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The Role of AtmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan in Women Empowerment in Varanasi.

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Abstract:

The paper will critically analyse the significance of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan in the empowerment of women in Varanasi. Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan has the vision to make India self-reliant in the economic field, i.e., manufacturing activities, employment sector and labour workforce. The economic self-reliance of women is essential for the development of the nation. Women have played a vital role in bringing dynamic changes in the society and development of the Indian nation. Many schemes have been launched under AtmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan to improve women's socio, economic, cultural, and political status in Varanasi. It has led to the protection of human rights and the political empowerment of women in the Varanasi constituency. Women have been effectively participating in the political process in Varanasi. Dynamic changes have taken place in the voting behaviour of women in Varanasi. Women have played a predominant role in the political development, political culture, political socialisation and political modernisation of Varanasi. This research paper analyses the impact of AtmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan in the Varanasi Parliamentary constituency of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, with special reference to women's empowerment. Many schemes related to Atma Nirbhar Bharat, such as 'Ek Stall Ek Mahila Ke Naam', Samarth Training Abhiyan, Kabad Se Jugad, etc., have played a vital role in the empowerment of women in the Varanasi constituency. It has led to dynamic changes in the livelihood and empowerment of women in Varanasi. In this context, it will elucidate the trends and latest dynamics of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan in women's Empowerment in Varanasi.

Keywords: *Atma Nirbhar Bharat, women empowerment, self-reliance, Varanasi*

Introduction

The Global economic crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic gave birth to an ambitious campaign Atma Nirbhar Bharat. The main goal of this Abhiyaan is to be self-reliant and become a global supplier. When India faced the economic crisis in 1991, the policies of Liberalisation, privatisation, and globalisation were implemented. Similarly, Prime Minister Modi introduced this self-reliant campaign with an economic package of Rs 20 trillion on 12 May 2020; it has some features like the Swadeshi movement, 1905 during British rule (Business Standard,2020). This announced package would benefit farmers, labour, cottage industry MSMEs. Before the Covid 19 pandemic, there was zero Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) production, but India now produces 2 Lakh PPE kits daily. Many developed countries had adopted protectionist policies. For developing countries, it is challenging to adopt protectionist policies. India has shown its potential to become self-reliant. The government focused on twelve sectors to become global suppliers, i.e., Textiles, Automobile, Food Processing, Iron, Organic Farming, Furniture and industrial machinery, Agro-chemical, Aluminium and Copper, Electronics, Masks, Ventilator and Sanitizers. (Dubey,2020).

When the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan is launched it was based on five pillars. These five pillars was the aim to achieve explain by The Prime Minister such as **Economy** it is needs to make India economy for quantum growth, not the incremental economy. India should have a strong **Infrastructure** so that maximum foreign investment may attract. **Technology** is became the essential part of any system. India needs a system capable of realising the dreams of the new century and which is based on technology, not on old traditions of the past. **Demography** is the base of any country. India is the largest democracy in the world, having vibrant demography, which is the main source of self-reliant India. Half the population means women will play a significant role in making India Atma Nirbhar. The survival of any country Market is depends on **Demand**. India has the second world's largest population having a huge market, so the cycle of demand and supply chain in our economy, which is power, needs to be harnessed to its full potential. Along with these aims Mr. Prime Minister Narendra Modi focused on four 'L' helpful for self-reliant India. These four are important to Production. First is Land. No industry or manufacturing can be imagined without land. The land is the biggest obstacle in the establishment of industry in India. This problem can be solved by making land corporations or banks. The second is labour Industry or production cannot be successful without labour. But there are many complications regarding labour law in India. There is a need to make a rational law for labour. So that foreigners could invest in India. Third is liquidity. It is cash which is necessary to run the industry. During the Corona period, the wheel of the industry, especially the MSMEs, has come to a halt due to a lack of cash. The last fourth is Law. The laws which create obstacles in development is needed to abolish. These laws delay the establishment of the industry, which encourage red tape, thereby discouraging the industry. Dozens of laws have already been abolished under the Ease of Doing Business. Significant changes in laws can clear the way for self-reliance.(National Portal of India).

