



**SYLLABUS**

**Class – B.COM (HONS)/BBA. II YEAR**

**SUBJECT: WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**

Unit-I	<p>History of Women Empowerment in India Ancient Period, Medieval and Modern Period.</p> <p>2. Concept of Women Empowerment: Meaning, forms, Need and Importance. 3. Dimensions of Women Empowerment: Social, Religious, Economic, Educational and Political.</p> <p>Key Words: Women Empowerment, Social, Religious, Economic, Educational and Political Dimensions.</p>
Unit- II	<p>1. Women Empowerment: Constitutional Provisions and Laws</p> <p>2. Women Empowerment Policy and Schemes</p> <p>A. Central Level</p> <p>B. State Level (With Special Reference to Madhya Pradesh),</p> <p>Key Words: Constitutional Provisions, Policy, Central Schemes, State Schemes.</p>
Unit – III	<p>1. Women Empowerment: Issues and Challenges.</p> <p>2. Supporting Agencies: NGOs, Self Help Groups and Panchayati Raj Institutions.</p> <p>3. Powerful Women Leadership of India: Ahilya Bai Holkar, Rani Durgavati, Savitri Bai Phule, Mary Kom, Sindhutai Sakpal, Tessy Thomas, Indira Nooyi, Gaura Devi.</p>



**renaissance**

college of commerce & management

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### ***UNIT-I***

Women's empowerment can be defined as promoting women's sense of self-worth, their ability to determine their own choices, and their right to influence social change for themselves and it is closely aligned with female empowerment – a fundamental human right that's also key to achieving a more peaceful, prosperous world.

In Western countries, female empowerment is often associated with specific phases of the women's rights movement in history. This movement tends to be split into three waves,

The first began in the 19th and early 20th centuries when suffrage was a key feature.

The second wave of the 1960s included the gender revolution and the role of women in society.

Third-wave feminism is often seen as beginning in the 1990s.

Women's empowerment and promoting women's rights have emerged as a part of a major global movement and are continuing to break new ground in recent years. Days like International Women's Empowerment Day are also gaining momentum. But despite a great deal of progress, women and girls continue to face discrimination and violence in every part of the world.

The Women's Empowerment Principles Created in collaboration between the UN Global Compact and UN Women, the Women's Empowerment Principles are used to empower women in the marketplace, workplace, and community.

The seven Principles are:

- Principle 1: Create high-level corporate leadership for gender equality.



- Principle 2: Treat all people fairly at work, respecting and supporting non-discrimination and human rights.
- Principle 3: Ensure the health, well-being, and safety of all workers, whether male or female.
- Principle 4: Promote education, training, and professional development for women.
- Principle 5: Implement supply chain, marketing practices and enterprise development that empower women.
- Principle 6: Champion equality through community initiatives and advocacy.
- Principle 7: Measure and report publicly on progress to create gender equality.

### **The global landscape of women's empowerment**

Gender equality is a basic human right, and it is also fundamental to have a peaceful, prosperous world. But girls and women continue to face significant challenges all around the world. Women are typically under-represented in power and decision-making roles. They receive unequal pay for equal work, and they often face legal and other barriers that affect their opportunities at work. In the developing world, girls and women are often seen as less valuable than boys. Instead of being sent to school, they are often made to do domestic work at home or are married off for dowry before they are adults. As many as 12 million underage girls are married every year. While some progress is being made in various parts of the world, there is still a great deal left to be done to right the problems of gender inequality.

### **Why is empowering girls and women so important?**

Empowering women is essential to the health and social development of families, communities, and countries. When women are living safe, fulfilled, and productive lives, they can reach their full potential and contribute their skills to the workforce, and can raise happier and healthier children. They are also able to help



fuel sustainable economies and benefit societies and humanity at large. A key part of this empowerment is education. Girls who are educated can pursue meaningful work and contribute to their country's economy later in life. They are also four times less likely to get married young when they have eight years of education, meaning that

they and their families are healthier. Empowering girls is the key to economic growth, political stability, and social transformation. Help empower girls now.

