

A Study on Mahatma Gandhi's Perceptions of Women

By

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Abstract:

Over the last few thousand years, there have been several significant shifts in the position of women in India. Throughout history, women have had equal standing with males. This trend peaked in the Middle Ages, but many reformers, including Mahatma Gandhi, have since worked to further equal rights. Women in India have had a long and storied history. During the Middle Ages, when practices like sati, child marriage, and the prohibition on widow remarriage spread across India, the status of women declined even more. One of the most pressing issues facing the world in the twenty-first century is the advancement of women. However, progress for women is still a mirage in the actual world. Victimization of women by societal ills is something we see every day. Certainly, the nation's progenitor, Mahatma Gandhi, had dabbled in this area a century earlier, paving the road for women's advancement. Among Gandhi's priorities in social transformation is the advancement of women, even if this is not central to his program. He fought for women's emancipation and advancement. The role that women have played throughout human history and development was something he emphasized. Men should not consider themselves superior to women, he said, since nature has endowed both sexes with equal ability.

Keywords: Women, Mahatma Gandhi, Perceptions, Women empowerment, Society.

Introduction:

Over the last few thousand years, there have been several significant shifts in the position of women in India. Throughout history, women have had equal standing with males. This trend peaked in the Middle Ages, but many reformers, including Mahatma Gandhi, have since worked to further equal rights. Women in India have had a long and storied history. During the Middle Ages, several societies in India institutionalized practices such as sati, child marriage, and a prohibition on widow remarriage, further degrading the social status of Indian women. The advancement of women is now among the most pressing issues facing the world in the twenty-first century. However, progress for women is still a mirage in the actual world. Every day, we see firsthand how different societal ills exploit women. Certainly the nation's progenitor, Mahatma Gandhi, had dabbled in this area a century earlier, paving the road for women's advancement. As a social reformer, Gandhi is concerned with issues like women's emancipation, even if this is not central to his objective. He fought for women's emancipation

and advancement. He went into detail on how humans have developed over time and the role that women have always had in that process. Men should not consider themselves better than women, he said, since nature has endowed both sexes with equal ability.

For Gandhi, women will never be able to respect themselves until they are given the roles that are rightfully theirs in society and the economy based on their intelligence and education. Furthermore, they would never be able to support themselves in any field. During his lifetime, Gandhi motivated Indians to break free from the mental and social shackles caused by centuries-old traditional traditions by implementing tangible and practical programs to educate women.^[1]

As a prominent political and social reformer, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi attempted to end the long history of societal injustices suffered by women in India. He was of the firm belief that egalitarianism—the inclusion of men and women from all socioeconomic backgrounds—is the key to a society's quick development.

Any effort to comprehend Gandhi's views on women, according to Madhu Kishwar's^[2] book, must incorporate:

- (a) a review of Gandhi's theories on women's societal roles and the nature of female oppression in India;
- (b) an analysis of the extent to which Gandhi ensured that many women joined the national movement and politics, as well as an assessment of the quality of their involvement under Gandhi's leadership.

This is the most crucial part because it has changed women's lives even in independent India. The other part is the experimental nature of their relationships, which reflected his attitudes towards women and his ideal man-woman relationship. His views on this topic also went through a long process of evolution.

You need to know Gandhi's stance on religion in order to grasp his philosophies and any of his positions, including those on women. The way Gandhi felt about religion is crucial to comprehending his life and ideas. "He sees religion as an integral part of life that is inseparable from everything else. I do not think of religion as one of the many things that people do," Gandhi said. Everything that I do, down to the smallest detail, is guided by my religious beliefs. The existence of God was the one thing about which Gandhi was most certain. Truth was self-realization, the ultimate aim of existence, and nonviolence and love were the only ways to reach God, according to him. Gandhi was a powerful figure in contemporary India who shared the view that religion has the power to inspire people to do great things. He was greatly impacted by the profound ethical and philosophical teachings revealed in the Gita. He saw religion as a means to an end—the perfection of one's moral character—through the application of pure truth. The fact that Gandhi was born into a very religious household explains the profound impact of religion on his life. Both of his parents were devout devotees of Vishnu, the Hindu God of devotion. His mother was a member of the Pranami sect, which advocated religious tolerance and concord and shared Hindu and Muslim views. The Pranamis accorded equal reverence to the holy texts of the Vaishnavites and the Koran. Her son will never forget the profound impact she had on him via her unwavering religious fasts and vows.

