



WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT- A PARADIGM CHANGE IN PERCEPTION OF SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT

Women constitute almost half of the population of the entire world but their participation in the corporate world remained at low level for years as most of them continued with household activities despite having adequate educational background. Consequently, their involvement in paid activities in economic terms remained minimal. Government of India, over last few decades, emphasized the need for increased participation of women in the workforce which has resulted in motivating women of our country to look forward and extend their contribution to the economic growth of our country. This has been reflected from the numbers of female in gross enrollment ratio at school level and undergraduate level. The revolution in technology facilitated the process and accelerated it to a large extent. Various Government schemes have been launched, from time to time, to promote women education and their involvement in employee workforce. Their role as an entrepreneur and in the Board of various companies also validates their upliftment and unlocking their role which was confined to household activities only for many years. The present development of the society is in line with Sustainable Development Goal intended to be achieved globally. This study has been conducted to examine the changing role of Indian women in entrepreneurship with a view to highlight the prospects and challenges being faced by them. Various statistical tools and technique have been employed to derive meaningful interpretation. The outcome of the study would be of immense use for the policy makers and initiating corrective actions in the interest of entire society.

KEYWORDS: *Economic Growth, Friedman Test, Sustainable Development, Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test, Women Education, Women Entrepreneurship.*

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

According to a report published in The Economics Times dated 8th March, 2021, women in India contribute 17 percent to the national GDP in comparison to global average of 40 percent. The Global Gender Equity Index 2020, reveals that India is ranked 108th on its performance on gender equity which reflects that Indian women are not being provided with same benefits accorded to their male counterparts. Despite of regulatory requirement of having at least one woman as director in the board of companies, only 17% of Nifty 500 companies have women as director in their

boards. Although, these statistics does not convey encouraging participation of women in work force but there has been significant change in the perception of the society with regard gradual involvement of women in the employment workforce and enrollment for education. The reason for this change, to the large extent, can be attributed greater use of information technology in the discharging jobs and seeking education. The steps taken by Government in bridging the gender gap has started fructifying with many women emerging as entrepreneurs in India and uplifting the name of our country in international business environment as well.



The latest survey conducted by Women web reveal following important facts in relation to emerging role of women entrepreneurship in India.

- 1. Women constitute around 14% of the total entrepreneur base in India i.e., 8.05 million out of the total 58.5 million entrepreneurs. While some are accidental entrepreneurs due to the lack of other work opportunities, many others are driven by a specific mission or goal. (Source: Sixth Economic Census released by Ministry of Statistics)*
- 2. Most of the entrepreneurs starts their businesses between the ages of 25 and 35. 51.2% of women fall under this criterion. Another 19.6% of women started their business between the ages of 35-40. Thus, we may infer that majority of urban women entrepreneurs have prior work experience before starting their own ventures whereas only a small number (11%) start their business before turning 25 years.*
- 3. In terms of Industry, the largest segment of women entrepreneurs (16%) belongs to the creative service designing like content writing, etc. The second and third position is held by health and allied and Apparel and accessories respectively. Apart from that about 30% belong to the other sector which includes Travel and tourism, Manufacturing etc. Majority of women entrepreneurs belong to the creative services field possibly because this sector has relatively low entry barriers and does not need significant capital besides a computer and a mobile/Internet connection for the most part.*
- 4. On the category of business size measured by the criteria of Revenues and No. of employees, the majority of women-owned businesses were likely to be micro enterprises or small business with 68.5% reporting a revenue of under Rs.10,00,000 (Rs. 10 Lakh or 1 Million) in the last financial year. Another 23.7% reported revenues of between Rs.10,00,000 and Rs.50,00,000 (Between Rs. 10 Lakh and Rs.50 Lakh/Between Rs. 1 million and 5 million).*

Source: <https://www.womensweb.in/2019/07/women-entrepreneurship-in-india-2019>

With above facts at the background, this study has been conducted with a view to examine the change in perception of general public with regard to employment and education of women besides identifying the reasons obstructing the growth of women professional career and effectiveness of steps taken by Government in promoting education of girls.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Keeping in view the objective of the study, both primary as well as secondary sources of data, were employed. A questionnaire, containing five questions, addressing to the issues under study was developed and responses were collected through convenience sampling method. The information obtained through the questionnaire from 54 respondents was subjected to statistical tests namely - Friedman ANOVA test, Wilcoxon Signed Rank test and Pie Chart analysis to derive meaningful interpretation.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

