

Social Protection to Promote Gender Equality- A Study on Women Artisans of Jodhpur City Design for Social Change

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Abstract:- Social change refers to the implementation of ideas which have the potential to bring in a positive change in the society, mostly to the people who are marginalized by the way system works and affects them.

A continuous and gradual process, social change has the power to redefine the holistic setting of a society by altering its economic, social, cultural, political, and other aspects. Gender happens to be an integral part of the society we live in, as male and female population is at par with one another, hence gender equality as a concept is a crucial aspect for Social Change to come about. Despite the gender parity in terms of population, one can't help but notice the existing inequality and bias that women in society have to face across all walks of life on a daily basis. The discrimination that women face within their families, at social events or even their workplaces speak volumes of the need for social change that needs to come about. 67% women agreed to the gender bias experience in their routine life.

To gain better insights of the same, author conducted a study at women empowerment centers in Rural and Urban areas around Jodhpur. The women were interviewed, and presented a questionnaire, asking them about the change they might have experienced in gender equality in the last few years as they worked with these organizations. The study includes the experiences of women at the domestic, professional, and societal fronts. 76% respondents voted right to education and employment as a mean to reduce the gender discrimination.

The expected results indicate a positive growth in gender equality when it comes to the lives of the women who are working at these empowerment centers.

This research aims at establishing the fact that women should be conditioned to be financially independent through receiving education about their rights, in order to bring in a much needed equality amongst both genders in a society.

Keywords: Social Change, Gender Equality, Rural Areas, Discrimination, Upliftment.

I. INTRODUCTION

Women all over the world have faced discrimination from men, regardless of how progressive the society is. Even today, a large proportion of the female population is subjected to gender bias in their daily lives. Every day, women in rural India face second-class treatment from their family, friends, workplace, and society in general.

Women participating in economic life ensures optimal involvement in the workforce and boosts employment, which is one of the most important needs for long-term growth and development and also the key to ensuring a sustainable and balanced growth and development structure.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development created the Mahila E-Haat project. It is one of India's women empowerment programs, allowing women entrepreneurs to use technology to exhibit their products (created, manufactured, and sold) on an online platform.

Women entrepreneurs can promote their products with descriptions and images using only their mobile phones and internet connections. Buyers can contact vendors via phone, in person, by email, or by any other means. Clothing, fashion accessories, pottery, boxes, home décor, toys, and a variety of other items may be on the list. Through an online platform, this effort helps the 'Make in India' campaign.

"Women's empowerment" refers to the process of increasing women's access to control over strategic life choices that affect them, as well as access to opportunities that allow them to fully realize their capacities, based on the assumptions that women differ from men in their social positions and that those differences are due to asymmetric, unequal power relations between the genders.

In order to improve women's quality of life, economic, political, and socio-cultural empowerment challenges the system of sexual stratification that has resulted in their subordination and marginalization.

Women's empowerment can be achieved by providing enough educational opportunities, political backing, and a competent legal system, as well as creating jobs for women. NGO's and self-help groups (SHG) play an important part in women's empowerment by providing basic education,

vocational training, self-employment training, legal assistance, women's protection, and self-awareness initiatives.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To get a better understanding of the role played by empowerment center in order to bring gender equality, 100 women were interviewed. Each one of them was presented a questionnaire in order to understand the development that took place in their lives in reference to gender discrimination they have experienced in their lives before and after their jobs at the employment center. The samples were collected from the women working at the craft centers in Jodhpur and Chandelao.

The Questionnaire was designed to find out if the women understand the concept of gender discrimination in the first place, or if they were practicing discrimination themselves. It aimed to get the clear situation of bias from women's perspective and their thoughts about the topic.

➤ *Table No.1 – Assessment of Women's awareness on Gender Bias*

This table demonstrates the basic understanding of women on gender bias. Women were asked following questions, to which they had to answer as per table:

- 1) Do you believe in gender discrimination?
- 2) Do you believe discrimination exists around you?
- 3) Should men help around domestic chores?
- 4) Should education be equal to both the genders?
- 5) Should women be given more education?

