

स्वातंत्र्योत्तर भारतातील
स्त्री-पुरुष समतामूलक समाज रचना
(स्थिती, गती आणि आम्ही)




संपादक

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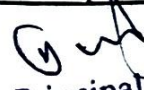

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Gender Equality and Indian Family, Social Life: Condition and Direction

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Women are an essential part of society. Women are the key to sustainable development and quality of life in the family. Women assume a variety of roles in the family. She is a wife, mother, manager of family income, leader, and administrator. Despite the large amount of work women must do on a daily basis to support their families, their opinions are rarely appreciated and their rights are limited. In Indian society, women are traditionally discriminated against and excluded from family and political related decisions.

Sex and gender discrimination is an issue of immense proportions in India. Gender discrimination in India had led to educational backwardness for girls. It's a sad reality that despite educational reforms in the country, girls in India are still denied a chance at learning. The lack of education is the root cause for many other problems. Woman has come out of the four walls of the house. Today she is free to join any service or follow any professions. But it is equally true that women in Indian society face problems of sex discrimination, female foeticide, dowry system, sexual harassment etc. The Indian Constitution attempts to provide equal opportunities to women, protect their rights and ensure justice to them through the various provisions. Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right but a necessary foundation for a thriving, peaceful and sustainable world.


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Gender Equality:

Gender equality, also known as sexual equality or equality of the sexes, is the state of equal ease of access to resources and opportunities regardless of gender, including economic participation and decision making and the state of valuing different behaviours, aspirations and needs equally regardless of gender.


Importance of Gender Equality:

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful and sustainable world. The exclusion of women places half of the world's population outside the realm of opportunity to partner in building prosperous societies and economies. Equal access to education, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision-making processes are not only rights women should have, the benefit humanity at large.


As per UNICEF, gender equality means that "Women and men, and girls and boys, enjoy the same rights, resources, opportunities and protections. It does not require that girls and boys, or women and men, be the same, or that they be treated exactly alike."

Role of Women in Indian Families:

Women are the key to sustainable development and quality of life in the family. Women assume a variety of roles in the family. She is a wife, mother, manager of family income, leader, and administrator. She assigns duties among family members according to their interest and abilities and provides resources in term of equipment and materials to accomplish the job. She plays a key role in the preparation and serving of meals, selection and care of clothing, laundering, furnishing and maintenance of the house. She is the first teacher of the child. Her contacts with the child during the most formative period of his development sets up his behaviour pattern. She is thus responsible for the maintenance of utmost discipline in the family.


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The Situation of Women in Indian Families: - Sex Ratio:

Sex ratio is used to describe the number of females per 1000 of males. Sex ratio is a valuable source for finding the population of women in India and what is the ratio of women to that of men in India. In the Population census of 2011, it was revealed that the population ratio in India 2011 is 940 females per 1000 of males. The major cause of the decrease of the female birth ratio in India is considered to be the violent treatment meted out to the girl child at the time of the birth. To date, a lot of families have a preference for male children and disfavour towards the daughter. Sons, especially in the business communities, are considered economic, political, and ritual assets where daughters are considered liabilities. According to media reports, the Sex ratio at birth for children born in the last five years has improved in 2019-21 from 2015-16. According to the recently released Economic Survey, India has more females as compared to males. The number of females per 1,000 males has increased from 991 in 2015-16 to 1,020 in 2019-21. The sex ratio at birth has also increased from 919 in 2015-16 to 929 in 2019-21.

Women and Health:

Poor health conditions of women is also a barrier in their progress. The main reason for such health conditions is the traditional importance given to a male child neglecting the presence of a female child which leads to less care given to her. Generally, in India, women are the one who eat last and least in the whole family. So, they eat whatever is left after the men folk are satiated. As a result, most of the time their food intake does not contain the nutritional value required in maintaining the healthy body. In villagers, sometimes women do not get to eat the whole meal due to poverty.