Gandhi believed that a devout follower of religion could not afford to remain sedentary. Living a solitary existence was not something he believed in. This meant that, for Gandhi, the only

way to experience Godhead fully was to dedicate his life to helping others. “The path to redemption, in my view, is an endless sacrifice for the sake of my nation and all of humanity, he said. I wish to be one with all living things.”^[3]

How women impacted Mahatma Gandhi:

Women, both urban and rural, educated and illiterate, Indian and non-Indian, also shaped his thoughts and actions. Though Gandhi looked up to his renowned and esteemed father, who had obvious leadership characteristics, he was most shaped spiritually and morally by his mother. Kasturba Gandhi, Mahatma Gandhi’s wife, had a profound impact on her husband’s outlook on women. Gandhi openly confesses that he had subjected his wife to many tortures in order to satisfy his sexual urges; she endured these ordeals with extraordinary strength and patience. “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,” Gandhi said in a letter he sent to Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur from Wardha on 20-10-1936.^[4] But man has taken pleasure in enslaving you, and you have shown that you are prepared to be enslaved until the crime of lowering humankind is committed by both the enslaved person and the slaveholder. You might argue that my unique role in society from birth has been to help women see their worth. I “opened my eyes to my mission” when Ba proved to be an unwilling enslaved person, and I went on to become an enslaver myself.^[5]

While Gandhi was cognizant of the fact that women were exploited both inside and outside the house, he held the view that individuals cannot be enslaved until they actively choose to be so. Even Gandhi himself acknowledged that it was women, notably his mother and wife, from whom he learned the art of passive opposition, which does not include violence. The spirit of equality and the concept of reciprocal respect were realized when Gandhi transformed himself from a dominant husband into an understanding one in response to Kasturba’s passive opposition to his unacceptable husbandly and personal attitudes and acts. “My Experiment with Truth,” his autobiography, delves deeply into his journey from a controlling spouse to a kind friend. Gandhi acknowledged that this did not come easy. Both physically and psychologically, he imposed his will on Ba. A violent altercation ensued when Gandhi ordered Ba to clean his visitor’s toilet and Kasturba refused. Mahatma Gandhi almost broached the idea of excluding Ba from the home. Her measured and strong reprimand finally got through to Bapu, and he came to his senses and admitted guilt. Thus, Gandhi acknowledges that his mother and wife were the sources of his profound trust in women’s Shakti. Women in his own culture, both as housewives and as members of society at large, were subjects of his observation and study.^[6] Although Sarojini Naidu, Lakshmi Menon, Sushila Nayyar, and Rajkumari Amrit Kaur were well-known, hundreds of other Indian women had an impact on Mahatma Gandhi, who went unrecognized. Mahatma Gandhi became a genuine ally of women because of the impact of many women. Women absorbed his teachings on the significance of emancipation and gave their all to the fight for independence since his ideals and vision were obviously achievable. Female liberation warriors’ memoirs and life stories provide light on their battle against sexism and injustice.

Notable among the many women with whom Gandhi was close throughout his political career are Annie Besant, Oliver Schreiner, Millie Graham Pollock, Mirabhen, Sarala Devi

Chaudhurani, Amrit Kaur, Kamla Devi Chattopadhyay, Sushila Nayyar, and Sarojini Naidu, among many others. The ladies above did help shape Mahatma Gandhi's view on women, although in their modest ways.

