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SCOPE OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA DURING THE 19th , 20th CENTURY AND TILL THE DATE

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ABSTRACT

This study encompasses the scope of Women Empowerment in India during the 19th ,20th Century and till the date. At the earlier time womens were getting equal status with men. But they had faced some difficulties during the19th Century. Many of time they were treated as bondservant. From early twenty century their statuses have been changed slowly and gradually. After then, independence of India, the constitutional makers and some national leaders strongly demand equal social position of women with men. Today we have seen the women occupied the respectable positions in all walks of the fields. These fields are Freedom Fighter, Politicians, Defence, Education, Workforce Participation, Businesses, Land and Property rights, Sports, Medical sectors, Architecture etc.They have not absolutely free some discrimination of the society. Some women have been able to establish their potentialities in India. So, each and every should be careful to promote the women statuses. Secondary data base have been employed to conduct the study. Secondary data has been generated from the Government and Non-government institutions , journals and books.

KEYWORDS: Scope of Women Empowerment, secondary data, Social development.

INTRODUCTION

India females population has been comparatively lower than males. As far as their social status is concerned , they are not treated as equal to men in all the places. Gender disabilities and discriminations are found in India even present day. Now the women in India enjoy a unique status of equality with the men as per constitutional and legal provision . A few number of women have been able to established their potentialities. Hence, each and every should be careful to promote the women statuses.

OBJECTIVES:
The aims and objectives of this study are the following:

- To examine the scope of women empowerment in india during the 19th , 20th century and till the date .
- To find out the changing pattern of women empowerment on the societal system in India.
- To suggest remedial measures for development of women empowerment in India .

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The Study Area:

India is a very large country. The geographical extension of the country is from 8° 04ʹ to 37° 6ʹ N longitude and 68° 07ʹ to and 97° 25ʹ E latitude Covering of an area of 3.287 million sq.km.

Database:

Secondary data have been used in this paper. Secondary data have been taken from the Government and Non-Government offices, journals, papers, etc .

METHODOLOGY :

At the outset relevant literature were studied and a pilot survey was done through the areas of India. The secondary data was collected from various sources. These are the data of Government and Non-Government offices, journals, papers, books etc . Photographs were use where it was found very necessary. Collected secondary data have been processed using appropriate method. The report in a scientific journal is then prepared by analyzing and interpreting the processed data.

DISCUSION:

Scope of Women Empowerment in India during the 19th, 20th Century and till the date:

(i) **Freedom Fighter** : Kittur Chennamma, queen of the princely state Kittur in Karnataka, led an armed rebellion against the British in response to the Doctrine of lapse. In the 16th cencuty Abbakka Rani, queen of coastal Karnataka, led the defence against invading European armies, notably the Portuguese. In 1857 Rani Lakshmi Bai, the Queen of Jhansi, led the Indian Rebellion against the British. She is now considered as a national hero.

(ii) **Politicians:** In the world India has one of the highest number of female politicians. Women have held high offices in India including that of the Prime Minister, the President, Speaker of the Lok Sabha and Leader of the Opposition. The Indian states Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tripura and Rajasthan have implemented 50% reservation for women. Majority candidates in these Panchayats are women. In present time 100% of elected members in Kodassery Panchayat in Kerala are women.
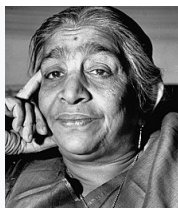

Plate 1 : Sarojini Naidu, a poet and freedom fighter, was the first Indian woman to become President of the Indian National Congress and the first woman governor of a state in India.

- In 1917, Annie Besant, the first female president of the Indian National Congress.
- In 1925, Sarojini Naidu, the first Indian born female president of the Indian National Congress.
- On 15 August 1947, following independence, Sarojini Naidu, the governor of the United Provinces, and in the process became India's first woman governor. On the same day, Amrit Kaurassumed office as the first female Cabinet minister of India in the country's first cabinet.
- Post independence:Rukmini Devi Arundale was the first ever woman in India to be nominated a Rajya Sabha member. She is considered the most important revivalist in the Indian classical dance form of Bharatanatyam from its original 'sadhir' style, prevalent amongst the temple dancers. She worked for the re-establishment of traditional Indian arts and crafts.
- In 1951,Prem Mathur of the Deccan Airways, the first Indian woman commercial pilot.

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Plate 2 : Indira Gandhi , the first female Prime Minister of India in 1966.

