

Amelioration of Women Since 20th Century: Education, Career and Influence in Society

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Abstract

“There is no chance of the Welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly on one wing.” It is a very popular saying discoursed by Indian youth icon, the immense source of energy Swami Vivekanand ji. Growth of a family, a society and a nation depends on both the male and female. As every element of universe is facing the process of variations each second; productively, condition of women is also changing for centuries. As per the census report of 2011 the literacy rate of women was calculated to be 65.46% comparison of this with women's literacy rate in census report of 2001 (i.e. 54.16 %) signifies an increment of approximately 11%. In every society women have both the positive as well as the negative phases of changes as their history. The researchers are curious to explore, collect and explain the reformation and amelioration of women since 20th century regarding their education, Careers and influence they are making in society in 21st century. The main purpose to perform this descriptive research is to find out the gradual changes which took place over a long period of time. This paper would include all possible data that explains and provides an overall reformed view of women in 21st century.

Keywords: - *amelioration, education, career, reformation, growth of women*

We come from such a nation where born the people like Savitribai Phule who is known to be the first lady teacher of India. she was a social reformer and a trailblazer of women's education. In spite of social rejection and depreciation she kept on working on her goals and founded a school in 1848 at Pune for girls and ostracized sections of society. Therefore we can study, achieve our degrees and look up to ourselves with confidence because of her life long dedication.

Her dream of providing a respectable life to women has been followed by so many social reformers. One of them was the great economist and social reformer, the chairman of the drafting committee of Indian constitution Dr. B.R. Ambedkar who said, “I measure the progress of a community with degree of progress women have achieved.”

Recently Government of India released census records of India of 1951. At that time the percentage of literate women was around 9% while it was 21.16% for males. It was more than twice. The difference between male and female literacy rate continued to variate year after year. The recent census of 2011 resulted the literacy rate of female as 65.46% and for males it was 82.14% which is quite satisfactory. This appreciable improvement in literacy rates involves some

governmental campaigns and laws which benefited female education . Some of them are beti Bachao beti padhao campaign which was initiated by current Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 22nd January 2015 which works for gender equal birth rate and women empowerment schemes . PRAGATI , a scholarship scheme was launched in 2014 that aims to provide encouragement and support to pursue technical education. Different state governments have provided a considerable ratio of reservation in higher educational admissions and government jobs. Moreover, a little fee relaxations are also being provided in some application forms.

Women have faced a feeling of secondary citizen in countries like America , Russia , New Zealand , Australia , etc . including India , all the mention countries and others faced so many hurdles before getting right to choose the representative of the public , i.e. “ right to vote” . **women suffrage movement** is an example of a long protest fight to win Right to vote for women fought by so many countries including India . According to feminisminindia.com suffrage movement india was followed by hundreds of women but there were leading faces who initiated and widened this fight for rights of women of the land . Princess Sophia Duleep Singh (daughter of maharaja Duleep Singh) , Madaam Bhikaji Cama , Lolita Roy , Shrimati Shushama Sen , Cornelia Sorabji , Bhagmati Bhola Nauth and Ramdhulari Devi are names of those amazons . In 1950 Indian women got Right to vote.

The national commission for women was set up by parliament in 1990 to safeguard the rights and legal entitlements of women . The 73rd and 74th amendment (1993) to the Constitution provided reservation of seats in local bodies of panchayats and municipalities.

Although , women are getting their rights and benefits today but they have so many stereotypes and obstacles in their history such as purdah system , triple Talaq , polygyny, etc. *purdah system* and *triple Talaq* were been started in India after 12th century when Mughals invaded India. Both of these are social barriers for development in growth of women. Thankfully, triple Talaq has been abrogated by the Supreme Court of India in 2017 . The Ministry of Minority affairs claims decline in triple Talaq cases by 80% after its abolition. Purdah system is observably out of practice nowadays mostly but some women are still facing Hijab as a barrier not only in India but in Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan ,etc. Masih alinejad Iranian American journalist says,"videos and messages I have received in recent days from women in Iran are showing how angry they are following a young woman's death in police custody over a violation of country's strict religious dress code."

While talking to Republic tv. News channel , women rights activist of India , Advaita Kala says , “It is extremely important that the world speaks up. Speak up against the regime and its draconian measures when it comes to limiting women's freedom."