Social Work and Women

All people, regardless of their gender, religion, or country of origin, were important to Gandhi. Sarvodaya, Gandhi's widely popularized philosophy for the benefit of all humans. The conviction that all people are fundamentally the same on an ethical and spiritual level is central to Sarvodaya. Instead of seeing social welfare as an apart or compartmentalized aspect of life, his perspective was integral to his whole outlook on the world.^[7]

Since "the individual is the one supreme consideration," Gandhi was able to condemn modern civilization and reject the collectivist perspective of society without believing that social change could be influenced by things like "collective consciousness," "class struggle," or "the moral priority of any collective agency over the individual."^[8]

Mahatma Gandhi wrote, "*The women certainly do social work, but as individuals. I would like them to assume responsibility as a body for some social service. This will create their capacity for organization. When such capacity has been created, individuals may come and go, but the organization will remain. God has given such capacity only to human beings. In our country, women have not cultivated it so far. The blame for this lies with the men. But that is a question with which we need not concern ourselves just now. If we believe that women must acquire this capacity for organization, we should try to cultivate it in them. It does not matter if we believe that women must acquire this capacity for organization; we should try to cultivate it in them. It does not matter if we commence only with my writing a letter to their Association and their replying to me. Slowly (no matter if very slowly), we may take up other activities. If you have fully understood what I have suggested and if the suggestion has appealed to you, if the other women also approve of it, and if they are ready to take an interest in carrying it out, you may take up this work. If, however, you see difficulties in carrying it out or see no meaning in it, you may drop the idea.*"^[9]

Social liberation was just as important as political emancipation in Gandhi's view, and his political views are deeply rooted in humanitarian principles that reflect his spirituality. Politics, in Gandhi's view, is inextricably linked to social elements.

His whole worldview and program of constructive labor provide a unified picture of his thoughts and deeds in the realm of social welfare.

Social Evil: Mahatma Gandhi's Condemnation

In his writings and speeches, as well as in his journals, Harijan and Young India, Mahatma Gandhi hoped to elevate women's status. He encouraged women to join his anti-raj movements, and he helped them understand that their virtues made them superior to men in a non-violent struggle that demanded unending patience, silence, and sacrifice. Gandhi believed that women could rise to the position of leader in non-violent satyagraha, which did not necessitate the knowledge that books could impart but rather the grit that comes from faith and suffering.

To paraphrase Gandhi: "I make no distinction between son and daughter. Such distinction is, in my opinion, unfair and wrong. The birth of a son or a daughter should be welcomed alike."—one of his harsh criticisms of the preference for sons among Indian families, which exacerbated the already pitiful condition of women.^[10]

Even though women are the ar dangini or better half, they are “reduced to the position of a mere chattel to be bought and sold,” which Gandhi slammed as a despicable practice that made the birth of a female child unwelcome due to the hateful system of dowry and the inevitable wedding expenses.

Child marriage, especially arranged marriages where girls were wed to men who could pass for grandfathers, was another social evil that afflicted Gandhi greatly. He was very critical of this practice, describing it as “an immoral and inhuman act” and “a crime against god and man to call the union of the children a married state...”^[11]

Gandhi believed that laws alone could not eradicate such a pervasive evil as child marriage. He also believed that the barbaric practice of purdah was doing great damage to India. Gandhi emphasized the importance of women’s education and opposed child marriage, the evil system (Purdah), and husbands’ dominance over their wives. He believed that ignorance and a lack of knowledge were at the heart of all the problems in society.

Gender equality:

Gandhi made it clear that he would not budge from his position on gender equality. He held the view that women should have the same freedom to make their moral claims as men since they are unique persons. Unfortunately, women have been subjugated and reliant on men for a long time due to men’s dominance and the inferiority complex that comes with men’s self-serving teachings. When it came to gender inequality, Gandhi was adamantly against it. Without discrimination based on race, gender, nationality, or place of birth, Gandhi fought for a society that would be free of exploitation and promote equality in all areas of life. The extreme economic disparity exists in today’s society. Economic equality is the bedrock of socialism. In this wicked world where some people have enough to eat while others go hungry, Ram Rajya is impossible. For him, violence was the inevitable consequence of inequality, which he saw as leading to exploitation.^[12]

He thinks that everyone, from scavengers to physicians, attorneys, business people, and clergy, can accomplish good deeds for society. So, wages ought to be fair, if not equal, for labor. All of the convicts in his Ashram were given the respect and resources they needed. There was no gender bias in Gandhi’s actions.

