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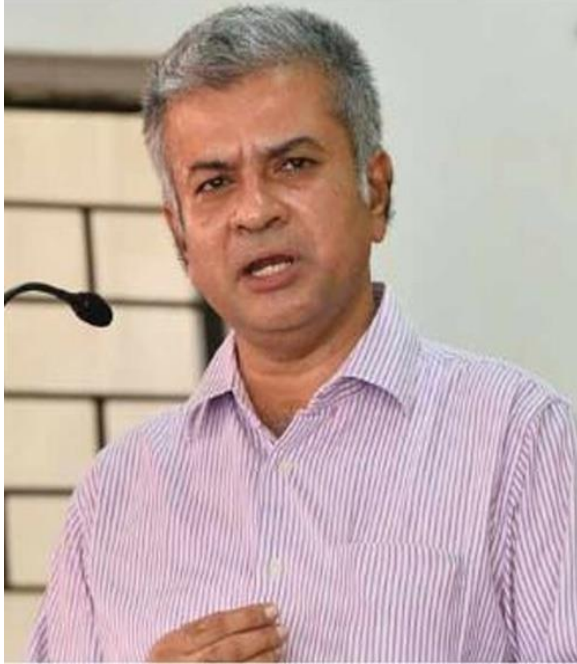
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Subhrajit did his LL.M. in Sports Law, from Nottingham Trent University of United Kingdoms, with international scholarship provided by university; he has also completed another LL.M. in Energy Law from University of Petroleum and Energy Studies, India. He did his B.B.A.LL.B. (Hons.) focussing on International Trade Law.



# The Laws Transforming Women's Lives in 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Critical Analysis

Mangal Kumar Raj, Ph.D. (Research Scholar).  
Department of Law and Governance, Central University of South Bihar, Gaya, India

## ABSTRACT

History speaks about the change and transition of cultural and social pattern and ups and downs. It is clearly evident that the most affected section of the society has been the women and their position in society always been treated as second class. Once Prime Minister Nehru said that “You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women.” This is a famous quote by Jawaharlal Nehru on women. The status of women depicts the social, economic and mental condition in a nation. Whether it is political change, economic status or age of feminism there has always been an issue of debate. The paper will analyse various jurisprudential aspects that advance the rights of women their empowerment and assesses the degree to which Indian legal procedures have successfully changed the situations for women by looking at case studies, conclusive data in 21<sup>st</sup> century. It specifically looks at how they affect women's socioeconomic agency and the number of cases of gender-based violence that are minimised. Through an analysis of their strengths and weaknesses, the study provides a basis for informed policy recommendations and advocacy efforts aimed at establishing more culturally sensitive, equitable, and resilient legal frameworks to advance gender parity.

**Keywords:** - *Jurisprudential aspects, Women's Rights, Case studies, Gender-based violence, Empowerment etc.*

## INTRODUCTION

Politics, politicians, policies. Women are socialised to feel both alienated and distant from these concepts: alienated because they invoke images of masculinity and power, and distant since these ideas are part of the public discourse.<sup>1</sup> Despite the fact that the state has long been a focal point of understanding and advocating for human welfare, the majority of women have been socialised to shun it.<sup>2</sup> It is becoming more and more obvious that policies enable significant social change, that policies require power, and that state power must be utilised to ensure the redress of women's rights

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<sup>1</sup> Young, I. M. (2013). The ideal of community and the politics of difference. In *Feminism/postmodernism* (pp. 300-323). Routledge.

<sup>2</sup> Gabel, P. (1983). Phenomenology of rights-consciousness and the pact of the withdrawn selves. *Tex. L. Rev.*, 62, 1563.



as women restore their voices and their rights.<sup>3</sup> Law empowers the women of 21<sup>st</sup> century on larger scale.<sup>4</sup>

Law is a set of rules that are created and are enforceable by social or governmental institutions to regulate behaviour, with its precise definition a matter of longstanding debate. It has been variously described as a science and as the art of justice.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the Laws become fundamental instrument to transform the women's lives in 21st century through the idea of education, political representation and empowerment.<sup>6</sup>

Empowerment means power of authority to do something. This also refers to taking charge of one's life and making decisions on your own. The fundamental requirements for women's empowerment are gender equality, self-reliance, awareness, a good educational standing, employment, excellent health, and control over life's necessities. Empowering women is impossible without knowledge of their rights and duties. Empowerment of women is a source of development for families, nations, and individual women as well. Women have a right and a need to transform society for the better.