The meaning of self-reliance is not a self-centred or protectionist system (Business standard, 2020). It simply means to be a global supplier instead of being a global demanding country. Every Market survive with demand and supply chain. This champion give boost not only full fill country demand but also India join world market as a exporter country. It's needs every Individual be a self reliant so automatically a society become self reliance than a country can achieve the goal of self reliance. India has second largest population of world after china. Women are the just half population with 48.45%. This sentence clearly indicates that women are the strength of any country (Pandey and Yadav,2019) Without women contribution no country can progress. In India women are not share equally in every field as education, Opportunities, Job, ownership of property, decision making process, in entrepreneurship and in business sector. In India only 11% women headed households. The largest percentage of women headed households in Lakshadweep near about 43.7% (Censes,2011). Meghalaya is the one of the state where society is matriarchal. So India needs firstly to empowerment of women. Empowerment can be achieved with financial independence of women.

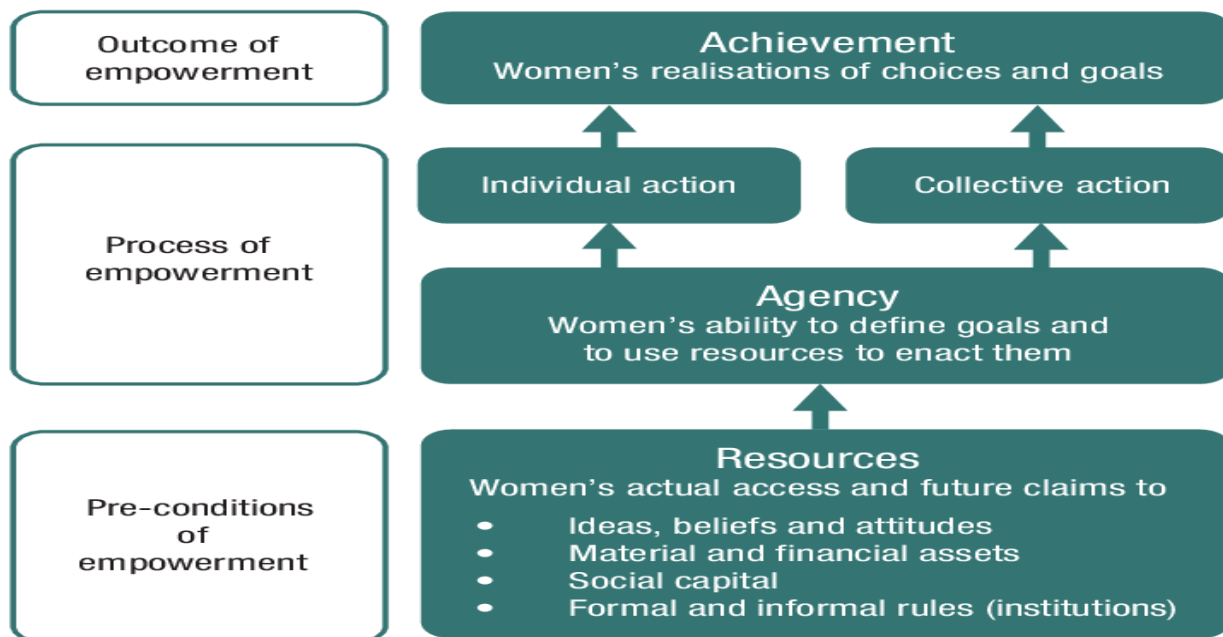
We cannot achieve the goal of Atma Nirbhar Bharat without women's empowerment. Women-led development is the best way to become self-reliant Bharat. The importance of women in every field is essential to growing a nation, so it became necessary to recognise women's activities and work. Atma Nirbhar Bharat provides opportunities for women to become financially independent. The established belief system by society has undervalued women's work competency. In the 21st century, it became essential to give preference to women's work for developing an equitable and Atma Nirbhar society. In 1977, M.N. Srinivasan, a renowned anthropologist, depicted in his work on South rural India that women's work from outdoor on payment is recognised as low family status. According to the economic survey report, 2021-22, women's labour force participation rate in 2018-19 was only 26.5% compared to males (80.3%). So, women's participation is needed in the workforce, about 48 per cent global average to becoming Atma Nirbhar. India's GDP can grow 27 per cent if women's participation is equal to men as the labour force. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that women have entrepreneurial attributes and virtue. If women became financially independent, they could control decision-making (Nishank, 2021).

