

## MAKING WOMEN COMPETENT ENOUGH FOR TOMORROWS SUSTAINABILITY IN INDIA

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### Abstract

*The population of the world constitutes almost 50% of women. As per as their social status is concerned, they are not treated as equal to men in all the spheres of life. Women are understood as they are not enabling people, they cannot acquire and possess power resources, in order to make decision on their own, or resist decisions that are made by others that affect them. Even it is said that they should be empowered when they have control over a large portion of power resources in society. The extent of possession of various resources such as personal wealth, such as land, skills, education, information, knowledge, social status, position held, leadership trains, capabilities of mobilization. It is widely believed that the women will be competent when they get equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities. The competency will go a long way in removing the existing gender discrimination.*

*Women competency in contemporary Indian society is in forms of their education, health, media images and work in the context of descendant, their legal status in terms of marriage, divorce and inheritance of property, their participation in social and political activities, rule of residence and household chores, seeking wealth care should be taken into consideration. Similarly, a role of women deals with duties and obligations while empowerment deals with rights. For instance, it is commonly assumed that the most of the woman in India is: wife a cook, a teacher of her children and daughter-in-law and so on.*

*The paper deals with the status of 20<sup>th</sup> century women in India and their preventive scales to handle and make women over come from the orthodox customs. The data reflects the gradual changes in 21st century women's status, and a new look of 21st century women which resulted as India shining among the World.*

*Woman must not accept; she must challenge.*

*She must not be awed by that which has been built up around her; she must reverence that woman in her which struggles for expression.*

*~Margaret Sanger~*

### I. INTRODUCTION

The population of the world constitutes almost 50% of women. As per as their social status is concerned, they are not treated as equal to men in all the spheres of life. Women are understood as they are not enabling people, they cannot acquire and possess power resources, in order to make decision on their own, or resist decisions that are made by others that affect them. Even it is said that they should be empowered when they have control over a large portion of power resources in society. The extent of possession of various resources such as personal wealth, land, skills, education, information, knowledge, social status, position held, leadership trains, capabilities of mobilization. It is widely believed that the women will be competent when they get equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities by removing the existing gender discrimination.

Women competency in contemporary Indian society is in forms of their education, health, media images and work in the context of descendant, their legal status in terms of marriage, divorce and inheritance of property, their participation in social and political activities, rule of residence and household chores, seeking wealth care should be taken into consideration.

Women have been portrayed as frail and feeble since time immemorial. This is very strange that this phenomenon is not limited to one civilization or society alone but it is common to most of the culture in this world. Feminity is a Female Gender Role and in sociology the term gender role denotes a set of behavior norms in which society tries to impose these norms upon an individual through a process called socialization and during this process a person accepts these norms, acts according to them and develops a matching sense of gender identity ([www.worldIQ.com](http://www.worldIQ.com)).

Since the antiquity the women has been suppressed and remained underdeveloped. Women were left behind in the process of development in comparison to men because of social evils and traditions. Women perform approx 70% of the total working hours but can earn only 10% of the economy. Two-third of the total population is illiterate-

therefore there is serious need to pay attention to women of the country

Empowerment as judgment was introduced at the International Women's Conference at Nairobi in 1985. The discussion tangible empowerment as: "A redistribution of amicable power as great as carry out of resources in foster of women. Empowerment is a multi-faceted routine that encompasses most aspects i.e. enhancing awareness, arguing entrance to resource of economic, amicable as great as done at home etc."

Newer technologies and developed instruments have opened the doors for women for safe, reputed and productive work in organized as well as in unorganized sector, now people believe that women are regarded to be more devotional to their ethics.

## II. GENDER PREJUDICES IN WOMEN GROWTH

Sociologically the word gender refers to the socio-cultural definition of man and woman, the way societies distinguish men and women and assign them social roles. The distinction between sex and gender was introduced to deal with the general tendency to attribute women's subordination to their anatomy. For ages it was believed that the different characteristics, roles and status accorded to women and men in society are determined by sex, that they are natural and therefore not changeable.

