care and family planning. Hence varieties of programmes were taken up under different sectors of development to ameliorate the socio economic status of women. In the rural development sector the IRDP gave priority to women heads of households and about 35% of total number of beneficiaries under TRYSEM was women. A new scheme viz Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) was started in 1982-83 as a pilot project in the blocks of the country. Many voluntary organizations were requested to avail funds from the government for the above schemes and benefit women.

Another program Swarnajayanti Gram Swarajgar Yojana (SGSY) was launched in 1999. The purpose is to bring assisted poor families above the poverty line by providing income generating assets through mix of the bank credit and subsidy.

Under Science and Technology for Women varieties of activities were taken up. Projects were sponsored for development of smokeless chullahs use of solar cookers setting up of bio-gas plants and devices for improving the water purification system. A number of technology demonstrations cum training centers at selected focal points all over the country were setup by the National Research Development Corporation (NRDC) to provide expertise and resources to women entrepreneurs.

### **Women's role during freedom struggle:**

- Although the importance of women cannot be attributed only to the freedom struggle as it dates back to the pre-independence struggle era i.e. since ancient and medieval times, the manner in which women in India came into the public sphere particularly in political sphere is remarkable. During 1857 revolt India had important women participants such as Sarojini Naidu, Jhansi Rani Lakshmi Bai, Kittur Rani Channamma and Begum Hazrat Mahal.
- The first mass participation of women in the national movement started with the Swadeshi movement and kept on increasing through the Non Cooperation Movement with certain limitations. In Civil Disobedience Movement we saw women coming in thousands of

numbers and leading the key aspects of the National Movement through initiatives like picketing of liquor and cloth shops, taking care of the injured freedom fighters, going to jails. Therefore, they earned for themselves what they got in the constitution in 1950 which was the Universal right to 'Adult Franchise'.

- During the time of freedom struggle (especially during the Civil Disobedience Movement and Quit India movement) women in large numbers began to take part in national life and sacrificed their personal life for the sake of national cause.

### **Women's role in Indian politics:**

- In 1917 an Irish woman, Annie Besant became president of the Indian National Congress and in 1925 Sarojini Naidu became the first Indian woman who assumed the role of President of the INC.
- Moving ahead with the post-independence era, India managed to elect its first woman Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi even when the western world did not even think of women leaders at that time.
- The participation of women in Indian Politics has not improved at a rate of expectation that it would improve given the stellar role women played in national movement, the increasing focus of participation of women in politics is giving fruitful results to the Indian polity.
- Injecting democracy at the grass root level i.e. at the level of panchayat and municipalities India has managed to secure thousands of women representatives. Thorough analyses of low representation at national and state level signal that the political parties are reluctant to give seats to women because of politics being a game of winning ability and power management. Women are shy of participating in politics because of increasing violence and criminalisation of politics.
- It is important to understand that the political representation of women is important because this is how issues related to women and other major policy decisions get the right kind of space. Experience shows that when women are in important leadership roles the policies change for good.

### **Women's role in social area**

- Women do not face discrimination in employment opportunities or promotion in the academic sphere and in the sphere of pure sciences, professional and financial areas like banking has accommodated many young professional women. But the prevalence of disparity at the lower levels of society is disturbing such as women being paid less in rural

labour sector. It is also being said that the Minimum Wages Act also discriminate between women's and men's wages in agriculture and construction labour sectors.

- There is a debate about the nutritional status of women which was raised recently when so many women won Olympic medals for India. The Indian women are nutritionally not considered as strong as their western counterparts. Despite the obvious limitations of low nutritional status compared to the males, Indian women performed exceptionally well in Olympics.
- In Swachh Bharat campaign also, women are leading from the front. In the areas of cleanliness and hygiene women are entrusted with the responsibility within the family. To mark this achievement, the Union Government is celebrating **Swachh Shakti Saptah** to highlight the role of women in the Clean India mission and to recognize their leadership and honour the women sanitation winners.

### **Conclusion:**

The World Bank recommended that safest and only way to lift India out of poverty is to educate and increase the status of country's women. As it is already observed by our great freedom fighter Mahatma Gandhiji and our 1<sup>st</sup> Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Our 1<sup>st</sup> woman Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi also stressed that women have trailed behind men in almost all sectors and their status could be raised by providing opportunities for their independent means of employment/entrepreneurship. Women have proved that they are not less than men in efficiency, hardwork or intelligence.

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## BE A LEGEND THAN A LADY

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### Abstract:

This paper is an attempt to deconstruct the social structuring of male superiority through the eyes of feminism and gender studies. The paper moves through the conventions of the patriarchy which stood as a barrier for women and how some of our Indian women have broken those patriarchal norms prevailing throughout our society. Then theories aid in dissecting the key factors that formulate the social superiority of man.

### Introduction:

According to Hindu Religion, *Shakti, Sampathi, and Sadbhodhi*, power, wealth, and wisdom, are ruled by Goddesses Durga, Lakshmi, and Saraswathi. With that point in mind, this highly spiritual land called India with the second-highest population in the world has only 21 % of women contributing to the better tomorrows of the nation. At 17 % of GDP, Indian women's economic contribution is less than half of the global average and falls short of China's 40 %. If 50 % of women joined the workforce, India's growth rate could be increased by 1.5 percentage points per year, to 9 percent.

This shows the disparity that exists between the genders in India. Even after 75 years of independence, Indian women are struggling for financial independence. To find the root cause of this, we must dissect the Indian Society. Be it of any religion or caste or creed, the subjugated gender of women is in a continuous struggle for identity. It is an age-old practice of patriarchy that drives Indian society forward. Patriarchal society prioritizes men and, to some extent, limits women's human rights. Male dominance gets reflected in both the public and private spheres. In this way, feminists employ the term "patriarchy" to describe the power dynamic between men and women, as well as to investigate the root cause of women's subordination.

In its broadest sense, patriarchy refers to the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family, as well as the extension of male dominance over women in society as a whole. It implies that "men hold power in all of society's important institutions" and that "women are denied access to such power." It does not, however, imply that "women are either completely powerless or completely deprived of rights, influence, and resources" (Lerner, 1989). Patriarchal ideology exaggerates biological differences between

men and women, ensuring that men are always in the dominant, or masculine, roles and women are always in the subordinate, or feminine, roles. Because of the power of this ideology, "men are usually able to secure the apparent consent of the very women they oppress." They accomplish this "via institutions such as the academy, the church, and the family, each of which justifies and reinforces women's subordination to men" (Millett, 1977). Power, dominance, hierarchy, and competition characterize the patriarchal system. As a result, patriarchy is a social structure and practice in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women.

In India, there is significant variation across regions, classes, religions, ethnic and caste groups, and so on. The country's family structure and kinship patterns, social and economic milieu, culture, and social practices vary greatly. The rural-urban divide must also be considered as a consistent factor. This rich diversity was exacerbated by the changes brought about by colonial rule. Since then, traditional and modern values have been perpetually at odds, resulting in numerous ambiguities. Because of the lack of social, cultural, and economic homogeneity, generalizing Indian women in the crucible of change is difficult, and images of Indian women are paradoxical and contradictory.

Indian women, be it in skyscrapers of urban or rural grounds of India face inequality and emotional turmoil just the same. The power structure of India is hard for women to take in hand. Societal power and decision-making are traditionally handled by the menfolk. The superiority of men over women is discussed in plenty by many. Aristotle proposed similar "theories" and referred to males as active and females as passive. The Female was a "mutilated male," someone without a soul in his eyes. In his opinion, a woman's biological inferiority makes her inferior in her capacities, her ability to reason, and thus her ability to make decisions. Because man is superior to woman, he is born to rule and she is born to be ruled. "The courage of man is shown in commanding a woman in obeying," he said (Learner, 1989). Women's biology, according to modern psychology, determines their psychology, and thus their abilities and roles. Sigmund Freud, for example, stated that anatomy is destiny for women. In his opinion, "a normal human being was a man" (Freud, 1977).

Patriarchy, which assumes male superiority over females, shamelessly maintains women's dependence on, and subordination to, men in all aspects of life. As a result, all power and authority within the family, society, and state remain solely in the hands of men. As a result of patriarchy, women have been denied their legal rights and opportunities. Patriarchal values limit women's mobility and reject their freedom over themselves and their property. "Something else is less important than the other thing," subordination means (Cobuild, 2010).

"Subordination" means "having less power or authority than someone else in a group or organization," according to *Advanced Learners Dictionary* (Hornby, 2003).

The term 'women's subordination' refers to women's inferior position, lack of access to resources and decision-making, and the patriarchal domination that women face in most societies. As a result, women's subordination denotes women's inferior position to men. The feeling of powerlessness, discrimination and the experience of low self-esteem and self-confidence all contribute to women's subordination. As a result, women's subordination is a situation in which there is a power relationship and men dominate women. Women's subordination is a central feature of all interpersonal domination structures, but feminists choose different locations and causes of subordination. The contemporary feminist theory begins with Simone de Beauvoir's contention that because men regard women as fundamentally different from them, women are relegated to the status of the second sex and thus subordinate (Beauvior, 2015). According to Kate Millet's theory of subordination, women are a dependent sex class under patriarchal dominance (Millet, 1977).

However, these theories of male supremacy have been challenged, and it has been demonstrated that there is no historical or scientific evidence to support such explanations. There are biological differences between men and women, but these differences do not have to serve as the foundation for a sexual hierarchy in which men are dominant. The examination of many of these theories enables us to recognize that patriarchy is a man-made phenomenon, the result of historical processes. No single explanation for the origins of patriarchy is universally accepted. Frederick Engels provided an important explanation for the origins of patriarchy in his book *The Origins of the Family, Private Property, and the State* in 1884 (Engels, 1902). Women's subordination, according to Engels, began with the development of the private property, when the world-historical defeat of the female sex occurred. According to him, both the division of classes and the subordination of women evolved historically.

So, handing down the authority to women is hard for men to come by. Now consider the women of Indian origin who have successfully landed in positions that are male-dominated fields such as Politics, Economics, Science, Law, Medical, Sports, and Entertainment. The First Woman doctor in India was Anadhibai Joshi. She, along with her husband went to the United States to pursue her dream of becoming a doctor. Women seeking a career in medicine in nineteenth-century India were expected to work as midwives. Even though a doctoral program was available in Chennai, its male instructors were conservative, and the idea of having female students was frowned upon. The country's subsequent and complete lack of female doctors further limited access to critical healthcare for its women, who felt uneasy being evaluated by

male professionals. "I'm going to America to study medicine," an 18-year-old Anandi told her audience at Serampore College Hall. "Ladies, both European and Native, are naturally averse to exposing themselves to treatment by doctors of the opposite sex in cases of emergency." In my humble opinion, there is a growing need in India for Hindu lady doctors, and I volunteer to qualify for one." She also stated that she would not convert to Christianity and expressed her desire to open an Indian medical college for women upon her return to the country. Even after her pledging not to convert and it is only for the betterment of medicinal treatments in India that she is leaving, people defamed and humiliated the couple for their choice. But once she returned after her graduation and started practicing, she was celebrated everywhere around India. In 1887, at the age of 21, when she died of tuberculosis, the whole of India mourned her death. Anandi's remarkable life may have ended ironically, but it provides insight into the depravity of societal expectations since time immemorial. More importantly, how one can and must overcome these obstacles to pursue a goal for both personal fulfillment and the greater good of the community. Suffice it to say, it will serve as an inspiration to future generations.

After almost 39 years, during the freedom struggle in India, again we as a nation saw women attempting to contribute to a free India. Many have fought with great valor and wisdom and provided many contributions. One such iconic personality is Annie Besant who became the first woman president of the Indian National Congress. Annie Besant was a champion of women's rights who also advocated for a variety of social issues. She was embroiled in controversy for writing about the importance of birth control, as she was the first woman to speak out about it. She also fought and protested for the women who worked in matchstick factories, as well as against the inhuman and unfair treatment the women endured. She was adamant that India would never be great unless men and women walked side by side and hand in hand. As if a bird had one of its wings broken before taking flight. As the joint family stream broke down, she changed her mind about widow remarriage and vocational training for women. About this, she spoke out against women's exclusion, stating that "shutting up women is unworthy of civilization." Indian men do not deserve to be free politically until Indian women are free socially.``

Politically this was just the beginning. Because the Indian independence struggle brought forward many voice-less women who spoke bravely and fought mercilessly for India. It was the new era in making. In 1966, Indira Gandhi became the prime minister of India. This was a major step for the Indian Social Structure. Till this, India was ready to accept women in minor positions. But to give the control of the whole nation to a woman was a milestone. According to

political narratives, when Indira took over the government following the death of Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, many saw her as a dumb doll who couldn't do anything more than wear her sari correctly and look attractive. One can only imagine how surprised everyone was when she revealed herself to be a powerhouse who was not afraid to take charge, speak out, and fight for the good of the country.

From this, I moved on to the two most challenging sessions – Science and Sports. Both these fields are considered the Lion's Den for women. But Indian women have always challenged themselves to the position that in these aspects as well the women have shown their strong foot. Science and society are inextricably intertwined, and reforms in the social structure and scientific institutions are required. In India, women in science make up a modest percentage of the total number of working women. Women are in short supply in India today, whether it's in terms of science fellowships, awards, or positions in science administration. Women's underrepresentation in science in India, particularly at senior levels of teaching and research, has become a major problem. As a result, there is a need to raise awareness of science occupations as a viable alternative for women and maintain them in the field and provide them with the required recognition. Be it any amount of superior contribution, the success of a woman's contribution lacks empathy from the men's world. From the household to winning an election or becoming a CEO, a woman's achievement is overly judged with prejudice and degraded into mere luck. This form of inequality has always been reflected in the advancement of our social structure. India is the land of religions and where women are worshipped, most of the time in physicality they are being downgraded.

Every sportsperson in India has a backstory that motivates us, but in the case of sportswomen in India, the struggle is doubled. Sexuality itself is a burden for them. To choose a career out of sports is considered somewhat atrocious. Publicly, many sportswomen might have a huge fan following, but personal surveys have shown that sportswomen are considered less attractive by the men of Indian society. Women who value athletic participation have faced an uphill battle in gaining recognition and equality with men. Despite their efforts, extreme disparity persists. This anecdotal evidence of women's basic ability to compete successfully with men is supported by research, which implicates general societal attitudes toward women as a limiting factor in women's performance. Previous studies comparing the physical capacity of women and men used the average woman and average man as subjects. Women were inferior to men in these studies. However, as researchers have pointed out (Wilmore, 1979), the average woman in these studies led a very sedentary life compared to the average man; thus, women's inferiority has been hopelessly confounded with the lack of exercise and experience typical of

female subjects used in this research. In terms of physiological parameters such as body composition and physique, muscle fiber characteristics, strength, and cardiovascular capacity, comparisons of highly trained female and male athletes show that they are more similar than different. And yet the difference is huge. Women of athlete physique are often considered 'less womanly'. Even in situations where appearance should not matter, there is a widespread tendency to focus on women's looks and bodies rather than their character traits or abilities. According to research, men and women alike judge the worth of individual women primarily based on the appearance of their bodies. When we evaluate men, we do not do this. Women are aware of this and derive their sense of worth from their appearance. This affects their self-esteem, task focus, and performance, even on tasks unrelated to their appearance.

This is similar in the case of the entertainment field as well. There are incidents in which the actress of our industry has voiced out the pay gap and sexual harassment incidents which are always in the way for them. It is only in recent years that the entertainment industry has seen any number of women-oriented movies. This is because of the lack of monetary benefits that a women-oriented movie gains from the theatres. The social circles of Indian society always prefer to be entertained with movies that picture a superior hero and sexually objectified heroine. The Actresses are always valued only till aging becomes visible. Even if the heroes are in between the age gaps of 40 -80, this is not the case for actresses. The Entertainment industry is gradually reforming its ways and still may be miles away from achieving the final goal.

