

# **WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN EARLY BUDDHISM\***

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## **Abstract**

Buddhism about twenty-five centuries ago inculcated the values of equality, justice and moral strength and spiritual energy by making woman empowered. The concept of women's empowerment has gained more and more significance in the present times. The present study about women's empowerment in the Buddhist period carries a contemporary significance. It offers the right path to remove ignorance and powerlessness among women. The right path is that of empowerment. Empowerment brings enlightenment. Enlightenment in the individual – both female and male – and social life enables humanity as a whole to tread the path of righteousness, truth, peace, progress, prosperity and justice. Empowerment of women mean empowerment of the entire mankind as in the present times, women are at the center of the world inside home and also hold the nucleus of the world outside home. Women have become the center that holds all the parts together and does not allow any disintegration to happen. The ceremony of innocence is celebrated by women, the flag of fair dealing is held by women, the march of non-violence is continued by women and therefore women have become the path finders of latest advances and record-breaking performance. Women have really proved themselves to be the solace for all the ills, all the pains, all the sorrows, all the sufferings and all the woes of men. In the woman lies the womb of progress, in her lies the cradle of prosperity, in her lies the hearth of peace and in her lies the throne of saintliness and she holds the key to happiness all over the world, peace in all the continents, brotherhood among all races and religious and woman will certainly in her reign of empowerment bring on this planet the Kingdom of Heaven.

Keywords: Women; Empowerment; Buddhism

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## Introduction

It is universally accepted that like all human beings, women too have a right to freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to live in dignity as their male counterparts do, all over the world. Yet the position of women has all along been a subordinate one. Despite protests, movements, agitations and other means of resistance, there has been no respite from this social evil. Gender discrimination continues even in the present times.

Health care, education, literacy rate, income ratio and social status are the different parameters by which the position of women is gauged to be lower than that of men. In every walk of life, women were and are still marginalised and of lower than status than men because women all along have been subjugated to subordinate status by men. This problem of subordination and marginalisation of women needs a solution.

The empowerment of women is one of the solutions to the problems of inequality, subordination and marginalisation that women face in the society. However this kind of empowerment is only partial for though they have economic and political power, they are kept out of decision making as they are dependent on their husband, father or brother for crucial decisions. Hence, in order to change this situation, it is necessary that women have to realise their own nature and understand the value of their own existence.

Hence in order to make woman empowered it is necessary that woman as well as society both have to change their mentality. The problem is: how will such realization of the woman and the man in the society become possible? What type of philosophy is necessary to adopt in order to change the mentality of the women about herself and that of the society about women? There are different schools of philosophy that will help to solve these issues. Buddhism is not an exception to this. It enables us to solve these issues. Many attempts have been made to discuss and bring out the Buddhist perspective on woman, as well as status of woman in Buddhism. Review of literature on women in Buddhism: - A brief review of Buddhist perspectives on women's status, many prominent scholars have studied Buddhism with a specific reference to the problem of the position of woman in the social framework.

1) Dhammananda K. Sri has explained that women's position in Buddhism is unique. The Buddha gave women full freedom to participate in a religious life. The Buddha was the first religious Teacher who gave this religious freedom to women. Before the Buddha, women's duties had been restricted to the kitchen; women were not even allowed to enter any temple or to recite any religious scripture. During the Buddha's time, women's position in society was very low. The Buddha was criticized by the prevailing establishment

when He gave this freedom to women. He moved to allow women to enter the Holy Order was extremely radical for the times. Yet the Buddha allowed to prove themselves and to show that they too had the capacity like men to attain the highest position in the religious way of life by attaining Arahantahood. (Dhammananda, 1993)

2) Dewaraja Lorna has pointed out that the Buddhist doctrine of salvation through an individual's own efforts presupposes the spiritual equality of all beings, male and female. This assertion of women's spiritual equality, explicitly enunciated in the texts, has had a significant impact on social structures and how women are viewed in the world. Women and men alike are able to attain the Buddhist goal by following the prescribed path. No external assistance in the form of a priestly intermediary or veneration of a husband is necessary. In domestic life in ancient India, religious observances and sacrifices were performed jointly by husband and wife. In Buddhism, however, all religious activities, whether meditation or worship, are acts of self-discipline created by individuals, independent of one's partner or outside assistance. (Dewaraja, 1999)

