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**KARAIKUDI.**

**DIRECTORATE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**

**M.A.(SOCIOLOGY)**

**III Semester**

**35133-GENDER AND SOCIETY**

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# UNIT I - SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER

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*Social Construction of Gender*

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## **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

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Gender is a social construct that impacts attitudes, roles, responsibilities and behavior patterns of boys and girls, men and women in all societies. Increasing attention has been given to the importance of achieving gender equality in education. To date, however, most efforts have focused on addressing gender parity - an equal number or proportion of girls and boys accessing educational opportunities. Although simple gender parity may be easier to measure, gender equality encompasses a wider concept, of which gender parity is only a part. Gender equality moves beyond access and requires that girls and boys also experience the same levels of quality and outcomes of education. One of the key impediments to achieving gender equality in education is that it cannot be addressed in a vacuum; rather, educational institutions are products of the inequalities that exist in larger societies. Educational institutions are shaped by the societal forces that perpetuate gender-based discrimination; yet, they can also be essential tools to effect great

*Self-instructional Material*

change throughout a community or social context. Behaviours and beliefs formed in schools and educational institutions can have a lasting impact on gender relations in society. Education systems are both a result of external forces and instrumental to perpetuating or alleviating gender disparity around the world. This unit emphasizes the social construction of gender, gender and biology, gender equality and equity. This unit creates a lot of inputs for the prospective students about the gender issues, gender dynamics and gender roles.

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## **1.2 OBJECTIVES**

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- describe the social construction of gender
  - describe the concept of gender and sex
  - recognize the difference between gender and sex
  - explain the gender differences from biology perspective
  - Identify the importance of Gender equality vs. equity
  - describe the gender roles and development
- 

## **1.3 MEANING OF SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER**

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Social construction is a social process in which both individual and other social processes are intrinsically related. Every construction or image of the world is influenced by the individual's experience of the society and his/her interaction with various social processes. Therefore, many often it is argued that the social construction itself carries subjective biases as it is shaped by individual experience. Social construction is also influenced and dominated by the interests of a particular group or class of people. For instance, in Pakistan power and education rest with a few elite who don't take interest in the development of the human resources of the majority? In this sense, the culture, norms, ideologies, and values of the dominant group are used to justify and sustain a particular form of social construction. Hence social constructions through which we understand the everyday life try to classify people on the basis of caste, class, religion, community, kinship, gender and so on. The classification of people is the product of social construction and also forms an integral part of the social processes. Social processes such as primary socialization and the presence of social institutions help to produce an accepted kind of social construction. Hence, gender is the product of such social construction.

Gender is socially constructed and a result of socio-cultural influences throughout an individual's development (Schneider, Gruman & Coutts, 2005). Gender identity can be affected by, and is different from one society to another depending on the way the members of society evaluate the role of females and males. Our gender identity can be influenced from the ethnicity of the group, their historical and

cultural background, family values and religion. Often people confuse or misuse the terms gender and sex. The term sex refers to the biological distinction of being male and female (Schneider, Gruman & Coutts, 2005). To make the distinction clearer one could consider that we inherit the sex but we learn our gender (Boss, 2008). Gender is a structural feature of society and the sociological significance of gender is that it is a device by which society controls its members (Henslin, 2006). Gender like social class and race can be used to socially categorize people and even lead to prejudice and discrimination. Prejudice is a set of attitudes, more likely unfavorable, towards members of a group (Pennsylvania State University, 2011).

The idea of social construction of gender sees society, not biological sex differences, as the basis for gender identity (Anderson, Logio & Taylor, 2005). There are many different processes by which the expectations associated with being a boy or a girl is passed on through society. For instance one could see this from the moment a child comes into the world and from the fact that he/she has to face a "blue" or "pink" reality. I recently attended a baby shower party and I was shocked first by the amount of items a baby needs and even more about the color choice of each item. Everything was pink, as a baby girl was expected, and honestly I never imagined how many different shades of pink actually exist for products such as baby clothes. The house decoration was pink, people were wearing pink or pastel colors, all the gift wrappers pink as well as the gifts themselves. My gift was one of the few items of a different color, as I chose yellow and light purple items, which was actually a challenging task to find as most of the items in the store I shopped were blue or pink. The social construction of gender could be further seen by the way parents behave to their children, by their expectations about how their children should behave and act, and by the toys they buy for them. For example girls are supposed to play with dolls and be sweet and emotional and boys are supposed to play with action figures and be aggressive and rational. Therefore clothes, toys, and even the language used with young children follow the trend of stereotyping gender. Children learn by modeling and the messages they receive and act accordingly. An example similar to the dress code we have for children can also be seen with adults, particularly in the colors, fabrics and designs specific to each gender. Another example is the situation of a female working in the business field that is expected to dress in a masculine way in order to be considered successful and to be taken more seriously. This could demonstrate again how social influences affect gender expectations and shape behaviors and norms regarding gender.

Apart from the family, which is the first agent of socialization and learning gender identity, children learn from other sources such as

school. Starting from the first years of school, including day care center years, children learn their gender identity from playing and interacting with other children and care providers. By visiting a child care program one may notice that the environment is arranged in ways to promote gender identity. Most likely there will be an area staged as the housekeeping corner where girls the play and there will be another area with building blocks and tool kit items where the boys play. However it is believed by several that the kind of toys and roles children play affect their future and the skills they learn. Playing with blocks is considered giving experience in spatial relations and in mathematical concepts, where playing with dolls and dramatic role playing is associated with learning to be a nurturer (Conzalez-Mena, 2006). As children grow more stereotype ideas are involve regarding which subjects are favorable and suitable for each gender. For instance the most obvious example is math and probably all of us have heard the notion that boys are better in math than girls. Therefore one could see that again social influence affects perception about gender identity and roles. However perceptions such as this can lead to stereotype threads which are the fear or nervousness that one's behavior will exemplify a negative stereotype about his in-group and thereby in essence confirming the accuracy of the stereotype.

Furthermore the media also affects and influences gender identity. For instance children are constantly bombarded with shows depicting gender stereotype models from toys marketed as for boys or girls, to children's TV programs and shows. It is common for the children's programs to emphasize the role of the male "hero" who saves the weak female. Children interpret these messages as "real life" which shapes their reality, behavior, and expectations of their gender role.

Additionally cultural and religious beliefs and attitudes have a serious impact on gender identity and in many cases promote stereotype beliefs against women and lead to gender discrimination. When it comes to culture and religious influences in a society regarding the view of gender it is believed that the concept of institutionalized sexism is appropriate to describe this situation. Institutionalized sexism is the sexist attitudes that are held by the vast majority of people living in a society where stereotypes and discrimination are the norm (Aronson, Wilson, & Akert, 2011).

Society constructs our gender and categorizes its members similar as it does with age, ethnicity, race, social class and status. However the categorization according to gender is another way of manipulating members of a society and to promote inequalities. There are obvious biological and anthropological differences between the two sexes but we cannot use these differences to infer conclusions and provide stereotyped models about gender. However no matter the form, sexism has overall negative consequences and results in stereotyping

women, and even prejudice and discrimination.

### 1.3.1 Sex

The differences between male and female sexes are anatomical and physiological. "Sex" tends to relate to biological differences. For instance, male and female genitalia, both internal and external are different. Similarly, the levels and types of hormones present in male and female bodies are different.

Genetic factors define the sex of an individual. Women have 46 chromosomes including two Xs and men have 46 including an X and a Y. The Y chromosome is dominant and carries the signal for the embryo to begin growing testes. Both men and women have testosterone, estrogen, and progesterone. However, women have higher levels of estrogen and progesterone, and men have higher levels of testosterone.

The male/female split is often seen as binary, but this is not entirely true. For instance, some men are born with two or three X chromosomes, just as some women are born with a Y chromosome. In some cases, a child is born with a mix between female and male genitalia. They are sometimes termed intersex, and the parents may decide which gender to assign to the child. Intersex individuals account for around 1 in 1,500 births. Some people believe that sex should be considered a continuum rather than two mutually exclusive categories.

Examples of differences or characteristics related to sex:

- Males have testicles, female do not.
- Females have breasts, males do not.
- Female baby tends to weigh less than male baby
- Females can get pregnant, males do not.
- Males have more possibility of having mustache than females
- Males have thick voices than female

### 1.3.2 Gender

Gender tends to denote the social and cultural role of each sex within a given society. Rather than being purely assigned by genetics, as sex differences generally are, people often develop their gender roles in response to their environment, including family interactions, the media, peers, and education.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines gender as:

**"Gender refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men, such as norms, roles, and relationships of and between groups of women and men. It varies from society to society and can be changed."**

Gender roles in some societies are more rigid than those in others. The degree of decision-making and financial responsibility expected of each gender and the time that women or men are expected to spend on

homemaking and rearing children varies between cultures. Within the wider culture, families too have their norms.

Examples of differences or characteristics related to sex:

- A woman does more household work than men.
- Professions like nursing is said to be more suited for women than men
- Almost 120 years ago, women were not allowed to vote.
- In more Islamized countries, women have to cover maximum part of their body while men do not have to.

### 13.3 Sex and Gender: What is the Difference?

Sex and Gender are two words that refer to the differences between males and females. Though these two terms are commonly used interchangeably, there is a distinct difference between sex and gender. The main difference between sex and gender is that sex refers to the biological and physiological differences between males and females whereas gender refers to the social differences between men and women.

Historically, the terms "sex" and "gender" have been used interchangeably, but their uses are becoming increasingly distinct, and it is important to understand the differences between the two. In general terms,

#### SEX VERSUS GENDER

SEX	GENDER
Sex refers to the biological and physiological differences between man and women	Gender refers to the social and cultural differences between men and women
Sex has two main two categories: male and female	Gender has two main categories: masculine and feminine
Sex remains the same regardless of time and culture	Gender roles, expectations may differ across time and culture
Sex is created by the reproduction needs, that is biological features	Gender distinctions are created by social norms

**Check your progress -1**

Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below

b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit,

i. Explain Social Construction of Gender.

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**1.4 GENDER AND BIOLOGY**

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It is important to distinguish between sex and gender. Sex refers to a person’s biological make-up as male or female. Typically, a person’s genotype (genetic makeup) and phenotype (observable traits) are used to determine a person’s sex. Males are defined as having an XY 23<sup>rd</sup> chromosome, while females are defined as having an XX 23<sup>rd</sup> chromosome (though tests have revealed variations in chromosomes, including XXY, XYY, and XXX). Scientists have linked a person’s 23<sup>rd</sup> chromosome to the development of a sexed phenotype. Anatomically, males and females have different reproductive organs: a penis, testicles, and scrotum for males, and a vagina, uterus, and ovaries for females. Other anatomical differences include the development of breasts among females, and the presence of a menstrual cycle.

While sex is the determination of whether a person is biologically male or female, gender is the socio-cultural determination of understanding of what it means to be a man or a woman. Sex is largely constant across different cultures; in virtually any country, a person with XY chromosomes and male reproductive organs is considered male. Gender, however, takes many forms and is shaped by religious, political, legal, philosophical, linguistic, and other traditions. For example, in some countries, wearing make-up is associated with women and is seen as feminine. Elsewhere, men routinely wear make-up and it is seen as masculine. Across history in most parts of the world, women have been denied access to economic independence and legal and political rights more often than men have. This oppression is based on cultural understandings of women as the weaker sex, but is often linked to females’ biological capacity for bearing and nursing children.

Some physical differences between the male and female sexes are thought to occur as a result of both biological and cultural processes. For example, on average, males have more upper body strength than females. This difference is partially the result of differences in the biological development of the musculoskeletal system, but is exacerbated by the cultural tendency for men to use their upper body muscles more than

women through physical labor and athletics. Similarly, males have a shorter life expectancy than females do, on average. Again, this may partially result from different biological make-ups, but decreased life-expectancy gaps in developed countries prove that cultural institutions contribute to the gap. When men and women have similar careers and lifestyles the life-expectancy gap decreases.

**Check your progress -2**

Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below

b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit,

i. Discuss about Gender and Biology

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**1.4 GENDER EQUALITY AND EQUITY**

**1.5.1 Gender Equality**

This refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women’s and men’s rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women’s issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development.

**1.5.2 Gender equality competence**

Refers to the skills, attributes and behaviours that people need in order to mainstream gender effectively. It implies theoretical and practical knowledge of the various tools that can be used for this process. It requires recognition of the fact that no political or organisational action is gender-neutral and that women and men are affected by policies in different ways.

**1.5.3 Gender equality competence development**

A term broader than gender equality training, as it is understood to include a wide range of different educational tools and processes, including:

- Face to face training events and courses of study;



- Staff induction;
- Online modules;
- Guidance materials and compendia of resources;
- Consultancy arrangements;
- Networks for sharing expertise.

#### **1.5.4 Gender equality training**

Is a broad concept which encompasses any educational tool or process that aims to make policy-makers and other actors in the EU and Member States more aware of gender equality issues, build their gender competence and enable them to promote gender equality goals in their work at all levels? Gender equality training has been understood to cover a wide range of different educational tools and processes: face to face training events and courses of study, staff induction, online modules, guidance materials and related resources, consultancy arrangements, and networks for sharing expertise.

#### **1.5.5 Importance of Gender Equality**

Worldwide, most countries recognize that equal rights should exist between men and women. Many have produced regulations intended to fight discrimination and programs granting women access to health, education, and economic rights such as land ownership. However, the fact remains that women have fewer opportunities than men to benefit from economic development, with lower participation in the labor force.

Even in the most advanced countries, their wages average 73 percent of those of men. International programs such as the Millennium Development Goals point out the benefits of addressing gender inequality and the positive impact this can have on poverty reduction. The principle of gender equity in the workplace is generally accepted, discriminatory practices persist in many organizations despite regulations to the contrary. It is important to create an open and friendly atmosphere to address gender discrimination issues; therefore it is critical to involve men and women rather than only women. Because gender biases are embedded in culture, it is very difficult to eliminate them without having a holistic view and involving men as a part of the solution.

