

Women of Today - Fitting into Glass Slippers or Shattering Glass



Ceilings



Abstract:

Women of today have high hopes and aspirations for themselves as well as for the society. But are they really living up to their hopes? Are they able to follow their dreams like in a fairytale? Do they find themselves in a society which treats them well or provides them equality or considers them as the superior authority?

The answer to many of the questions above is – Not really!

Since time immemorial women were treated as subjects and fighting against time, the women of today have come a very long way. Gone are the days when today's women will follow anything and everything against her inner call. But does that happen with each and every women? Have we given this freedom to each and every women around us to be able to think independently like a fierce warrior? We have a mixed population of women out of which most of them are made to fit into glass slippers whereas some have gone out of their way to shatter that glass ceiling which comes in their way. Our role as a society should ideally be to provide such an environment to our women of today in which they fearlessly can take up their decisions and take charge of their lives without any forceful shadow being embarked on them. It is because of this forceful dark shadow that many of them are forced to dump their lifelong craved and earned desires and professional accomplishments.

Keywords: women of today, glass ceiling, glass slippers, mind-set change, forceful dark shadow

INTRODUCTION:

We have seen infinite examples right from the rural sector till the urban sector, ranging from a not so literate women to a well sophisticated and cultured women. Every woman I must say has gone through this phase in her life where this so called 'forceful dark shadow' has been imposed on her in some form or the other. This forceful dark shadow has many variants and degrees.

Indian womanhood and its psychological underpinnings:

To be perfect, to behave only in a lady-like manner, girls shouldn't do this, never reply back, talk slowly and in a low volume, get married at the right age, have babies, your career is not that important, higher studies are not meant for you, freedom is not for women, cooking should be your hobby, high salary and position means compromising your character, you can't be good as your male employee, look after yourself as your looks will get you a good husband, study and find a job in your own city, domestic violence is normal in a marriage, ignore if you are stared at, ignorance should be a women's weapon, good girls are traditional, docile and domestic, her attitude leads to the others actions, should not compromise on household chores even when you are working, you can't balance personal and professional life together, your talent is useless for

the world-don't waste your time, your sole purpose of life is to be a good wife, you are dark hence society will never appreciate you and the list can go on and on like this.

These are only some of the statements which almost every women has come across in some way or the other, whether positively or negatively or in the form of a sarcasm but it has been encountered by all in their beautiful life. Many women take it in a positive way who have a strong mental balance, are determined towards their life goals and nothing can deter them from their success path. Then we have some who take it in a very wrong and negative way and this is where it directly impacts that woman's psychological well-being and the happy life takes a harsh turn. The woman can always be a decision maker but the family and society do play a vital role in deviating her from her decisions. In this world where technological advancements happen within micro seconds the advancement of the female gender is comparatively low. The ownership and the magic wand to transform one's life is still not in the hands of the women individually. We have the entire family, society, employers, friends and many other extra pollutants who transform the woman completely instead of her life. It is high time that in such an advancing country the women should be given the right to decide whether she wants to go beyond a certain paradigm shift or she wants to seclude herself within her comfort zone. The women are always taught since childhood how to avoid and be cautious with any risk, instead of being taught how to be fearless and be able to tolerate those risks. They are never taught how to approach a challenge, yet some are looked down upon if they go ahead and accept a challenge.

Blessed are those women who would say it with pride that she never went through any psychological stress or barrier being a girl child-a woman-a wife-a mother. But such ratio of women will definitely be very low. The problem with our society is that they will never come forward to support a woman at all times but will surely come ahead to scrutinize, degrade and control a woman's confidence. Such thoughts should completely be banished as the women of today want their decision to be liberal.

How society and family can transform a woman into a “Wonder Woman”?

A woman is a very strong individual created by our Holy God who does not need anyone to help her or transform her but in real life if she gets to find a positive support and aura around her, she will definitely touch the stars. Family and society both together can develop and lead to the positive psychology of increasing an optimistic mind, a cheerful environment, strong social, personal and professional connections, and a healthy self-confidence and well-being to each and every woman.

