

# Barriers Against women Empowerment: Role of Social Media in Women Empowerment in India

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## Abstract

In our Indian patriarchal society women have been discriminated , exploited , harassed and victimized for centuries. In this male dominated structure there are so many Barriers or Rituals have been imposed against women Such as Gender Discrimination, Child Marriage, Veil custom, sati custom, Female infanticide , child marriage ,Dowry , prohibition on girls education, prohibition widow Remarriage and so etc. these social customs or barriers restraint women Empowerment in India. Although there are some provisions in indian constitution which show way for women Empowerment. In spite of constitutional provisions still women have been struggling to get what they deserve in the society. In the era of Digitalization and globalization social media playing significant role interm of social or political Reforms By Giving voice, awareness , education information to vulnerable sensitive class of the society like women, children , backward class and minorities. Therefore social media can play vital role in uprooting social barriers or social malpractice against women and pioneerise the path for women upliftment but social media also having some threats like online harrasment ,Roosting Cyberbullying . This research paper will analyse the Barriers against women Empowerment and will analyse constitutional provisions as well as social media role in women Empowerment and uprooting social barriers or Rituals against women in indian society. This paper will discuss social media negative impacts as well in the path of women Empowerment. This paper nature would be Qualitative.

**Keywords:** Social Barriers, Women Empowerment, social media, cyberbullying

## Introduction

In our male dominated society male have created so many social barriers in the name of social customs or traditions . These social barriers or customs have created that kind of system in which Indian women upliftment is restricted. Women have been struggling to achieve the position in indian society which they deserve for. Their true potential has not been utilised yet . They are just like hidden treasures which is still needed to be explored. Although they have proved themselves several times but still they searching or struggling for their real identity. Barriers such as Patriarchal Indian system, prejudice or Narrow mind set , cultural beliefs and traditions, social Malpractices against women , Gender Differences , Deficiency of Education and awareness in women. Although indian constitution provide some provisions for women protection and upliftment Such as provisions under fundamental rights and under directive principles as well as under fundamental duties. Panchayat system . Apart from these constitutional provisions Social Media also can be helpful in women Empowerment because social media is a powerful medium or platform where women can Raise their voice against all social Malpractices or Gender stereotypes. They can spread awareness By creating social groups in social media platforms , social media also provides wider opportunities in businesses world for women which would make women more independent in Economically. Social

Media also provide platform for social or political reforms in women through hashtag Movements like # Me Too , pinjra tod , # Happy to Bleed, # will go out , # Nirbhaya, # LahukaLagaan. Etc.

As we are aware with the nature of this digital world that It's as free zone where everyone free to share his thought or ideas . Because of this nature social media becomes dangerous place where privacy, personal data can be misused, fake id or false data can mislead. Online harassment ,Cyberbullying and Roosting can demoralise women for upliftment. These challenges women have to face while using social media platforms for women Empowerment.

1 . Barriers against women empowerment : there are so many Barriers or Restrictions against women empowerment such As

### **1.A Cultural beliefs and traditions**

Cultural beliefs and traditions also restraint women Empowerment. where Male dominance over women accepted. in these beliefs or traditions it is assumed that male is superior and women welfare lies only under male guidance or instructions .women are meant to play their family related duties ( Chula chokha) .

### **1.B . Patriarchal Indian society :**

Indian society have been patriarchal based society where always son have right on paternal property or asset. It is inherent to only sons. In this patriarchal system women Financially depend upon male . For Financial safety or security women have to accept male domination . In this system women can't be empowered or upliftment can't be placed.

### **1.C. prejudice Or Narrow Mind-set:**

Conservative society which having Narrow or prejudice Mind-set Can't provide opportunities to women for their upliftment. In these kind of society women are restricted to only household works, they don't get equal Education or opportunities like male get . Girls are forced to Do child marriage by marrying them at a young age , their physical and mental development is hampered . Women couldn't find their identity and Self respect and women Empowerment is hindered

### **1. D. Social Malpractices aginst women:**

there have been so many social Malpractices have been continued for ancient times such as devdasi Partha, johar partha , sati partha , veil custom, prohibition on widow remarriage. Child marriage, domestic violance against women etc. these and many more social Malpractices also block women upliftment. Without restrictions on these Kind of social Malpractices No society can be called a progressive society . Women Empowerment can't be done without stopping these malpractice of the society.