The main objectives of this research are 1.To analyse the impact of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan in the special context of Varanasi women. 2. It explores the role of government schemes introduced under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan.3. To critically examine the correlation between self-reliant campaigns and women empowerment.4. To observe the impact of the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Campaign on women's political activism. All study is based on Varanasi women because this research universe belongs to the constituency of Prime Minister Modi so that it can be generalised easily. The data analysis will be based on primary and secondary data available on Central government websites and Varanasi district official websites, Articles, journals, local newspapers, and books mentioned in the bibliography.

What is women Empowerment?

Empowerment is the polemic term. Its interpretation varies accordingly, context and issues. The word 'Empowerment' is mostly used to indicate women's progress in every field. Women empowerment is defined as promoting women to be self-dependent and make their choice in every field to contribute to social change for themselves (Goyal,2020). Empowered women and empowered society complement each other in the nation's development. The empowerment of women in the country is an essential need of the present time.

Figure.1 Three Dimensional Model by Kabeer



(Source: Kabeer, 1999)

Women empowerment means increasing women's spiritual, political, social or economic power. Women access on resources it is the pre condition of empowerment, women's abilities to use the resources and ready to enact them for upcoming generation. These action are necessary to individual level and collective level. The realisation of empowerment to make choice and deciding goals.

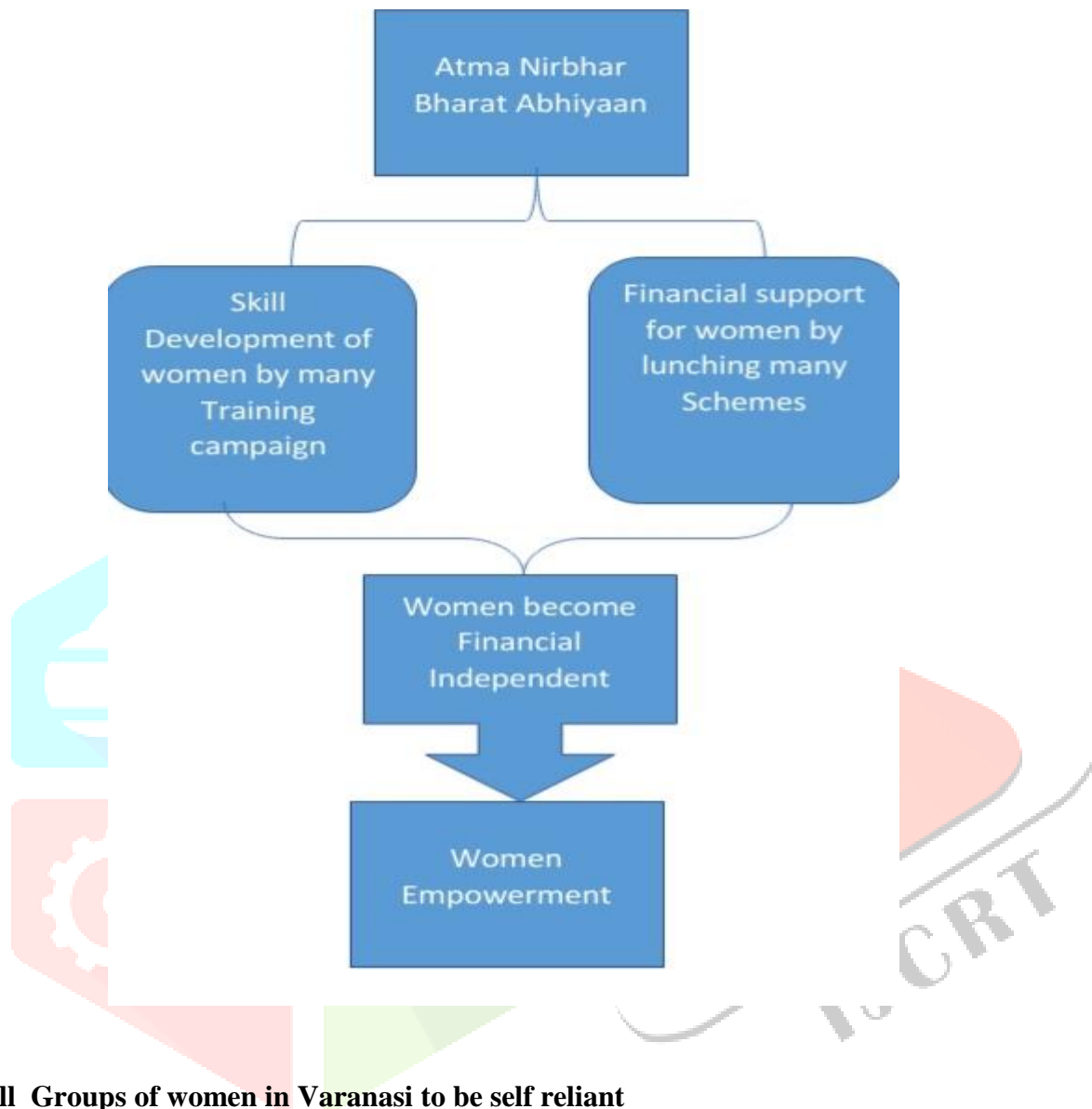
The women empowerment in India

In the case of India, the Gender equality principle is inducted in the Indian Constitution as in Preamble, Fundamental Rights, fundamental duties and directive Principles. The Constitution also directs the state to make positive discrimination favouring women to empower them. The fifth five-year plan focused on the development approach of women empowerment. (Purusottam 2009, Mahnta 2009) The National Commission for Women was established in 1990 by a Parliamentary Act to protect women's rights (The National Commission for Women Act, 1990). 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments ensured women's political participation in local Governance. The year 2001 was declared as the year of women's empowerment. The government launched various programs campaigns and made legal provisions with the establishment of many institutions to empower women. Despite this, the condition of women remains worse