Since women are now represented in significant positions in India's government, academia, industry, and legal system, many people think the country's "woman problem" has been resolved. It is true that there are more women in that nation than ever before in positions of power, but particularly for women of colour, the percentage of women in these positions is quite low. The concepts of women's right and wants have been disputed; these have included allegations that women are a significant target for social and economic exploitation as well as arguments that they live in a friendly and accommodating social order. There exist various routes to social fairness, contingent on how women's rights and demands are defined. At present, groups subscribing to a variety of social doctrines use the term "gender" and argue they are committed to the economic, political, and social implications of the concept.

#### **LEGAL FRAMEWORK:**

There are many national and internationally recognised norms and criteria pertaining to women's

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<sup>3</sup> Narayana, A., & Ahamad, T. (2016). Role of media in accelerating women empowerment. *International Journal of Advanced Education and Research*, 1(1), 16-19.

<sup>4</sup> Davies, M., & Niemann, M. (2002). The everyday spaces of global politics: Work, leisure, family. *New Political Science*, 24(4), 557-577.

<sup>5</sup> Bobo, L., & Hutchings, V. L. (1996). Perceptions of racial group competition: Extending Blumer's theory of group position to a multiracial social context. *American sociological review*, 951-972.

<sup>6</sup> Akhter, N., & Naheed, F. (2014). Perceptions of Educated women about the role of media in women empowerment. *European Scientific Journal*, 10(31).

leadership and political engagement.<sup>7</sup> The history of international commitments to women's participation in politics by all nations serves as the foundation for United Nations Women's programmes on women's leadership and political participation.<sup>8</sup> But it was in the 1970s that the global feminist movement began to gain acceptance, as the first World Conference on Women was planned and conducted in Mexico City, and the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 1975 to be the International Women's Year. In 1979, the General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women which is often described as an International Bill of Rights for Women. It included commitments under Article 7 on political and public life and Article 8 on representation upholding women's right to participate in the public life. In the year 2011, In its 2011 resolution on women's political engagement, the UN General Assembly urged all of its member states to take a number of actions, one of which was to examine the disparate effects that their voting systems had on women's political participation.<sup>9</sup> It also firmly urged all political parties to remove any obstacles that prevent women from participating in politics, and it raised awareness of the importance of women's involvement in politics. It looked into claims of abuse, assault, or harassment against female candidates and elected officials in order to hold people accountable and take the necessary actions to prosecute those involved. It promoted women's engagement in politics at all levels and increased involvement in decision-making.

The Indian Constitution has a number of safeguards for women. Enshrined in the Indian Constitution are provisions pertaining to gender equality in the Directive Principles, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties, and Preamble. According to Article 15, discrimination cannot be made among citizens on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex. Article 51A states that it is the duty of every citizen to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women.<sup>10</sup> The Indian parliament enacted the Protection of Human Rights Act in 1993 that defines human rights as the right to life, liberty and dignity of the individual.<sup>11</sup> However, women in India continue to face numerous forms of discrimination even after seven decades of freedom. Due to numerous personal laws that currently prohibit women from being treated equally, the right to equality before the law is not entirely enforceable. It is difficult to change the rigid roles that culture and religion have for

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<sup>7</sup> Newman, B. M., & Newman, P. R. (2001). Group identity and alienation: Giving the we its due. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, 30(5), 515-538.

<sup>8</sup> Fukuyama F. (1998). "Women and the Evolution of World Politics", *Foreign Affairs*, vol77, no5, pp24-40).

<sup>9</sup> Singh, A. P. (2017). Role of media in women empowerment. *International Journal of Advanced Education and Research*, 2(5), 50-53.

