

# Mahatma Gandhi's view on Women Empowerment

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## Abstract:

*Gandhi – the paragon of ethical living and pacifism believed in many ideas and lived as an example of those. Though it is nearly seven decades and there has been a dramatic change in the world since his demise, we may still apply the golden ideas suggested by him for the renovation. Some like gender based discrimination; Poverty and Violence are progressing aggressively. Violence is evil and a self destroyer because of which, we forget who we are, what to do. It not only affects the individual but the whole world. It prevents the person from thinking and realizing the facts. Now we are in the extreme edge in using nuclear weapons which is quite enough to destroy all the living for generations. The most beautiful and powerful creature named Women – the onest praiseworthy ethical God's Gift to refurbish this world. This paper elucidates a crystal clear conception which paves way to revamp the world upended. Women empowerment is Mahatma's brainchild and the much raised topic around the globe for the betterment of the world. The solest way to eradicate innumerable unruly crisis and to uplift Family, Society, Nation and the World is Women Empowerment.*

**Keywords:** Women Empowerment, Patience, Confidence, Truth, Education, Renovation, Poverty, Violence, Gender discrimination.

## I. INTRODUCTION:

Violence has been a part of human nature as our sin always. Usage of weapons is not the only violence. Misuse of power and authority, Domestic violence like physical abuse, Emotional abuse, Psychological abuse, Economic violence, Child abuse and Technology assisted abuse are various types of violence. Poverty is the lack of basic needs such us Food, Clothing and Shelter. Now a day's lack of education is also poverty. Women empowerment is not just a word instead it is a Revolution which turns the world upside down. Women are equal in number to men throughout the world. As per a survey, nearly Two-Third of the world's total work is being done by women but they receive only One-Tenth of the world's total income which is really unfair. There are various problems faced by women in this society. Some includes Gender Discrimination, Disparity in Education, Child marriage, Sole responsibility, Economic inequality, Dowry, Domestic violence, short of equal Employment opportunities, Maternal Health, Widow status, Property rights, Deficient of respect, Honor killing.

## II. DISCRIMINATION:

Humankind is classified into gender and community. Gender is a common word but when gender discrimination is considered, females are the one who suffers a lot. Various types of gender discriminations exits right from the early age to now and from birth to death of a girl child. It was a male dominant society where our ancestors lived. Male child was the heir of a family where as girl child is considered as a burden. It was the time when female were considered to be born only to serve men and to do all the house-hold activities. Years back, some procedures like female infanticide, sati, lack of education, house-hold responsibilities, dowry, and child marriage were in practice that put women behind. Female were trapped within the house and that too in the scullery. Rather serving the family members, they were denied possessing other knowledge. Marriage takes places at the age when they not even know

the meaning of the word. Cookery was the only allowed doing for female. Education was denied and they were forced to burn herself to death on her husband's pyre which means there is no life for women without men.

Human differentiate themselves to various communities. Community discrimination like untouchability, denial from entering temple, prohibition to take water from common well, etc. took place as in then still pursuing somewhere even now. These types of discrimination chase from childhood education to employment and the worst heart-breaking thing is that it continues at graveyard too. Humanity dies in most of the cases. Poverty took place because of these demarcations.

### III. POVERTY:

Poverty is something to be ashamed of, as it is the worst form of ferocity, the root of disorders and the mother of crime. People who can't satisfy even their basic needs FCS (Food, Clothing and Shelter) are well thought-out to be in poverty but in reality people without Educational knowledge are also poverty inmates as they can't set apart good from bad. There are still many people without basic needs like food, shelter and cloths. It is the most atrocious malady for this society. Poverty is high in specific areas and low in the rest having wealth as the major difference that steer people towards Child labor, inadequate nutrition, lack of sanitation facilities ushering them to ill health. These deficiencies turn them negative against and towards the society and the system which in turn broke as violence. Lack of access to services leads to poor health and status which it turns take to illiteracy. These make poor people unable to earn money as others and increase poverty. It affects the academic career at childhood stage itself making powerless victims feel inferior, constrained, conflicted, embarrassed, frustrated and turns against society. The most horrible thing is that parents selling even own children to overcome dearth. It is undeniable that uneducated adults and kids nurture more unemployment and crime, heading to continual, long-lasting poverty. Poor housing and living environment makes way to food and water related diseases.

### IV. VIOLENCE:

Violence is that carried out by a group of people over another who were strangers to each other. War is not the only form of violence, hurting others in any way comes under this category. It has various modes, some of which are discussed here. Misuse of power and authority is the act of using one's power and position in an abusive way to harm others to show their dominion status over the other. Domestic violence like physical abuse troubles others physically. Emotional abuse, Psychological abuse, Economic violence, Child abuse and Technology assisted abuse are various types of violence that distress one emotionally and be a route to confusion, fear, hopelessness, shame, moodiness, difficulty concentrating and social withdrawal. Interpersonal violence takes place between people because of vengeance, ego, misunderstanding etc. who are well known to each other.