Traditionally women are confined by the constraints of domestic arena, docile, passive, and inferior, upholding a feminine ideal of domesticity. In male dominating society it is still the man who has right to question, use weapons and wear a picture of complete confidence. A women is small presupposed to be seek, humble, and submissive.

Any discrimination between men and women are really a matter of concern and endeavor to spread gender equality and gender justice is worth praising. Since days immemorial, women have been bogged down by domestic obligations and compulsions. Their mobility has been confined with the four walls of kitchen. Women have also been submissive to male domination society the reason for them being taken for granted and exploited. On the other side society pays respect to women on various occasions.

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Gender Diversity: Case Studies in Indian Media

- Female representation Women's access within media has visibly enhanced in the past decades while the state agencies such as Prasar Bharti have stated policies for increasing women's presence

following reports to promote gender equity<sup>2</sup>. Private organizations do not have formalized guidelines<sup>3</sup> yet they have a large number of women staff.

Source: Joseph, Ammu (2002), Working ratio of women

### Doordarshan Staff Related to News

	Male	Female	Total
Newrecruiters in DD news service	5	16	21
DD News senior most post	1		1
Director news	5	-	5
News editors	7	3	10
Assistant news editors	9	3	12
Executive producer	1	-	1
Chief producer	1	-	1
Programme executives	12	-	12
Video editors	8	-	8
Camera 'men'	30	3	33

"Participation and Access of Women to the Media, and the Impact of Media on and its use as an Instrument for the Advancement and Empowerment of Women" Beirut, Lebanon 12 to 15 November 2002

	Male	Female	Total
HT City features	1	8	9
Bureau	3	-	3
City reporters	11	3	14
Outstations reporters	19	2	21
Photographers	3	-	3

Source: Hindustan Times, Editor Chandigarh edition, 10th Dec 1, 2004

### The Hindustan Times (Chandigarh Edition)

However, a look at the disaggregate data reveals that women as broadcasters and on desk jobs have a higher representation than as correspondents. While Hindustan Times has only five female reporters out of 35, The Indian Express Chandigarh Edition has six out of a total of 23. The place of women in genuine journalistic role in Indian language newspapers according to Robin Jeffery's was found wanting. "Their numbers... were scant, the jobs few and prejudices against them formidable"<sup>4</sup>. No doubt gender discrimination is rampant in the media, but given their increasing presence can women as a 'critical mass' transform media portrayal of gender?

"What worries me is that so many women are coming into television as directors and writers and there is still no change (in the stereotyping of

women in popular television serials)  
- Shabana Azmi

- Representation of gender interests minimal  
Physical imagery of the female form is used in subtle or in a more blatant manner as a product by the media itself. The acceptance of the 'femininity product' with the media can be further gauged through the minimal representation of gender interests. A media survey in 1994 of gender coverage in news found.
- Gender representation to be biased - men were portrayed in diverse roles, women almost always in traditional feminine roles.
- Women accounted for 7 per cent of the time in the hard news section and 14 per cent in all news programmes<sup>6</sup>.
- 1999 analysis of two English newspapers found women occupying a marginal space. Coverage relegated to a weekly 'gender page'. Female presence was more through advertisements, news of crime and social events. Cricket news occupied nearly 20 per cent more space than women's issues.

#### Gender Portrayal within Media

Product creation and proliferation of commodity the portrayal of gender as a product and the accompanying body politic in the media is well-documented. The most common form is the coverage provided to the beauty pageants and mega models. Women's representation has moved beyond female images of the family and home to personal care as dictated by the market agenda in a predominant patriarchy.

Sankar, who consults on gender and microfinance issues for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), Christian Aid, while women can be expected to be provided for, they are assigned a subordinate status within the household and society at large. Their dependent status leaves them vulnerable to 'patriarchal risk', that is, there would likely be an abrupt decline in their economic welfare and social status if they no longer had male guardianship. The greater the dependence, the greater the risk.