Mahatma Gandhi’s Perspective on Women’s Equality:

Gandhi fought for the freedom of all oppressed groups in society, not only the nation’s political oppresses. His life’s work has had several notable outcomes, one of which is the reawakening of women, which has helped them overcome their inherent inferiority complex and achieve greater levels of dignity and self-esteem. In his words, “When woman, whom we all call abala, becomes sabala, all those who are helpless will become powerful.” He cared deeply for the well-being of society’s most vulnerable members. Prioritising social above political goals was something he was very comfortable with. He thinks that social change should be put off till after Swaraj is achieved. Women, in Gandhi’s view, are equal to men in intelligence and are, therefore, an indispensable part of society. She is just as entitled to freedom and liberty as he is. But just as a man is entitled to a preminent position in his “domain” or area of action, so too is a woman entitled to one of her own. The house is a woman’s domain, while the outer world is a man’s. Although there is a lot that both boys and girls may learn from elementary school, Gandhi argued that all students should have access to education. There would be

significant distinctions in terms of advanced degrees. Because of inherent differences between the sexes, it is important to teach boys and girls in separate classrooms. They serve different purposes in life; however, in essence, they are equal. Household leadership always falls to women. Beyond it, man is supreme. While men work to make a living, women put money aside and spend it. She is the nation's mother and the educator of her children.^[13]

The inherent power of women was something Gandhi had unwavering trust in. In his view, women possess innate virtues like as love, nonviolence, forgiveness, and an extraordinary ability to sacrifice. Once, Gandhi commented.

In opposition to the high cost of weddings. Marriage rituals, in his view, needed to be streamlined. In his opinion, such circumstances did not call for a banquet. The Ashram was the site of several wedding ceremonies. Reciting the basic Ashram prayer and sharing some words of wisdom from Mahatma Gandhi with the young couple on how to live a fulfilled and joyful life of service was all that was done. After this short ritual, he would give the newlyweds a Bhagavad Gita.

The Power of Women

Gandhi changed the way women saw the world and the political landscape of India. In Gandhi's view, there is no difference between men and women. He had faith in the power inside each person. His unending message to them was that guys weren't the only ones capable of showing bravery and fortitude. He used Sita as an example, saying that she was able to escape Rawan's clutches because of her strong moral character. He had faith in the Indian women's capacity to overcome adversity and excel alongside males in any field because of their courage, intelligence, perseverance, and tenacity. "If one believes that women are weak, I would say that no women in the world are weak," Mahatma Gandhi declared during a prayer service. We are all-powerful.^[14] There is no such thing as a weak person among those who are devout.

Consequently, I think it's important to instill in our young people the belief that they are strong before everything else. Gandhi believed that men and women were equal and that there should be no hierarchy between them. Because they have accepted their subordinate role, women have grown to despise themselves.

Gandhi's Views on Women's Education

Equal access to education for females and boys was an issue that Gandhi passionately championed. Literacy is neither the goal nor the beginning of education; rather, it is a means to an end—the holistic development of a person's mind, body, and soul. All it is is a means to an end—the education of both sexes. Education is more than just being literate. So, I'd start the kid off right by showing it a practical skill and giving it the freedom to do something from the very first movement it learns. Under such a curriculum, I believe that students are capable of reaching their full intellectual and spiritual potential.

Free and mandatory education for boys and girls from the ages of seven to fourteen was one of Gandhi's central proposals in his 1937 National Education Scheme. In Gandhi's view, "females should be better prepared for the roles of mother and homemaker if the educational system takes their unique requirements into account. Gandhi and the majority of Indian women educators in the early 20th century shared the belief that women's education should address their unique societal roles. Regarding women's education, I'm unsure about when it should

start and if it should vary from men's. Still, I think women should have access to all facilities, even those that are specifically designed for them, unless essential.”^[15]

Gandhi's Views on Women's Political Engagement

Among the few advocates for women's emancipation, M.K. Gandhi stands out for his belief that women should play an active role in the independence movement. “My contribution to the great problem (of women's role in society) lies in my presenting for acceptance of truth and ahimsa in every walk of life, whether for individuals or nations,” said Mahatma Gandhi. “I have hugged the hope that in this, a woman will be the unquestioned leader and, having thus found her place in human evolution will shed her inferiority complex.”^[16] Women's entry into national politics through non-violent methods brought about remarkable outcomes, including the realization of their inner strength and the introduction of human and moral elements into politics.

