

# Digital Skills to Enhance Womens Empowerment in India

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**Abstract:** India is one of the world's fastest-growing economies, with women mostly from the middle class increasingly toward the inside the labor force. Digitalization offers a diversity of opportunities for female empowerment and for a more equivalent female participation in labor markets, financial markets, and entrepreneurship. Currently, digitalization seems to favor the female labor force that faces a lower risk of being replaced by machines, as compared to the male labor force. Women's frequently superior social skills stand for a relative advantage in the digital age, and this is predominantly so when social skills are complemented with higher education and advanced digital transformation literacy. Information Technology is a powerful tool for women to use to overcome discrimination, achieve full equality, well-being, and participation in decisions that impact the quality of their lives and the future of their communities. The number of exclusive subscribers using mobile internet in rising countries grew from 728 million in 2010 to 1.8 billion in 2014. In 2016, 70 percent of Indian internet users (distribution) were male while 30 percent were female users. This was predictable to alter to 60 percent male users and 40 percent female users by 2020. The female internet subscriber's people are half of the 258 million male Internet users, and the partiality is more manifest in rural India. Along with States, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Delhi have a top proportion of feminine internet users. This has insightful implications for women's financial, social, and political empowerment. Beginning entrepreneurship opportunities to inexpensive healthcare and peer education platforms, mobile internet is beginning to empower women in stimulating ways. The aim of this paper is to show the situation of women in newly emerging areas of information technology and to study the diverse ways in which IT has benefited women in provisions of employment.

**Keywords:** empowerment, community, progress, change, application

## INTRODUCTION

The principle of femininity equal opportunity is enshrined in the Indian constitution in its preamble, fundamental rights, duties, and directive principles. The constitution not only grants equal opportunity to women but also empowers the State to take on measures of positive discrimination in kindness of women. Women's empowerment has been a characteristic of development support from the time when the 1990s. Women empowerment is also distinct as "a change in the circumstance of a women's life, which enables her greater than before capacity for important a satisfying human life. It gets reflected in exterior qualities such as health, mobility, education and awareness, class in the family, participation in decision making, and also at the intensity of material security. This is also adding of internal qualities such as self-awareness and self-confidence. Just 29% of India's internet users or subscribers are women. Except this digital gender separate is bridged, India's hard line push towards digitization will further establish the political, monetary, and social marginalization of women. The immensity of policy and commercial interventions focus on humanizing access to internet services by upgrading range and broadband infrastructure and bringing down the costs to human being users, in adding together to facilitating the uptake of digital technologies through programs for digital skilling. Remote technical solutions, however, will be inadequate to deal with the social and cultural heredity of India's digital gender divide. Take mobile phone associations for paradigm.

While 43% of Indian men own a cell phone, women lag following with only 28% mobile ownership. The gender gap in mobile ownership-estimated at about 114 million-reinforces the information of unequal access but also paints an incomplete and disingenuous picture.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of this paper i.e. "Digital skills enhance women empowerment in India" is to cover the following objectives

- [1] To study the Government Schemes for women empowerment.
- [2] To assess the Awareness and present status of innovating skills of Women Empowerment in India
- [3] To study the present position of women in newly emerging areas of information technology.
- [4] To study the different ways in which information technology has benefited the working women.
- [5] To study the training and capacity building through women empowerment in India.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper is mostly descriptive and analytical in nature. In this paper, an endeavor has been taken to study the empowerment of women in India. The data used in it is simply from secondary sources according to the have to of this study. Present circumstances of women in India

## DIGITAL SKILLS

Digital skills are definite as a collection of abilities to use digital devices, communication applications, and networks to right of entry and supervise information. They facilitate group to generate and share digital content, communicate and work together, and solve problems for successful and creative self-fulfillment in life, learning, work, and social tricks at large. Entry-level digital skills, denotation basic functional skills necessary to make fundamental use of digital devices and online applications, are extensively careful a critical component of a new set of literacy skills in the digital age, with conventional reading, writing, and numeracy skills. At the advanced spectrum of digital skills are the higher-level abilities that allow users to make use of digital technologies in empowering and transformative ways such as professions in ICT. Major digital transformations such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), machine learning, big data analytics, change skills requirements and, in turn, impact capacity building and skills development for the 21st century digital economy. To flourish in the associated economy and society, digital skills must also gathering and jointly with other abilities such as well-built literacy and numeracy skills, critical and innovative thinking, complex problem solving, an ability to work together, and socio-emotional skills.

## WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Women's empowerment is the process of growing women's right of entry to control over the planned life choices that affect them and way in to the opportunities that allow them completely to realize their capacities. Women's empowerment as an economic, political, and socio-cultural progression challenges the structure of sexual stratification that has resulted in women's subordination and marginalization in order to get better women's excellence of life.

Figure 1: Administrative imitative women empowerment schemes in India



There are many schemes that are focused on women empowerment and assistance in India to make their voice be heard. The Indian government is not far behind with its schemes for women.

## **INDIAN GOVERNMENT SCHEMES FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**

List of most important Women Empowerment schemes in India

### **BETI BACHAO BETI PADHAO SCHEME-2015**

- [1] To avoid gender-based sexual category selective elimination.
- [2] To make certain the continued existence & safety of the girl child.
- [3] To make certain the education and involvement of the girl child.

### **ONE-STOP CENTRE SCHEME-2015**

To endow with support and support to women affected by violence, both in confidential and public spaces.  
To make possible/Assist in filing the First Information Report (FIR/NCR).  
To give or some psycho-social support and therapy or counselling to women/girls.

### **WOMEN HELPLINE SCHEME -2016**

- [1] To support or provide to women or girl child for toll-free 24-hours telecom service to women affected by violence.
- [2] To facilitate crisis and non-crisis involvement through referral to the suitable agencies such as police/Hospitals/Ambulance services/District Legal Service Authority (DLSA)/Protection Officer (PO)/OSC.
- [3] To provide in sequence or information about the suitable support services, government schemes, and programs available to the woman pretentious by violence, in her particular circumstances within the local area in which she resides or is employed.

### **WORKING WOMEN HOSTEL -1972-73**

- [1] To promote the availability of safe and expediently located somewhere to live for working women.
- [2] To provide room to children of working women, up to the age of 18 years for girls and up to the age of 5 years for boys.

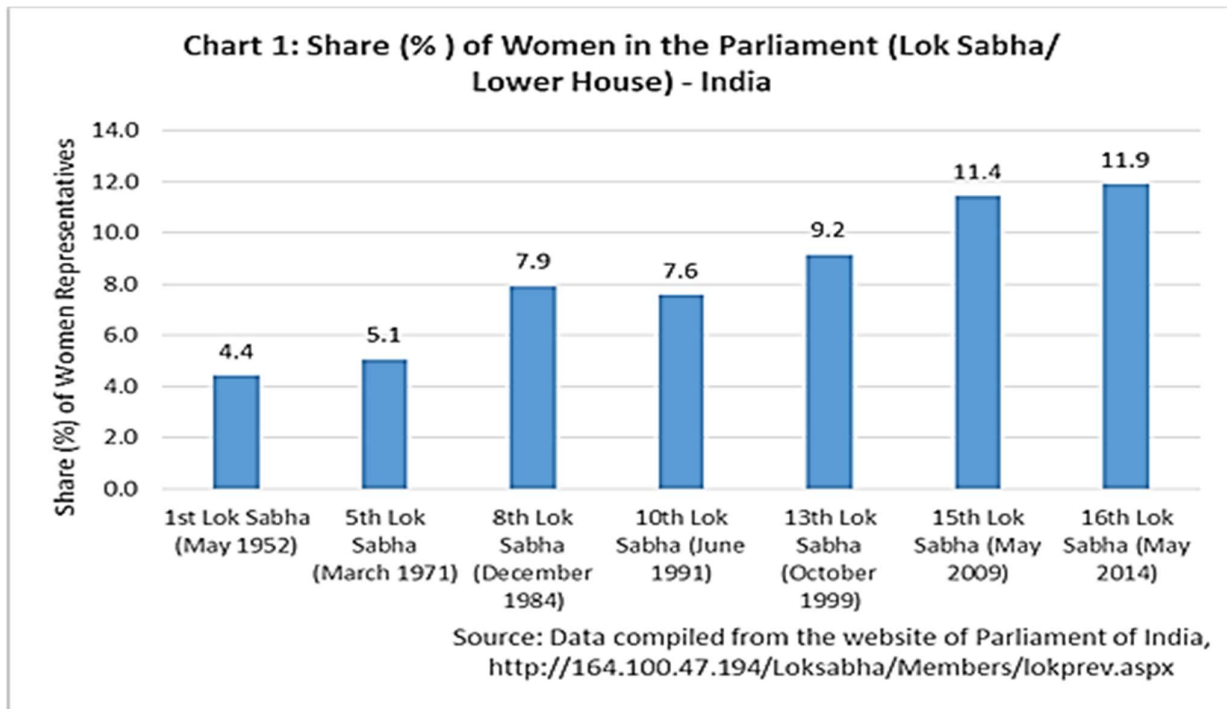
### **WADHAR GREH – 2018**

- [1] To provide to the main require for protection or house, food, clothing, medicinal treatment, and care of women in distress.
- [2] To give women with legal or judicial aid and guidance.

