WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN DIGITAL ERA

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Abstract-- **Information technology is growing at a rapid rate, as seen by the current situation becoming more digitalized. When it comes to the IT sectors, men and women have equal benefits. In fact, it is regarded as a very effective instrument for women to end prejudice and promote their personal well-being and equitable participation, all of which are essential for their social recognition and the development of their local communities. Their ability to work from home and their flexible schedules make them valuable assets to the government, enabling them to participate in important economic decisions. The rapid expansion of the IT industry has not only encouraged women to speak up, but also encouraged them to discover their latent skills. The IT industry has experienced tremendous expansion in recent years, creating a wide range of new, demanding job opportunities for women. Women would gain from the Pradhan Mantra Digital Abhiyan and numerous other measures, enabling them to take the lead and live meaningful lives.[1]**

INTRODUCTION

The definition of empowerment is "giving power," which refers to the ability to make decisions based on one's own intellectual knowledge. Giving women the ability to navigate the demanding social, economic, and corporate environments is known as women's empowerment. When drafting laws to advance contemporary society, our government also takes into account the contributions made by women. Every nation with a global economy views itself as essential to the development of numerous fields. To put it briefly, we cannot advance as a nation if we abandon our portion of the planet. Women can use the ICT sector as a powerful tool to recognize their identity in front of the world by engaging in decision-making, entrepreneurship, and a variety of other activities. Women are undoubtedly less able to access technology. However, there are a lot of an illustration of how entering training in this area significantly alters their social standing. The fact that it reached the astounding date mentioned in this piece is evidence of the women's tremendous advancement in this field.

One of the crucial rudiments that's aiding in closing the gender gap in the plant is the advancement of technology. This system has searched for tactics and programs that neutralize the socioeconomic disadvantages faced by women. Women can now pierce new avenues for profitable commission thanks to the digital shift. This is a rare chance to broaden the description of a flexible work terrain that benefits both genders.[2]

This isn't just another round-up in honour of Women's History Month. We should all honour women, especially these women, without waiting for a special day!
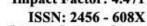
women who have disproved all stereotypes.

Women who have paved the way for others to follow in their footsteps.

women who have inspired and influenced a lot of others.

Purpose of the Study: The following goals are covered in this study, "empowering women through digital technology."

1. To illustrate the status of women in recently developing information technology fields.

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[1] https://ignited.in/I/a/232030

[2] https://www.livemint.com/news/india/how-technology-is-opening-various-routes-for-gender-equality-in-2023-11678172114057.html

2. To research the various ways that working women have profited from information technology.

3. To research how IT affects the empowerment of rural women.

The theme for this year's International Women's Day is "Digit ALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality." It falls on March 8, 2023 The Commission on the Status of Women's 67th Session will be centre on "Technological innovation, education in the digital age, and change in education for achieving gender equality."

Involving women and other underrepresented groups in technology leads to more innovative solutions and increases the likelihood of breakthroughs that support gender equality and cater to the needs of women. In contrast, there are significant costs associated with their lack of inclusion. According to UN Women's Gender Snapshot 2022 report, the exclusion of women from the digital sphere has reduced low- and middle-income countries' gross domestic product by $1 trillion over the past ten years; if nothing is done, this loss is projected to increase to $1.5 trillion by 2025. In order to reverse this trend, it will be necessary to address the issue of online abuse, which 38% of women in a study of 51 nations reported having directly experienced.

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COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY[3]

People's lives in today's fast-paced, technologically-driven world are largely defined by the internet and the devices that allow them to access it. Technological advancements have revolutionized human existence, bringing about profound shifts, impacting society, and stimulating the economy. The country's contributions to the digital revolution are generating enormous profits for the economy. Despite improvements in the country's digital literacy, women continue to encounter numerous barriers when trying to use technology and the internet. The main determinants of how women might benefit from technology innovation to reach higher levels are their literacy and social standing. It is undeniable, nevertheless, that rural women lag behind in terms of internet and technology use.