From time to time, our country has seen many women leaders and their contributions to the sectors of national development. But the balance will never be shown equally as the gap is always evident. It is only in 2019 that India was reluctantly ready to take up a Woman as the finance minister of India. Whenever it comes to the factors of important decision making related to the household or of our nation, involuntarily the society looks up to the man to make a better judgment than the women. This comes from the idea that, essentially, men are or will be the better choice in making crucial judgments. The minor gender is considered to lack the capability which gives the other half the autonomy of power. Civil, political, social, economic, and cultural involvement and rights are all aspects of autonomy. The smallest area where women can share or control resources are the family. Gender inequality in the home, on the other hand, manifests itself in a lesser role for women in decision-making, less control over resources, and physical limits.

Women's empowerment refers to granting women decision-making power in the social, economic, and political spheres. It is a process of educating women on the socio-psycho-cultural

and political injustices that women face in society. Gender equality and development cannot be achieved without women's empowerment. Women's empowerment rises with their age and is nearly constant across different vocational groupings. In comparison to non-working or unpaid working women, working women enjoy a considerable advantage. Women are the root of all social constructions. As said at the beginning, one bows down to women to achieve strength, wisdom, and power and yet in the human form of the same, we deny them based on lame misjudgments such as cognitive inability, appearance, and strength. Even as our women are growing out of these constraints, it's a gradual process. Society is gradually accepting women to take part and contribute to the economic, cultural, and scientific betterment. It is a snail's walk, but an optimistic venture. By this one day, maybe someday, the expiration dates on a woman's dream will gradually fade.

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## **NAME, FAME AND PROGRESS: THE REAL SCENARIO OF INDIAN WOMEN**

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### **Abstract:**

The Indian Women has been always at the forefront right from ancient period. Belawadi Mellamma was the first woman to form army in 17<sup>th</sup> Century. Infact, through age's women have marked their presence and instances are countless. Similarly, India has also seen women facing severe challenges like forced prostitution from a very young age, becoming victim of acid attack, killing for dowry, sexual abuse, marital rapes and many other ways of confinements and restrictions like sati practices, purdah system, child marriage. In spite of that, women consistently worked for their home, society and nation. The Swadeshi, Home rule and Non-cooperation movements has witnessed their participation and Annie Besant, Sarojini Naidu, Kasturba Gandhi, Sister Nibedita are to name a few. Post-independence, several government initiatives have been taken. Women participation in sports, Science and technology, finance, politics, different working sectors, as entrepreneurs have gradually evolved and excelled. Basically all the fields are continuously witnessing their active participation and development. The impact can be seen on the framework they have built which in turn shapes the household, societies and ultimately the nation. Thus the calm and subtle descendants from Venus have shown their competence and excellence in diverse fields in spite of all odds. After all "**Just as Women's rights are human rights, women's progress is human progress**", Hilary Clinton.

**Keywords:** Women, Progress, Participation, Challenges, India, Society

### **Introduction:**

The contributions of a woman to the society are immense. From being an educator, caretaker, farmer, entrepreneurs, conscience supporter to moral booster there role is essential and recognised as well. Evidences from history have established the central role of women in (Benard *et al.*, 2008). Reports ensure their involvement in bringing stability, enhancing progress and promoting long-term development of nations. Be it urban or rural setup, the contributions of women in the transition of society are diverse. The United Nations Womenwatch Organization has given the statement that "Rural women play a key role in supporting their households and

communities in achieving food and nutrition security, generating income, and improving rural livelihoods and overall well-being". In urban set up, women have moved out of the home and established themselves in work place as well. Basically urbanization have facilitated more opportunities, employment and financial independence to them (<https://globalvolunteers.org/global-role-of-women/>).

The gender equality and women's empowerment mandate is universally agreed on by all members of UN and focusses on peace, development and human rights. The mandates on gender equality emerges from the United Nations Charter, which explicitly reiterates the equal rights of men and the women. The 1995 Fourth World Conference (FOW) on Women endorsed "Gender Mainstreaming" as a pre-defined approach for attaining the gender equality commitments (<https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/intergovernmental-support/world-conferences-on-women>). The resulting Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action thus directed all stakeholders in development policies and programmes, including UN organizations, Member States and civil society sectors, to take action in this regard. Additional commitments are embodied in the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, the Millennium Declaration, and a variety of resolutions and decisions of the UN General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and the Commission on the Status of Women (Background Information" ECOSOC). The 1997 agreed conclusions of ECOSOC defined gender mainstreaming as: "The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality (Roger, 2011)."

Hence, gender equality is the extensive and long-term overarching goal, while gender mainstreaming are the set of definite, planned approaches as well as technical and institutional processes required to achieve that goal. Gender mainstreaming integrates gender equality in national public and private organizations, in central or local policies, and in services and sectoral programmes. In the long run, it aims to transform discriminatory social institutions, laws, cultural norms and community practices, such as those limiting women's access to property rights or restricting their access to public space (<https://www.undp.org/>).

The evolution of gender equality was necessitated owing to the prevalence of discrimination. Several vulnerabilities, violations and risks have brought disadvantages that affected girls, ladies and women socially, emotionally, culturally, politically and even more

ways. In this article, an initiative towards status of women since ages has been attempted, how different challenges and problems prevailed, the struggle to overcome and their excellence and establishment across the globe in different sectors.

### **The journey through ages**

*“O Goddess, Let yourself become the burning power of fire; who is not able to burn anything without thee. At the conclusion of any mantra, whoever taking thy name (Svaha), will pour oblations in the fire, he will cause those offerings to go directly to the gods. Mother, let yourself, the repository of all prosperity, reign over as the lady of his (fire’s) house.”*

The homa (Sanskrit: होम)/ havanis a fire ritual performed on special occasions. Here every mantra or Shloka is addressed to “Swaha”, the wife of “Agni”, instead of Agni himself. This facet of Swaha as Agni’s wife is evident in Mahabharata, BhagavathaPurana, BrahmavantaraPuranain the form of various hymns. This is an indication about the high status of women endowed. Swayamvara, GandharvaMarriage were other classic examples that suggested that women had the liberty to make choices and take decisions. Women had played a powerful role and imagery of goddess and other viranganasquite well substantiate their potential (Majumdar and Pusalker, 1951).

The Medieval period also witnessed women as upholders of legacy and folklore. Queen Kumara Devi of Gupta Period, Prabhavatigupta (she was the wife of Rudrasena II of the Vakataka dynasty and daughter of Chandra Gupta II of the Gupta Empire) were competent administrators. Several other pioneers like Queen Nayanikaof the Deccan region (south-central India), Queen Anula of Anuradhapura, Queen Kurmadevi of Mevad, Queen Didday of Kashmir, RudramaDevi ofthe Kakatiyadynasty, AkkaMahadevi (a prominent figure of the Veerashaiva Bhakti movement prevailed inKarnataka in12<sup>th</sup> century) are the prime examples. Raziya Sultana was the only woman monarch whohas ever ruled Delhi. Other great warriors being Gond Rani Durgavati who fought a battle with Mughal emperor Akbar’s general Asaf Khan in 1564. Chand Bibi who defended Ahmednagar against the powerful Mughal forces of Akbar in the 1590s. Nur Jahan, the wife of Jehangirwas an imperial power behind Mughals, AbbakkaChowta (the first Tuluva Queen of Ullal) fought the Portuguese in the latter half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Shivaji’s mother, Jijabai and Tarabai were classic Maratha warrior and administrator. Keladi Chennamma fought against Bijapur Sultanate. Onake Obavva was a woman who fought the forces of HyderAli, Mai Sukhanstrongly defended the town of Amritsar against external forces. While, Velu Nachiyar, was one of the earliest Indian queens to fight against the British colonial power in India. Kittur Chennamma (Rani of Kittur) and Rani Lakshmi Baifought against the British East India Company in defiance of the doctrine of lapse (Ramusack *et al.*, 1999).

Nevertheless the various instances of Gender Equality in the ancient period, several restrictions and limitations also evolved and intensified. The purdah system, child marriage, sati practices, debadasis etc were a blow to the attainment of equality. The negligence and harassments prevailed in all spheres from utilisation of resources and opportunities, economic participation, decision-making and many more (Ramana, 2009). The deprivation of women to pursue education worsened the status as illiteracy kept them unaware of the different rights and resources they could utilise. Basically on the name of “sanskaras”, they were preferred for confinement inside the four-walls and deal with house-hold chores.

During the British rule as well as Post-independence, many revolutionary events positioned women to the forefront. Social reformers like Dayanand Saraswati, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Jyotirao Phule, Peary Charan Sarkar, Pandita Ramabai fought for the betterment of women. Swami Vivekananda said, ‘Just as a bird can not fly with one wing only, a Nation can not march forward if the women are left behind’. Men and women are the two holes of a perfect whole. Strength is borne of their union and their separation results in weakness. Each has what the other does not have. Each completes the other, and is completed by other. Etymologically, the word ‘**woman**’ means – **half of man**. The relation of the male and female is very well illustrated in our **Nyaya Darshan** by the analogy of mind and matter, which means that man and woman are closely associated with each other, as the soul and body. Therefore the women are ought to be respected.

In modern India, voice of women is heard from all corners. Space, finance, political system, education, science and technology, dance and music, as beauty peagent, engineers, architects, medical practitioner, community helpers, military professional and what not. The evidences of uplifted socio-economic and educational status of women are established. Important initiatives like constitutional provisions and social legislation were the landmark decisions by Government of India which facilitated the outcomes. Several programs and amendments by Government like National perspective Plan for Women (1988-2000), National Commission on self-employed women for dealing with issues on women like maternity benefits, childcare facilities, equal wages etc were launched. The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Constitution was passed in 1993 to provide for 33.33% reservation in panchayats, panchayat samitis, zillaparishads and local body institutions. The National Commission for Women in 1992 (Act No.20 of 1990 of Government of India) was framed to look into the issues concerning women’s rights and promoting their empowerment.

### **Strategies for prevention of violence against woman**

Various laws were framed and implemented to prevent ongoing restrictions and shaping up the status (Pandit, 2018).

- A. Section 498A: of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which defines the offence of matrimonial cruelty, was inserted into the IPC by an amendment in 1983.
  - B. Domestic Violence in Marriage: The aim of this article is to segregate this evil from the other righteous norms, thus trying to create a mental block or resistance amongst people towards the undue violence.
  - C. Eve teasing In India And Tortious Liabilities: The term Eve teasing is used to refer to sexual harassment of women in public places.
  - D. Bride burning and Laws in India: The system of dowry is deep rooted in the Indian society since the early days of the history.
  - E. Law, Women And Advertisements: The Advertising Standards Council's Code for Self regulation defines an advertisement.
  - F. Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005: It is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted to protect women from domestic violence. It was brought into force by the Indian government and Ministry of Women and Child Development.
  - G. Personal Dignity: Dignity is a universal human concern. Its moral agenda is to treat women with morality, ethics, law and politics as an extension of the Enlightenment-era concepts of inherent, inalienable rights
  - H. Commercial Sex Workers: The commercial sex worker has been a universal being throughout civilization as prostitution.
  - I. Women and Violence: Violence affects the lives of millions of women worldwide, in all socio-economic and educational classes.
  - J. Domestic Violence Act, 2005-A Bane Or A Boon?: Domestic violence is one of the gravest and the most pervasive human rights violation.
  - K. A Woman Can't Rape Woman: In *State Govt. V. Sheodayal* (1956 Cr LJ 83 M.P) M.P High court opined that modesty of a woman can be outraged by another women u/s 354.
  - L. Rights of Second Wife: Second marriage, during the subsistence of the first marriage, is illegal.
  - M. Violence against woman - Issue of Honor killing: A woman can be targeted by individuals within her family for a variety of reasons, including: refusing to enter into an arranged marriage.
  - N. Can Women be Karta?: The Karta of a Hindu joint Family in Hindu Law is the senior most member of the family.
  - O. Family law - A complete guide on family laws in India.
- Effective ways to deal with the situation includes building up effective strategies like
- a. Creating awareness of different dangers of existing ill traditions.

- b. Strategies to tackle violence against girls in school.
- c. Facing the challenges and developing courage to speak about violence happening at home.
- d. Transform attitudes towards harmful practices at multiple levels.
- e. Help make girls' journeys to school safer.
- f. Engaging respected community elders in the fight against violence.
- g. Mobilise youth to fight harmful practices such as child marriage.
- h. Engage boys and young men to become the active agents of change.
- i. Protect girls who face additional risks during emergencies.
- j. Embolden girls to speak out.
- k. Share vital information with the community.
- l. Challenge rape culture.
- m. Reach out to marginalised and rural girls.
- n. Take a stand against regressive forces.

### **Women's role in Nation shaping and its stability**

*“Healthy Women, Healthy Nation”* is a notion that speaks many things. Empowering women benefits their households, communities, societies and ultimately the nation. The creation of a nation involves multiple factors. Political stability, economic growth, infrastructure development, military excellence, literacy and many more. Nation building is basically a long term, continuous and challenging endeavour. Implementing effective strategies and their strict following up are the core factors to nation building. In a diversified country like India, ethnic homogeneity and cultural integrity is crucial. If the citizens are unified, the country is stable. It's worth mentioning that throughout the history and since ages the women has played the central role in bringing stability, promoting progress and ensuring long-term development of nations.

1. Eve Yvonne Maday de Maros (who changed her name to Savitribai Khanolkar) is the woman who designed the “Param Vir Chakra”, India's highest gallantry award. The design of the medallion, considered the highest military decoration, encapsulates the ethos of India's defense and patriotism. She represented the power, valour and sacrifice of the soldiers in her design. Savitribai included sword Bhavani of the great maratha warrior Chhatrapati Shivaji enclosed within the Indian mythical weapon ‘Vajra’ from both sides. As per Indian Mythology, Vajra is made up of a sage's bone that originated to kill evil enemies in the name of goodness.
2. As academicians, India has always been famed for its contribution to the world. The women in the field of science, mathematics and technology has also made their impact since long. Anandibai Gopalrao Joshi (1865-1887), Janaki Ammal (1897-1984), Kamala

Sohonie (1912-1998), Asima Chatterjee (1917-2006), Rajeshwari Chatterjee (1922-2010), Human Computer Shakuntal Devi (1929-2013), Kalpana Chawla (1962-2003), Dr. Indira Hinduja and the number continues. Rarest possibilities can be turned into a real opportunity and women are capable of doing this.

3. Beauty Pageants like Reita Faria who bagged Miss World title in 1966, Zeenat Aman as Miss Asia Pacific in 1970, Sushmita Sen as Miss Universe in 1994, Aishwarya Rai as Miss World in 1994 to recent Harnaaz Sandhu as Miss Universe in 2021. They have popularized India, its style and our culture to the entire world. They have shown how diverse Indian women are and their leadership potential.
4. Indian women politicians have marked their presence across the globe. Their schemes and political traits have actually contributed to the development of country. Late Smt Indira Gandhi has always been a powerful and impactful leader. Worth mentioning are the names of Late Sushma Swaraj, Late Jayaram Jayalithaa (Beloved Amma), present finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman and many more. They have United India through different schemes, inspired the mind set of people and have worked for the different aspects of the country. The Chief Minister of West Bengal Smt. Mamata Banerjee launched the “Kanyashree Prakalpa” as an initiative towards empowerment of girl child with education in 2011 soon after coming to the power. This scheme benefited several lakhs of girl child. The United Nations in the year 2017 accorded its highest award for public service to the West Bengal government for this scheme.
5. Indian women have excelled in sports – Saina Nehwal, Sania Mirza, Mary Kom, PV Sindhu, Mithali Raj, Dipa Karmakar, Geeta Phogat, Saikhom Mirabai Chanu, Lovlina Borgohain, Jyothi Surekha Vennam, Avani Lekhara, Bhavinaben Patel. The list is really vast. From the pro-kabaddi league to Nike’s advertisement “Dadading”, female sportspersons are celebrated for their efforts and so are the female coaches like Purnima Mahato, Renu Kohli.
6. The legendary playback singer Late Lata Mangeshkar who ruled decades with her melody have tied the universe into a single string. On her demise, President Ram Nath Kovind said in her songs “generations found expression of their innermost emotions”.