<sup>10</sup> Chakraborty, D. S. K. (2018). Women's rights in India: A constitutional insight. Prof.(Dr.) NK Chakrobarati (eds.), *Gender Justice*, 129-183.

<sup>11</sup> Kannabiran, K. (2013). *Tools of justice: Non-discrimination and the Indian Constitution*. Routledge India.



women. One of the numerous emerging initiatives in India aimed at reclaiming citizens' rights to take part in politics and development on an equal footing is the women's movement. Nonetheless, the state, the community, the family, and society at large are the institutions through which violence is perpetrated.<sup>12</sup> It finds support from dominant ideologies that work to maintain the status quo "in the name of religious and caste identities, as well as centuries-old customs and traditions."<sup>13</sup>

In India, women are underrepresented in state and federal legislatures as well as in politics. On a social level, women's access to political power is restricted by men's dominance in the armed forces, government, courts, legislature, and police force. However, the case for women in political leadership has been made frequently, with the goal of fostering a society that is less hostile and more cooperative. Additionally, violence against women "points to the prevalence of ideologies that legitimise the use of violence when conflict arises in relationships of unequal power... aggressive behaviour is considered part of daily life and dominant conceptions of masculinity recognise tough and aggressive behaviour."<sup>14</sup>

Although the Constitution of India prohibits forced labour and the trafficking of human beings, these practices continue to flourish. Article 39 of the constitution in the directive principles of state policy asserts that the state shall secure equal rights of livelihood for women and equal pay for equal work. However, women rarely have access to most urban and industrial jobs, and they are paid significantly less for doing the same work. There is discrimination against women working in so-called white-collar jobs even in the four metropolises of Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, and Kolkata. According to a poll conducted by the Indian Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry, a mere 3.3% of women receive promotions to high positions. While some industrial enterprises are allowed to offer paid maternity leave to their female employees under the Maternity Act, most rural and informal urban women are not eligible for this benefit. The National Commission on Self-Employed Women estimates that 94% of the workforce works in these severely exploited industries. Many working women are not receiving the social security benefits to which they are legally entitled under current labour legislation. It is important to raise awareness of the fact that India's GDP would rise considerably higher if its female work force took a more active role in the nation's development. Certain safeguards have been included in Indian laws to guarantee Indian

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<sup>12</sup> Kadeswaran, S., Brindha, D., & Jayaseelan, R. (2020). Social media as a gateway for accelerating women empowerment. *Parishodh Journal*, 9(III), 4876-4885.

<sup>13</sup> Kumari, M. (2020). Social media and women empowerment. *Int. J. Sci. Technol. Res.*, 9(3), 626-629.

<sup>14</sup> Agnihotri I. & Majumdar V. (1995). Changing Terms of Political Discourse: Women's Movement in India 1970s–1990s", *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol30, no29, pp1869–78).

women a dignified life. These laws help women generally to maintain their dignity in society.<sup>15</sup>

- Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961
- The Immoral Traffic Prevention Act, 1956
- Indian Penal Code (IPC), 1960
- The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961
- The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971
- Equal Remuneration Act, 1976
- National Commission of Women Act, 1990
- The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005
- The prohibition of Sexual Harassment of women at Workplace Act, 2013

1. **POSH (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013** - The Department of Women and Child Growth passed the POSH Act, 2013, India's first legislation addressing the problem of sexual harassment of women at the workplace. Sexual harassment at the workplace is violating women's fundamental rights, including the Right to Equality and the Right to Life, as stated in Articles 14, 15, and 21 of the Indian Constitution of 1950. The Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal Act of 2013 was primarily designed to protect women from workplace sexual harassment and to prevent such harassment.<sup>16</sup> *In the leading judgement of Vishaka and others v. State of Rajasthan Vishaka and others v. State of Rajasthan,*<sup>17</sup> the Supreme Court gave the Vishaka guidelines that defined sexual harassment and put the obligation on the employers to provide a safe working atmosphere to the women employed.