In 1946, in response to a letter from a woman lamenting the lack of women in politics, Gandhi said: “So long as considerations of caste and community weigh with us and rule our choice, women will be well advised to remain aloof and thereby build up their prestige.” This allowed Gandhi to see women in a service rather than a power capacity. Women in the workforce can help change men's perceptions of women by encouraging them to vote, providing or arranging for practical education, encouraging critical thinking, and breaking free from caste systems. This will force men to recognize women's strength and sacrifice capabilities and to honor them accordingly. As for women, Gandhi told them to “revert to barbarism” by teaching the villagers basic hygiene and sanitation skills; he also said, “Women must have votes and an equal status.” Gandhi's belief in women's suffrage was unwavering. However, it is not the last issue. It doesn't start until women start having an impact on national political discussions.

Social liberation was just as important as political emancipation in Gandhi's view, and his political views are deeply rooted in humanitarian principles that reflect his spirituality. Politics, in Gandhi's view, is inextricably linked to social elements.

Indian women have been more visible in politics since independence because they were instrumental in the revolution that freed the country in 1947. The leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, who believed strongly that women should work alongside men, paved the way for this new and significant role for women.

Panchayat Raj

Every village must be self-sufficient and capable of managing its affairs, even to the point of defending itself against the whole world. Since India has always been an agricultural civilization, Gandhi's idea of Gramme Swaraj laid the groundwork for the Panchayat Raj System. Independence must start at the bottom.

Industrialization's Dark Side

Gandhi advocated for small-scale industries that would improve the economic status of villagers and contribute to women's safety, but he was opposed to the obsession with machines. Heavy industries, in his view, would make people with low incomes poorer. While Gandhi sought to free the oppressed, he believed that industrialization had the opposite effect. When asked if he was against machinery in general, Gandhi responded, “How can I be when I know that even this body is a most delicate piece of machinery?”^[17] He went on to say that even a tiny toothpick is a machine. What he opposed was the obsession with machinery in general,

not machines in and of itself, specifically, what people called “labor-saving machinery.” In this particular case, he was referring to machines that would leave thousands of people unemployed and thrown out on the streets to die of starvation.

According to Gandhi, industries lead to environmental pollution. Regarding the topic of tram cars and electricity, he said that machinery is like a snake hole, which can contain anywhere from one to one hundred snakes. In cities, you’ll find tram cars and railways, and the only place you’ll see electric light.

Gandhi on the economic place of women

Gandhi was not only a leader who helped bring about India’s independence through non-violent means, but he also possessed a profound understanding of both the social and economic facets of life. He recognized that India is a rural nation, and that its civilization has been based on agriculture. His idea of Gram Swaraj eventually led to the establishment of the panchayat Raj System. He favored a decentralized and balanced economy. It was with a remarkable insight that Gandhi could make women an important social base for the movement without undermining their traditional role in society. Gandhi called upon women to assume responsibility for changing not only their circumstances but also those of the country as a whole. He urged women to assume responsibility for changing India’s economic and moral future.

Environmentally friendly

It is well-known that Gandhi emphasized environmental hygiene; he also stressed that the entire village and each family should keep their premises spotless. Gandhi himself put these fundamental principles of harmonious living in harmony with nature into practice. Gandhi was extremely environmentally friendly.

Safety Issues Concerning Gender

A woman’s honor can only be safeguarded by her inner moral fortitude, which is why Gandhi wished for women to be courageous. In my unwavering belief, no one can ever disgrace a courageous woman who understands that her innocence is her greatest defense. No matter how monstrous a man may be, he will cringe in the face of her radiant innocence. So, women need to encourage their guys to be brave. If they are able to overcome their current dread of attacks, they will become completely fearless... Women need to learn to be brave from their parents and husbands. A live trust in God is the finest way to learn it. He may be unseen, yet he is a reliable guardian. Having this faith makes one the bravest person. Gandhi was unwavering in her support for women’s rights. In his view, women should not be subjected to legal restrictions that males do not face, he asserted. There ought to be complete equality between my daughters and sons in my treatment of them. It is not appropriate for women to seek men’s protection. Just as the ancient Draupadi relied on God and their strength and virtue, so too must they.

