



Empowering Women through Online Education

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Abstract

The empowerment of women plays a significant role in the development of any community. It ensures that education is scalable, flexible and accessible making it a potent instrument for advancing women's empowerment. Increasing women's employment, reducing poverty, and promoting economic growth all depend heavily on education. Women with higher levels of education and ability are also more likely to make better life decisions and have better health outcomes. This essay aims to explain the value of digital learning in raising women's standing in the global community. The significance of equipping women with fundamental digital skills was also explored in the study.

Keywords: digitalization, gender, empowerment, education

Introduction

Digital Literacy helps people to comprehend how to use different digital tools, applications, software, and technologies, digital literacy is extremely important in the world of technology. Technology is important in today's society in many areas, including education, communication, entertainment, the workplace and entrepreneurship. Proficiency in digital literacy is crucial for both career and personal success. Women now have many opportunities to further their careers and build a brighter future in the digital age, which has fundamentally altered how we communicate, work, and live. Digital literacy programs are crucial for promoting socioeconomic inclusion, empowering women for a sustainable future, and minimizing gender differences in access to digital technology. Empowering women in the digital age is crucial for long-term success in addition to advancing gender

equality. In the digital age, empowering women is essential for promoting gender equality and long-term social and economic advancement. This essay examines the need of educating women basic computer skills. It highlights the lack of effective digital platforms for closing the gender gap and the necessity of laws that support diversity and provide safe online environments for women. The 21st century has seen a significant increase in the importance of digital literacy in defining economic, social, and political options. Ensuring that women have the skills, opportunities, and confidence to use digital tools efficiently is just as important as providing them with access to technology. The process of giving women the abilities, information, and access to digital technologies to enhance their social, professional, and personal lives is known as "digital empowerment."



Significance of Digital Literacy

Digitally literate women are better able to use online platforms for networking, marketing, and reaching markets outside of their regional boundaries. This is especially crucial for female entrepreneurs who may utilize digital technologies to manage finances, advertise goods and services, and expand their companies. Digital technologies have emerged as a potent instrument that can help women in business with equal chances. Women can effectively use online platforms for networking, marketing, and gaining access to vital business resources by learning digital skills. Additionally, women's ability to successfully handle their finances is strengthened by digital literacy. As digital financial instruments become more widely available, women can use these platforms to improve their financial independence, make informed financial decisions, and build resistance to economic crises and instabilities.

Digital literacy is essential for women's social inclusion and empowerment, even beyond the economic implications. It enables women to actively engage in socioeconomic activities, get vital information, and adjust to the quickly changing technology landscape. Women who are digitally literate are also better able to form social networks, network with others, and participate in the community. In particular, online learning platforms provide inclusive and flexible learning options, which lessons systemic barriers to women's education in developing fields.

Types of Digital Learning Tools

The term "digital learning" refers to a variety of approaches and platforms created to meet the varied demands and learning styles of individuals. Technology is used in eLearning, MOOCs, mobile learning, e-commerce platforms, and other digital learning formats to make education easier, more flexible, and more engaging. E-learning is the process of delivering content and improving learning through digital platforms such as Learning Management Systems. It includes a range of educational materials, including discussion forums, tests, and movies. Students can participate in live

sessions or learn at their own speed with e-learning. E-learning is used by many commercial and educational institutions to offer academic courses or professional development. MOOCs are online courses that are typically offered for free or at a very low cost in order to be accessible to a large number of students globally.

MOOCs are available on platforms such as Coursera, edX, and FutureLearn, and they cover anything from advanced technical domains to the humanities. These classes are usually designed to be self-paced, enabling students from different educational and socioeconomic backgrounds to acquire necessary knowledge and skills without being constrained by traditional classroom-based training. Through the use of mobile devices to access learning materials, mobile learning makes education more flexible and accessible by encouraging students to participate in their studies. Bite-sized learning and instant access to knowledge are made possible by the usage of mLearning, which encompasses educational apps, podcasts, and videos.

