

EVALUATION OF EFFORTS TOWARDS WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

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"Feminism isn't about making women strong women are already strong. It's about changing the way the world perceives that strength (G. D. Anderson)

OR

Women are real leaders every where you look, from the CEO who runs a fortune 500 company to the house wife who raises here children and heads her house hold. History saps. our country was built by strong women and we will continue to break down walls and defr stereotypes. (Nancy Pelosi)

There ore it can ri 11tl be acce ted that women are the real architects osociety, if honestly taken into consideration. Women has always been saving. "We can do anything that men can do. But men should also be saving". we can do anything that women can do, as expected by Gloria Steinam.

Once. former Prime Minister of Great Britain Smt. Margret Thatcher expressed her opinion and stated "If you want something said, ask a man; it you want something done, ask a women"t i.e. women, always remain active agile & ready to work, while men prefers to say.

Further defining the strength of a women Eleanor Roosewelt said, "A women is like a tea bag you never know how strong she is, until she gets into hot water.

So the idea is that a feminist is any one who recognizes the equality and full humanity of women and men.

Women Empowerment for the last few decades has been the subject of discussion and debate around the world. India too is a part of this serious discussion U.N. too, placed the women empowerment issue on the top priority.

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Difference between men and women is not the new issue. It has been years and years, since the social, emotional, economical, condition of women has been very miserable and pathetic. She has been the playing instrument in the hands of men inside the four walls of the house as well as outside. She has been living on the mercy, mood, likings, dislikings of men since birth till death. She struggled as daughter, as sister, as wife, as mother in all seasons of the year. She has been pressed, suppressed and crushed down on many occasions. Hardly she was taken into serious consideration, because it has been the thought of the society, that she is not more than a puppet in the hands of men.

But time changed, women were fed up of ill treatment. She has started realizing that she can also obtain, what man obtains. Why men secure privilege class? Why she is inferior, dependent and miserable? She too feels the need of equality, employment, social, political & economical upliftment and identity. irrespective of cast, creed, religion; women want to enjoy the rights and privileges what men has been enjoying since ages as his only right. For example — equal work — equal pay. Right to education, right to marry, right of property, right of employment etc. She wants social identity, Individual recognition, and independent present and future security.

Though in 20th century, social, status of women is much better in comparison to the social status of 18th & 19th century women. Specially in India. Women were even considered as commodity, that can be sold and purchased. Even to day in few states of India women has worth price from 5000 to 20,000 for physical lust or at times for marriage as well. Women in India was kept in the four walls of house and she was completely dependent on men. Her desires, emotions, ambitions, expectations were worthless and unimportant. She was a slave in the hands of men since birth till death India witnessed social evils like child marriage, widow marriage, Parda system, dowry system at large level. But social reformers tried their best to remove these evils, through social awakenings. Women in India struggled for long time for right to cast the vote even.

Strong laws like (1) protecting women from domestic violence Act 2005, (2) Compulsory Registration of Marriage Act 2006 came into existence, which checked the scenes of domestic violence, and marriages were more strong legally. Men got the alarm, that no more he can dominate women for his manliness.

But here the question arises that after all social, legal efforts, do we really find women safe and secure in society today? Does she really feel energetic, important, & respectable before men?

We need to find the answers of these questions. Because even today we find "NIRBHAYA", victim of man's lust. Even today in our society inspite of working hard at both the ends (i.e. domestic & professional) she is some how, somewhere feeling restless, humiliated and insecure.

Today we find women as worker, consumer, entrepreneur, manager, and even investor, According to a economic report entitled, "Women and the world Economy 1950, That only one third of American women of working age had a paid job." While 2/3 of American women are working, and they are 50% partners in American economy.

Women in India too are working widely. Although they hardly get justice in their wages. In our Indian society women is working as architect, Professor, Lawyer, Judge, Engineer, Pilot, Financial Consultant, Doctor, Nurse, Beautician, Sales girls etc., She has entered those working areas where men dominated, like, police, army, pilot, commandos, drivers, C.A's. But unfortunate part is that she has been underutilized resource. She is not given full opportunity to bloom out as she deserves.