According to India today report 58% of Iranians do not believe in Hijab altogether whereas 72% oppose the compulsory Hijab. It is a hope that exploitation would be ended as soon as possible so that women would feel free to explore and strive hard to get hundred percentage of what they are capable of.

Famous authors of the twentieth century like Munshi Premchand emphasises on exploitation and torture women faced that time. His Novels on widow marriage and mismatch marriages , i.e. **Nirmala** and **premashram** respectively provide a literature presentation over the pity condition of 20th century women. Mahadevi Verma the great Indian author and feminist once said , “If we can bear the harsh truth , we would have to accept it with humility that society has given to

women the most debased means for building up her life . She must live , having been made for the means of the exhibition And enjoyment of men’s wealth .” Her literature *Shrinkhala ki kadiyan* represent the condition of feminine section of India.

When we look up to entertainment Industries we see a list of such movies which on one hand manifest the reality , the social stigma women of the country are facing with which they can relate to and on the other hand such movies and TV shows which represented their lead role as a rock solid Hero that motivates both plebeians and patricians of the land. Resembling to this we can take the example of movies like mardaani , pink , English Vinglish, Lajja etc . TV serials aim to do so are Balika Vadhu, Na Aana Is Des Lado , Anupama , etc . The TV show Na Aana Is Des Lado represents the wretched conditions of females in Haryana . The tyrannical action like gender determination during pregnancy female foeticide neonaticide separation of female etc were the core issues tried to convey.

Gazing towards three consecutive decades that is 1971 ,1981 and 1991 we came to observe from a government census report that respective to the years mentioned there were 930 , 934 and 927 females on per 1000 males in Haryana. There were 875 females per thousand males in 1971 and 870 per 1000 males in 1981 .

In 2008 Central Government (congress party was ruling that time) had introduced Dhanlakshmi Yojana as a pilot project in which girls children wear provided some funds from birth till class 8th . These amounts were given for birth registration, vaccinations, Primary School ,at the end of every academic year till class 8th if attended 85 % school days . This scheme was ended in 2013.

Haryana government started Ladli Yojana in august 2015, under this scheme, rupees 5000 were invested for every child in a family . Uttar Pradesh government launched u.p.Bhagyalakshmi Yojana in 2017 to stop female foeticide. This scheme benefits by transferring a of 2 lakh in installments till the age of 21 years . MP government started ladli Lakshmi Yojana 2006 to stop child marriage and karnataka bhagyashri , Maharashtra Majhi Kanya Bhagyashree yojna , West Bengal kanyashree , etc. were launched to cope up with such problems and issues.

According to census of 2011 , there were reported 940 females on every 1000 males over the country. Haryana reported 830 female child per 1000 males. It was 871 in Delhi , 846 in Punjab and 888 in Rajasthan. These are still very heart wrenching.

To stop the detriment of women’s life from polygyny , the Parliament of India passed hindu Marriage Act on may 1955. This act strictly prohibits a Hindu from getting in bigamy and polygamy .when proven to do so, person would be strictly punishable under the IPC as per section 5 and 17 of Hindu Marriage Act 1955. However the Indian Christian marriage Act 1872 ., Parsi marriage and divorce Act 1936 and special Marriage Act , 1954 are active since they were passed. Unfortunately , Muslim women were having no constitutional tool against exploitation of their personal law involving polygyny and teen talaq .Teen talaq has been abolished and current governments of Uttarakhand and Assam are working on uniform civil code . Goa government is the only executing body that is working as per uniform Civil Code (UC C). Gujrat government on 29th october, 2022 announced to make a committee for implementation of UCC. Under uniform civil code rules and laws , benefits and punishments are implemented regardless of religion.

The main theme of the current paper is women empowerment which was historically and theoretically risen up in India in 1848 A.D. by Savitribai Phule. As a result, currently women of India are winning international medals in sports like P.T. Usha, M. S. Dhanraj, Saina Nehwal, P.V. Sindhu, Meera Bai Chaudhary, etc.; in beauty with brain competition Nutan (Miss Asia), Sushmita Sen (Miss Universe), Priyanka Chopra, Aishwarya Rai, Manushi Chhillar, etc.; others who are fluttering tri color with pride are Indira Gandhi, Sushma Swaraj, Lata Mangeshkar, Kiran Bedi, and enormous fields are blessed to get powerful women of the Nation. Like although it wasn't the beginning of rise of women in India because before invasion and annexation over several legacies of India by Mughal, Portuguese, British etc Indian women had complete right to study, to debate, to select partner, to rule the kingdom, etc. 1948 was the rebirth of women empowerment after a deterioration of about 800 years.