3) Gross Rita M. has pointed out that the position of femaleness is no barrier to the achievement of the Buddhist human ideals takes two forms in Buddhist texts. The much more common variation on this theme essentially proclaims that "the dharma is neither male nor female, that gender is irrelevant or even not-existent when one truly understands the Buddhist teachings. One also finds infrequent claims that in fact, for those with good motivation, femaleness is actually an advantage. Thought that assessment is not by any means common or well-known, its very existence is important for gathering the fullness of an accurate record of Buddhist attitudes toward gender. (Gross, 1993)

4) Blackstone Kathryn R. mentions that the life of renunciation is intrinsic to the quest for liberation. There are rare occasions in PÈLÈ texts in which a person attains liberation prior to renouncing, but, overall, renunciation is viewed as a prerequisite to liberation. Doctrinally, the rationale for this insistence on renunciation is clear: the secular world of family, kinship, occupation, and possessions is seductively attractive. In order to realize the deceptiveness and futility of that attractiveness, women and men must separate themselves from it. It is simply too difficult to 'see things as they really are' while one is immersed in secular life. The process of attaining liberation itself can be viewed as the successive renunciation of the assumptions, attitudes, and evaluations that characterize the human condition. In attaining liberation, one must disentangle oneself from the emotional, intellectual, and social habits of mind that perpetuate one's continuing existence in the cycle of sa°sÈra. The first step in this process is the physical act of renunciation. One must initiate the process by transforming one's life-style and behavior. The transformation of

one's consciousness first comes the external changes, then the internal (Blackstorn, 2000).

5) Narasu P. Lakshmi has pointed that Buddhism being a matter of self-control and self-culture, it regards every individual, whether man or woman, as a complete whole. Accordingly the Dhamma does not concern itself with those relations between man and woman in which one sex is regarded as completing the other. But in all Buddhist countries the influence of Buddhism has been such that woman has always had fair play. She is given perfect freedom and is bound by no rigid ties (Narasu, 2005).

In other words, Buddhism gives importance to morality and accepts equality of mankind by preaching that everyone can attain the highest position after training and control of the spirit. It implies that not only man but woman also attains Nibbāna. It is the statement of the evaluation of women's value in Buddhist religion. It is the result of human body and human mind and its development or self-training, not restricted to the sexuality. The highest place is the place for the noble human nature to exist in its appropriate status. So women keep their authority, showing full potentiality and ability in the Buddhist concept through self-training and self-development of themselves.

It is held in the Buddhist thought that women and men are different on biological and physical backgrounds but they have same capabilities. The Buddhist view accepts that every human being is composed of five elements. The Buddhist view has advocated the equality between man and women and thus it has transcended their gender difference. It treats man and woman on par with each other.

Further, the Buddha recognizes the fact that these duties do not constitute the whole of her life, but to serve as a complement to the good life already enjoined in his religion to all his followers, irrespective of their sex. With regard to the spiritual potentialities, the capacity to attain the religious goal is not inferior to man. For instance, the place of woman is significantly given in terms of spiritual attainment. Here is the statement in the Buddhist scripture:

Essentially, Buddha did not teach empowerment as a concept but rather, his ideologies enabled women to have control over their own life. The effects of Buddhist teachings of non-violence, tolerance and sympathy towards all beings transcended into daily life, thereby also helping the position of women in society. Hence it could be said that the Buddhist ways of empowerment of human rights could be one of the solutions for solving the problems that come in the way of the total empowerment of women.

## **Concept of Empowerment**

The Concept of Empowerment is central to the ideal of sustainable development. This concept has assumed greater significance in the present times in order to liberate all human beings from the dictates of the external forces.

Empowerment enables an individual to become capable of attaining freedom from want, freedom from fear and the right to lead life in a dignified manner (Hajira Kumar and Jaimon Varghese, 2005). Liberation from want and fear and attainment of essential human dignity are the desired outcomes of empowerment of each and every individual irrespective of gender, race and religion. Empowerment is a process that enables an individual to gain confidence to attain, control over resources and to set agenda of one's own life. It enables an individual to know about himself or herself, what she or he wants, and to try attain what she or he wants.

Empowerment involves the enhancement of an individual's capacity to know, to act and to enjoy. Empowerment brings confidence, awareness, mobility, ability to choose and capacity to control all types of resources and above all to possess decision-making power (R.Venkata Ravi, 2004). Empowerment can be achieved through developing positive role models. The need for empowering individuals is vital in order to identify the real and appropriate needs, encourage commitment, ensure sustainability and personal development, and inculcate self-esteem and equal opportunity to share power. The aim of empowerment is to transform the society though the transformation of individuals. When an individual is empowered, he can transform the society in different ways.

