


Chapter 6

Role of ICT in Economic Empowerment of Women by Being an Effective Facilitator for Women Entrepreneurship.

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ABSTRACT

Information and communication technology (ICT) is steadily gaining dominance over other channels as a standalone medium for gaining and sharing knowledge, hybrid working environment, network strengthening and funding, business collaborations, new venture set-up, marketing and branding. ICT being most effectively featured with accessibility and omnipresence has been capable of empowering a lot of developing and talent-rich areas, and women empowerment is one among them. This chapter makes an attempt to bring out the efficient role played by ICT in enhancing the lifestyle of women. It proposes to provide a detailed description of how ICT has empowered women, and entrepreneurs, to set up and develop their business ventures giving them access to required resources and making them more competent through information and wider access to the market. This chapter presents its findings based on a systematic review of different case analyses by using secondary data. The findings will be also supported by the evidence and information gathered from credible reports, articles, and publications.

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INTRODUCTION

There is not even a single country in this world who have fully closed the gender gap or the differences between men and women and their participation and access to, in the economy and economic development. 59% is the gender gap which is analysed for economics (The Global Gender Gap Report of 2015) International Human rights instruments oppose this, because their principle of gender equality is a central commitment. The emerging role of ICT can produce a vital seen of decreasing the gender gap in terms of contributing towards socio-economic empowerment of women. ICT Access will help to bring empowerment among women. This will help them to get their voices heard in the society at all the levels. This way ICT will structure independent space for women in the society. (Hussain, 2016). However, it is evident that the major percentage of females in any of developing world do not have access to ICTs because of different reasons like social, infrastructure, linguistic and cultural. In order to empowering the women powerfully, strong as well as independent in all possible areas with the help of ICT requires immediate actions at local, regional, national and international levels. The ICT provides resources, information, and opportunities for development (Rathi & Niyogi, 2016). In spite of the difficulties in accessing the ICT, ICT usage is increasing. In the developed world 77% of the population uses the ICT when compared to developing world 31 percent of its population uses ICT. Globally 41% of the men or online against 37% of the women. In developed world 826 million female are using the internet against 0.98billion male internet users and in developing world it is about 0.475 billion female internet users versus 0.448 billion male internet users. The gender gap identified is more pronounced in developing world, whereas 16% fewer women than men use internet, compared with only 2% fewer women than men in developed world (ICT Facts and Figures, 2013).

In 2020, when we compare the global percentage of women who were using the internet in comparison with 62% of men it was found 52%. The term gender parity can be defined as the percentage of female divided by percentage of male, it stands anywhere in the range of 0.98 and 1.02 which is an indicator of achieving gender parity. In all areas, the gender internet division has been lessening in recent years as a result the global gender parity scores have enhanced from 0.89 in 2018 to 0.92 in 2020. It is therefore observed that the parity is achieved as a whole among the developed countries however the divide remains wide in the LDCs, where only 19 percent of women are using the Internet (12 percentage points lower than men), the landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) (27 percent of women versus 38 percent of men), Africa (24 percent versus 35 percent) and the Arab States (56 percent versus 68 percent (ICT Facts and Figures 2021). This clearly shows the exponential growth in ICT usage in the last 10 years.

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