Describing the magical power of women is beyond words. She can make home, give birth to lives, nurture generations, efficiently administer the household, enriches the society and hence structure the nation ultimately. Women are the pioneers of nation and are the key factors to sustainability and quality. Important concerns still prevails over government and workplace policies and their implementation. The struggle to juggle will continue but it’s true that women’s status are the significant marker of a progressive society and a developed nation.

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## **SWACHHATA ABHIYAN, WASTE MANAGEMENT AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**

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### **Abstract:**

The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan in India has created awareness about health and hygiene. It has also led to safety, health benefits and financial benefits for women. Swachh Bharat Abhiyan in India proved to be a driving force to inculcate the habits of personal and community cleanliness. It also imparted momentum to the activities like segregation of waste at the source and recycling of waste.

The responsibility of cleanliness and waste management at home and in society is mainly shouldered by women. This paper explains efforts taken by some Government and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and individuals working in the field of waste management in Indian context. These efforts have proven to be beneficial to improve health, safety, financial conditions, self –confidence of women. Some representative examples have been cited in this article. The study is based on press releases by Government, news reports and research articles, blogs and annual reports of NGOs.

### **Introduction:**

The Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) was launched on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014 by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, with the aim of achieving an Open Defecation Free (ODF) India in five years. The SBM has achieved its goal in partnership with state governments, district administration, development partners, swachhagrahis, Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) members and other grassroot functionaries by constructing over 100 million household toilets in rural India. The SBM assumes greater relevance for women health, safety and their access to higher education.

In India, some NGOs are already working for the welfare of rag pickers, sanitary workers; some NGOs as well as individuals work for recycling of waste, like composting, plastic

recycling, ewaste recycling. Their efforts received more attention after the SBM was launched. All these efforts have directly or indirectly contributed for women empowerment.

### **Observations and discussion:**

#### **Effects of efforts of Government organizations:**

- (1) In India, prior to SBM, open defecation was common in rural as well as in urban area due to many reasons like- poverty, huge population, scarcity of water, unavailability of clean toilets, lack of awareness about the health problems arising due to open defecation etc. This led to issues related to safety ,security, dignity, health and education for women. Women who used open defecation sites like open fields or the side of a railway track had fear of attack from animals or getting raped.Risk of contracting infections was greater for menstruating and pregnant women. The lack of toilets in schools was the most common reason for menstruating girls dropping out from school.

From the study carried out jointly by UNICEF, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and Sambodhi Research and Communications Private Limited with assistance from Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti, significant changes can be observed in safety, convenience and self-respect for rural women due to construction of household toilets.

Till 2020, there is 61.24%increase in house -holds with toilets as compared to 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014.After the construction of toilets 93% of women reported that they were no longer afraid of being hurt by someone or harmed by animals while defecating. Not only this, but 93% of women also reported that they were no longer afraid of contracting health infections.91% of the women reported that they have been able to save up to an hour and do not have to travel up to a kilometre for defecation after the construction of toilets. Instead of waiting till late evening or dark, women can now use toilets at any time of the day. Also, 92% of women said they were no longer afraid of going to the toilet in the dark of night, which is a huge jump from the pre-toilet construction stage (12%).

- (2) The Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) focussed on source segregation of waste to secure better ranking in SwachhSurvekshan 2020. Officials from the Urban Community Development (UCD) wing of the GVMC and the Public Health Department created awareness on separation of dry, wet, medical and other wastes before giving it to the sanitary staff. The Self Help Groups (SHGs) working with UCD also promoted home composting techniques on a large-scale.

Classes were conducted by the SHGs to teach women the benefits of using household wastes to grow flowers and vegetables. In the first year, there were around 1,200 women practising home composting and in the second year, the number increased to nearly 60,000.

**Effects of efforts of Non-Government organizations:**

(1) The Mumbai based NGO StreeMuktiSanghatana is working as a supporter of female waste pickers since 1999 through ParisarVikas Programme [Gross, A. G. (2013)]. The aim of ParisarVikas programme is to recycle waste and create zero waste cities. It aims to organize the waste pickers, educate them, and provide the women with health and counselling services. It has acquired a unique place in solid waste management in Maharashtra as well as other states, as it covers families below poverty line.

The Sanghatana's sustained work with marginalised women, especially waste-pickers, resulted in the city's first child-care centre for children of waste-picker women and an adult literacy campaign in Chembur, Mumbai.

The Federation of self-help groups of waste pickers, ParisarBhaginiVikasSangh has raised resources for educating more than 5,000 children of waste-picker women

According to the Annual Report (2015) of StreeMuktiSanghatana, SMS has prepared the project for the e-waste recycling whereby e-waste is collected from door to door, colleges and other organizations and sent for recycling to licensed manufacturers. Awareness workshops for e-waste are taken in Mumbai, Thane, Navi Mumbai, for 750 ParisarBhaginis in 15 areas.

In 2003, SMS operated the first bio-gas plant for the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC). Since then, it has obtained contractual work with several educational institutes, residential colonies and business centers for maintaining and operating bio-gas plants and compost pits.

(2) KagadKachPatraKashtakari Panchayat is a Trade Union of waste pickers in Pune. A co-operative movement called SWaCH, an acronym for Solid Waste Collection and Handling was formed by the members of KagadKachPatraKashtakari Panchayat. 75% members of SWaCH are women. They learnt the techniques of waste segregation to work for waste management and received facilities like medical insurance, education loans and scholarships for their children. Thus these women from Pune's slums have set an example that with the right guidance and support, women can be self independent and make a better future for themselves and their children .

**Effects of efforts of individual citizens:**

With Swachh Bharat Abhiyan picking up steam, municipal corporations across India's cities urged people to engage in composting waste so that the burden of carrying waste into landfills is significantly reduced.

(1) Three women from Bengaluru started conducting 10-day tutorial classes over WhatsApp to teach people the simple tricks of composting. Shubha Govindachar, BharathiAswath and Priya Srinivasan, these three women were familiar with the science of composting and would regularly carry out composting at home. They used the compost in their gardens. They realised that composting is a complicated process for many. So they started teaching composting from household waste through WhatsApp group- MaraliMannighe (Back to soil). The tutorials were quickly popular among users not only from India, but abroad as well. People interested in composting have enrolled in the WhatsApp tutorial groups from California, Canada and Singapore.

(2) Aditi Deodhar is environmental-conscious software consultant from Pune. She has launched a forum called 'Brown Leaf' in Pune. It is a platform connecting people who have brown leaves to dispose to people who need them. From November 2016 to April 2017, the forum was able to stop 5,000 gunny bags of dry leaves from being burnt. Instead they are used for mulching and composting. Brown Leaf not only works for leaf exchange, but seeds, saplings, ideas and advice are also shared through the forum.

They have developed resources to help people manage dry leaves in eco-friendly manner. Guidance in this regard is provided through PDFs, videos, online courses, video conference and webinars.

(3) ReCharkha – Ecosocial is a social enterprise from Pune founded by Amita Deshpande. It upcycles waste plastic bags, multilayered wrappers of gifts, multilayered wrappers of biscuits, old audio and video cassette tapes and many such kind of packaging using a traditional charkha and handloom. This helps to segregate plastic waste at source and its recycling into products like fashion accessories, daily utility products, products for home décor, office and school use. ReCharkha is providing livelihood opportunities for tribal women, artisans and waste pickers and it is also contributing to reduce the problem of plastic menace.

**Conclusion:**

1. The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan in India has created awareness about cleanliness and its relation to health and hygiene.
2. It has also led to safety, health benefits and financial benefits for women.
3. The combined efforts of Government and Non-government organizations and individuals are contributing for empowerment of women as well as providing environment friendly solutions of waste management.

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## **BREASTFEEDING- IT'S SIGNIFICANCE IN THE 'NEW NORMAL'**

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### **Breastfeeding- an overview:**

According to WHO, “breastfeeding is one of the most effective ways to ensure child health and survival and is the ideal food for the infants. It is clean, safe and contains antibodies which help protect against many common childhood illnesses (WHO).” According to UNICEF (2018), “Breastfeeding is among the most effective ways to protect maternal and child health and promote healthy growth and optimal development in early childhood.” Breastfeeding provides a healthy start, and is the best source of nutrition. It plays a vital role in a child’s life by enhancing the growth, and most importantly supports the development of brain ([www.globalbreastfeedingcollective.org](http://www.globalbreastfeedingcollective.org)). A process through which the young infant is provided with nutrients required for proper development and a healthy growth is termed as Breastfeeding. Bottle-feeding or artificial feeding poses a threat to the child’s health resulting in serious health consequences such as risk of childhood mortality and morbidity whereas, breastfeeding increases greater chances of survival. (Pala *et al.*, 2013). The “global strategy for IYCF” states that “breastfeeding is an unequalled way of providing ideal food for the healthy growth and development of infant; it is also an integral part of the reproductive process with important implications for the health of the mothers. As a global public health recommendation, infants should be exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months of life to achieve optimal growth, development and health. Exclusive breastfeeding is recommended as breast milk contains all the necessary nutrients which are sufficient to sustain appropriate growth and development of a healthy term infant for the first 6 months of life (Dadhich, 2016). Breastmilk provides protection against gastrointestinal infection, acts as a source of energy and is an important source of nutrients. A child who is breastfed is less likely to be obese or overweight (WHO). Breastmilk is considered the safest food for a newborn because breastmilk is free of contamination which helps the child to grow healthy during the first 6 months of life (Garje *et al.*, 2016). The American Academy of Pediatrics reaffirms its recommendation of exclusive breastfeeding for about 6 months, followed by continued breastfeeding as complementary foods are introduced, with

continuation of breastfeeding for 1 year or longer as mutually desired by mother and infant (Eidelman *et al.*, 2012).

### **Importance of breastfeeding**

Breastfeeding provides psychological as well as physical bonding between the child and the mother. Breastfeeding is the optimum source of nutrition for the child (Vassilopoulou *et al.*, 2021). Bioactive molecules present in the breastmilk contribute to immunity as well as helps in the development of the organs and acts as a probiotic for the newborn (pubmed.ncbi). Breastmilk reduces the risk of becoming obese and overweight children are less likely to become obese or overweight. It is also found that breastfeeding is associated with reducing the risk of leukemia (the most common type of cancer found in children) as breastmilk possess passive immunity. Breastmilk also lowers the risk of respiratory illness, gastroenteritis, sudden infant death syndrome and otitis media (Motee and Jeewon, 2014). Mothers who breastfed the child have a lower risk of developing ovarian cancer, breast cancer, post-partum depression and type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (James *et al.*, 2009, <https://www.mayoclinic.org>). Breastmilk contains micronutrients (such as minerals and vitamins) and macronutrients (such as protein, fat and carbohydrates) and sufficient amount of water for the newborn to meet the requirements adequately. Breastmilk also contains Immunoglobulin (mostly IgA), lysozyme (helps in killing bacteria) and lactoferrin (helps in binding iron) (Dadhich, 2016). As long as breastfeeding continues, the child's immune system will be reinforced with the antibodies, hormones and cells present in the breastmilk (<https://www.mayoclinic.org>).

### **Colostrum**

Colostrum is the thick yellowish fluid which is nutrient-rich, produced by the mammary glands immediately after giving birth. It benefits the growth of the newborn, provides protection against gastrointestinal infections and is the source of passive immunity that is achieved by the mother and transferred to the child (Thapa, 2005). The composition of colostrum differs from the milk which is secreted later and is a very rich source of energy (Kuralkar and Kuralkar, 2010). Colostrum is rich in lactoperoxidase and lactoferrin (antimicrobial peptides), Immunoglobulin (Ig) and other bioactive molecule as well as growth factors important for growth, development and for nutrition required for the newborn. It contains natural antibiotics and immune factors provide strong support for the immune system to prevent infection (Godhia and Patel, 2013). Colostrum helps to protect the baby against respiratory infection and other types of infections as it is rich in anti-infective factors. It also contains more epidermal growth factors in comparison to mature breast milk which help a baby's immature intestine to develop afterbirth. This helps to

prevent the baby from developing allergies and intolerance to other foods. Colostrum helps to clean baby's intestine which is important to prevent jaundice in the newborn. Colostrum is also rich in vitamin A (Dadhich, 2016). Human colostrum is the ideal food for human newborns and is preferable over formula or milk from other animals. The proportions of nutrients in human milk are different than other animals and therefore suited better for humans. Although formula simulates human milk as much as possible, the components of colostrum and mature milk, such as immunoglobulins, leukocytes, as well as antioxidants, enzymes, and hormones, give colostrum and mature human milk many advantages over formula ([www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)).

### **Positioning**

Proper positioning and attachment to the breast is very important for effective breastfeeding. A mother can breastfeed the child in any comfortable position so that there is good latch and successful suckling. A few basic principles can be followed for effective breastfeeding:

- The baby's chin should touch the breast.
- The shoulder, ear and buttock should be in a straight line, while the buttock must be supported with the mother's hand and the face of the baby should be towards the mother.
- The positioning of the nose should be opposite to the nipple.
- The baby should be held close to the mother.
- The palm and the fingers of the mother should be placed on her chest wall, just below the breast so that the first fingers form a kind of support at the base of the breast.
- For the baby's good and easier attachment, mother's thumb should be placed on the top of the breast.
- There should be minimum space between the nose of the baby and the nipple for proper breathing and the baby should not be held too tight or too close.

In regards with the above mentioned lines, UNICEF has laid down the **CHIN principles** for positioning:

- **Close:** baby needs to be close to his mother so he can scoop enough breast into his mouth. Ensure both mother and baby's clothing and hands are not in the way.
- **Head free:** when attaching to the breast, the baby will tilt his head back to allow his chin to lead as he comes onto the breast. Even a finger on the back of the baby's head will prevent this important movement.
- **In line:** the baby's head and body should be in alignment so that he does not have to twist his neck, which would make feeding and swallowing difficult.

- **Nose to nipple:** with mother's nipple resting below baby's nose, he will begin to root. As he tilts his head back, the nipple will slip under his top lip upwards and backwards to rest between the hard and soft palate.

Improper positioning can lead to damage, sores or pain in the nipples, resulting in discontinuation of breastfeeding process which can harm the baby's health and can cause weight loss (Dadhich, 2016, [www.unicef.org.uk](http://www.unicef.org.uk)).

### **Maternal illness and breastfeeding**

The process of lactation can be severely affected due to maternal illnesses. In self-limiting illnesses such as mild viral infections and cold the mother should continue breastfeeding but in severe cases such as HIV, breastfeeding can be continued but with appropriate infant feeding practices and counseling. Exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life with antiretroviral drugs (for the mother as well as the child) is recommended in India. Risk of transmission in case of Hepatitis (A, B and C) is very low and the child can be breastfed normally (Dadhich, 2016; <https://kidshealth.org>; [www.avert.org](http://www.avert.org)).

Breastfeeding may not be possible in cases such as medical condition, lifestyle, comfort and many other reasons (<https://kidshealth.org>). In such cases, the following methods/ways can be adapted in order to feed the child.