### **What is women's empowerment?**

For centuries women were not treated equally to men in many ways.

- They had no education rights.
- They had no voting rights.
- They had no share in the property of their parents They had no freedom to choose their work.

There was a lot of domination by a male-oriented society.

Women empowerment is the process of giving women the ability to live a happy and respected life in society. Women are empowered when they have unrestricted access to chances in range of domains, such as education, profession, and lifestyle, among others. It involves things like education, awareness, literacy, and training to help them improve their position. It also in values decision- making authority. A woman feels powerful when she takes a significant decision. Empowering women is the most important factor in a country's overall growth. If a household has just one earning member, while another family has both men and women earning, who will have a better standard of living? The solution is straightforward: a household in which both

men and women work. As a result, a country where men and women work together grows more quickly. Now we are in a century where we talk about justice, equal



rights, and gender equality. Empowerment of Women is the Empowerment of family/ household and in turn development of society and nation.

In India, women are still facing different obstacles in male dominating society.

- They are the victim of abuse
- They are victims of Violent Crime
- There is a stalking
- Harassment at the workplace
- Outright trafficking
- Forced prostitution

As per the UN population fund, 12 million girl children have been aborted in India in the last 3 decades an estimate. The term women empowerment is all about authority, or the power embarked on women sharing indistinguishable rights. The term refers to the liberation of women from socio-economic restraints of reliance. Women comprise around 50% of the country's population, and a bulk of them stays economically dependent on other without employment.

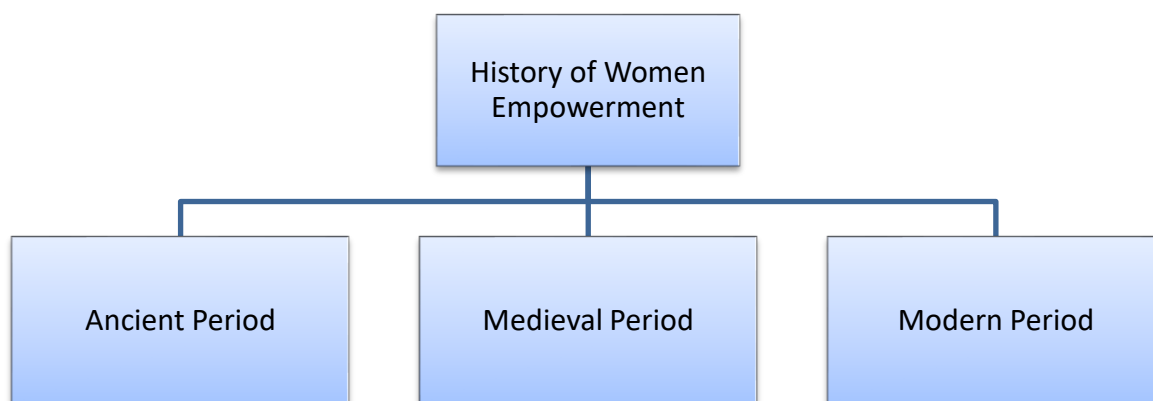
In the age of feminism, a small portion of women in India are freed and can employ their free will, and are permitted to carve out their lives the way they want. But there is a considerable division of the women in this nation who require optimistic support. In most Indian villages and semi-urban cities, women are still denied fundamental education and are never authorized to continue higher education despite amassing the understanding required.

Women are known for delivering multiple roles effortlessly per day, and thus, they are considered the backbone of every society. Living in male-dominating societies, women play a wide range of roles, such as caring mothers, loving daughters, and capable colleagues. The best part is that they fit the bill perfectly in every role.



Nonetheless, they've also stood as a neglected bunch of society in different parts of the world. In turn, it has resulted in women surviving the brunt of unevenness, financial trustworthiness, oppression, and distinct social evils.

### **History of Women Empowerment in India**



#### **A.) Ancient Period**

Women are a gift to society. During the ancient period of India, women played a significant role.