*In the case of Laxmi v. Union of India,*<sup>18</sup> The Supreme Court's decision prohibited the sale of acids. Additionally, it was clarified that dealers could only offer acid for sale if the buyer could show a legitimate form of identification and specify what they needed to buy. The supplier must provide the police with the selling information within three days.<sup>19</sup> It was also declared unlawful to sell acid to anyone younger than eighteen.

2. **Gender biasness** - In India there are different religions and different beliefs. One thing which is legal in a particular personal law is illegal in another personal law. Because of

<sup>15</sup> Vickers, J. (2002). Thinking about Violence. In V. D. Rajan & J. Vickers (Eds.), Gender Race and Nation: A Global Perspective Toronto: University of Toronto Press. (pp. 222–246).

<sup>16</sup> April Carter, The Politics of Women's Rights (London: Longman 1988) P. 139.

<sup>17</sup> (AIR 1997 SC 3011).

<sup>18</sup> (2014 SCC (4) 427).

<sup>19</sup> Chhibber, B. (2018). Women's Rights Are Human Rights. World Affairs, 22(1), Spring 2018 (January – March).

which chaos is created in society. For example, *In the case of Indian Young Lawyers Association & Ors. v. The State of Kerala & Ors.*<sup>20</sup> where it wasn't permissible for women to enter the temple while they were menstruation. The Supreme Court ruled that "devoutness cannot be imperilled to gender biasness," permitting women of all ages to enter the Sabarimala temple.

3. **Women's reservation bill-** The women's reservation bill is a proposed amendment to the Indian Constitution that would reserve 33% of the seats in the Lok Sabha for women.<sup>21</sup> A drawing of lots will be used to determine the seats that must be set aside in rotation. The allocation of seats must be made so that no more than one seat is set aside in any three consecutive votes. The Rajya Sabha approved the measure in 2010. Therefore, if the law is approved by both houses, it will enable women to enter politics on an equal footing with males.
4. **Maternity benefits-** A lady who is expecting a child receives compensated time off through the maternity benefit. With this, a woman may adequately care for the child and not worry about her workload. The Maternity Benefit Act of 2017 provides female employees who have no more than two children with a 12- to 26-week period of paid maternity leave. Before the anticipated delivery date, a female employee may take up to eight weeks of leave, and she may also take time off after giving birth. A woman can take twelve weeks of maternity leave, six weeks prior to and six weeks following childbirth, if she is expecting her third child.<sup>22</sup> After the 2017 change to the statute, women may now take a 12-week motherhood leave starting on the date of the child's birth if they adopt a kid under three months old. Depending on their job profiles and permission, employees may continue to work from home after the trial time has ended. Additionally, a creche is required at any organisation with more than fifty workers, and female employees are entitled to visit the child care centre four times a day.
5. **Claims on inheritable property-** It is believed that women belong to their in-laws. She will go to her husband's house after getting married, where she will inherit her husband's belongings. However, after her marriage, girls were not granted any rights on her father's

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<sup>20</sup> (Writ petition (Civil) no. 373 of 2006),

<sup>21</sup>Laura M. Padilla (2007). A Gendered Update on Women Law Deans: Who, Where, why, and Why Not? *American University Journal of Gender, Social Policy & the Law*, 15, 443–504.

<sup>22</sup> Standing, G. (1999). Global Feminisation through Flexible Labour: A Theme Revisited. *World Development*, 27(3), 583–602.



land. The sons or grandsons inherit the whole estate. This is the primary inequality that was encountered. Laws are changed to address this issue, and women are granted the ability to inherit their father's possessions. *In the case of Mary Roy v. State of Kerala*,<sup>23</sup> where a woman was being prevented from inheriting property of her father. The Supreme Court gave a judgement in which it was held that a woman has equal right to get an equal share in her father's possessions.