Digital literacy for Financial Education

Women who are digitally literate are better prepared to conduct financial transactions. They have access to a range of financial resources that assist women in managing their finances, including banking services, budgeting applications, and many investing platforms. Smartphones make it simple to access mobile banking apps. They make financial services easily accessible and enable time-efficient money management. Applications like Paytm and others are specifically designed to be easy to use and accessible by people with poor literacy levels. Applications like Annapurna Microfinance Pvt Ltd, Asirvad Microfinance Pvt Ltd, and others offer financial services and small loans with lower interest rates to people who cannot access regular banking services. Even illiterate women who might lack basic financial knowledge and abilities can benefit greatly from the financial literacy training and company development assistance that these apps provide to their users.



Key Dimensions of Women Empowerment

Increased control over financial resources, employment prospects, and participation in entrepreneurial endeavors are all considered forms of economic empowerment. Women's active engagement in social and cultural activities, which strengthens their positions within family and community structures, is a key component of social empowerment. Women's substantial involvement in governance and decision-making processes is a key component of political empowerment, which helps to break down obstacles to political representation and leadership. Women's access to reproductive health services, knowledge, and resources is ensured by health empowerment, improving their general well-being and quality of life.

Safety Concerns in Digital Literacy Programs

Initiatives for women's digital literacy should go beyond teaching technical skills; they should also include teaching them how to identify online dangers and safeguard their personal data. Privacy protection should be an element of such programs, and women should know how to protect their data, create strong passwords, and identify harmful malware. In addition to the technological aspects of security, fostering an inclusive and respectful culture is essential to creating a safe online environment. Programs should encourage women to report harmful activity, stress the value of polite online conversation, and offer resources for getting support when experiencing cyberbullying.

Digital platforms are also in charge of upholding rules that shield women from abuse and harassment. Initiatives can better prepare women to securely explore the immense possibilities of the digital world by addressing these safety and security concerns in addition to providing training in digital skills. Women will be empowered to use technology not only for professional and personal development but also to fight for their rights and participate in significant social change as they have greater control over their digital lives. Making digital literacy a tool of empowerment rather than a source of risk requires a safer online experience.

Barriers to Digital Learning for Women

Although there are several obstacles preventing women from fully engaging in this educational revolution, digital learning has the potential to significantly empower them. One of the biggest issues is gender disparity in access to technology; women frequently encounter more barriers than males to acquiring smartphones, PCs, and dependable internet connections, which makes it challenging for them to use digital learning environments.

Socio-cultural barriers are important because cultural norms limit women's freedom and movement, which frequently prevents them from taking advantage of educational possibilities that call for the use of technology. The situation is made worse by financial barriers including the high price of computers, smartphones, and internet connectivity. Many women cannot afford these technologies, especially those from low-income homes, which keeps them from using online learning environments. More generally, women's access to digital education is further restricted by institutional and political barriers, such as a lack of supportive laws, restricted access to internet infrastructure, and in certain areas, government-imposed internet censorship.

Conclusion

In India, empowering women through digital literacy is a complicated process that necessitates an all-encompassing strategy that includes supportive ecosystems, community involvement, and government initiatives. Women's empowerment has been started, however in order to strengthen the program's importance, more improvement and support from the government are needed. Achieving digital empowerment is inextricably related to more general gender equality objectives since research indicates that women who have equal access to opportunities and skills make significant contributions to social, economic, and political growth. Giving them access to the digital tool will enable them to compete on an equal footing with males. The government should act appropriately as a



society to bring about this change. Since health, education, literacy, and other factors are also indicators of women's empowerment, we shouldn't limit our perspective to economic empowerment. India can unlock the transformative potential of technology and enable women to more fully participate in the economic, social, and political development of the nation by addressing the structural barriers that restrict women's access to digital technologies and putting targeted strategies to improve digital literacy into place. To ensuring that all women can thrive in the digital age, the push for gender equality and digital inclusion necessitates constant commitment, teamwork, and ingenuity.

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