

Women in Technology

Dr. M.C.Sophia

Professor in English, Aditya Engineering College, Surampalem, E.G.Dt., India

Globalization and the tremendous progress in science and technology have paved the way for drastic changes in the lifestyle of humans in all spheres of life. Eventually the roles of men and women have undergone changes in the contemporary society. No longer have we witnessed the stereotyped and traditional image of women as homemakers merely confined to the four walls of the houses. Recent advances in science and technology has created a new picture of women as empowered. So women are enjoying more freedom and economic independence to express themselves and actively participate in the development of technologies. They are active in the production of goods, industry, natural resources, management, educational sphere, community etc. They are occupying different positions in all fields and professions. So it is understood that without the involvement of women, a country cannot achieve full economic development especially in terms of technology. And it is only because of the contribution made by women to technology that progress is taking place enormously and at a spider's pace.

Women play an important role in various sectors such as economic, political, social, sports, educational, enterprising etc. Women are crucial part of Indian economy. Technology plays an important role for empowering women. Various IT enabled services given various new trends for the market such as E-commerce, E learning, mobile learning, internet etc. highlights significance of these trends for promoting women empowerment especially in developing countries like India. With the help of these new trends, women can acquire information about various issues, their usage and knowledge they can explore to sell or develop their products/services by using new trends of E-commerce. Knowledge of internet can upgrade the knowledge of women about political, economical and social situation of whole world.

It is universally accepted truth that information technology offer immense opportunities for development of economical, social, educational development of the people. Women empowerment is an important part for the overall national development. As women are the crucial part of Indian economy and social system of India, they are actively involved in education, sports, politics and any other field but the rate of women empowerment is not as per the expectation compared to developed countries. Government of India is taking lot of initiatives for women empowerment among them Self help Group is playing a vital role. Through self help group movement women come together, share their problem, and develop solution for survival and progress.

Access to technology, control of it, and the ability to create and shape it, is a fundamental issue of women's human rights. Global Fund for Women's Technology Initiative aims to help end the gender technology gap and empower women and girls to create innovative solutions to advance equality in their communities. For instance, with a mobile phone, a pregnant woman in a rural area can stay connected to a midwife. For other women and girls, Internet access and a mobile phone can mean access to a bank account for the first time, a new tool to learn how to read and write, or a way to stay safe and avoid harassment in a crowded city. Women are 21 percent less likely to own a mobile phone—a key resource in the global south where phones provide access to safety, organizing networks, early warning systems, mobile health care, and money transfers. Global Fund for Women's Technology Initiative will help to close this gap and give women and girls the tools and access they want and need.

Digital technology is an increasingly important tool for movement building, allowing organizations and networks to exchange information rapidly, and to organize across geographical locations. It also creates opportunities for a diversity of voices to be heard and shared—an important feature of strong social movements.

Information Technology Information technology consists of various hardware, software, internet, other communication networks and media used for collection, storage, processing of the data and transmit information in the form of data, voice, text, images etc. information technology offers time and space. These offer valuable resources for women especially in developing countries who suffer from limited availability of the time, social isolation and lack of access of knowledge and productive resources.

Achievements for women through Technology:

- Improved access to and control of technology for women and girls, especially in remote and marginalized areas
- Creative technology-based solutions to key gender equality issues like violence, health, and economic and political empowerment
- More safe online spaces for women and girls, and women's rights organizing
- More women and girls playing leadership roles in designing and shaping technology, especially to advance women's rights
- Stronger, more inclusive national and global women's movements, collaborating regularly to share resources and ideas, and develop common advocacy strategies

Women and girls also need safe spaces where they can find support as they access technology and information. Yes, they need actual safe and empowering spaces, but an empowering environment also must be one in which legislation and laws allow — and possibly even require — young women to access technology. Financial allocation for programs and services is important to consider at the policy level. Where girls are typically excluded from formal education, governments need to act to erode social, cultural, and other barriers to education. Governments also need to provide open, easy to find, usable information.