Self-Cleaning

You can only connect with something that exists once you cleanse yourself first, Gandhi said, highlighting the need for moral strength. The practice of ahimsa is pointless without first purifying one’s own heart, and a person who lacks spiritual purity can never come to know God. Consequently, cleansing of oneself should permeate one’s whole existence. When people make an effort to live a more pure life, it shows in their surroundings. Nevertheless, being

entirely devoid of emotion in one's thoughts, words, and actions is necessary to attain perfection, and the road to perfection is long and winding.

The best Swadeshi and Spinner

Because of our innate Swadeshi mindset, we are not allowed to do anything with our hands other than use and serve our local surroundings.

Gandhi's Views on Unemployment

Every one of India's honest workers may get a job. According to God's plan, everyone has the innate ability to labor and earn a living wage. Employers will seek those who are prepared to put their skills to use. When you're trying to make a decent living, no job is too menial. Our willingness to utilize the limbs God has given us is all that really counts.

Gandhi's National Movements and the Women's Role

The power of women to stand up against oppression was something Gandhi believed in without reservation. Throughout his time in South Africa, from his early years to his last, he saw firsthand the extraordinary level of engagement of women in politics. They took moral ground from Mahatma Gandhi and used it to their advantage by staging public rallies, selling khadi and mandated literature, picketing establishments selling foreign goods and liquor, producing illicit salt, and ascending to greater heights.^[18]

The original non-cooperation movement encouraged women to take part, but only within the bounds of their social status. Gandhi emphasized spinning since it was something that could be done at home. It was advocated that women remove their headscarves, go out into the streets, and participate in processions. In November 1921, a thousand women took part in a parade in Bombay to protest the Prince of Wales's arrival. Initially, women did not participate in the 1928 Bardoli Satyagraha.^[19] They were outnumbered by males at political rallies beginning in April, and they even had their meetings. It all started with the Declaration of Independence in 1930. Gandhi declared his intention to disobey the Salt Law in March, thereby beginning a campaign of civil disobedience. He intended to walk the two hundred miles from Sabarmati Ashram to the seaside hamlet of Dandi, where he could collect salt from the seashore. They asked him to bring four or five ladies with them, but he declined; thus, they were left out of the initial group of 79. However, ladies accompanied Gandhi on his journey to Dandi, eager to see him and listen to his speech. Two thousand women out of five thousand were in the audience at Abhrama on April 10, 1930. Upon his arrival in Dandi, 560 ladies greeted him.^[20]

However, not all women were willing to be restricted in this way. Despite dire warnings, Khurshedbehn Naoroji and Mridula Sarabhai plunged headfirst into the conflict. Ahmedabad was the site of their respective arrests. On April 23, Ahmedabad was graced with a magnificent parade of ladies dressed in khaki. Volunteers from the Videshi Kapade Bahiskar Samiti, who were adorned in saffron sarees, oversaw the half-mile-long parade.^[21] As an active participant, Lilawati Munshi was one of eleven women who participated in the Wadala raid on June 1, 1930, which the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee organized. At Wadala's Salt Prevention office, they all were taken into custody.^[22]

Men did not object when Gandhi rallied their female relatives to join the nationalist cause. The reason is that Gandhi did not actively oppose the patriarchal system. The traditional Indian family's routine was unaffected by him. Women should not be fettered by his request. He believed that women were not inherently subordinate to men but rather had distinct

responsibilities.^[23] Domestic responsibilities were not to be sacrificed in order to participate in politics. A woman's principal responsibility was to serve her husband, her family, and her nation. If a woman wanted to dedicate her life to fighting for liberation, Gandhi said she shouldn't get married. Two people who embody this Gandhian principle are Dr. Susheela Nayar and Ushabehn Thakkar. He counseled childlessness and celibacy for equally committed couples. This was the exact code of conduct that Acharya J.B. Kripalani and Sucheta adhered to. So, males did not see Mahatma Gandhi's advocacy for women as an attack on their patriarchal authority.^[24] The power equation in the house remained the same. Sita was still the perfect wife, in Gandhi's words. He hoped to expand them into the broader political arena by appealing to the traditional role of Indian women. The reasoning was straightforward, if not simplistic: she had been sacrificing for her husband, children, and family for a long time, and now she was being asked to do the same for the independence of her nation.

