

## Role Of New Media In Empowering Women: A Trend In Patna

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### ABSRTACT

In the present times, Women empowerment in India is a much-debated topic and empowerment of women has emerged as an important issue in recent times. As per the theory of “Public Sphere” given by Habermas in which he explains that public sphere is realm of our social life in which every individual of the society without any discrimination of gender come together and share their problems and this public sphere which operates in a society try to solve the problems of people. New Media is giving women of our society this virtual Public Sphere through which they are voicing their personal matter and problems with full confident. By indulging in various activities through New Media they are moving towards the empowerment. New Media plays an important and vital role in women’s empowerment and its development. Media can create an awakening inspiration to achieve their potential as prime source of change in the society, we live in. With the growing dominance of New Media in day-to-day life, women’s lifestyle and their traditional thought and activity is also changing. Now the society is also seeing them differently as they were treated and seen in earlier days. Media can create an awakening inspiration to achieve their potential as prime source of change in the society, we live in. The present paper entitled “Role of New Media in Empowering Women: A trend in Patna will present the analysis of survey on 60 women regarding their educational empowerment, change in lifestyle, their awareness and on their increase in confidence and sense of equality. This paper will specially highlight the positive perception and use of New Media as a development tool to empower the women. his paper will present the analysis of survey on 60 women regarding their educational empowerment, change in lifestyle, their awareness and on their increase in confidence and sense of equality. This paper will specially highlight the positive perception and use of New Media as a development tool to empower the women.

**KEYWORDS:** New Media, Public Sphere, Internet, Women Empowerment, Patna

### INTRODUCTION

In the present times, Women empowerment in India is a much-debated topic and empowerment of women has emerged as an important issue in recent times. As per the theory of “Public Sphere” given by Habermas in which he explains that public sphere is realm of our social life in which every individual of the society without any discrimination of gender come together and share their problems and this public sphere which operates in a society try to solve the problems of people. New Media is giving women of our society this virtual Public Sphere through which they are voicing their personal matter and problems with full confident. The subject of empowerment of women has becoming a burning issue all over the world including India since last few decades. Many agencies of United Nations in their reports have emphasized that gender issue is to be given utmost priority. It is held that women now cannot be asked to wait for any more for equality. Inequalities between men and women and discrimination against women have also been age-old issues all over the world. Women are vital human resource in improving the quality of life. The country’s overall development depends greatly on the inclusion of women in its development process. For any society the process of development will be left incomplete without the active involvement of women. Mahatma Gandhi firmly states that the *“status of women would not change merely by bringing legislation; it must be supported by change in the women’s social circumstances and situation.”* What is women empowerment *“Women’s empowerment is defined as “women’s ability to make their strategic life choices where that ability had been previously denied them. New Media has provided opportunities to women to reorganize different activities in different fields in a way that can bypass the traditional male-dominated society.”* Women of Indian society still suffers deprivation and discrimination attitude and now it is necessary to mobilize the vast women power if the country must progress in all walks of life.

This will focus on this issue that New Media is playing a significant role in empowering women of Patna in different sphere. New Media has emerged as a powerful tool for women empowerment in developing country like India. In India total New Media users are 243 million and among that 60 million users are women. Empowering women aims to inspire women with courage to break free from the chains of limiting self-belief pattern and societal or religious conditioning that have traditionally kept women suppressed and unable to see their true beauty and power. Why it is said that after invent of New Media women empowerment has become more possible. The answer lies in the feature of New Media which has made it possible, with the growing dominance of the internet, blog, what’s App, social media like face book, twitter; so, it could be said that the use of New Media and communication is rapidly changing and becoming mobile, interactive personalized and multi-channel, and these qualities of New Media is probably empowering the women of our country.

In this contemporary world, women need to gain the equal amount of power that men have. There is inequality and vulnerability of women in all spheres of life; they need to be empowered in all walks of their life. However, after the invent of New Media women are getting empowered slowly in different walks of their life. All over the world the impact of New Media has been seen in the empowerment of women and India has also seen its impact on women empowerment. Take the example of horrifying Delhi gang rape in December 2012. It was social media such as twitter, facebook etc. gave all the girls a platform to raise their voice against this heinous crime. Many researchers and scholars have done the research on the role of New Media in the empowerment of women which also came with the result that New Media has flatten the social hierarchies. Here I would like to mention about the book written by **Thomas. L. Friedman** "*The Flat Earth*" in which he discussed about that the globalization has changed the core of economic concept and brought the entire world on one platform making the world the flat earth. In the world of New Media men and women have become equal it does not discriminate on any ground among men and women, who makes the flat earth where there is no difference in men and women. Now question arises how New Media is empowering women in the society? Here are few points which will describe how New Media is playing role in the empowerment of Indian women and further this paper will focus on these aspects only.

### WHAT IS NEW MEDIA

The New Media are a combination of offline and online media, such as computer network and personal computer, a combination of transmission links and artificial memories filled with text, data, image or sounds that can also be installed in separate device. There are certain features of New Media such as:

- Hypertext,
- Multimedia
- Interactivity
- Immediacy

Due to these features of New Media a new paradigm has been formed in communication world:

New Media gave the tool to the audience the application and the network. A tool to gather as much as information one can or want.

Many scholars have stressed that new media that is not necessarily constrained by the dominant characteristics of mass media. Mass Media as a medium has a monopoly on information. Due to this monopoly, it may be involved in practicing bullet theory and propaganda theory rather than focusing on real issues of the society. "*New media has added new dimension to the users by placing within easy reach, a mindboggling range of information. It gives each of us many options to cultivate consumption of information and views*" (B.K Ravi 2012).

Hypertext ended the limitation of space which is very important in print media. Now through hypertext variety of information and in-depth information can be provided without any space crunch as new media platform is seamless.

Another feature Multimedia has reduced the importance of time limit of Television news channel. Through this feature of new media video and audio can be stored and can be watched according to users' convenience. Interactivity has reduced the dependence on mainstream mass media for information. Now any user can share any information and initiate a group discussion. One of the strengths of new media is its immediacy which enables new media platforms to give information immediately.

New Media is also threatening the established power structure. Earlier Information was always threatened by power. In New Media digitalization is threatening the power. Power has threat due to New Media.

### Following are roles of New Media which in empowering women:

#### ACCESS TO INFORMATION:

Access to information is the central issue which is necessary for women's empowerment. Women have traditionally been excluded from the external information sphere, both deliberately and because of factor working to their disadvantage such as lack of freedom of movement or low levels of education. New Media has opened a direct window for women to the outside world. Jurgen Habermas has given the theory of "Public Sphere" according to which Public Sphere is a place where people come together and put their problem and issues. New Media has given the "New Digital Space" that could be facebook, blog, what's app etc. where women could put their issues and problems which would be heard by many people at a time.