- During Rig Vedic period women enjoyed high status in society.
- Work by ancient Indian grammarians such as Patanjali and Katyayana suggested that women were educated in the early Vedic period. Their conditions were good.
- The women were provided the opportunity to attain high intellectual and spiritual standards. There were many women Rishis during this period.
- Rigvedic verses suggest that women were married at a mature age and were probably free to select their husbands.





- There was no sati system and early marriage. Scriptures such as Upanishads and Rig Vedas mentioned several women sages, and seers notably Maitreyi and Gargi.
- Some kingdoms in ancient India had a tradition such as "nagarvadhu" ("bride of the city") Women competed to win the coveted title of the "nagarvadhu" • "Amrapali" is the most famous example of nagarvadhu.
- According to studies, women enjoyed equal status and rights during the early Vedic period.
- Women were discriminated against since the later Vedic period, especially in education, other rights and facilities.
- Arthashastra imposed more stigmas on women and they were not free to go anywhere without their husbands' permission. "Their conditions become worse in the Gupta period. During Smriti Shastras and Manu Smriti, however, later (approximately 500 B.C) status of women began to decline.
- Manu dictated a woman would be dependent on her father in childhood on husband in her youth and on her son in old age.
- And with the invasion of various Emperors, by and large the status of women began to decline and they faced confinement and restrictions. The practice of child marriage is believed to have started around Sixth Century.

Ancient India had many learned women. Two types of Scholarly women

- 1) Brahmavadinis → The women who never married and cultured the Vedas Throughout their lives.
- 2) Sadyodvahas - who studied Vedas till they married.
- 3) Panini - mentioned female Students Studying Vedas
- 4) Katyana called the female teacher Upadhyaya or Upadhyayi.
- 5) Ashoka got his daughter "Sanghamitra" inducted into preaching Buddhism.





### **B.)Medieval Period**

The Indian woman's position in society further deteriorated during the medieval period, when Sati pratha and child marriages in some communities started, ban on widow remarriages became part of social life among some communities in India.

- The conquest and invasion of various emperors from outside in the Indian subcontinent brought the purdah practice to the Indian society
- Among the Rajputs of Rajasthan, the Jauharpratha was practiced. In some parts of India the Devadasis temple women were sexually exploited.
- Polygamy was widely practiced especially among Hindu Kshatriya.

But still during the medieval phase, there were women who excelled in their field, they were

- The Gond queen Rani Durgawati ruled for 15 years and she lost her life in a battle with the Mughal emperor.
- Razia Sultana became the only monarch to have ever ruled Delhi.
- Pandita Ramabai also helped in the cause of women's upliftment
- Kittur Chennamma - She was the queen of the princely state Kittur in Karnataka led an armed rebellion against the British in response to the Doctrine of lapse. (This was the act enforced by British govt. to occupy the states and lands of the India of princely states, applied till -1858)
- Rani Laxmi Bai, Ahilabai Holdkar, Savitri Bai Phule are examples of successful women in the medieval period.
- Kadambini Ganguly and Anandi Gopala Joshi were a few of the early Indian women to obtain educational degrees.
- The Bhakti movement tried to restore women's status and questioned some of the forms of oppression on her. Mirabai is an example of a female saint-poet during the Bhakti movement. Soon after the bhakti movement Guru Nanakji (first Guru of Sikh) also preached the message of equality between men and women.



Famous reformers who fought for rights and for the upliftment of women.

- 1) Removal of Sati Pratha- 1829 - Raja Ram Mohan Roy
- 2) Widow Remarriage Act – 1856 - Iswar Chandra Vidhyasagar
- 3) Joytirao Phule Etc.....

**C.) Modern Period**

Place of women in Independent India.

If we talk about the present scenario or modern phase, women in India participate in all activities such as education, sports politics, media, art, culture, service sector, science, and technology. Indira Gandhi who served as Prime Minister of India for an aggregate period of fifteen years is the world's longest-serving women Prime Minister.