In terms of the law, Gandhi was quite clear that he was "uncompromising in the matter of women's rights."^[25] On the other hand, he believed that more than legal change was needed to fix the issue on its own and that it wasn't worth putting further energy into. He contended that the liberation of women was intrinsically related to the emancipation of India, the elimination of untouchability, and the betterment of the masses' economic situation since gender relations were comparable to those between other unequal power groupings. Also, Gandhi wished that women's organizations would learn more about the realities faced by rural women as they seemed to be estranged from their rural sisters.

The least fortunate were Gandhi's constant focus throughout his life. Raising women's standing in India was one area he significantly influenced. Women in India made tremendous strides towards regaining their historical status during his reign. These women were empowered by Mahatma Gandhi's moral and ego-boosting ideals, which allowed them to integrate into society and take part in national activities. "To call women the weaker sex is a libel; it is man's injustice to women."^[26] So said Gandhi. His deeds and beliefs were essential in molding India's past, even if they don't line up with ours now.

Women and their present status in India

Laws enacted to safeguard women are failing to stem the tide of rising crimes against them. Polygamy, slavery, child marriage, the purdah system, and dowry systems were all societal conventions that made women completely reliant on males from the day they were born until the day they died. All of these things were unacceptable to Gandhi, and his views are applicable even now.

A fresh wave of fearless women were prepared to take up dangerous and challenging jobs after the Quit India resolution was approved in August 1942.^[27] Their self-assurance soared as they saw a sea change from the old paradigm of women as fragile and defenseless to a more prominent place for women in American society.

Many Indian women played key roles in the 1947 movement that won independence for their nation, and since then, they have gone a long way.^[28] Many people in India now credit Mahatma Gandhi for helping to pave the way for women to take powerful political roles, such as president, prime minister, speaker of the Lok Sabha, etc.

To help the oppressed in society, the economy, and politics, Gandhi used a variety of strategies. Every member of Indian society was meant to have their mental and physical faculties bolstered

by his methods. The idea of nonviolence as a strategy for the weak to attain their socioeconomic and political goals was also established by Gandhi.^[29] Concerning several matters pertaining to the creation of a fair and practical global order and the preservation of humanity, his views regarding the perils of Western civilization have taken on considerable weight. For the social issues of this and future generations, the Gandhian principle of Sarvodaya will prove to be an invaluable tool.^[30] With its focus on the masses and dedication to a decentralized social setup, it will contribute to the societal transformation that benefits everyone and the community at large. Women played an essential part in every one of his shows, even though he never had a dedicated show for them. I think this is why there were so many female participants in his programs. Throughout the liberation fight, Gandhi supported Indian women in many ways, some of which were deliberate and others which were unintended.^[31]

Conclusion

Gandhi dedicated his life's work to uplifting the downtrodden, and his advocacy for women in India was essential in the country's feminist movement. Mahatma Gandhi's moral and self-esteem-boosting ideals enabled women in India to retake their position in society during his time, and they achieved enormous achievements in doing so. Aside from a broad awakening, women under Gandhi's guidance were actively involved in national activities and became mainstream citizens. According to Mahatma Gandhi, "To call women the weaker sex is a libel; it is man's injustice to women." Time has changed, and Mahatma Gandhi's ideas and deeds only partially mesh with the present.

Laws enacted to safeguard women do not seem to be sufficient, and the number of crimes perpetrated against them continues to rise every day. Child marriage, polygamy, slavery, the purdah system, and dowry systems were among the societal practices that made women dependent on males from the moment they were born until they died. All of these were things that Mahatma Gandhi despised, and his views are still with us today.

In the final comments is analyzed how a new generation of women, prepared to take on dangerous and challenging jobs, came into existence after the Quit India resolution was passed in August 1942. As a consequence, women gained a new position in the national mainstream, and the stereotype of weak, helpless women was drastically altered.

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