#### KNOWLEDGE:

**As far as knowledge is concerned** new media has created a "new knowledge space" this new knowledge space is a space of internet where they get endless knowledge on any issue and this knowledge creates awareness among women. This awareness could be related to health issue, social issues, etc. Networking which is possible in New Media catalyses the process of women's empowerment by opening avenues for women to freely articulate and share their experience, concern, and knowledge, creating the possibility of their further enrichment.

### ACCESS TO E-EDUCATION:

New media gives opportunity of e-learning and e-education to women which help them in empowerment. There are many women who want to study but could not attain it due to some social barriers but New Media breaks all these barriers for women and provide them facility to get educated as per their desire.

New Media is platform which links people, irrespective of caste, class, sex, religion, and race. When New Media platform is facilitating the women, with its feature a way of empowerment then it is important to evaluate and assess the role of communication technology in empowering women, particularly from the point of view of access and utilization. Intervention of New Communication technology can accelerate the women empowerment in our society. Communication technology can be used to impart information, and that in turn will lead to motivation, mobilization and action. Communication technology can encompass different approaches—welfare, participatory and catalyst approaches with women as change agents. Information, reinforced with success stories, can motivate women to adopt healthy lifestyles.

### RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To find out educational empowerment through new technologies like e-learning.
- To find out the change in lifestyle by using New Media.
- To find out the use of New Media is making them more informed and aware.
- To find out how virtual activities are making them more confident and bringing sense of equality.

### SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

Women of our country have been confined in the boundary of traditionalism since ages. They have never given equal opportunity as men to grow or to be empowered in the society so they are lagging in every field. This paper has some social significance that how Patna women are getting empowered in a different way, such as psychological, personal, and educational empowerment. There is a need to uncover many factors related to women empowerment like social aspects, self-decision making, economic independency, health, participation in decision making, awareness and, many more issues that can help progressive development of women in the society. It will assess the role of new media in empowering Patna women.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

ICTs are emerging as a powerful tool for a women empowerment in the developing country like India (**Beena et.al, 2012**). The objective of her research was to study the role of ICT in the overall empowerment of rural women with the reference to them

- Personal empowerment
- Educational empowerment
- Economic empowerment
- Social empowerment
- Psychological empowerment

The researcher found that 86% women says that ICT is helpful in psychological empowerment because it increases self-esteem, self-confidence, feeling more valued and respected, feeling less isolated from others. 85% women say that they are gaining new and useful knowledge, information, and awareness on various issues.

In recent years new media has become a development tool to empower women. The cited report in the research released in June 2013 titled “Women & Web Study”, out of the total 150 million Internet users in the country, around 60 million women in India are now online and use the Internet to manage their day-to-day life. With easy access to Internet at homes, cyber cafes, offices and growing adoption of smart phones, the Internet is being used by women for a variety of things (**Khan. A, 2013**). It noted that women who are online are relatively more affluent and younger—75% are in the 15-34 age groups, with over 24 million women accessing the Internet daily. New Media provide effective tool for women to generate knowledge on important issues like health, education, provide platform to speak out about their lives which will them in empowering themselves in different ways (**Khan. A, 2013**).

There are certain forms of women empowerment using the ICTs. These forms are:

**SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT:** They gain access to new information and knowledge as per their interest. It provides them mental stimulation and broadened participant’s thinking. It also helps them in developing new skills, abilities, confidence, and competence.

**TECHNOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT:** It helps them in understanding about the use of ICTs and their impact.

**POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT:** It is helping in political empowerment also by networking feature of New Media their voice is reached to many people.

The researcher said that it is important to see ICTs as tool for women's development needs and accordingly all forms of ICTs should be considered to determine which are more appropriate in a particular setting and for the particular programme (**Dr.Sundharavadivel et. al, 2000**).

In a report submitted to **Department of Women & Child Development Ministry of HRD Government of India by VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION FOR PEOPLE SERVICE (VAPS)** it is said that ICT in convergence with other forms of communication have the potential to reach those women who hitherto have not been reached by any other media, thereby empowering them to participate in economic and social progress, and make informed decision on issues that affect them. Knowledge revolution is an important outcome of ICTs. There is a flood of knowledge for people and ICT, when used as a broad tool for amalgamating local knowledge incubated by the communities with information existing in remote databases and in public domain, heralds the formation of a new class of society - the Knowledge Society. Knowledge thereby becomes the fundamental resource for all economic and developmental activities in the knowledge society of which women form an equal part. Information technology is the common denominator that links people, irrespective of caste, class, sex, religion, race or political alignments. This is why it becomes even more important to evaluate and assess the role of communication technology in empowering women, particularly from the point of view of access and utilization. In this research it is found that it is true that ICTs has made their life easier. The trend shows that this sector helped the women to increase their awareness about the world and it also allowed them to participate in all the affairs of their work.

New Media has paved a new approach to the empowerment of women in South Africa (**Danny Glen Wright in 2011**). In the research "**Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women through ICT: United Nation Division for the Advancement of Women Department of Economic and Social Affair**" in 2005 It was found that as women started involving in the Baduria ICT centre in West Bengal, India they reported that they gained more respect in their local communities because of the ICT skills acquired at the center learning use of a computer and accessing and distributing information to local people. This resulted in greater respect at both the family and community level. There was also an emergence of solidarity since women learned to use computer together at the ICT center, they often discussed their problems and creating a sense of unity among them.

In the research "**Arab Social Media, Dubai School of Government**" in 2011 it was explored in survey that how social media impacts Arab women, and its potential as a tool for women's empowerment. Most felt that New Media could in fact enhance women's participation in the legal, political, economic, social, and civic arenas. A high percentage of respondent felt that New Media could be an empowering tool for women, enhancing their participation in several facets of their lives including the legal, economic (enhancing entrepreneurial and employment opportunities), political and social expression and promoting social change aspect.

## METHODOLOGY

► Methodology of this research is "survey method." Surveying is a research method that we use to get information about certain groups of people of interest to us. **According to Jacqueline P. Wiseman and Marcia S. Aron** Survey research is a method for collecting and analyzing social data via highly structured and often very detailed interviews or questionnaires to obtain information from large numbers of respondents presumed to be representative of a specific population.

Survey method has two types:

1. Descriptive Survey
2. Analytical Survey

► This research is based on Analytical survey. The Analytical survey, seeks to find out why people behave the way they do. Researchers often use data from descriptive surveys to develop hypotheses and use analytical surveys to test their hypotheses about what causes certain kinds of behavior.

► Analytical surveys attempt to determine whether there is causal relationship between certain kinds of behavior and various social and demographic characteristics of people.

The study has been conducted on 60 women of Patna. After the data collected from the field it was processed in computer using statistical package for social science (SPSS), and excel. These packages are used to make the analysis easy and clear.

For this research, researcher has chosen non-probability sampling. In non-probability sampling population are chosen based on their relative ease of access. Non-Probability sampling is of three types:

1. PURPOSIVE SAMPLING
2. QUOTA SAMPLING
3. CONVENIENCE SAMPLING

Under the above-mentioned category of non-probability sampling, I have chosen "**Purposive Sampling**" in which samples are chosen based on who they think would be appropriate for study.

