



**ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER**

**Computer Science**

**DIGITAL INDIA INITIATIVES FOR THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN INDIA**

**KEY WORDS:** Digital India, Women empowerment, Digital Scheme for women Empowerment

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**ABSTRACT**

Government of India in its constitution describes the principle of gender equality in its Preamble of Fundamental Rights. This describes to not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the women by government by adopting positive measures of discrimination in favor of women that can help people to emphasize their control on the factors affecting their lives. Empowerment of women will develop more awareness to be more politically, socially and economically active so that independent intelligent discussion in matters that affect them can be taken. In this concern Govt. of India has taken number of initiative and schemes out of these this paper describe how Digital India has brought impact on the social and economic aspect of women.

**INTRODUCTION**

Government of India has started number of programs to empower the women in every field of life. Positive results are also achieved by implementing these schemes to strengthen them yet more efforts are required for fulfillment. Out of these number of scheme Digital India is one of them that has changed life of most of the women. This program was started by Govt. of India with the aim that this will not only economically uplift the standard of rural women but also the urban women.<sup>1</sup>

Aim of this program is to connect all remote citizens to world. this is done by making them digitally literates, helping them to set up business without moving distant locations to be economically sound and be aware to easily access of government services locally. By this mean services are delivered efficiently, transparently and reliably with affordable cost.

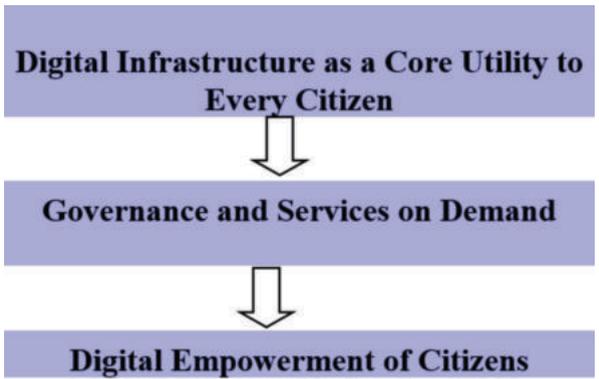
**Research Methodology**

This paper is basically descriptive and analytical in nature which analyzes empowerment of women status with the use of digital India Program. Facts used in this paper are taken from secondary source wherever required to describe.

**Digital India**

This is a program started by Govt. of India with aiming to set up infrastructure that could contact citizens to Government, Government to citizen and Government to Government to implement its polices transparently, efficiently, timely and reliably to each citizen .Digital India has nine pillars which is working on the realization of three main objectives: the provisioning of digital infrastructure, shifting towards e-governance paradigm that assures services on-demand and the digital empowerment of citizens. This has changed life of every individual to setup their business due to large transparency.

The Startup India campaign has been seen as critical for promoting women-owned MSMEs (Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises) in the digital economy. For example, in his 2015 Independence Day address the Prime Minister announced that the Startup India campaign would ensure that "The country could, in no time, have at least 125000 startups by women and Davits". Similarly, the 2,50,000 Common Service Centers – Internet-enabled one-stop-shops that provide access to government services and other commercial digital services to rural communities across the country have been celebrated for opening up opportunities for women to become digital entrepreneurs in their villages. The Union Minister of Electronics and IT, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, has heralded these centers as catalysts of "An information technology revolution for social change that is led by women"<sup>7</sup> and "A digital revolution for women's empowerment"<sup>8</sup>. The Digital India program is centered on three key vision areas:



**Need of Women Empowerment**

According to Vedas Purana of Indian culture a women is being worshiped such as Laxmi Mata goddess of wealth, Saraswati Mata for wisdom, Durga Mata for power. <sup>9</sup>The status of women in rural areas is very adverse as more than 80% of the female population in rural area is in agriculture and animal care. Most of the women works nearly 2/3 of its work hours but receive 1/10th of the world's income and has less than 1/ 100th the world property. Among the total population of women in world 2/3 are illiterate. Also 70% of people living below poverty are women. They have Lower sex ratio i.e. 933 and relatively less healthy than men though belong to same class. They constitute less than 1/7th of the administrators and mangers in developing countries and only 10% seats in World Parliament and 6% in National Cabinet.

**Schemes and initiative in Digital India**

Govt. of India has started more than 20 schemes 10 especially for women to uplift their standard of living e.g. UJJAWALA - A Comprehensive Scheme for Prevention of trafficking and Rescue, Rehabilitation and Re-integration of Victims of Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation , Mahila E-Haat, Mahila Shakti Kendras (MSK), POSHAN Abhiyaan etc. Similarly 16 major initiatives 11 are taken through Digital India to empower women e.g. Aadhar Enabled Scheme, Digidhan Abhiyan, MyGov, PAHAL (DBTL), PayGov India, Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana etc. The mentioned initiatives are taken by Govt. of India to empower citizens and execute the scheme efficiently and transparently. Yet fulfillment is not achieved due to lack of infrastructure and awareness of scheme among citizens. There is lot of factors which causes hindrance out of which digital literacy is main one.