A questionnaire was designed with relevant questions to seek views of the respondents in addition to examination of the following hypotheses:

Null Hypothesis (1): There has been no change in perception of general public in imparting education to girl child over last five decades, particularly period prior to liberalization, period after liberalization but before technological revolution and period after liberalization and technological revolution.

Null Hypothesis (2): There has been no change in involvement of women in present workforce in comparison to period prior to year 2000.

In order to test the Null hypothesis (1), respondents were required to express their views through ranking on the scale of 0- 10 (with 0 being least and 10 being maximum) for the period prior to 1990 (designated as Rank 1), period prior to 2000 (designated as Rank2) and period after 2000 (designated as Rank3). The information submitted by the respondents was subject to Friedman ANOVA test to examine the statistical difference in their responses as the same set of respondents have given information for different period and it complies with all essential conditions for non parametric test. The output of the descriptive statistics and the Friedman ANOVA test is given below in table 1:



Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Ranks

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Rank1	54	1.5926	.78952	1.00	3.00
Rank2	54	4.2963	.50017	3.00	5.00
Rank3	54	8.4815	.50435	8.00	9.00

The descriptive statistics shows that there is significant difference in the mean values of the Ranks with standard deviation higher in case of Rank 1 but of the same level in case of Rank 2 and Rank 3. In order

to examine if the difference is statistically different or not, Friedman ANOVA Test, was applied and its output is shown below in table 2

Table 2: Friedman Test

N	54
Chi-Square	108.000
Df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.000

As the p-value is 0.00 i.e., less than 0.05, it implies that the probability of accepting null hypothesis is very less at 5 percent level of significance and therefore it is rejected. The alternative hypothesis, i.e., there is significant difference in change in perception of general public in imparting education to girl child over last five decades is not rejected.

In order to ascertain, if there has been significant difference in perception being assessed during the period with Rank 1 – Rank 2 and Rank 2 – Rank 3, Wilcoxon Signed Rank test was applied and the output for the same is shown below in table 3 and table 4 respectively.

Table 3: Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test statistics of Rank1 and Rank2

	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Rank2 - Rank1	Negative Ranks	0 ^a	.00
	Positive Ranks	54 ^b	1485.00
	Ties	0 ^c	
	Total	54	

- a. Rank2 < Rank1
- b. Rank2 > Rank1
- c. Rank2 = Rank1

Test Statistics^a

	Rank2 - Rank1
Z	-6.586 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

- a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test
- b. Based on negative ranks.

Table 4: Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test statistics of Rank3 and Rank2

	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Rank3 - Rank2	Negative Ranks	0 ^a	.00
	Positive Ranks	54 ^b	1485.00
	Ties	0 ^c	
	Total	54	

- a. Rank3 < Rank2
- b. Rank3 > Rank2



c. Rank3 = Rank2

Test Statistics^a

	Rank3 - Rank2
Z	-6.537 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

b. Based on negative ranks.

As the probability value (p value) at 5% level is 0.00, we reject null hypothesis and conclude that there has been consistent significant change in perception of general public with regard to imparting education to girl child and this perception has strengthened as our country moved towards liberalization of economy and revolution in technology.

The second hypothesis of the study was examined using Wilcoxon Signed rank as there were two variables, in the ordinal form, and given by same set of respondents. The responses were subjected to the test using SPSS and the output of the same is given below in table 5.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics and Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test statistics of women in employment workforce

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Rank1	54	4.2222	.41964	4.00	5.00
Rank2	54	7.5556	.79305	7.00	9.00

Ranks

	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Negative Ranks	0 ^a	.00	.00
Positive Ranks	54 ^b	27.50	1485.00
Ties	0 ^c		
Total	54		

a. Rank1 < Rank2

b. Rank2 > Rank1

c. Rank2 = Rank1

Test Statistics^a

	Rank2 - Rank1
Z	-6.570 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

b. Based on negative ranks.