Table No.1

Answer No	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	10	4	0	16	70
2	67	7	0	10	16
3	50	36	0	10	4
4	76	12	3	6	3
5	3	8	29	3	57

The above table brings out a clear picture, 70% Of women strongly don't believe in discrimination, while 10% still believes in it. At the same time, 67% women strongly agree to gender bias around them, and 16% of them strongly disagree to recognize any discrimination. Only 50% women strongly agree men should help in domestic work, while 36% agrees to the same, and 4% women strongly disagree to it. 76% women strongly supports equal education opportunities to both the gender, while 4% disagree. When further asked if women should be given more education than men, 57% women strongly disagrees, 29% were neutral, and 3% agreed to it.

➤ *Table No.2 – Assessment of What Women face at home when started work.*

This table throws light on women's experience at their home when they started work. Women were asked following question; the recorded answers are shown in the table below;

- 1) Was your family supportive of you starting work?
- 2) Were you heard in your family when you started work?
- 3) Do you feel heard in the family after you have started work?
- 4) Were you confident of yourself when you started work?
- 5) Do you still cover your face at your home?

Table No.2

Answer No.	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	64	6	0	5	25
2	0	21	24	34	21
3	28	62	7	2	1
4	12	8	0	35	45
5	80	5	10	5	0

The table indicates the support ladies received when they wanted to start work, 25% women had to struggle hard when they started work, where in 64% women were strongly supported by their family. Most women felt unheard in the family before they started work, but there was a major positive change when they started work. Only 3 % women would still feel unheard in the family even after they started work, where as 7% of women did not notice any difference before or after work. 80% women were not confident when they started to work, as opposed to 12% of them who would feel confident at their work from day one. Shockingly 80% of women still have to strictly cover their face at their homes.

➤ *Table No. 3 – Assessment of the changes women face after starting work at domestic & social Front*

The table brings out a clear picture of changes women have experienced after starting work. The difference they have experienced in people's behavior towards them. Women were asked following questions:

- 1) Do you feel confident about yourself after starting work?
- 2) Do people in your family show respect towards you after you have started work?
- 3) Are you involved in decision making after you have started work?
- 4) Do you have a social life other than your family now?
- 5) Do you save the money you earn?

Table No. 3

Answer No.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	76	10	0	8	6
2	69	22	3	2	4
3	45	17	22	10	6
4	60	17	15	6	2
5	72	11	6	5	6

The table throws light on the importance of employment for women, most women have shown a great progress after starting work, be it about the confidence, or the role they can play in decision making or the ability to have a healthy social life beyond their immediate and extended families. There is a great rise in the number of women who feel that their families and neighbors treat them with more respect after they have joined the employment centers. 72% of women have strongly started saving money and that is a very good thing.

Women were also asked open ended questions like:

➤ *What changes they would like to bring in society in order to erase the gender discrimination?*

76% women wanted to bring equality in education, and freedom to work. 20% women wanted women's opinion to be considered to be involved in decision making. Some women wanted freedom to travel and be more expressive. Only 1% women voted for women's right to choose a partner to marry.

➤ *What is the difference you want in your daughter/daughter in law's life as compared to yours?*

60% women want to provide equal education, while 23% support the freedom to work, while 11% women had no answer to this question, 4% women wanted their daughter/daughter in law to choose the lifestyle they wanted, and 2% wanted freedom to wear clothes.

➤ *What is your reaction towards the birth of a girl or a boy child in your family/relatives/ people around you?*

68% women expressed equal joy in the birth of a baby boy or a baby girl, while 20% said they will be happier for the birth of a baby girl. 12% were happier with the birth of baby boy, as they think that boy will carry forward the family's name.

III. CONCLUSION

The study suggests that women empowerment and employment center bring positive change in the lives of women. It uplifts the morale and boosts the confidence of the ladies working there, at the same time making the financially independent and stable. Research finds a decline in the gender bias towards the working women from their families and people around them. For any society to grow, the gender discrimination has to diminish and women need to be given equal rights and opportunities for a society to be progressive. 76% of respondents believe that proper education and employment help women grow, and reduce the gender bias existing around them.

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