EXPLORING THE DIMENSIONS OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN VARIOUS SECTORS

DR RAVINDER KUMAR,
Assistant professor
School of law, NIILM University, Kaithal Haryana
ravigrowkkr@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The notion of women's empowerment is widely endorsed across various sectors of society, yet its practical application remains inconsistent. This discrepancy becomes evident when examining the challenges faced by women in both public and private corporate sectors. In the context of India, women encounter difficulties in transcending traditional and orthodox societal views. The entrenched cultural norms and perspectives on women's roles contribute to a significantly lower representation of women in various fields compared to men. Moreover, women in these sectors often endure harassment, with their struggles being overlooked.

In professions such as IT, corporate training, teaching, air hostess roles, receptionists, marketing, and others, women face obstacles stemming from societal expectations, religious beliefs, and cultural biases. Unfortunately, blind faith in religious doctrines and practices has led to instances of harassment, as highlighted in prominent cases involving figures like Ram Rahim and Swami Nityanand. While these cases may temporarily alter societal perceptions, they often revert to the status quo over time. One can discern the persistence of gender inequality from the statistics, revealing that women constitute only approximately 11% of the upper house's total strength. This underscores the need for a more comprehensive and sustained effort to address and rectify the challenges hindering women's representation and empowerment in various sectors.

KEYWORDS: women's empowerment, society, corporate sector, traditional views, orthodox beliefs, challenges, India, representation, harassment, societal norms, cultural biases, professions, IT, corporate training, teaching, air hostess, receptionists, marketing, religious beliefs, cultural norms, gender inequality.

This article delves into the often-overlooked dimensions of women's empowerment, specifically within the context of their engagement in small industries and crafts, constituting around 30% of the workforce. It sheds light on the intricate relationship between women's representation and their level of responsibility as they ascend the hierarchy within companies. The focus is on uncovering this disparity and pinpointing areas where the presence of women in the labor market is on the rise. Anticipating progress in the public sector, especially with the imminent presentation of the Women's Bill in both upper and lower houses of parliament, the article discusses the hurdles that still need to be addressed. It explores the statistical landscape of key business sectors like IT and the stock market, drawing comparisons between the corporate and minuscule sectors concerning the proportion of women among the total workforce. With unanimous support for the introduction of the Women's Bill, this article highlights the expected positive shift in the representation of women in the government sector. Nevertheless, it acknowledges existing impediments that need to be addressed. Through a thorough exploration of sector-specific statistics, such as IT and the stock market, the article provides insights into the contrasts between the corporate and small-scale sectors in terms of women's participation in the workforce.

Objective:

This article aims to comprehensively explore the current conditions and status of women in Indian society. It delves into the realities concerning women, assessing the extent of their empowerment in the modern Indian scenario. Additionally, the article seeks to analyze the constitutional provisions, laws, and policies that have been instituted to promote and enhance women's empowerment in the country.

Researchers have formulated a set of principles known as The Women's Empowerment Principles, offering valuable insights into empowering women across various domains such as the workplace, marketplace, and community. These principles emerged from a collaborative effort between the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the United Nations Global Compact, drawing inspiration from the Calvert Women's Principles.

Women's Empowerment Principles is to establish guidelines that lead towards best practices, focusing on integrating the gender dimension of corporate responsibility within the framework of the United Nations Global Compact and the role of businesses in sustainable development. Beyond serving as a practical guide for companies, these principles aim to educate and engage other stakeholders, including governments, in their collaborative endeavors with businesses.

Historical Background

Proportional political representation, a core tenet of modern constitutional democracy, aims to include all segments of the population. Despite constituting nearly half of the global population (49.58 percent), women historically faced political marginalization worldwide. Starting in the mid-19th century, social movements initiated significant reforms, with the United Nations supporting women's rights in its charter established in 1945. The feminist movements of the 1960s and '70s furthered this cause, leading to the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) by the UN General Assembly in 1979.

In 2000, UN member states incorporated gender equality into the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), succeeded later by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2016. Goal 5 of the SDGs aims to achieve gender equality and empower women, emphasizing their full participation and leadership opportunities in decision-making across all spheres[1].Scholars, such as Anne Phillips, highlight the advantages of increased female representation in politics, citing the diverse skills women bring, their role-modeling impact, and their ability to address gender justice. This inclusion also ensures the representation of women's specific interests in state policy[2], contributing to a more vibrant democracy. Political scientists, including Hannah Pitkin and Emanuela Lombardo with Petra Meier, have discussed various forms of political representation—'descriptive,' 'substantive,' and 'symbolic'—emphasizing their combined importance for democratic participation and transformation, especially for women.