This is the truth that women posses very important place in economic development. Her contribution is required substantially in the progress of the nation. Married & unmarried ladies are earning a lot. At places women, is earning more than a men. To strengthen the social and economical condition of the family women is working both out side and inside and uplifting both home and society.

Economical progress has added a lot to her self confidence, character and personality. She has started believing in herself. She is hungry of her individual identity as well as the identity of her family and society as a whole.

Sociologist Robert Blood (1965) Found in his research that "employment emancipates women from domination by their husbands and secondly raises their daughters from inferiority to their brothers". It's just a research, society is aware of the facts.

To say, education and economic independence has, to some extent transformed the life of women, and this economic independence has brought a new pattern of living in society. Both men and women are working together, which has enabled them to understand each other more closely than before. Women has started working outside and men has started helping her inside the home. This has brought a new era of mutual trust, co-operation and understanding between men and women. That is why both men and women are able to work harmoniously. Therefore

inspite of being nuclear family system in society they are worried about their individual existence and recognition.

Our P.M. Sri Narendra Modi Ji visited USA, few months before, there he visited Face book office and met Mark Zuckerberg. There Modi Ji was invited for his views on women empowerment by Mark. Modi Ji said, 'if we want economic progress and stability, half of the population (women) cannot be ignored in any way. She (women) is unavoidable and can not be put within the four walls of the house. He felt emotional, remembered his mother who was the main pillar behind his upbringing and progress and worked hard without any support and motivation.

U.P. Govt. is also paying importance towards women empowerment. Govt. established 'Women Power Line — 1090' for women security and empowerment. This power line according to available data has solved nearly 3,88,658 problems related to women. It includes problems like acid attack, rape, domestic violence, etc. women, getting training to meet out the challenges related to syber crime as well.

Infact the picture or image of Indian women has been some what different. She has been portrayed very tender, agile, sophisticated, fearful, fully decorated with ornaments, and cosmetics. But looking at the troubles, tortures & mishandlings by men, she had to come out of her traditional image just to uplift herself socially, economically and morally. She, not only transformed her appearance rather she changed her attitude, character and thinking as well. She is more wise, prudent & Intellectual in comparison to her past.

Here we can mention few very prominent women of India; as role model like Jhansi Ki Rani, Rani Lakshmi Bai, Razia Sultana, Chand Bibi etc. from history of India.

Barkha — Dutta -	Brave Journalist of Indian Television, as well as Group editor
Medha Patekar -	of NDTV known for her brave and dynamic reporting.
Kiran Bedi -	60 years social activist & reformer, front line activist of
Tassv Thomas -	Narmada Revolution.
Nirupma Rai -	65 years dynamic first lad)' IPS Officer, national tennis
Chitra Ramkrishna-	player. First women as U.N. Civilian Police Advisor.
Sumitra Mahaiant . Meera	Scientist from Kerala. Who is also known as 'Missile
Kumar	Woman'. Proiect director of Agni VI. Tessy is the first Indian
Kiran Mazoomdar-	lady scientist to direct the missile programme in India.
Chandra Kocher-	

India's first foreign services officer. Former ambassador to U.S. foreign secretary and spokes person for foreign affairs.	First women MD of BSE & NSE. (Stock Exchanges of India) Women speakers for Lok Sabha in India. First lady chair person of 11M. She was awarded as world's strongest lady by Banglore 'JOBES' Magazine. Managing Director of India's first & biggest Pvt. Bank of India ICICI.
Arundhati Bhattacharya-	Indian Banker and Chairperson of State Bank of India.
Indira Nue-	Chairperson & CEO ofPEPSICO.
Shruti Badhra-	Special advisor to the Prime Minister of Britain.
Pratibha Patil-	Women President of India.
Smt. Indira Gandhi-	First lady Prime Minister of India.