Empowerment is manifestation of redistribution of power (Ashok Humar Jha, 2004). It is the change of self-perception through knowledge. It is multi-dimensional social process. It is enhancing the position in the power structure of the society. It is the capacity to regulate the day-to-day lives in the social, political and economic terms. Empowerment is a multi-faceted, multi-dimensional and multi-layered concept. Empowerment means moving from a position of enforced powerlessness to one of power'.

### **Kinds of Empowerment**

There are different kinds of Empowerment namely; 1) individual empowerment, 2) family empowerment, 3) organization empowerment and 4) community empowerment.

The concept of empowerment at the individual level is an enhancement of an individual's capacity.

At the family level, we are concerned with the inter-relationships among the members of the family unit such as the husband, the wife and their children. The family empowerment of women is the enhancement of the management, arrangement and betterment of the family life through enhancing abilities.

At the institution level, the empowerment means creation of new structures and possibilities, as institution is a larger group of individuals working for attaining some common good.

At the community level, the empowerment is collective in its nature. Individuals are encouraged to play a role in the process of integration in society. It is linked with the psychological empowerment of individuals.

Thus, the four levels of empowerment range from a single unit to a collective group. The individual, family, institution and community are expanding groups of certain positive interests. Empowerment and its levels enable the individual as well as groups to enhance their capacities, potentialities and opportunities.

In this way, we have seen different aspects of empowerment and the role that it plays in the formation of individual's personality as a rational, confident, independent human being. Empowerment as it deals with different aspects of human life also plays an important role while evaluating the status of an individual in the society. It tells us that an individual is empowered means he or she is independent, confident, and this is possible because he or she has realised himself or herself as well as society also has realised his or her nature. Hence, it can be said that an empowerment is a criterion for deciding the status of an individual.

### **Glorification of Women in Pre-Buddhist Era**

When we consider the glorification of woman in Pre-Buddhist era, we find that such glorification was with reference to religion as woman was considered as goddess. Hence we will study such glorification of women from religious perspective.

The religious aspect of life in the Vedic period is closely linked with the social aspect on one hand and the ethical aspect on the other hand. The very invocation of the Atharvaveda addresses divinity as a Devī – the goddess – who while present in the waters fulfills all our desires and hopes.

The most venerating regard for women is found in the Vedic culture. The Vedic tradition held a very high regard for the qualities of women and has retained the greatest respect within its tradition as seen in the honor it gives for the goddess. The Goddess is portrayed as the feminine embodiment of important qualities and powers. These forms include those of Lakshmi (the goddess of fortune and queen of Vishnu), Sarasvatī (the goddess of learning), Subhadra (Krishna's sister and auspiciousness personified), Durgā (the goddess of strength and power), KÈlī (the goddess of time), and other Vedic goddesses that exemplify inner strength and divine attributes – even divine power in the form of Shakti is considered feminine.

In the Vedic culture, women have always been given the highest respect and freedom, but also protection and safety. Parvatī even known as Uma, is the beloved wife of Lord Shiva, and who is the Great mother of the universe. She is the power that creates and destroys, the womb from which all things precede and to which all return. The entire universe is created and sustained by the dual

powers of the divine couple. Together they represent the unitary cosmic principle and imbalance, they disturb the microcosmic equilibrium, since she represents the dynamic energy which is of the nature of the mind, and she is inseparable and non-different from the Lord himself. It is the goddess in the form of dynamic energy that is the cause of all things being seen or experienced. This dynamic energy of consciousness is known as *ShivÈ*. Thus *Parvatî* and *ShivÈ* (*Uma-Mahesh*) are two names for the same Supreme Being who is the source of all creation. Therefore, the prayer starts with “*Tvameva mata cha pita tvameva*” – You alone are mother and are also our father”. The Holy Trinity of Divinity in India of *Brahma* (The Creator), *Vishnu* (the preserver) and *ShivÈ* (the destroyer) is accompanied by the corresponding complementary feminine counterparts as *Saraswatî* (the Goddess of Learning), *Lakshmî* (the goddess of wealth) and *Parvatî* (the goddess of strength). These goddesses are worshipped all over India, in particular during the festive occasions of *Navratrî* (Nine Nights) and *Diwalî* (the festival of lights) during the harvesting season.