As the p value is less than 0.05, it amounts to rejection of null hypothesis and we can conclude that involvement of women in employment workforce has increased subsequent to upsurge in technology usage for discharging various kind of jobs.

The opinion of respondents with regard to effectiveness of steps taken by Government in direction of promoting education of Girl Child was sought. The result obtained for the same is shown below in the pie chart (Figure 1)

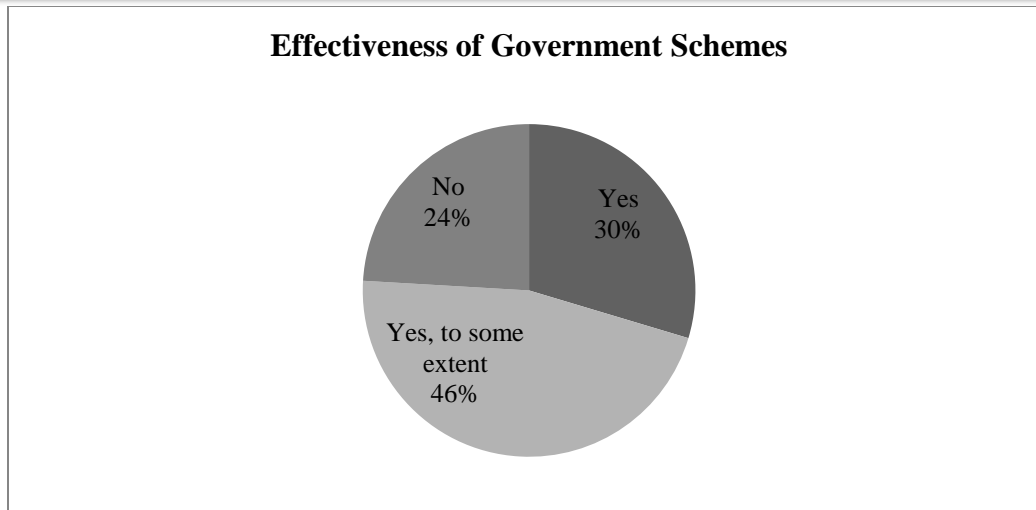


Figure 1: Pie chart showing responses regarding effectiveness of government schemes

It can be observed that though 30 % of the respondents agreed to the fact that Government steps have effective where as 24% were of the contrarian view and 46% of the respondents partially supported the fact. Thus, there is need to articulate Government schemes through more effective channels of communication so that their impact could be felt more materially at the ground level.

The opinion of the respondents was also sought on the increased opportunity of jobs for women due to change in work culture of most of the organizations who resorted to online jobs and WFH (Work from home). The responses (in percentages) are shown below in pie chart (Figure 2)

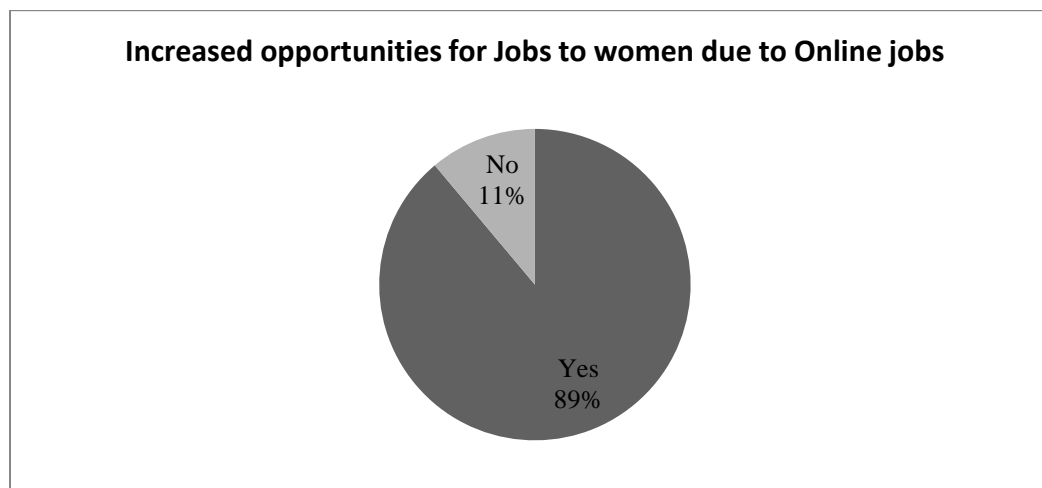


Figure 2: Pie chart showing responses regarding increased opportunity for women in online jobs