Literacy is a major problem when it comes to technology use since it prevents people from using it efficiently. The programs designed for rural women have a lot of flaws, but among the few who have used technology to reach high heights, there are a few noteworthy successes. A rural lady named "Pooja" wanted to demonstrate her creative skills, and the internet helped her achieve this, according to Nottermans (2019). Women with such brilliant ideas should be given the chance to succeed so that they can serve as role models for other rural women looking to increase their own levels of digital literacy. ICT provides a wealth of information and mostly focuses on empowering women through the use of simple tactics, however Often, this

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[3] https://kristujayanti.edu.in/SSR-III/3.4.3-Research-Papers/UGC/2019_2020/26.pdf

information is not used in an efficient manner. The significant difference in digital incentives between urban and rural women that leads to socioeconomic inequality is reflected in this study.

Empowering Patterns[4]

There are several indications around the world that advancements in the digital economy are helping women become more economically empowered by allowing them to engage in it, particularly as workers, producers, consumers, and entrepreneurs.

Interaction

Participation in the economy requires being reachable and able to reach people, particularly in the digital age. Specifically, mobile technology have improved women's connectivity, particularly in developing nations, allowing them to stay in touch with employees, suppliers, and commercial clients, for example. When faced with household duties and, in certain situations, limited mobility, the use of ICT has made it possible for women to overcome social constraints that limit their mobility outside of the home, stay connected to the outside world, and escape loneliness. An increasing number of women are being able to connect thanks to programs like GSMA's Connected Women initiative, which aims to lower the cost and increase accessibility of ICT, particularly in rural regions.

Acquisition of Skills

Access to online training programs and information resources has allowed women to learn the digital skills they need to engage in the digital economy, even though some types of technology use require them. Acknowledging the need of having sufficient digital skills, numerous governments, nonprofits, and international alliances have developed initiatives to provide at the very least fundamental abilities to women from diverse backgrounds.
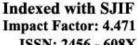
Adaptable Work

The ability of women to negotiate flexible work arrangements—which allows them to overcome obstacles to their mobility, such as cultural norms or domestic responsibilities—is a particularly significant benefit made possible by the digital economy. For instance, the well-known Grameen Village Phone program in Bangladesh, which turned housebound women into resellers of airtime and internet services, became a global symbol of women's empowerment severe Financial Services Accessible .For many women in poor and emerging nations, mobile money has made financial services and alternative solutions for commercial transactions more accessible . Especially in rural areas, women frequently cannot physically access traditional brick-and-mortar banking institutions due to their remote locations or because of the onerous administrative requirements needed to open a bank account or be eligible for other financial services. By utilizing their vast networks of independent agents and creative business strategies, mobile network providers have overcome geographical limitations and improved accessibility to digital banking services.al years ago.

THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN THE DIGITAL ERA[5]

The IT industry is regarded as non-discriminatory notwithstanding gender discrimination. It offers entrepreneurs, both male and female, equal opportunities. Without a doubt, in India, women's access to technology is restricted. But there are now enough examples to demonstrate

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[4] https://www.apo-tokyo.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/P-Insights-Vol.-3-9_Womens-Empowerment-in-the-Digital-Age.pdf

[5] https://www.ijbm.co.in/downloads/vol2-issue1/12.pdf

that, given the right training, women can use technology with surprising comprehension and control. To encourage electronic networking among women's groups, the African Women's Network of the Association for Progressive Communication (APC) has organized painting workshops. Both male and female weavers in Kenya received training on how to use the Internet to research new weaving methods and find more reasonable rates for their woven goods. There are other effective methods for using IT to empower women in India as well. India Shop is an online store founded in Tamil Nadu in 2005 with the goal of selling goods produced by non-governmental organizations and rural women's cooperatives. The dairy information system KIOSK (DISK), which maintains a database of all milk animals and offers details on veterinary services and other useful information about the dairy industry, is used by women dairy farmers in Gujarat, India. Women who dropped out of school in the middle of the Himalayas fix water pumps and handle computer data for the pumps' upkeep. Through the use of IT, the volunteer organization SMILE (Savitri Marketing Institution for Ladies Empowerment) in Pune has raised the literary status of underprivileged women. They may now sell a wider range of goods, including purses, candles, soft toys, and utility items, thanks to the internet. The products have increased market reach, awareness, and exposure thanks to the internet. These data demonstrate that IT has worldwide empowerment of women. The data from a number of IT organizations is shown here to demonstrate how women can advance when given equal opportunities.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY'S BENEFITS FOR WORKING WOMEN[6]

