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## **Impact of Social Media on Indian Women**

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## ABSTRACT

Today's society is very much different than it was before and that is because of the social media. It has spread awareness rapidly in society. There is a global impact of movement taking place in any part of the world. Feminists, activists, environmentalists and many more have surpassed the proliferation of making individuals realise that they think rationally and beyond borders. The advent of the Internet has made our lives easy with its prolific technologies. Interestingly, we are at the stage of an explosion of knowledge. In the form of smartphone teaching apps, kids have their teachers in their pocket. Google Voice, Alexa, is a slave to our commands. These provide a changed way of thinking about Indian society, which is now more open, welcomed values for each culture; moreover, it has begun to value our society's women. Thus, the present paper is an attempt to study the impact of social media on Indian women.

**Keywords: Social Media, Society, Patriarchy, Feminism, Women**

## Introduction

Today's world is dependent on the social media network and has emerged into many different forms. One of which is a promotional tool and others include blogging, education, and job recommendations provider. Different media forms are aimed at a variety of target audiences. According to a survey report in India the female users on social media is increasing in number day by day.

Nearly two decades have passed in which social media has affected numerous aspects of our lives by helping us communicate with family and friends, and also enabling us to connect with people all over the world. Never before we had access around the world as compare to these days with the help of social media and it is a decade when social media became nearly parts of everyone's life and if we see the statistics of developed and under-developing countries where more than 70 to 80 percent of their population are using



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internet and most these are new adults between 18 to 35 years old and these adults spend most of the time on the internet and social media searching for information, products or chat with friends.

Women entrepreneurship are not exception of these big change millions of women used these opportunities and its nearly a decade where women use social media for the business purposes to sell products and services. In addition, this research provides details on how women are affectively using these social media and what are the factors that help these individual business women in the social media online business.

### Literature Review

Friedman (2005) observes that gender researchers and feminist scholars have also become interested in new media as a development that has the potential to more generally break down or flatten social hierarchies. Pedersen (2007) examined the gender portrait of blogging by examining the influence of political blogs. The data showed that female blogs are significantly smaller than male blogs. Male blogs usually trend towards more controversial pieces while female blogs focus on more personal information. Explain how blogging can affect the political landscape in a global context.

Harris (2008) argues that the mere 'going online' act enables women to create identities that are a first step in identifying themselves as a citizen for women. Williamson (2009) indicates that digital media in Britain has already started to challenge socio-cultural and political norms. Keller (2011) argues that for young women to forge political identities and to confront sexist cultures, blogs are particularly important online spaces. She gives two examples of blogs by an American high school student, the 'Seventeen Magazine Project' which satirises the 'beauty and lifestyle' tips of the 'Seventeen' teen magazine and blog created by a 16-year-old girl' for teenage girls who care about their rights as women and want to be heard' Large international followings were attracted to both blogs. Examples of how new media enables previously



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disengaged or marginalised groups to challenge power bases using communication styles that will appeal to peers are these blogs.

In Fallon, et al. (2011) says that there is a correlation between self-promoting/imposing behaviour and male dominance online. Other possible causes of differing levels of male dominance online include different types of media (terminal versus non), non-participation in political discussions/activity online, and different communities (for example direct message versus social media). According to Deeba Shahwar (2013), mainly males are the ones acting as the "eye-catching" objects which are used to attract the viewers' attention. The fact that more and more women are portrayed in advertisements as it is predominantly the object of our desire portrays a really big change in our concept of what is considered beautiful in women and also indicates that the physical appearance will be an argument for a product.

Richard M. Perloff (2014) sums up that social media's interactive format and content characteristics, such as the strong peer presence and exchange of a multitude of visual images, suggest that social media can have a significant impact on body image issues by working through negative social comparisons, transportation, and peer regulatory processes. It also discusses social media effects on male body image, intersections with ethnicity.

### Status of Women in India

The opportunity for education and exposure to the refined traditional language called Samskrit, which was regarded as 'Devabhasha' (God's language), has been denied to women since ages on the Indian soil. The status of women propagated in early times is evident in reference to an ancient authentic Vedic scripture of India, the Manusmriti. In addition, women are not regarded as fit to be free and independent. They should never be permitted to act independently by their guardians. Many other extracts reflect women's deprived status.



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A woman must never do anything even inside her home without the consent of her father, husband and son respectively. She must remain in control of her father in childhood, of husband in youth and of son after the death of her husband. (Manusmruthi, 5.148)

But the scriptures did not disrespect women. With regard to the value of women in society at the time, it is stated that women's participation is necessary for any religious or spiritual activity to take place. Without each other, men and women are incomplete. The most ordinary religious obligation would therefore require the participation of both.