Women's experience perceptions of depression in India : A metaethnography, performed by Anindita Bhattacharya, David Camacho, Laura L. Kimberly, Ellen P. Lucas; 1987 to 2017). This includes interesting facts :-

1. Self – silencing of needs and aspirations to maintain and remain in relationships, leads women to develop self esteem and negative self evaluation. (Jack, 1999)
2. Women learn to relate to others in ways that empower others to develop, when they don't receive the same in return, their sense of self worth and self validation can suffer. (Miller, 2012).

Doctor Keshab Chandra Mandal is an author researcher and publisher. He was former project director of ICSSR, New Delhi. He describes women empowerment under a base plan, i.e. social, educational, economic, political and psychological. Looking up to these categorical improvements we can consider major part of educational, economic and political empowerments are onus on ruling government which are being full filled. Rest two are social and psychological level empowerment. Both of these are interwoven. Therefore empowering women psychologically would surely be facilitated if social norms views and practices would be in favour of women. So many social reform entities are doing countless things to make this happen. Some of them can be discussed shortly:-

Mr Mahesh Savani a well known Diamond Merchant of Gujarat takes on complete expenditure of orphan girls including Hindus Muslims and Christian girls marriages. Besides these he is at present financially helping over 1500 girls who don't have family. Till 2017, he fulfilled dream of marriage of about 800 girls.

Arunachalam muruganatham, popularly acknowledged as the *padman* of India once came to know the dark reality and underestimated problems of menstruation and found women helpless regarding sanitary during monthly cycle. Understanding that women are jeopardizing their lives, he invented a low cost sanitary pad machine in 1998. Presently, about 4500 villages use those pads. He has been awarded as Padmashree also.

Harish sadani is Co-founder and Chief functionary of **MAVA, i.e. (Men Against Violence and Abuse)**. The aim of his organisation is to engage and mentor thousands of adolescence and young males across India to work on healthy relationship, and sexuality related matters. He is also training corporates, universities and NGOs on prevention of sexual harassment toward women.

Nirbhaya case 2012 proven an eye opener for **Dipesh Tank** of Mumbai. He with friends started a campaign **WARR (war against Railway Roadies)** in August 2013. He took a survey in 2013 at Malad station with the help of a questionnaire to assess how safe women feel at station or in train. According to that survey 85% of women told us that they feel unsafe at the station where they are vulnerable to regular sexual harassment. The copy of Survey was sent to RPF, GRP, Prime Minister and President of India. Thankfully there hard work after 6 months of persuasion got support of railway police and 40 policemen were allotted to each station.

Seva Bharati is a non government non political non profiting organisation founded in 1989 by Balasaheb deoras having RSS as parent organization. It works for rise of economically unprivileged women. It reports that it has a total of 1404 such training projects for teaching students, other skills, computer programs etc with which women can make startups on their own. It also awares women about health, hygiene, pregnancy, their right, etc. It has also coordinated with government Agencies to rescue girls from abuse assault and harassment.

Taking cognizance of women empowerment economically, Government of India initiated different schemes, beneficiaries of which are obviously women. Some of them are Bhartiya Mahila Bank business loan 2017, Mudra Yojana, Dena Shakti scheme, women entrepreneurship platform (WEP) etc.

On the other hand there are so many rights and privileges being provided from government side. Daughter's right in patriarchal property, rights on In-laws property after divorce or husbands death, UJJAWALA scheme from preventing women trafficking and rescue, maternal leaves from job with salary, facilitations like Rajya Mahila Samman and Nari Shakti Puraskar, job offers in Defence Services and aviation, etc. are name of few.

Looking towards the sport agencies BCCI that is Board of Control for cricket in India on 27th October 2022 announced that the women cricketers will be paid the same match fees as their male counterparts. This is the recent provable decision taken towards women empowerment equal to men till the date.

Albert Einstein said once, "The woman who follows the crowd will usually go no further than the crowd. The woman who walks above alone is likely to find herself in place no one has been before."

Therefore it is our collective responsibility to foster girl child equally to the boy child, to provide the maximum opportunities as per our capacities, to feed their Minds with equal love, care and belief that we present to males. The ultimate one line onus on us is to give them Wings and open sky, free them from shackles and let them fly.

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