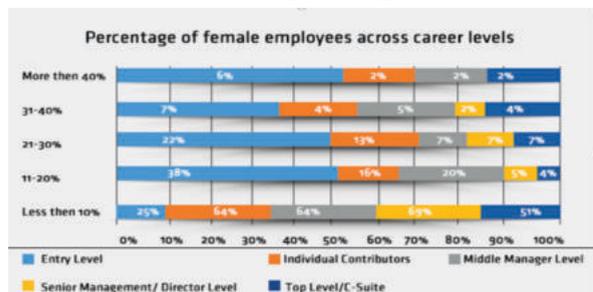
**Reasons for Empowerment of Women**

Government at Central and state level has various Acts and Schemes to empower the women of India. But still women are discriminated at every level of the society whether it is social, political, economic, access to education, and also reproductive healthcare. Percentage of women in service is very less as they are provided less opportunities to study though mentality in 2019 has changed and they are provided

equal chance to study by parents but still this number is very less due conservative mindset. Thus educating women is very important in empowering them. It has also noticed that health of women poor as they consume less food and work more e.g. housekeeping, children caring, animal and agriculture work. Another problem is that workplace harassment of women. Now a days we came to know number of cases of rape, kidnapping, dowry that are faced by women in the society. These reasons require women empowerment of all kinds in order to protect themselves and to secure their purity and dignity. Hence we need to formulate reducing feminized poverty, promoting education of women, and prevention and elimination of violence against women.

**Digital India and Women Empowerment**

Digital India has become an effective tool to empower women of 21 century. Due to revolution in communication technology and enhancement in infrastructure and tool of digital communication women have been strengthened in every field whether it is service, security, health, literacy. For education Digital India on NMEICT platform provides various modules to get information easily in any language, not only theoretical but practical knowledge is also available. EPGPathshala contains numbers of books which are free to access. In spite of this Swayam portal, Nptel portal also provides number of certificate, degree courses with a nominal fee. As a result education is not at doors of women to empower. To feel them more secure special women police station, launch of Durga Shakti app, toll free number by various state, special leaves to take care their children, special medical facility for birth and financial help are provided by government through various scheme. These entire schemes are registered digitally for monitoring and transparently execution. In India there are about 250000 Panchayats having 650000 villages and all of them are not connected to the internet. <sup>14</sup>Digital India hopes to provide phone connectivity and broadband access in 2.5 lakh villages by 2019 and that will truly be the landmark for entrepreneurs and policy planners to build new solutions for rural markets. Few states e.g Haryana has tie up with BSNL to provide high speed lease line to meet out need, but the work is under process and will take time to finish. <sup>15</sup>There are millions of people who are denied of their rights and entitlements because of a corrupt administrative, financial and governance system. The illiteracy, lack of information and inability to question the authorities causes them not to uplift hence in such case knowledge of the computers and access to the internet could help them a lot to come out of information darkness and access their rights without the role of a middleman. Lack of skilled workforce is another hindrance but now a day's mobile technology is playing major role in providing information and digital empowerment to the rural people. <sup>15</sup>Due to digital change number of women at senior role are increasing over last five year (2012-17) though there is still more constraint exists to excel. In research women are ahead than men due to this digital change.



Source:- <https://www.nasscom.in>

**Suggestions**

The priority should be given to the education of women which is the grassroots problem. Hence more attention is required for women education. We need to organize awareness program among women especially belonging to weaker

sections about their rights. Women are allowed to work and should be provided enough safety and support to work. They should be provided with proper ages and work at par with men so that their status can be elevated in the society. Strict compliance of schemes and Acts should be to benefit the needy in the society. The digital divide will reduce considerably. The Government should provide internet access through good service providers at lower costs to the rural women across the country to increase their work force participation, improve literacy rates, and encourage entrepreneurial activities. Hence proper impartation of digital knowledge to women will certainly be a boon to the women when properly implemented.

**CONCLUSION**

This paper describes the status of women in India and its role in society. This shows women play important role for the development of her family and society and is excelling in every field whether it is education, game, agriculture or service sector even with lot of hurdles in life. Numerous initiatives have strengthened their status to be at par with men but still more is desired to satisfy fundamental law gender equality. The constraints of functional, technological economic and social have to be attended in the women empowerment process. Strictly compliance of schemes and initiative will surely empowering the women to excel in today's digital era.

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