

Chapter 7

Social Empowerment of Women Through ICT Tools With Special Reference to Use Post Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

The chapter sheds light on how the use of digital technology has enhanced the skillset of women especially after Covid-19. The author has also conducted an empirical study on how a better awareness and increased use of digital tools have made females more confident and powerful. Women's empowerment can be a crucial driver of macroeconomic growth and stability in the future. Digitalization is instrumental to achieve this goal: ICTs development provides enormous opportunities for women, who should be an integral part and key actors of all decision-making processes. To this end, we should mainstream a gender equality perspective and use ICTs as tools. We should also work on removing the gender barriers to high-tech education and training and promote equal opportunities in ICT-related businesses for men and women.

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INTRODUCTION

A range of chances for female empowerment are provided by digitalization and for a more equal representation of women in the financial, labour, and business sectors. At the moment, digitalization appears to favour the female labour force, which is less likely to be replaced by machines than the male labour force. In the digital age, women's frequently greater social abilities constitute a competitive advantage, especially when those social skills are combined with higher education and advanced digital literacy. However, the same limitations and obstacles that prevent women from advancing in many nations now may prevent them from taking advantage of several advantageous prospects in the digital age. Governments must make significant efforts to eliminate these obstacles. Giving women more access to new digital technology appears to be a viable first step in these efforts, and in accomplishing the aim. In the context of knowledge societies, the empowerment of women means developing their capacities for understanding the issues that impact them and speaking up about those issues. It comprises boosting women's engagement in political and economic processes in order to increase their ability to overcome social and institutional hurdles and overall improve their quality of life. By providing women with places to freely express and collaborate, knowledge networking accelerates the process of women's empowerment. By exchanging their insights, worries, and knowledge, people can potentially become even more enriched. ICT can help women widen the scope of their work and tackle problems that were previously out of their league. The body of evidence supporting the use of ICT to empower women globally is expanding. For instance, training workshops have been held by the African Women's Network of the Association for Progressive Communications [APC] to facilitate electronic networking among women's groups. The Multimedia Caravan initiative in Senegal gave rural women the chance to create their own concepts for how ICT may be used to satisfy their needs and objectives for development. Weavers in Kenya were taught how to use the internet to get more affordable rates for their goods and learn new weaving techniques. A radio programme called Mama FM was created in Uganda by the Uganda Media Women's Association so that women may actively participate and learn about development concerns such, among others, human rights, children, governance, nutrition, and health. In order to assist women farmers who identified a lack of knowledge and networking resources as the main barriers to their becoming successful entrepreneurs in a new market economy, the UNDP telecenter project in Ukraine uses ICTs in agriculture and farm management. Since India has been utilising ICT for development for more than 20 years, there are numerous effective ICT usage strategies for empowering women. A Tamil Nadu e-commerce website called India Shop was created (in 2005) with the purpose of selling goods produced by rural women's cooperatives and NGOs. ICTs, including

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