Principle 1: Cultivate High-Level Corporate Leadership for Gender Equality[3]
Leadership Fosters Gender Equality [4]
Affirm unwavering high-level support and institute top-level policies promoting gender equality and human rights.Set comprehensive company-wide goals and targets for gender equality[5], integrating progress as a key metric in managers' performance evaluations. Involve both internal and external stakeholders in formulating company policies, programs, and implementation plans that propel the agenda of equality forward. Ensure that all policies demonstrate gender sensitivity, recognizing factors that impact women and men differently while fostering a corporate culture that actively promotes equality and inclusion.

Principle 2: Promote Equal Treatment and Inclusion in the Workplace[6]
Uphold Equal Opportunity, Inclusion, and Nondiscrimination.
Ensure equitable remuneration, including benefits, for work of equivalent value, striving to establish a living wage for all employees.Foster gender-neutral workplace policies and practices, eliminating any form of gender-based discrimination.Implement recruitment and retention practices that are sensitive to gender, actively promoting the appointment of women to managerial, executive positions, and corporate boards.Ensure a minimum of 30% participation of women in decision-making and governance across all business levels and areas.Provide flexible work options, leave, and re-entry opportunities, ensuring equal pay and status for all positions.Support accessibility to child and dependent care through the provision of services, resources, and information to both women and men.

---

[1] "Gender ratio in the world", Statistics Times, August 2020.

[2] "Sustainable Development Goals", Bureau for Rights Based Development (BRD).

[3] https://unglobalcompact.org/take-action/action/womens-principles

[4] Leadership Promotes Gender Equality *Women and Leadership* Oxfam, 2000 P50

[5] Indian Constitution Article 14 embodies the general principles of equality before Law and equal protection of laws. Article 15(1) and (2)prohibits the state from discriminating against any citizen only based on any one or more of the aspects such as religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them.

[6] Indian Constitution Article 16(1) mandates equality of opportunity in public employment (does not include private sector) and prevents discrimination based on religion, race, descent, place of birth, caste, sex, residence, or any combination of these reason in any public employment or office.

Principle 3: Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers[7]

Health, Safety and Freedom from Violenceensuring women's health, safety, and freedom from violence is imperative for fostering a secure and equitable society. Robust measures, including accessible healthcare, stringent legal frameworks against gender-based violence, and community awareness programs, are crucial to create an environment where women can thrive without fear, enjoying their fundamental rights to health and safety. Efforts toward building a violence-free society contribute significantly to the overall empowerment and well-being of women in India.

Taking into account differential impacts on women and men, provide safe working conditions[8] and protection from exposure to hazardous materials and disclose potential risks, including to reproductive health. Establish a zero-tolerance policy towards all forms of violence at work, including verbal and/or physical abuse and prevent sexual harassment. Strive to offer health insurance or other needed services - including for survivors of domestic violence - and ensure equal access for all employees. Respect women and men worker's rights to time off for medical care and counseling for themselves and their dependents[9]. In consultation with employees, identify and address security issues, including the safety of women traveling to and from work on company-related business. Train security staff and managers to recognize signs of violence against women[10] and understand laws and company policies on human trafficking, labour and sexual exploitation

Principle 4: Promote education, training, and professional development for women[11]

Education and Training Despite the notable educational achievements of women in India, the employment rate among them remains considerably low. World Bank data reveals a decline in the proportion of working women in India, plummeting from 24 percent to 18 percent over the decade spanning from 2010 to 2020.[12]

Foster workplace policies and programs aimed at facilitating the advancement of women across all organizational levels and business domains. Encourage women to explore opportunities in nontraditional job fields.Ensure equitable access to company-supported education and training initiatives, encompassing literacy classes, vocational training, and information technology programs.Provide women with equal opportunities for both formal and informal networking and mentoring, fostering a supportive professional environment[13].

Clearly articulate the business case for women's empowerment, emphasizing the positive impacts of inclusion for both men and women
Principle 5: Foster enterprise development, supply chain, and marketing strategies conducive to women's empowerment.
Encourage the growth of enterprises, enhance supply chain dynamics, and develop marketing strategies that contribute to the empowerment of women.
Enterprise Development, Supply Chain, and Marketing Practices: Cultivate expanded associations with enterprises led by women, encompassing small businesses and women entrepreneurs. Support

---

[7]Government of India Ministry of Labour and Employment NATIONAL POLICY ON SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT AT WORK PLACE 1.9 The fundamental purpose of this National Policy on Safety, Health and Environment at workplace, is not only to eliminate the incidence of work related injuries, diseases, fatalities, disaster and loss of national assets and ensuring achievement of a high level of occupational safety, health and environment ... P3.