### **MAHILA E –HAAT (2016)**

- [1] It is a direct online promotion platform launched by the Ministry of women and child development to support women entrepreneurs, Self Help Groups (SHGs), and Non-Governmental organizations (NGO) to platform goods made and services rendered by them. This is a part of the Digital India initiatives prgrammes.
- [2] To assist entrepreneurship opportunities virtual platform for women.
- [3] To teach women on various aspects of online marketing, selling, and helping them set up their business venture.

Figure 2: women participation in the parliament in India

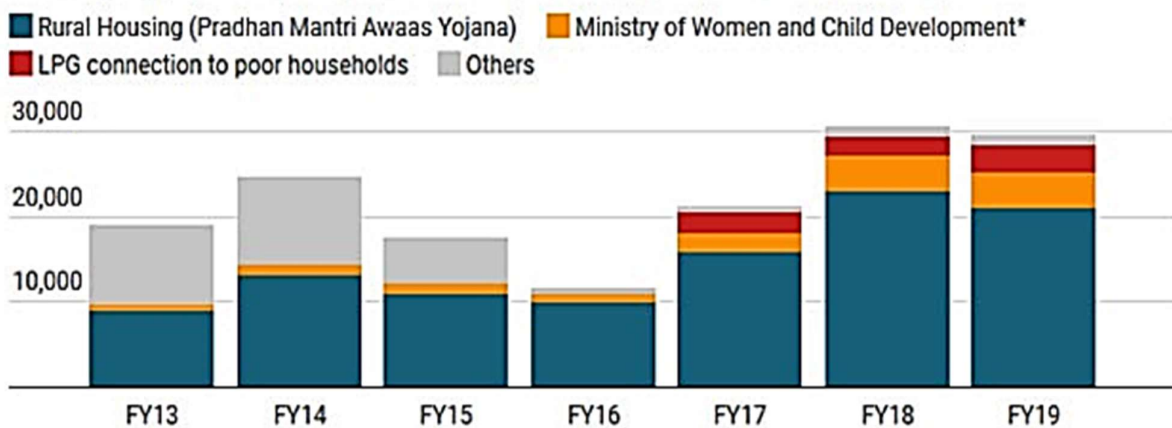


(Source: website of parliament of India)

In India, the women share representation in the parliament election just 4.4 % in 1952. Then in year 1971 (5.1%), 1984 (7.9%), 1991 (7.6%), 1999 (9.3%), 2009 (11.4%), 2014 (11.9 %). In the above shows that continued increased the women share representation in the parliament.

Figure. 3 Budget Allocation of Union Government

**Break-up of part A of Union government's gender budget statement (Rs. crore)**



\*contains schemes such as 'Maternity Benefit Programme', 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao', etc. which are in part A of the gender budget statement (GBS). Other schemes under the Ministry of Women and Child Development, which partly benefit women, are mentioned in part B of GBS in budget documents. Figures are budget estimates (BE) for FY19 and revised estimates for other years.

Source: Budget documents and Mint calculations • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

(Source: Budget documents and mint calculations)

## **INNOVATING SKILLS FOR A DIGITAL ECONOMY**

To realize the opportunities presented by digitalization, governments need to understand how jobs—and the skill sets demanded by these jobs—are changing. Digital skills have stimulated from ‘optional’ to ‘critical’ and require to be complemented with transversal ‘soft skills’ such as the skill to exchange a few words efficiently in both online and offline mediums. In emergent countries, digital skills are also in high demand and greatly improve prediction for straight employment. They are associated to higher earning impending, and experts have predicted a growing number of jobs for people with highly developed digital skills. Not only are there new jobs available, but some of them are also actually going unfilled, making the provision of advanced digital skills part of a solution to unemployment.

## **TACKLING INEQUALITIES AND GENDER DIVIDE**

There are major inequalities in digital skills in both developing and developed countries along with a number of lines, notably socioeconomic status, race, gender, geography, age, and educational background. Gender divides in digital skills are severe: women are 1.6 times more likely than men to report a lack of skills as a factor impeding their use of the internet. The proportion of women using the Internet is 12% lower than the proportion of men using the Internet, and the gender gap in Internet usage has widened between 2013 and 2017, in particular in the least developed countries. Not including policy interventions, ongoing scientific developments intimidate to exacerbate the inequalities between those with and without digital skills. Integrated and comprehensive responses are urgently needed. Government is the main act for need to play a fundamental role in setting up the fundamental principles for comprehensive and evenhanded digital skills development, providing programs and capacity development initiatives for disadvantaged of community or group, and re-skilling youth or middle age persons or women at risk for job disarticulation. Ensuring that everybody has pertinent digital skills helps encourage comprehensive and equitable education and permanent learning for all.