- In 1953, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, the first woman president of the United Nations General Assembly
- In 1963, Sucheta Kriplani , the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, the first woman to hold that position in any Indian state.
- In 1999, On 31 October, Sonia Gandhi , the first female Leader of the Opposition (India).
- In 2007, On 25 July, Pratibha Patil , the first female President of India.
- In 2009, On 4 June, Meira Kumar ,the first female Speaker of Lok Sabha.

(iii) Culture:

Plate 3 : Women in Bihar

The women in India is strongly connected to family relations. In India, the family is seen as very important. The vast majority of marriages are monogamous (one husband and one wife) populations in India. Weddings in India is wholly expensive. Most marriages in India are arranged. Sari and salwar kameez are worn by women in India. A *bindi* is part of a woman's make-up.
Rangoli festival is a traditional art very popular among Indian women.

(iv) Defence: Women in Indian Armed Forces
- In 1972, Kiran Bedi , the first female recruit to join the Indian Police Service.
- In 1992, Priya Jhingan , the first lady cadet to join the Indian Army (later commissioned on 6 March 1993).

Plate 4 :A women officer in the Indian Army briefing Russian soldiers in 2015 (joint exercise).

In 1992 the Indian Armed Forces began recruiting women to non-medical positions . In 1992 the Indian Army began inducting women officers. In 2013 the Border Security Force (BSF) began recruiting female officers.

- In 2011, Mitali Madhumita made , the first woman officer to win a Sena Medal for gallantry.

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- In 2014, women made up 3% of Indian Army personnel, 2.8% of Navy personnel, and 8.5% of Air Force personnel.
- In 2014, a record 7 female ministers are appointed in the Modi ministry, of whom 6 hold Cabinet rank, the highest number of female Cabinet ministers in Indian government such as Defence and External Affairs etc.
- In 2015, the Indian government announced that women could serve as fighter pilots in the Indian Air Force (IAF) , having previously only been permitted to fly transport aircraft and helicopters. India announced a decision to allow women to take up combat roles in all sections of army and navy in 2016.
- Tanushree Pareek, the first female combat officer commissioned by the Border Security Force on March 2017.

 (v) Education :
- Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and Jyotirao Phule plays important role for the betterment of women. Peary Charan Sarkar, a member of "Young Bengal", set up the first free school for girls in India in 1847 in Barasat,(later named Kalikrishna Girls' High School).
- In 1848, Savitribai Phule, along with her husband Jyotirao Phule, opened a school for girls in Pune, India. Savitribai Phule , the first woman teacher in India.
- London Mission Bengali Girls' School, established in Calcutta (LMS, 1869),
- John Elliot Drinkwater Bethune established the Bethune School in 1849, which developed into the Bethune College in 1879, the first women's college in India.
- In 1883, Chandramukhi Basu and Kadambini Ganguly , the first female graduates of India and the British Empire.
- In 1898, Sister Nivedita Girls' School was inaugurated.
- In 1927, The All India Women's Conference was founded.
- In 1944,Asima Chatterjee, the first Indian woman to be conferred the Doctorate of Science by an Indian university.

Plate 5 : School girls in the classroom, Lakhiganj High School, Assam

The female literacy rate in India is less than the male literacy rate. Far fewer girls than boys are enrolled in school, and many girls drop out. In urban India, girls are nearly on a par with boys in terms of education. Other hand in rural India, girls continue to be less educated than boys. The National Sample Survey Data,1997, the states of Kerala and Mizoram have approached universal female literacy. The important factor behind improvements in the social and economic status of women in Kerala is literacy.

Under the Non-Formal Education programme (NFE), about 40% of the NFE centres in states and 10% of the centres in UTs are reserved for females. About 300,000 NFE centres were catering to about 7.42 million children in 2000. About 120,000 NFE centres were exclusively for girls.

In 2011, the total literacy rate is 74.04% in India . The literacy rate is 65.46% for females, while for males it is 82.14%. The 2011 census, indicated a 2001–2011 decadal literacy growth of 9.2%, is slower than the growth seen during the previous decade.

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(vi) Workforce participation:

Plate 6 : A woman working at an *Aadhaar* center in India.

- A large percentage of women in India are actively engaged in traditional and non-traditional work. National data collection agencies accept statistics that women's contribution as workers. There are far fewer women than men in the paid workforce. In urban India, women participate in the workforce . For example, in the software industry 30% of the workforce is women.
- In 1905, Suzanne RD Tata , the first Indian woman to drive a car.

Plate 7 : Sarla Thakral , the first Indian woman to fly an aircraft in 1936.