[8]https://labour.gov.in/sites/default/files/SafetyHealthandEnvironmentatWorkPlace.pdf18/01/2020 at 12:22 pm

[9] N. B. Sarojini & others, Women's Right to Health NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION 2006 P 93.
https://nhrc.nic.in/sites/default/files/Womens.pdf visited 20/12/2019 at 10:11 am.

[10] Bhartiya Stree Shakti *Tackling Violence Against Women: A Study of State Intervention Measures (A comparative study of impact of new laws, crime rate and reporting rate, Change in awareness level)*Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, New Delhi 2017 p 27

[11]https://wcd.nic.in/womendevelopment/national-policy-women-empowerment visited 12/08/2019 at 02:00.

[12]https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.EMP.TOTL.SP.FE.ZS?locations=IN 20/20/2020 at 8:00 pm

[13] Women, Business and the Law 2016: Getting to Equal By World Bank Group 2016 P2

gender-sensitive approaches to overcome barriers in credit and lending. Advocate that business partners and associates uphold the company's dedication to promoting equality and inclusion. Uphold the dignity of women in all corporate materials and marketing endeavors. Ensure that the company's products, services, and facilities are not implicated in human trafficking, labor exploitation, or sexual exploitation.

Principle 6: Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy[14]

Community Leadership and EngagementCommunity leadership and engagement for women involves actively promoting and supporting women's involvement in decision-making processes, advocating for gender equality, and collaborating with community leaders to create inclusive spaces. This initiative recognizes and celebrates women's contributions, ensuring their voices are heard and heeded in community matters. Through philanthropy and community programs, the focus is on fostering equal opportunities, eradicating discrimination, and empowering women to lead and contribute meaningfully in their communities.

Lead by example, demonstrating the company's dedication to gender equality and the empowerment of women.Utilize influence, independently or in collaboration, to champion gender equality and cooperate with business partners, suppliers, and community leaders to foster inclusive practices.Collaborate with community stakeholders, officials, and other entities to eradicate discrimination and exploitation, creating opportunities for women and girls.Promote and acknowledge women's leadership and contributions in their communities, ensuring adequate representation in community consultations.Employ philanthropy and grant programs to reinforce the company's commitment to inclusion, equality, and human rights.

Principle 7: Ensuring Accountability through Transparent Reporting for Gender Equality[15]

To uphold the commitment to gender equality, it is imperative to measure and openly communicate progress. Companies should not only disclose their policies and implementation strategies but also establish clear benchmarks for assessing women's inclusion at all organizational levels. Regular reporting, both internally and externally, with gender-disaggregated data, contributes to transparency. Integrating gender markers into routine reporting obligations further reinforces a comprehensive approach to monitoring and advancing gender equality initiatives. This commitment to measurement and public reporting is vital for fostering a culture of accountability and continual improvement.

Publicize the company's policies and comprehensive implementation plan dedicated to fostering gender equality.Set clear benchmarks to quantitatively assess the inclusion of women across all organizational levels. Regularly measure and disclose progress, utilizing internal and external channels, with data appropriately disaggregated by gender.Integrate gender markers into existing reporting obligations to ensure a holistic approach to tracking and enhancing gender equality initiatives.

Women representation in Indian politics

The representation of women in the Indian Parliament has seen incremental progress but remains significantly below the desired levels. In the Lok Sabha, the lower house, the situation reflects a persistent gap between the ideal and the actual. In 2014, the need for women members was 59, yet only 11 were present. By 2019, the requirement increased to 66, but the actual representation was only 22 out of 545 seats.