After independence when the constitution of India was framed, it came up with many rights in favour of women.

- The Constitution of India guarantees equality before law (Article 14).
- No discrimination on the grounds of gender, cast, race, religion etc.(Article 15 ).
- Special provisions to be made by state government in "favour of women and children (Article 15(3))
- Equal opportunity for all citizens in matters related to employment (Article 16).
- Equal pay for equal work (Article 39(d)).
- Also just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief( Article 42).
- Prohibition of traffic in human beings and forced labour.(Article 23)
- Feminist activism in India picked up momentum during the late 1970s.
- Later governments of India declared 2001 as the Year of Women's empowerment (swashakh).
- The Government of India had adopted the National Policy for Empowerment of Women on 20th March, 2001 with the objective to bring about the



advancement, development and empowerment of women and to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. The policies/programmes of the Government are all directed towards achieving inclusive growth with special focus on women in line with the objective of the National Policy for Empowerment of Women.

- On 9th March 2010, Rajya Sabha passed the Women Reservation bill ensuring 33% reservation to women in Parliament and state legislative bodies.

#### Today's Condition

- 1) India has largest number of professionally qualified women as estimated.
- 2.) India is among the largest population of workingwomen in the world.
- 3) India has more doctors, surgeons, scientists, and professors than the United States Women Achievers.
- 4) Due to the help of social reformers of India women in India slowly started recognizing their true potential.

Today Indian women have excelled in each and every field from social work to visiting Space stations.

#### **Concept of Women Empowerment**

It is a process or art of giving women the ability to live a happy and respectful life in society. Women are empowered when they have unrestricted access to chances in a range of domains, such as education, professional life, and lifestyle among others.

"It involves things like, education, awareness, literacy, and training to help them improve their level or position in society's giving them decision-making authority. A woman feels powerful when she takes significant decisions.

Empowering women is the most important factor in a country's overall growth.



### **Need for Women Empowerment**

Almost all countries, regardless of how progressive, have a history of mistreating women. To put it another way, women from all over the world have been defiant to achieve their current standing. While Western nations continue to make progress, third-world countries such as India continue to lag behind in terms of women's empowerment. Women's empowerment is more important than ever in India. India is one of the countries where women are not safe. This is due to a variety of factors. Not only that, but horrific crimes against women such as rape, acid attacks, the dowry system, honor killings, domestic violence, and other forms of violence against women continue to occur throughout India. Women should account for 50% of the entire population. However, due to female feticide practices, which is still prevailing in the rural and underprivileged sections of Indian societies, the girl-child population is rapidly

Declining, affecting the country's gender ratio. Furthermore, the education and freedom scenario is extremely regressive in this situation. Women are not permitted to continue their education and are married off at a young age. In certain areas, men continue to dominate women, as though it is the woman's responsibility to labour for him indefinitely. They don't let them go out or have any form of freedom and personal life. As a result, we can see how women empowerment is a pressing issue. We must equip these women with the tools they need to stand up for themselves and never be victims of injustice.

### **Importance of Women Empowerment**

For the growth and development of any nation, gender empowerment is a must. It is the empowerment of people of any gender. While conventionally, the aspect of it is mentioned for the empowerment of women, the concept stresses the distinction between biological gender as a role, also referring to other marginalized genders in a particular political or social context. Gender empowerment has become a significant topic of discussion in regard to development and economics. Entire