6. **Custody of child-** It is stated that a child is closer to her mother than to her father. However, in cases of parental separation, a child becomes the property of both parents, if they so choose. Another issue arises when the child is a girl and the fathers may not want to keep her with them. However, if the child is a boy, the father wants to have him because he thinks the boy would show him the way to heaven. Women now have the legal right to fight for child custody and to demand maintenance from their husbands for the two of them. *In Roxann Sharma v. Arun Sharma*,<sup>24</sup> In this instance, the supreme court of law rendered a decision about the children's custody that was entangled in a dispute between the parents. According to a court decision, the mother will get custody of the child when separated parents are fighting over who gets to keep the child who is younger than five years old.<sup>25</sup>
7. **Education and Employment:** Women's empowerment depends on their ability to access economic and educational opportunities. Even while the percentage of women in the economy and in literacy has increased, there are still gaps, particularly in rural areas where traditional gender roles are prevalent.<sup>26</sup> In addition, discrimination against women in the workplace frequently takes the form of sexual harassment, lower pay, and less prospects for career growth.
8. **Quality Education-** Every person has the right to receive an education. Men and women will not be valued equally in our society if they have unequal access to education. Broadening one's perspective through education is beneficial, as prejudices will always impede a nation's progress.

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<sup>23</sup> 1986 SCC (2) 209.

<sup>24</sup> 2015 SCC (8) 318.

<sup>25</sup> Prof. (Dr.) Shefali Raizada, (n.d.). Transformation in Women's Rights: A New Reformatory Beginning in Indian Society (Additional Director, Amity Law School, NOIDA, AUUP, p. 75).

<sup>26</sup> Anker, R. (1998). Gender and Jobs: Sex Segregation of Occupations in the World. Geneva: International Labour Organisation.

9. **Work opportunities-** Women are only thought to be adept at domestic tasks. However, if they receive an education, they will have access to equal employment options and should be compensated equally with other workers.
10. **Equal work and pay-** When it comes to labour, women get paid less than men. It is a clear reflection of the different environments and circumstances that men and women live in. It is a persistent belief that women are inferior to men. When gender parity exists in the workforce, jobs will be distributed based on an individual's aptitude and skill. This will produce greater financial results.
11. **Empowerment-** The most crucial approach for socioeconomic growth is empowering women. Treating women equally is more important than treating them poorly or above. Gaining empowerment will enable them to take advantage of new business prospects for their family and themselves. A sane society in which men and women assist one another can only be achieved via the empowerment of women.

#### **POLITICAL REPRESENTATION:**

Women are now more represented in politics and positions of decision-making than ever before, but their participation rate is still disproportionately low.<sup>27</sup> Women are unable to meaningfully participate in or lead political processes due to structural obstacles such resource scarcity, political violence, and ingrained male dominance in political parties.

1. **Women in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha:** - Only 62 women made up the 16th Lok Sabha in India (2014), or 11.41 percent of the total number of members. Even while it is higher than the 9.02% it was in 1999,<sup>28</sup> it is still less than half of the 22.2% global average. Not much better, the Rajya Sabha has 29 female members in 2014, making up 11.9% of the entire membership. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that India is rated 141st in the world in the Inter-parliamentary Union's rating of women in national parliaments,<sup>29</sup> even though this is an increase over the 1999 record of 7.70%, which is far lower than the global average of 19.6%. India is placed lowest in the region, behind her neighbours, China at 71, Nepal at 40, Afghanistan at 45, and Pakistan at 86. From 5% in the first Lok Sabha to 15%

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<sup>27</sup> Michael Omi and Howard Winant, (1986). *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1980s* New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul. (p. 7).

<sup>28</sup> Singh, R. (2018). Political participation and representation of women in Indian politics: A study. *Asian Journal of Multidimensional Research (AJMR)*, 7(9), 249-266.

<sup>29</sup> Reddy, B. V. (2017). IMPACT OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE. *Anveshana's International Journal of Research in Regional Studies, Law, Social Sciences, Journalism and Management Practices*, 2(9).

in the current Lok Sabha, women now make up 15% of the legislature. More than 45% of women are represented in national legislatures in South Africa, Scandinavian nations like Sweden and Norway, and other places.

