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Rural Women in the Digital Age: A Strategic Analysis for Developing Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Through the Vision of Swami Vivekananda

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ABSTRACT

This paper tries to find out why Swami Vivekananda repeatedly emphasized on "Education" as the only means to eradicate all evils against the Indian women - especially, gender biasness, in the public domain. The research work tries to focus on the psychological and communicational aspect of the issue. He had dictated a model about how this path could lead to self-abstraction, ultimately eradicating gender inequality. The paper tries to enquire about its relevance in 2026, especially for the rural women in India. The work follows a qualitative analysis with exploratory approach. It aims to advance the model for the women of the Digital Age and tries to find out and analyse the problems behind women facing gender inequalities, when communication speed has taken a giant leap forward.

***Keywords**: Rural, MSME, Digital, Hurdle, Renaissance.*

Introduction

In the lecture "The Sage of India", Swami Vivekananda comments, 'Any attempt to modernise our women, if it tries to take our women from the ideal of Sita is immediately a failure, as we see everyday. The women of India must grow and develop in the footprints of Sita, and that is the only way."

Avoiding any political interpretation, this remark emphasizes on three interesting but known-to-everybody terms - MODERNIZE, SITA and FOOTPRINTS. There are three different questions which we are trying to decipher systematically -

- What to modernise and how to modernise?
- Why should the Indian women need to follow the path of Sita?
- How would this "Footprint to Modernization" help Indian women in building successful entrepreneurships in the Digital Age?

Modernization

With every single day moving forward, we are witnessing a two-fold competition multiplying in our society. If one can be coined as "New Technology', then, the other is obviously "Experience". As of April 2024, the Press Information Bureau states that 95.15% of the villages in India have already been digitally connected. Still one question remains - Is there appropriate speed?

"Having internet" and "Using internet" are to different realities. Interestingly, in 2026, Niko Partners argue that 40% of the Indian gamer base now constitute women participation with rural growth

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outpacing the urban areas. It is needless to prove that online streaming needs more efficacy than just recording and uploading content in different social media platforms. Moreover, with the advent of 5G network slowly penetrating the rural base, the art of "Live Streaming" has become easier than before. Now, if technology is improving day by day, the next question is - Are we adopting the new technology? Are we really modernizing?

The answer is broadly bifurcated between two group.

