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A CRITICAL STUDY OF POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT
INITIATIVES

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Introduction:

In all the countries of the world, the factor 'of women has been continuously neglected. Even till the 20th century, no one looked seriously at women's liberation and women's empowerment. But in the last decade of the 20th century, the question became of universal interest. In the post-independence period, the women's movement has concerned itself with a large number of issues such as dowry, women's work, price rise, land rights, political participation of women, Dalit women, and marginalized women's rights, growing fundamentalism, and women's representation. The thought of this factor in the social system is now effectively coming in front of researchers, students, scholars, and politicians and their reactions and thoughts on it have started to be looked at seriously. Due to the patriarchal society in most countries of the world, the social and cultural system that directly and indirectly supports the interests of the male class has become stronger day by day. The reality of gender discrimination between men and women, which is based on the principle of diversity in nature, has been transformed into the unequal status and unequal practices, and from this, practices, thoughts, and studies that are favorable to men and unfavorable to women have become the norm. By analyzing this reality, the literature highlighting the fallacy of this unequal practice and suggesting measures to change this situation is coming forward effectively. This is why the concept of women's empowerment has come forward. Commenting on this question, Devi Sumati has said that, Women's Educational and economic status:

Towards Equality Report, in 1974, the report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India titled "**Towards equality**" is significant in the debate on women's issues in India. The findings of the Committee provided evidence for the decline in women's employment owing to technological changes and biases on the part of employers. The committee was of the view that all the stakeholders like the government, employers, and trade unions viewed women as primary homemakers and not as the breadwinners. It highlighted the neglect of women's economic roles who work for the survival of the family. When they work as wage laborers they earn fewer wages than men. To correct this inequality government passed the Equal Remuneration Act (1976). However, this legislation remains ineffective. Government's response: In the late 1970s, the government started to create women's cells within a few ministries like Rural Development, Labour, and Human Resource Development to address the issues about women. In the late 1980s, the government came up with a National Perspective Plan for Women (1988-2000). This national plan made several recommendations for the legal, economic, social, and political status of women. The government also appointed a National Commission on self-employed women to look into the issues concerning women employed in the informal sector who do not get protection from Labour Laws like maternity benefits, childcare facilities, equal wages, etc.

The 73rd and 74th amendment to the Constitution which was passed in 1993 provides for 33.33% reservation in panchayats, panchayat samiti, zilla parishads, and local body institutions.

The Government also constituted the National Commission for Women in 1992 to look into the issues concerning women's rights and the promotion of their empowerment. It is a 6 statutory body tasked to provide advice to the government on women's issues.¹

Hypothesis: "In the post-independence period, there were several initiatives that worked for the emancipation of women":

A hypothesis is the proposed explanation for an event. For a hypothesis to be a scientific hypothesis, a scientific method is required so that an individual can test it. Although the terms "hypothesis" and "theory" are often used interchangeably, scientific assumptions are not the same as a

scientific theory. The need for education to acquire knowledge and skills some assumptions have been used for this research article.²

Indian women have made economic progress since independence.

After independence, the condition of Indian women is improving.

After independence, various schemes are being implemented for the development of Indian women.

Women in Maharashtra are progressing after independence.

Research Methodology: -

I select descriptive and analytical research methodology. This study is mainly based on secondary data. The required data have been collected from various Reports, journals, and books. For this present research paper research have selected descriptive and analytical research mythology.

Objectives of the Study:

The objective of the study is to highlight "In the post-independence period, there were several initiatives which worked for the emancipation of women". I express an opinion on the following objective of the research paper:

- To study the economic progress of Indian women after independence.
- To study the status of Indian women after independence.
- To study the various schemes for the development of Indian women after independence.
- To study the progress of women in Maharashtra after independence.