Even as the latest UNDP Report ranks India 119 in the Human Development Index, in the Gender Inequality Index, India ranks 122 at 0.748. "Women and children are the most disadvantaged sections of the population in terms of resources, access to healthcare, education, information and communication technology," says Sankar. "Female-male ratio of representation in parliament is a mere 0.1,

female-male ratio of population with at least secondary education is 0.5." (Last updated: December 13, 2010)

#### Women participation in Media:

In the beginning of the media profession the women were given work in the editorial section of the news paper there was no single women in reporting section on the desk at the edit page. The women were receptionists and telephone operators. Over the last few decades larger number of women started employed in the media. The media course offered in the university from the 1960s onwards, the issue based women's movement of the 1970s and the magazine boom in the 1980s. At this time women get job of writing soft stories or features for magazine sections, instead of working as reporters. Women who joined in 1970s were either associated with or sympathetic to the women movement and various movements at grassroots level (Bhavani & Vijaya laxmi 2005:22) the opportunity expanded for women with the economic liberalization and growth of satellite channels and the launching of chain newspaper editions. Now there is a remarkable change, it has been the increasing visibility of women resident editors, news editors, chief reporters, reporters, editors and publishers. This inspired women to enter the media with confidence but few women holds a senior position and still male is dominating in this field.

The Press Institute of India's Study 2004 observed that though an increasing number of women are reporters and the nature of work is not encouraging. Women are still limited to the assignments covering 'soft issues' such as fashion, culture, the arts and the life style while men are assigned political and economic stories, which are considered 'hard issues'.

In the overall development of society and nation, role of women is very significant. It is commonly accepted that a developed society is one, which represents the rights of its female members, where women have equal status, economic, social and all other. In the backdrop we have attempted to evaluate place of women in India in the field of media and empowerment.

#### IV. OBJECTIVE

The objective of the study is to portray the status and participation of women in media and their process of empowerment.

- Analyze the effect of Government Policies in empowering women.

## National Policy 2001

The goal of this Policy is to bring about the advancement, development and empowerment of women. The National Policy includes creating an environment through positive economic and social policies for full development of women to enable them to realize their full potential. It provides all human rights and fundamental freedom by women on equal basis with men in all spheres – political, economic, social, cultural and civil. It ensures Equal access to participation and decision making of women in social, political and economic life of the nation. It also ensures equal access to women to health care, quality education at all levels, career and vocational guidance, employment, equal remuneration, occupational health and safety, social security and public office etc. The policy strengthens legal systems aimed at elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and changing societal attitudes and community practices by active participation and involvement of both men and women.

On the basis of the above interpretation the strategies has been designed in the National policy to enhance the capacity of women and empower them to meet the negative social and economic impacts, which may flow from the globalization process.

The National and State Councils headed by the Prime Minister and the State Councils by the Chief Ministers and be broad in composition having representatives from the concerned Departments/Ministries, National and State Commissions for Women, Social Welfare Boards, representatives of Non-Government Organizations, Women's Organisations were formed to oversee the operation of the Policy on a regular basis. These bodies will review the progress made in implementing the Policy twice a year. The National Development Council has also been informed of the progress of the programme undertaken under the policy from time to time for advice and comments. At the grass-roots, women have been helped by Government through its programmes to organize and strengthen into Self-Help Groups (SHGs) at the Anganwadi/Village/Town level. The women's groups will be helped to institutionalize themselves into registered societies and to federate at the Panchyat/Municipal level. These societies work about synergistic implementation of all the social and economic development programmes by drawing resources made available through Government and Non-Government channels, including banks and financial institutions and by establishing a close interface with Panchayats/ Municipalities