### V. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND MAHATMA'S VIEWS:

Though we live in 21st century, women backwardness still continues. Women face many atrocities right from her birth to death, which varies from regions and class. Some widespread issues are Gender discrimination, Disparity in Education, Child marriage, Sole responsibility, Economic inequality, Dowry, Domestic violence, lopsided Employment opportunities, scanty Maternal Health, Widow status, Property rights, be short of respect and Honor killing. Mahatma Gandhi had expressed his views on various issues like equality of genders, women's honor, education, child marriage and dowry system. Just as to Mahatma's words "social reforms are required to uplift the perception of Indian women. It is good to swim in the waters of tradition, but to sink in them is a suicide". He considered child marriage as void and is more evil. In a letter to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur in answer to a question about the religion of children in mixed marriages, Gandhi reveals his patriarchal bias. "I am quite of opinion the children of mixed marriages should be taught in the mal parent's religion. This seems to me to be self obvious for common happiness and interest. That the

instruction should be liberal goes without saying. I am considering merely the question of choice of religion. The children cannot profess two religions. They must respect the female parent's religion. If the female parent has not that much discretion and regard for her husband's religion, the marriage becomes superficial". He was also against widow remarriage and dowry. He stated dowry as "Heartless". He also encouraged women to participate in politics. For Gandhi, women were not mere toys in the hands of men, neither their competitors. Men and women are essentially endowed with the same spirit and therefore have similar problems. Women are at par with men, one complementing the other. Men are in the position to help women in shaping herself and of which she had no hand. "(if) the woman should be prevailed upon or induced to forsake the hearth and shoulder the rifle for the protection of that hearth. It is a reversion to barbarity and the beginning of the end. In trying to ride the horse that man rides, she brings herself and him down. The sin will be on man's head for tempting or compelling his companion to desert her special calling" are Mahatma's words which clearly expressed his mentality against the slavery of women as housekeeper. In Gandhi's views, Education for women was the need of the time that would ensure their moral development and make them capable of occupying the same platform as that of men and Women can never be considered to be the weaker sex. In fact, women for Gandhi were incarnations of moralities like knowledge, humility, tolerance, sacrifice and faith.

Empowering means facilitating people notably women to get hold and possess supremacy resources in order for them to make decisions on their own or deny the decisions made by others which impair them directly or indirectly. Fear is the first and foremost thought that pulls us from stepping up. In order to overcome that we should be able to differentiate good from bad, confidence from skepticism, patience from tolerance, trustworthy from shifty which can be obtained only from Education and Experience. Education is the trump card to success and the most invincible tool which can be used to change the world. Education turns the incomplete person to a complete human. Confidence is an attitude that evokes action. It is the most prestigious quality and the best outfit a person can create within, directing one to have inner stability. The first step in success is the self confidence, the prime to move self forward. Patience is the real courage to achieve success. Tolerance condemns the persecution and oppression of others and is the highest form of education. It is the virtue of human without convictions and the outcome of patience with boundary.

Mahatma had colossal assurance in the competence of women to bring on a non violent crusade. Women took on critical responsibilities in India's struggle for freedom underneath his guidance and leadership. They held public meetings, organized blockade of shops from selling foreign alcohol and articles, sold Khadi and participated in National Movements vigorously. They faced the baton of the police courageously and even went at the back of bars. Gandhi's push for women to join India's struggle for independence was influential in renovating the outlook of women. Through their participation in Indian struggle for freedom, Indian women bust down all the shackles of subjugation that had brushed them to secondary position from time immemorial.

"If you women would only realize your dignity and privilege, and make full use of it for mankind, you will make it much better than it is. But man has delighted in enslaving you and you have proved willing slaves till the slaves and the slave-holders have become one in the crime of degrading humanity. My special function from childhood, you might say, has been to make women realize her dignity. I was once a slave-holder myself but Ba proved an unwilling slave and thus opened my eyes to my mission. Her task was finished. Now I am in search of a woman who would realize her mission. Are you that woman, will you be one?" are the words by Gandhi in a letter to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur from Wardha on 21<sup>st</sup> October.1936. These words of Gandhi kindle all women realize their dignity and to overcome all their hindrances.

## VI. CONCLUSION:

When women were given right education at right time she can overcome the first hindrance in her life i.e fear, as she possesses self confidence, patience and tolerance. Once a Woman realizes her strength she breaks all the barriers and makes strategic life choices at all the circumstances for the betterment of her society, family and herself. Empowering Women is the most essential to have bright future in family, Country and the World. Quoting to an African proverb "If you educate a man, you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a nation" women empowerment is the utmost requirement to the betterment of this World.

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Dr.A.Nidhya has been teaching and serving student's community for a decade. She has attended several numbers of seminars and conferences and presented 10 papers at various locations. Numerous awards have been received by her. Recently Honorary Doctorate Award has been given for serving student's base for a period of 10 years at Bangalore (2019) tops the most. At present she is working as Assistant Professor at Saiva Bhanu Kshatriya College, Aruppukottai, Tamilnad, India.