That list shows that India has already witnessed the existence of brave and dynamic ladies. Even than, women in found weak and miserable. Why?

Govt. of India is also working fer women empowerment. Year 2001 was declared Women empowerment pear and stated. 'Our vision in the new centurv of a nation shall be true when women are the equal partners with men'. That's how women was placed equally with men. Programmes like 'Swam Shakti', Istri Shakti' and 'Swam-Sudha' were started for women.

But the most unfortunate part of the society is that inspite of all efforts and awakenings, social, political, economical, we witness the evil of 'female feticide i.e. killing of female foetus inside mother's womb. So brutal and inhuman thinking of the society. This evil needs quick surgery as well.

Women empowerment is not merely to reduce the distance between men and women in society. It means, she should not be considered as object only rather she deserves to be the subject. That's why it is rightly said, God stays there, where women is respected & regarded. Without women home is just like a structure made of bricks. India cannot portray her dream of development and progress without women's co-operation, involvement and vital partnership. Mahatma Gandhi knew the value of women. Once he spoke to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur on 21st Oct 1936. You women do not recognize your inner power and strength. Do not consider yourself weak, tender, suppressed and oppressed. As long as you (women) express yourself weak and miserable, men will continue to exploit you in all corners of life. May be physically, mentally emotionally and socially. You are not the slaves and commodities. Get up and find

out yourself. I want you to be tough, strong, and socially secured like men. Walk shoulder to shoulder with men instead of bowing down on his shoulder for help and support all the time. Make your place in the society. I know, you can do it better and better every time. Today I am searching a new multi dimensional lady for my mission, who can prove herself as an 'Iron Lady' of the Nation.

We find the Iron Lady as the Prime Minister of India. Smt. Indira Gandhi, who assumed the office from 1966 to 1971, and again from 1980 to 1984. She was very influenced and inspired by her father Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru for her determination, working style, mental strength, she was entitled as Iron Lady of

India. Once she revealed the secret of her mental strength she spoke to a reporter, 'My father Pt. J. L. Nehru told me that two types of persons live in this world, firstly those who work, secondly those who do not work but even take the credit of success to them. My father always inspired me to live in the first category'. A woman of great ideas and determination was also entitled honoured the women of the millennium by BBC

She is the lady behind India's status and existence as Nuclear power country, Green revolution, and space mission. She worked hard for country's progress and pride. No doubt education for women is so important that half of the problems of India shall be over, if women in India is educated said Mrs. Gandhi.

In India most of the families give priority of education to their male child, his better upbringing while female child is often considered secondary. A girl if educated provides vision, knowledge & culture to two families while male child restricts it to one. Therefore it is suggestive that irrespective of religion, cast, community & standard, education should be provided to both male & female for better India, progressive India, & developed India.

Therefore the issue, women empowerment is a burning issue, all over the world. "Women empowerment and women equality with men is universal. It ultimately refers to the creation of an environment for women where they can make decisions of their own for their personal benefits as well as for the society.

It also refers to increasing and improving the social, economic, political and legal strength of the women, to ensure equal rights and make them confident enough to claim their rights such as:-

- (i) Freely live their life with a sense of self worth, respect and dignity.
- (ii) Complete control of their life, both within and outside their home and work place.

- (iii) Make their own choices and decisions.
- (iv) Equal social status in the society.
- (v) Equal rights for social and economic justice.
- (vi) Determine financial and economic choices.
- (vii) Equal opportunities of education.
- (viii) Get equal employment opportunities without any gender bias.
- (ix) Get safe and comfortable working environment.

Society should accept globally that women has the right to get their voices heard. If country has to grow, then first women needs to grow globally. This is the truth and it should be accepted by this male dominated society.

This will not be unfair to say that women are increasingly participating in the national development process. They are making the nation proud by their outstanding performances almost in every spheres including, medical, science, sports, social services, engineering etc. Therefore she is the strong pillar in the process of National and International development and her existence should be honestly, proudly and beautifully honoured and accepted for the better tomorrow of the society not only in India but around the world.