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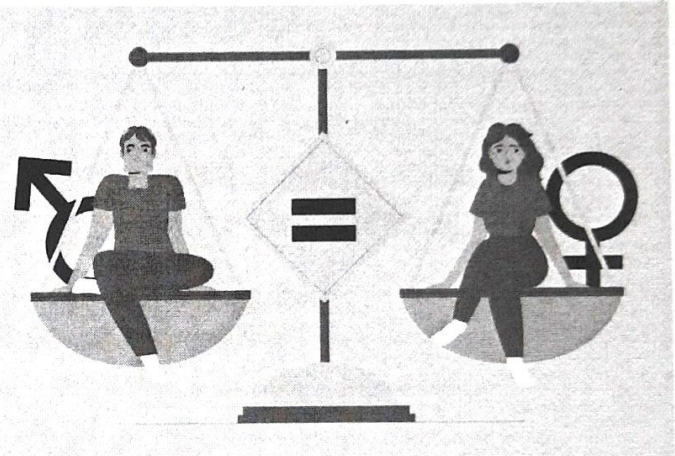
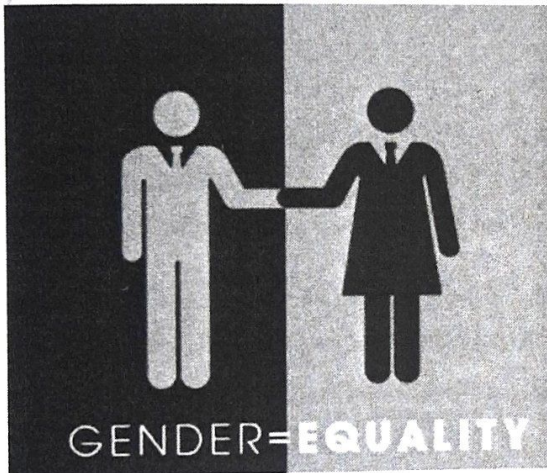
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## A Study of Gender Equality and Socio Economic Status of Women in India

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### Introduction:

Today, if women participated in the economy identically to men, it would add up to USD 28 trillion, or 26%, to annual GDP in 2025 compared with a business-as-usual scenario; and this economic potential is highest in developing countries. At present, there are 432 million women of working-age in India, out of which 343 million are employed in the unorganized sector. A report by McKinsey Global Institute has estimated that just by offering equal opportunities to women, India could add US\$ 770 billion to its GDP by 2025. Yet, the present contribution of women to the GDP remains at 18%. Even in rural India, women have been achieving new milestones every day. Despite social and familial exclusion, women have asserted their right to financial independence, built businesses from the scratch and inspired those around them. With median annual earnings of \$30,100, women in the United States still earn only 76.2 percent of what men earn (Chart 1). Among working women, 33.2 percent work in professional and managerial positions. About a quarter (26.0 percent) of businesses is owned by women, and 87.9 percent of women live above poverty. Today in India women are becoming self-reliant to a large extent due to self-help groups. Women have a large and positive impact on the economy, in business, agriculture and industry and as domestic workers, market vendors, and migrant workers and in their unpaid care work. Women play a pivotal role in the success of any society and culture, without the upliftment of women, no society can prosper. From doing office jobs to taking responsibility for household work, and doing so selflessly, women are the backbone of our society. Women's economic participation and their ownership and control of productive assets speeds up development, helps overcome poverty, reduce inequalities. Women have vast and positive impacts on the economy, in business, agriculture, and industry, and as domestic workers, market vendors, migrant workers, and through their unpaid care work.

Equal to man, Women in India now participate fully in areas such as education, sports, politics, media, art and culture, service sectors, science and 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 themselves 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. A number of 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 make 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.

### Hypothesis of the Need for a Study of Gender Equality and Socio Economic Status of Women in India:

Hypothesis is the proposed explanation for an event. In order for a hypothesis to be a scientific hypothesis, a scientific method is required that an individual can test it. Although the terms "hypothesis" and "theory" are often used interchangeably, scientific assumptions are not the same as scientific theory. The need for education to acquire knowledge and skills some assumptions have been used for this research article.<sup>3</sup>



Women in Indian society are making economic progress.

Women have unequal status.

Various schemes are implemented for the development of women.

**Research Methodology:-**

I select descriptive and analytical the research methodology. This study 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 A Study of Gender Equality and Socio Economic Status of Women in India. I express an opinion on the following objective of the research paper.

- To study the economic progress of women.
- To know the unequal status of women.
- To know about various schemes for the development of women.

Women in India are not a homogeneous group. They reflect the pluralistic society that India as religion, class, caste, ethnicity, region etc., are all woven into the mosaic. Large scale discriminations are prevalent on the basis of caste, class, religion and ethnicity and women are worst sufferer because of these. Women from particular classes, religions, castes and ethnic backgrounds are marginalized in multiple ways, given that patriarchy and gender based discriminations cut across all these backgrounds. Dalit and tribal women, Muslim women, single women including widows, elderly women, differently-abled woman and women in sex trade are the worst sufferers.