If the support is provided to the women of today they will not at all go ahead banishing and shattering glass ceiling which will pose as a hindrance for her in shining. One such example is: Women are better educated and more active. Since 1991, women have been filling managerial positions faster than men, particularly in high-income countries, although the data show us that women still have a long way to go before they equal the number of men in these roles.

We also have yet to achieve anything close to gender balance in the highest echelons of the business world, in executive roles and in boardrooms. In addition, the bigger the company, the

less likely we are to see women at the helm, in the labor force than ever, and are increasingly working in managerial roles. Yet despite these gains, their representation in top positions in business still lags behind that of men.

<https://www.ilo.org/infostories/en-GB/Stories/Employment/beyond-the-glass-ceiling>

We know that there are various roles with which the Indian women juggles with and does it with great finesse.

Some of the important factors with which society and family can play a crucial role are:

- Indian womanhood can rise to dizzy heights and achieve accolades if she is made the SOLE OWNER of her DECISIONS.
- Trust her and give her the liberty to paint her canvas called 'Life'.
- Let her live a free life with her own set of restrictions and boundations without any condition.
- A woman has proved her caliber in various sectors of work. Do not discriminate at the workplace. She is capable of achieving any impossible task.
- Stop judging her because she is a female.
- Let her rise and demand her rights.
- She has the potential to choose her career and take it to any direction or heights.
- Do not undervalue her talent.
- There shouldn't be any societal or family pressure thrust upon her which would directly affect her self-worth.
- No external expectations should be set which can negatively influence her decision and impede her professional growth.
- Stop bullying, gaslighting, the 24x7x365 sermonizing can prove to be extremely crushing and detrimental for a woman who is just trying to carve a place for herself in her beautiful world. Let her just be 'herself'.
- She needs to be praised for her present and future endeavors rather than criticizing her for her physical attributes.
- Let our ladies, women, sister, mother, wife should not be overloaded with any if's- but's- shouldn't tyranny which engulfs our women very often.
- Let them search for their ideal self.
- They should be taught bravery instead of perfection.
- Do not inculcate shame and hate in them instead they should be taught to love themselves first.
- They should feel happy of being accepted equally in the society and being a very important pillar as well.

These are just few of the factors that can prove wonders for women across the globe. But we should understand the objective to ensure the above is achieved, we first need to accept our women with an open heart and as an important member in our lives. That is how an optimum balance will be maintained.

Successful list of few Indian women who were set free as a Butterfly to be decision makers?

- ✚ Bhavana Kasturi: 1st army officer to lead an all-men contingent at the Republic Day parade.
- ✚ Hina Jaiswal: 1st woman flight engineer in the Indian Air Force
- ✚ Mithali Raj: 1st woman to play 200 ODIs
- ✚ GC Anupama: 1st woman president of the Astronomical Society of India.
- ✚ Gagandeep Kang: 1st Indian woman scientist to be elected as a fellow of the Royal Society, London
- ✚ Jayshree Vyas: BSE's 1st independent woman director
- ✚ Nirmala Sitharaman: India's 1st full-time finance minister
- ✚ GS Lakshmi: 1st woman to be appointed to ICC's international panel of match referees.
- ✚ Bhawana Kanth: 1st woman fighter pilot of the Indian Air Force to qualify to undertake a combat mission on a fighter jet
- ✚ Aparna Kumar: 1st IPS officer to complete the Seven Summit challenge
- ✚ Dutee Chand: 1st Indian to win a 100m gold in a global event at 30th Summer University Games in Italy
- ✚ Hima Das: 1st Indian to win five gold medals in twenty days (July2-20)
- ✚ PV Sindhu: 1st Indian to win the Badminton World Championships
- ✚ Shaliza Dhani: 1st female officer of India to become a flight commander of a flying unit
- ✚ Chandrima Shaha: 1st woman president elected at Indian National Science Academy
- ✚ Anshula Kant: 1st woman CFO of the World Bank Group
- ✚ Nita Ambani: 1st Indian trustee of the Metropolitan Museum of Art
- ✚ Sub-Lieutenant Shivangi: 1st woman pilot for the Indian Navy



<https://www.cnbctv18.com/photos/politics/roundup-2019-indian-women-who-broke-the-glass-ceiling-this-year-4964241-18.htm>

Progress of Women in the Workplace:

In 2015 females made up 11.2% of board members on Indian firms, double the 5.5% in 2010, according to a report by Credit Suisse which analyzed 2,400 companies worldwide. The global average in 2015 was 14.7%, with Norway (46.7%) and France (34%) topping the list.