### **Expressed milk**

If the mother is in a state where breastfeeding is not possible or if the child is unable to suck, breastmilk can be expressed. In the process, before handling the milk, bottles or the pump, the mother should wash her hands thoroughly. Specially designed pre-sterilized milk storage bags must be used.

### **Human milk bank**

The demand for HMB (human milk bank) has increased significantly over the years. It has several advantages over the supplement or formula feeding. In this process, mothers who produce milk beyond the requirements and in excess amount donates milk to the milk bank. The child is fed milk through tube feeding. The risk of necrotizing enterocolitis which is potentially life-threatening condition among the children causes damage to the intestine is minimized through this process of breastfeeding (Srilakshmi, 2021).

### **Breastfeeding during Covid-19**

According to UNICEF (2020) Breast milk provides protection against many illnesses and is the best source of nutrition for most infants. Breastfeed children have better chances to survive and thrive. In the context of COVID19, there is no evidence that the illness can be transmitted through the breastmilk, hence the recent guidance is that women with COVID-19 are

recommended to continue breastfeeding (early exclusive breastfeeding from birth to 6 months and then continuing up to 2 years of age and beyond), but they should take precautions, including practicing respiratory hygiene during feeding, including wearing a mask covering mouth and nose, washing hands with soap and water for 20 seconds before and after touching the baby and, routinely cleaning and disinfecting surfaces they have touched. Therefore, a breastfeeding mother with COVID-19 should be supported to hold her newborn skin to skin, breastfeed safely, and share a room with her baby.

In situations when severe illness in a mother with COVID-19 or other health complications, prevents her from caring for her infant or prevents her from continuing direct breastfeeding, mothers should be encouraged and supported to express milk, and safely provide breastmilk to the infant, while applying appropriate hygiene measures. If the mother is expressing breast milk with a hand, manual or electric breast pump, she should wash her hands before expressing breastmilk or touching any pump or bottle parts and ensure proper pump cleaning after each use. The expressed breastmilk should be fed to the child using a clean cup and/or spoon, preferably by a person who has no signs or symptoms of illness and with whom the baby feels comfortable.

Intensifying the protection, promotion and support to adequate infant and young child feeding is therefore a critical action to be safeguarded by the health personnel even in the context of COVID-19 ([www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)).

A report by National Health Portal of India (2020) states that the numerous benefits of breastfeeding exceed the potential risks of transmission and illness associated with COVID-19. If mother has symptoms of or confirmed COVID-19, she should take following steps to avoid spreading the virus to her baby and can breastfeed if they wish to do so:

- Wear a mask/ cloth face covering during any contact with the baby, including while feeding
- Wash hands with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand rub before touching the baby
- Sneeze or cough into a tissue. Then dispose of it immediately and wash hands again
- Routinely clean and disinfect surfaces that mothers have touched

It is important to replace medical masks as soon as they become damp and dispose of them immediately. Masks should not be reused or touched in the front.

If mother is too unwell to breastfeed her baby due to COVID-19 or other complications, she can be supported to safely provide her baby with breast milk in a way possible, and

acceptable to her such as expressing milk, donor human milk, wet nursing (another woman breastfeeds the child) or infant formula milk with safe measures ([www.nhp.gov.in](http://www.nhp.gov.in)).

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## **STATUS OF WOMEN IN LIBRARY PROFESSION**

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### **Abstract:**

The paper throws light on the status of women librarians from various angles. The paper discusses the gender inequalities inherent in the various human resource practices, such as, selection and recruitment, role assignments, training, pay, performance evaluation, promotion and termination. The relation among the gender, technology and libraries has been dealt with vividly. The fact of women's lagging behind in IT sector has been shown with the help of statistical data and analysis. The remedy of women's discrimination in libraries has been discussed. The most essential necessity is of changing the organizational culture so that the women can be represented properly in IT sector.

**Keywords:** Women Librarian, gender inequalities, gender discrimination, diversity initiatives, information technology, HR policy.

### **Introduction:**

A librarian is traditionally concerned with collection of books as is evident from the etymology of the word 'librarian' from the Latin word 'liber' meaning "book". He/she is a person who works professionally in the library providing access to information and helps in information literacy programmes. A librarian keeps on continually adapting himself or herself with the social and technological needs. He or she may deal with information in many formats including books, electronic resources, audio and video recordings, newspapers, magazines, maps, manuscripts, photographs and other graphic materials, bibliographic databases, web-based digital resources, etc. He or she may also provide with computer training, technical assistance to physically challenged people, coordinate with community groups to host public programs and help in locating community resources.

Olivia Crosby described librarians as "information experts in the information age". Specific duties of librarians vary according to the size and type of the library. Librarians may be of the following types:

- Archivists can be librarians who deal with archival materials such as manuscripts.
- Collection development or acquisition librarians monitor the selection and acquisition of books.
- Electronic resources librarians manage the databases.
- School librarians work as teachers, information technology specialists and uphold literacy.
- Instruction librarians teach the users how to identify, evaluate and use information in face to face classes or through online system.

Outreach librarians are entrusted with providing library and information services to the underrepresented groups such as people with disabilities, home bound adults and seniors, homeless and rural communities, etc. In academic libraries, outreach librarians work for first-generation college students, minorities, etc. Reference or research librarians provide the direction on the use of electronic and other information resources with the help of a structured conversation known as reference interview.

Experienced librarians take up the managerial responsibilities. They are concerned with planning of the library and its relationship with its parent organization.

### **Gender inequalities in the workplace**

Organizational gender inequalities are a complex phenomenon that is evident in organizational structures, processes and practices. Some of the gender inequalities inherent within human resources (HRs) practices affect the women harmfully. The reason is that HRs practices such as, policies, decision-making and the implementation affect the hiring, training, pay and promotion of women. The disadvantages of lower pay, status and opportunities at work and the experiences of being stigmatized, affect the women's physical and psychological stress, physical and mental health, job satisfaction ,organizational commitment and over all their performance. Institutional discrimination can occur in each type of HR policy such as selection and recruitment, role management, training, pay, performance appraisal, promotion and termination. If the method used for performance appraisal systematically favours men over women, then gender discrimination can be formalized into the HR policy. For example, "face time" is an important performance measuring system which rewards employees who are at the office for a longer period of time. Women make flexible work arrangements more than the men although very often women give more quality time than men. As such, they fail to perform well with regard to "face time" and often face penalties. Consequently, they become victims of gender discrimination.

Women become victims of personal discrimination in each type of HR-related decision-making, such as, selection and recruitment, role assignments, training, pay, performance evaluation, promotion and termination. In male-typed tasks or believed to be that for males, women face personal discrimination and are less selected when compared to their male counterparts. Organizations can take steps to reduce gender discriminations in respect of its HR policies. Organizations can develop diversity initiatives which include the change in the composition of workforce consisting of the policies to recruit, retain and develop employees from underrepresented groups. Diversity can be strengthened by inculcating HR policies that reward managers who recruit more diverse personnel. Organizations that offer its managers incentives to identify and develop successful female candidates for promotion are more liable to develop diverse talents. An organization which is endeavouring to innovate and grow can opt for diversity initiatives since diverse groups have multiple solutions on a problem helping to develop a more noble solution of a problem. This approach in turn gives better opportunities to women for recruitment in these organizations.

Gender discrimination in an organization can also occur from work-family conflict. Work-family conflict is a type of conflict which occurs when the demands of the work role interferes with the demands of the family role or vice versa. Women are more adversely affected by this type of conflict. Work-family conflict results in mental stress, illness-related problems, etc. Family friendly HR policies which help women differentially can be adopted for reducing this type of conflict. For example, flexible work arrangements, provision of childcare, elderly care, paid maternity leave can help in reducing work-family conflict for the working mothers. The family friendly HR policies can be applied to organizational strategy, leadership, culture and climate which can attract more women in top leadership and increase the number of women employees in all departments.

Gender discrimination in HR policies relating to personnel decisions (i.e., recruitment and promotion policies) can be decreased if a job analysis is taken up on the appropriate knowledge and skills required for a particular position. This would ensure that the qualities required for an ideal employee for a particular position are based on the accurate knowledge of the job and not on stereotype gender biased knowledge about the job.

### **Gender discrimination in library and information science research**

According to the data available from the paper entitled, 'Gender Disparity Among Indian Library and Information Science Professionals: a 20 year sample of publications from 1999-2018', by Parabhoi, Sahu, Dewey and Parabhoi which has used Scopus database, the statistics of the number of articles published by year and first author gender from 1999-2018 is given below:

**Table 1: Number of articles published by year and first author gender from 1999-2018**

<b>Year</b>	<b>No. of Documents</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1999	11	09	81.81	02	18.18
2000	10	08	80	02	20
2001	13	13	100	00	0
2002	19	18	94.73	01	5.26
2003	25	21	84	04	16
2004	20	14	70	06	30
2005	20	17	85	03	15
2006	27	21	77.78	06	22.22
2007	23	12	52.18	11	47.82
2008	32	19	59.38	13	40.62
2009	39	22	56.41	17	43.58
2010	58	36	62.07	22	37.93
2011	68	45	66.18	23	33.82
2012	102	81	79.41	21	20.58
2013	113	91	80.53	22	19.46
2014	137	106	77.37	31	22.62
2015	124	96	77.41	28	22.58
2016	110	83	75.45	27	24.54
2017	127	91	71.65	36	28.34
2018	117	84	71.8	33	28.2
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>1195</b>	<b>887</b>	<b>75.15</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>24.85</b>

It is seen from Table 1 that the percentage of contribution of the males as first author from 1999 to 2018 is much higher than the females every year. The year 2001 is most noticeable with the male contribution as first author as 100% and the female contribution as the first author as 0%. Again, the year 2007 shows much increase in the female percentage as first author resulting in 47.82% as compared to the previous year, i.e., 2006, in which the percentage of female contribution as first author was only 22.22%.

**Table 2: Most prolific male author**

Sr. No.	Male Author	No. of Papers	H-Index	Rank
1	Gupta, B.M.	23	7	1
2	Kumar S.	17	5	2
3	Bhardwaj R.K.	16	5	3
4	Gul S.	14	4	5
5	Prathap G	13	6	6
6	Khan A.M.	13	3	6
7	K.C. Garg	12	3	7
8	Ram S.	12	3	7
9	Gupta D.K.	12	2	7
	Above 3 authors	200		
	Double authors	396		
	Single authors	291		

**Table 3: Most prolific female author**

Sr. No.	Female Author	No. of Papers	H-Index	Rank
1	Tripathi M.	13	5	1
2	Kaur A.	8	3	2
3	Anuradha K.T.	6	2	3
4	Ghosh M.	6	4	3
5	Sawant S.	6	3	3
6	Sheeja N.K.	6	2	3
7	Hirawade M.A.	5	1	4
8	Kaur H.	5	1	4
9	Saxena S.	5	2	4
	Above 3 authors	57		
	Double authors	142		
	Single authors	109		

It is evident from Table 2 that out of 887 papers with male as the first author, B. M. Gupta is the most prolific male author with 23 papers in his credit. Table 3 shows that out of 308 papers as female as the first author, M. Tripathi is the most prolific female author with 13 papers in her credit. From Tables 2 & 3, the comparison between H-index of the male and female first

authors shows that the H-index of the male first authors are comparatively higher than that of the female first authors.

**Table 4: Top ten journals published in by male authors**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Name of the Journals</b>	<b>No. of Publications</b>	<b>%</b>
1	DESIDOC Journal of Library and Information Technology	221	24.92
2	Annals of Library and Information Studies	155	17.47
3	International Information and Library Review	65	7.33
4	Scientometrics	58	6.54
5	Electronic Library	53	5.98
6	Library Hi Tech News	34	3.83
7	Malaysian Journal of Library and Information Science	35	3.95
8	Library Review	26	2.93
9	Program	18	2.03
10	Collection Building	21	2.37
-	Other		

**Table 5: Top ten journals published in by female authors**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Name of the Journals</b>	<b>No. of Publications</b>	<b>%</b>
1	DESIDOC Journal of Library and Information Technology	74	24.03
2	International Information and Library Review	42	13.64
3	Annals of Library and Information Studies	34	11.04
4	Scientometrics	15	4.87
5	Electronic Library	14	4.55
6	Library Hi Tech News	11	3.57
7	Library Review	11	3.57
8	Program	11	3.57
9	Library Management	08	2.60
10	Malaysian Journal of Library and Information Science	07	2.27
-	Other		

Tables 4 and 5 show the top ten journals of publication by men and women respectively during the period, 1999-2018. It is seen that both the males and the females published most frequently in the ‘DESIDOC Journal of Library and Information Technology’ with 24.92% of articles by men and 24.03% of articles by women. However, there are some differences with males contributing 2.375% of their articles in the journal, ‘Collection Building’ while this journal is not among the top ten journals in cases of female authors. Again, 2.60% of the articles by the female first authors were published in the journal, ‘Library Management’ which received no contribution from the male first authors during the period, 1999-2018.

**Table 6: National and international publications by gender**

<b>Publications</b>	<b>Female First Authors</b>	<b>Male First Authors</b>	<b>Proportion of All Female First Author Articles</b>	<b>Proportion of All Male First Author Articles</b>	<b>Total Publications</b>
National	108	376	108/308=35%	376/887=42%	484(41%)
International	200	511	200/308=65%	511/887=58%	711(59%)
Total	308	887	100%	100%	1195

Table 6 shows the numbers of contributions in national and international journals in cases of female and male first authors during 1999-2018. It is seen that 108 articles were published by the female first authors as compared to 376 articles by the male first authors in the national journals. Similarly, 200 articles were contributed by the female first authors as compared to 511 articles by the male first authors in the international journals. Thus, again it is evident that the male contributions as the first authors in the national and the international journals are higher than the female contributions as the first authors.

**Relation among gender, technology and libraries:**

Information technology (IT) is important to different organizations including the libraries. But, it is generally found that men build up the major workforce in the IT sector. Researches in the field of sociology, psychology and women studies highlight the organizational and social barriers that inhibit the women from entering the IT sector. If the causes of women’s lagging behind in information technology can be ascertained, then measures can be taken up to improve the position of women in IT field. Technology, besides producing products and services also affects the society, culture, our ability to work and communicate. As computer becomes more and more significant in our homes and workplaces, participation in the development and use of information technology has become vital. Libraries need to provide with products and

services which are accessible by a large number of clientele. IT has become vital in libraries but still women are lagging behind men in case of information technology. Several cultural and social biases inhibit women from taking leading role in IT.

Statistics and analysis in the IT field make evident the discrepancies between the compensation and managerial level of men and women.

According to Association of Research Libraries (ARL) statistics from 2004-2008, males were more employed as heads of computer systems department within the libraries than females. The salaries were also higher in these cases for the male employees. The female employees were paid less than their male counterparts despite the fact that they had more experience in the field except in 2004-2005. In 2007-2008, it is evident that the salary of the female employees was slightly lagging behind from their male counterparts though they had the same years of experience.

**Table 7: Library computer systems department heads (ARL Report)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Department Heads</b>	<b>Salary</b>	<b>Years in Field</b>
2004-05	Women	32	76,764	18.9
	Men	60	76,060	16.9
2005-06	Women	32	78,767	19.4
	Men	52	79,680	18.4
2006-07	Women	26	81,435	18.2
	Men	52	82,409	17.6
2007-08	Women	27	87,107	18.8
	Men	51	87,136	18.8

It is again presumed that authors of papers published in technology oriented journals would have more interests and expertise in technology. ‘Information Technology and Libraries’ is the journal of Library Information Technology Association, division of the American Library Association (ALA). ‘The Journal of Information Science & Technology’ (JASIS&T) is an official publication of American Society for Information Science and Technology. ‘D-lib Magazine’, an electronic journal on digital library research and development is published by the non-profit Corporation for National Research Initiatives (CNRI). ‘Computers in Libraries’ is published by Information Today and includes case studies and how-we-did-it articles and is not peer-reviewed. The journal, ‘Library Hi Tech’ is published by Emerald and is peer-reviewed.