#### **1.5.6 Sustainable Development Goal 5: Gender equality**

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls  
Empowering women and promoting gender equality is crucial to accelerating sustainable development. Ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls is not only a basic human right, but it also has a multiplier effect across all other development areas.  
Since 2000, UNDP together with our UN partners and the rest of the global community has made gender equality central to our work, and we

have seen some remarkable successes. More girls are now in school compared to 15 years ago, and most regions have reached gender parity in primary education. Women now make up to 41 percent of paid workers outside of agriculture, compared to 35 percent in 1990.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to build on these achievements to ensure that there is an end to discrimination against women and girls everywhere. There are still gross inequalities in access to paid employment in some regions, and significant gaps between men and women in the labour market. Sexual violence and exploitation, the unequal division of unpaid care and domestic work, and discrimination in public decision making, all remain huge barriers. Gender equality is one of 17 Global Goals that make up the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. An integrated approach is crucial for progress across the multiple goals.

### **1.5.7 Gender Equity**

Gender Equity is the process of allocating resources, programs, and decision making fairly to both males and females without any discrimination on the basis of sex...and addressing any imbalances in the benefits available to males and females. This requires ensuring that everyone has access to a full range of opportunities to achieve the social, psychological and physical benefits. It does not necessarily mean making the same programs and facilities available to both males and females. Gender equity requires that girls and women be provided with a full range of activity and program choices that meet their needs, interests and experiences. Therefore, some activities may be the same as those offered to boys and men, some may be altered, and some may be altogether different. Human rights legislation, including the 1982 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, has affirmed the principles of equity while making provisions for affirmative action programs to eliminate disadvantages.

### **1.5.8 Equality vs. Equity**

There is sometimes confusion about the difference between the concepts of equality and equity. Usage often depends on the sector and country in question. In Canada, in the sport and physical activity system, the use of gender equity is most common.

In contrast to equity, gender equality is the process of allocating resources, programs and decision making so that males and females have the same (therefore females and males would each receive 50% of the resources, facilities, and each have access to the same programs, e.g. if there was a male program, there would also be a female program). While the goal of treating everyone the same may seem noble, the principle of equal treatment tends to ignore the fact that people differ in their capacities, interests, resources and experiences.

Equality focuses on creating the same starting line for

everyone. Equity has the goal of providing everyone with the full range of opportunities and benefits – the same finish line.

### **1.5.9 The Benefits of Gender Equity**

Organizations have much to gain by committing themselves to achieving gender equity:

- Fully representing the population base and tapping the resources of every member results in a larger, stronger and more effective organization.
- Skilled women provide the organization with an important talent pool of administrators, coaches and officials.
- Taking the lead in promoting girls and women brings prestige and support to the organization.
- Working together, women and men can learn to build equal partnerships.
- By fulfilling their legal responsibility to treat fairly everyone involved in the organization and making a commitment to gender equity, organizations avoid a negative public image as well as the time and expense of dealing with unnecessary lawsuits.

**Why do we need equity?** We need gender equity now. Those are words often uttered in social justice circles, and recently, across a number of headlines. What does that mean? More broadly, how is gender equity different than gender equality?

**If gender equality is the end, gender equity is the means.** Gender equality "does not mean that women and men will become the same, but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female." Gender equity means fairness of treatment for women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different, but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations, and opportunities. When we talk about opportunity, we're talking about ensuring opportunity is not limited simply on the basis of gender. We are talking about correcting for gender biases so that economic outcomes improve for all.

#### **1.5.10 Preference for Sons**

Cultural institutions in India, particularly those of patrilineality (inheritance through male descendants) and patrilocality (married couples living with or near the husband's parents), play a central role in perpetuating gender inequality and ideas about gender-appropriate behaviour. A culturally ingrained parental preference for sons —

emanating from their importance as caregivers for parents in old age — is linked to poorer consequences for daughters.

The dowry system, involving a cash or in-kind payment from the bride’s family to the groom’s at the time of marriage, is another institution that disempowers women. Such parental preferences are reflected in increasingly masculine sex ratios in India. In 2011, there were 919 girls under age six per 1000 boys, despite sex determination being outlawed in India.

India ranked 87th out of 144 countries on the Global Gender Gap Index 2016 by the World Economic Forum, with a ranking of 136 in the economic sphere, 113 in educational attainment and only 142 in health and survival. These figures reflect the state of gender disparity in the country, and the lack of effective measures to address the issue. Even though the government of India has launched several programmes such as Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Women Helpline, etc, to further this cause, the scope for other stakeholders to contribute is immense. Understanding the impact of gender interventions can help develop effective models that can be scaled. Though the process of achieving gender equity is gradual and inter-generational, it will still be within our reach if concerted and comprehensive action is taken.

**Check your progress -3**

- Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below
- b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit,
- i. Explain the importance of Gender Equality

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- ii. Analyze why we need Gender Equity

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**1.6 LET US SUM UP**

This unit proposes the basic concepts and Terminologies of Social construction of Gender. Human rights are for all human beings, men as well as women. This means that women are entitled to the same human rights as men. However, all over the world women have historically often been discriminated against in many ways, due to the fact that they are born as female and not male. Even though there have been some improvements, unfortunately, this kind of discrimination still exist in our societies. Ideas about gender roles represent a social norm that is currently changing and evolving.

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**1.7 UNIT – END ACTIVITIES**

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1. Identifying the gender issues and gender bias in India
2. Discussion on Gender Equality and Equity

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## 1.8 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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1. Social construction is the notion that people's understanding of reality is partially, if not entirely, socially situated. Gender is a social identity that needs to be contextualized.
2. The distinction between sex and gender differentiates a person's biological sex from that person's gender, which can refer to either social roles based on the sex of the person (gender role) or personal identification of one's own
3. 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,
4. Equity is the means to get there. The word 'equity' also has deep financial implications.
5. Gender issues include all aspects and concerns related to women's and men's lives and situation in society.

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## 1.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

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1. Andersen, M.L., Logio, K.A. & Taylor H.F. 2005). *Understanding society: an introductory reader* (2nd e.d.). Belmont, CA Thomson Wadsworth.
2. Aronson, E., Wilson, T.D. & Akert, R.M. (2011). *Social Psychology* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall/Pearson.
3. Howard, P. 2003. *Women and plants, gender relations in biodiversity management and conservation*. London, ZED Books.
4. Federick Luis Aldama (2005). *Brown on Brown: Chicano/a Representations of Gender, Sexuality, and Ethnicity*, University of Texas Press.
5. akley, Ann. 1972. *Sex, Gender, and Society*. New York: Harper and Row.

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# **UNIT II NATURE AND GENDER, GENDER IDENTITY AND SELF IMAGE, GENDER ROLE SEGREGATION AND RANKING, SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF GENDER**

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## **Strucure**

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Objectives

2.3 Nature and Gender

2.3.1 Gender: biological theory

2.3.2 Evaluation of the biological theory of gender

2.3.3 Gender stereotypes

2.4 Gender Identity and self image

2.4.1 Gender Identity

2.4.2 Biological influences on gender identity

2.4.3 Psychological and social influences on gender identity

2.4.4. Self Identity

2.4.5 Body

2.4.6 Identity

2.4.7 Social

2.5 Gender role

2.5.1Types of Gender Role

2.5.2 Gender Roles and Relationships Matrix

2.5.3. Gender Based Division and Valuation of Work

2.5.4. Exploring Attitudes towards Gender

2.6 Segregation and ranking

2.6.1 Introduction

2.6.2 What are the causes of segregation?

2.6.3 What are the consequences of segregation?

2.6.4 Gender Gap Ranking

2.7 Sociological analysis of gender

2.7.1 Introduction

2.7.2 The Social Construction of Gender

2.7.3 Major Sociological Theories of Gender

2.8 Let us sum up

2.9 Unit – End Exercise

2.10 Answer to Check your Progress

2.11 Suggested Reading

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## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

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As one of the most fundamental aspects of self, gender impacts everybody. All of us can point to a time in our lives when we were burdened by unfair limitations or expectations because of others beliefs about our gender. Gender identity appears to form very early in life and is most likely irreversible by age. Although the exact causes of gender identity remain unknown, biological, psychological, and social variables clearly influence the process. The sociology of gender examines how society influences our understandings and perception of differences between masculinity (what society deems appropriate behaviour for a “man”) and femininity (what society deems appropriate behaviour for a “woman”). This unit’s emphasis the nature of gender, gender identity and self image, gender role, segregation and ranking and sociological analysis of gender attitude towards gender and social construction of gender. This unit creates a lot of inputs for the student perspective about the nature of gender, gender issues, gender dynamics and gender roles.

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## 2.2 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Express the biological theory of nature and gender
- Describe the gender roles in society through variety of institutions
- Discuss the gender identity and self image
- Describe the causes and impact of declining sex ratio in India
- Identify the sociological analysis of gender

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## 2.3 NATURE AND GENDER

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### .2.3.1 Gender: biological theory

Biological psychology regards gender identity and role as arising from biological processes. Gender differences are seen as resulting from sex differences. In other words, women and men act, think and feel differently because of differences in how their brains work. These brain differences may result from chromosomal differences and may also be the result of hormonal differences.

Women and men are chromosomally different. Women have two X chromosomes (XX), whereas men have an X and a Y chromosome (XY). In the period following conception, female and male embryos are indistinguishable apart from their chromosomes. However, the Y chromosome in males starts to promote the production of testosterone and other androgens (male sex hormones). These androgens cause the male to develop testes and a penis instead of ovaries and a uterus. The

*Nature and gender, gender identity  
and self image, gender role  
Segregation and ranking,  
sociological analysis of gender*

*NOTES*

*Self-Instructional Material*

**NOTES**

androgens also cause the male brain to develop differently from the female. A biopsychologist would argue that it is these differences in brain development, and the differences in brain activity caused by the secretion of androgens in adulthood, that cause men to behave differently from women (e.g. acting more aggressively).

Some people are conceived with an atypical chromosomal pattern. People with Klinefelter's syndrome (XXY) are biologically male but have an extra X chromosome. This causes physical effects including underdeveloped genitals and a lack of body hair, and psychological effects including poor language skills and a passive temperament. People with Turner's syndrome (XO) are biologically female but have one X chromosome missing. Physically the effects of this are a short body and distinctive webbing at the neck. Psychologically, people with Turner's syndrome often have poor spatial and mathematical skills.

Women and men produce different sex hormones in varying quantities. Besides affecting the functioning of various bodily organs (e.g. causing the menstrual cycle in women) these sex hormones appear to have an effect on behaviour. Testosterone, which is produced in greater quantities by men, affects several types of behaviour, some of which are regarded as 'typically male'. For example, Dabbs et al (1995) found that violent offenders had higher testosterone levels than non-violent offenders and Coates et al (2008) found that financial traders with higher testosterone levels took greater risks. Women have higher levels of oxytocin than men. Some researchers have linked this to increased sociability. Oxytocin seems to affect the formation of bonds and attachments between people and Klaver et al (2009) found that higher levels of oxytocin are linked to improved memory for faces.

### **2.3.2 Evaluation of the biological theory of gender**

It is clear from a range of studies involving humans and other animals that chromosomal and hormonal differences between males and females affect a range of masculine and feminine behaviours, which supports the biological view. However, much of this research is correlation. Consequently, whilst it indicates a relationship between, for example, testosterone levels and risk taking, it does not indicate the direction of causality. Whilst higher testosterone might cause people to make riskier decisions, it might also be that the process of taking risks causes testosterone levels to rise.

The biological view of gender is supported by those cross-cultural studies that have found universal features of gender. For example, in all cultures studied, men are found to be more aggressive than women, which suggest



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an innate, biological difference. Similarly, Buss et al (1990) studied what women and men look for in a potential mate in a large number of cultures and found that whilst men consistently prioritised youth and physical attractiveness, women placed a higher premium on wealth and status. These differences may reflect biological differences between women and men that have arisen because of evolutionary processes.

**What are gender roles?**

Gender roles in society means how we're expected to act, speak, dress, groom, and conduct ourselves based upon our assigned sex. For example, girls and women are generally expected to dress in typically feminine ways and be polite, accommodating, and nurturing. Men are generally expected to be strong, aggressive, and bold.

Every society, ethnic group, and culture has gender role expectations, but they can be very different from group to group. They can also change in the same society over time. For example, pink used to be considered a masculine color in the U.S. while blue was considered feminine.

**2.3.3 Gender Stereotypes**

A stereotype is a widely accepted judgment or bias about a person or group — even though it's overly simplified and not always accurate. Stereotypes about gender can cause unequal and unfair treatment because of a person's gender. This is called sexism.

**There are four basic kinds of gender stereotypes:**

Personality traits — For example, women are often expected to be accommodating and emotional, while men are usually expected to be self-confident and aggressive.

Domestic behaviors — For example, some people expect that women will take care of the children, cook, and clean the home, while men take care of finances, work on the car, and do the home repairs.

Occupations — some people are quick to assume that teachers and nurses are women, and that pilots, doctors, and engineers are men.

Physical appearance — For example, women are expected to be thin and graceful, while men are expected to be tall and muscular. Men and women are also expected to dress and groom in ways that are stereotypical to their gender (men wearing pants and short hairstyles, women wearing dresses and make-up).

**Check your progress -1**

Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below

b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit,

i. Explain the biological theory of gender

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## **2.4 GENDER IDENTITY AND SELF IMAGE**

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### **2.4.1 Gender Identity**

Sociologists are particularly interested in gender identity and how (or if) it determines gender roles. Gender identity appears to form very early in life and is most likely irreversible by age. Although the exact causes of gender identity remain unknown, biological, psychological, and social variables clearly influence the process. Genetics, prenatal and postnatal hormones, differences in the brain and the reproductive organs, and socialization all interact to mold a person's gender identity.

### **2.4.2 Biological influences on gender identity**

Sexual differentiation, which encompasses the physiological processes whereby females become females and males become males, begins prenatally. The differences brought about by physiological processes ultimately interact with social learning influences postpartum (after birth) to establish firmly a person's gender identity.