By providing a platform for women to openly express and share their experiences, worries, and expertise, information technology has accelerated the process of women's empowerment and opened up opportunities for their continued enrichment. Their operations have expanded because to the usage of IT, which has also allowed them to handle problems that were previously beyond of their purview. Historically, women have been kept out of the external information domain, both consciously and unintentionally due to disadvantages like restricted mobility or low educational attainment. It gives ladies a clear window to the outer world. They receive information free from censorship and distortion. As a result, people's viewpoints widen and their comprehension of their current circumstances increases. The way that people think about work and the workplace has changed significantly because to IT. Women now have more career alternatives, including the freedom of working from home, thanks to IT. The Bharti group and Tele-Tech jointly own Tele-TechIndia, a joint venture BPO company that offers its workers a choice of four-day work weeks as opposed to the typical five. Housewives and other part-timers who work 30 hour weeks are eligible for bonuses. Women can work 20 hours a week from home thanks to Mumbai-based Datamatics Technologies, a BPO that processes data.Married women now have more career options, especially if they have young children. This implies that women might do better in the digital age, where ICT proficiency is becoming more and more necessary and rewarded accordingly. In the medium run, at least, policymakers might use the increasing availability of ICT skills for women to close the gender wage gap until the labor market responds to the increased supply of ICT skills. In order to close the gender wage gap, policies that support and encourage female workers to pursue STEM-related studies and support the growing need for systematic skill enhancement and updating may be necessary.

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[6] https://www.ijbm.co.in/downloads/vol2-issue1/12.pdf

These policies should focus on improving female workers' numeracy, STEM-quantitative skills, and ICT skills.[7]

Women In Startup Field

Modern enterprises have replaced conventional business practices due to the quick development and improvement of technology. Owing to these enormous shifts, new ventures like start-ups and entrepreneurship have emerged. The government and private businessmen have encouraged startups, which has made them the new buzzword in the economic world today. Taking chances is one of the qualities of an entrepreneur that characterize many startups. Startups and other new company endeavors are transforming the economy and society. Start-ups offer an avenue for independent work; visionaries can transform concepts into companies, but they may encounter numerous hazards, novel obstacles, and intensifying rivalry. Reducing gender discrimination and empowering women are two of the government's goals. India will become a powerful nation if women are empowered to take on more responsibilities outside the house and kitchen, become financially independent, and participate in decision-making. Providing women with chances for their social, cultural, and economic growth is equally vital. Additionally, women are breaking new ground in a variety of commercial sectors . Nurturing women's entrepreneurial talents and talent by pushing them to launch their own businesses is one method to empower them. The government has encouraged women to launch start-ups with financial and technological Support Through Its Initiatives**.**

Violence Against Online Crime Of Women

The ability to join and participate in the revolution, regardless of location, is provided by the promise of online venues for global feminist networking. It is a powerful tool for announcing shifts in the dissemination of feminist activity. The focus of analyses of the new media as creating alternative arenas for opposition and resistance has been on how it de-territorializes space and allows for alliances and intervention that transcend geopolitical boundaries and identity. These feminist movements are local-global, which promotes transnational contacts while taking local circumstances into consideration—intersectionality being a key component of critical analysis. The localization and adaption of international feminist movements in India have impacted and molded current online activism. Women now have a voice thanks to a variety of expression channels, including blogs, tweets, hashtags, and websites, regardless of the underlying socioeconomic and cultural divides. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, the vibrant online community contributes to the development of a favourable climate for the feminist movement on the internet. Additionally, conventional boundaries are becoming less clear as men and women organize into networks and use social media to transform "hashtag" protests into campaigns advocating against sexual abuse.[8]
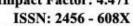
There are numerous ways in which digital empowerment can enhance women's empowerment. [9]

- Rural women can benefit from increased access to and comprehension of technology by becoming more knowledgeable about many facets of life.