60 women are chosen ageing between 20-40. As I have chosen purposive sampling so the respondents are college going girls and women who use internet for their various purpose.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

**Finding of educational empowerment through new technologies like e-learning is based on following criteria:**

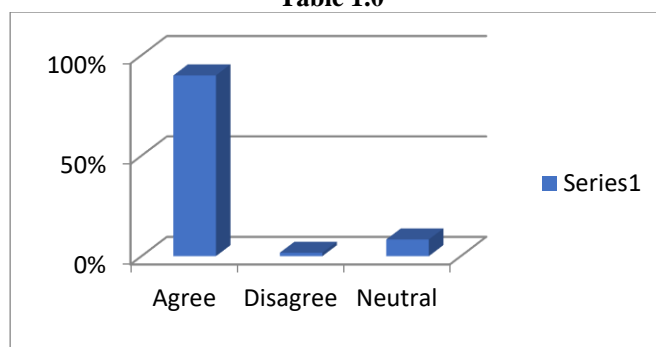
- How frequently women use New Media for educational purpose.
- New Media platform has broadened the horizon/given easy success of education for women.
- What kind of material one search online.
- How one prefers to search online.

The data revealed from this survey suggest that women of Patna are getting educational empowerment due to use of New Media in their life. As per the survey of 60 women 54 women are agreed that New Media New Media platform has broaden the horizon/given easy success of education for women. Only one woman disagrees on this and rest has a neutral opinion.

### New Media has broadened the horizon/given easy access to education

	Frequency	percent
Agree	54	90
Disagree	1	1.7
Neutral	5	8.3
Total	60	100

**Table 1.0**



**Fig 1.0**

Women have started accepting the fact that New Media platform is giving them easy access in enhancing their education, their responds in other question has proved this.

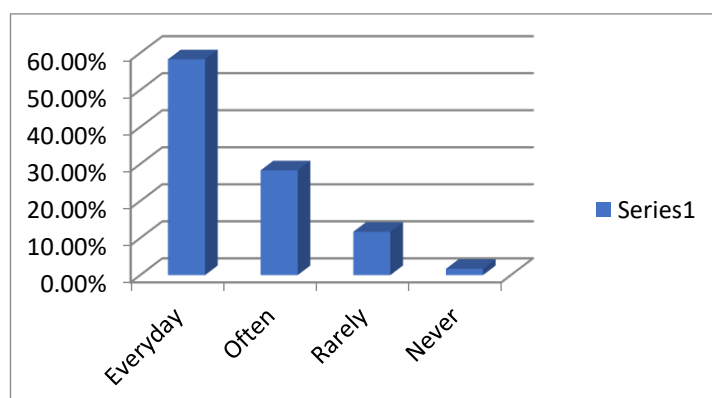
Among the survey of 60 women 57.4% 4women use Internet every day for their educational purpose, whereas 27.9% women use internet often, 11.5% use rarely and only 1.6% women never use internet for their educational purpose.

- **How frequently women use New Media for educational purpose.**

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Everyday	35	58.3
Often	17	28.3
Rarely	7	11.7
Never	1	1.7
Total	60	100.0

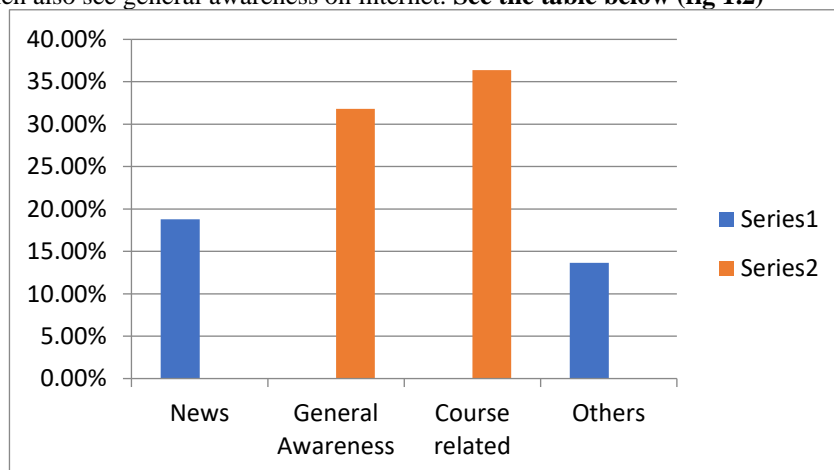
**Table: 1.1**





**Fig: 1.1**

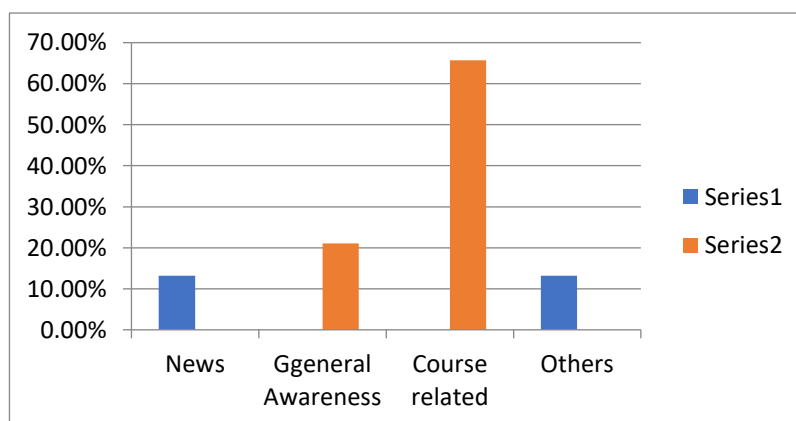
This research has purposive sampling and to make the sampling purposive researcher chose students for the survey. There are 38 college going students aging around 20-25 and 22 women ageing around 30-40 so the data suggest their traits in using New Media for educational purpose. If we see the data separately of women and college going girls then the data is in this way that among 22 women ageing around 30-40 say that 36.36% women search for course related and very close to that 31.81% women also see general awareness on internet. **See the table below (fig 1.2)**



**Fig 1.2**

#### (Women ageing 30-40)

Now the data of the age group college going girls interpret that now a days girls are dependent for their class assignment and course material on internet and as earlier they agreed that New Media platform provides them easy access of education, they find internet an easy access for their class assignment and course related work so they use internet everyday or very often (**see table 1.1& fig 1.1**) for their educational purpose. Here we see that college going students ageing around 20-30 among them 65.7% students use internet for course related material. (**See fig 1.3**)