Similarly, in the Rajya Sabha, the upper house, the deficit in women representation is evident. In 2014, out of the needed 31 women representatives, only 12.7% were present. In 2016, with a requirement of 27, the actual number was merely 11. In 2020, while 25 were needed, only 10.2% constituted the female members in the house.These statistics underscore the pressing need for concerted efforts to bridge the gender gap in political representation. Despite incremental improvements, achieving parity in the Indian Parliament remains a formidable challenge, necessitating proactive measures to enhance women's participation in legislative bodies.
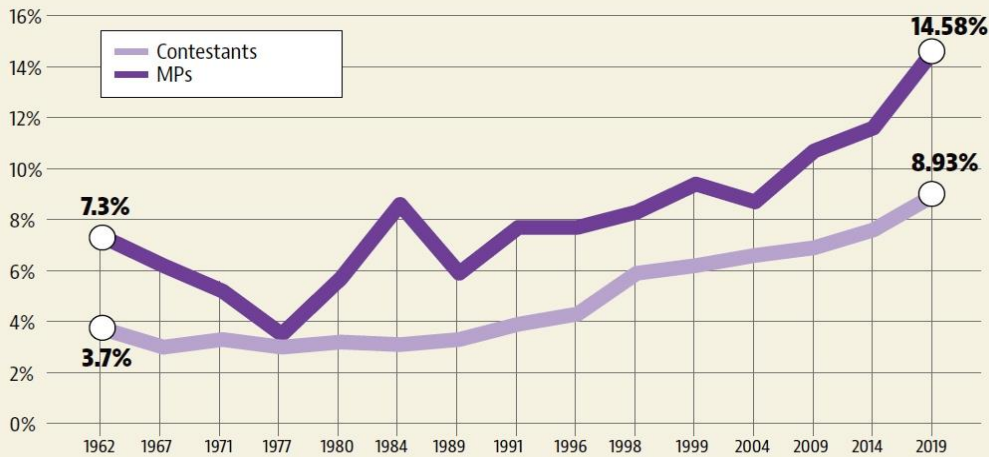
---

[14]https://unglobalcompact.org/take-action/action/womens-principles
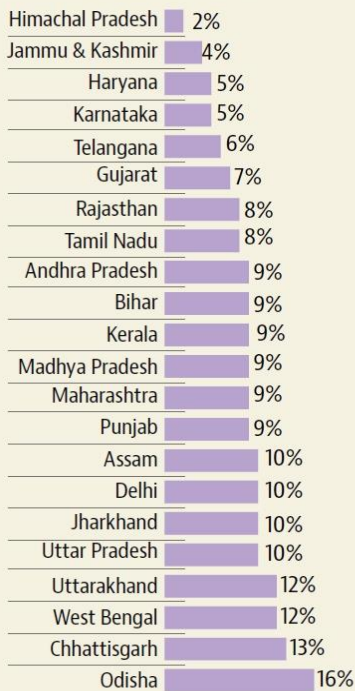[15]Id 14

Women in the House over the years

In 2019, women candidates had a higher strike rate than men in Bharatiya Janata Party, Congress

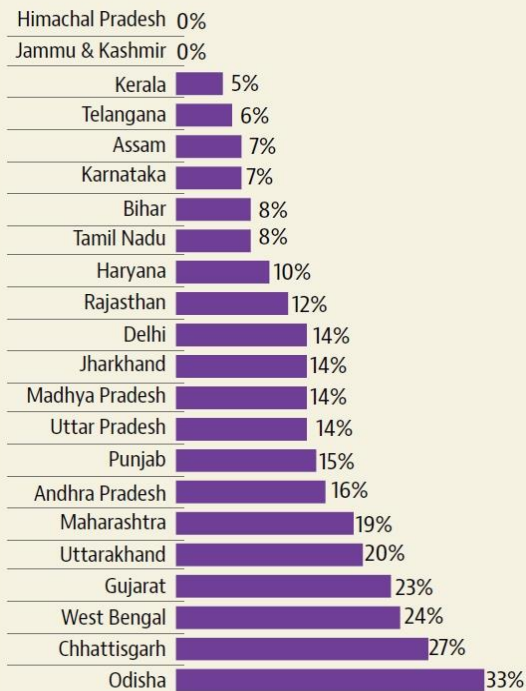## WOMEN CONTESTANTS AND WOMEN MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Legend:
- Contestants
- MPs

Key data points on chart: 7.3% (1962, MPs), 3.7% (1962, Contestants), 14.58% (2019, MPs), 8.93% (2019, Contestants)

Years on axis: 1962, 1967, 1971, 1977, 1980, 1984, 1989, 1991, 1996, 1998, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014, 2019

HOW THE BIG STATES VOTED IN THE 2019 LOK SABHA ELECTIONS

WOMEN CANDIDATES

State	%
Himachal Pradesh	2%
Jammu & Kashmir	4%
Haryana	5%
Karnataka	5%
Telangana	6%
Gujarat	7%
Rajasthan	8%
Tamil Nadu	8%
Andhra Pradesh	9%
Bihar	9%
Kerala	9%
Madhya Pradesh	9%
Maharashtra	9%
Punjab	9%
Assam	10%
Delhi	10%
Jharkhand	10%
Uttar Pradesh	10%
Uttarakhand	12%
West Bengal	12%
Chhattisgarh	13%
Odisha	16%

