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## GANDHI AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

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**Abstract:-** There is an opinion among the people from ages that women play a significant role in Man's life. She can play a crucial role in the development of a nation as well as human development. The hands which cradle can cradle the whole world. The Vedas and Shastras have regarded women as Devi, Jagatmata, Ardhangini, which expresses the view that the life of man would be incomplete if there is no woman. Therefore she is called Ardhangini of man. At this juncture the proverb holds true, that always there is a woman behind the success of a man.

**Keywords:** Gandhi , human development , Women Empowerment .

### INTRODUCTION: -

Though there is high regard as women are concerned, unfortunately women are the most suffering sect of the modern male predominant society. They were treated as slaves, were abandoned to take education, to take part in Yagnya, they were forbidden to go out of house. The condition of women became very worst after the Manu Smriti came into existence. Even to day the conditions of women has not improved in our society. Therefore deliberate, conscious and perspective efforts have to be made for the empowerment of women in our society. Unless and until the male predominant society of our's clear's the way for the upliftment of women the nation progress will not be realised.

In this connection many social reformers like Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, Rajaram Mohan Ray started movement for social, political and economical empowerment of women of our society. History is evident for this, Despite of these social reform movements the Architects of Modern India, have made deliberate, conscious, and precise efforts to empower women are Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. B .R. Ambedkar, and many others. Gandhiji's attitude towards woman can be better understood in the General Philosophy of life i.e. Ahimsa or non violence, which gives no room for any discrimination or feeling of high and low. For Gandhiji every social position had same value irrespective of caste, creed and sex. In the year 1981 Feb 20, while addressing the social gathering of Bhagini Samaj he said "Woman is the companion of man gifted the equal physical and mental capacities. She has the right to participate in every and each activities of man, and she has the same rights of freedom and liberty as he. He said Hindu Shastras bias and expressed his clear view in these words" I make no distinction between son and Daughter. Such distinction in my opinion is invidious and wrong, the birth of son or daughter welcomed alike. Each one need the active help of other Men and women are compliments to each other rather than competitors. They both have the same and same feelings.

### GANDHIJI'S THOUGHTS ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Gandhi holds a unique position among the social reformers. His views on women empowerment can be summarised in following lines. An attempt is made here to understand Gandhi and his view on women empowerment.

- 1.His views on widow
- 2.Views on child marriage
- 3.Views on Dowry system
- 4.Views on Marriage system
- 5.Views on Education of women
- 6.Equality of Men and women

### 1. His views on widow and remarriage:

Gandhiji was very keen about the women widow hood and re marriage of them. This issue was closely related with the custom of marrying of young girls who dont know the meaning of marriage. From ages widows have been suffered long of humaliation and deprivation. For Gandhi for marriage will be meaning full when the beside grown up to shoulder the responsibilities. On one occasion he said “ I detest child marriage, I shudder to see a child-widow” Therefore he urged to the parents not marry a girl of tender age. He proposed for the remarriage of young widow girls.

### 2) Views on child marriage:

Gandhi was a strong opponent of the system of child marriage. Child marriage to him was an “Immoral and inhuman Act”. In his opinion child marriage is not at all immoral and in human act but also a social evil. Therefore he invoked women themselves to work for the welfare of their own sex.

### 3) His views on marriage:

Gandhi also expressed his views on marriage system. He opined that the marriages should be very simple. The marriage rites and religious ceremonials should not cost more than ten rupees. He urged the rich people to restraint themselves and lead the poor people and thus be helpfull in preventing the waste of national resources. The marriage should not aim at the satisfaction of lust but also to fullfill spritual and social purpose. The ideal marriage in his opinion should full fill three conditions 1) Spritual development 2) Service 3) Mutual Attraction or love. Marriage only for satisfaction sexual apetite was called as Vyabhichara. The ideal husband and wife are slaves of each other. But wife only is not the slave of husband.

### 3) Views on Dowery system:

Gandhi was totally opponent (against) of the dowery system which defiled the pure character of marriage. Gandhi advocated that the dowery system leads to discrimination in society against the birth of daughters. Parents helplessly give their daughters in marriage absolutely un suitable matches. With regard demand of dowery by the young man leads to demoralisation of youths of the country. Therefore he suggests to create public opining against dowery system. His advice to the parents was that they should not hesitate to marry their daughters to a good young man coming from other community and other region.

### 4) Views on Education of Women:

Gandhi find out the reason for women's pitiable condition is their ignorance and lack of education among them. Through education we can develop self confidence and quality of independence and courage to resist against the injustice on them. He opines that women herself should organise agitate against the injustice and for welfare of their owen sex.

For Gandhi, Men and women are alike; there is no any difference. No one was superior or inferior to none; rather men and women are compliments of each other. Thus Gandhiji Advocated equality and freedom of women to take any decision for their empowerment. For women empowerment Gandhi mobalised the women participation in national movement for freedom. He often used to say that women were an embodiment of love and suffering therefore she can play the role of leader easily.

Gandhi during his life time made attempts to empower women in Indian context. He made all possible efforts to empower women and strengthen her hand so strong that she can protect her self from all indiscrimination and exploitation from male predominant society of our's.

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