Regardless of what socially hierarchical society is, women in India have always been underprivileged and never shared equal rights with men. The other part of the world today feels that the upper caste Indian families enjoy a social status of higher quality. But the reality in India, irrespective of women's social status, is that the vast majority of the population is the most ignored and depressed sectors to date. If we look at the social anatomy of women's status, for women's liberation in India, there were a lot of leaders who were fighting for it. Liberation, even after many years of independence, is a mirage. Most women are limited to kitchen, labour, seen as a home-maker, seen as the only one to take care of a family, all of which are the textures of a society dominated by men. It seemed like men had the upper hand against women's forces for many decades. A girl's child was seen in a classroom after some five decades of free India. Even today, lakhs of girls in the classroom do not see a bench. Although some of the middle- and upper-class women's empowerment is apparent late, the amount of discrimination is phenomenally high. In the nation, female foeticide and infanticide are popular. Women remain downtrodden with gross inequality, this being the social status of women regardless of caste or religion.

"One is not born, but instead becomes a woman," Simone De Beauvoir correctly said. One is born as



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a free human being, but it is a society that discriminates between a boy and a girl. Typical essential qualities begin to be associated right from the birth society, i.e. stereotypes with males & females. Blue for boys & pink for girls; kitchen set & dolls for girls & he-man & bat or boys football; the gender politics set-off right from infant innocence & with age gets denser & denser. Women are considered to be the second sex (lower sex), which is second to the first, i.e. men. The paradox is that it has been justified by the patriarchal society in such a way that even women have internalised that this gender discrimination is correct & natural, so it should not be called 'discrimination.' This is a global phenomenon of world standing of men united to assert their dominance over half of the population of the world and subject them to men of objectification & dominance. There have been women fighting to free themselves from male oppression since antiquity. Thanks to patriarchal societal norms, women have always been considered inferior and incapable of any serious thinking. In all societies, from elite classes to the grassroots level, the same perception and sex stereotyping is more or less seen. Since ancient times, women have been under the dominance of their equal (ironically always dominated and therefore always unequal) counterparts.

As Karl Marx observed, they have done chores since people began living in the settlements and men have had to go out to collect food and firewood. This division of labour was not based on any logical or biological characteristics, but was merely a random allocation of labour on the basis of work load sharing. This labour division was gradually associated with male & female biological attributes, so it had to be called natural. Intrigued and practised by every unit & institution of society and the media, this gender discrimination is no different. Media technologies that have become an integral part of people's daily lives and part of society are a powerful tool for creating and communicating gender democracy and gender culture in society. Mass media can legitimise gender ideas and concepts shaped by gender politics and ideology, and increase the likelihood of audiences receiving them. The effectiveness of gender, culture and formation depends on the state, gender, politics, gender strategies and ideology of the mass media and the images they



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present.

## The Impact of Social Media on Women in India

The media has never been close to women. As the masses were illiterate, print was simply out of reach. Including many high-status, cinema remained far to the majority and prestigious families remained rigid and saw cinema as abominable. In fact, male actors dressed up as females were seen in early Indian cinema, e.g., in one of the earliest Indian movies, Raja Harischandra. Dada Saheb Phalke, the father of Indian cinema, was unable to find female actresses. Indian male feudal psychology allowed their women to the theatres only under the feeling of the mythological content and to see the gods on the screen like Lord Krishna or Lord Rama. Women were projected as a weaker section in the mid-20th century cinema. However, as soon as Indian Cinema played a major role in liberating Indian women, it became a social outing and women were reserved separate space for film viewing. The portrayal of women in Indian cinema saw a sea change at the end of the 20th century. The time-to-time content of Indian cinema also influenced the transformation of thinking women. Due to its commercialization and in the guise of competing for its supremacy over its counterparts, however, Indian television as a powerful media has contributed to the distortion of the image of women that gave their democratic participation a different dimension. In an era of transition, women's media participation has increased at a very rapid rate. There is a rapid and steady increase in the proportion of women working in night shifts and technical personnel such as engineering graduates. Graduates of women's journalism and mass communication are taller than ever. Along with their lifestyles and conventions, the priorities of urban women are shifting. Religious minority empowerment in India is very strong. A ray of hope is seen in the literacy rates of minority girls. The presence of Muslim girls in India, for instance, is gradually increasing in classrooms. Indian Muslim women are entering the mainstream in all areas of life, regardless of their social status.