WOMEN MPs

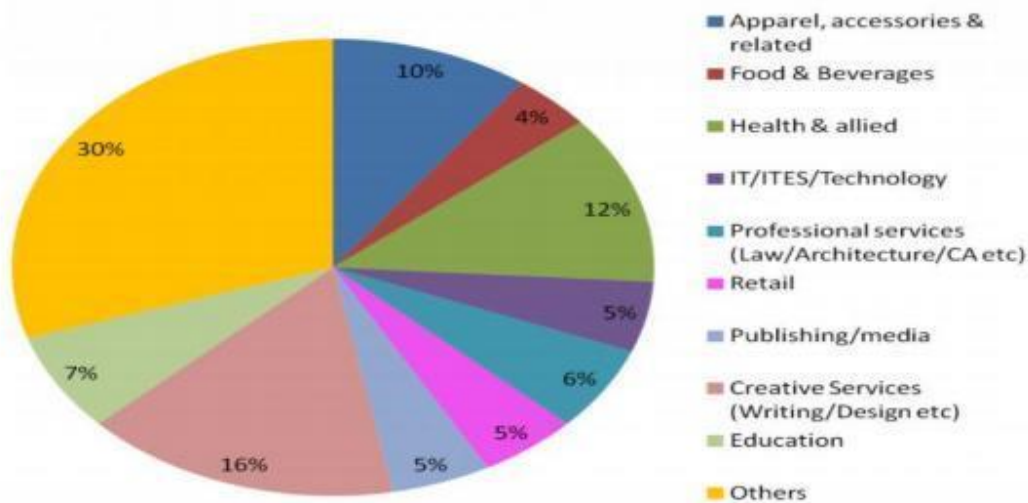| State	%
Himachal Pradesh	0%
Jammu & Kashmir	0%
Kerala	5%
Telangana	6%
Assam	7%
Karnataka	7%
Bihar	8%
Tamil Nadu	8%
Haryana	10%
Rajasthan	12%
Delhi	14%
Jharkhand	14%
Madhya Pradesh	14%
Uttar Pradesh	14%
Punjab	15%
Andhra Pradesh	16%
Maharashtra	19%
Uttarakhand	20%
Gujarat	23%
West Bengal	24%
Chhattisgarh	27%
Odisha	33%

Source: Trivedi Centre for Political Data

Source https://www.hindustantimes.com/lok-sabha-elections/lok-sabha-election-results-2019-at-14-6-lok-sabha-to-have-most-women-ever/story-5BCCTbyER96BxdMV22PKPN.html
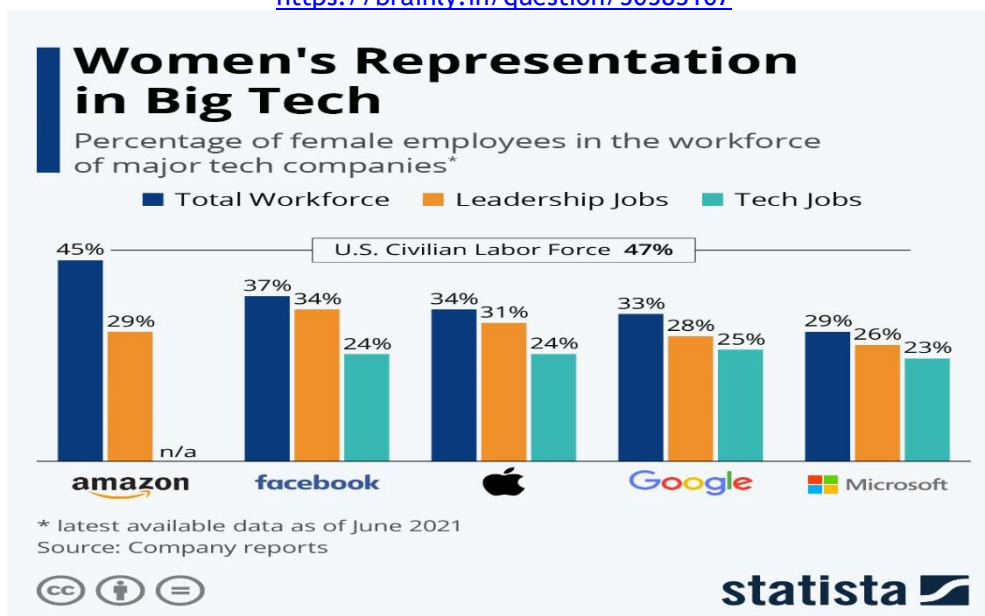
The dearth of women CEOs in the Indian corporate sector is palpable, with only a handful readily coming to mind, including notable figures like Indra Nooyi of Pepsico, Chanda Kochar of ICICI, and Neelam Dhawan, MD of HP India. This scarcity is particularly conspicuous in sectors like IT, where Neelam Dhawan stands out as a rare example. ArunaJaynath's direct promotion to the position of Global Delivery Officer at Capegemini and Akila Krishna Kumar's leadership at Google India add to the shortlist.