"Gender bias and discrimination against women begins from the day the female child is born since an overwhelming preference in our society is bestowed on the male child, poor childhood care neglect of education and lack of other supporting factors adversely affect the growth and personality of women. Economic dependence, dowry, violence against women, and many other socio-psychological factors make her position more vulnerable and prone to exploitation. That is why the empowerment of women is very necessary and is the most discussed term now a day, and it has many dimensions such as inheritance and ownership of property, sexuality, and equality in all social, economic, and political spheres. Empowerment of women refers to creating a situation in which they can decide their destiny and also participate as equal partners in various developmental activities." That is, from the birth of a woman, she was discriminated against and ignored.³ Women in India now participate fully in areas such as education, sports, politics, media, art and culture, service sectors, science, technology, etc. Economic and Social Empowerment places women and girls in a stronger position. Women's and girls' Economic Empowerment gives a voice in decision-making processes. In addition to addressing the gender wage gap challenge, financial empowerment can be fostered through multiple pathways. Having a bank or a savings account that a woman can use by herself is a major aspect of a woman's financial security. Similarly, property ownership is a factor that greatly contributes to a woman's financial autonomy. With greater financial security, women are in a position to make decisions on their own, utilize their agency, and enhance not just their own lives but also the household. As shown over the two rounds of NFHS 4 (2015-16) and NFHS 5 (2019-21) in figure 18, the percentage of women having a bank or savings account that they use has increased substantially – from 53% to 78.6%. States such as Bihar, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, and Karnataka, improved significantly in terms of the percentage of women with bank or savings accounts. Women owning a house and/or land (alone or jointly with others) have also witnessed an increase from 38.4% to 43% from 2015 to 2021. Many states and UTs performed poorly on this measure, with states such as Maharashtra, Delhi, Andaman & Nicobar Islands registering a dip in the percentage of women owning property. Considering the immense progress that India is making in reforming the property rights of women, the increase on this front is a welcome trend. In line with the discussion on the linkage between property ownership and lesser vulnerability to acts of domestic violence, India should aim to further boost this trend.

India:

India is an eastern country, and the social conditions common in the east and the complete independence of women are also found in India. Egypt, Arab countries, Portugal, Spain, etc. Due to the influence of the ideologies of the nations, some customs arose here. For their selfishness, there was a

policy of keeping women at home and undercoating them. When it comes to women's freedom, you don't deserve to be given freedom. You are said to be fit for slavery. It is admirable that women used the few opportunities they had during the period of extreme independence. Upper-class women used to participate in politics during the Peshwa period. Lower-class women had no time to think because they had to labor because of abdominal distension. The common middle-class woman was bound by the ideas of customs and religion. In such a situation, if the British ruler had not come here, women's movements would not have been formed. The British had to pass laws against practices like sati, child marriage, and infanticide. Women who had been silent for centuries were read. The successful fight started by women for women's suffrage in England had an impact on Indian society. A. D. Akhil Bharatiya Mahila Parishad was established in 1927 and the women's movement started. As she gained confidence in speaking, she started presenting her songs before the Parliament through a delegation. Not only this but by sending representatives to the World Women's Conferences, the global movements of women started to be understood and their problems came before the world. The men were surprised to see this. To men, one of the major benefits of joining the women's movement was that women's voices soon reached every corner of the country. Hence, women were encouraged to participate in the Satyagraha movement.

The research work done by the special committee and the detailed report published based on it is very important to determine the status of women in India. On the one hand, it sheds light on how common women are in their experiences of development; on the other hand, it also shows how class, caste, and religion make a difference in the position of women. In this, the status of women was examined with the rights given by the constitution. The discrepancy between promises and reality in the constitution has been highlighted.

Human Development Report in the wake of the Beijing Conference. 1995 was created. It mainly discusses how gender-based schemes affect the status of women in the context of current economic, political, and social development. At the same time, the extent of women's participation in the economic and political sectors was also discovered.