### **1. E. Gender – Discrimination :**

in our indian society the birth of a girl is considered a curse on the other hand birth of a boy is celebrated as a blessings of God . Girls are considered burden to family. female foeticide and female infanticide are so common in the society . According to Ministry of Health Family Welfare In an answer they stated that 210 , 221, and 107 cases of female foeticide cases had been reported in 2012, 2013 and 2014. According to 2011 Census of India Haryana and Punjab were reported lowest sex ratio in India .

Punjab having 895 and Haryana 879 per 1000 male . While overall India 943 female on 1000 male . These data shows Gender differences or GenderDiscrimination in India . Therefore this Gender Differences or discriminations should be avoided for women Empowerment.

### **1. E. lack of Education and awareness in women :**

literacy rate also down in women than male in indian society. According to 2011 Census of India female literacy rate was 65.46 % and male having 82.14%. this tells women Literacy need to be enhanced for women upliftment. Women particularly from rural areas are not even aware of their Rights . They are easily manipulated to follow the

vicious circle of exploitation and harassment. Women education and awareness could be the key for women Empowerment.

## **2. Constitution provisions for women Empowerment:**

**2.1** Article 15 (3) . “ special arrangements for women and children.

**2.2** . Article 15 (3) “ with the help of article 15 (3) indian parliament passed “National commission for women act 1990.

**2.3** Article 16” Equal opportunity for all ( women Equal opportunity)

**2.4** Article 23 – 24 protect women from exploitation and particularly human trafficking . Which bring safety and security to women

**2.5** Article 39 42 “ maternity help for women “ . ( Maternity benefit act 1961 .

**2.6** Article 51( A) ( E) .” we should understand the Glory of our culture and abandon such practices which are against the dignity of the women’ .

**2.7** 73 rd. and 74th Amendment of India. Part 9 provide reservation of women in panchayat and mcd .

**2.8** Article 243 ( D) 1/3 Reservation for women in panchayat

## **3. Social Media Impact on women Empowerment.**

We are living in Digitalization and globalization age where new technologies bringing more convenient way of communication and connection among people at local and global level . Social Media platforms are also part of these convenient technologies. Social Media platforms actually provide Social Relation among people virtually . People Share their ideas, their daily life activities or updates their knowledge, information, Creativity, entertainment, audio , video , they do share post , they do discuss on various topics , such as political affairs , sports activities, Music, international politics, environmental concerns, therefore we can say social media touching every aspect of human life . social media Like Facebook whatsapp, Twitter ( Now C) , Instagram, Telegram, Etc. are mighty and more convenient medium for connecting and sharing . Social Media can be a very powerful medium for advocating women Empowerment in India . Because it can provide a powerful medium for women Empowerment like

### **3.1 Voice for women:**

social media provide best platform to raise voice against injustice . Women can share their stories, their ideas or opinions upon injustice or better ideas on women empowerment through post ,tweet content or through social media movements women can bring attention towards their issues or even social media movements can bring pressure upon government

**to frame policies or Laws in favour of women upliftment. Like some social media we can see**

**3.1(a) Me Too# : Me Too movement was actually started by** Tarana Burke in2006 to support the survivors of sexual violence and discrimination . But Me Too movement became viral # in 2017 when Alyssa Milano actress exposed sexual harassment in Film industry. In 2018 # Me Too became popular in india Too.

**3.1( B) # Nirbhaya :** 2012 Delhi Nirbhaya case which was about gang rap and brutal Murder of Nirbhaya. For raising voice against this inhuman act and justice for Nirbhaya . This movement was run on social Media with Hashtag Nirbhaya.this social Media Movement brought immense pressure on Indian parliament brought Criminal Law ( Amendment) Act ,2013 which was also known as Nirbhaya Act.

**3.1(C). Pinjra Tod#.** This movement was about to raise voice against discriminatory Rules for female in college campus or hostels/ Paying Guest. Pinjra Tod# was meant to break silence or cage of those rules which aimed to silence the women right or freedom on the name of safety and security.

**3.1( D)# Happy To Bleed:** This movement came in response when in 2015 sabarimala temple chief Prayar Gopalakrishnan, the Devaswom gave the statement that when machine will be invented to scan women purity ( no menstruation Time) will be allowed to enter the temple if found impure( menstruation Time) will not be allowed in the sabarimala temple of Kerala. In The response or criticism Nikita Azad and her friends Run Happy To Bleed # on social Media posting their pictures with sanitary pad. This social Media movement was against the taboo for women menstruation or stigma in india.