Thus, on September 19, 2023, the Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-Eighth Amendment) Bill, 2023 was presented in the Lok Sabha. The Bill aims to allocate one-third of all seats in the State Legislative Assemblies and Lok Sabha to women. Two years after it was introduced in the Rajya Sabha, the House passed a Bill that was comparable. It expired in 2014 following the dissolution of the 15th Lok Sabha. The participation of women in State Legislative Assemblies and Parliament is examined in this essay. Websites of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha as of September 19, 2023; PRS. Women currently make up 13% of Rajya Sabha MPs and 15% of Lok Sabha MPs. Among parties with more than 10 seats in Lok Sabha, 42% of BJD MPs and 39% of TMC MPs are women. In Rajya Sabha, 17% of INC MPs are women.

It is clear from all the trends that the forces that currently control our parties and administration cannot be trusted to prioritise women's representation in politics. Even the most talented female lawmakers feel marginalised and helpless in their own parties these days. In fact, presently most of the female heads or leaders are those who are backed up by their male partner or any politically dominating male figure. Therefore, in India it's a common practice by political leaders to introduce their female partners or a female family member as a nominee in the elections where they are not qualified to participate in the upcoming elections. The real participation of these women is limited to fulfilling the technicalities and no true influence in the public domain.<sup>30</sup> Within their own political groups, the few women in leadership roles are an incompetent minority and have not been able to inspire more women to enter electoral and party politics.<sup>31</sup> As a result, it is imperative that we take specific action to increase women's political participation and give them more control over decisions made at all societal and political levels. If our democracy does not provide women enough room, it is gravely flawed.

**2. Women in Panchayat Raj Institution:** - Compared to the parliament, panchayat raj institutions in India have a far higher representation of women. According to the Ministry of Panchayat Raj, there were 37.8% more women in the Intermediate Panchayat and 37.8% more in the Gramme Panchayat in 2008. A total of 36.77% of women were represented in

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<sup>30</sup>Nelly P. Stromquist. (1995). Romancing the State: Gender and Power in Education. *Comparative Education Review*, 39 (4), 423–454.

<sup>31</sup>S. Waseem Ahmad, Nilofer and Gazala Parveen, (2008). Women's Political Participation and Changing Pattern of Leadership in Rural Areas of U.P. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 69(3), 661-672.



the Panchayat's three tiers. Article 243 D of the Indian constitution, which requires at least one-third of the seats in all Panchayat tiers, appears to be the cause of this. 2009 saw the proposal of an additional amendment to the article, raising the percentage to 50%, however it was not passed. Although not all Indian states have it, some, like Bihar, have a 50% reservation for women in the Panchayat Raj under state legislation.

### **TECHNOLOGY AND MEDIA:**

These days, the media play a crucial role in every aspect of life. It has a vital function in raising people's consciousness in all spheres of life. It is a tool for quickly conveying intended information to individuals. It is a tacit method of influencing people's attitudes. Additionally, it is a quick way to educate people on how to modify their behaviour as needed. It is widely used by individuals as a source of knowledge, amusement, and education. Governments and other institutions profit from media use when they utilise it for their own objectives.<sup>32</sup> It influences people's behaviour in a quiet way. The media serves as a platform for sharing opinions with others. The three primary forms of media used for education are print, broadcast, and televised. There are various types of media, including books, journals, radio, television, newspapers, and the internet. Women primarily watch television, listen to radio shows that interest them, read newspapers for information, and pass the time by reading books or journals. People can learn social values through the media. It is a reliable source of non-formal learning. Media writers can assist people in becoming aware of their issues, the causes of those issues, and suggestions for resolving those issues.<sup>33</sup> A solution to the majority of issues facing women and their families is women's empowerment. It may be the greatest way to advance knowledge and the capacity for independent thought by raising people's understanding of their rights and social obligations. The media has a responsibility to educate the public on ways to support women's emancipation and acknowledge their contributions to societal advancement.

Due in large part to social media's rapid spread and reach, digital technologies are now indispensable to campaigns for women's empowerment and gender equality. Women may create, share, and discuss a wide range of content in real time, including ideas, opinions, perspectives, and experiences, thanks to digital platforms. They provide a platform for women's voices to be heard globally and bring attention to issues that women face that are rarely covered by traditional media.