in present time in every field. The Gender Gap Report clearly remarks on women's status in India with 140 ranks out of 156 countries (World Economic Forum Report, 2021). It has remarked the decline in women's economic participation. The opportunity and the gender discrimination ratio have increased to 32.6%. This report shows that The Female Labour Force Participation rate declined from 24.8 percent to 22.3 percent. Women in the professional and technology sectors came down to 29.2 percent. In India, only 20% of women earn as compared to men. (Global Gender Gap Report, 2021)

Atma Nirbhar Bharat and Women Empowerment in Varanasi.

Working population lead to the economic development of a nation. Working populations known as males and females are involved in productive and temporary employment (Trewartha,1969).This statement indicates that no nation can progress without The half population of the world which are the women. Women make 48.45% part of our population. The population of Varanasi is 36,76,841.The women are 17,54,984 in Varanasi. This number of women is just half strength of Varanasi. The literacy rate of Varanasi is 75.60%, and the women's literacy rate is 66.69%.. The women worker population in Varanasi is 47.73%. The work Participation rate of the female is 33.20% (District census Handbook Varanasi,2011). women may empower; it is necessary to increase their participation in economic activities and get a fair wage. There is a need to provide training for skill development and financial support. Atma Nirbhar is a milestone Abhiyaan in women's progress to make them skilled and financially independent throughout many schemes. Atma Nirbhar Bharat abhiyaan is stand for financial Independence through the self skill development. In case of women financial dependency is the root cause to make women dependent on men in every field. When women become self reliant it lead to be them empowered. But women had got a remarkable beginning in form of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan.

Figure.2 Impact of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan on women empowerment

Small Groups of women in Varanasi to be self reliant

Many small groups of women in Varanasi are working with help of many government institutions and achieve the aim of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan. These groups are as follows:

Wood toy craft

'Local for Vocal' slogan by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has boosted woodworking in Varanasi. Earlier men dominated woodworking. Now, women of urban and rural areas are being taught the skill of wood art under the Samarth Training Campaign. These women can now earn from 15 to 25 thousand rupees every month. Realising the Prime Minister's Local for Vocal slogan, these women can now earn a good income by making wooden toys in the remaining time after doing housework. (News 18 Hindi, 2021).