Genetics is the scientific study of heredity. Geneticists study genes, the basic units of heredity that determine inherited characteristics. Determination of an embryo's chromosomal sex is genetic, occurring at conception. This process involves chromosomes, which are the biological structures containing biological "blueprints," or genes. The egg, or ovum, always carries an X chromosome, and the sperm carries either a Y or an X chromosome. A zygote is the product of conception: a fertilized egg. A male zygote (XY) is the product of the fusion of an egg with a sperm carrying a Y chromosome; a female zygote (XX), the product of the fusion of an egg with a sperm carrying an X chromosome. The X chromosome provides valuable genetic material essential to life and health. The Y chromosome is smaller than the X, and carries little more than directions for producing a male.

### **2.4.3 Psychological and social influences on gender identity**

Gender identity is ultimately derived from both chromosomal makeup and physical appearance, but this does not mean that psychosocial influences are missing. Socialization, or the process whereby a child learns the norms and roles that society has created for his or her gender, plays a significant role in the establishment of her or his sense of femaleness or maleness.

Children quickly develop a clear understanding that they are either female or male, as well as a strong desire to adopt gender appropriate mannerisms and behaviors. This normally occurs within two years, according to many authorities. In short, biology "sets the stage," but children's interactions with the social environment actually determine the nature of gender identity.

Some people are unable to merge the biological, psychological, and social sides of their gender. They suffer gender dysphoria, or emotional confusion and pain over their gender identity. Specifically, transsexuals may desire to be rid of their primary and secondary sexual structures and acquire those of the other sex by undergoing sex reassignment surgery. Transsexuals should not be confused with transvestites, who enjoy wearing the clothing of the other gender.

#### **2.4.4. Self Identity**

##### **How do you see yourself physically and psychologically?**

Your identity refers to the characteristics that distinguish you as you. It is the answer to the question, “Who am I?” These characteristics include physical features, interests, personality, ethnic origin, your gender, and so on. One of your most distinguishing personal characteristics is being male or female. A child learns this distinction by age two or three and will be very unhappy if you make a mistake about it!

A person's sex refers to being male or female. Currently, the word **gender** is also often used to mean male or female. However, scientists use “sex” and “gender” to mean different things. In this case, sex refers to the biological differences between men and women, or what makes them male and female, such as their genes, hormones, genital organs, secondary sexual characteristics, and some other aspects of their bodies. These biological differences constitute the sex of the person.

Biology determines sex differences between male and female bodies. Bodies are basically the same in all cultures, but gender differences are largely shaped by your social and cultural groups. There are two important parts to gender: **gender identity**, how you see yourself as masculine or feminine, and **gender role**, how society expects you to behave because of being male or female. Like two sides of a coin, they are different but closely linked.

Other scientists think gender identity is learned in childhood and is set by age three. From early childhood on, boys and girls are socialized, by the expectations of others, to think of themselves in certain ways. Consciously or not, parents, other adults, and your friends treat you in certain ways depending on your sex. So some researchers believe it is not biology, but social expectations that determine what it means to be masculine or feminine.

How does puberty influence your gender identity? Children already know that the genital organs of boys and girls are different. But before puberty, with clothes on, boys and girls don't look that different, especially if they have similar hairstyles. As you mature during puberty, the differences become more obvious as the secondary sexual characteristics develop and clearly distinguish who is male and who is female.

Differences in appearance represent only part of the picture. Gender identity is how a person thinks of himself or herself as a boy or girl. An

**NOTES**

important part of gender identity is how people expect you to behave, how society defines your gender role.

### **2.4.5 Body**

Most societies view sex as a binary concept, with two rigidly fixed options: male or female, based on a person's reproductive anatomy and functions. But a binary view of sex fails to capture even the biological aspect of gender. While we are often taught that bodies have one of two forms of genitalia, which are classified as "female" or "male," there are Intersex traits that demonstrate that sex exists across a continuum of possibilities. This biological spectrum by itself should be enough to dispel the simplistic notion that there are just two sexes. The relationship between a person's gender and their body goes beyond one's reproductive functions.

Bodies themselves are also gendered in the context of cultural expectations. Masculinity and femininity are equated with certain physical attributes, labelling us as more or less a man/woman based on the degree to which those attributes are present. This gendering of our bodies affects how we feel about ourselves and how others perceive and interact with us.

### **2.4.6 Identity**

Gender identity is our internal experience and naming of our gender. It can correspond to or differ from the sex we were assigned at birth.

This core aspect of one's identity comes from within each of us. Gender identity is an inherent aspect of a person's make-up. Individuals do not choose their gender, nor can they be made to change it. However, the words someone uses to communicate their gender identity may change over time; naming one's gender can be a complex and evolving matter. Because we are provided with limited language for gender, it may take a person quite some time to discover, or create, the language that best communicates their internal experience. Likewise, as language evolves, a person's name for their gender may also evolve. This does not mean their gender has changed, but rather that the words for it are shifting.

More than just a series of new words, however, this shift in language represents a far more nuanced understanding of the experience of gender itself. Terms that communicate the broad range of experiences of non-binary people are particularly growing in number. Genderqueer, a term that is used both as an identity and as an umbrella term for non-binary identities, is one example of a term for those who do not identify as exclusively masculine or feminine. This evolution of language is exciting, but can also be confusing as new terms are created regularly, and since what a term means can vary from person to person.

### **2.4.7 Social**

Social gender is the third dimension. This includes Gender expression, which is the way we communicate our gender to others through such things as clothing, hairstyles, and mannerisms. It also includes how

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individuals, communities and society perceive, interact with, and try to shape our gender. Social gender includes gender roles and expectations and how society uses those to try to enforce conformity to current gender norms.

Practically everything is assigned a gender—toys, colours and clothes are some of the more obvious examples. We begin to teach children about gender from the moment they are born; given the prevalence of the gender binary, children face great pressure to express their gender within narrow, stereotypical definitions of “boy” or “girl.” Expectations regarding gender are communicated through every aspect of our lives, including family, culture, peers, schools, community, media, and religion. Gender roles and expectations are so entrenched in our culture that it’s difficult to imagine things any other way.

Finally, norms around gender change across societies and over time. One need only consider men wearing earrings or women having tattoos to see the flexibility of social expectations about gender. Even the seemingly intractable notion that “pink is for girls, blue is for boys” is relatively new. Prior to the mid-twentieth century, pink was associated with boys’ clothing and blue with girls’ clothing (still due to the gendering of colours, but with a different rationale associating each color with particular gendered characteristics).

**Psychological and social influences on gender identity**

**Check your progress -2**

Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below

b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit,

i. Explain psychological and social influence on gender identity

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**2.5. GENDER ROLES**

A gender role is a set of societal norms dictating the types of behaviors which are generally considered acceptable, appropriate, or desirable for people based on their actual or perceived sex or sexuality. Gender roles are usually cantered on conceptions of femininity and masculinity, although there are exceptions and variations. The specifics regarding these gendered expectations may vary substantially among cultures, while other characteristics may be common throughout a range of cultures.

The term gender role was first coined by John Money in 1955, during the course of his study of intersex individuals, to describe the manners in which these individuals expressed their status as a male or female in a

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situation where no clear biological assignment existed. The term gender role refers to society's concept of how men and women are expected to act and how they should behave. These roles are based on norms, or standards, created by society.

**2.5.1 Types of Gender Roles**

Gender roles are a specific set of social and behavioral actions which are considered to be appropriate for the given gender. The concept of gender roles has been developed from the work of Caroline Moser. She explains this concept as follows: Gender planning recognises that in most societies low-income women have a triple role: women undertake reproductive, productive, and community managing activities, while men primarily undertake productive and community politics activities.

<b>Reproductive Role</b>	Childbearing/rearing responsibilities, and domestic tasks done by women, required to guarantee the maintenance and reproduction of the labour force. It includes not only biological reproduction but also the care and maintenance of the work force (male partner and working children) and the future work force (infants and school-going children)
<b>Productive Role</b>	Work done by both men and women for pay in cash or kind. It includes both market production with an exchange-value, and subsistence/home production with actual use-value, and also potential exchange-value. For women in agricultural production, this includes work as independent farmers, peasant wives and wage workers.
<b>Community Managing Role</b>	Activities undertaken primarily by women at the community level, as an extension of their reproductive role, to ensure the provision and maintenance of scarce resources of collective consumption, such as water, health care and education. This is voluntary unpaid work, undertaken in 'free' time.
<b>Community Politics Role</b>	Activities undertaken primarily by men at the community level, organising at the formal political level, often within the framework of national politics. This is usually paid work, either directly or indirectly, through status or power.

**Multiple Role**

Both men and women play multiple roles. The major difference, however, is that Men: typically play their roles sequentially, focusing on a single productive role Women: must usually play their roles simultaneously, balancing the demands of each within their limited time constraints

*Nature and gender, gender identity and self image, gender role Segregation and ranking, sociological analysis of gender*

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The gender-based division of labour ascribed in a given socio-economic setting determines the roles that men and women actually perform. Since men and women play different roles, they often face very different cultural, institutional, physical and economic constraints, many of which are rooted in systematic biases and discrimination

**2.5.2 Gender Roles and Relationships Matrix**

The Gender Relationship Matrix is an analytical tool that uses participatory methodology to facilitate the definition and analysis of gender issues by the communities that are affected by them. Using the Gender Relationship Matrix will provide a unique articulation of issues as well as develop gender analysis capacity from the grassroots level up. The main aims of the Gender Relationship Matrix are as follows.

- Helps determine the differing impacts of development interventions on women & men.
- Provides a community based technique for identification and analysis
- Initiates a process of analysis that identifies and challenges gender roles within the community in a constructive manner. The Gender Relationship Matrix is consisting of two parts of analysis namely level of analysis and category of analysis.

**Level of Analysis**

- Women – all ages in the community
- Men - all ages in the community
- Household - All men, women, children residing together extended, nuclear family.
- Community - Everyone in the project area as a whole.

**Category of Analysis**

- Labor – This refers to Changes in tasks, level of skill required (skilled versus unskilled, formal education, training) and labour capacity (how many people and how much then can do; do people need to be hired or can members of the household do it.)
- Time – This refers to changes in the amount of time (3 hours, 4 days, and so on) it takes to carry out the task associated with the project or activity.
- Resource – This refers to the changes in access to capital (income, land, etc) as a consequence of the project, and the

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extend of control over changes in resources (more or less) for each level of analysis.

- Cultural – Cultural factors refer to changes in social aspects of the participant’s lives
- (changes in gender roles or status) as the result of the project.

**Gender Roles and Relationships Matrix Format**

Levels of Analysis	Categories of Analysis			
	Labour	Time	Resource	Culture
Women				
Men				
Household				
Community				

**2.5.3. Gender Based Division and Valuation of Work**

Families provide love and support to adults and children, but homes are also workplaces, and households are important parts of the larger economy. Even when families do not directly produce or market goods and services, they keep the economy running by supporting and maintaining adult workers, buying and consuming products, and reproducing the workforce by having babies and socializing children. These domestic activities require labor. The total amount of time and effort put into feeding, clothing, and caring for family members rivals that spent in all other forms of work.

Every home is a combination of hotel, restaurant, laundry, and often childcare and entertainment centre. The mundane work that goes into these activities is usually invisible to the people who benefit from it, especially children and husbands, who are the equivalent of non-paying customers. Cleaning and cooking obviously require work, but even fun activities like parties or holiday gatherings require planning, preparation, service, clean-up, and other behind-the-scenes effort. Women perform most of this family labor, even though men do the same sorts of things outside the home for pay as chefs, waiters, or janitors. Although people tend to think of domestic activities as "naturally" being women's work, there is enormous variation in who does what both inside and outside the home. Every society has restrictions on what kinds of work men and women do, but there is no global content to these roles, and studies show that divisions of labor are influenced by specific environmental and social conditions. Activities often associated with women, such as nurturance, domestic chores, and childcare, are sometimes performed by men, and activities often associated with men, such as warfare, hunting, and politics, are sometimes performed by women. Thus, although gender is often used to divide labor, there is no universal set of tasks that can be defined as "women's work" or "men's work."



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**2.5.4. Exploring Attitudes towards Gender**

Attitudes towards Gender (also referred to as sex role attitudes) have been defined as "an individual's beliefs about appropriate behavior for men and women". One's gender role attitudes are likely to indicate her or his adherence to socially accepted and culturally based norms that dictate behavioral standards in cross - sex relationships. Gender role attitudes indicate the degree to which a person accepts or rejects socially accepted and culturally based norms that dictate appropriate behavior that is gender specific. Social Attitudes surveys have included attitudinal questions asking about the roles of men and women within the family, in particular around providing an income from work versus playing a caring role in the home. Examples of gender role attitudes include such statements as "men should open the door for women," "fathers and mothers should participate equally in nurturing and caring for their children," "men are primarily responsible for earning money and providing for their family," and "women should adopt their husband's surname upon marriage." Gender role attitudes and ideas about traits or tasks that are specific or inherent to a particular gender encourage us to stereotype or pigeonhole individuals according to their gender. Obviously, this practice has negative implications for both males and females.

However, gender biases in language, traditions, and the work place have tended to historically favour men and produce undesirable consequences for women.

- (ii) What do you mean by Gender Role?
- (iii) List out the various types of Gender Role.

**Check your progress -3**

Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below

b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit,

i. List out the various types of Gender Role.

.....  
.....  
.....

**2.6 GENDER SEGREGATION**

**2.6.1 Introduction**

Nothing defines the nature of gender in a society more than the tendency of men and women to do different work. In both paid and unpaid work, contemporary societies exhibit a remarkable level of differentiation between the tasks done by women and those done by men – the gender segregation of work. This basic feature of society has proven highly resilient in the face of dramatic social change in many other arenas, including the workplace, the family and the state (Geist & Cohen 2011).