- The Experienced Rural Woman (age group of 35+) : What is "Experience"? Traditionally, experience meant observing certainly reality and repeated brain impulse to remember it. If 2 + 2 brings out 4, then, repeated use of this observation in our day-to-day life has made us believe this conclusion. We need not now calculate and can come to the required answer just by looking at the numbers and symbols. But, for any kid, the scenario is completely different. For the "Experienced Rural Woman", 'Hearing' stories through gossips, 'Witnessing' stories through TV serials, and, sometimes, 'Understanding' stories through different narratives of various news agency propagandas, has implemented a permanent impression of FEAR about digital scams in the subconscious level. No doubt, to some extent, it is true. The innovation, which the digital scammers portray today, has become really hard to pick. Even more, with the introduction of Artificial Intelligence. But, still, there is something more which is missing. The art of 'Fact Checking'. The idea of MISINFORMATION and FAKE INFORMATION. In the public sphere today, this age group always want some public identity to come forward and simplify the 'FACT' for them. In the current scenario of politics, these public figures hardly do so. Moreover, they might hide certain words or interprerit certain incidents in such a way that these women become more and more dependent on whatever 'They Say'. Now, why these agenda-settings strategies are being taken up is not the concern of this paper. But, these manipulative strategies do work and are effectively impacting the behaviour of rural women in India. This is the ground reality. As a result, though these women can, but, won't 'Recheck' the fact with more than one media agency. It is not about time or education level. It is solely because of decreasing confidence level due to 'Fear Impulse Strategy' used in the political field. Therefore, in 2026, EXPERIENCE = OBSERVATION + REMEMBRANCE + CONFIDENCE
- The Enthusiast Rural Woman (age group of 10+) : Here, the scenario is completely different. The "Enthusiast Rural Woman" wants to use ChatGPT to gain good marks, but, won't read 5 good books to churn out quality content. They want to believe in sensualised and 'Trending' social media reels to gain instant fame, but, won't reach out for the hundreds of free courses, available over the internet, for learning impactful search engine optimisation techniques. They want to do more and more of 'Get Ready With Me' trends, but, won't open micro boutiques. The question is not about bookish education, but, majorly about the intent shown. Swami Vivekananda, in the Karma Yoga, actually hints not to judge a man by his instant deeds. Even a fool can transform into some hero in times of extreme crisis. He asks to look at his daily activities. The day-to-day discipline of any individual builds his 'Character'. The character of a man is solely responsible for creating his destiny. The problem with this age group is this Hyper-Sentualised Intent. For me, intent is the amulgamation of the Digital Reality and Internal Deficiency. Digital Reality is the atmosphere and ambience created in the social media. Thanks to algorithms, a man today gets to see what he actually wants to! Seldom does he encounter any opposite narrative. Even if he does, he might see people sharing the same arguments which he had already in his mind. In this way, he creates the Digital Bubble for himself. Secondly, the over-sensualised society shown, especially, in Bollywood, has created an everlasting internal deficiency for the Enthusiast Rural Women. After all, the idea of 'Advertising' any commodity has been relaying on this deficiency for ages. But, in 2026, rural women not only focuses on fulfilling this deficiency, but, also believes in getting satisfied, exploiting it, for a longer period of time. They want to commercialise 'Beauty' as directed in the Masala Movies, but, become clueless when asked "What Next"? In 2026, the concentrations span is shifting from anything and everything, in no time. Even for the two-month long IPL season, the broadcasters are constantly shifting from one tagline to another almost every 10 days. From "India Ab Ek Hokar Dekhega" to "IPL Rivalry Week" to "IPL Revenge Week" and so on. It is constantly changing. Another good example could be the public relation campaigns used for the Pro Kabaddi League every season. Almost every week has got a new name to rebrand the matches in front of its audience. Now the question is - If "Beauty" is being commercialised, will

Instagram filters retain audience concentration in the long run? The simple answer is "No". Even in pornography websites, this strategy works well. It is the same advertising technique which makes an individual scroll more and more after watching a few videos - In search of something more, something new. Therefore, for this generation, EXPERIENCE = INTENT + DIGITAL BUBBLE + HYPER-SENTUALISATION.

Hence, to build a successful entrepreneurship, especially, in the digital age, rural women needs to balance 'Confidence' and 'Hyper-Sentualization'. In the era of Amazon and Flipkart, only these two terms remain most relative. And, here, comes the idea of Sita.

Idea of Sita

In 2026, we see a general tendency among the upcoming Indian women. The idea of 'Modernisation' seems to be equal with the idea of 'Westernization'. People believe more in the glossiness of the West rather than having faith in the inherent qualities of the East. This is where Swami Vivekananda counters the superficial idea of 'what I don't possess is always something better'.

The way how any Western family behaves in day-to-day life is completely different from that of any Indian family. In India, the mother takes charge of all homely affairs. Where as, in case of the West, it is the wife. Moreover the Western families are more 'Individualistic' in nature, where as, any Indian woman is completely 'Socialistic'.

Social behaviour do not constitute in a single day. I am not saying that the West is wrong in their way of life. But, the generalised tendency, to portray Indian woman or the inherent culture of this land as something inferior, is dangerous and destructive, at least for the home country. Almost, nine out of ten teenage girls comment about the betterment of the Western culture in every way possible. When asked about the reason behind it, there lies no depth in their answers. No statistics, no innovation about future solution. Just because others believe it or this is the 'Trend Narrative' floating around or it feels 'Cool' to comment in favour of such ideology - they feel, it should be done. Again, I am not saying, the narrative could be wrong. But, the perspective with which it is being said is confusing and irregular. This 'Lack of Vision' is the root cause of all problems.