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[7] https://www.oecd.org/social/empowering-women-in-the-digital-age-brochure.pdf

[8] https://vc.bridgew.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2891&context=jiws

[9] https://www.smilefoundationindia.org/blog/women-empowerment-needs-digital-empowerment/

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- turns an ordinary woman into a businessman by giving her the know-how and encouragement to use her talents—such as cooking, weaving, stitching, pottery, etc.—to start and manage profitable enterprises.
- improves small enterprises by removing intermediaries and the necessity for a physical market, providing simple access to resources, and offering guidance through expertise and information.
- Through the internet, women who unintentionally stopped working after giving birth or for other personal reasons that limited their mobility can still work from home.
- Easy access to raw materials and customers for completed goods and services has been made possible by the internet market, which has made doing business easier. for females
- The proliferation of online courses provides a means for women whose mobility is restricted to pursue higher education.
- Numerous smartphone apps provide women with timely health or other information needs.
- On social media, women can learn about and express their opinions on a range of topics.
- For many women living in small towns and cities, the transformation in the working model of large and small enterprises during COVID-19 from a physical office to an online platform opened doors to employment; digitalization created an opportunity in the face of hardship.

INDIAN WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

India is seeing a revolution in entrepreneurship. A survey on women entrepreneurs estimates that by 2030, women-owned enterprises might contribute 150–170 million jobs to India's GDP.

Sudha Murthy

Every successful man has a woman who encouraged him to take the first step in his endeavors. In 1981, Sudha Murty gave her husband Narayan Murty a loan of Rs. 10,000 to help him start Infosys. Furthermore, who is unaware of the multibillion-dollar business it helped to launch today? The Padma Shri Awardee, however, finds books, social work, teaching, and remaining grounded to be charming. At a period when becoming an electronics engineer was seen as a "male-dominant career," Sudha made this decision. She was soon employed as TELCO's (now Tata Motors) first-ever female engineer. She turned into a symbol of resistance to gender-biased careers and made many other businesses reevaluate the diversity of their staff.

Indira Nooyi

Former Pepsico CEO Indra Nooyi is on the boards of directors of Amazon and other companies. Among India's most prosperous female entrepreneurs is Indra Nooyi. Serving as Pepsico's first female CEO and chairman until 2019, she had a significant role in the company's development and expansion. Her forays into entrepreneurship continued after that. She now sits on the boards of the International Cricket Council (ICC), Philips, and Amazon.

Upasana Taku, Co-Founder Mobikwik

Indian businesswoman Upasana Taku co-founded MobiKwik, a well-known digital wallet and mobile payments startup, with her spouse Bipin Preet Singh. The business began as a platform for bill payments and cellphone recharges, but it has since grown into a comprehensive digital wallet and payments system. MobiKwik, which has over 120 million customers and partnerships with over 3 million merchants, has expanded into one of the biggest mobile payments companies in India under Upasana's skillful leadership. She was named one of

Fortune India's "under 40" in 2018 in recognition of her contributions to the Indian startup ecosystem. In addition to her job at MobiKwik, Upasana is an outspoken supporter of Indian women entrepreneurs and has been a keynote speaker at several conventions and gatherings.

Richa Singh

Richa's emotional health program, "Your DOST," aims to eradicate the stigma associated with mental illness. She developed this platform so that individuals can get help from professionals like psychologists, psychotherapists, and mental wellness coaches. She saw that many people, even though they are under a lot of stress, are afraid to talk about their problems because of the social repercussions.

CONCLUSION[10]

In addition to having a good effect on women's daily lives, women's empowerment is essential to the general growth of any society. Numerous opportunities for women in India and around the world have been brought about by the winds of radical change in the domains of work and information technology. Finding out how women use digitization in urban and rural areas is the main goal of this study. The purpose of the study is to determine how basic internet access points and training programs should be offered to rural women in order to facilitate their use of the internet. Although the "Internet Saathi" projects are supposed to provide training to rural women, in practice, hardly one in ten of these women actually utilize the internet. The process of digitization, which focuses mostly on digital literacy, which is the most important skill needed for women's empowerment. With the advancement of mobile technology, women can now stay informed about daily developments in both national and international news, and the world is literally at their fingertips. Education helps rural women not only become more digitally literate but also more economically independent. In order to achieve this, it would be beneficial for rural women to learn how to use smartphones to access the internet, conduct financial transactions online, and stay informed about current events worldwide.

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[10] https://vc.bridgew.edu/jiws/vol21/iss5/11/