Ek Stall Ek Mahila Ke Naam:

In urban areas, women have increased their participation in self-depend outdoor work such as tea stalls, vegetable stalls, fruit and juice stalls, street food stalls. Ek Stall Ek Mahila Ke Naam scheme proving much beneficial to the rural area, women are still handling the responsibility of their family inside the veil. Rural women are becoming self-reliant by the 'Ek Stall Ek Mahila Ke Naam' scheme. It has started from Baragaon in the rural area of Varanasi, the parliamentary constituency of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This campaign is running in Varanasi with the cooperation of NABARD and the Farmer Producer Company. Under this scheme, women can sell produced vegetables to the consumer directly. Stalls are set up on road tracks in rural areas. Rural women are becoming more empowered economically and socially. (News,2021)

Kabad Se Jugad

Women are self-reliant by realising the Prime Minister's vision of *waste to wealth* in Varanasi. Women are making natural incense sticks, incense and gulal etc., from the flowers offered in the temples. Women are trained by Hunar-e-Banaras. Our waste can also become a source of income. (2021)

Pink Enamel

This art was very famous in the Mughal era. Men have privileged in this art at that time. Varanasi women are reviving pink enamel. They are breaking the hegemony of men in the field of pink enamel and becoming self-reliant. The government is promoting to women for learning the skill of this pink enamel. Now, women are supplying pink enamel to foreign for crores rupees. Revival of this handicraft by women plays a significant role in uplifting women's status (Navbharat Times).

Sewing and knitting training centre

The sewing center and knitting centre is in Tiwaripur of Sewapuri Block in Varanasi. During coronavirus pandemic women suffering much. Public committee and Asha trust helped to open this training centre.

AtmaNirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojna

This scheme was launched in November 2020 to encourage employment opportunities during the Covid-19 pandemic. This scheme provides provident fund subsidies to appoint new employees in registered companies with EPFO. This contribution by the government will be for two years; it will be 12 percent of the basic salary. It targets employees who had to leave the company from 1 March 2020 to 30 September 2020. Now more than 50 lacks employees are getting benefit under this scheme. Affected women employees in the Covid pandemic also benefit from this scheme and get empowered. (<https://labour.gov.in/aatmanirbhar-bharat-rojgar-yojana-abry>). Uttar Pradesh government has started many women-centric welfare schemes for the self-reliance of women.

.Virasat Abhiyan:

It is a practice established in Indian society that the son is the heir to the land, and the daughter does not protest against this social practice. In 2021, Uttar Pradesh Government launched 'Virasat Abhiyan'; this scheme promptly transfers land ownership to the lawful inheritor. This scheme covers widow and transfers land ownership expedites. (The Economic Times, 2021)

Mahila Samarthya Yojana:

The Government of Uttar Pradesh has started UP Mahila Samarthya Yojana for women. Based on local resources, women connect with employment and training for home and cottage industries. Women have the most crucial role in home industries. So, this scheme makes women financially independent as well as empowering. Through this scheme, when half the population on a large scale will be self-reliant, then the development of the nation will also increase.

Mukhya Mantri Kanya Sumangal Scheme

Many schemes are being implemented for women's empowerment, but Mukhya Mantri Kanya Sumangala Yojana is proving very effective. It focuses on the education of daughters to make them self-reliant and healthy. This scheme helps girls' education from economically weaker families for their upcoming future. The government provides 15000 rupees for daughter's education and health. Hence, this scheme provides the fundamental need for the empowerment of girls. It plays a crucial role in the financial inclusion of women. (The Economic Times, 2021)

Mission Shakti:

Mission Shakti is making women self-reliant with self-security respect. Self-confidence is instilled in women for safety; on the other hand, women are being made self-reliant through National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) (Jagran, 2021).

Mainly, In Varanasi, government schemes and individual or collective efforts positively affect women's livelihood. Many particular schemes for empowering and self-reliance women in Varanasi are as follows.

Widow Pension Scheme:

The widow pension scheme already exists, but the Uttar Pradesh government has decided on a special widow pension. The government provides 6000 rupees per year to those widows who lost their husbands in the Covid pandemic. Ten thousand women benefit under this scheme, which is very helpful for their self-reliance for a widow. (The Economic Times,2021). The government is also providing a pension for the victim of triple talaq.

In order to make women self-reliant in Varanasi, many NGOs are providing skill development training to increase the income of women with the government's help.

Women of *Gulab Aajeevika Self Help Group* located in Sewapuri block of Varanasi are increasing their income by making masks, crowns and papads from indigenous items under the self-reliant initiative. Twelve women work in this group and earn money for themselves and their families. (DD News,2020)

Pari Aajeevika Self Help Group is located in Matuka village of Sewapuri block of Varanasi. Women who are members of this group earn money by making crowns and sending them to Vrindavan under the self-reliant initiative; on the other side, they are also fulfilling the dream of Make in India by making Raksha Bandhan. (DD News, 2020)

Asha Trust and Lok Samiti N.G.O has opened a Sewing Embroidery Training Center in Sewapuri block. Women are learning this skill and getting employment (Jagran, 2021).