Women and Educational Condition:

Gender discrimination in India had led to educational backwardness for girls. It's a sad reality that despite educational reforms in the country, girls in India are still denied a chance at


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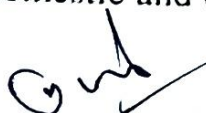
learning. The mindset needs to understand the benefit of educating girls. An educated, well-read woman ensures that other members, especially the children of the house, get a quality education. Girls are often prevented from attending school even when they're eager to so. Girls are supposed to fulfil domestic duties and education becomes secondary for them whereas it is considered to be important for boys. Many families and cultures tend to favour education for boys. Parents and community leaders may not see the value in educating a girl, believing it to be unnecessary for her primary roles in life as a wife and mother. Girls are groomed for marriage, so parents prefer to invest in a boy's education. A common belief is that when girls marry, they belong to their in-laws, So the return on investment for education is too low. For low-income families with limited budgets, education is unaffordable for girls. Earlier women were denied going to schools and have education but now conditions are much more stable. Still, illiteracy is the biggest weakness of women.

Women and Economical Condition:

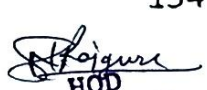
Indian women are economically weak since education was not given to them for years and property laws were also not in favour of them. They were dependent on men financially as all economic power used to be in the hands of men. Thus, women require economic power to stand on their own legs on par with men. The number of working women has also steadily increased. Today she is free to join army service or follow any professions. Women need employment justice, Education, Vocational training and Skill improvements would increase the capacity for gainful economic participation of women in India.

Social Life of Women in 21st Century:

Woman has come out of the four walls of the house. She has come to her own and started scaling the ladder of social advance with proud and dignity. Women of India are now uplifted and emancipated and granted equal status with men in all walks of life - political, social, domestic and educational. Today she is free to join any service


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or follow any professions. Women are working as doctors, teachers, engineers, women scientists, space researchers, giant IT specialists, women generals, women public officers, judiciary officers etc. Some women are governors and ministers. No distinction is now made in matters of education between boys and girls. The role of women is much different today that it was in the past. Today, women work outside the home. Women also have more power than they were in the past. Women are required to balance a lot more today than in the past as well jobs, children, homes, and life in general. But it is equally true that women face the numerous challenges and discrimination emanating from social prejudices.

Problem Faced by Women in the Society: -

Female Foeticide:

The worst manifestation in one country of gender discrimination is female foeticide. In India girl babies are being killed, aborted and abandoned simply for being girls. Females not only face inequality in this culture, they are even denied the right to be born. Women are not born but made. What better than India to exemplify this statement by Simone de Beauvoir.

Dowry:

Dowry is the main reason for discrimination and injustice towards women in Indian society. The Dowry system in India refers to the durable goods, cash and real or movable property that the bride's family gives to the bridegroom, his parents, or his relatives as a condition of the marriage. Some Cases, the dowry system leads to crime against women ranging from emotional abuse and even death.

Sexual Harassment:


Women are victims of violence and physical abuse. Regrettably, there has been a rise in aims against women. Crimes like rape, sexual harassment at office or public places, molestation, eve-teasing etc. Women are still exploited which is a shameful side of our country.



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Women and Indian Constitution:

The Indian Constitution attempts to provide equal opportunities to women, protect their rights and ensure justice to them. The main privileges granted to women by constitution of India are as follows:

- Preamble of the Constitution.
- Equality before law
- Equality of opportunity
- Humane conditions at work.
- Fundamental Duty
- Reservation of seats for Women in Panchayats and Municipalities
- Voting rights / Electoral law.

Government Schemes and Policies for Women Empowerment:

India's story on women empowerment is not complete without focusing on grassroots initiatives adopted by the government and civil society organisations. The governments have launched new schemes, policies and programmes to empower both urban and rural women. The prime minister's "Beti Bachao Beti Padhao" initiative aims at equal opportunity and education for girls in India. In addition, specific intervention on female employment, programmes on the empowerment of adolescent girls, "the Sukanya Samridhi Yojana" on girl's child prosperity and the "Janani Suraksha Yojana" for mothers advance India's commitment to gender equality.

Conclusion:

The discrimination starts from even before the girl child is born. In many instances, she is prevented from being born. The girl child is considered a burden. The traditional system, illiteracy, household responsibilities, lack of awareness, low mobility, lack of Confidence and male stereotypes are factors responsible for creating gender disparity. The lack of education is the root cause for many

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other problems. All girls deserve equal opportunities and an empowering environment.

Gender equality does not mean that men and women should be the same, but equal access to opportunities and life changes. Women deserve the autonomy that is neither dependent on nor constrained by any gender biases. Achieving gender equality requires women's empowerment to ensure that decision making at personal and public levels and access to resources is not only in men's favor. Both women and men can fully participate as equal partners in a productive life.

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