According to the report of the Women's Commission, even though the actual status of women has been examined, inequality is seen in society today. There is a difference in the status of women in rural and urban areas. Coming back to the real root of the problem, it seems that women's issues are still not resolved. On the one hand, literacy and reservation provide development opportunities, but not so much security. So they have to work under constant pressure and fear. If you look at the schemes announced by the government in reality, those schemes are seen only on paper. Despite various schemes and laws to advance women in every field, their status is not equal today. The main reason for this is that even today women are not treated equally in this society based on male-dominated culture. Until the mentality of society changes, there will be no change in the position and status of women. Women who can be counted on the fingers are coming forward.

Women's issues are different in every society. These questions came up in various ways. In the developed countries, women became aware early and fought for it, but in the underdeveloped countries, women's issues came to the fore for a long time. Even though there were already numerous problems facing underdeveloped countries, the social reformers there managed to focus the attention of the society and the government by creating a women's movement. Women's movements in every country towards women's issues Tried to focus everyone's attention. Women's issues started being discussed at the national level as well as at the global level. Therefore, the international joint organization was forced to take note of this and at the global level, 'International Women's Day AD. Celebrating it in the year 1975, created sympathy for women. After that 1975 to 1985 was celebrated as the 'Women's Decade'. During this period, attempts were made to solve the dilemma of women's issues and then gradually increased women's organizations globally by organizing women's conferences at the global level. On the occasion of the Women's Decade, this issue started to be discussed in the country. Empathizing with women's issues, these issues came to global attention. Women started speaking out in these conferences against oppression. The problems of women in each country's

society were different. Those questions started being raised here. Due to this women's movement, she got the form of rights. They started saying that we are also human and we also have the right to live as a human. Therefore, today in almost all developed, underdeveloped, and developing countries, women have got equal rights through the constitution, which has to be considered a success of the women's movement. Initially, the question was viewed sympathetically. After that, from the point of view of human rights, it got the form of a right. In India too, the women's movement took shape in this background.

Financial constraints:

Financial independence or automatic income is largely a source of empowerment for women. Because it is important to put women on their feet and make them worthy. The participation of labor unions in India is very little. According to the 1991 census, in the state of Bihar, only 15 percent of women's trade union participation is compared to 48 percent of men, while in Uttar Pradesh only 12 percent of women's trade unions are compared to 50 percent of men. It is a matter of concern that women's participation in trade unions is so low for women's empowerment. The main reason for this low ratio is the increasing proportion of women workers in the agricultural sector. Due to this, unskilled work, low wages, and seasonal and irregular work are also mainly cited as reasons for non-participation in women's organizations.

The government declared the year 2001 as 'Women's Empowerment and Empowerment Year' and actively accelerated the empowerment of all women. Tried to provide financial support to earning women by giving special exemptions in income tax. Also, the government has taken up some schemes for the empowerment of women in families below the poverty line in rural areas.

Although the country has made progress in various fields in the post-independence period, it has not achieved much in eradicating poverty. The main reason for this is that government banks in rural areas, and NGOs are the components of the scheme, and their influence is reduced. Women do not get enough credit. So it cannot progress well. Even after the government declared 2001 as the year of empowerment, women cannot work due to a lack of economic freedom, and ignorance. This step of financial self-reliance is still a long way for an Indian woman. The humiliating treatment, gender discrimination, and oppression in the workplace do not lead to real economic empowerment of women.

Global empowerment efforts:

CEDAW (Convention Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women) is a very important international document from the point of view of women about the violation of all forms of discrimination against women. The document was accepted by the international organization. The Commission on Women was established by the United Nations to determine the rights of women. Since then this commission has been working on women's issues. This document was approved by the United Nations General Assembly on 18 December 1979. India signed this document on 9 July 1993. Also in AD, the year 1975 was declared as the 'Women's Decade' by the United Nations. Women's issues were considered at the global level. Therefore, every country's government and NGOs were forced to take some decisions to take concrete steps regarding women's awareness. Declaring the Women's Decade forced the rulers, rulers, and voluntary organizations to think about women's issues and plan activities. Along with America, Russia, Japan, Sweden, Norway, and Israel, steps were taken from the point of view of women's issues and their equal rights in India. The effect of this can be seen at the global level.