**NOTES**

However, variation in the pattern of segregation belies the common assumption that it is immutable (Yaish & Stier 2009). Rather, although gender segregation is a universal aspect of gender inequality, the form that it takes reveals the nature of the gender system, and in theory it is no more inevitable than gender inequality itself (Charles & Grusky 2004).

### **2.6.2 What are the causes of segregation?**

#### **Preferences, choices and opportunities**

Paula England (2010) has suggested that social change with regard to gender segregation is largely one-sided, as women seek access to male-dominated jobs more than the reverse – because female-dominated jobs are compensated less. Thus, changes in women’s occupational distribution have been more pronounced than those for men. However, women’s desire for upward mobility is constrained by the continuing presence of gender “essentialist” views which hold men and women to be inherently, categorically different in terms of preferences and aptitudes (Hollander & Howard 2000). Essentialism pushes women toward jobs traditionally done by women, such as teaching, nursing, and other care-related service work – while men under the influence of essentialism prefer to stay in male-dominate fields. In England’s view, it may be women with higher earning potential – especially those whose parents and themselves went to college – who more often seek to integrate male-dominated jobs; for them, upward mobility may require crossing the gender line. On the other hand, women with less access to high-status jobs can pursue an upwardly-mobile path that includes female-dominated work; for them, getting into a white-collar administrative job, nursing career or teaching credential represents upward mobility even though their destination career is still female-dominated. As a result, gender integration has advanced much more among higher-status occupations.

Identifying the causes of segregation is further complicated by the distinction between two different kinds of gender segregation (Charles & Grusky 2004): that which is a more benign division between comparably-rewarded manual versus non-manual tasks, or “horizontal” segregation; and that which involves separation into hierarchically ranked occupations within those spheres, or “vertical” segregation. In practice, this differentiation is very difficult to define, sometimes resulting in circular definitions in which what men do is perceived as more “manual” and also higher status than what women do. In any event, this scheme at least attempts to address the fact that segregation results from a combination of both culturally-based “choices” and hierarchically imposed status rankings.

### **2.6.3 What are the consequences of segregation?**

The most-studied effect of occupational segregation is its contribution to the gender wage gap (Shauman 2006). However, the sorting of men and women into different jobs has a variety of consequences, including job

satisfaction and stress as well as employee turnover (Reskin, McBrier & Kmec 1999). Because wages are more easily measured and compared across work settings – both for researchers and for workers comparing job opportunities and outcomes – focusing on the wage gap is both substantively and methodologically reasonable.

The gender wage gap could result from three mechanisms. First, if women earn less than men on average, then it follows that female-dominated occupations will have lower average pay. That is true, but it does not account for the entire effect of gender composition; even statistically holding constant the lower wages of women, average pay is smaller in jobs with more women in them (Cohen and Huffman 2003a). Second, women may be sorted into jobs that have lower expected earnings. That could result from employers' hiring practices (Fernandez and Mors 2008), from women's lower levels of skills and experience (England, Hermsen and Cotter 2000), or from women's acting on their own occupational "preferences," such as the need to choose flexible jobs so they can care for family members (Cha 2013; England 2005).

All of these processes do contribute to the tendency of women to cluster in jobs that pay less than men's, or to specialize in lower-paid areas within their fields (Boulis & Jacobs 2008). However, a third mechanism is particularly revealing about the deeply embedded nature of gender in modern society: devaluation (Reskin 1988). Occupational gender devaluation occurs when occupations with high concentrations of women are paid less because women disproportionately fill them. That results from a number of factors which are difficult to differentiate in a study, such as the greater power of men to protect their own privileges in the workplace, and the discriminatory practices of managers and employers who profit from paying women less. However, recent research, which carefully sequences the changes in occupational composition and earnings over time, provides strong evidence that average pay in occupations does in fact decline after women enter them (Levanon, England and Allison 2009).

#### **2.6.4 Gender Gap Ranking**

India made no improvement in the overall gender gap ranking by the World Economic Forum (WEF) in 2018, compared to 2017. It stood at a low 108 out of the 149 countries in 2018, the same as in 2017.

"India maintains a stable ranking this year, but its gap is directionally larger this year, with a 33 per cent gap yet to be bridged," says the report, titled Measuring the Global Gender Gap.

India ranked lower on all segments - economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival ranking, and

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political empowerment. “It (India) needs to make improvements across the board, from women’s participation to getting more women into senior and professional roles,” the WEF said.

The country continues to rank third-lowest in the world on health and survival. It remained the world’s least-improved country on this sub-index over the past decade. India’s ranking on political empowerment came down to 19 in 2018, from 15 in the previous year. The country has closed nearly 40 per cent of its gender gap on this sub-index. On political empowerment, one country — Bangladesh — has reached a level of gender parity of more than 50 per cent among South Asia. The region’s remaining countries are yet to achieve a gender parity level of at least 20 per cent.

It is worth noting that, from a low base, South Asia has made the fastest progress on closing its gender gap of any world region over the past decade. Meanwhile, the country also recorded improvements in wage equality for similar work, succeeds in fully closing its tertiary education gender gap for the first time, and keeps primary and secondary education gaps closed for the third year running.

Interestingly, India has the second-largest artificial intelligence (AI) workforce, but one of the largest AI gender gaps, with only 22 per cent of roles filled by women.

“The economies that will succeed in the fourth industrial revolution will be those that are best able to harness all their available talent. Proactive measures that support gender parity and social inclusion and address historical imbalances are therefore essential for the health of the global economy as well as for the good of society as a whole,” said Klaus Schwab, founder and executive chairman of the WEF. (Source: World Economic Forum 2018)

**Check your progress -4**  
Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below  
b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit,  
i. What are the causes and consequences of segregation?  
.....  
ii. Discuss the Gender gap in ranking  
.....  
.....

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## 2.7 SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF GENDER

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### 2.7.1 Introduction

The sociology of gender is one of the largest subfields within sociology and features theory and research that critically interrogates the social construction of gender, how gender interacts with other social forces in society, and how gender relates to social structure overall. Sociologists within this subfield study a wide range of topics with a variety of research methods, including things like identity, social interaction, power and oppression, and the interaction of gender with other things like race, class, culture, religion, and sexuality, among others.

To understand the sociology of gender one must first understand how sociologists define gender and sex. The former, sex, is understood by sociologists to be a biological categorization based on reproductive organs. Most people fall into the categories of male and female, however, some people are born with sex organs that do not clearly fit either category, and they are known as intersex. Either way, sex is a biological classification based on body parts.

Gender, on the other hand, is a social classification based on one's identity, presentation of self, behavior, and interaction with others. Sociologists view gender as learned behavior and a culturally produced identity, and as such, it is a social category.

The sociology of gender examines how society influences our understandings and perception of differences between masculinity (what society deems appropriate behaviour for a “man”) and femininity (what society deems appropriate behaviour for a “woman”). We examine how this, in turn, influences identity and social practices. We pay special focus on the power relationships that follow from the established gender order in a given society, as well as how this changes over time.

### 2.7.2 The Social Construction of Gender

That gender is a social construct becomes especially apparent when one compares how men and women behave across different cultures, and how in some cultures and societies, other genders exist too. In Western industrialized nations like the U.S., people tend to think of masculinity and femininity in dichotomous terms, viewing men and women as distinctly different and opposites. Other cultures, however, challenge this assumption and have less distinct views of masculinity and femininity. What this suggests is that we learn gender through the process of socialization. For many people, this process begins before they are even born, with parents selecting gendered names on the basis of the sex of a foetus, and by decorating the incoming baby's room and selecting its toys and clothes in color-coded and gendered ways that reflect cultural expectations and stereotypes.

*Nature and gender, gender identity  
and self image, gender role  
Segregation and ranking,  
sociological analysis of gender*

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One result of gender socialization is the formation of gender identity, which is one's definition of oneself as a man or woman. Gender identity shapes how we think about others and ourselves and also influences our behaviors.

### **2.7.3 Major Sociological Theories of Gender**

Each major sociological framework has its own views and theories regarding gender and how it relates to other aspects of society.

During the mid-twentieth century, functionalist theorists argued that men filled instrumental roles in society while women filled expressive roles, which worked to the benefit of society. They viewed a gendered division of labor as important and necessary for the smooth functioning of a modern society. Further, this perspective suggests that our socialization into prescribed roles drives gender inequality by encouraging men and women to make different choices about family and work. For example, these theorists see wage inequalities as the result of choices women make, assuming they choose family roles that compete with their work roles, which renders them less valuable employees from the managerial standpoint.

However, most sociologists now view this functionalist approach as outdated and sexist, and there is now plenty of scientific evidence to suggest that the wage gap is influenced by deeply ingrained gender biases rather than by choices men and women make about family-work balance.

A popular and contemporary approach within the sociology of gender is influenced by symbolic interactionist theory, which focuses on the micro-level everyday interactions that produce and challenge gender as we know it. Sociologists West and Zimmerman popularized this approach with their 1987 article on "doing gender," which illustrated how gender is something that is produced through interaction between people, and as such is an interactional accomplishment. This approach highlights the instability and fluidity of gender and recognizes that since it is produced by people through interaction, it is fundamentally changeable.

Within the sociology of gender, those inspired by conflict theory focus on how gender and assumptions and biases about gender differences lead to the empowerment of men, oppression of women, and the structural inequality of women relative to men. These sociologists see gendered power dynamics as built into the social structure, and thus manifested throughout all aspects of a patriarchal society. For example, from this viewpoint, wage inequalities that exist between men and women result from men's historic power to devalue women's work and benefit as a group from the services that women's labour provides.

Feminist theorists, building on aspects of the three areas of theory described above, focus on the structural forces, values, world views, norms, and everyday behaviors that create inequality and injustice on the basis of gender. Importantly, they also focus on how these social forces

can be changed to create a just and equal society in which no one is penalized for their gender.

*Nature and gender, gender identity and self image, gender role Segregation and ranking, sociological analysis of gender*

**Check your progress -1**

Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below

b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit,

i. Explain sociological analysis of Gender.

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**2.8 LET US SUM UP**

Through this unit, you have learnt about the Nature and Gender how nature endeavoured to Biological psychology regards gender identity and role as arising from biological processes. Every society, ethnic group, and culture has gender role expectations, but they can be very different from group to group. Socialization, or the process whereby a child learns the norms and roles that society has created for his or her gender, the Gender differences are seen as resulting from sex differences biological theory of gender historical existence of this dichotomy. Nothing defines the nature of gender in a society more than the tendency of men and women to do different work. The gender segregation is largely one-sided, as women seek access to male-dominated jobs more than the reverse – because female-dominated jobs are compensated less. Thus, changes in women’s occupational distribution have been more pronounced than those for men. This unit discusses about nature and gender, concept of gender identity and self image, gender segregation and ranking, gender roles in society through variety of institutions such as family, state, religion, culture, the media, and issues related to girl child.

**2.9 UNIT – END EXERCISE**

Discuss the biological influences on gender identity

Explain the sociological analysis of gender and society

**2.10 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

1. Gender roles in society means how we’re expected to act, speak, dress, groom, and conduct ourselves based upon our assigned sex.
2. Gender identity is our internal experience and naming of our gender. It can correspond to or differ from the sex we were assigned at birth
3. The sociology of gender is one of the largest subfields within sociology and features theory and research that critically interrogates the social construction of gender

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## **2.11 SUGGESTED READING**

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4. Lippa, Richard A. 2002. Gender, Nature, and Nurture. Mahwah, NJ: L. Erlbaum.
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# **UNIT –III PRIVATE - PUBLIC DICHOTOMY AND SEXUAL DIVISION OF LABOUR IDEOLOGY AND GENDER, SEX PREFERENCE, DECLINING SEX RATIO AND SOCIO-CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS**

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*Private - Public Dichotomy and  
Sexual Division of Labour  
Ideology and Gender, Sex  
Preference, Declining Sex Ratio and  
Socio-cultural Implications*

**NOTES**

## **Structure**

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Objectives
- 3.3 Meaning of the Public and Private
  - 3.3.1 Dichotomy
  - 3.3.2 Public and Private Dichotomy
  - 3.3.3 Private and Public: Feminist Debates
  - 3.3.4 The Personal is Political
- 3.4 Sexual Division of Labour
  - 3.4.1 What is sexual division of labour?
  - 3.4.2 Neolithic societies
- 3.5 Ideology and Gender
  - 3.5.2 What is Gender Ideology?
  - 3.5.3 Origin of Gender Ideology
  - 3.5.3 Modern Promoters of Gender Ideology
- 3.6 Sex preference
  - 3.6.1 Meaning of Sex Preference
  - 3.6.2 Son preference continues in India
- 3.7 Declining Sex Ratio
  - 3.7.1 Definition of Sex Ratio
  - 3.7.2 Reasons for Declining Sex Ratio in India
  - 3.7.3 Consequences of declining sex ratio
  - 3.7.4 Scenario of sex ratio in India
  - 3.7.5 Schemes to combat the problem of sex ratio
- 3.8 Socio-Cultural Implications
  - 3.8.1 Socio-Cultural Factors and Male Child Preference: An Empirical Overview
  - 3.8.2 Theoretical Framework
  - 3.8.3 Social inequality
- 3.9 Let us sum up
- 3.10 Unit – End Exercise
- 3.11 Answer to Check your Progress
- 3.12 Suggested Reading

*Self-Instructional Material*

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## **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

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In this unit briefly examined the significance of the private/ public dichotomy in relation to masculinity and femininity. Here, we will take a much closer look at the issue of private/public dichotomy in the context of gender relations. During the course of this unit you will learn about various nuances related to this concept. The discussion on private/public dichotomy has been central to the Western liberal political thought and so also forms an important part of feminism and women's struggle for suffrage and equal political participation. Private denotes the activities which take place within the sphere of domestic, and public comprises of the activities related to business, politics, law, and governance. From a feminist perspective, the complete separation of the two spheres is seen as hierarchical and patriarchal. This unit discusses some of the ways in which feminists have debated the concept of private/public dichotomy sexual division of labour, ideology of gender, sex preference, declining sex ratio and we discuss about what are the socio cultural implications to affect the gender equality in the society.