It can be observed that 89% of the respondents were of the view that the new kinds of jobs which involves discharging of duties through online mode has led to increase in employment opportunities for women. Thus, we may conclude that the origination of new kind of work culture would rope in more women for their contribution in economic activity and would be facilitating in achieving one of the main objectives of sustainable development goals.

The study also aims to identify the main impediments in the growth of professional career of women and sought views of the respondents on the same by offering them following possible reasons:

- a) Lack of Education
- b) Time scarcity due to involvement in household works.
- c) Security issues
- d) Lack of family support.



The views of the respondents are displayed in the pie chart (Figure 3)

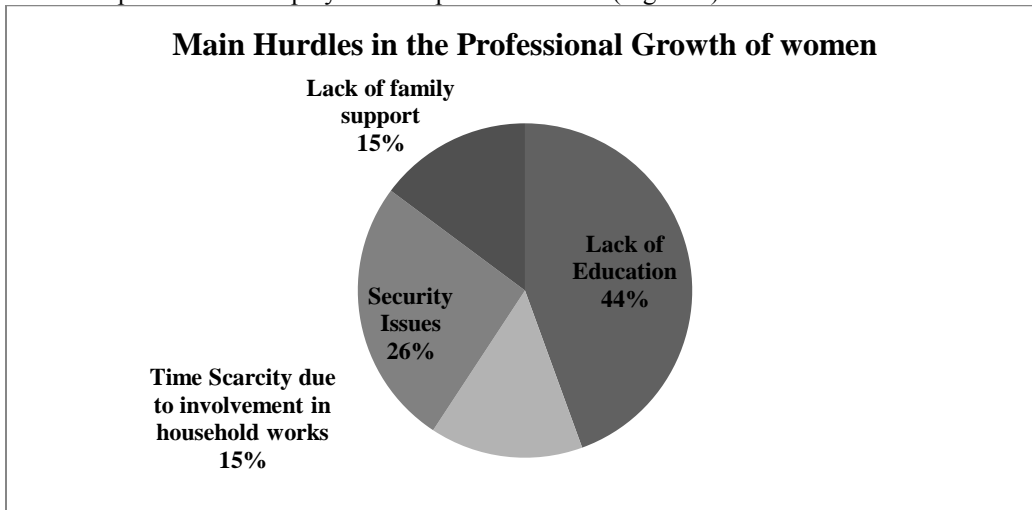


Figure 3: Pie chart showing responses regarding hurdles in growth of professional career of women

It can be observed that the major reason in the professional growth of women was found to be lack of education followed by security issues. The reasons cited are reflected from the Gross enrollment ratio for education of female at school level and higher studies. Though, there has been significant improvement of Gross enrollment of females at school level but for higher studies, more efforts are needed for its improvement.

CONCLUSION

It is inferred from the above facts and its statistical interpretation that the perception of the society over last few decades particularly after opening up of Indian economy i.e., post liberalization period after 1991 and the period subsequent to commencement of usage of information technology has changed with regard to involvement of women in employment workforce. The emerging opportunities of jobs for women in various sectors led to metamorphic change in the society and motivated most of the sections of the society to focus on the education of their child without any gender biasness. The statistical result of the study clearly proves the significant change in the perception of the society towards education of girl child and participation of women in employment workforce. The study also highlights that the upcoming nature of jobs would help in involving more women in workforce as the security issues to the large extent would be solved through this mode of job and this would also help in increasing gross enrollment of female for higher studies as they would be motivated with the availability of job opportunities. It is therefore suggested that Government should continue with its existing steps of motivating

women for seeking education and acquiring skills with the objective to enhance their employment potential.

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