World Commission on Women:

During the session of the World Commission on Women held in New York from 28 February 2000 to 2 March 2000, Ka Nanadi Croatia was appointed as the newly elected Chairperson, and Christine Gila was appointed as the Vice Chairperson. This Women's Commission has been created mainly for the role of women.

Apart from this, four World Women's Conferences have been held so far to address women's issues and a seminar of the World Commission on Women was held in June 2000.

Carried out women's empowerment mindset in India:

Feminist thought in India started with the work of Kranti Jyoti Savitribai and empowerment started from here. He showed the world that Shree can also do epoch-making work along with Purusha. Therefore, Savitribai is known as an activist who gave a new direction to women's life.

"Savitribai can be proudly mentioned as a constructive force that shaped women's life. Savitribai gave prestige. The brilliance of this flame of innovation is an inspiration for today's and tomorrow's Maharashtra. This Savitribai of modern times continued to struggle in the nineteenth century to infuse new life into the dead society and women's life." Savitribai Phule became a teacher in 1948. Their step outside the home for education is the beginning of a new era. Savitribai emerged as a woman from the Bahujan community under very adverse conditions and performed educational work with determination, skill, and passion for the very first time. Empowerment of women started from there.

Women Empowerment Efforts by the Indian Government:

The Government of India acted upon the resolution of the World Council of Nairobi. The 'National Policy Plan 1988-2000' has drafted several women's welfare schemes related to the development program in line with the Nairobi Resolution. 'Shram Shakti 1988' is a report on self-employment and informal employment of women and contains several suggestions to improve the present situation. Therefore, it is expected to improve the status of women. A resolution was passed in the SAARC Conference on Girl Children for the period 1991 to 2000. In it, the policy was designed considering the three aspects of life protection and development of the girl child.

The Government of India has made policy changes at the government level to solve the problems of women and implemented such decisions.

Laws relating to women Laws:

1952 Women's Equal Suffrage Act, 1955 Prevention of Double Pregnancy Act, 1956 Warsha Haq (daughters share in the property), Abortion Act 1972 Act, 1961 Act of Prohibition, 1956 Anti-Prostitution Law, 1984 Establishment of Family Court, 1988 Anti-amniotic fluid examination law, 1956 Widow Marriage Act Satiban Act Child Marriage Prevention Act, 1929 Child Marriage Prevention Act, 1956 Marry according to your religion, 1954, Registration Marriage Act, 1955, Law of Divorce, 1956, Alimony Act, 1956, Anti-Improper Trade in Girls Act, 1956, Adoption Act, 1972, Abortion Act Amniocentesis Act, 1934, Devdasi Abolition Act, 1983 Rape Act, 1976, Equal pay for equal work.⁴

In the post-independence period, several initiatives worked for the emancipation of women. The prominent ones were related to the constitutional provisions and social legislation for women. The Constitution of India adopted the principle of equality in the Fundamental Rights Resolution of the Karachi Congress. Article 15(3) incorporated such provisions and mandated the state to legislate special measures to promote equality and bring women to par with men. The government of India undertook various measures that sought to remove the legal disabilities which degraded the position of women. Legal reforms were initiated in Hindu family laws in the 1950s. The reforms sought to give greater rights to Hindu women in marriage, inheritance, and guardianship. However, similar changes in the family laws of other communities like Muslims, Christians, Parsis, and Jews have not been reformed despite the Directive Principle of State Policy mandating to bring uniform laws for all the communities.⁵

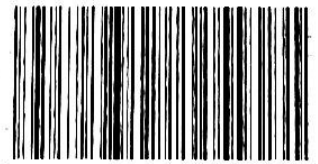
Today after the independence of India, the status of women changed completely. Women were given equal status at the national level in all respects. In short, in the post-independence era, the Indian government has been striving for the all-around development of women by implementing many initiatives for women's liberation and economic progress. It is a matter of pride to have a tribal woman President in India today.

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