**(Students ageing 20-30) Fig 1.3**

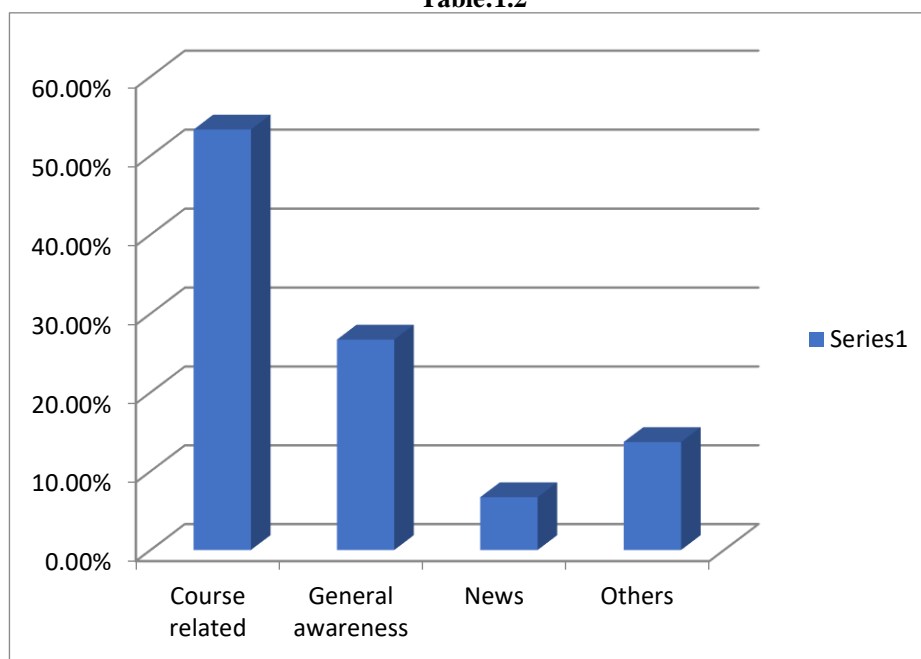
This data interprets that woman ageing around 30-40 are also enhancing their educational knowledge by using New Media platform every day or often or rarely that means somehow, they are managing to use internet for their educational purpose, as it is an easy access of education which earlier in the data it has been agreed by 54 women among 60 women (**fig1.0**) and (**Table 1.0**).

Internet is a platform where one gets lots of information at one place. Data revealed that 53.3% women go on internet for their course related material, 26.7% women search for general awareness, 6.7% women search for news and 13.3% women search for others.

#### What kind of material do you search online

	Frequency	percentage
Course related	32	53.3%
General awareness	16	26.7%
News	4	6.7%
Others	8	13.7%
Total	60	100

**Table:1.2**



**Fig.1.4**

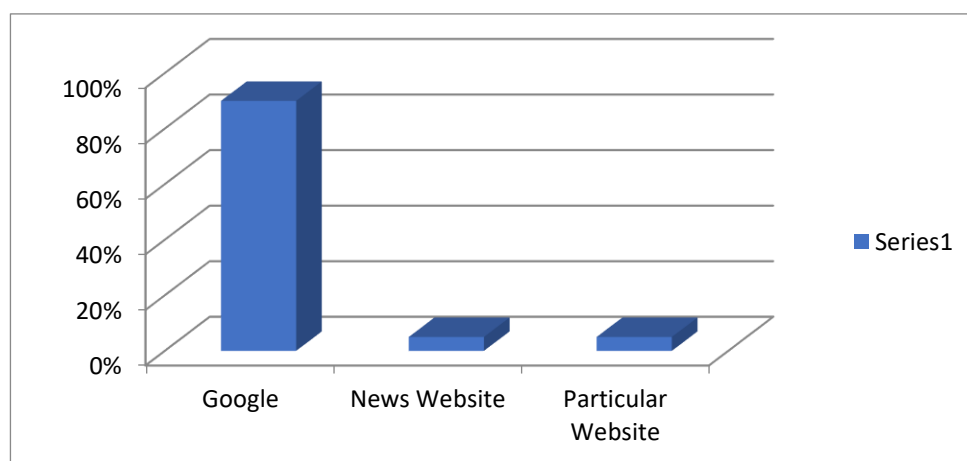
Data suggests that using internet for their educational purpose has become a common phenomenon among women and girls. If 53.3% women saying that they use internet for course related work that means they get course related material easily on internet which is satisfying their educational need that is why they search course related material online. If 26.7% women are searching for general awareness and 13.3% women are searching for news then also it suggests that they are enhancing their knowledge by searching this kind of material online.

90% women prefer to search through Google and only 5% and 5% prefers to search through news website or any website.

#### How do you prefer to search online material

	Frequency	Percentage
Google	54	90%
News Website	3	5%
Website	3	5%
Total	60	100

**Table 1.3**



**Fig: 1.5**

As through data (see table 1.2 and fig 1.4) we found that women mostly search for course related and then for general awareness. If 90% women are using Google for their course related work that suggest that they are not using direct link for their course material instead of that they are going through Google which according to them is easier for them. It suggests that they are not getting e-library facility for their course related work. If they will get e-library facility then they might use that and will get more relevant information for their course related work. Students prefer online medium for their course related work and college should provide more e-facility to the students which further encourage them searching through website for their educational purpose and they will get more authentic information for their course related work.

We all know that education is the most powerful weapon which one can use to the world and so with the revealed data women are getting empowered by using internet for educational purpose and we could say that New Media has emerged as powerful tool for women empowerment.

#### **Finding of change in lifestyle of women by use of New Media is based on following criteria:**

- For what purpose women use internet.
- E-banking/E-ticketing/online shopping/E-learning has made their life easy or not.
- Do they possess debit card.
- Do they use family members' debit card

#### **Use of internet on priority basis**

	1	2
<b>Entertainment</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>26.66%</b>
<b>E-MAIL</b>	<b>28.33%</b>	<b>16.6%</b>
<b>E-banking/online shopping/e-learning/e-ticketing</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Social media</b>	<b>21.66%</b>	<b>23.3%</b>
<b>News</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>21.66%</b>

**Table 1.4**

As per the survey finding (see table 1.4) on the priority scale of (1-5), 28.33% women have given priority to e-mail. E-banking/online shopping/e-learning/e-ticketing and social media is choice of 25% and 21.66% women respectively as top priority. However, news and entertainment are top priority of only 15% and 10% women respectively. Data suggest that women are using e-mail maximum for their communication purpose that means their lifestyle is changing in the virtual world. They are also becoming part of the virtual world. If we see the data then difference between using of e-mail and E-banking/online shopping/e-learning/e-ticketing in the priority list are very less, 28.33% women keep e-mail on the priority 1 and little less than that, 25% women keep E-banking/online shopping/e-learning/e-ticketing on priority 1. This suggests that they are connecting themselves more through virtual world. Their virtual activities are increasing. If women prefer to do their work through e-services then it suggests that they are that much capable of accessing e-services which itself is a sign of digital empowerment among women.