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## **3.2 OBJECTIVES**

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss various debates in relation to the Private/Public dichotomy
- Identify the division of gender and valuation of work based on gender
- Probe the concepts of gender and ideology in different spheres of society
- Identify the gender imbalance in India causes and consequences
- Make clear the socio cultural implications of gender inequality in India

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## **3.3 MEANING OF THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE**

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In liberal political thought, the notions of public and private were conceptualised in connection with the relationship of individual with the state. Initially, the operation of the state was limited to the activities of the public sphere. Thus it excluded the abuse and problems committed in the sphere of the private. More so, the opposition and distinction between public and private was taken as natural, trans-historical, and trans-cultural within liberal political thought. The public sphere encompasses the domains of business, economy, politics, and law and the sphere of the private encompasses domestic domains of family which have been the

basis of women's subordination. This distinction is more complex because it goes beyond the simple division of two forms of social activity which take place separately. As Pateman (1989) argues, the division denies the symbiotic and dependency relationship which exists between the two spheres (cited by Chinkin 1999), and the public sphere is represented as superior to the private.

Feminists have challenged this distinction between public and private as natural and universal to every society. Broadly, the criticisms can be viewed in terms of: i) Women's location within the private sphere leading to their systematic exclusion from public life; and ii) the emphasis on the political nature of the private sphere which includes family, marriage and kinship. Hence, the division has denied the right to equality for women both in the family and in the public domain.

Further, this dichotomy is visible in all the spheres of life starting from international law, human rights discourse, work and economy, and in state participation. Feminists have rejected such an absolute separation of the private from the public life. For example, the sexual division of labour has not only created the notion of unpaid female labour within the family, and women's access to undervalued jobs in the labour market, but it has also contributed largely for the sustenance of the public sector. It shows that the division between the two domains is both dependent and political in nature.

**The terms "public" and "private," and their underlying concepts,** have been used for thousands of years, often as opposites to form the public/private dichotomy. For Aristotle, male citizens were expected to govern themselves. Separate from the governing sphere, male citizens ruled their own households. Other male citizens could not interfere with a male's household unless a male citizen violated the expectations for his roles as husband, father, or slave owner. Open to many interpretations, Jesus said, "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's," a statement perhaps serving as a basis for the separation of church and state. Today, the public/private dichotomy is widely used as a tool to delineate the powers of government and market actors, devise boundaries around family homes, and define responsibilities of community members. Public often concerns government, but sometimes includes areas where individuals can communicate. Private frequently refers to markets, but just as often to people and spaces where individuals, families, nonprofit organizations, and others live and cooperate. Public is characterized by access and openness. Private is characterized by efficiency, innovation, and promotion of self-interest.

### **3.3.1 Dichotomy**

**A dichotomy is typically conceptualized as having four components.** The first component is a division. A dichotomy divides phenomena. The second component is having two parts. Di- means

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“two”; a dichotomy has two parts. The third component is exclusion. The division creates a boundary that excludes overlap of the two parts. The fourth component is exhaustion. The dichotomy exhaustively includes all potential phenomena, and all phenomena belong on one side or the other of the dichotomy. Applying these four components to a consideration of the public/private dichotomy will further understanding of whether the public/private dichotomy truly is a dichotomy, and if it is not, whether the notion of a public/ private dichotomy is still useful.

**The first component of a dichotomy is that phenomena can be divided.** The boundary is drawn on the basis of a difference, such as one phenomenon possesses a characteristic the other phenomenon does not. In the public/private dichotomy, this boundary divides public and private. An important boundary separating public and private is eligibility. In the case of eligibility, public often implies accessibility: a public good is available to everyone. Private means restriction: the good is available to some, such as people who can pay for access. A similar boundary is a physical boundary. A public space, such as a public park, is available to everyone. A private space is restricted; for instance, a family can lock their home and take steps to prevent individuals from entering their property. Another important boundary is obligations. For obligations, public often denotes a legal requirement: individuals and families are obligated to pay taxes to governments. Private implies absence of legal coercion: individuals enjoy freedoms to act or not act as they see fit. Private examples range from whether to try to adopt children to whether to consume alcoholic beverages. The public/private dichotomy divides these phenomena into two spheres of activity.

**The second component is that the dichotomy consists of two parts.** Quite simply, the public/private dichotomy is based on two parts, the public and the private. Yet both public and private have multiple meanings, and each meaning of public is related to each meaning of private. For instance, in discussing social policies, public sector usually refers to government and private sector refers to the market. Public can refer to the public sphere and private to the private sphere when discussing areas of socio-political action. In each instance, public refers to one kind of phenomenon and private refers to a second kind of phenomenon.

**A key component is the ability to use the dichotomy to exclude one phenomenon from another,** to designate a phenomenon as one kind or the other. This component clarifies that all phenomena can be divided into two parts. For the public/ private dichotomy to exist, all phenomena must be able to be divided into either public or private. An example is social policy. We designate health insurance plans as either public or private. In the United States, the largest public health insurance plan is Medicare. The private system of employment-based health insurance plans insures most Americans. Further, the public/private dichotomy is

used to distinguish private property on which a home is built from public property on the same property, such as a sidewalk or a public utility mechanism. Finally, some activities are designated public and others private. Participating as a citizen in meetings of local government bodies, such as schools or city councils, is a public activity. The decision to have sexual intercourse is considered one of the most private activities.

### **3.3.2 Public/Private Dichotomy**

**The public/private dichotomy for public and private spheres often violates the requirement of exclusion.** Necessary to the public sphere, libraries, television and radio broadcasts, and religious organizations also require the interest of and support from private-sphere members. The public/private dichotomy may not exhaust all possibilities. Voluntary organizations, which belong in the social sector, are often considered necessary for a healthy society, but their membership does not easily belong in either the public or private sphere. The frequency and importance of public/private collaborations raises the question of exhaustion: do the frequency and importance of public/private collaborations suggest a third type of phenomena the concept of a public/private dichotomy does not encapsulate?

**What are potential harms of relying on the idea of a public/private dichotomy?** Potential harms include false assumptions, hidden involvement, and inequities. Advantages are supposed to characterize the efforts of public- and private-sector actors and institutions. After recognizing the numerous violations of the exclusion component, however, these distinct advantages become fuzzy and perhaps disappear. If tax benefits are removed, will individuals be less likely to act in their own interests and save for retirement? Governments financially support and intervene in many private activities. Some private actors may not provide goods and services without government involvement, and government may provide goods and services as a result of private behaviors. Public/private collaborations can hinder democratic accountability. When we ignore public involvement and label an activity as private, government officials and their constituents may be discouraged from gathering information about how government resources are used to support such private undertakings. Labelling an activity as public may overstate the degrees of access to a good, program, or service that government provides. Inequities arise from how public and private efforts are funded and regulated. All taxpayers may foot the bill for private retirement pensions and health insurance plans, especially when these plans go bankrupt. All governments regulate and some conduct surveillance, but many governments regulate and observe private behaviors of some social groups more than others. Inequalities in access to information and education can result in inequities in public-sphere participation, thereby producing public-sphere weaknesses.

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**Despite these dangers,** why should we continue to use the concept of the public/ private dichotomy? The public/private dichotomy can function as a tool and shield. It can be used to place responsibilities on the shoulders of government or nongovernmental institutions. The public/private dichotomy can be employed to distinguish between public and private spheres, highlighting the importance of the public sphere in keeping governments and markets under control. The public/private dichotomy can be drawn on to describe change. It is a valuable tool for analyzing privatization and new assumptions of responsibilities and powers by private and public actors. The public/private dichotomy is useful for describing declines in public spheres. The public/private dichotomy can be effective as a shield. It can be wielded to prevent government intrusion into private decisions and other government surveillance. Social groups can deploy the public/private dichotomy to draw attention to hypocritical stances taken by governments. These social groups can point out that the same sort of behavior is considered private for some, but that government actors seek to make the behavior an issue of government regulation for other social groups.

**Dichotomies are characterized as consisting of four components:** division, two parts, exclusion, and exhaustion. Using this conceptualization, it is difficult to characterize the public/private dichotomy as exclusive or exhaustive. Consequently, this difficulty raises questions of whether the public/private dichotomy is a false dichotomy. It remains an open question as to whether the benefits of relying on the concept of a public/private dichotomy outweigh its costs.

### **3.3.3 Private and Public: Feminist Debates**

Within gender studies, the interest in the private/public dichotomy emerged due to its gendered nature— association of masculinity with the public on one hand, and the association of femininity with the private on the other hand. Feminist writers have engaged with this debate in varied ways.

The feminist criticism of this dichotomy centres on questions such as; where and why this dividing line is being drawn between these spheres and whether there is a need to draw this line and so on. Feminist criticism in this sphere has varied in different phases of feminist struggle. Broadly, the demand for equal rights for women and men within family and the political domain has been an essential feature of feminist struggle. Liberalism viewed the concept of private and public in opposition to each other. Therefore, the existing social inequalities in the private sphere have never been considered in the domain of public. The claims about political equality, universal suffrage, and civil liberties are completely associated with the social activities of the public sphere. Feminists in the past questioned these structures of public and private as problematic and political in nature. They viewed the separation of the two spheres as the patriarchal face of liberalism. Other than liberal feminism, all other

feminists explicitly disagree with the liberal conceptions of public and private and viewed the social structure of liberalism as a politically contested arena; hence the debates over equal rights may not begin with the private/public distinction.

Further, feminists such as Firestone, Ortner, Eisenstein and others questioned whether civil society, which acts outside the liberal state, was a part of the private or the public domain. Liberalism has seen the distinction of the private and public domain in terms of the representation of social reality and the bourgeois, dominant nature of the liberal state. Feminists argue that liberalism is based on the structure of patriarchy and growing class relations. Therefore, they describe this conception as patriarchal-liberalism, i.e. freedom of expression is the product of patriarchy and capitalism.

### **3.3.4 The Personal is Political**

‘The personal is political’ was adopted as a slogan by feminists in their political struggle to challenge the ambiguities of the public and private divide. This slogan has drawn women’s attention towards the social acceptance of dualisms in the life of women and men. For example, the slogan has encouraged women to see matrimonial choice is not a matter of destiny, nature or luck but it is a conscious social action. Feminists have emphasized that the personal is structured through public interventions such as laws on rape, abortion and inheritance, policies of child-care, implementation of welfare benefit schemes and sexual division of labour at home and the workplace, and so on. The provision of child-care leave for women has given them the scope to balance work and parenting; however, it reproduces the idea that childrearing primarily rests with the women. Similarly, there are occupations such as nursing, teaching, and secretarial work which carry gender stereotyping in the labour market. The inherent inequalities of the private can only be resolved through political agendas and action. The slogan ‘personal is political’ has opened a new discourse in liberal-patriarchal societies. Women’s daily experience has become a means to understand the interconnection between the private and public. According to Pateman, “the separation of the private and public is both part of our actual lives and an ideological mystification of liberal-patriarchal reality...” (P. 131). However, some feminists have challenged the assumed separation of women’s world from that of men under patriarchal-liberalism systems. Women have never been completely excluded from the public sphere; they were engaged in the public realm variously. For instance, several participants in the antisuffragist movement were supporting women’s access to education, so that they could function as ‘good mothers’. These activities are seen as an extension of the domestic sphere, but have only a limited connection with women’s right to vote. As another example, nations that believed in ‘eugenics’ encouraged educated women of a particular class and race to go for more children. These ideas were

**NOTES**

controversial and are now dated. In contemporary society, women have representation in authoritative positions of public bodies, but the world is considered to be dominated by the men. Many women from the working-class have joined the public sphere for getting paid employment. Similarly, married women joining the factory are one of the prominent features of post-war capitalism in European countries. However, the presence of women is most visible in low-status, low-paid and unskilled jobs. This shows the continuation of the sexual division of labour within family and sexual division of labour in the work place. Feminists have argued that women suffer from a triple burden of work, i.e., domestic work, reproductive work and work in the productive labour market. Feminist analysis has shown that household work responsibility is rarely shared by both women and men. Therefore, a demand has arisen for the restructuring of the household to enable women to participate in economic activity outside the home. The appropriate calculation of a nation's economic growth can be achieved only by including the factor of unpaid household labour.

As you may have noted from the above discussion, feminists have concluded that liberals' idea of separate worlds is actually interrelated. The natural sphere of the family is part of civil society. The disintegration of the nuclear family is seen as a social problem which has led to the breakdown of civil life. In this situation, family as a social category forms a part of public life. Feminists see the family as an important concern of the state. Policies concerning marriage, sexuality and welfare measures by the state have to take note of power structures. Kate Millett in her book *Sexual Politics* (1971) defines power in terms of the political. Within the domestic sphere, power is exercised in forms of sexual politics or sexual domination. The exercise of power by the individual man upon the individual woman within the household is political in nature which Millet described as 'personal becomes political'. The approach of understanding private/personal as political can enable feminist scholars and activists to analyze issues concerning domestic violence, marital rape, female feticide/ sex selective abortion, women's access and control over family resources, and decision making which exclusively form parts of the personal.

<p><b>Check your progress -1</b></p> <p>Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below</p> <p>        b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit,</p> <p>i. Discuss about the Public / Private Dichotomy</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
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## 3.4 SEXUAL DIVISION OF LABOUR

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*Private - Public Dichotomy and  
Sexual Division of Labour  
Ideology and Gender, Sex  
Preference, Declining Sex Ratio and  
Socio-cultural Implications*

### NOTES

### 3.4.1 What is sexual division of labour?

Sexual division of labour means that work is divided between males and females according to their gender. While assigning or dividing the work, the capability of a person is not considered and only the gender is taken into consideration. Generally, all the household unpaid work is assigned to the females and males are supposed to go out for work and earn money for the family. It is not that men cannot do housework, but they think that it is for women to attend to these things.