However, even at the executive officer (EXO) level, the representation is marginally better. Despite over 30% of employees in the IT sector being women and nearly 50% of recent hires being female, the presence of women at the top remains disproportionately low. While women often shoulder significant responsibilities at home, the same level of dedication is expected at the CEO level, creating a potential barrier.Traditional business practices, favoring family members as board members, further hinder the inclusion of external women directors. Changing dynamics, such as the introduction of policies like flexible working hours, school facilities, and extended maternity leave, are beginning to alter this landscape. The growing number of women employees in the IT sector, with a noticeable ratio compared to male counterparts, reflects an increasing ambition to share responsibilities equally.As more women enter the industry at lower levels, the expectation to rise to leadership positions grows. The trend is expected to continue, with women becoming more assertive and proactive during negotiations, demanding equal compensation packages at the bargaining table. This shift signals a positive trajectory towards greater representation of women in leadership roles within the IT sector.

https://brainly.in/question/30583107

https://www.statista.com/chart/4467/female-employees-at-tech-companies/

Women Participation in Stock Market

Traditionally, the stock market has been synonymous with male dominance, often associated with Dalal Street and the trading game. However, a paradigm shift is underway, hinting at a more inclusive future. While the current number of women investors remains modest, the trend is poised to change. The rise of women earning higher incomes, coupled with a deeper understanding of

financial metrics like Earnings Per Share (EPS) and Price-Earnings Ratio (P/E), is expected to make their presence more pronounced.

Currently estimated at around 5% of all retail investors, up from 2% five years ago, women's participation in the stock market is steadily increasing. In developed markets, this figure stands at about 15-20%[16]. As women continue to make significant contributions to the economy, their role as crucial earning members in families is on the rise. Enhanced education and economic awareness have shifted their focus from traditional investment products to market-linked options like mutual funds and direct equities.

The accessibility of inexpensive online trading platforms has played a pivotal role in enabling more women to enter the market and generate additional income. Despite a growing number of women engaging in day trading, the majority tend to adopt a more conservative, long-term investment approach for capital appreciation[17]. While their earlier focus was primarily on the primary market, there is now a notable increase in women participating in the secondary market.

As women investors become more market-savvy, another noteworthy trend is the increasing number of women professionals in decision-making roles at brokerages and fund houses. The proliferation of institutions offering MBA degrees has led to a rise in skilled women talent in trading and investment roles. Employment practices are evolving, with hirers no longer discriminating between men and women in job offers and salary packages. Despite these positive strides, there is still work to be done to dismantle existing barriers between genders.

Women Representation in Companies Board in Asia Pacific

In five Asia Pacific countries, including India, over 70% of company boards lackfemale independent directors. Notably, more than 70% of boards in Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, New Zealand, and Singapore have female independent directors[18]. However, boards with three or more female directors remain rare, and those with three or more independent female directors are nearly nonexistent. Recognizing the significance of gender diversity in boardrooms, efforts are being made to reverse this trend.The acknowledgment of the importance of women in the workforce has prompted recruiters to hire more women managers. The upward trajectory of women employees reaching top leadership positions is improving, and this positive trend is anticipated to persist.

Constitutional Safeguards of Women

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The Constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favor of women. Empowerment is the one of the key factors in determining the success of development is the status and position of women in the society[19]. We put a special focus on empowering women and girls, because we believe they hold the key to long-lasting social change in communities. Empowering women must be a united approach, a cause that requires continued attention and stewardship by all. We need to augment our efforts for empowering women and enhance their progress. It is our moral, social and constitutional responsibility to ensure their progress by providing them with equal rights and opportunities. Today women with their smartness, grace and elegance have conquered the whole world. They with their hard work and sincerity have excelled in each and every profession. Women are considered to be more honest, meticulous, and efficient and hence more and more companies prefer hiring women for better performance and result.