. In a Report submitted to Department of Women & Child Development Ministry of HRD Government of India "Enhancing Women Empowerment through Information and Communication Technology" by VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION FOR PEOPLE SERVICE (VAPS) Reg. Office: 130, C/1, Madura Coats Compound, Katcheri Road, Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu. Training and Research Centre, it is found that they use internet more frequently for the



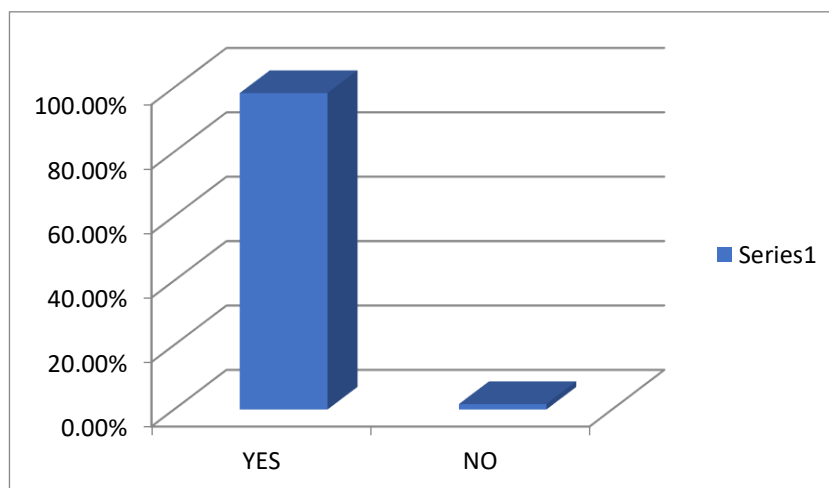
E.mail in compare to other use of the internet. They use it because to share information which is easier and quicker than any other source of communication. 351 respondents said they use internet for the E.Mail purposes whereas only 66 said they use it for the various news. Here also we see that researcher found that they also use internet for the study purposes like getting various materials for their study related subjects. In this research it was also found after data analysis that women use e-mail on priority basis for communication and students use internet for their course related work most. With this analysis we could say that use of e-mail and use of internet for course related work is very common and frequent among women. It means that internet is providing them opportunity of easy access of education among women and they prefer to go online for their educational purpose and communication purpose which signifies the role of New Media in empowering women.

Among 60 women 59 women that mean 96.7% women agree that **E-banking/online shopping/e-learning/e-ticketing** have made their life easy and above data (see table 1.4) clarifies it, that they agreed on this because they have adopted the new technologies in their day-to-day life.

**Do you think e-banking/e-ticketing/online shopping/e-learning has made one's life easy?**

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	59	98.3%
No	1	1.7%

**Table: 1.5**



**Fig:1.6**

Among 60 women 70% women own their personal debit card and 43.3% women don't own but uses their family members' debit card.

**Do you have your own debit card?**

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	42	70%
No	18	30%
Total	60	100

**Table 1.6**

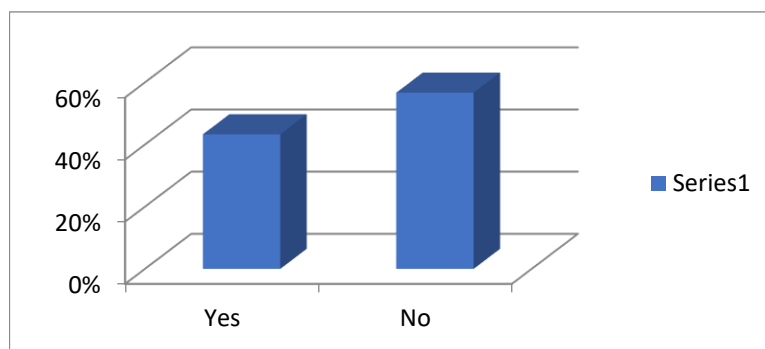


Fig: 1.7

**Do you use your family members' debit card**

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	26	43.3%
No	34	56.7%
Total	60	100

Table:1.7

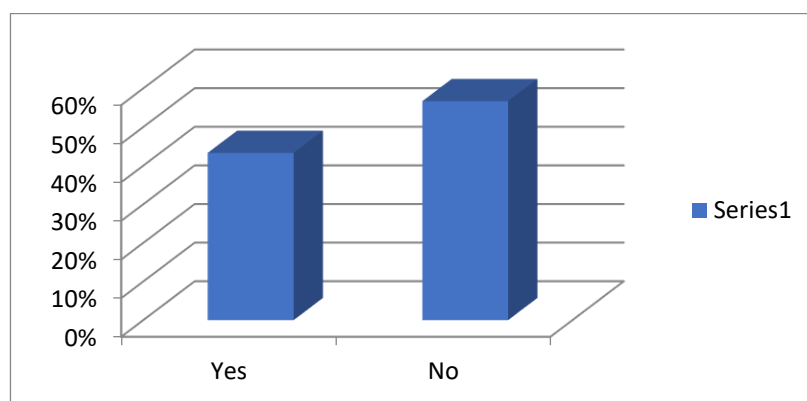


Fig 1.8

Having personal debit card or using family members debit card signifies that women of Patna are leaving behind the traditional lifestyle and they are competing with the new technologies and changing their lifestyle as per the present need. In our society it has been seen that women are always dependent on their husband or father for their financial need. But this data suggests that now women are having their own debit card that means now they are not dependent on their husband or father for their financial need which indicates towards the financial empowerment of women and financial power in their hand could change their lifestyle in many ways.

As per the **“Diffusion of Innovation”** theory given by Rogers there are few categories of adopters in the society and they are: Innovators (who innovate the idea), Early adopters (who adopt the innovation very soon), Early majority (those who see the example and adopt the idea), Late majority (accept the innovation after the generalize view) and Laggards (those who do not want to change and do not accept the new idea). Data in the **table 1.4, 1.5, 1.7** indicate that at least they are not laggards they have accepted the new thing in the society and they are using those new technologies in their life which is a clear indication of change in their life style.

According to a project conducted by **UNESCO** it is found that

- Women gained more respect in their local communities because of ICT skills acquired at the center learning to use a computer and accruing and distributing the Information to local people. This resulted in greater respect both at family and community level.
- Younger women felt they were able to approach the job market with greater confidence than before. ICT skills help them to find jobs and increase their income.
- Women became more creative after learning a program like Paintbrush in Windows XP.
- Women have achieved an increase in income as well as enhancement of solidarity among women in community.

With this we can say that if women would be given training on the use of these new technologies, then the lifestyle of women will change and women empowerment could be seen on larger scale.