The question of the role of wage rates is important because it gives an indication of how far trends towards gender equality in educational attainment (i.e. in market human capital) and in labour market opportunities (i.e. in the returns to that human capital) will result in a more equal division of labour. There are numerous reasons why female specialisation in unpaid domestic work may be the subject of concern in a gender equity sense. For example, domestic human capital may be of little value relative to market human capital outside a specific relationship, and so lead to less bargaining power within the relationship (via a lower external threat point) and poorer outcomes in the event of relationship breakdown.

### 3.4.2 Neolithic societies

Most societies have been patriarchal since the Neolithic era. This means that men were treated better and had more privileges than women. In Neolithic societies, there were gender roles that gave more rights to men than women. The men were warriors, head of household and possible rulers, whereas women were the bearer of children and would stay in the house to take care of them. Women in the past were discriminated against, and there is still just as much discrimination today, just in modern forms. In the past, women did not have the right to vote, own land, be head of house, own land, be citizens, and so much more. In the present, women are discriminated against in many ways such as unequal job opportunity, lower paychecks, and sexual harassment.

Most ancient civilizations were patriarchal societies. A way that societies showed patriarchy was having gender roles based on your sexuality. In many societies, such as Egypt and Nubia, the authority and decision making was all up to the man of the household. Men were also able to sell their own wife and children into slavery to satisfy debts. Men were also the only ones able to inherit land. Only when there was no male heir, was a woman about to inherit it. With men being more dominant, it makes women feel inferior and unequal. "He then becomes the ruler of our bodies. And this misfortune adds still more troubles to the grief we have". It is evident that women are unhappy with the patriarchal

*Self-Instructional Material*

society that they lived in, and it is sexist for a man to be ruler of a woman's body.

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## **3.5 IDEOLOGY AND GENDER**

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Gender ideology refers to attitudes regarding the appropriate roles, rights and responsibilities of men and women in society. Traditional gender ideologies emphasize the value of distinctive roles for women and men where men fulfill their family roles through breadwinning activities and women fulfill their roles through homemaker and parenting activities.

Gender ideology also refers to societal beliefs that legitimate gender inequality. Gender ideology is not a variable that ranges from liberal to conservative instead it refers to specific type of belief those that support gender stratification.

### **3.5.1 What Is Gender Ideology?**

An ideology is a system of beliefs and values which forms the basis for a type of thought, be it political, economic, social, or otherwise. But harmful ideologies attempt the justification of a perverse vision by the dominant elites, in order to present and support certain policies or agendas.

Gender ideology consists in denying that the differences between men and women have natural and biological foundations. Instead, this thinking proposes that these differences are the fruit of a social and cultural construction. It alleges that society and culture impose their respective roles on men and women, none of which corresponds to natural differences between the sexes.

### **3.5.2 Origins of Gender Ideology**

Gender ideology has arisen in the last century owing to attacks on the relationship between biological sex and sexual identity.

#### **1. Alfred Kinsey**

One factor that gave rise to this anthropological deconstruction—indirectly but really—was the sexual ideology of Alfred Kinsey, a doctor of zoology and entomology.

Kinsey is often referenced erroneously as the father of sexual education in the US and in the rest of the world. Kinsey and his colleagues conducted unethical sexual experiments, both in adults (who were interviewed about their sexual behaviors) and in children (who were sexually manipulated and recorded). As a result of these “studies,” Kinsey favoured the existence of “sexual outbursts” ranging from heterosexuality, to bisexuality, to homosexuality—with other perversions in between, including pedophilia.

#### **2. Dr. John Money**

John Money, professor of psychology and sexology at Johns Hopkins University until 2006, was one of the most prominent of these sexologists who redefined “gender” to mean “social performance that indicates an internal sexual identity.”

As early as 1955, Money had coined another euphemism: “the role of gender.” Money proposed that if a child was uncomfortable with his sex, his parents should treat him as if he were the opposite sex. That concept led to a very sad case of transsexualism, under the direction of Money himself, in which a child ended up committing suicide when he reached adulthood. Like Kinsey, Money was favorably disposed to pornography and pedophilia.

Money’s work helped convert the term “gender” into an ideological concept. Before the 1950s, the term “gender” applied only to grammar and not to people. (Languages that are based on Latin categorize nouns and their modifiers as masculine or feminine, and for this reason we still refer to them as having a gender.) However, the uses of the terms “sex” and “gender” changed during the 50s and 60s because certain sexologists, including Money, realized that their agenda in favor of sex change could not be defended enough with the use of the words “sex” and “transsexual”. From a strictly scientific perspective, human beings have sex and sexual differences that are genetically determined.

### **3. Pro-Choice Feminism**

This feminism emerged in the USA in the 1960s, driven by the publication of the book “The Feminine Mystique” by the feminist archetype Betty Friedan. She stated that motherhood presented an obstacle for the equality of women with respect to man and the modern development of society. The problem that constituted this “biological burden” had to be solved by means of contraception and abortion, and in time, lesbianism.

By 1969, feminists had achieved the establishment of a Chair in “Women’s Studies” at the University of San Diego, California. By the 1970s, the propagandists of extremist feminism had established the misleading term “gender” in their elitist jargon.

This linguistic history clarifies that the term “gender” is not and has never been a biological or scientific entity but rather a socially and politically invented concept. Though fabricated, this understanding currently dominates mainstream medicine, media and the academic world.

#### **3.5.3 Modern Promoters of Gender Ideology**

Both American and international organizations continue to actively support gender ideology.

##### **1. The Former Obama Administration**

Shortly after taking office, former President of the United States Barack Obama declared himself in favor of homosexual marriage. In addition:

- Under his direction the Department of Education ordered public schools to accommodate transsexual students, on pain of losing federal subsidies.

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- He supported LGBT groups wanting to impose “Transsexual Awareness Month” in schools, as well as favoring the installation of bisexual restrooms.

## **2. U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child**

Outside the U.S., the first promoter of gender ideology is the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990). Although it has very good articles in defense of minors, there are also others implying that children have autonomy equal to that of adults.

At the Beijing Conference on Women (1995), the U.N. coined the terms “gender perspective” and “gender equity.” Although in none of its multiple appearances in the final document, these ambiguous terms are equated with “various forms of family,” or families made up of two homosexuals or two lesbians.

## **3. The Organization of American States**

The Organization of American States (OAS) is another supranational entity dedicated in recent times to promote misguided gender bias.

Already in 1994, the OAS launched the gender concept in its “Convention Against Violence Against Women,” an otherwise laudable endeavor. In 2009, the OAS proposed the inclusion of the “gender perspective” in all social programs, both hemispheric and national. The Secretary General, Luis Almagro Lemes, is in favor of abortion, homosexual “marriage” and the legalization of marijuana – all of which he considers signs of “progress.”

Finally, the OAS issued a communiqué by which it requires the countries of its hemisphere that have not legalized homosexual marriage to do so. Implicit in this requirement is also the order that the LGBT ideology be implemented in all educational, health and cultural institutions of society.

## **4. Margaret Sanger and Planned Parenthood**

Margaret Sanger, founder of abortion giant Planned Parenthood, was a New York activist who promoted eugenics (the belief in a “superior” race), as well as contraception, abortion and sexual liberty. Today, the directors of Planned Parenthood follow her legacy. They promote the LGBT ideology in their programs of sexual education, even against the wishes of concerned parents.

The international conglomerate formed by Planned Parenthood, the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), also promotes the LGBT agenda around the world. This includes Latin American countries with the approval of their interested governments.

### **Check your progress -1**

Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below

b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit,

i. Explain the Gender and Ideology

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## **3.6 SEX PREFERENCE**

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### **3.6.1 Meaning of Sex Preference**

Sex discrimination begins before birth in many parts of the world. Many cultures have myths about how parents can increase their chances of having a son. There is now a test, amniocentesis that provides the scientific method for determining sex before birth. The test involves examining the chromosomes in the amniotic fluid. Until now little advantage has been taken of this knowledge since amniocentesis is uncommon around the world. There are recent news reports that assert that in India female fetuses are being aborted. The same has been rumored for China. Sex selection may become more widespread as the technology of sex detection improves. Currently, an abortion for the purpose of sex selection must be performed in the 2nd trimester of pregnancy because the test can be done only after the 3rd or 4th month of pregnancy. A technology which permits very early sex detection could, when combined with early menstrual regulation, have widespread ramifications, particularly since the preference for sons is so widespread. Son preference is common throughout the world and is unusually strong in Arab countries and in South Asia. It is fairly mild in Latin America and Southeast Asia. In Africa sex preference has not become a public issue for fertility is so high. Policymakers in countries such as Bangladesh, China, India, Pakistan, South Korea, and Taiwan have recently become concerned about sex preference for their objective is to reduce the population growth rates of their countries.

Among countries with son preference China is unusual in that the government has tried to undermine the basis for son preference. It has encouraged families with an only daughter to adopt a son-in-law and have him take the family name. It has tried to equalize women's position in marriage and the economy. The policymakers in other countries assume that son preference will diminish with modernization. Family planning workers in most Asian countries assume that sex preference affects family size. A cross-cultural study including data from Bangladesh, India, and Morocco found that families starting out with a string on sons were as likely to have more children as those families who began with a string of daughters. Approaches to changing attitudes about sex preference include attempting to reorganize society and reform the patriarchal family; emphasize economic development, and ignoring the problem. Sex preference is the result of social organization, family structure, economic activities, religious beliefs, and tradition.

### **3.6.2 Son preference continues in India**

For more than 100 years, the Indian census has shown a marked gap between the number of boys and girls, men and women. This gap, which has nationwide implications, is the result of decisions made at the most

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local level—the family. Common wisdom is that the preference for sons is motivated by economic, religious, social and emotional desires and norms that favour males and make females less desirable: Parents expect sons—but not daughters—to provide financial and emotional care, especially in their old age; sons add to family wealth and property while daughters drain it through dowries; sons continue the family lineage while daughters are married away to another household; sons perform important religious roles; and sons defend or exercise the family's power while daughters have to be defended and protected, creating a perceived burden on the household.

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### 3.7 DECLINING SEX RATIO

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#### 3.7.1 Definition of Sex Ratio

The **sex ratio** is the ratio of males to females in a population. In most sexually reproducing species, the ratio tends to be 1:1. This tendency is explained by Fisher's principle. For various reasons, however, many species deviate from anything like an even sex ratio, either periodically or permanently. Examples include parthenogenic species, periodically mating organisms such as aphids, some eusocial wasps such as *Polistes fuscatus* and *Polistes exclamans*, bees, ants, and termites.

The human sex ratio is of particular interest to anthropologists and demographers. In human societies, however, sex ratios at birth may be considerably skewed by factors such as the age of mother at birth, and by sex-selective abortion and infanticide. Exposure to pesticides and other environmental contaminants may be a significant contributing factor as well. As of 2014, the global sex ratio at birth is estimated at 107 boys to 100 girls (1000 boys per 934 girls).

#### 3.7.2 Reasons for Declining Sex Ratio in India

Recent data released by World Bank projects decline in sex ratio in India from 943 reported in 2011 to 898 in 2031, and an overall reduction in youth population of the country. While throwing light on the reasons for such estimates, discuss the social, economical and political consequences of same on society.

Sex ratio is defined as the number of females per thousand males. As per Census 2011, Sex ratio of India is 943. In absolute terms, India has 48.53% female population compare to 51.47% male population. The poor status of women in the Indian society is a main reason for the declining sex ratio. The poor status of the women is attributed to the following factors.

Education –Education has a great influence on the sex ratio scenario of India. Child marriages are a common part of the Indian society. Girls are prone to the issue of child marriage at a very early age. These make them to stay away from the education and are compelled to take the

**NOTES**

responsibilities of the household. Due to illiteracy, people are unaware about the power and role of women in today's era.

**Poverty** – Poverty is one of the factors which is responsible for the declining sex ratio. Due to poverty, a lot of girls do not have access to nutritious food. This deprives the women and girl child from a living a healthy life. And face high risks of infant and maternal mortality.

**Social status of women** – In India women are merely considered as an object. Menace of dowry has reduced the status of women. Due to these financial problems most of the families prefer male child over female. Due to lack of education, women are unable to establish their roles in many places.

**Sex selective abortions** – The methods of sex determination and female feticide are adopted which is main reason of declining number of females.

**Infant and Maternal Mortality** – Infant mortality rate is the number of death of babies before the age of one. Due to female feticide, the sex ratio declines terribly. Maternal mortality also contributes to the declining sex ratio as most of the women die during the childbirth due to improper care and less facilities. To address this trend of declining sex ratio following schemes have been initiated by the government

### **3.7.3 Consequences of declining sex ratio**

#### **Social**

- The declining sex ratio leads to surplus men which threatens demographic stability.
- Skewed sex ratio leads to social evils like human trafficking, violence against women.
- States like Punjab and Haryana which have highly adverse sex ratio is witnessing tendency of importing brides from other states. This is often resulting in exploitation.
- Skewed sex ratio gives rise to a vicious cycle of adverse sex ratio leading to perpetuating cycle.

#### **Economic**

- Skewed sex ratio is leading to the practice of bride purchase.
- This is leading to objectification of women. Increased violence against women prevents their participation in the economic activities due to fear of violence.
- Increased law and order issues impede the economic growth.
- Skewed sex ratio induces greater competition among men hence striving to achieve greater excellence contributing to economic growth.

#### **Political**

- Skewed sex ratio reduces the ability to women to influence policy making and act as a pressure group.

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- Declining sex ratio leads to less representation of women in policy making and lack of gender sensitivity.
- Initiatives like Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao in Haryana have shown that concentrated efforts can aid in countering the declining sex ratio. Similar initiatives must be undertaken at high priority regions to counter the declining sex ratio.

### **3.7.4 Scenario of sex ratio in India**

In 2015, the sex ratio in India was 943 females for 1000 males. Sex ratio varies from region to region. In the latest census, Kerala has 1084 females per 1000 males, making it the best state to have a good sex ratio. With a ratio of 877 females per 1000 males, the state of Haryana suffers from the lowest sex ratio. There has been a great improvement in the sex ratio of India. In 2012, India had a ratio of 940 females per 1000 males.