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in the year 2020, in partnership with the Uttar Pradesh State Rural Livelihoods Mission (UPSRLM), launched a project to help women from farming households take a leading role in transporting their crops from farm to market. As a result, today, these rural women have broken stereotypes and stepped forward in the agricultural supply chain and increased their income (news.un.org/hi).

Women of Domari village in Varanasi are making Gujarati garland. Earlier, this garland used to sell for Rs 6-7, but now these people sell it for Rs 8 to 10. They are not compelled to spread their hands for money. This work also utilises these people's time. (Khabar lahariya,2021)

Impact of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Campaign on the Women Status in Varanasi

These all kind of description of the significant schemes under Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan in Varanasi shows about the efforts of government. It has affected women and the structure of society, especially in rural areas. In Indian patriarchal society, the women's sphere is confined to their home. Self-dependency of women increases their self-respect. Male dominance undervalued women working outside and earning money. So accordingly, in society, it is only the responsibility of men to earn money. On the other hand, women work hard at home, but their work is unpaid. Society does not understand the value of women's hard work, and they are treated as second class people. They have no their self-choices regarding their life. Hence, two major impacts emerge; First, women become totally dependent on men and second, they are behaved as sub-ordinated in their own home.

Atma Nirbhar Bharat's campaign has broken society's prejudice related to women. It is helping to uplift women's status in becoming self-reliant. Women are earning money and taking care of their families. They are becoming independent economically and having a choice related to their life. So, women are becoming more empowered. Economic independence has given self-respect to the women in society and given value

for their hard work. They are becoming more aware of their economic interest. We can say that women are becoming more enable economically and socially. The economic progress of women will act as a catalyst in the country's economic development.

Atma Nirbhar Bharat Campaign and Political activism of women in Varanasi.

In the past years, women of Varanasi were neutral towards politics. Their voting turnout was meagre in comparison to men. But they share approximately equal voting turnout compared to men and participate in political campaigns. Women consider that their lives are changing due to the government schemes under self-reliant campaigns. They are getting direct benefit economically and support to that particular political party, i.e., Government of Uttar Pradesh launched many women-centric schemes by which women got the benefit. So, in the 2022 legislative assembly election, the inclination of women was towards Government. Women were also campaigning for the political party. Hence, we can conclude that a self-reliant campaign improves women's economic and social status and mobilises politically.

Summary of Findings

AtmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan will make individual economically empowered. India will be vibrant economically. However, this visionary Abhiyan may be fail without annihilating the gender inequalities. Women's financial inclusion is significant for the growth of Indian economy. But in India, women are struggling for their fair participation in the Indian economy under prevail socio-cultural norms and Gender gap is increased due to Covid 19 pandemic outbreak.

Announced Package by Prime minister during Covid pandemic, had a lacking of gender perspective. Women were missing in the discussion on affected people due to Covid 19. This scheme had promised to give Rs 500 per month to women's Jan Dhan account holder. But it was not enough for women to survive. Indian women are already unpaid household. They have also burden of child care. So, proper women centric welfare policies and schemes are needed for women's economic participation.

Although, Central government and Uttar Pradesh government has launched various women centric schemes because financial inclusion of women for achieving the aim of Atma Nirbhar Bharat is essential. Earning by women will increase the demand along with supply will also grow. It will boost to Indian economy. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme, Working Women Hostel, One Stop Centre Scheme, Women Helpline Scheme. Mahila Shakti, Ujjawala Scheme etc., central government schemes are playing a crucial role for women empowerment. Mission Shakti, School Chalo Abhiyaan, Government aid for child educational, Mahila Samarthya Yojana, Mukhyantri Kanya Sumangala Scheme etc. by Uttar Pradesh government are also uplifting women status economically in Varanasi. Individual and collective efforts by N.G.Os are working for women empowerment. Hence, we conclude that Atma Nirbhar Bharat and Women are complement. When women will be empowered, vision of AtmaNirbhar will be realised.

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