**Finding of New Media is making the women of our society more informed and aware is on the following criteria:**

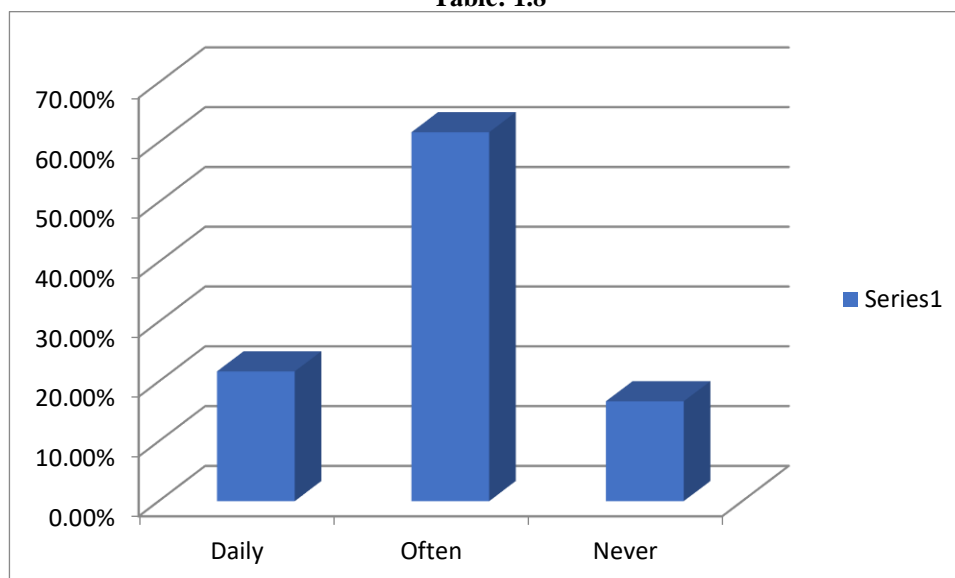
- How often they visit news website or e-paper.
- How they get information online.
- What type of information they seek from online platform

As far as concerned of women getting more informed and aware due to use of New Media, the data revealed that only 21.7% women visit news website or e-paper daily and 61.7% women visit often and 16.7% women never visit any news website and e-paper.

**I visit online news website or e-paper**

	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	13	21.7%
Often	37	61.75%
Never	10	16.7%
Total	60	100

**Table: 1.8**



**Fig: 1.9**

The data in Table: 1.8 & Fig 1.9 suggest that women do not prefer to visit online news website or e-paper for awareness on social issues or other information, however other data from **Table: 1.1** women use New Media every day or very often, but for educational purpose. In this survey is purposive sampling is chosen so most of the respondents are students and they use New Media more for their educational purpose. They are less interested in information from news website or e-paper. When they were asked that how they get information online then 91.7% women say that they get information through google and only 6.7% women say they get information through news website and 1.7% women get information from any other source.

**How do you get information online**

	Frequency	Percentage
Google	55	91.7%
News Website	4	6.7%
Any other	1	1.7%
Total	60	100%

**Table: 1.9**

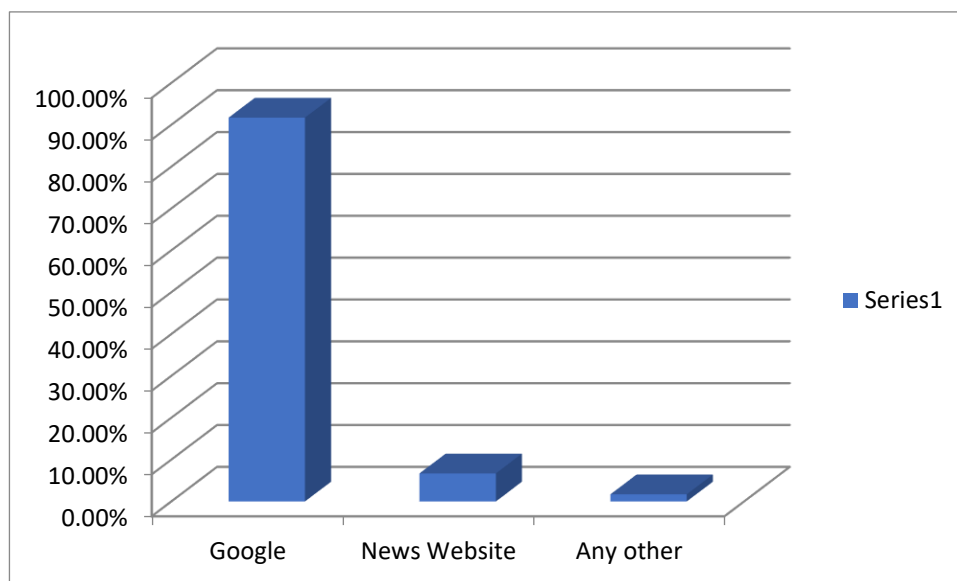


Fig: 2.0

Above data (**Table: 1.9 & Fig: 2.0**) suggest that women prefer to get any information through google. Earlier also women have said (**see table: 1.3 & Fig: 1.5**) that they prefer to search any online material through google. It is possible that they are getting information on social issue or other news from google only, instead of any news website or e-paper.

As far seeking information from online platform is concerned among women then in total survey of 60 women 45% women search for educational purpose again maximum respondents are students and they only prefer to seek educational material from online platform instead of getting aware of other issues. Data revealed that they search for other information also such as news, general awareness, fashion, entertainment, and health but the percentage is very less compared to educational material. (**See the table & fig below for data**).

#### What type of information do you seek from online platform

	Frequency	Percentage
Educational	27	45%
News	6	10%
General awareness	13	21.7%
Fashion	4	6.7%
Entertainment	6	10%

Table2.0

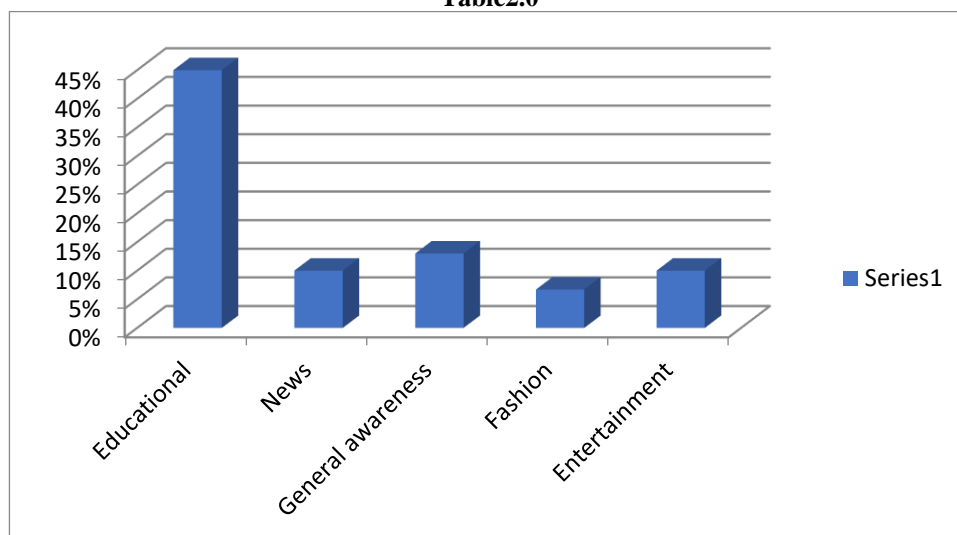


Fig: 2.1

Data suggest that women do not give importance to information and social awareness from news website. They are more concerned for their educational purpose. New Media provides all kind information but they are not using this platform for making them more informed and more aware on social issue. They have restricted themselves on internet only for educational material. But still as per data (see table 2.0) few women visit news website and e-paper for other information. We cannot say that all women are restricting themselves only to the educational content, rather than that there are few women who are giving preference to other information also and making themselves empowered by getting more and more information through New Media.