Constitutional Rights to Women:

The rights and safeguards enshrined in the constitution for women in India are listed below:
•   The state shall not discriminate against any citizen of India on the ground of sex [Article 15(1)].

---

[16]https://www.forbesindia.com/article/investment-special-2021/meet-the-women-of-dalal-street/67309/1 visited on 25 may 2021 at 10:00 am.

[17]https://www.business-standard.com/article/markets/female-investor-participation-in-india-below-global-average-shows-data-121100300792_1.html visited 05/10/2021 at 12:55 pm.

[18]https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/jobs/no-female-independent-directors-in-70-boards/articleshow/7652200.cms?from=mdr visited 19 /03/2019 at 12:00 pm

[19] Indian Constitution Article 15(3)- Special provision enabling the State to make affirmative discriminations in favor of women.

• The state is empowered to make any special provision for women. In other words, this provision enables the state to make affirmative discrimination in favour of women [Article 15(3)].

• No citizen shall be discriminated against or be ineligible for any employment or office under the state on the ground of sex [Article 16(2)].

• Traffic in human beings and forced labour are prohibited [Article 23(1)].

• The state to secure for men and women equally the right to an adequate means of livelihood [Article 39(a)].

• The state to secure equal pay for equal work for both Indian men and women [Article 39(d)].

• The state is required to ensure that the health and strength of women workers are not abused and that they are not forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their strength [Article 39(e)].

• The state shall make provision for securing just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief [Article 42].

• It shall be the duty of every citizen of India to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women [Article 51-A(e)].

• One-third of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Panchayat shall be reserved for women [Article 243-D(3)].

• One-third of the total number of offices of chairpersons in the Panchayats at each level shall be reserved for women [Article 243-D(4)].

• One-third of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Municipality shall be reserved for women [Article 243-T(3)].

• The offices of chairpersons in the Municipalities shall be reserved for women in such manner as the State Legislature may provide [Article 243-T(4)].

Legal Rights to Women:

The following various legislations contain several rights and safeguards for women:

• Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005) is a comprehensive legislation to protect women in India from all forms of domestic violence. It also covers women who have been/are in a relationship with the abuser and are subjected to violence of any kind—physical, sexual, mental, verbal or emotional.

• Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act (1956) is the premier legislation for prevention of trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation. In other words, it prevents trafficking in women and girls for the purpose of prostitution as an organised means of living.

• Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act (1986) prohibits indecent representation of women through advertisements or in publications, writings, paintings, figures or in any other manner.

• Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act (1987) provides for the more effective prevention of the commission of sati and its glorification on women.

• Dowry Prohibition Act (1961) prohibits the giving or taking of dowry at or before or any time after the marriage from women.

• Maternity Benefit Act (1961) regulates the employment of women in certain establishments for certain period before and after child-birth and provides for maternity benefit and certain other benefits.

• Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act (1971) provides for the termination of certain pregnancies by registered medical practitioners on humanitarian and medical grounds.

• Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act (1994) prohibits sex selection before or after conception and prevents the misuse of pre-natal diagnostic techniques for sex determination leading to female foeticide.

• Equal Remuneration Act (1976) provides for payment of equal remuneration to both men and women workers for same work or work of a similar nature. It also prevents discrimination on the ground of sex, against women in recruitment and service conditions.

• Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act (1939) grants a Muslim wife the right to seek the dissolution of her marriage.

• Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act (1986) protects the rights of Muslim women who have been divorced by or have obtained divorce from their husbands.

• Family Courts Act (1984) provides for the establishment of Family Courts for speedy settlement of family disputes.

• Indian Penal Code (1860) contains provisions to protect Indian women from dowry death, rape, kidnapping, cruelty and other offences.

- Code of Criminal Procedure (1973) has certain safeguards for women like obligation of a person to maintain his wife, arrest of woman by female police and so on.
- Indian Christian Marriage Act (1872) contain provisions relating to marriage and divorce among the Christian community.
- Legal Services Authorities Act (1987) provides for free legal services to Indian women.
- Hindu Marriage Act (1955) introduced monogamy and allowed divorce on certain specified grounds. It provided equal rights to Indian man and woman in respect of marriage and divorce.
- Hindu Succession Act (1956) recognizes the right of women to inherit parental property equally with men.
- Minimum Wages Act (1948) does not allow discrimination between male and female workers or different minimum wages for them.
- Mines Act (1952) and Factories Act (1948) prohibits the employment of women between 7 P.M. to 6 A.M. in mines and factories and provides for their safety and welfare.
- The following other legislations also contain certain rights and safeguards for women:
- Employees' State Insurance Act (1948)
- Plantation Labour Act (1951)
- Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act (1976)
- Legal Practitioners (Women) Act (1923)
- Indian Succession Act (1925)
- Indian Divorce Act (1869)
- Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act (1936)
- Special Marriage Act (1954)
- Foreign Marriage Act (1969)
- Indian Evidence Act (1872)
- Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act (1956).
- National Commission for Women Act (1990) provided for the establishment of a National Commission for Women to study and monitor all matters relating to the constitutional and legal rights and safeguards of women.
- Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal). Act (2013) provides protection to women from sexual harassment at all workplaces both in public and private sector, whether organised or unorganized.