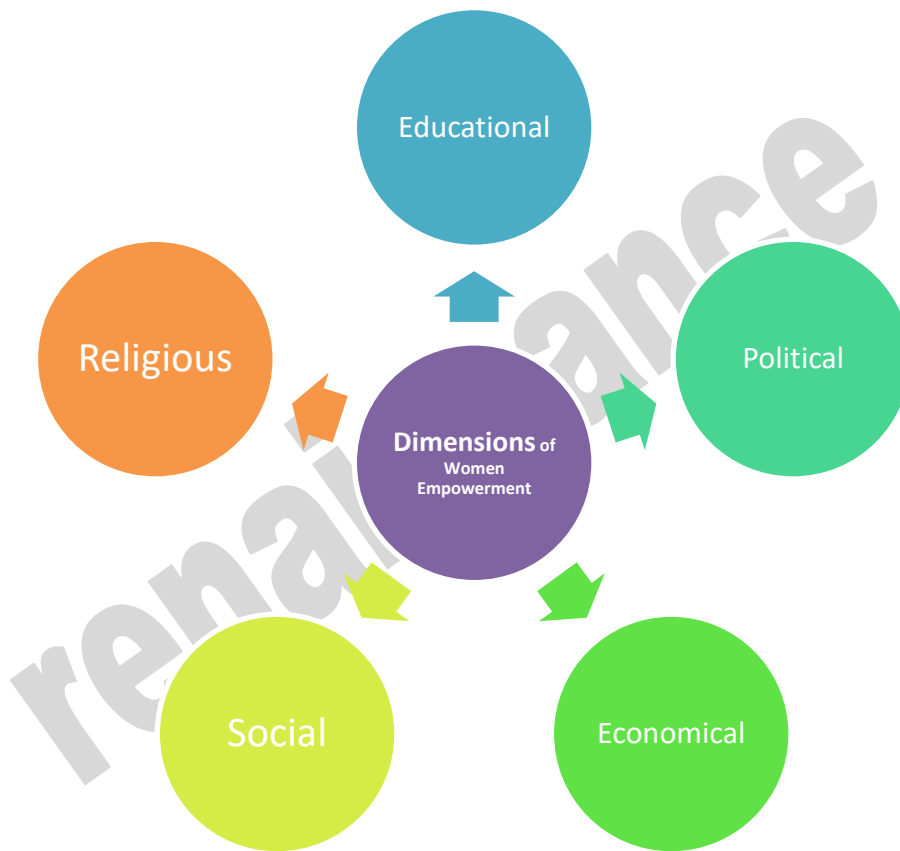


nations, businesses, communities, and groups can benefit from the implementation of programs and policies that adopt the notion of women empowerment.

[1] Empowerment is one of the main procedural concerns when addressing human rights and development. The Human Development and Capabilities Approach, The Millennium Development Goals, and other credible approaches/goals point to empowerment and participation as a necessary step if a country is to overcome the obstacles associated with poverty and development. Gender empowerment can be measured through the Gender Empowerment Measure, or the GEM. The GEM shows women's participation in a given nation, both politically and economically. Gem is calculated by tracking "the share of seats in parliament held by women; of female legislators, senior officials and managers; and of the female profession and technical workers; and the gender disparity in earned income, reflecting economic independence." It then ranks countries given this information. Other measures that take into account the importance of female participation and equality include: the Gender Parity Index and the Gender Development Index

#### Dimensions of Women Empowerment

Women empowerment is an active and multi-dimensional process which enables women to realize their identity and power in all aspects of life.



- 1) Educational Empowerment: Universal tool to empower the growth of any human being. It empowers women to understand their rights, fight for their freedom and improve their awareness.
- 2) Political Empowerment: Women's reservation and participation in political decision-making matters will contribute to the nation's growth.
- 3) Economical Empowerment: Can be achieved by gender equality at the workplace and equal pay for equal work. Providing her the job training and development programs can help her to achieve economic independence.
- 4) Social Empowerment: Social values set for women are different from men. Education can be imparted to her through various social awareness programs in order to make her aware of raising her voice on social evils like dowry, domestic violence, and rightful maintenance through ;  
Dowry Prohibition Act- 1961.



Domestic Violence Act – 2005

Women has got right to maintenance under section 125 of Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 etc.

- 5) Religious Empowerment: Religion is often seen as a barrier to gender parity. Stories abound of gender-based violence done in the name of religion. As a result, in many cases, the issues of religion and gender parity are often dismissed as too complicated to address.

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