Digital Skills for Women is a non-profit knowledge group created by women for women aimed at female-identifying professionals who do not have knowledge in the skill/digital/ Information Technology business.

## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

Programme will be strengthened to bring about a superior participation of women in science and technology. These will comprise procedures to motivate girls to take up science and technology for higher education and also make sure that improvement projects with scientific and technical inputs engage women completely. Hard work to develop a scientific irritation and awareness will also be step up. Extraordinary procedures would be taken for their guidance in areas where they have particular skills like Communication and Information Technology (ICT). Efforts to expand suitable technologies suited to women’s needs as well as to diminish their hard work will be given a special focus too.

## **MATERIAL COVERED**

- [1] Digital marketing strategy
- [2] Social media marketing
- [3] SEO
- [4] Content marketing
- [5] Privacy
- [6] Block chain
- [7] UX/UI.
- [8] Analytics
- [9] Cybersecurity
- [10] Databases
- [11] Website strategy

**DIGITAL TRAINING AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**

In arrange to address the femininity based and other inequalities and inequities in the public and empower women, it is vital to tap the marvelous potential of ICTs. Inaccessible ICT initiatives in different parts of the humanity have given away how such programs can advantage women. Vodafone’s initiative ‘linked Women’ has predictable 5.3 million women could be lifted out of illiteracy through mobile technology by 2020. Such technology could reduce violent behavior against women and enable women to seek innovative opportunities leading to an increase in economic action estimated at 3.4 billion US dollars.

**DOMAINS OF EMPOWERMENT**

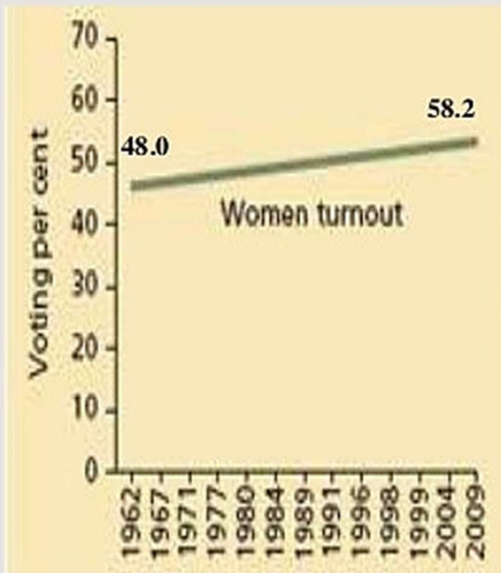
Empowerment is the process by which a human being gains the aptitude to make planned life choices. It can be a human being or group and can take place in different spheres of life, including:

Psychological empowerment – when women come to consider that they should be able to make or manipulate decisions that affect them and increase the self-assurance to take action on this.

Political empowerment – when females gain the ability to pressure the rules and norms that govern the social order and decisions about who gets what, when and how. This can be through public or private organizations, concern formal or informal rules/institutions, community, sub-national, and national levels.

Figure: 4 Women in political participation

**POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT**



Source: Election Commission of India

- Participation of women in elections increased over the years
- Proportion of women turnout for voting (2009) – 58.2%

(Source: Election Commission of India)

Social empowerment – when women increase the ability to create/influence decisions about their social connections (e.g. mobility, association with others), reproduction, health and learning.

Economic empowerment – when women gain the aptitude to build or create/influence and act on decisions about their contribution in labour markets, their share of voluntary work and in the share and use of their own/their household's assets.

Mobile internet applications (or 'apps'): Internet related software planned to run on smart-phones, tablet computers, and other mobile devices. Apps are stand-alone programmes that differentiate from accessing internet content through a browser (although a browser itself is an application). Examples include email applications such as Gmail and Yahoo mail, search engines such as Google and Bing, and social media platform like as Twitter, Facebook, etc.

## **IMPACT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ON RURAL WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**

In India, women comprise a large portion of the rural population and play a substantial role in the rural sector. These women engage in economic activities such as handicrafts and sewing or rolling cigarettes, the weaving of baskets and fabrics, working in cities as vendors. They are in urgent need of the following information for their further development:

- [1] Educational opportunities outside the village.
- [2] Job opportunities in both the formal and informal sectors.
- [3] Government assistance programs career advancement within the restrictions of traditions.
- [4] Modern child care facilities.
- [5] Legal provisions to counter sexual harassment, domestic violence & social injustice. By providing the above information, information Technology played a greater role in rural women empowerment.