## Women Empowerment through Five Year Plans

First (1951-56)	Welfare measures for women. Establishment of the Central Social Welfare Board. Organization of Mahila Mandals and SHG and the Community Development Programmes
second (1956-61),	The empowerment of women was closely linked with the overall approach of intensive agricultural development programmes
Third and Fourth (1961-66 and 1969-74)	Female education as a major welfare measure.
Fifth (1974-79)	Training and capacity building of women for the need of income and protection. In 1976, Women's welfare and Development Bureau was set up under the Ministry of Social Welfare.
Sixth (1980-85)	Shift from welfare to development.
Seventh (1985-90)	Gender equality and empowerment
Eight (1992-97)	Empowering women, especially at the grass roots level, through Panchayat Raj Institutions.
Ninth (1997-2002)	Strategy of women's component plan, under which not less than 30 percent of funds/benefits were earmarked for women-specific programmes.
Tenth (2002-07)	Empowering women through translating the recently adopted National Policy for Empowerment of Women (2001) into action and ensuring Survival, Protection and Development of women and children
Eleventh (2007-12)	Meeting the MDGs and is a signatory to many international conventions, including Convention for Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child

- Perception of male and female working as a media professional for female candidates
- Comparative study women working in media in India of secondary data

## V. METHODOLOGY

### Sample for primary data:

Over all 50 Men including Women were interviewed (working as a media person in over all India)

### Secondary Data and Primary Data:

#### A. Secondary data record of 'women working in media'

#### Data related to women participation in India (Secondary Data)

- 1) *First press commission report by government of India 1954*
  - Nearly 2000 media person were employed.
  - In 189 Indian language newspaper 1,270 journalists were working.
  - In 36 English newspapers 751 journalists were employed.

Total Women comprised 12 percent of the workforce in India (Bhavani and Vijaya Lakshmi 2005:22)

- 2) *Eapen's study (1967)* found two-thirds of journalists were from forward castes and from prestigious family.
- 3) *Joseph (1994)* Studied 200 women journalists. And revealed that gender continued to play an obstructive role in the lives of Indian women journalists both in the professional and in the wider society.
- 4) *The press Institute of India report 2004* revealed that over two thirds of women journalist was below 34 years. The study observed that many women journalists (even from established newspapers) work as a daily wage labour, without any appointment letter, signing a muster roll at the end of the month to get Rs. 1,500-3,000. They are hired and fired.
- 5) *Balasubramanyam 2005* studied 835 journalist spread across 14 different states, working in newspapers and magazines in 11 languages. Only 20.12 percent of them were women journalists and among them 38.68 percent were in the age group of 20-30 years and 35.57 percent were in the 31-40 age group.
- 6) *Bhavani and Vijaya Lakshmi 2005* reported that a majority of women journalists 77 percent in **Andhra Pradesh** were confined to desk as chief sub-editors, desk in charges, senior sub editors and

edition in-charge and sub-editors 41 percent in Telugu and 4 percent in the English press reached higher position as editors of newspapers. The study found that only 18.9 percent of respondents were working as reporters in Telugu papers and only 8 percent were working in English newspapers.

- 7) *In Andhra Pradesh* 35.1 percent of women working in medium newspapers were earning salary of less than 2500 per month. The percentage of women earning a salary of Rs 501-5000 per month was 35.1 percent in medium newspaper and 29.8 percent in large ones. A high percentage 37.4 percent of journalists in prominent newspapers received Rs 500 more per month than woman in medium size newspaper (2.8 percent).

- B. Primary data answer to unstructured questions by the media people working in small, large and big media.

#### Instrument:

Unstructured questionnaire was used for the interview session. During the interview observation was made to check the reactions.

#### Interpretation:

All human rights-civil, cultural, economic, political and social including the right to development are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated... the human rights of women and the girl child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. The full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by women and girls is a priority for governments and the United Nations and is essential for the advancement of women (Beijing Platform for Action, paragraph 213)

The lack of gender sensitivity in the media is evidence by the failure to eliminate the gender based stereotyping that can be found in public and private local, national and international media organizations. Print and electronic media in most countries do not provide a balanced picture of women's diverse lives and contributions to the society in a changing world (Beijing Platform for Action, paragraph 235 and 236).