From the statistics for the years 2006 and 2007, as published in Melissa Lamont’s article, ‘Gender Technology and Libraries’ published in the journal, ‘Information Technology and Libraries’ in September, 2009, it is evident that men publish at a higher rate than women as shown in the table below except for the journal, ‘ Computer in Libraries’ :

**Table 8: Gender of authors in technology journals, 2006-07**

Publication	Articles	Female Authors		Male Authors	
		#	%	#	%
Computer in Libraries	57	51	61.4	32	38.6
D-Lib Magazine	92	83	38.6	132	61.4
Information Technology & Libraries	43	28	33	57	67
JASIS &T	354	244	30.3	560	69.7
Library Hi-Tech	91	63.....	41.2	90.....	58.8
Totals	637	469	35	871	65

In not only libraries but in other workplaces also, man holds more IT positions than women. According to Rasmussen and Hapnes, women will bring diversity and different outlooks to IT field. The products and services produced by diverse workforce will appeal to the broader market.

Technology is pervasive throughout the library and the libraries develop basic IT skills as requirements of their employment. Sometimes they develop advanced computing skills to manage the lack of technical support, to develop new services or for professional and personal interest. Correspondingly, technologists learn the library concepts, such as, ‘description’ and ‘classification’. Occupational segregation occurs when positions with similar educational qualifications but with different title and location within an organization are valued differently. In libraries occupational segregation occurs between the traditional library departments and IT departments. Libraries are mainly females while the IT workers are predominantly males. The result is that gendered segregation occurs for the libraries.

According to the research by Adam et al. (‘Being an ‘It’ in IT: Gendered Identities in IT,’ European Journal of Information Systems 15, no. 4 (2006): 368-78), women want to identify themselves with a larger group within the organization and not IT. Women have a tendency of underestimating their technical skills.

Sometimes women underestimate their technical abilities and want to disassociate themselves with the IT environment because of the IT organizational culture. Technical jobs

require longer and irregular hours leading to the assumption that family and home responsibilities may be hampered. In Western cultures, the computing profession is linked with masculinity and power. Socioeconomic factors, geographic and ethnic differences affect the desires of men and women to enter the technological field.

### **Conclusion:**

It is evident from the above analysis that the gender disparity is prevalent in the field of library and information science. The female authors may be lagging behind their male counterparts in the field of research and publication due to their family obligations besides their professional duties and responsibilities. It is the duty of their male colleagues as well as the male members of their families to cooperate with them so that they can increase their research and publication outputs.

The under representation of women in IT can be remedied by means of greater educational opportunities for women. Some organizational, societal and cultural concepts inhibit the women from entering the IT sector. The librarians should attempt to transform the organizational culture instead of emphasizing on the number of women working in IT. The librarianship and IT have much in common. Nowadays, the skills of the librarians and technologists are being blended. The best of classic library theory and practice and IT can together develop a dynamic and diverse workforce. Thus, gender discrimination can be avoided in the libraries and the women can be properly represented.

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## हिंदी की कहानियों में नारी चित्रण

विजय भास्कर लावणे

महात्मा गांधी महाविद्यालय, अहमदपुर

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साहित्य में नारी के विविध रूप सामने आते हैं। क्योंकि साहित्य समाज का दर्पण होता है। नारी समाज का अभिन्न अंग है। नारी हर समय घर और समाज के लिए निरंतर संघर्ष करती नजर आती है। प्रेमचंद ने ईदगाह कहानी में अमीना का, डाई आखर प्रेम का कहानी में जयन्ती शास्त्री का, कृष्णा सोबती ने सिक्का बदल गया कहानी में षाहनी का, मैत्रीयी पुश्या ने ललमनिया कहानी में मौहरो का आदी कहानीयों में नारी के विविध रूप उजागर किए हैं। बेटी, पत्नी, बहन, माँ आदी कई रूपों में कहानीयों में नारी दिखाई देती है।

### ईदगाह :

प्रेमचंद ईदगाह कहानी में दिखाया है कि रमजान के पूरे तीस रोजों के बाद ईद थी। सुबह-सुबह ईदगाह जाने की तैयारी शुरू थी। तीन कोस का पैदल रास्ता था चारों तरफ प्रसन्नता थी। चार-पाँच साल का गरीब सूरत, दुबला पतला लडका, पीछले वर्ष ही उसके माता-पिता इस दुनिया से हमेशा के लिए चले गए ऐसा एक बालक हामीद अपनी बुढ़ी दादी अमीना के पास रहता है। अमीना हमेशा पोते के बारे में ही सोचती है उसके मन में कई प्रश्न आते हैं, कि मेरा पोता इतने दूर कैसे पैदल चलेगा वह अमीर के बच्चे होंगे वह मेरे पोते को खिलोने दिखाएँगे, मेवा मिठाई खाइंगे पर अमीना के पास तो पैसे नहीं थे, तब अमीना रोने लगी तब छोटा हमीद कहता है मैं पैदल जाने को तैयार हूँ। अमीना ने कपडे सिकर कुछ पैसे बचाए थे परवह बहुत कम थे वह कहती है घर में कुछ तो पकाना पड़ेगा पर हामीद को भी तो कुछ पैसे देने पड़ेगे तबवह उसे तीन पैसे ही देती है पर उसका मन हामीद को ईदगाह भेजने के लिए तैयार नहीं होता वह मन में ही कहती है “अमीना उसे यो न जाने देगी नन्हीं सी जान। तीन कोस चलेगा कैसे! पैर में छाले पड जायेंगे। जूते भी तो नहीं हैं।” (१) इससे समझने आता है कि एक दादी अपने पोते का कितना खयाल करती है। खुद बुढ़ी है पर पोते को हर खुषी देना भी चाहती है उसे कुछ भी पीडा नहीं होनी चाहिए यही सोचती है।

जब हामीद ईदगाह से आता है तो उसके हाथ में चिमटा होता है वह देखकर अमीना कहती है दोपहर हो गई कुछ भी खाया पिया नहीं क्या? और छाती पीटने लगनी है क्या लाया चिमटा पर जब हामीद बताता है कि रोटीया बनाते समय तुम्हारे हाथ जलजाते थे इसकारण चिमटा लाया तबवह राने ही लगी और दामन फैलाकर हामीद के लिए दुआएँ देने लगी इस कहानी में एक दादी को अपने पोते के प्रति कितना लगाव है। परिस्थिति कुछ भी हो पर अमीना बुढ़ी होकर भी अपने पोते को खुष देखना चाहती है।

### डाई आखर प्रेम का :

मालती जोशी ने अपनी कहानी डाई आखर प्रेम का इसमें मीस जयन्ती शास्त्री नामक अध्यापिका का चित्रण किया है। जब अध्यापिका पढाती है तो कुछ लडकिया शरारत करती है शेफाली नामक लडकी बडी शरारत होती है। वह हमेशा मीस जयन्ती के पीरीयड में कुछ न कुछ शरारत करती है। तब एक दिन मीस जयन्ती शास्त्री को एक चीड़ी नोटबुक में मिलती है पढने पर किर्ती ने कहा यह गलत है तब सब उसे हसते हैं तब जयन्ती शास्त्री कहती है तुम्हारे मानसीक गठन के लिए आचार व्यवहार के लिए अच्छे संस्कारों

के लिए तुम्हारे माता-पिता महाविद्यालय भेजते हैं इससे उसकी छात्रों के प्रति जिम्मेदारी स्पष्ट होती है। इससे समझता है की जयंती शास्त्री एक सच्ची अध्यापिका थी।

एक दिन नोटिस आयी मीस शास्त्री की माँ का देहांत हुआ तब क्लास की लडकीया मीस शास्त्री की घर आयी तब वहा मिसेस वर्मा उनके घर में थी तब लडकीयों ने पुछा यह मॉडम जब मुंबई गई तो यह बुढा- बुढी कौन है। तब मिसेस वर्मा बताती है वह मिस शास्त्री के मंगेतर दलजीत के माता पिता है। शास्त्री का दलजीत से विवाह तैय था , पर वह सैनिक था देश सेवा करता था, माँ बाप की अकेली संतान था, हमेषा अपने माता-पिता की सेवा करना चाहता था। शास्त्री ने दलजीत से शादी की जीद करने लगी पर उसने बताया जंग से लौटकर सोचेंगे। पर जंग से लौटा दलजीत का समान, वह षहीद हुआ। वह कई दिन रोती रही पर अचानक उसे इस संसार में एकदम अकेले असहाय छुट गए दलजीत के माता-पिता याद आए और उसने आप को दलजीत के घर को ही समर्पित कर दिया। अपने पिता को कहा आपके तो और भी बच्चे हैं पर इनको देखने वाला कोई नहीं। वे लोग मुझे बहु नहीं तो बेटी के रूप में तो स्वीकार करेंगे। बस “तब से उसका यही घर है, यही माता-पिता है। विवाह की बात उठती है तो वह कह देती है, इन दोनों प्राणियों समेत जो मुझे स्वीकार करेगा मैं उसी का वरण करुंगी।” (२) इस कारण मीस शास्त्री की शादी नहीं हुई है। यह बाते सुनकर सारी षरारती लडकिया शांत होती है। कितना त्याग है। यह देखकर तो कुछ लडकियों को तो रोना आता है।

महाविद्यालयीन छात्रा तो हमेशा खूष रहना चाहते हैं पर मीस शास्त्री उन्हें सही रास्ता दिखाना चाहती है। दलजीत जो होनेवाला पती था उसके प्रेम के लिए कितना त्याग करती है एक सेना के जवान का युध करते समय अगर मृत्यु होती है तो उसके माता-पिता को संभालने वाला कोई नहीं होता तब मीस शास्त्री सैनिक के परिवार के प्रती पूरा समर्पण करती है। उदासी से भरे जीवन जीने वाले बुढे दम्पती के जीवन में मीस शास्त्री उजाला लाती है।

### सिक्का बदल गया :

कृष्णा सोबती ने सिक्का बदल गया इस कहानी में षाहनी के द्वारा देश विभाजन की त्रासदी को दिखाया है शाहनी एक अमीर जमींदार की पत्नी थी। उसके पति की गाँव में बडी इज्जत होती थी उसकी दूर-दूर गाँव तक फैली जमीन थी। जीसमें साल में तीन फसल होती थी। उसकी कोई औलाद नहीं थी उसने एक मुस्लिम बच्चे षेरे को गोद लिया जीसकी माँ इस दूनिया में नहीं थी षेरे को बडा करके उसकी षाहनीने शादी भी कर दी थी। देश विभाजन के समय झगडे होने लगे षेरे ने कई खून किए तब षाहनी उसे समझाती है पर वह नहीं सुनता। हालाकी वह उसके ही दिए मकान में रहता है।

एक दिन सारे गली वाले उसकी हवेली को लूटने की योजना बनाते हैं। तब षाहनी को थानेदार, षेरा सब ट्रक में बैठने के लिए मजबूर करते हैं। शाहनी के मन में आता है आज सिक्का बदलते ही आजतक मेरे अन्नपर जीने वाले मुझे ही मेरे हवेली से बहार निकाल रहे हैं। हवेली के बहार कई भीड जमा हुई थी सारा गाँव शाहनी की तरफ देख रहा था। दाऊद खाँ ने शाहनी से बोला कुछ साथ रखना हो तो रख लो कुछ बाँध लो सोना-चाँदी। तब शांत स्वर में शाहनी बोली सोना-चाँदी तो आप लोगो के लिए है, कहकर शाहनी आगे जाने लगती है फीरसे वही कहता है कुछ नकद ही रख लो। वक्त का कुछ पता नहीं, तब शाहनी कहती है, ‘ नकदी प्यारी नहीं यहाँ की नकदी यहीं रहेगी। उसी समय उसका मानस पुत्र कहता है देर हो रही है इस वाक्य से शाहनी चौक जाती है। उसके मनमें फीरसे प्रण आया इस हवेली में रानी बनकर मैं आयी थी पर मैं रो-रोकर नहीं षान से बहार निकलेगी लडखडाते कदमों को संभालते वह डयोढी से बहार हो गई।

शाहनी ने अपना वारिस जीसे माना था उसने ही धोखा दिया था। षहानी को लगा एक बार फिर से हवेली के अंतीम दर्शन करु पर उसने सोचा सारे गाँव वालों के सामने मैं हमेशा बडी बनी रही आज क्यों छोटी बनू पीछे न देखते हुए शाहनी सिर झुकाए चल

पडी। पीछे भवन खड़ा था बच्चों, बुढ़े, मर्द-औरते सब पीछे थे ट्रक में शाहनी बैठी इस्माइल ने कहा शाहनी कुछ कह जाओ तुम्हारे मुँह से निकली असीस झूठ नहीं होती तब शाहनी ने कहा “रख तुहानू सलामत रखे बच्चा। खुशिया बक्शो।” (३) आखरी बार शेर ने शहानी के पाँव छुए तब शहानी ने बड़े दिल से कहा मेरे चाँद तेरे भाग्य जग जाए। इन सारे वाक्य से समझ में आता है नारी अपने उपर कितनी भी आच आने दो वह किसी को भी बुरा नहीं कहती। हमेशा समाज हीत चाहती है। अपने पुत्र हो या मानस पुत्र उसके प्रती सदा स्नेह बरसाती है।

### ललमनियाँ:

मैत्रेयी पुष्पा ने अपनी कहानी ललमनिया में एक गरीब नारी की व्यथा और दर्द को स्पष्ट किया है। ललमनिया की प्रमुख पात्र मौहरो एक लोककला को जीवित रखना चाहती है। उसकी माँ भी इस कला को जीवित रखने के पुरे प्रयास करती है और अपने बेटी मौहरो को ललमनिया नाच सिखाती है। जब मौहरो यह नाच दिखाती है तब जोगेश एक अमीर घर का बेटा अपने प्रेमजाल में उसे फसाकर उसकी विधवा माँ से उसका हाथ माँगने के लिए अपने जीजा के साथ आता है। तब उसकी माँ कहती है हम इतने गरीब और आप इतने अमीर तब जोगेश बड़ी-बड़ी बातें करके विश्वास दिलाता है की शादी के बाद इसे रानी बनाकर रखूंगा। शादी के बाद ससुराल वालो ने मौहरो को चौखट तक छूने न दी। ससुराल वालों ने कहा “कहा से उठाकर लाया है इस नटिनी को? इसका नाच पसंद आ गया? पर हमें पता लग गया है कि नाचकर ही पेट भरती है।” (४) इसके बाद जोगस ने उसे गाँव के बहार एक छोटेसे मकान में उसे कुछ दिन रखा। वहा रात में छुपकर आने लगा कुछ दिन बाद उसने कहा मैं काम की तलाश में शहर जाता हू वहाँ से आने के बाद तुम्हें लेकर जाऊंगा परवह वापस आया ही नहीं पर इधर नौ महीने के बाद मौहरो एक बच्ची को जन्म देती है।