In the Vedic tradition it is common to see the pairing of the Vedic male Gods with a female counterpart, thus combining both sets of powers and qualities that each would have. This is noticed in the pairs of *RÈdhÈ* – *Krishna*, *SÎtÈ* – *Rama*, *Laxmî* – *Vishnu*, *Durgâ* – *ShivÈ*, *Saraswatî* – *Brahma*, *Indrani* – *Indra* and others. The combination of male and female divinities makes the complete balance in the divine spiritual powers. Through the medium of pure affection, the feminine divinities have been able to break down the most powerful citadels known to creation, especially those of evil.

It is strongly believed that in addition to feminine aspect of the Divinity, women from the Vedic time have kept religion alive through various religious rites. There is no domestic ritual in which women cannot participate. *Aitareya Brahmana* confirms that the sacred rituals bear fruit only if men and women perform it as a pair (*Aitareya Brahmana.VII. 10.*). It is for this reason the housewife is to conduct her household affairs like a *Samrajni* – an empress. She is indeed *Lakshmi* of her universe – the home-gruha and is a queen commanding respect from all the members of her family. In the Vedic period, religion played a pivotal role in social life. Religion was an inseparable part of every aspect of life. The feminine principle too is inseparable from the masculine principle. Its supremacy in divinity, in nature, in divine couples, in honoring rivers and places, in respecting mothers and in performing religious rituals is accepted from the Vedic times to this day. In the religious aspect of life in the Vedic period the equality to women is guaranteed but even superiority is admitted and her supremacy is never challenged. According equality, accepting superiority and obeying the supreme sway of women was practised in the Vedic period in respect of wife in whatever stage they were. In this way, in Vedic culture, woman is glorified by treating her as goddess. However this glorification is illusory, it is because the feminist understanding and interpretation of social and

moral thoughts exposes the patriarchal power politics and proves that such glorification is not real glorification but illusory glorification.

### **Women's Nature through the Buddhist Perspective**

Buddhism, in its origins, was a pragmatic soteriology, a theory of liberation that sought to free humanity from suffering, first by thoroughly analyzing the fundamental human predicament and then by offering a practical method or path for eliminating the afflictions, cognitive and dispositional, that are perpetuated as greed, hatred, and delusion (Cabezón, 1992). Human suffering and liberation, the Buddha was frequently critical of conventional views, including those carrying the authority of Brahmanic tradition. In marked contrast to the sacerdotal ritualism of the Brahmins, he offered a path that was open to all. The first canonical attitude to consider, soteriological inclusiveness, thus arguably is the most basic and also the most distinctively Buddhist attitude regarding the status of women that one can find in the vast literature of the 2500 year old tradition. The earliest Buddhists clearly held that one's sex, like one's caste or class (varṇa), presents no barrier to attaining the Buddhist goal of liberation from suffering. Women can, affirmed by the Buddhist tradition, pursue the path. Moreover, they can become arhats, Buddhist saints who had broken completely the cycle of the suffering of death and rebirth (saṃsāra) (Gross, nd.).

In fact, the position that femaleness is no barrier to the achievement of the Buddhist human ideals takes two forms in Buddhist texts. The more common variation on this theme essentially proclaims that "the dhamma is neither male nor female," that gender is irrelevant or even non-existent when one truly understands the Buddhist teachings. One also finds infrequent claim that in fact, for those with good motivation, femaleness is actually an advantage. Though that assessment is not by any means common or well-known, its very existence is important for gathering the fullness of an accurate record of Buddhist attitude toward gender.

In addition, the Buddha's main argument against this was that no man or woman could be superior or inferior in society merely by reason of his birth (K. T. S. Sarao, 2010). He clearly pointed out that position of man and woman depended on his or her conduct. This meant that it was a person's attitude and behaviour (kamma) which made a man superior or inferior (Shailini, 2008). It will be shown that these are not all that the race of woman needs; not all that her human nature requires. She has the same human nature which man has, and of course, the same natural human rights. Woman's natural right for its rightfulness does not depend on the bodily or mental power to assert and to maintain it – on the great arm or on the great head; it depends only on human nature itself, which God made the same in the frailest woman as in the biggest

giant. Further he told to Ajñatashatry do not become unhappy at the birth of the daughter.