Access to information isn't enough. By all means, provide information to women — but also give them the chance to learn more about the ways they can use that information to improve their lives. In communities where economic empowerment is a major issue, provide workshops and trainings about how to use the internet to grow markets and improve small businesses. Train local librarians on available health resources so they can point library users toward the answers they seek.

Importance of Technology for Women Empowerment in various aspects;

Social Empowerment

1. New knowledge and information.
2. Awareness and understanding of issues.
3. Skills, abilities and competence.
4. Support, friendship and inspiration.
5. Participating in group activities with women.

Political Empowerment

1. Participating in policy making.
2. Taking action to change your life or your community.
3. Networking and lobbying.
4. Changing stereotypes about rural women.

Psychological Empowerment

1. Self confidence and self esteem.
2. Feeling more valued and respected.
3. Motivation, interest and enthusiasm.
4. Freedom to do things or express yourself.
5. Feelings of belonging wellbeing and happiness.

Technical Empowerment

1. Knowledge about ICTs.
2. Awareness and understanding about ICTs.
3. Skills and competence in using new ICTs.
4. Ongoing support and advice in using ICTs.
5. Access to high quality technologies.
6. Confidence to use and speak about ICTs



Conclusion

When it comes to the governance of the Internet – no matter if it’s the policies that shape it, the technology that builds it, or the content that lives on it – **women need to be at the table.**

The good news is that in the Internet community, an inclusive approach runs deep. Gloria Steinem once famously said: “I believe that change comes from the bottom, not the top.” This is even more important in the context of the Internet. Because not only does the Internet provide for inclusion and collaboration, but it facilitates bottom up change in a way that no other technology or point in history have ever been able to make. And it will open a world of opportunities we’ve never known before and a digital future where all voices are heard. It could represent the very best of us. We can get there. As millions of women around the world are raising their voices it’s time to make sure we listen. Around the globe, these types of networks lead to the formation of savings cooperatives, self-help groups, and small businesses — strengthening women’s roles in their families, in their communities, and in the world. *All people should aim to “promote a global neutral space that works towards the involvement of women in technology and contributes to reducing the gender gap in the field.”*

References

- [1]. Chandrashekhar, K.S, Shivaprakash, C.S., (2010), The Role Of Information Communication Technology In Women Empowerment And Poverty Eradication In Kerala, APJRB, 1, (2), 1-16
- [2]. Das Sanjay Kanti, (2012), Micro Finance and Women Empowerment: Does Self Help Group Empowers Women? IJMBS, 2, (2), 71-79. Fernandez Aloysius P., History and spread of the self-help affinity group movement in India The role played by IFAD, 8-35
- [3]. Kothari C.R. (2004), Research Methodology- Methods and Techniques, New Age Publication. II Edition.
- [4]. Kramer W.J., Jenkins B.& Katz Robert S.,(2007),The Role of the Information and Communications Technology Sector in Expanding Economic Opportunity, economic opportunity series, 4-52
- [5]. Laxmi R., Vadivalagan. G., Impact of Self Help Groups On Empowerment of Women: A Study In Dharmapuri District, Tamilnadu. 42-53.
- [6]. Mahalakshmi P, Deboral Vimala D. and Krishnan K., Information & Communication Technology Women's Empowerment, Social Sciences Division Central Institute of Brckishwater Aquaculture , Chennai., 2, 112-120
- [7]. Panchakshari Ninad, Huddedar Sudhir, (2012), Personal Micro Credit a Path for Upliftment of Socio-Economic Status of the Lower Income Women, IBMRD's Journal of Management and Research, 1, (1), 8-
- [8]. Prasad P.N., Sridevi V., (2007), Economic Empowerment of women through information technology: A case study of Indian State, Journal of International women studies, 8(4), 106-120. Status of Microfinance, NABARD Report 2011-12.
- [9]. Talwar Shalini, (2012), Beyond Micro Finance: Strategic Shift to Financial Inclusion to Stimulate the Growth of Rural India, IBMRD's Journal of Management and Research, 1(1), 27-34.