While India has done well compared with China and South Korea, it still lags behind other Asian countries such as Thailand and Malaysia.

While India has made progress in appointing females to board positions, this hasn't been matched by the number of women in senior management posts.

In fact, the number of senior positions held by women has fallen, dropping from 7.8% in 2014 to 7.2% in 2016 and compared with a global average of 13.8%, according to the Credit Suisse study.

Nearly 10 million people are entering India's job market every year and nearly half of those are women. Without that support from the society- which includes men taking up more responsibilities at home - it's unlikely that India will realize its ambition of becoming an economic superpower.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/business-37622621>

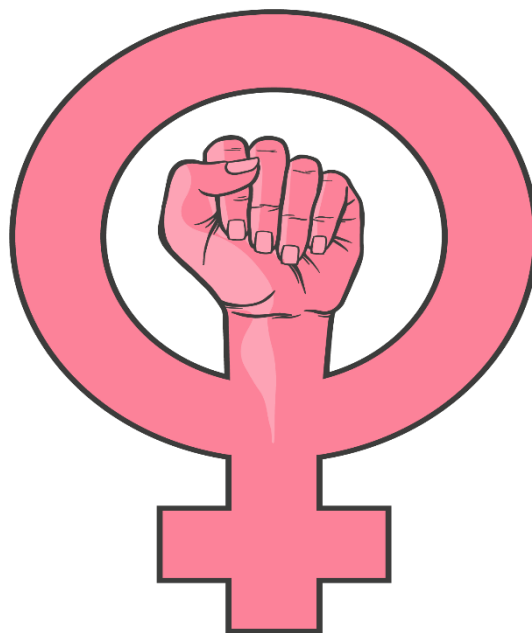
It's 2020 and women in India, even those with prestigious degrees, still rarely secure their dream jobs. Around 49% of alumnae and female students of the elite Indian Institutes of Management (IIM) feel they do not have the same opportunities for career growth as men in their organizations, revealed a pan-IIM survey on "Women in the Workplace" released on March 4. The survey was conducted by a global career advancement platform for women, The Star In Me, in collaboration with the IIM Kozhikode alumni association. It received 400 responses from 20 IIMs, with the majority of respondents working at mid- to senior-management levels across industries. <https://qz.com/india/1813778/even-iim-women-struggle-to-break-glass-ceiling-at-their-workplace/>

CONCLUSION

It is a moment of delight to watch the women of our country to reach such heights but seldom do we think about the struggle and painful journey they embarked. Very few are blessed to have had a smooth start but that few comprises of a minority percentage. These women believed in themselves and were set free as a butterfly to discover and explore the path leading them towards this paramount success. We need such a society and family for our women where they are **nourished** and brought up in such a way that in every household we have a woman who makes us proud by reaching in the list of the top successful women not only in India but globally around the world. *We all have been captivated with the saga of invincible stories about Rani of Jhansi, we intend to assure the same saga to continue in today's time.* Our women of today is a complete epitome of success, courage, confidence, resilience and the amazing ability to fit into any kind of diverse role to spread her magical miracle everywhere. She doesn't need an opportunity because she can find one on her own, she doesn't need any help or support as she has honed her skills to cater to any problems she faces, *what she actually needs is a society where she can bloom and blossom forever.*

To conclude I would say that the women of today does not need to fit herself into a glass slipper, we all know that as we were told, like Cinderella did? Why does a woman want to fit into a glass slipper when she can shatter the glass ceiling?" Our women of today is **FIERCE & FABULOUS.**

Let the choice be only in the hands of the individual woman in question, as she knows best about her inner soul and calling from within her heart and mind.



References:

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