**3.1( E) # Lahu Ka Lagaan:** when Indian government brought 12% GST on Sanitary pads . In this response Lahu ka Lagaan # movement was run and after one year government remove that 12% on sanitary Napkin.

**3.1 ( F)# I will go out :** on January 21, 2017 a march of about 5000 people across nation Wide 30 cities and town for showing protest against sexual harrasment or sexual violence, and demanding Equal right of women. This March was also against Gender stereotypes. At New year's Eve Celebration On January 2017 , in Bengaluru , Karnataka , it was reported that women were molested or sexually harrassed by masse.on this incident politicians G. Parameshwara and Abu Azmi made sexiast comment about their dress or western culture. These comments brought outrage of the people on social media. Therefore showing outrage sexually harrassment and gender stereotypes that March was done in 30 cities of India in January 2017.

All these social media Movements on women issues shows power of social media. Therefore social media can provide voice to victimized women and show path to women Empowerment.

### **3.2 Economically straighten in women :**

Social media is not only the platform for Entertainment but it also provides better opportunities for businesses, Jobs , New and creative ideas for being a entrepreneur . Women would have access to reach potential Customers and Market. By utilising these opportunities through social media platforms women can become more independent on financially .they wont be depend on male partner or Family. They would be able to take their decisions.

We can count some women Name in India who established themselves as entrepreneur with the help of social media platforms . Such As Falguni Nayar founder of Nykaa, Ghazal Alagh( Mamaearth) Sabina chopra ( Yatra.com ) , Etc.

### **3.3 Spreading Awareness:**

Social Media also give opportunities for Spreading Awareness regarding women related issues . Like Women Literacy, Domestic violence against women, against social Malpractices, women Rights, sexual violence or sexual Assault against women. Etc.

### **3.4. political participation of women:**

Social Media platforms encourage women to participate in politics. Through social media women can participate in political Movements, political campaign, they can raise voice or pressure upon policymakers to frame policy in favour of women . They can advocate for social or political reforms for women through social media platforms by sharing post , ideas, stories, information Creative content .

### **3.5 challenge to Gender biased thought or stereotypes :**

social media could be a very handy platform for women to bring their perspective, Thoughts , Narrative against Gender biased thought, stereotypes, or prejudice mind-set for women . They can promote progressive approach for upliftment of women .

## **4. Side effects of social media for women Empowerment:**

As we all know that social media having both side positive and negative. Social Media is kind of place where very less restrictions. It is kind of free zone where so many threats for violation to privacy , misuse of data , false or fake

id, accounts scammer, manipulated data , Misuse of Artificial intelligence. All these threats could be challenge for women Empowerment .

**4.1** Cyberbullying and online harrasment. Social Media have less restrictions therefore Anybody can post Negative comment , hate speech, abusing , Roosting, therefore online Harrasment or Cyberbullying is very common .that could demoralise women to use social media for women Empowerment .

**4.2** fake News or Manipulated information: people often share fake News or Manipulated information or content to get more views or prove their point of view . Most of the time viewers don't Cross check or see validation of the content.

Therefore For women Empowerment that could also be a threat because their post or ideas can be manipulated or argued in wrong way by bad elements of the society.

**4.3** Breaching privacy: through social Media personal data stolen for businesses, advertising ,scam purpose which bring more concern for privacy and security of women their autonomy and control would be on risk on these social Media platforms .

## Conclusion

Women empowerment is essential for any nation or society's progress. Social or cultural barriers prohibit progress of society or the nation .there is no doubt that constitutional provisions brings significant impact on Indian women empowerment despite of these provisions there is need to implement these provisions with strong will . In the age of digitization and Globalization Social Media has gained much popularity in term of building connections and sharing ideas, information, etc. therefore social Media also can play vital role in the progress of the women empowerment. With the help of social Media women can express themselves by sharing their stories, experience, ideology, blogs , information, awareness, voice against injustice, discrimination, sexually – mentally harassment , social malpractices . But women also need to keep in mind about various impacts of social Media such as Cyberbullying, online harrasment, fake news, misuse of the data, privacy violation . Women empowerment can get new straightening if these platforms will be used smartly and consciously.

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