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<sup>32</sup>Shafeeqa Khurshid. (n.d.). Political Participation and Representation of Women in Indian Politics. *International Journal of Recent Research in Social Sciences and Humanities (IJRRSSH)*, 2 (1), 50-53.

<sup>33</sup>Sumonto Chakravarty. (n.d.). Political Participation of Women in India – Problems Faced and How It Can Be Solved. *Journal On Contemporary Issues of Law (JCIL)*, 4 (9), 161. ISSN 2455-4782.

The *#MeToo movement*,<sup>34</sup> which opposes sexual exploitation, harassment, and the culture of rape, has acquired international traction since 2017 because of these tools.<sup>35</sup> They have also been used to assist international efforts aimed at increasing awareness among men and women, such as the UN's "*HeForShe*" campaign, which demonstrated to the world that gender equality is about more than just "women fighting for women." Last but not least, women are leading the charge in these rallies against the oppressive Iranian regime, and social media is crucial in elevating their voices. Digital technologies are essential in the development sector as well.<sup>36</sup> There are countless examples, such as literacy and health education initiatives for rural women and women's cooperatives that have raised their earnings and forged new alliances by educating themselves about and using digital technology. Digital technologies can be an equally potent force for women's oppression as they are for change in favour of women's empowerment.<sup>37</sup> Globally, social media marketing strategies exploit women's bodies to boost business profits; these tactics are founded on a patriarchal capitalist system that sets expectations for behaviour and appearance. According to this model, a woman's accomplishments, intelligence, and self-worth are subordinated to her attractiveness and hourglass figure.<sup>38</sup> In a race to self-objectification, these commercials cause women of all backgrounds to internalise these unrealistic and false beauty standards, which has gravely detrimental effects on their mental health.

## CONCLUSION

Rape cases are not caused by the presence of women in public spaces; rather, it is the predatory behaviour of men, who belong behind bars. Even with the greatest of intentions, discrimination against women must end if there is to be a true and long-lasting solution to crimes against them. Be schooled and educated on gender issues so that men no longer represent a threat to women, rather than being shielded from them.

A fair evaluation of women's political engagement should start with the question of whether women's low status stems from a lack of representation or from being excluded from specific levels

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<sup>34</sup> Hillstrom, L. C. (2018). *The# metoo movement*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA.

<sup>35</sup> O'Neil, A., Sojo, V., Fileborn, B., Scovelle, A. J., & Milner, A. (2018). The# MeToo movement: an opportunity in public health?. *The Lancet*, 391(10140), 2587-2589.

<sup>36</sup> Onwuachi-Willig, A. (2018). What about# UsToo?: The invisibility of race in the# MeToo movement. *Yale LJF*, 128, 105.

<sup>37</sup> United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women. (1995, September). *The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women.*, Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/decision.htm>

<sup>38</sup> Baro, P. K., and Sarania, R. (2014), *Employment and educational status: Challenges of women empowerment in India*. *Pratidhwani the Echo*, 2 (4), 55 – 63.

of political power due to their poor status.<sup>39</sup> "The most effective tool for changing the world is education." This is one of the main answers to the numerous issues India is currently facing. The amount of people who are aware of their rights rises with education. When we begin to eradicate illiteracy, we also alter people's cognitive processes, which leads to a more logical approach to the issues that different segments of society face. Education not only makes cures more accessible but also gives people the power to stand up for themselves and stop harming others. Injustice is something that shouldn't be permitted. The realisation that they have legal redress also instils in citizens a sense of protection.

The policies and clauses of the Constitution that promise women a place of dignity and equality. However, laws of the land are general for men but particular for the women's of our society. The independence of women in terms of their education, economic status, and political participation is crucial for the emancipation and equality of women. The woman may develop completely as a result of this. Gainful employment opportunities are the only way to attain women's empowerment and economic independence. Gainful employment for women, particularly in more fulfilling professions, will undoubtedly improve their lot in life and raise their prestige and stature in society. It is a well-established global reality that women's financial status will only improve if they participate in the political process, since economic empowerment inevitably follows political empowerment. As a result, it becomes critical and imperative that the Indian government and women's organisations look for solutions to raise the political standing of women.