### **3.7.5 Schemes to combat the problem of sex ratio**

Due to the declining sex ratio, the government has introduced certain schemes to tackle the issue.

**Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao** – This is one of the important campaign introduced by the government led by Narendra Modi to generate awareness and improve the efficiency of the welfare services meant for women. The initiative was launched by Prime Minister Modi on 22 January 2015 in Haryana.

**Sukanya Samriddhi Account** – This scheme has been notified by the Ministry of Finance on 2 December, 2014. The initiative aims at opening a new account for the girl child. The account can be operated by her after the age of 10. The account can be opened in a post office or a public sector bank.

**The Girl Child Protection Scheme** – The scheme is aimed at preventing the gender discrimination by protecting the rights of the girl child. It also tries to eliminate the negative attitudes and practices against the girl child.

**Aapki Beti, Humari Beti** – Haryana has the lowest sex ratio in India. To cope up with this issue, the Haryana government launched this scheme. A sum of Rs 21000 would be deposited by the state government in the account of every new born girl. The scheme would be implemented in both rural and urban areas. It would target the girl child of Scheduled Caste and Below Poverty Line (BPL) families.

**PCPNDT Act:** The Indian government has passed Pre-Conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) (PCPNDT) Act in 2004 to ban and punish prenatal sex screening and female foeticide. It is currently illegal in India to determine or disclose sex of the foetus to anyone. However, there are concerns that PCPNDT Act has been poorly enforced by authorities.



**Check your progress -1**

Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below

b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit,

i. Analyse the Causes for Declining Sex Ratio in India

.....

ii. Discuss the consequences of Declining Sex Ratio

.....

*Private - Public Dichotomy and  
Sexual Division of Labour  
Ideology and Gender, Sex  
Preference, Declining Sex Ratio and  
Socio-cultural Implications*

**NOTES****3.8 SOCIO CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS**

In most human societies, the socio-cultural practices cause the prevalence of male child preference among couples. In fact, the issue of male-child preference has attracted global attention ranging from individuals, scholars, intellectuals as well as other relevant professions among others. It is on this ground that, this study looked at the socio-cultural factors responsible for male child preference among couples in Ilorin. To execute the research agenda, the study used cross-sectional survey, while multi-stage random sampling was used to select 384 respondents. Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS/PC) Version 20.0 was used to analyze the quantitative data. The statistical methods employed in the analysis included the percentages, the mode, and cross-tabulation. Chi-square was used to test the two hypotheses formulated. The study discovers that there is a significant relationship between the understanding of religion and preference for male child. The research also discovers that there is a significant relationship between culture and male child preference. Based on these findings, the study recommends that the cultural practices that oppress women or see women as subordinate such as the small inheritance rights given to women and the tradition that forbids women from bearing their fathers' name after marrying should be abolished.

**3.8.1 Socio-Cultural Factors and Male Child Preference: An Empirical Overview**

The perceived importance of having a son among couples have been analyzed along with different social, economic, political and cultural reasons that significantly determined couples' desire for the sex of child they prefer to have especially as their first child. A study by Edewor (2001) on "the fertility and the value of children among the Isoko of Delta State" claimed that male children are respected for their contribution to retaining or preserving family name, serving as a source of social prestige and defense to parents, provision of old-age security and so on.

Das Gupta and Chung (2007) researched on why son preference is declining in South Korea. The researchers analyzed the 1991 and 2003 data collected in the Korea National Fertility and Family Health Surveys. They used multivariate logistic regression analysis to estimate the odds ratio for the association between a respondent's characteristics and

*Self-Instructional Material*

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having strong son preference. The researchers discovered that religion, parental pressure, and woman's birth control positively affected son preference. Das Gupta and Chung (2007) discovered that "if the husband is his parents' only son – and therefore the only source of a continued line of male descendants – there is a significantly higher likelihood of the woman reporting that she must have a son'

### **3.8.2 Theoretical Framework**

Social construction feminism theory was used to explain the social and cultural factors affecting male child preference. The social construction feminism comes out of the general school of thought entitled social constructionism. Social constructionism is derived from the work of Berger and Luckmann (1967) on "The Social Construction of Reality", which introduced the term social construction to sociologists. Social constructionism proposes that everything people "know" or see as "reality" is partially, if not entirely, socially situated. A social construction is something that is created or invented by the society and not something that exists independently or by itself in the "natural" world. Norms and cultural practices give rise to the emergence and existence of social constructs. The social constructs are being governed and managed by cultural practices and norms of the society.

Social construction feminism which is an offshoot of social constructionism theory examines the anatomy of the established gendered social order as a whole. It sees gender as a society wide institution that is built into all the major social organizations of society (Marecek, Crawford & Popp, 2004).

Social construction feminism asserts that the construction of gender is invisible. However, it focuses on the processes that create gender differences. The common social process that permits us to see the gender differences is the gendered division of labour in the home that allocates child care and housework to women. Gender segregation and gender typing of occupations that do not allow women and men to do the same kind of work are among the social processes that differentiate genders. Another important social process that distinguishes between genders is selective comparisons that ignore similarities between women and men such as women's and men's separate sports competitions (Lober, 2001).

### **3.8.3 Social inequality**

Social inequality refers to relational processes in society that have the effect of limiting or harming a group's social status, social class, and social circle. Areas of social inequality include access to voting rights, freedom of speech and assembly, the extent of property rights and access to education, health care, quality housing, travelling, transportation, vacationing and other social goods and services.

The reasons for social inequality can vary, but are often broad and far reaching. Social inequality can emerge through a society's understanding of appropriate gender roles, or through the prevalence of social

stereotyping. Social inequality can also be established through discriminatory legislation.

Social inequalities exist between ethnic or religious groups, classes and countries making the concept of social inequality a global phenomenon.

Social inequality is different from economic inequality, though the two are linked. Social inequality is linked to racial inequality, gender inequality, and wealth inequality. The way people behave socially, through racist or sexist practices and other forms of discrimination, tends to trickle down and affect the opportunities and wealth individuals can generate for themselves.

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**Check your progress -1**

Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below

b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit,

i. Socio-Cultural Factors and Male Child Preference in India

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**3.9 Let Us Sum up**

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Through this unit, you have learnt about the meaning of private and public. We have attempted to identify the historical existence of this dichotomy and analyse the feminist questions about the separate spheres. The above discussion on private and public has primarily used right-based frameworks. The construction of a democratic state relies upon the convergence of the public and private dichotomy. A number of cultural and socio-economic factors influence the relative benefits and costs of sons and daughters and ultimately effects the parents' gender preferences, the effect of socio-cultural factors on the preference of the sex of the children. The gender-discriminatory laws with regard to inheritance, marriage, reproduction and wage labour are inherently related with the division between public and private spheres. To study the causes and consequences of declining sex ratio and the wide gap between the number of men and women in India stems from some cultural factors and steps need to take in the right direction to stop this phenomenon in the future. As you read ahead, try to relate what you have learnt here to the other issues to which you will be introduced.

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**3.10 UNIT – END ACTIVITIES**

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1. Discuss the public/private dichotomy from a feminist perspective.
2. Analyse the important reasons for declining sex ratio in India

**NOTES**

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### **3.11 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

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1. Gender ideology refers to attitudes regarding the appropriate roles, rights and responsibilities of men and women in society.
2. Declining sex ratio has many potentially serious consequences although there are no historical model by which to learn about the implications of a lack of women relative to men
3. Indian society is patriarchal society i.e. a male oriented society and there is a strange invisibility of girl child.

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### **3.12 SUGGESTED REDDINGS**

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1. Nussbaum, M., A. Basu, Y. Tambiah & Niraja Gopal Jayal (2003). Essays on Gender and Governance. Human Development Resource Centre. India: UNDP.
2. Pateman, C. (1989). 'Feminist Critiques of the Public/Private Dichotomy'. In C. Pateman, Disorder of the Private Women. Cambridge: Polity
3. Bhog, Dipta et.al, (2009). Textbooks Regimes: A Feminist Critique of National and Identity, Nirantar, New Delhi
4. Krishna Raj, Maithreyi (1986). Women's Studies in India: Some Perspectives, Popular Prakashan Private Limited, Bombay.

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## UNIT IV -CONCEPTS OF THEORIES

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Concepts of Theories

NOTES

- 4.1 Introduction
  - 4.2 Objectives
  - 4.3 Feminism: Concept & Definition
  - 4.4 First Wave
  - 4.5 Second Wave
    - 4.5.1 Simone De Beauvoir and The Second Sex
    - 4.5.2 The Feminine Mystique
    - 4.5.3 Women's Liberation in the USA
  - 4.6 Third Wave
  - 4.7 Post-Feminism
  - 4.8 Towards a Feminist Perspective
  - 4.9 Let Us Sum Up
  - 4.10 Unit End Exercise
  - 4.12 Suggested Readings
  - 4.11 Answers to Check Progress
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### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

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The term feminism can be used to describe a political, cultural or economic movement aimed at establishing equal rights and legal protection for women. Feminism involves political and sociological theories and philosophies concerned with issues of gender difference, as well as a movement that advocates gender equality for women and campaigns for women's rights and interests. Although the terms "feminism" and "feminist" did not gain widespread use until the 1970s, they were already being used in the public parlance much earlier; for instance, Katherine Hepburn speaks of the "feminist movement" in the 1942 film *Woman of the Year*.

According to Maggie Humm and Rebecca Walker, the history of feminism can be divided into three waves. The first feminist wave was in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the second was in the 1960s and 1970s, and the third extends from the 1990s to the present. *Feminist theory emerged from these feminist movements*. It is manifest in a variety of disciplines such as feminist geography, feminist history and feminist literary criticism.

Feminists and scholars have divided the movement's history into three "waves". The first wave refers mainly to women's suffrage movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (mainly concerned with women's right to vote). The second wave refers to the ideas and actions associated with the women's liberation movement beginning in the 1960s (which campaigned for legal and social rights for women). The third wave refers to a continuation of, and a reaction to the perceived failures of second-wave feminism, beginning in the 1990s.

Self-Instructional Material

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## 4.2 OBJECTIVES

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- To understand the feminism in general.
- To recognize the types of feminism in the world
- To acknowledge the driving forces, ideologies and theories of feminism

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## 4.3 FEMINISM: CONCEPT & DEFINITION

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“The history of feminism is inextricable from the time-honored concerns of historiography: politics and power” (Offen, 1988: 142).

To begin with, some of the Dictionary meanings of feminism are mentioned here. According to Cambridge Dictionaries Online, feminism can be seen as “the belief that women should be allowed the same rights, power, and opportunities as men and be treated in the same way, or the set of activities intended to achieve this state.” According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica, “Feminism is the belief in the social, economic, and political equality of the sexes.” The Collins Dictionary of Sociology provides a comprehensive understanding of feminism. According to it, Feminism can be understood in number of ways like: “1. a holistic theory concerned with the nature of women’s global oppression and subordination to men;

2. A socio-political theory and practice which aims to free all women from male supremacy and exploitation; 3. a social movement encompassing strategic confrontations with the sex-class system; 4. an ideology which stands in dialectical opposition to all misogynous ideologies and practices” (2006: 214).

Regarding feminist writings, Susan James asserts at the outset that “Feminism is grounded in the belief that women are oppressed or disadvantaged by comparison with men, and that their oppression is in some way illegitimate or unjustified” (James, 1998: 576). Jaggar (1983: 5) entails that feminism “helps women to achieve the fullest possible liberation.” She further argues that there has been a shift from feminism to women’s liberation movement in the contemporary period as “Earlier feminists used the language of ‘rights’ and ‘equality’, but in the late 1960s ‘oppression’ and ‘liberation’ became the key words for the political activists of the new left. The change in the language, reflects a significant development in the political perspective of contemporary feminism” (1983: 5). For Hooks, feminism is “the struggle to end sexist oppression” (2000: 28). She further argues that “To understand feminism ... one has to necessarily understand sexism” (Hooks, 2015: 1).

Regarding sexism, it can be stated that it is a “social situation in which men exert a dominant role over women and express in a variety of ways, both private and institutional, the notion that women are inferior to men” (Langer, 2001: 5). Beasley includes “a critique of misogyny/ sexual hierarchy” in the field of feminism (1999: 36). For Thompson, “Feminism aims to expose the reality of male domination, while struggling for a world where women are recognized as human beings in their own right” (2001: 8). At the other spectrum of homogenized understandings of what is feminism and what it constitutes lies the ‘fractured’ notion of feminism in terms of race relations & colonial power. While the former in terms of ‘Black Feminism’ is very much visible in the writings of bell hooks, Patricia Hill Collins among others; the latter in the form of ‘Third World Feminism’ negating/suffering from imperialism is present in the writings of Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Kumari Jayawardena, Uma Narayan among others.

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#### 4.4 FIRST WAVE

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First-wave feminism refers to an extended period of feminist activity during the nineteenth century and early twentieth century in the United Kingdom and the United States. Originally it focused on the promotion of equal contract and property rights for women and the opposition to chattel marriage and ownership of married women (and their children) by their husbands. However, by the end of the nineteenth century, activism focused primarily on gaining political power, particularly the right of women's suffrage. Yet, *feminists such as Voltairine de Cleyre and Margaret Sanger were still active in campaigning for women's sexual, reproductive, and economic rights at this time. In 1854, Florence Nightingale established female nurses as adjuncts to the military.*

In Britain the Suffragettes and, possibly more effectively, the Suffragists campaigned for the women's vote. In 1918 the Representation of the People Act 1918 was passed granting the vote to women over the age of 30 who owned houses. In 1928 this was extended to all women over twenty-one. *In the United States, leaders of this movement included Lucretia Mott, Lucy Stone, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Susan B. Anthony, who each campaigned for the abolition of slavery prior to championing women's right to vote; all were strongly influenced by Quaker thought.*

American first-wave feminism involved a wide range of women. Some, such as Frances Willard, belonged to conservative Christian groups such as the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Others, such as Matilda Joslyn Gage, were more radical, and expressed themselves within the National Woman Suffrage Association or individually. American first-wave feminism is considered to have ended with the

passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution (1919), granting women the right to vote in all states.