The Buddhist View about woman's nature pointed out that despite the fact that the Buddha elevated the status of women; he was practical in his observations and advice given from time to time. He realized the social and biological differences between men and women. The reality of the fact of the nature of women was brought out by the Buddha who had pointed out not only their weaknesses, but also their abilities and potential.

### **Buddhist Concept of Empowerment and Its Reflection in Buddhist Society**

Empowerment of women in the religious and ethical aspects is absolute in the Buddhist ages. There was economic independence, social equality but in political arena and in household tasks the traditional conditions continued. As a whole, woman in Buddhism enjoyed higher status, greater freedom, more equality and an enhanced liberal environment than in the preceding ages. Women were more empowered in the Buddhist Period.

Both PÈrsva NÈtha of Jainism and Gautama the Buddha as non-Brahminic protestant leaders totally rejected the position of inequality and subservience imposed on woman in the Post-Vedic periods. Both of them opened the doors of their monastic communities of course with strict rules and regulations for the admission of women, Hundreds and hundreds of women perfected their spiritual pursuit under the Buddha. The Psalms of the Sisters (TherÈgathÈ) alone provides much evidence in this respect. Widows, bereaved mothers grieving over infant mortalities, victims of sexual assaults and exploited women of many other sorts found solace in the religion of the Buddha. The glory of the vast segment of the community of India's women was restored through the religion of the Buddha and his teachings. Around the sixth century B.C., the protestant movements of Jainism and Buddhism appeared to do quite a bit of violent clean up and restored lost rights for many social groups, in terms of gender class and caste (Varna and JÈti).

Buddhist women, young as well as old, were emboldened through their own religious convictions and awakening to challenge the existing Indian social and religious conventions on these matters. The BhikkhunÈ SomÈ had fired back at a challenger, who told her that as a woman with her only two fingers wisdom, she could never aspire to get anywhere hear true sainthood. She bravely answered him: "What does it matter our being man or woman, when our minds are perfectly under our command? Our wisdom and judgment are wholly mature and the truth of the norm (Dhamma), we clearly see." In the Indian context, SomÈ's reply in the sixth century B.C. indeed would be the highest point of emancipation in the ladder of the women's liberation. Spiritual emancipation was one of the major hurdles to clear and SomÈ's reply amply provides a substantial evidence of the same aspect of woman's empowerment.

Buddhism's contribution to the liberation and uplift of the Indian woman in the social sector was equally immense. In this respect, the elevation of the woman in the Buddhist set up was conceptually much nobler, it was much more than a question of 'rights' and 'duties'. The Buddhists seriously respect interpersonal relationships and therefore do not desire to tear away any portion of society and isolate it. To the Buddhist, it is an achievement in the total integration the woman into the social fabric of the human community. The family in this respect is the smallest unit. In Buddhist thinking the male's respect for the female had to be so high that the Buddhists knew what was meant by the courteous behavior to women. The ladies therefore had to be treated with due courtesy and consideration.

These beliefs and practices regarding the woman's position in her spiritual aspect, in her family life the social aspect and the religious aspect in the days of Buddhism prevailing in India bring out the accurate picture of the knowledge of the triple views. What is the woman's view of herself, what is the woman's attitude towards society and what is the society's attitude towards women – are the three aspects of the perspectives of the views towards mutual understanding. The first perspective is – What is the woman's attitude towards herself? In this connection it is worth remembering Some's reply to the challenger and MahepajapatÈ GotamÈ's pleas to secure admission to the female monastic order. Some is conscious of the fact that woman who is in possession of both wisdom and virtue is equal to any other virtuous and wise individual irrespective of the gender, class or caste distinctions. MahÈpajÈpatÈ GotamÈ continued to appeal for the spiritual emancipation of herself and the other female disciples of hers. This shows that SomÈ as well as MahÈpajÈpatÈ GotamÈ is conscious of the woman's attitude to herself. This consciousness leads them to know that there is no difference as such between a man and a woman. SomÈ refuses to be discriminated on account of the differences in gender. MahÈpajÈpatÈ GotamÈ seeks to find out whether women are entitled to spiritual emancipation or not as men are. This knowledge leads them to self-realization. This self-realization is what is essential for empowerment. Women in the days of Buddhism were aware of their spiritual empowerment. This empowerment emphasized their individual identity as distinct yet integrated in community.