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Until recently, the participation of women in the media was negligible, very few women were in top position in the media, but in practise and preaching, gender discrimination is decreasing in the wake of feminism and the spread of education. The value of gender equality is well recognised for development and well accepted. With each other's cooperation, men and women cannot achieve excellence either. The issues of gender equality, equity and women's empowerment are becoming even more important in the context of the knowledge sphere as women play a strategic role in the incubation and transfer of critical knowledge, which often forms the blueprint for community survival in depth and minimises their risk in adverse circumstances. In all walks of life, including the media, men already have their space. It is time for us to give women space, but at the same time to maintain adequate space for men. Communication that is sensitive to gender is the only way to treat women and their male counterparts equally. This idea is one of the latest media trends and has emerged in the last two decades due to the momentum of the feminist movement, interdisciplinary studies such as media studies, women's studies and gender studies, etc. Women's empowerment seeks to inspire and convince them to come out of various adverse circumstances, whether social or religious, that have traditionally kept them suppressed and unable to see their true strength, power and beauty. Although we are living in the modern era, women are suffering from different problems in different areas of life in rural areas today.

Social media plays an important and vital role in the empowerment of women and their growth. As a prime source of change in the society in which we live, the media can create an awakening inspiration to achieve their potential. The use of New Media has already started with the growing dominance of the Internet, blog, chat, social sites, and therefore communication is rapidly changing and becoming mobile, interactive, personalised and multi-channel. In a useful and easy to understand way, the internet has served as a vehicle or a channel to convey information. This extraordinary revolution affects the fundamental structure of societies and stimulates debates and debates that are deeply linked to women: the rapid





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transformation of public-private boundaries, the relationship between new media and women's empowerment.

## **The Role of Social Media in Empowering Women**

In helping women empowered, social media is seen as an important source. It helps to speak out against women's oppression and marginalisation at the grass root level as the main source and access. As it has the ability to persuade and mould opinion, the media is considered the most powerful and influential means of this view. The relationship between the media and women is important because the media influences whatever image women have in our nation. In the media and more so in social media, which all can access without any interference, bias or discrimination, the same trend is witnessed. We understand that women are looking for information on different issues New media provides them with opportunities at their doorstep to bring information on all issues / topics to them, and reach everyone in new ways.

The Internet user base is rapidly increasing among women. In recent years, the impact of new media has been witnessed worldwide, with online platforms increasingly becoming powerful mechanisms for mobilising popular support. India is no exception, and the media coverage of this particularly horrific case of Delhi gang rape and the online reactions changed young people's mindsets and it seems that people are no longer willing to accept rape and sexual assault as "a simple fact of life." Indian people demanded change and used the power of modern media to make their voices heard. In the case of gang rape in Delhi, platforms such as the 'Gang Rape in Delhi' Facebook group and 'Justice for Raped Girl in Delhi' have united people to express their hopes of a future free of similar cases. Through Twitter, Facebook and other new media, people raised their voices, expressing their frustrations with the government and administration. Computers and the Internet were men's things a long time ago. It doesn't matter why it used to be so right now, what is more significant is that it's a thing of the past. Social media is transforming. Twitter may have begun as a male-dominate platform, but a recent Beevolve.com study found that women on Twitter now outnumber



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men by 6 percent. Furthermore, female users are more active than men, tweeting more often on average. More frequently and in a more diverse way, women use social media. What is particularly interesting is that they use smartphones and tablets more often than men. The subjects in which they are interested are also different; family and fashion are more important for women, while men refer to sports, technology and entrepreneurship more.

When their voice is restricted, social media acts as an alternative media, a platform for sharing, raising the voice of women. Cyber-hands joined thousands of men to help women, to share their voices in each and every protest. The topic of empowering women has to be brought to light. Empowerment is necessary for the family, society and country to have a bright future, to make their own decisions for their personal dependents. Whenever a voice is limited, through any other possible way social media brings us fully, it can be made loud.



For training, recruitment, and organisation, social media is less costly than traditional methods (Papic & Noonan, 2011). Different studies have shown that individuals who are active online are likely to be involved in group activities for any cause, such as creating an online group, sharing their voices. It allows people to share their views with friends, to see how many others share their views, to coordinate activities and get the word out about protests and social problems.

### Conclusion

Women now have many opportunities in India in the areas of education, work and employment. People break the shackles of ruthless traditions and talk about what is right and what this society needs to bring about changes. We would also like to comment on the rate of digital literacy, which for females is still very low. Whether we will promote education for women in every sector. In order to develop India better,



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we can help.

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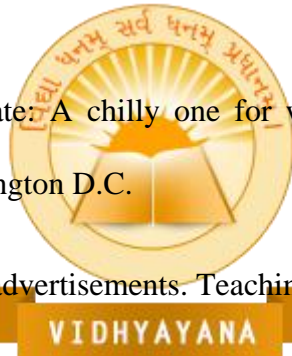
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