समाज भी ऐसे रिश्ते को मान्य नहीं करता तब समाज का विरोध सहकर वह बेटी को बड़ा करती है। मेहनत मजदूरी करके अपनी कला को भी जीवित रखती है। एक दिन अचानक एक शादी में वह अपने बेटी को लेकर जाती है वहा मौहरो ललमनिया नाच दिखाती है तबवह दुल्हा जोगेश को देखकर पांत ही हो जाती है। उसको बड़ा दर्द होता है पर वह कुछ भी नहीं कर सकती ,जिसके शादी में नाच रही थी वह उसका पति ही था। वह पूरी तरह से ठगी गयी थी। पुरुशसत्ताक व्यवस्था में बेचारी मौहरो गरीबी, ग्रामीण परिवेश, जीने के कुछ भी साधन नहीं होने के कारण सारी सत्यता समझकर भी कुछ भी नहीं कर सकती लेखिकाने ग्रामीण नारी का दर्द आह और कराह इस कहानी में चित्रित किया है।

इन सब कहानीयों में अलग- अलग दृष्टी से नारी का चित्रण किया गया है। ईदगाह कहानी की अमीना गरिब होकर भी अपने पोते को सब खुशिया देना चाहती है साथ में पोते पर अच्छे संस्कार भी करती है पोता भी मेले में कुछ न खाकर दादी की लिए चिमटा लाता है। पर दादी तो हमेशा मेरा पोता खूष किसतरहसे रहे यही चाहती है। ढाई आखर प्रेम का इस कहानी की मीस जयंती शास्त्री का चरित्र त्रिचण करते समय दिखाया है नारी प्रेम त्याग की मूर्ती है यह दिखा है।जयंती का त्याग मय जीवन दलजीत के परिवार के प्रती समर्पण भावना, प्रेम ही मानवीय संबंधों में निर्मित होने वाले जहर को नश्ट कर देता है। नारी का यहा एक गुण दिखाई देता है कि जहाँ प्रेम होता है वहा समर्पण भी होता है। इस कहानी में लेखिकाने नारी की संवेदना का सफलता पूर्वक चित्रण किया है।

सिक्का बदल गया इस कहानी में शाहनी का एक समय खास और बड़ा रुतबा था। वह अमीर थी उसने अनाथ बच्चे शेरों को अपना माना पर आखिर में वह भी साथ नहीं देता। शाहनी को आखिर गाँव छोडना पडा पर उसने अपने साथ सोना रुपये कुछ नहीं लिया सब शेरों को छोड चली जाती है। पर कभी किसी को बुरा नहीं कहती अपने उची प्रतिमा को कभी छोटा नहीं होने देती

शहानी हमेशा अपनी पीडा को दबाकर रखती है यह हर नारी की खासियत होती है वैसा ही शहानी का चित्रण है। खूद पर इतना बडा संकट आने पर भी वह सबके लिए खसे दुआ मागती है। शोरो को अच्छा आर्शावाद दिए जाती है। नारी की महानता लेखिकाने शाहनी के द्वारा उजागर की है। ललमनियाँ कहानी की प्रमुख नारी पात्र मौहरों अपनी लोककला को जीवित रखने का पूरा प्रयास करती है। एक सच्ची कलाकर होती है पर ग्रामीण परिवेष में रहने के कारण पुरुष सत्ताक व्यवस्था की वह भी शिकार होती ही है। समाज विरोध को सहकर बेटी को जन्म देने पर उसे पति द्वारा अस्वीकार करना और आखिर पती की षादी में नृत्य दिखानों के लिए मजबूर होना पडता है, उसे परवह विवाह रोक नहीं सकती। यहा लेखिका ने समाज से ठगी गयी स्त्री पुरुशसत्ता का वर्चस्व ग्रामीण नारी का दर्द, आह, और त्रासदी को मौहरों के द्वारा उजागर किया है। हर कहानी में नारी के विविध रूप सामने लाने का प्रयास सफलता पूर्वक किया गया है।

**संदर्भ :**

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साहित्य सरिता/जोगेंद्र सिंह बिसेन/ओरियंट लॉगमैन/प्रथम संस्करण २००८ /पृष्ठ ६३  
साहित्य सौरभ/सं. सुजितसिंह परिहार/राजकमल प्रकाशन/प्रथम संस्करण २०१९/पृष्ठ ४९  
साहित्य भारती/सं. अजय टेंगसे/वाणी प्रकाशन/प्रथम संस्करण २०१३ /पृष्ठ १७०

## भारत के राष्ट्र निर्माण में महिलाओं का योगदान

अंजुम नाहिद रऊफ खान

यशवंतराव चौहान कला को विज्ञान महाविद्यालय,

मंगरुलपीर, जिला वाशिम

भारत के गौरवशाली इतिहास में महिलाओं का महत्वपूर्ण योगदान रहा है महिलाओं ने हर क्षेत्र में आगे बढ़ कर चुनौतीपूर्ण वातावरण में अपने आप को सिद्ध किया है हमारे भारत देश में कैसी प्रतिभावान महिलाएं गुजरी हैं जिन्होंने अपने योग्यता के बल पर भारत के इतिहास को एक नया स्वरूप दिया है उन्होंने हमारे सामने एक आदर्श रखा है।

भारत में महिलाओं की परिस्थिति में पिछले कुछ सालों से महत्वपूर्ण बदलाव आए हैं भारतीय इतिहास में महिलाओं में प्राचीन काल में राज्य को संभाला है और हुकूमत भी की है रजिया सुल्तान रानी लक्ष्मीबाई सावित्रीबाई फुले महिलाओं ने अपने आप को सिद्ध किया और अपनी प्रतिभा के बल पर नए दौर की शुरुआत की महिलाओं की स्थिति को अंतिम दौर में विभाजित कर सकते हैं प्राचीन काल में महिलाओं को समानता का अधिकार था मध्यकालीन भारत में महिलाओं को निम्नतम स्तर दिया गया आधुनिक काल में महिलाएं राष्ट्रपति, प्रधानमंत्री, लोक सभा अध्यक्ष, प्रतिपक्ष की नेता आदि जैसे शीर्ष पदों पर आसीन हुई हैं।

हमारे स्वतंत्रता संग्राम के गौरवशाली दिनों से, भारतीय महिलाओं ने जीवन के हर क्षेत्र में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई है जैसे राष्ट्र निर्माण, समाज का सशक्तिकरण, देश को विकास पथ पर आगे ले जाना और स्वच्छता अभियान में देश का नेतृत्व करना। महिलाओं ने खुद को बहुत महत्वपूर्ण पदों पर पाया है और अपनी भूमिका को अत्यंत उत्कृष्टता के साथ निभाया है।

### भारत के स्वतंत्रता संग्राम में महिलाओं की भूमिका:

राष्ट्रीय आंदोलन में महिलाओं की पहली सामूहिक भागीदारी स्वदेशी आंदोलन से शुरू हुई और कुछ सीमाओं के साथ असहयोग आंदोलन के माध्यम से बढ़ती रही। सविनय अवज्ञा आंदोलन में हमने हजारों की संख्या में महिलाओं को आते देखा और शराब और कपड़े की दुकानों पर धरना देकर, धायल स्वतंत्रता सेनानियों की देखभाल करने, जेल जाने जैसी पहलों के माध्यम से राष्ट्रीय आंदोलन के प्रमुख पहलुओं का नेतृत्व किया। इसलिए, उन्होंने अपने लिए वही कमाया जो उन्हें १९५० में संविधान में मिला जो - 'वयस्क मताधिकार'; का सार्वभौमिक अधिकार था। स्वतंत्रता संग्राम के समय (विशेषकर सविनय अवज्ञा आंदोलन और भारत छोड़ो आंदोलन के दौरान) बड़ी संख्या में महिलाओं ने राष्ट्रीय जीवन में भाग लेना शुरू कर दिया और राष्ट्रीय उद्देश्य के लिए अपने निजी जीवन का बलिदान कर दिया।

### भारत की राजनीति में महिलाओं की भूमिका:

भारत को आजादी मिलने के बाद भारतीय महिलाओं ने राजनीतिक क्षेत्र में भी महत्वपूर्ण योगदान दिया है भारत की राजनीति में वह सक्रिय हुई है। १९१७ में एनी बेसेंट भारतीय कांग्रेस की अध्यक्ष बनी पहली भारतीय महिला सरोजनी नायडू अध्यक्ष बनी आजादी के बाद के युग के साथ आगे बढ़ते हुए, भारत अपनी पहली महिला प्रधान मंत्री श्रीमती इंदिरा गांधी को चुनने में

कामयाब रहा, तब भी जब पश्चिमी दुनिया ने उस समय महिला नेताओं के बारे में सोचा भी नहीं था। फिर भी भारतीय में राजनीतिक क्षेत्र में महिलाओं को इतना हिस्सा नहीं मिला है जितनी कि वह हकदार है।

आज भारतीय समाज में कामुकता बढ़ रही है आज में नैतिक मूल्यों का निरंतर व्यास हो रहा है प्रशासन में निष्क्रियता और भ्रष्टाचार बढ़ रहा है दूसरी तरफ महिलाओं पर होने वाले अत्याचारों में अधिकता हो गई है भारत को आजादी मिलने के बाद से हमारे संविधान में समान अधिकार और हक सबको प्रदान किए हैं। परंतु आज तक हमारे यहां की भारतीय महिलाओं को अधिकारों का सही उपयोग करना नहीं आया हमारे देश को तरक्की करना है तो महिलाओं की हालत में सुधार करना होगा हमारे समाज में आज पुरुष की मानसिकता को बदलना होगा मारे भारतीय समाज में शताब्दी से लव की दशा को सुधारने के लिए।

बहुत से समाज सुधारक आगे आए राजा राममोहन राय स्वामी विवेकानंद स्वर चंद्र विद्यासागर ऋषि दयानंद सरस्वती महात्मा फुले गांधीजी यदि लोगों ने महिलाओं की दशा को सुधारने के लिए प्रयत्न किए १९३५ के बाद भारत देश में स्त्री मुक्ति आंदोलन शुरू हुई है इस दौरान महिलाओं की समस्या सामने आई औरतों को इंसान बनकर जीने का अधिकार मिलना चाहिए। यार अब नहीं आया महिला यह पूरी तरह से परिवर्तित हो गई है का कार्य क्षेत्र बिल्कुल बदल गया है शिक्षण आरोग्य सामाजिक व राजकीय स्वतंत्रता समता विद्वान्यन इसका योग्य परिणाम उसके जीवन पर हुआ है – महिला आरक्षण विधेयक अब एक आवश्यकता बन गया है क्योंकि जमीनी स्तर की महिला राजनीतिक कार्यकर्ता भारतीय राजनीति में राज्य और केंद्र स्तर की भूमिका निभाने के लिए तैयार हैं। महिलाओं की मतदान भागीदारी में वृद्धि राजनीति में उनकी रुचि को प्रमाणित करती है।

हैरानी की बात यह है कि २०१० और २०१२ के विधानसभा चुनावों में मतदान प्रतिशत के मामले में महिलाओं ने पुरुषों को पछाड़ दिया था। २०१४ में अखिल भारतीय स्तर पर पुरुषों और महिलाओं के मतदान प्रतिशत के बीच का अंतर कम होकर १.५% रह गया है। यह स्वस्थ प्रवृत्ति इंगित करती है कि महिलाएं तैयार हैं, वे उत्सुक हैं, और वे राजनीतिक प्रक्रिया के महत्व को समझती हैं। यह समझना महत्वपूर्ण है कि महिलाओं का राजनीतिक प्रतिनिधित्व महत्वपूर्ण है क्योंकि इसी तरह महिलाओं से जुड़े मुद्दों और अन्य प्रमुख नीतिगत फैसलों को सही जगह मिलती है। अनुभव से पता चलता है कि जब महिलाएं महत्वपूर्ण नेतृत्व भूमिकाओं में होती हैं तो नीतियां अच्छे के लिए बदल जाती हैं।

### सामाजिक क्षेत्र में महिलाओं की भूमिका:

सौभाग्य से, महिलाओं को शैक्षणिक क्षेत्र में और शुद्ध विज्ञान के क्षेत्र में रोजगार के अवसरों या पदोन्नति में भेदभाव का सामना नहीं करना पड़ता है। बैंकिंग जैसे व्यावसायिक और वित्तीय क्षेत्रों ने कई युवा पेशेवर महिलाओं को समायोजित किया है। लेकिन समाज के निचले स्तरों पर असमानता की व्यापकता परेशान कर रही है जैसे कि ग्रामीण श्रम क्षेत्र में महिलाओं को कम भुगतान किया जा रहा है। यह भी कहा जा रहा है कि न्यूनतम मजदूरी अधिनियम कृषि और निर्माण श्रम क्षेत्रों में महिलाओं और पुरुषों के वेतन के बीच भी भेदभाव करता है। हमने यह भी देखा है कि बॉलीवुड अभिनेत्रियां जेंडर पे गैप का मुद्दा काफी उठाती हैं। महिलाओं की पोषण स्थिति के बारे में एक बहस है जो हाल ही में उठाई गई थी जब इतनी सारी महिलाओं ने भारत के लिए ओलंपिक पदक जीते थे। भारतीय महिलाओं को पोषण की –ष्टि से अपने पश्चिमी समकक्षों की तरह मजबूत नहीं माना जाता है। पुरुषों की तुलना में कम पोषण स्तर की स्पष्ट सीमाओं के बावजूद, भारतीय महिलाओं ने ओलंपिक में असाधारण रूप से अच्छा प्रदर्शन किया।

स्वच्छ भारत अभियान में भी, महिलाएं आगे बढ़ रही हैं क्योंकि हम अक्सर ऐसे विज्ञापन देखते हैं जहां महिलाएं शादी के प्रस्तावों को अस्वीकार कर देती हैं जब परिवारों के घर में शौचालय नहीं होता है। इसलिए, हम देख सकते हैं कि स्वच्छता और स्वच्छता के क्षेत्र में महिलाओं को परिवार के भीतर जिम्मेदारी सौंपी जाती है। इस उपलब्धि को चिह्नित करने के लिए, केंद्र सरकार स्वच्छ भारत मिशन में महिलाओं की भूमिका को उजागर करने और उनके नेतृत्व को पहचानने और महिला स्वच्छता विजेताओं को सम्मानित करने के लिए स्वच्छ शक्ति सप्ताह मना रही महिलाओं को शिक्षित किया जाए महिलाओं की समाज में हालत सुधारने के लिए जरूरी है कि दिशा में आगे कदम बढ़ाया जाए महिलाओं की प्रतिभा बनाने के लिए उन्हें प्रोत्साहन दिया जाए।

महिलाओं को हर क्षेत्र में समर्थन दे दी जाए 'नई स्त्री' या 'नए युग की नारी' कुछ और नहीं बल्कि वह उन पुरातन परंपराओं का प्रतिकार है जिसने उसे वर्षों तक उपेक्षा के हाशिये पर किनारे रखा। नई स्त्री हर उन बेडियों को तोड़ने का साहस रखती है जिसने उसकी शारीरिक-मानसिक स्वच्छंदता पर बंधन आरोपित किये। नई स्त्री हर वो काम करेगी जो उसकी मर्जी पर निर्भर है।

#### संदर्भ ग्रंथ:

राष्ट्रीय महिला आयोग और भारतीय नारी लेखक ऐं अंसारी

महिलाओं के मौलिक अधिकार रमा शर्मा

एस के मिश्रा

विकीपीडिया इंटरनेट

## भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम की ऐतिहासिक पृष्ठभूमि के अवलोकन का अध्ययन एक दृष्टि में

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शोध सार:

जीवन बीमा मनुष्य के आर्थिक संकटों एवं जोखिमों को दूर करता है। जिस प्रकार आज मनुष्य को जीवन यापन के लिए रोटी, कपड़ा, मकान की आवश्यकता होती है उसी प्रकार आज जीवन बीमा भी जीवन यापन का महत्वपूर्ण हिस्सा बन चुका है जिसका होना बहुत ही आवश्यक है।