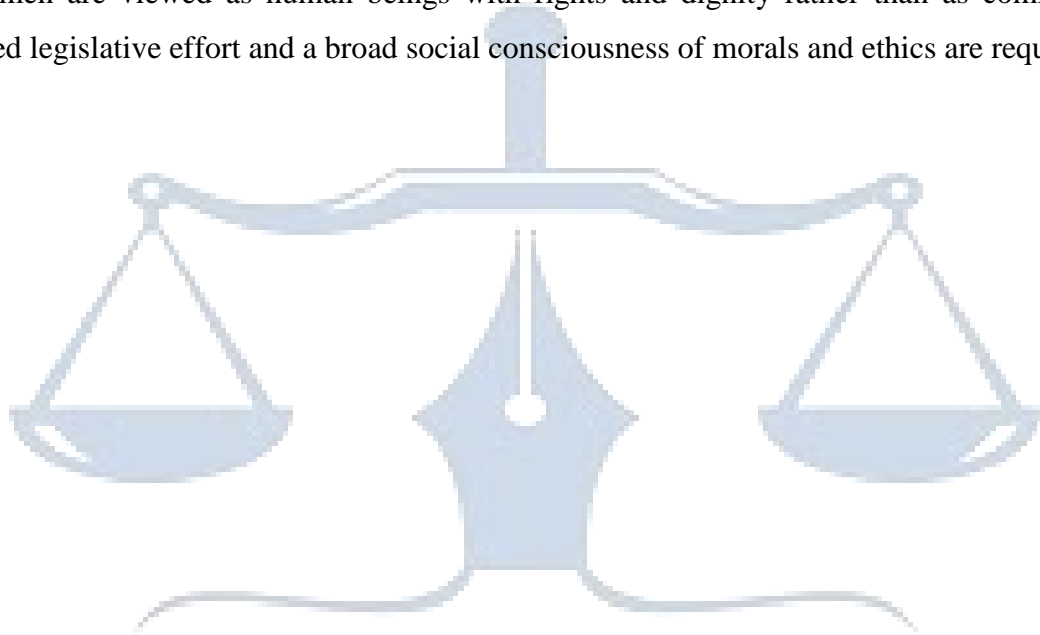
The media's involvement in accelerating women's empowerment is crucial since it will eventually result in women's economic empowerment. However, the mass media, like all social media, are good and useful tools for raising awareness of women's rights and roles in contemporary society. They do this by disseminating positive messages about what it means to be a woman, the positive examples that women provide us with on a daily basis, the achievements that women have made and continue to make, the social consideration that women receive, and the positive role models that young women receive for their economic empowerment. By putting media campaigns into action, the mass media might also significantly aid in the spread of the idea of gender equality. People will welcome him back into daily life if they witness in the media the triumph of gender diversity over gender roles. The mass media has always had an unconscious impact on how society thinks and behaves. Despite the derogatory portrayal of women in the media, success stories of well-known,

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<sup>39</sup>Suresh, L. B. (2011). Impact of information and communication technologies on women empowerment in India. *Systemics, Cybernetics and Informatics*, 9(4-2011), 17.



successful, and established women should be highlighted. Given its significant significance in the socialisation process that shapes gender roles, its systems of gender-neutral checks and balances must be reinforced. In order to prevent portraying women negatively, the media should support the projection of women in a respectable and dignified manner. It is imperative that media personnel receive gender-sensitive training, and a rewards programme might be established to recognise and incentivize those who effectively portray women. In the same way, people who violate the rules should face harsh penalties. It is necessary to provide new, creative, decent representations of women in the media that are based on Indian culture and society. To combat this threat and ensure that women are viewed as human beings with rights and dignity rather than as commodities, a concerted legislative effort and a broad social consciousness of morals and ethics are required.



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