Information Technology also helped in rural women's empowerment by making them aware of the world and more particularly, what is happening in India? The Internet has helped them in assimilating information about the variety, range, and quality of product publicity and marketing of products and services. Apart from being used as a tool of information, the application of information technology has created avenues for women empowerment. Noteworthy examples are that of SEWA, Embalam, NABANNA & e-mahile. SEWA (Self Employed Women's Association) uses information technology for women empowerment. It uses an internet-based training programme to develop a cadre of barefoot managers among the poor women workers, focusing on women in panchayats, forests & soon.

## **TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM**

Some of the training and capacity building programs are:

- [1] General uses of the Mobile phone usage for day to day calling and receiving phone calls, SMS, photography, use of the calendar, setting alarm, etc.
- [2] Making contacts through selected social media (WhatsApp)
- [3] Information searching related to diverse issues-health, education, nutrition, beauty and fashion, Government schemes, etc.
- [4] Household and personal management (payment of bills, filing of forms online, LPG booking, checking bank accounts, availing benefits of government schemes, etc.)
- [5] Admission to educational institutions especially schools, EWS category admissions, lateral entry to schools, and seeking information about the same.
- [6] Seeking employment
- [7] Entrepreneurship/ income generation
- [8] Use of selected mobile-based applications for the safety of women, financial management, health care, etc.

A multi-media approach was used for the capacity-building program comprising of the following: Icebreaking games, flashcards, short films, hand puppets, songs and parodies, and Powerpoint presentations. In addition, specially designed booklets with information on digital literacy skills were given to the women to function as ready reminders and further clarify the doubts. Environment building tools made were also used such as banners, posters, and badges, dangles to provide for the right context to the program.

The training was delivered using interactive lectures, PowerPoint presentations, demonstration, hands on exercises, and evaluation exercises. Roleplay and short films were used to give preliminary knowledge and motivate the audience followed by question and answer sessions.

The skill assessment tool was designed for the purpose of assessing the change in behavioral intent as well as skills of the poor women to various aspects of digital literacy, before and after the training. The tool was also administered to the women three weeks after the training to assess their retention. This tool helped to gauge the impact of digital literacy-related training on ICT usage by poor women to provide evidence for out-scaling such activities

## CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that women are empowered through the help of Information technology. It has changed its position from the past. The development of Information Technology has enabled the women section to participate in each and every walk of life. It has empowered women by enhancing their skills, knowledge, and income. Flexi, timings, and work at home with the internet have enabled more women to join the labor force. Thus Information Technology has played a greater role in women's empowerment. Its potential to sweep across political, geographical, economic, and social barriers is just the leverage that women need to build for themselves a new identity and a more honorable place in society.

Women's empowerment is a multi-dimensional process that involves transforming ideas, norms, relationships, and structures of resource and power allocation. In thinking about the pathways to women's empowerment in practice, it is important to avoid unfounded generalizations within or across locations, groups of women, or dimensions of empowerment. Processes of empowerment happen in real political, economic, and social settings in which women face violence, domination, and the work out of other forms of inequitable power.

## PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Major technology breakthroughs in the next ten years will impact forms of work and the structure of labour markets as well as other aspects of life such as education, health, and agriculture. From a skills development viewpoint, the implications of scientific change are predictable profound, both for the re- and up-skilling of young women and for the teaching or education of youth and children. In this circumstance, capacity building for anticipating the altering needs for digital skills for work and life is vital for all countries. Policy-makers and other government rules and conditions of need to forecast future developments in order to orient and priorities policy actions.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- [1] It is imperative to improve awareness about the digital skills needs of women for better income, efficiency in work and productivity.
- [2] Women need to be given special encouragement to acquire digital skills.
- [3] There is an urgent need to create demand for the use of ICTs by women.
- [4] The existing training infrastructure in the form of training centers available in communities could also be used for training women.
- [5] There should be special time slots for training women exclusively so that the hesitation experienced by them is minimal.



- [6] The women must feel safe with the trainer as well as by the training environment and location.
- [7] The training environment needs to be non-threatening.
- [8] The timings of the training should be suited and managed according to the availability of women in the community.
- [9] However, the training curriculum must be based on an analysis of their Practical and Strategic Gender Needs of women.
- [10] The training should preferably be impacted by females who speak in the locally understood language and who can come down to the level of the women.

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