Under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY), institutional credit up to Rs. 10 lakh is provided to micro/small entrepreneurs for income-generating activities in sectors such as manufacturing, trading, services, and activities allied to agriculture (PIB, 2021). Under the PMMY, around 68% of the total accounts are held by female entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship is a promising source of employment and financial independence for a lot of women. Chakraborty & Mukherjee (2020) discuss that although the percentage share of women-owned enterprises in the total enterprises is low, between the Fifth and Sixth Economic Census, women-owned proprietary enterprises increased by more than double. The study also points to the growing in formalization of women-owned enterprises. Against this backdrop, fostering greater access to finance for women entrepreneurs in order to bring about greater financial security is of great importance. As per the Global Gender Gap Report 2022 of the World Economic Forum, India ranks 135 out of 146 countries. Achieving higher economic growth with subpar performance in gender equality is reflected in many indicators on the status of women in India.<sup>1</sup>

Today Women make up only 22 per cent of artificial intelligence workers globally. A global analysis of 133 AI systems across industries found that 44.2 per cent demonstrate gender bias. A survey of women journalists from 125 countries found that 73 per cent had suffered online violence in the course of their work.<sup>2</sup>

India is a highly patriarchal society. Economic, social, political, religious, and cultural institutions are controlled by men. Various social practices and institutions are governed by patriarchy in such a manner that the choices, livelihood and sexuality of women are controlled to the extent that women have been degraded to second grade citizens despite having constitutionally guaranteed fundamental rights of equality. The crux of the problem in gender relations lies in the fact that roles, rights and obligations are not just different but they are highly unequal. Family, caste, community, religion, and many other, social and religious institutions have reinforced and legalized the patriarchal values and ideas. Unequal economic, social and political status and position of women is an outcome of patriarchy and deeply entrenched socio-cultural stereotypes about women. Most of the time it has been perpetuated by laws, regulations and policies which do not sufficiently address the sub-ordinate status of women.

The High powered committee on the status of women categorically stated, "The paradoxical situation of women in India is alarming. On the one hand they are worshipped as goddesses, while on the other burnt for dowry. Boys are seen as a big support for parents in old age are considered necessary in order for the family lineage to continue. Girls, on the other, are unwanted yet embody the 'honour' of the family. It's a double bind for the girls/women as they do not only have to preserve this



family 'honour' in society, but also be silent when various atrocities such as abuse, violence, rape, early marriages happen. In the few cases in which they break their silence, the repercussions are immense.

Every day, in every country in the world, women are confronted by discrimination and inequality. They face violence, abuse and unequal treatment at home, at work and in their wider communities – and are denied opportunities to learn, to earn and to lead. Women form the majority of those living in poverty.<sup>4</sup>

Deeply discriminatory practices-dowry, child marriage, honour killing, which hunting, and selection indicate profound vulnerability of and inequality towards girls/women in Indian society. Some of the following facts remind us that Indian women are subjugated on a wider scale: Dowry is just not an economic transaction, it devalues the girl. Child marriage is just not a social norm but denial of childhood, with irreversible consequences, especially for girls. Witch hunting is not just a way of society boycotting a woman who is seen as a threat to society but a way to control a woman who does not conform. Gender biased selection is just not about preference of boys over girls but a practice that is eliminating girls from the families and societies, altering the social fabric and causing further vulnerability to abuse and violence for those alive. Honour killing is not just a way of punishing the one who has brought dishonour to the family; it is indeed a barbaric murder, usually of girl. 'Triple Talaq' is not just a way of separation between a married couples, it is undemocratic, unconstitutional as it is against the fundamental right of equality of women.

Liberalization, Privatisation and Globalisation (LPG), along with the expansion of education and democratization of socio-economic and political institutions have brought many changes in the lives of women. Simultaneously, these changes have also affected women adversely. These changes of greater consequences have made women the target of a strong backlash in terms of increased violence against them, both within and outside the home, wage differential, poor quality of jobs and commoditisation of women in the society.

Schemes that were introduced under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme includes Ladli scheme, Kanyashree Prakalpa Yojana, Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, Balika Samridhi Yojana, Ladli Laxmi Yojana, Dhanalakshmi scheme and many more. One Stop Centre, Women Helpline, UJJAWALA, SWADHAR Greh, Sakhi Niwas, National Creche Scheme, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, Working Women Hostel Scheme, Mahila Police Volunteers Scheme, STEP (Support to Training and Employment Program for Women), Mahila Shakti Kendras (MSK). The 5 pillars of women empowerment: Education, Health, Security, Finances, Emotion. As per a report published in 2011 literacy rates (age 7 and above) were 82.14% for men and 65.46% for women.

Conclusions:

In short, a holistic approach is needed for the overall economical development and empowerment of women. Whatever plans there are for the economic development of women should be implemented. Until the economic development of women, the dream of a developed nation will not be fulfilled. Today there is an urgent need to protect the girls and women against the violence and promote their cause with utmost care so that they may feel at par with males.

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