Steps to be taken for Uplift women:
To uplift women and address the challenges they face, it is crucial to implement comprehensive measures that go beyond targeted schemes. The key lies in ensuring the broader development thrust reaches every woman, enhancing the resilience and security of their lives. Here are ten essential steps:
Create Safe Spaces: Establishing safe gathering spaces, such as READ Centers, provides South Asian women with a trusted environment to discuss gender equity, women's rights, and health without needing family approval.
Support Independence and Mobility: Empower women by enabling independent travel. READ Centers have notably contributed to increased autonomy, with a significant majority (75-77%) of women in rural Nepal and India reporting the ability to travel unaccompanied.
Promote Literacy: Literacy is a fundamental skill. READ Centers play a crucial role in teaching thousands of women to read, significantly impacting their daily lives and fostering a broader understanding of the world.
Enhance Savings and Income: Joining savings cooperatives at READ Centers in Nepal has led to a 63% increase in women's savings or income. These cooperatives enable women to invest and receive micro-loans, fostering entrepreneurship and supporting education.
Provide Job Skills Training: READ Centers offer training programs in various income-generating skills, such as beekeeping and sewing. One in five Nepali women initiates her own business after joining a savings cooperative and undergoing skills training.
Build Self-esteem and Confidence: A majority of women (58-83%) report increased self-esteem and confidence after engaging with READ Centers, empowering them to speak in public and share their opinions.
Boost Decision-making Power: Nearly two-thirds of women in Nepal (62%) and India (68%) attribute greater decision-making power in their homes and communities to their involvement with READ Centers.

Impact Health: Providing training and information on health care, family planning, and reproductive rights at READ Centers positively influences women's influence in their families and communities, empowering them to address issues like domestic violence.

Build Networks: Social networks are crucial for support and opportunities. Three-quarters of women in Nepal and half in India and Bhutan report expanding their networks through READ Centers, facilitating collective action and knowledge-sharing on issues like domestic violence and reproductive health.

Create Public Leaders: READ Centers offer leadership training to address the underrepresentation of women in public roles. This initiative has empowered 61-65% of women, enabling them to express their opinions in public and actively engage in community leadership roles.

Conclusion

the article provides a comprehensive overview of the complex landscape surrounding women's empowerment in various sectors of Indian society. It emphasizes the persistence of challenges stemming from cultural biases, traditional views, and gender inequality, particularly in professions like IT, corporate training, teaching, air hostess roles, receptionists, and marketing. The cases of harassment involving influential figures underscore the deeply rooted issues that women face in their professional journeys.The exploration extends beyond the corporate sector to encompass small industries and crafts, revealing a nuanced relationship between women's representation and their level of responsibility as they climb the organizational hierarchy. The imminent presentation of the Women's Bill in the parliament raises expectations for positive shifts in women's representation in the government sector, yet the article remains vigilant about the hurdles that must be addressed.

Highlighting the importance of statistical analysis, the article draws comparisons between key business sectors like IT and the stock market, delineating the disparities in women's participation between corporate giants and smaller-scale industries. The introduction of The Women's Empowerment Principles serves as a beacon, offering valuable guidance for empowering women in workplaces, marketplaces, and communities.

The overarching objective of the article is to explore the current status of women in Indian society comprehensively. It goes beyond discussing challenges to also analyze constitutional provisions, laws, and policies designed to promote women's empowerment. The inclusion of The Women's Empowerment Principles, formulated by collaboration between UN Women and the UN Global Compact, underscores the global commitment to advancing gender equality.

In essence, the article calls for sustained and comprehensive efforts to address the deeply ingrained challenges hindering women's empowerment. It anticipates positive shifts with legislative initiatives like the Women's Bill but remains vigilant, emphasizing the need for a multifaceted approach that encompasses cultural change, legal frameworks, and societal attitudes to truly empower women across all sectors of Indian society.