‘मनुष्य के जीवन में पल पल पर जोखिमों को कम करने का साधन ही जीवन बीमा है।’

जीवन बीमा एक ऐसा अनुबंध है जिसके अंतर्गत बीमा कंपनी बीमादार को प्रीमियम के बदले में बीमादार की मृत्यु होने पर अथवा परिपक्वता की अवधि पर उसे या उसके द्वारा चुने हुए उसके उत्तराधिकारी को बीमित रकम देने का उत्तरदायित्व ग्रहण करता है। सार्वभौमिक रूप से जीवन बीमा एक ऐसा अनुबंध है जो अनिश्चितता को निश्चितता में बदलकर जोखिम को कम करता है और परिवारपालक कि दुर्भाग्यवश मृत्यु हो जाने पर उसके परिवार को यथासंभव सहायता प्रदान करता है।

अप्रत्याशित घटनाओं (जैसे आग लगना, भूस्खलन होना, बाढ आना, बिजली गिरना, भूकंप आना, कोरोनावायरस एवं अन्य महामारी का आना) से होने वाली आर्थिक हानियों के जोखिम को कम करने का साधन ही जीवन बीमा है।

जीवन बीमा का प्रारंभ सर्वप्रथम इंग्लैंड में 16वीं शताब्दी में हुआ सबसे पहली जीवन बीमा पॉलिसी इंग्लैंड में सन 1583 में विलियम गिवनस नाम के व्यक्ति को 1 वर्ष की अवधि के लिए निर्गत हुई थी। आरंभिक काल में अल्पकाल के लिए ही जीवन बीमा किया जाता था। भारत में जीवन बीमा का कारोबार सन 1818 में प्रारंभ हुआ। इसके पश्चात अनेकों अनेक परिवर्तन के फलस्वरूप सरकार ने जीवन बीमा का राष्ट्रीयकरण 1 सितंबर 1956 को कर दिया और जिसका एकमात्र अधिकार भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम को दिया।

**मुख्य शब्द:** जीवन बीमा, जोखिम, प्रीमियम, मृत्यु, आर्थिक संकट, अनेकानेक।

भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम की ऐतिहासिक पृष्ठभूमि:

आज मनुष्य की जान और उसकी जमा पूंजी को अनेकानेक तरह से महाविनाश या बर्बादी होने का भय बना रहता है। कौन जानता है कि कब किसकी मृत्यु हो जाए? भविष्य अनिश्चितता का खेल है। हो सकता है कि आज कल्पनाओं के सागर में आशाओं की, अद्वितीय किरणों में हिलोरे ले रही हो, परिवार और बच्चों की खुशियों के लिए भरपूर प्रयत्न के बावजूद ऐसी स्थिति उत्पन्न हो जाए जिससे कि कल उनके आंसू पहुंचने में भी हम असहाय हो जाएं और इस दुनिया से प्रस्थान करना पड़े। वर्तमान समय में अक्सर सोचना पड़ता है कि अमुक व्यक्ति अभी तो मुझसे बातचीत कर रहा था, हंस रहा था, मन से प्रफुल्लित था लेकिन अरे ! अचानक में चल बसा। जीवन का कुछ पता नहीं है, जीवन प्रत्यक्ष या अप्रत्यक्ष रूप से विविध प्रकार के संकटों से परिपूर्ण है अर्थात् मानव का भविष्य अज्ञात है। कल क्या होने वाला है? यह अनिश्चित है एक क्षण के लिए यदि यह कल्पना की जाए कि किसी परिवार में

एकमात्र रोटी कमाने वाले व्यक्ति की दुर्भाग्यवश मृत्यु हो जाए तो उस परिवार पर दुखों का पहाड़ टूट पड़ेगा। क्योंकि आय के साधन बंद हो जाने से परिवार के सभी आवश्यक कार्यों पर कुछ समय के लिए विराम लग जाता है। इसी प्रकार मकान, दुकान, जहाज, मोटर ट्रक, मोटर कार, रेल आदि के दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हो जाने पर करोड़ों रुपयों की हानि के साथ साथ क्षेत्र में अन्य को परेशानियां आ जाती हैं अतः उपरोक्त परेशानियों के साथ समझौता करने का नाम ही बीमा है।

जीवन बीमा को आज बुरे दिनों का सहारा तथा बुढ़ापे की लाठी माना जा सकता है क्योंकि यह मनुष्य को संकट आने पर बहुत ही कठिनाइयों से मुक्त करता है। यह शाश्वत सत्य है, कि जो भी इस दुनिया में आया है उसे जाना भी है अर्थात् प्रत्येक व्यक्ति को एक ना एक दिन तो इस दुनिया से जाना है मृत्यु निश्चित है लेकिन मृत्यु का समय अनिश्चित है। युवावस्था में जब किसी व्यक्ति की मृत्यु हो जाती है तो उसकी पत्नी और बच्चों को अनेकों आर्थिक संकटों का सामना करना पड़ता है। ऐसी स्थिति में जीवन बीमा उसके आर्थिक संकटों को दूर करता है अर्थात् जीवन बीमा, बीमित मृतक व्यक्ति को पुनः जीवन तो प्रदान नहीं कर सकता लेकिन मृतक व्यक्ति के परिवार वालों को बहुत से सामाजिक और आर्थिक लाभ प्रदान करने में सहायक होता है जिससे जीवन के कुछ संकट कुछ सीमा तक दूर हो जाते हैं।

‘जीवन बीमा एक ऐसा अनुबंध है जिसके अंतर्गत बीमा कंपनी बीमादार को प्रीमियम के बदले में बीमादार की मृत्यु हो जाने पर या परिपक्वता के समय उसे या उसके द्वारा चुने हुए उसके उत्तराधिकारी को बीमित रकम देने का उत्तरदायित्व ग्रहण करता है।’

जीवन बीमा का प्रारंभ इंग्लैंड में 16वीं शताब्दी में हुआ उस समय अल्पकाल के लिए ही जीवन बीमा किया जाता था। 17वीं और 18वीं शताब्दी में जीवन बीमा का कारोबार करने के लिए बहुत सी बीमा संस्थाएं स्थापित हुईं जैसे सन 1698 में मरसस कंपनी, 1699 में सोसाइटी ऑफ इंश्योरेंस फॉर विंडोज एंड ऑफर्स, 1706 में एमुकेवल सोसायटी आदि। भारत में जीवन बीमा का कारोबार सन 1818 में प्रारंभ हुआ उस समय यूरोपइन लोगों द्वारा कोलकाता में ओरिएंटल लाइफ इंश्योरेंस कंपनी स्थापना की गई। सन 1823 में मुंबई लाइफ इंश्योरेंस कंपनी, सन 1829 में मद्रास इमिटेबल लाइफ इंश्योरेंस सोसाइटी आदि बीमा कंपनियां खुली इसके पश्चात अनेक छोटी-बड़ी कंपनियां स्थापित हुईं। यह कंपनियां अंग्रेजों का ही बीमा करने में अधिक दिलचस्पी लिया करती थी, भारतीयों का बीमा बहुत सीमित मात्रा में ऊंची प्रीमियम दर पर करती थी। सुब्यवस्थित ढंग से हमारे देश में 1871 से बोम्बे म्यूचल लाइफ इंश्योरेंस सोसायटी द्वारा बीमा किया जाने लगा। इसके पश्चात जीवन बीमा के क्षेत्र में अनेकों कंपनियां खुली लेकिन सरकार को इन कंपनियों से अनेकों शिकायतें मिल रही थी तो सरकार ने जीवन बीमा कंपनियों के क्रियाकलापों को नियंत्रण करने के उद्देश्य से सन 1912 में बीमा अधिनियम पारित किया। सन 1927 में भारतीय कंपनियों के हितों को सुरक्षित रखने के उद्देश्य से भारतीय जीवन बीमा कार्यालय का संघ बना। सन 1938 में केंद्र सरकार ने बीमा अधिनियम पास करके कंट्रोलर ऑफ इंश्योरेंस के आधिपत्य में इंश्योरेंस विभाग की स्थापना की ताकि बीमा कंपनियों के विनियोग प्रबंध एवं खर्च पर प्रभावशाली ढंग से नियंत्रण रखा जा सके। सन 1950 में बीमा अधिनियम में व्यापक संशोधन कर कई प्रतिबंध लगा दिए गए जिसके परिणाम स्वरूप 1955 तक अनेकों कंपनियां बंद हो गईं और गला घोट प्रतियोगिता का अंत हो गया। भारत सरकार को जब इन कंपनियों के क्रियाकलापों से अनेकों अनेक शिकायतें मिल रही थी तब सरकार ने बीमाधारकों के हितों को ध्यान में रखते हुए, पॉलिसी धारकों को शत-प्रतिशत सुरक्षा प्रदान करने के लिए, राष्ट्र निर्माण कार्यों में जीवन बीमा निधि का उपयोग सुनिश्चित करने के लिए, प्रतियोगिता में निरर्थक प्रयत्नों को टालने के लिए, बीमा कंपनियों के धारकों को दिए जाने वाले भाग अंश को बचाने के लिए, बीमा का संदेश प्रगतिशील शहरों से ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में पहुंचाने के लिए, राष्ट्रीयकरण करना उचित समझा और सन 19 जनवरी 1956 को राष्ट्रपति ने, राष्ट्रीयकरण के उद्देश्य से अध्यादेश जारी कर दिया जो 1 जुलाई 1956 से लागू हुआ जिसके अंतर्गत सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के रूप में

भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम नामक संस्था स्थापित हुई। 1 सितंबर 1956 से भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम ने अपना कारोबार आरंभ कर दिया। भारतीय जीवन का केंद्रीय कार्यालय योगक्षेम जीवन बीमा मार्ग मुंबई में स्थित है। वर्तमान में निगम के 08 क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय दिल्ली, मुंबई, चेन्नई, कोलकाता, भोपाल, हैदराबाद, बेंगलुरु, कानपुर में हैं। निगम के 113 मंडल कार्यालय, 2048 शाखा कार्यालय, 73 ग्राहक सेवा क्षेत्र, 1401 सैटेलाइट कार्यालय 1240 छोटे कार्यालय हैं।

### जीवन बीमा की आवश्यकता:

जीवन से संबंधित जोखिमों के दुष्परिणामों से बचने के लिए जीवन बीमा एक उत्तम व्यवस्था है। प्रत्येक मनुष्य को जीवन यापन के लिए धन की आवश्यकता होती है और वह धन एकत्र करने के लिए अनेक प्रयत्न करता है क्योंकि बीमाधन से उसका एवं उसके परिवार का जीवन यापन नहीं हो सकता अर्थात् मनुष्य पर अनेक प्रकार के पारिवारिक उत्तरदायित्व होते हैं और उन उत्तरदायित्वों को पूरा करने के लिए धन की आवश्यकता होती है, इसलिए मनुष्य अनेक तरह से उधम करता है धन कमाता है और अपनी आय से अपने परिवार के लिए भरण पोषण एवं सुख सुविधा की व्यवस्था करता है। क्योंकि मनुष्य को आज के लिए ही नहीं बल्कि भावी आवश्यकता की पूर्ति के लिए धन का समुचित प्रबंध करना होता है जिसके लिए अनेक तरीकों से धन बचाता है। अतः मनुष्य कब तक जीवित रहेगा और उसकी उपार्जन सकती कब तक कायम रहेगी कोई नहीं जानता जीवन नश्वर है एवं मृत्यु निश्चित है पता नहीं किस क्षण उसकी जीवन लीला समाप्त हो जाए और उसकी मृत्यु होते ही उसके परिवार के भरण-पोषण कि आय भी समाप्त हो जाए। इस प्रकार जीवन के पल पल पर जोखिमों से सुरक्षा के लिए ही जीवन बीमा की आवश्यकता होती है।

### भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम के उद्देश्य:

भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम निम्नलिखित उद्देश्यों को ध्यान में रखते हुए अपने कार्यों का संचालन करता है:-

1. जीवन बीमा का अधिकतम प्रसार करना और वह भी विशेषतया ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में तथा सामाजिक व आर्थिक रूप से पिछड़े वर्गों में इस बात को ध्यान में रखते हुए कि हमें देश में बीमा सभी बीमा योग्य व्यक्तियों तक पहुंचाना है और मृत्यु होने की दशा में उन्हें उचित मूल्य पर पर्याप्त वित्तीय सुरक्षा प्रदान करना है।
2. बीमे के साथ जुड़ी बचत को काफी आकर्षक बनाकर जनता की बचतों को अधिक से अधिक गतिशील करना है।
3. निधि का पूंजी निवेश करते समय समस्त समाज के हितों को भूले बिना अपने बीमा दावों के प्रति मुख्य कर्तव्यों को ध्यान में रखते हुए राष्ट्रीय प्राथमिकताओं और आकर्षक लाभ के दायित्वों को ध्यान रखते हुए पूरी लगाने वालों के साथ समस्त समाज के अधिकतम हित में निधि का शुभव्यवस्थित निवेश करना।
4. व्यवसाय को परम मितव्ययता था के साथ चलाना तथा इस बात का ध्यान रखना की सारा धन बीमादारों का है।
5. व्यक्तिगत तथा सामूहिक तौर पर बीमित व्यक्तियों के ट्रस्टी के रूप में कार्य करना।
6. परिवर्तित होते हुए आर्थिक व सामाजिक वातावरण के फल स्वरूप उत्पन्न होने वाली समाज की जीवन बीमा संबंधी आवश्यकताओं को पूरा करना।
7. विनम्रता के साथ कुशल सेवा प्रदान करके बीमित व्यक्तियों के हितों में अभिवृद्धि के लिए भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम में काम करने वाले सभी व्यक्तियों को उन की अधिकतम क्षमता के अनुसार कार्यशील बनाना।

8. निगम के उद्देश्यों की उपलब्धि के लिए समर्पण के साथ अपने कर्तव्यों के पालन द्वारा निगम के सभी एजेंटों और कर्मचारियों में सहयोग, गौरव और कार्य संतुष्टि की भावना का विकास करना।

**जीवन बीमा की विशेषताएं:- (भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम की अभिकर्ता निर्देशिका के अनुसार।)**

1. बीमा बीमा करता एवं बीमा —त के मध्य एक लिखित अनुबंध होता है।
2. यह एक ऐसा अनुबंध है जिसमें बीमा करता प्रतिफल प्राप्त करने के बदले में बीमित को पूर्व निर्धारित राशि भुगतान करने का वचन देता है।
3. यह एक सहकारिक उपाय है जिसके अंतर्गत कुछ लोगों की जोखिमों को बहुत लोगों के ऊपर डाला जाता है।
4. यह निश्चित घटना के घटने पर प्रवृत्तनीय होता है।
5. यह बीमा कराने वालों को जोखिमों के विरुद्ध आर्थिक सुरक्षा प्रदान करता है।
6. यह एक व्यवसाय है जिसके अंतर्गत मानव के जीवन का बीमा संपन्न किया जाता है।
7. यह अनिश्चितता के स्थान पर निश्चित स्थापित करने के लिए एक प्रक्रिया है।

**निष्कर्ष:**

भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम विश्व की एक व्यावसायिक संस्था है जिसका आर्थिक एवं सामाजिक क्षेत्र में महत्वपूर्ण योगदान है। भारत में भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम के राष्ट्रीयकरण के पश्चात भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम द्वारा अनेक प्रकार के उत्पादों का विकास किया गया है और निगम द्वारा विभिन्न प्रकार के उत्पादों का व्यवसायीकरण किया जाता है। भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम ग्राहकों की आवश्यकताओं के अनुसार बीमा उत्पादों का विकास करता है और नए नए उत्पादों के माध्यम से ही लोगों की सेवा करता है। भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम अपने उत्पाद समाज के प्रत्येक वर्ग को ध्यान में रखते हुए तैयार करती है जिससे आम जनों को सेवा और सुरक्षा दोनों मिल सके। आज जीवन बीमा प्रत्येक व्यक्ति के लिए अभिन्न अंग बन गया है। वर्तमान समय जो कि कोरोना काल चल रहा है और यह लाखों लोगों को नील चुका है इस भयंकर महामारी के आर्थिक संकटों से उबरने के लिए भी आज जीवन बीमा बहुत ही आवश्यक हो गया है। जीवन बीमा एक ओर आर्थिक सुरक्षा तो प्रदान करता ही है साथ ही बचत करने का एक महत्वपूर्ण साधन है।

**संदर्भ सूची:**

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योजना सूचना एवं प्रसारण मंत्रालय नई दिल्ली।

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फैक्टबुक भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम मुंबई।

भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम की निर्देशिका

## उत्तर प्रदेशमधील निवडणुकीचे २०१७ व २०२२ चे तुलनात्मक अभ्यास व महिलांचा सहभाग

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प्रस्तुत शोधनिबंध फेब्रुवारी-मार्च २०२२ मधील उत्तर प्रदेश निवडणुकीचा तुलनात्मक अभ्यास या विषयावर शोध घेण्याचा प्रयत्न संशोधकांनी केला आहे. प्रस्तुत विषय हा देशाच्या सध्याच्या राजकारणाचे विश्लेषण करण्यासाठी अतिशय महत्त्वाचा आहे. पाच राज्यातील निवडणुकांमुळे वेगळीच राजकीय गणिते २०२४ लोकसभा निवडणुकांच्या अनुषंगाने मांडली जात आहेत.