Efforts by the government to empower women: the ongoing effort to empower the women is made by the state, voluntary organizations and women group. Women group are also known as autonomous women's group. The main emphasis was to eliminate the discrepancies among genders. If the constitution guarantees equal opportunity and prohibition of discrimination has to become a reality

(put into practice) there has to be a constant effort to identify and gender inequalities

From the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-78) onwards has been a marked shift in the approach to women's issues from welfare to development. In recent years, the empowerment of women has been recognized as the central issue in determining the status of women. The National Commission for Women was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the rights and legal entitlements of women. The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Amendments (1993) to the Constitution of India have provided for reservation of seats in the local bodies of Panchayats and Municipalities for women, laying a strong foundation for their participation in decision making at the local levels. The strategy of Women's Component Plan adopted in the Ninth Plan of ensuring that not less than 30% of benefits/funds flow to women from all Ministries and Departments will be implemented effectively so that the needs and interests of women and girls are addressed by all concerned sectors. The Department of Women and Child Development being the nodal Ministry will monitor and review the progress of the implementation of the Component Plan from time to time, in terms of both quality and quantity in collaboration with the Planning Commission. rights of women given by the Human Rights are:

- Promoting and protecting the human rights through the full implementation of human rights instruments, especially the Convention on the elimination of All Forms of discriminating against women,
- Ensuring equality and non-discrimination under the law and in practice;
- Achieving legal literacy.

But Women are not aware of their basic rights under national and international law. Interview result shows that men's attitude towards women's working in media, that moreover 70 percent of women reported that they had no job satisfaction. Further 48 percent felt that their colleagues did not give proper encouragements in their area of interest. The study reported that 30 percent felt that they were not given important work, 45 percent claimed that they denied promotions, 45 percent reported that male colleagues found fault with their work and 53 percent said that there was a difference in men's and women's salary.

#### Interpretation of primary data:

Among the respondents, 45 percent female respondents said they earn less than 1,20,000 rupees per annum. 40 percent said they are getting approx 80,000 per annum further media women who were earning more than

2,50,000 per annum were few in numbers, 2.7 percent have an income in the range of 2,51,000-3,00,000.

The obtained result shows that now the attitude towards shift job have been changed more than 50 percent women are working in night shifts. But still they are having problem because of family responsibilities.

According to the all respondents the motivation for shift work and working in media are scope to express views, the chance to reform others, reform society, to get recognition, power and prestige, according to few of the subjects' salary is also a motivation to work in media.

## VI. CONCLUSION

After more than a half century of independence, progressive economic and social policies, more than a decade of economic reforms, we find that our women folk are still not in the position where they ought to be. Illiteracy is a black spot on India's face and when we take care of women literacy situation is further grim. Similarly, unemployment is a cause and outcome of low development and here too, we are not able to utilize half of our human resource simply because they are not properly educated / trained.

It seems not only from pre-existing differences in economic endowments between women and men but also from pre-existing gendered social norms and social perceptions. Gender inequality has adverse impact on development goals as reduces economic growth. It hampers the overall well being because blocking women from participation in social, political and economic activities can adversely affect the whole society.

There is a need for new kinds of institutions, incorporating new norms and rules that support equal and just relations between women and men. "Women have to be considered as equal participants in shaping the future society in India," argues Sankar. "It is not enough for poor women to earn more, she must have control over her earnings in order to continue to be productive. She must experience the benefits of that increased income. For many women, the process will involve confronting established social norms and hence the emphasis on striving for social change."

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has stated, "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."

The secondary data shows that the government of India and State of Andhra Pradesh has taken special attention for the empowerment of women but due to the social barriers and illiteracy, ignorance and violence due to gender disparity has stopped women to participate in media freely.

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