The second aspect of woman's self-realisation is related to the query concerning woman's attitude towards society. Woman's attitude towards society is noticed in the domestic roles that a woman was required to play during her career. Of course the major concern was about the duties a woman performed as a housewife. The period of growing up as a daughter was marked by the absence of any discrimination and the welcome absence of the feelings of disappointment of having a girl-child. It is found that such discrimination and such a puny of displeasure were experienced in the post-Vedic periods in

Hinduism. In the Buddhist period this picture changed. Woman's attitude to society too changed accordingly. This change in the attitude has led the woman to have a greater awareness of domestic obligations. In those days, the pattern of domestic life was more or less the same as in the Vedic periods. Sēmēvatē was orphaned by the outbreak of the plaque but she was adopted by Mitrē. Similarly, a certain King took Kana and made her as his own daughter (Dhm.82). This adoption of daughters is certainly an innovation in the Indian society.

In Buddhism the ceremonial need for having a son was done away with. No age is prescribed as the correct marriageable age but girls probably married as a rule between sixteen and twenty e.g. Visēkhē, Bhaddē Kunēalakesa. The arrangement of the marriage was strictly family affair and the majority of wives devoted themselves entirely to their husband's service. In view of the available evidence it can be concluded that the position of women in Buddhist India was more enviable and more honorable than it had been in Pre-Buddhist days. Daughters and widows were no longer regarded with such undisguised despair and contempt. On the contrary, both daughters and widows along with the wives commanded respect and ranked as individuals. They enjoyed more independence a wider liberty to guide and follow their own lives. This status is attained by women through their attitudes to the society which are enlightened by their self-realization. The empowerment of women in the social and domestic domains is self-evident.

The empowerment is based on self-realization and self-realization is ultimately possible through the society's attitude to women. The social framework changed drastically as the Four Class-Caste Groups Structure was done away with in the days of Buddhism. The subordination of women and the slavish degradation of woman through the displeasure at the birth of a daughter, child-marriage, prevalent general practice of monogamy, the discontinuation of discrimination towards widows and other practices were no more approved and were discontinued. The social acceptance of the equality of women, the acceptance of the spiritual empowerment of women, the discontinuation of discrimination against women bring out the fact that the social attitude towards woman was quite different from what it was in the Pre-Buddhist periods. This has led to the improved empowerment of women in spheres of religious, social and spiritual aspects. It is noticed that empowerment in the economic and political spheres for men and women was not still in sight as agro-economy and monarchy were still the watch-words of these areas of life. The Buddhist period has empowered women to attain spiritual liberation and enter in spiritual bliss.

This shows that women's view towards herself underwent changes, the woman's attitude towards society improved and the society's attitude to woman too changed to accommodate woman in religious and spiritual aspects. In spite of these changes, the situation in other spheres of life remained as it was in the Pre-Buddhist days. Empowerment through self-realization through the triple

awareness and possession of enlightenment is a remarkable feature of the position of woman in the days of Buddhism in India for a period of about one thousand and five hundred years from the sixth century B.C. to the ninth century A.D. self-realisation and empowerment are thus inseparably linked.

## **Conclusion**

The ideology of Buddhism in the ancient times and the ideal concept of empowerment of the contemporary times are combined to blend both the ancient and modern ideologies. Buddhism was the first ideology to make women empowered throughout the long span of the history of mankind of many millennia. All types of empowerment – social, political, economic, cultural, legal, ethical, religious, and even spiritual – were allotted to women by the compassionate and the Enlightened Buddha. He brought light in the darkness of ignorance of two types. The light of knowledge removed all forms of ignorance. The same cycle needs to be repeated now through the knowledge – self-realization, realization of the social world and the society's realization of the lot of women. Empowering will do away with the cause of women's present-day problems – lack of power. Lack of knowledge that is ignorance causes lack of power. Empowering is the solution to remove lack of power. Empowering women is empowering the entire humanity. The hand that rocks the cradle to make the baby sleep soundly is capable of rocking the nation to peace and prosperity. The hand that cooks uses the fire creatively, constructively and positively. The second solution to the present-day problems of women is empowerment as the same destroys the lack of power. Both the solutions removal of ignorance and empowerment cause the enlightenment, the dawn of knowledge. The positive forces of knowledge and power destroy the negative forces of ignorance and powerlessness. Making women empowered is to stimulate the positive forces of knowledge of truth, goodness and beauty as the torches of human life in general and the life of women in particular. The forces of purity, sanctity, sincerity and maturity are strengthened through the empowerment of women.

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