Empowerment does not only come from getting educated rather than that a woman must be aware and informed on all issues. They should see the New Media platform from holistic point of view and should not confine themselves on any particular use of Internet. They should take this New Media platform in a wider way for overall empowerment of women.

**Finding of virtual activities are making them more confident and bringing sense of equality is on following criteria:**

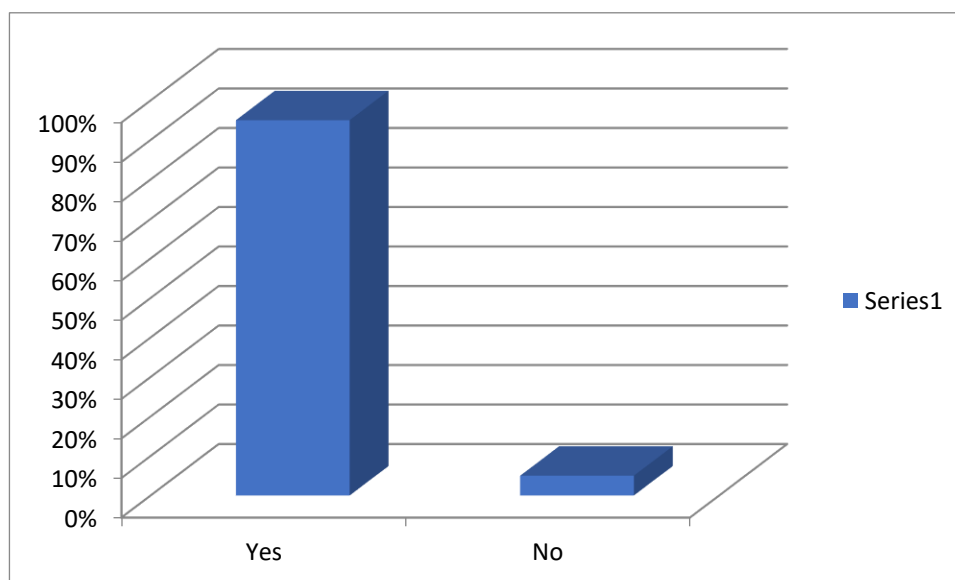
- Do they use social media.
- Women voice is more heard/visible due to social media
- Do they have blog
- How they share idea online

Survey result shows that among 60 women 57 women use social media that mean 93.4% women use social media and only 5% women do not use social media. (see table 2.1 & fig 2.2)

#### Do you use social media

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	57	95%
No	3	5%
Total	60	100

**Table 2.1**

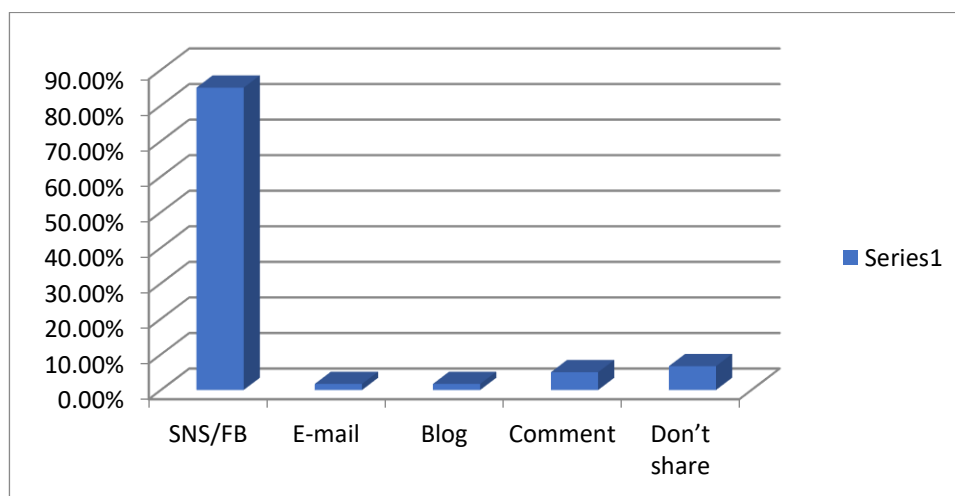


**Fig: 2.2**

Survey result suggest that social media is very popular among women of Patna. They even prefer to share their idea online through social media only because 85% women say that share their idea online through social networking site. Percentage of women sharing their ideas online through blog, e-mail comment is very less compared to social networking site. (See table 2.2).

**How do you share your idea online**

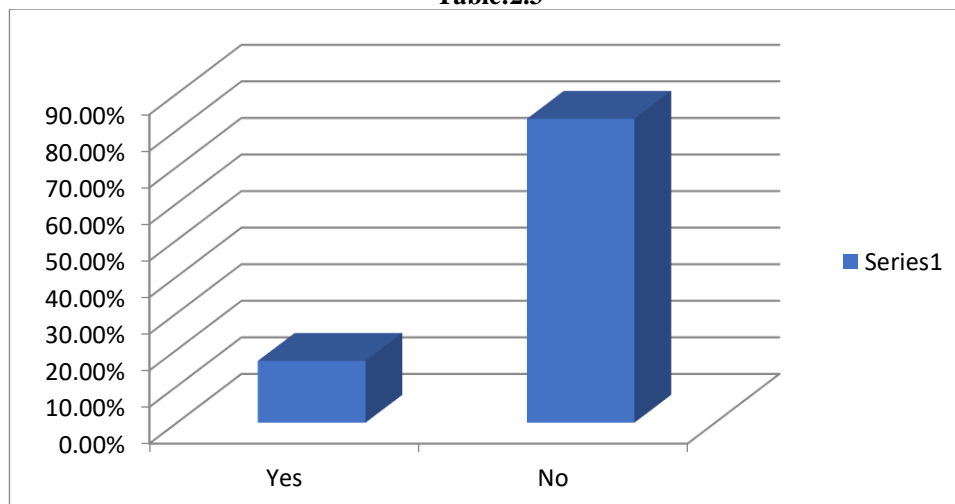
	Frequency	Percentage
SNS/FB	51	85.6%
E-mail	1	1.7%
Blog	1	5.0%
Comment	3	5%
Do not share	4	6.7%

**Table 2.2****Fig: 2.3**

This data suggest that they use SNS (social networking site) for sharing personal issues. With this we cannot say that they share their idea on issue base story. They are not indulging or active in giving opinion on social activity or any serious event. As per the data only 16.4% (see table 2.3) women have their blog and only 1.6% (see table 2.2) women share their idea online through blog.