प्रस्तुत शोधनिबंध हा चालू राजकीय घडामोडी वर आधारित असल्यामुळे प्रिंट मीडिया, इलेक्ट्रॉनिक मीडिया व इतर वेबसाईटच्या माध्यमातून माहिती संकलित करून शोधनिबंध पूर्ण करण्यात आला आहे. या शोधनिबंधाचे अनुषंगाने येणाऱ्या काळातील भारतीय राजकारणाची रूपरेषा कशी असेल याचा आढावा घेण्याचा प्रयत्न संशोधकांनी केला आहे. या शोधनिबंधात २०१७ मधील उत्तर प्रदेश राज्याच्या निवडणुकीचा व २०२२ मधील या पाच राज्यातील निवडणुकीचा तुलनात्मक अभ्यास संशोधकांनी केला आहे. तो पुढील प्रमाणे.

उत्तर प्रदेश हे देशातील सर्वात मोठे राज्य आहे. यात राज्यातील विधानसभा निवडणुकीचे भारताच्या पुढील राजकारणावर परिणाम व प्रभाव पडत असतो. विशेषतः २०२२ च्या लोकसभा निवडणुकीवर याचा प्रभाव पडणार आहे. उत्तर प्रदेश या राज्याच्या विधानसभा निवडणुकीचे निकाल १० मार्च २०२२ ला लागले आणि ते भाजपाच्या बाजूने लागले व दुसऱ्यांदा भाजपा २०१७ व २०२२ मध्ये सत्तेवर आली. त्यांनी एक परंपरा तोडली ती सलग दुसऱ्यांदा सत्तेवर येण्याची आहे. २०२२ च्या या राज्याच्या निवडणूक निकालानंतर योगी सरकार पुन्हा सत्तेवर आले. उत्तर प्रदेशच्या २०२२ च्या निवडणुकीचे व २०१७ च्या निवडणुकांचा तुलनात्मक अभ्यास पुढील टेबलच्या माध्यमातून करण्यात आला आहे.

उत्तर प्रदेश विधानसभा निवडणूक २०१७

एकूण जागा ४०३ बहुमतासाठी २०२

पक्ष	नेता	प्राप्त जागा	टक्केवारी	वाढीव किंवा कमी झालेली टक्केवारी
भारतीय जनता पक्ष	नरेंद्र मोदी	३२५	३९.७	+२४
सपा-काँग्रेस आघाडी	अखिलेश यादव	४७	२१.८	-७
बहुजन समाज पार्टी	मायावती	१९	२२.२	-३

उत्तर प्रदेश निवडणुकीचा २०१७ च्या विधानसभा निवडणुकीची २००२ च्या निवडणुकीसोबत तुलना केल्यास भाजपला १.६२ टक्के मताचा फायदा झाला आहे. पण त्यांच्या जागा ५७ ने कमी झाल्या तर समाजवादी पक्षाला १०.२४ टक्के

मताचा फायदा होऊन त्यांच्या ६४ जागा वाढल्या. बसपा व काँग्रेसला या निवडणुकीत खूप मोठे नुकसान सहन करावे लागले. बसपाच्या १८ जागा कमी झाल्या व ९.५ टक्के मताचा फटका त्यांना बसला तर काँग्रेसला पाच जागांचे नुकसान झाले व ३.९२ टक्के मतांचे नुकसान झाले. या निवडणुकीत समाजवादी पक्षातर्फे एकट्या अखिलेश यादव यांनी एकहाती भाजपाला शह देण्याचा प्रयत्न केला. त्यांचे हे यश भाजपाला नजरेआड करून चालणार नाही. भाजपने या निवडणुकीत सर्व शक्ती पणाला लावली होती. अनेक दिग्गज या निवडणुकीत भाजपाने प्रचार कार्यात उतरविले होते. या ही परिस्थिती त्यांच्या ५७ जागा कमी झाल्या आहेत हे विशेष. उत्तर प्रदेश विधानसभेच्या २०२२ च्या निवडणुकीत भाजपने सत्ता मिळवली आहे या निवडणुकीच्या अनुषंगाने काही निष्कर्ष काढण्यात आले आहेत ते पुढील प्रमाणे.

उत्तर प्रदेश विधानसभा निवडणूक २०१७

एकूण जागा ४०३ बहुमतासाठी २०२

पक्ष	नेता	प्राप्त जागा व नुकसान - +	टक्केवारी	वाढीव किंवा कमी झालेली टक्केवारी
भारतीय जनता पक्ष	नरेंद्र मोदी	२७३ -५७	४९.२९	+ ९.६२
सपा	अखिलेश यादव	१२५ +६४	३२.०६	+ १०.२४
बहुजन समाज पार्टी	मायावती	१ -१८	१२.८८	- ९.३५
काँग्रेस	प्रियंका गांधी	२ -५	२.३३	- ३.९२

उत्तर प्रदेश निवडणुकीत महिलांचा उस्फूर्त सहभाग:-

फेब्रुवारी-मार्च २०२२ मध्ये उत्तर प्रदेश विधानसभेच्या ४०३ जागांसाठी निवडणुका झाल्या १० मार्च २०२२ रोजी ४०३ जागांचे निकाल जाहीर झाले या निवडणुकीत २०१७ च्या निवडणुकीप्रमाणे भाजपा व मित्र पक्ष २७३ जागांसह उत्तर प्रदेशात पुन्हा सत्तेवर सलग दुसऱ्यांदा आले. उत्तर प्रदेश निवडणुकीचे २०२२ चे खास वैशिष्ट्य म्हणजे महिला मतदारांनी दाखवलेला उत्साह. महिलांनी उत्तर प्रदेश विधानसभेच्या निवडणुकीत व मतदानात दाखवलेली सक्रियता अनेक राजकीय अभ्यासकांनी उत्तर प्रदेशात महिलांनी भाजपाला पुन्हा सत्तेवर आणण्यासाठी घराबाहेर पडून मतदानाचा हक्क बजावला असे निष्कर्ष नोंदवले आहेत. द हिंदू मध्ये १२ मार्च २०२२ रोजीच्या अंकात “Women Voter’s behind BJP big Victory in Up” अशा प्रकारची बातमी दिली होती. त्यांच्या बातमीनुसार भाजप आघाडीला ४६ टक्के सपा आघाडीला ३३ टक्के व इतरांना १३ टक्के मतदान महिलांचे झाले होते. पुरुषांच्या तुलनेत भाजपाला महिलांचे दोन टक्के जास्त मते मिळाली आहेत. भाजपाला ४४ टक्के पुरुष मतदारांनी पसंती दिली तर सपाला ११ टक्के पुरुषांनी पसंती दिली. काँग्रेसला तीन टक्के महिलांची मते मिळाली तर पुरुषांची २ टक्के पसंती काँग्रेसला होती. बसपाला ११ टक्के महिलांचे मतदान झाले तर इतरांना चार टक्के महिलांनी मतदान केले होते. थोडक्यात भाजपच्या विजयात ग्रामीण व शहरी महिलांचे योगदान महत्वाचे आहे

निष्कर्ष:

- १) सलग दुसऱ्यांदा भाजपाने सत्ता मिळवली आहे हा एक विक्रमच आहे.
- २) भाजपच्या जागा कमी झाल्या पण मतांची टक्केवारी वाढली.
- ३) समाजवादी पक्षाच्या जागांमध्ये व टक्केवारीत मोठी वाढ झाली आहे.

- ४) २०२४ च्या लोकसभा निवडणुकीत भाजपाला दहा ते पंधरा जागांचे नुकसान होऊ शकते.
- ५) बसपा व काँग्रेसला मोठे नुकसान सहन करावे लागले आहे.
- ६) उत्तर प्रदेश निवडणुकीत जात व धर्माची समीकरणे प्रभावशाली ठरली आहेत.
- ७) या निवडणुकीत समाजवादी पक्षाकडून अखिलेश यादव यांनी एकहाती प्रचार सांभाळला होता.
- ८) भाजपने बर्याच जागा २०० ते २००० च्या फरकाने जिंकली आहेत हा फरक अतिशय कमी आहे.
- ९) पोस्टल मतामध्ये समाजवादी पक्षाला ५.५ टक्के मते मिळाली आहेत.
- १०) बसपा व काँग्रेसने उत्तर प्रदेश निवडणुकीच्या संदर्भात आत्मचिंतन करण्याची आवश्यकता आहे.
- ११) भाजपा व समाजवादी पक्षाला एकूण मताच्या ७२ टक्के मते या दोन पक्षाला मिळाली आहेत.
- १२) २०२४ च्या लोकसभा निवडणुकीवर उत्तर प्रदेश विधानसभेचा निवडणुकीचा प्रभाव असणार आहे.
- १३) महिला मतदारांनी उत्साहात मतदान केले.
- १४) महिला मतदारांनी भाजपाला पसंती दाखवली आहे.

वरील निष्कर्ष हे उत्तर प्रदेश निवडणुकीच्या अनुषंगाने काढण्यात आले आहेत. कारण उत्तर प्रदेश विधानसभा निवडणूक २०२२ ही अनेक राजकीय अर्थाने अतिशय महत्त्वाची आहे. ती देशाच्या राजकारणाला दिशा व कलाटणी देणारी आहे. त्यामुळे संपूर्ण देशाचे लक्ष या निवडणुकीकडे लागले होते आणि याच आधारावर अनेक राजकीय विश्लेषक या निवडणुकीचे विश्लेषण करत आहेत.

संदर्भ:

दैनिक लोकसत्ता दिनांक ११.०३.२०२२

डेलीहंट

दैनिक लोकसत्ता दिनांक ११.०३.२०२२

दैनिक सकाळ दिनांक ११.०३.२०२२

दैनिक सामना ११.०३.२०२२

विकिपीडिया २०२२ व २०१७

इलेक्ट्रॉनिक मीडिया १०.०३.२०२२



## About Editors



Dr. M. S. Gayathri Devi, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Mahatma Gandhi College, Kerala University, who was recently awarded Dr.Sarojini Naidu International Award for Working Women, in the category of Educationist, has always been very keen to plunge into new realms that offer wide readings, to establish close ties with people of letters, and to do things that inspire and motivate others. Having 16years of service as an academican in the Department of English, under various NSS Colleges', she has always taken active participation in various innovative teaching learning practices. Her expertise is in Translation Studies, Culture and Gender Studies. She has taken her PhD from SreeShankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, in Translation Studies. She received a medal from Sheila Dikshit, then Governor of Kerala, for her contributions in the field of research. Her M.Phil. was on Canadian Literature, from Institute of English, Kerala University. She is working on various academic bodies as Chairman, Convenor, Coordinator and Member.She had been part of various Syllabus Committee, for Universities. She has been an Additional Skill Acquisition Programme (ASAP) trainer, external mentor for Walk With the Scholar (WWS), Co-ordinator for Scholar Support Programme (SSP) and has been the Resource Person for various training programs under UGC and AICTE. While serving as the NSS programme Officer, she was selected and appointed as the Venue Manager for The National Games held in Kerala. She has given her valuable service to various administrative and academic posts, outside and within the college, she worked. She has also delivered public lectures and had presented papers in International and National seminars, and had contributed articles to various International and National journals. She has also shown her interest by engaging herself in various talk shows on current issues aired by popular channels.



Dr. Bhawana Asnani is currently working as Assistant Professor in Junagadh Agricultural University in Gujarat from more than nine years, with multiple experiences of extensive teaching, research, academics, administration etc. She received her B.Sc. (Hons.), M.Sc. and Ph.D. in Home Science (now Community Science) with specialization in Resource Management and Consumer Sciences, from Maharana Pratap University of Agriculture and Technology, Udaipur, Rajasthan. Dr. Asnani has published 2 books, 3 booklets, 8 folders and pamphlets, 21 research papers in referred journals, 7 chapters in books and 23 popular articles in Hindi and Gujarati languages. She has also presented various academic as well as research-based papers at several national and international conferences, seminars, webinars, symposiums etc. She is also a recipient of Gold plated Medal and National Level Award and Certificate for Academic Excellence Award-2019 by IRDP Group of Journals in an International Conference held at Chennai, Tamil Nadu. She also runs her own website '<https://www.bhawanaasnani.com>' since October 2016, which she had won in a refresher course as a digital prize and posted more than 250 write-ups so far. She is also a Registered Reviewer-in-Advances-in-Science,Technology-and-Engineering Systems Journal and till now reviewed about 30 research papers or manuscripts for various renowned journals. She also carries Life Memberships in various Societies and Associations of India.



Dr. Kanchan Awasthi is an Assistant Professor in Botany Department, School of Science at Maharishi University of Information and Technology, Lucknow. She received her post-graduation and Ph. D degrees in Botany from Lucknow University, Lucknow. Her specialization is in Heavy Metal Toxicity in Plants. She published many research papers in reputed journals and published many book chapters also. She has 11 years of teaching and research experience. She has the life membership of Indian Science Congress also.



Dr. Aboli A. Kshirsagar, M.Sc. (Botany), Ph.D., rendering service as Assistant Professor and Head in Department of Botany, Arts & Science College, Pulgaon with teaching experience of 12 Yrs. at UG level and 02 yrs at PG level. She is recognized Ph. D. Supervisor in the faculty of Science and Technology (Botany) of Rashtrasanta Tukdoji Maharaj Nagpur University, Nagpur. She has published 12 research papers in various reputed International Journals and presented papers in National & International Conferences and Seminars.She has organised State level seminar on "Improved Crop Plants: Role of Genetics" on dtd. 28/02/2012 funded by UGC. She has completed Minor Research Project (MRP) entitled "Effect of N2 fixation Bacteria Azospirillum on Quantity of Saponin in Roots of Cholrophytum boriuillanumum (Safed Musali)" funded by UGC under XIIth plan. Her area of interest is Molecular Biology, Cytogenetics and Phytochemistry. She has working as Institutional committee of reviewer of Asiatic Journal of Biotechnology Resources (AJOBR) Reviewers Panel.