This tendency is generally seen in the educated middle class. When asked about their future roadmap and also about the free resources available in the social media platforms about their field of study, they could hardly identify.

For ages, India had developed the inherent quality of Patience and Chastity. Why? Because India's geography provided everything to sustain happily. India had seen invaders, but, did hardly invade. India had seeing destruction, but, did hardly destroy. Because of India's geography, Indian rulers never bothered to attack foreign land. For ages, this attitude has infused the 'Art of Patience' and chastity in Indian societies. India is addressed as "Mother" because, in India, the word MOTHER has a different cultural meaning. In India, it is the symbolification of ultimate patience and chastity. Swami Vivekananda aptly says,"Our women are not so learned. But, they are more pure".

This "Purity" is the ultimate nature of Indian woman. This purity does not limit itself among any physical definition, but, becomes 'limitless' in the psychological area, building character. Here, the word means patience, perseverance and parenthood. Swami Vivekananda argues that no Indian women can ever become successful in the long run, in any work they do, eliminating this PURITY from their nature. It is inherent in Indian culture.

The patriarchal depiction of 'Sita' may seem to someone as a crying, helpless lady. But, Swamiji says, there may come a hundred Ramas in the future, but, this land won't get another Sita. She represented this purity. The everlasting determination, manifesting character.

Footprint

Mere bookish knowledge won't do any good. Neither has it done any good to the society as a whole in the past, not will it do anything in the future. We need education through which this character can be manifested.

CHARACTER = STRENGTH OF MIND + EXPANDED INTELLECT

On 28th of December, 1893, in a letter to Haripada Mitra, Swamiji writes about the early marriage of women in our country. This is not any new problem. It had been there in the Indian society for ages. Various governments have been trying their level best to counter this issue.

But, in 2026, if the "Woman" really want to, then, can establish successful entrepreneurships with the help of the digital world. Early marriage may not become a primary hurdle. In Swami-Shishya Samvad, Swami Vivekananda repeatedly emphasizes about spreading the education among women in 'our own style'.

Women, at the ground level, need to be taught History, the Puranas, housekeeping, the arts, duties of home life, but with the help of modern science. These are the skillsets they have been practicing for ages. If we make 'Time' a constant factor for improvement, then, what these rural women already specialize in, should be exploited. Primary entrepreneurships should be built around these activities and interdisciplinary sectors to create a network chain. In one way, when it increase confidence, on the other hand, it will expand the intellect to experiment new initiatives.

Why not any rural women 'learn' home science and create social media vlogs, teaching Indian remedies? Why not rural women 'master' history and make YouTube videos on the UPSC optional subject? Why not 'understand' the brush and paint, better, to create social media exhibition? Why not 'experiment' with new Indian dishes to create food-of-local cooking videos?

No doubt, it will need patience to develop the digital circle. It will also need perseverance to compete among hundred other brands. It also needs money. But, at present, different governments are providing various schemes, both, at the national level and state level, respectively. It is not that tough if consistency and hunger are nurtured. Afterall, any burgeoning entrepreneurship demands these two, the most.

When MSME Sector is undergoing 'Digital Renaissance' in 2026, it posits the perfect scenario and stage for the rural woman to come forward and showcase their skills and innovation. Entrepreneurship in the MSME SECTOR can also open the path of higher education for the rural women, in the long run. It might not happen in the very generation of 'Struggle'.

When asked to Swamiji about what sort of education is suited to our women, he replied,"Religion, art, housekeeping, cooking, sewing, hygiene but not novels and fiction'.

With due respect to fictional writers, why not novels and fiction?

Even in 2026, India still holds the highest number of child brides globally (approx 222.4 million). Prevalence is highest in West Bengal, Bihar and Tripura, exceeding 40%. Hence, if we are talking about women entrepreneurships, it is highly necessary to pull ourselves back from the fictional world and accept the reality. For women to "Actually" realise the condition of woman, is the biggest hurdle. Realisation builds intent. Intent transform into character. True character manifest the true experience.

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