**Do you have blog**

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	10	16.9
No	49	83.1
Total	60	100

**Table:2.3****Fig: 2.4**

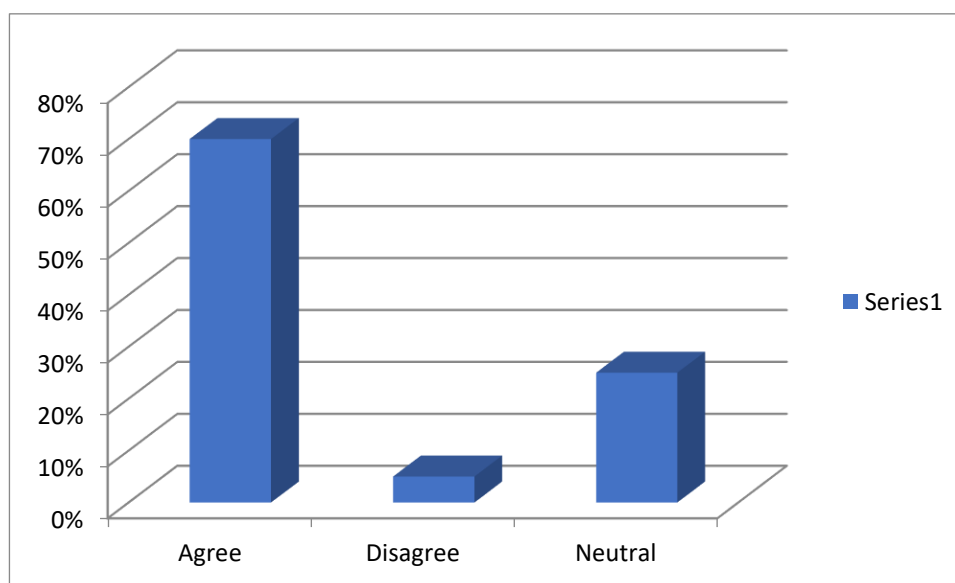


Although 70% women agreed that due to social media women's voice is more heard and visible and only 5% disagree on this and 25% are neutral. (See the data below).

**Due to social media women's voice is more heard and visible**

	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	42	70%
Disagree	3	5%
Neutral	15	25%
Total	60	100

**Table:2.4**



**Fig: 2.5**

Data suggest that New Media works best in putting their personal matter online and sharing it with friends. From above data it can be said that New Media (Internet) is slowly integrated into daily life, Interaction with New Media has increased and due to this there is a blurring line between virtual and actual activities among women. Meanwhile internet has surely facilitated them to share their personal matter online with their friends. Earlier women hesitate in sharing their personal matter publicly but this platform has boosted their confident in sharing their personal matter online with friends through SNS.

As far as sense of equality is concerned more, they voice their opinion more their voice will be heard and more people will act upon their opinion. New Media provides various platforms to voice their opinion on social issues other than Facebook, such as blog, comment, discussion board etc. and could become the momentum of change and bring the sense of equality in society between men and women. As per the survey women have initiated to voice their opinion through blog but percentage is very less. Among 60 women 16.9% women own a blog but only 1.6% women share their opinion through blog (see table2.3 & 2.2).

There is a famous aphorism given by Marshall McLuhan, **“The medium is the message.”** He explains through this quote that any medium has two crucial points to note: (1) it extends one or more of our senses, and (2) its ‘subliminal charge’ means that its effect on society arises first and foremost from the change it brings about in our pattern of perception. Here also we see that New Media is a medium which is affecting the pattern of perception among women and their lifestyle is changing. It is the medium only which is giving them opportunity to open and voice their opinion and personal matter openly with full confidence which is leading them towards empowerment. As per Marshall McLuhan’s quote **“Medium is the Message”** New Media, as a new medium, is obviously more than the sum of its content which is somehow proved with the above survey data that it is a medium which is playing a vital role in empowering women.

## CONCLUSION

The above study was carried out in the state of Bihar and as per the survey result it is found that new media is playing a significant role in empowering women of Patna in different ways. Today, Information Technology has changed the communication paradigm, providing easy access to education, information, awareness etc. which all together have left an

impact on women's day to day life and stepping towards the empowerment of women. New Media has influenced the life of women in different ways. With easy access to Internet at homes, cyber cafes, college and growing adoption of smart phones, the Internet is being used by women for a variety of things such as education, E-mail, SNS, entertainment, health etc. The development of New Media has enabled the women section to participate in the daily affairs of the state, which range from the household work to education, health, governance and so on. As per the data analysis it is found that women, among which mostly are students ageing around 20-25 are using internet for educational purpose and for communication they are using e-mail on priority basis. It has always been seen that women have to compromise many a times regarding educational knowledge due to several restrictions posed by societal structure but as per survey now women are having access of internet and they are getting benefitted in educational matter with the help of internet. Education is most important tool in empowering women and new media is providing them an easy access of education to them. Women are not even far away from using new communication technologies. They are also using new technologies such as debit card, e-banking, e-ticketing which is making their life easy. New Media has given such a platform to women where now they do not have to be dependent on men for various tasks, such as booking ticket, banking, financial need etc, this platform has made them self-dependent. Earlier we could have hardly seen that women use to do banking or ticket booking but this e-service facility given by New Media platform is making them dependent in banking, booking ticket and other work. In our Indian society women are supposed to do multi-tasking and survey findings suggest that due to use of New Media in their day-to-day life their life has become easy and they are able to perform multi task and their life is much easier now.

As far as sharing of ideas is concerned through online then as per survey it is found that women use SNS/FB for sharing their ideas, it signifies that nature of New Media (SNS/FB) is such that now they are coming forward and sharing their personal views and matters publicly. Now they are more open. In real society they do not get much option to share their ideas or problems. India is a patriarchal society where women are not allowed to speak up publicly and they hesitate also so the scope of sharing their problem becomes very less in real world. Human psychology is not always the same for all, few people hesitate in opening face to face. But virtual world is giving opportunity to the women of our society to open publicly. Now they are coming up on SNS/FB and sharing their matters easily. As I have already mentioned that sharing ideas and commenting on facebook is a very personalized matter which we cannot say that their voice is heard more. Until and unless they will not use other platform such as blog or any other new media platform for voicing their opinion their voice will not be heard and they will not become the part in nation building.

New Media have a huge potential for the empowerment of women, however there are many sectors where women need to indulge more such as voicing their opinion through blog and other platform so that their voice could be heard more on social issues also. It is necessary that they could be seen more in opening their mouth on social issues. It needs to be realized that information and communication technology by itself cannot answer all the problems facing women's development. Women must understand the maximum usage of New Media in their life which will give them sense of equality. In sum, the way new media has played its part in portraying about the atrocities faced by the women and empowering the women, no other sector has done.

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