- In 1959, Anna Chandy ,the first Indian woman judge of a High Court (Kerala High Court).
- In 1986, Surekha Yadav became the first Asian woman loco-pilot or railway driver.
- In 1989, Justice M. Fathima Beevi , the first woman judge of the Supreme Court of India.
- In 1991, Mumtaz Kazi , the first Asian woman to drive a diesel locomotive in September.
- In 1966, Captain Durga Banerjee, the first Indian woman pilot of the state airline, Indian Airlines.
- In 1984, On 23 May, Bachendri Pal, the first Indian woman to climb Mount Everest.
- In 2011, On 20 October, Priyanka N. drove the inaugural train of the Namma Metro , the first female Indian metro pilot.

In rural India in the agriculture and allied industrial sectors, females account for as much as 89.5% of the labour force. In overall farm production, women's average contribution is estimated at 55% to 66% of the total labour in India. According to World Bank report, 1991 women accounted for 94% of total employment in dairy production in India.

Women constitute 51% of the total employed in forest-based small-scale enterprises.

(vii) Businesses:

In India one of the most famous female business success stories, from the rural sector, is the Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad. Started in 1959 by seven women in Mumbai with a seed capital of only Rs.80, it had an annual turnover of more than Rs. 800 crore in the end of 2017.

In the Western state of Gujarat, One of the largest dairy co-operatives in the world, Amul, began by mobilizing rural women in Anand.

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(viii) Richest/ Successful Women:

Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, founded Biocon, one of India's first biotech companies, was rated India's richest woman in 2006. Lalita D. Gupte and Kalpana Morparia were the only businesswomen in India made the list of the Forbes World's Most Powerful Women in 2006. Gupte ran ICICI Bank, India's second-largest bank, during October 2006.

(ix) Land and property rights:

Plate 8 : Women harvesting rice paddy in Tamil Nadu. Women rarely own land in their own names, they often work in agriculture.

In most Indian families, women do't own any property in their own names, and do't a share of parental property. Due to weak enforcement of laws protecting them, women continue to have little access to land and property. In India, women's property rights vary depending on religion, and tribe, and are subject to a complex mix of law , but in principle the move has been towards granting women equal legal rights, since the passing of The Hindu Succession Act, 2005.

The Hindu personal laws of 1956 (applying to Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, and Jains) gave women rights to heritages. Sons had an independent share in the ancestral property, while the daughters' shares were based on the share received by their father. A father could effectively disinherit a daughter by renouncing his share of the ancestral property, but a son would continue to have a share in his own right. In 2015, Amendment of the Hindu laws, women now have the same status as men.

The Supreme Court of India ruled that Shah Bano, an elderly divorced Muslim woman, was eligible for alimony in 1986. The decision was opposed by fundamentalist Muslim leaders, who alleged that the court was interfering in their personal law. The Union Government subsequently passed the Muslim Women's (Protection of Rights Upon Divorce) Act. Christian women have struggled over the years for equal rights in divorce and succession. All churches, jointly with women's organizations, drew up a draft law called the Christian Marriage and Matrimonial Causes Bill in 1994.

(x) Sports women:
- In 1970, Kamaljit Sandhu, the first Indian woman to win a Gold in the Asian Games.
- In 1966, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay wins Ramon Magsaysay award for community leadership.
- The first Indian woman to win an Olympic Medal, Karnam Malleswari, a bronze medal at the Sydney Olympics in the 69 kg weight category in Weightlifting event.

(xi) Medical sectors:
- In 1886, Kadambini Ganguly and Anandi Gopal Joshi , the first women from India to be trained in Western medicine.

(xii) Architecture:
- In 1978, Sheila Sri Prakash , the first female entrepreneur to independently start an architecture firm.

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(xiii) Others:

In 1979, Mother Teresa wins the Nobel Peace Prize, the first Indian female citizen to do so.

Plate 9 : Kalpana Chawla, NASA photo portrait in orange suit

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Based on the above findings and assessment made thereby the following policy recommendations can be made.

- Educated sections of the society as well as the local leaders may take initiative to campaign programme to convince people at large about the positive effects of women empowerment in society.
- Spread Women education and promote societal activities.
- Arrange for awareness camps on a regular basis for the development of women empowerment.
- Needed Vocational and technical training, and financial literacy programmes for women to help them develop marketable.
- To gives freedom of their (womens) own life and lifestyle inside the home and also outside at their work.
- To helps women to select their own economic and financial choices , by their own.
- Needed a high social respect in society for women.
- Needs equal rights in society for women .
- Promote safe and secured Working location with proper privacy for women.

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