The term first wave was coined retrospectively after the term second-wave feminism began to be used to describe a newer feminist movement that focused as much on fighting social and cultural inequalities as political inequalities.

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## 4.5 SECOND WAVE

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Second-wave feminism refers to the period of activity in the early 1960s and lasting through the late 1980s. The scholar Imelda Whelehan suggests that the second wave was a continuation of the earlier phase of feminism involving the suffragettes in the UK and USA. Second-wave feminism has continued to exist since that time and coexists with what is termed third-wave feminism. The scholar Estelle Freedman compares first and second-wave feminism saying that the first wave focused on rights such as suffrage, whereas the second wave was largely concerned with other issues of equality, such as ending discrimination.

*The feminist activist and author Carol Hanisch coined the slogan "The Personal is Political" which became synonymous with the second wave.* Second-wave feminists saw women's cultural and political inequalities as inextricably linked and encouraged women to understand aspects of their personal lives as deeply politicized and as reflecting sexist power structures.

### 4.5.1 Simone de Beauvoir and The Second Sex

The French author and philosopher Simone de Beauvoir wrote novels; monographs on philosophy, politics, and social issues; essays; biographies; and an autobiography. She is now best known for her metaphysical novels, including *She Came to Stay* and *The Mandarins*, and for her treatise *The Second Sex, a detailed analysis of women's oppression and a foundational tract of contemporary feminism*. Written in 1949, its English translation was published in 1953. It sets out a feminist existentialism which prescribes a moral revolution. As an existentialist, she accepted Jean-Paul Sartre's precept existence precedes essence; hence *"one is not born a woman, but becomes one."* Her analysis focuses on the social construction of Woman as the Other. This de Beauvoir identifies as fundamental to women's oppression. She argues women have historically been considered deviant and abnormal and contends that even Mary Wollstonecraft considered men to be the ideal toward which women should aspire. De Beauvoir argues that for feminism to move forward, this attitude must be set aside.



### 4.5.2 The Feminine Mystique

Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) criticized the idea that women could only find fulfillment through childrearing and homemaking. According to Friedan's obituary in the *The New York Times*, *The Feminine Mystique* “ignited the contemporary women's movement in 1963 and as a result permanently transformed the social fabric of the United States and countries around the world” and “is widely regarded as one of the most influential nonfiction books of the 20th century.” In the book Friedan hypothesizes that women are victims of a false belief system that requires them to find identity and meaning in their lives through their husbands and children. Such a system causes women to completely lose their identity in that of their family. Friedan specifically locates this system among post-World War II middle-class suburban communities. At the same time, America's post-war economic boom had led to the development of new technologies that were supposed to make household work less difficult, but that often had the result of making women's work less meaningful and valuable.

### 4.5.3 Women's Liberation in the USA

The phrase "Women's Liberation" was first used in the United States in 1964 and first appeared in print in 1966. By 1968, although the term Women's Liberation Front appeared in the magazine *Ramparts*, it was starting to refer to the whole women's movement. Bra-burning also became associated with the movement, though the actual prevalence of bra-burning is debatable. One of the most vocal critics of the women's liberation movement has been the African American feminist and intellectual *Gloria Jean Watkins* (who uses the pseudonym "bell hooks") who argues that this movement glossed over race and class and thus failed to address "the issues that divided women." She highlighted the lack of minority voices in the women's movement in her book *Feminist theory from margin to center* (1984).

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## 4.6 THIRD WAVE

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Third-wave feminism began in the early 1990s, arising as a response to perceived failures of the second wave and also as a response to the backlash against initiatives and movements created by the second wave. Third-wave feminism seeks to challenge or avoid what it deems the second wave's essentialist definitions of femininity, which (according to them) overemphasize the experiences of upper middle-class white women. A post-structuralist interpretation of gender and sexuality is central to much of the third wave's ideology. *Third-wave feminists often focus on "micro-politics" and challenge the second wave's paradigm as to what is, or is not, good for females.* The third wave has its origins in the mid-1980s. Feminist leaders rooted in the second wave like Gloria Anzaldúa, bell hooks, Chela Sandoval, Cherrie Moraga, Audre Lorde,

Maxine Hong Kingston, and many other black feminists, sought to negotiate a space within feminist thought for consideration of race-related subjectivities. Third-wave feminism also contains internal debates between difference feminists such as the psychologist Carol Gilligan (who believes that there are important differences between the sexes) and those who believe that there are no inherent differences between the sexes and contend that gender roles are due to social conditioning.

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## 4.7 POST-FEMINISM

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Post-feminism describes a range of viewpoints reacting to feminism. While not being "anti-feminist," post-feminists believe that women have achieved second wave goals while being critical of third wave feminist goals. The term was first used in the 1980s to describe a backlash against second-wave feminism. It is now a label for a wide range of theories that take critical approaches to previous feminist discourses and includes challenges to the second wave's ideas. Other post-feminists say that feminism is no longer relevant to today's society. Amelia Jones wrote that the post feminist texts which emerged in the 1980s and 1990s portrayed second-wave feminism as a monolithic entity and criticized it using generalizations.

*One of the earliest uses of the term was in Susan Bolotin's 1982 article "Voices of the Post-Feminist Generation," published in New York Times Magazine. This article was based on a number of interviews with women who largely agreed with the goals of feminism, but did not identify as feminists.*

Angela McRobbie argues that adding the prefix post to feminism undermines the strides that feminism has made in achieving equality for everyone, including women. Post-feminism gives the impression that equality has been achieved and that feminists can now focus on something else entirely. McRobbie believes that post-feminism is most clearly seen on so-called feminist media products, such as Bridget Jones's Diary, Sex and the City, and Ally McBeal. Female characters like Bridget Jones and Carrie Bradshaw claim to be liberated and clearly enjoy their sexuality, but what they are constantly searching for is the one man who will make everything worthwhile.

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### Check your progress-1

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Note: Write your answer in the space given below

- 1. Define Feminism**
- 2. Bring out the waves of feminism**

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## 4.8 TOWARDS A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

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A Feminist perspective means to understand and deconstruct the ‘normal appearing’ social order to unravel the hidden transcripts of patriarchy and female/ women subordination and subjugation. It ‘discovers’ the hidden reality of male domination which is made to be appear ‘normal’. Highlighting the nuanced nature of feminist perspective, Menon (2012: viii) states that “A feminist perspective recognizes that the hierarchical organizing of the world around gender is key to maintaining social order; that to live lives marked ‘male’ and ‘female’ is to live different realities.” Thus the feminist perspective brings out the complex nature of reality; it goes beyond the natural and attempts to debunk the reality from the vantage position of the oppressed and marginal, in this case, women. Though in the recent past, there have emerged a variety of feminist perspectives like cultural feminism, Marxist & Socialist, Radical, eco-feminism among others, yet “what has united it since the beginning, across its disparate strands, is its focus on power, on the asymmetry of the gender dichotomy and of gendered relationships” (Dirks et. al. 1994: 32). It provides a fresh & new look into the social order which appears to be functioning ‘smoothly’ everyday devoid of any contestations and power hierarchy.

The following key feminist theoretical perspectives which though different from each other in some respects all begin with analysing women subordination and conclude by providing both a theory & practice of women freedom and liberation:

- Liberal feminism
- Marxist feminism
- Socialist feminism
- Radical feminism
- Multicultural feminism

### 4.8.1 Liberal feminism

Liberal feminism originates from the liberal political theory and thus focuses on equality. It can be seen as the application of liberal principles & practices of individual freedom and rights in to the lives of women. According to Schwartzman (2006: 1), “The ideals and concepts of liberalism have been used in feminist struggles for liberation throughout recent history. From the time of the women’s suffrage movement to the more recent battles over abortion, women have formulated their demands in terms of equality, autonomy, and individual rights.” Thus we see that the central themes in liberal feminism like independence, equality of opportunity and individualism are derived from the political philosophy of liberalism. In a way, liberal feminists argued that women should have similar rights as men. They challenged their systematic and historical exclusion from the public space. Some of

the key writings in liberal feminism are by Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792), John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women* (1869), Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) and others. *The Subjection of Women* (1869) is authored by John Stuart Mill. It first appeared as a pamphlet. It is in this writing that empathy towards women's inequality and commitment towards resolving the same appears very strongly. Mill argued that women should have the similar rights related to property & citizenship as their male counterpart has.

The late 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the suffrage movement so as to achieve equal voting rights similar to that of men. Thus the notion of rights is central in liberal feminism. The historicity of liberal feminism has been succinctly outlined by Jaggar (1983: 27-28) wherein she states that "In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, they argued that women as well as men had natural rights; in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they employed utilitarian arguments in favour of arguments in favour of equal rights for women under the law; and in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the development of the liberal theory of the welfare state, liberal feminists demand that the state should actively pursue a variety of social reforms in order to ensure equal opportunities for women." In the broad rubric of liberal feminism, women demanded equal rights to education and entering into occupational domains earlier considered as masculine or male-centric; equal political and civil rights manifested in citizenship which subsequently will lead to the right to vote. Liberal feminist suffrage campaign is a potent symbol of such demands. It is important to note that the dynamism of the state is paramount for liberal feminism. The latter strongly puts forth its demands and argues for its acceptance and implementation by the former. In contemporary times, liberal feminism has become all the more important due to the changing nature of welfare state due to emergence of capitalism and globalization.

#### **4.8.2 Marxist feminism**

Marxist feminism is based on the tenets of Marxist literature. In this regard, Tong (1997: 39) contends that "Just as the liberal concept of human nature is present in liberal feminist thought, the Marxist concept of human nature is present in Marxist feminist thought". Marx critiqued capitalism as the most exploitative system based on class relations. The creation of private property & surplus value at the cost of workers' needs is the prime goal of the capitalist industrialist. Jaggar (1983: 70) highlights that "The distinguishing feature of the Marxist analysis is the causal link that it seeks to establish between women's oppression and class society. Under capitalism, Marxists claim, women are oppressed primarily because their oppression benefits capital." Needless to say, the notion of class and class consciousness in terms of women being a 'class' i.e. 'sex-class' is at the core of Marxist feminist thought.

Marxist feminists like Kate Millett (*Sexual politics*, 1969), Emma Goldman (*The Traffic in Women*, 1970), Lillian Robinson (*Sex, class and culture*, 1978), Michele Barrett (*Women's oppression today*, 1980) among others argue that it is the exploitative character of the class system that can be seen as equal to patriarchal oppression; thus viewing capitalist patriarchy as a cause of women's oppression. Industrialization based production process fractured the domestic domain and resulted in the 'public' and 'private' domains of lives wherein the former mostly associated with men is responsible for paid work whereas the latter confined to household non-paid work is confined to women.

As and when, women join the labour market they are exploited in terms of less wages paid by the capitalists to generate their own surplus value. In addition, she is not paid for her domestic work (by her male relatives) as patriarchy ordains these as 'normal & natural' domain of women. Such an argument resonates with Paddy Quick's analysis in *The Class Nature of Women's Oppression* (1977) wherein it is argued that "the oppression of women is based on the role of women in the exploited class as the reproducers of labourers in class society. At the same time, the determining factor in this relationship (between women and men), is the specific economic form in which unpaid surplus labour is extracted from the direct producers" (Quick, 1977: 42). A similar argument is posed by Hartmann (2003: 207) that "Marxist feminists have focussed on housework and its relation to capital, some arguing that housework produces surplus value and that house-workers work directly for capitalists". In this way, the material basis of patriarchy can be placed in the division of labour thesis which is present in both capitalism and patriarchy.

In this way, we see that Marxist feminists argue that the system of capitalism needs free and uninterrupted flow of labour force (primarily male workers) for its optimum performance. For this to happen there needs to be a division between the public space marked by economic paid activities, the survival of which solely depends on the smooth functioning of private domestic 'unpaid household activities' domain by women. Thus, it is the need of capitalism that women stay indoors under the control of patriarchy performing household works so that the men can work outside. To oppose such an exploitative arrangement, one comes across 'Housework for Wages Campaign' initiated by Marxist feminists. So, we see that both class position and patriarchy are linked with each other in women's oppression. Thus, both the uprooting of the class system and patriarchy is the rallying cry of Marxist feminism. However, it is important to note that classical Marxism gives more priority to the former than the latter as capitalism is the fundamental cause of women's oppression; a point aptly highlighted by Hartmann (2003: 206) that "Many Marxists typically argue that feminism is at best less important than class conflict and at worst divisive of the working class. This

political stance produces an analysis that absorbs feminism into the class struggle.”

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### Check your progress

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Note: Write your answer in the space given below

1. What is liberal Feminism
2. Write about Marxist feminist thought

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### 4.8.3 SOCIALIST FEMINISM

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Socialist feminism can be seen as an answer to the question posed by Lydia Sargent (1981: xviii) which was “how can women understand their particular oppression in a way that can confront the narrowness of marxist terminology” which focuses on work and economic relations as the primary (sometimes only) area of importance; and how can they develop a new theory which understands the importance of reproduction, family, and sexuality as central to current analyses and future visions?” Socialist feminism highlights “contemporary male dominance as part of the economic foundation of the society, understanding ‘economic’ to include childbearing and sexual activity..... therefore, and the abolition of male dominance requires a transformation of the economic foundation of society as a whole” (Jaggar, 1983: 147). Hartmann (2003: 218) outlines that “As feminist socialists, we must organize a practice which addresses both the struggle against patriarchy and the struggle against capitalism.”

Vogel (1995: 43) pointed in the same line that “Women’s activities in the family household constituted, they suggested, the material basis of female oppression.” Thus it established a crucial inter-linkage between capitalism and patriarchy i.e. capitalist patriarchy in some sense wherein economic class aspects of women’s oppression is located. More conclusively, elaborating upon the tenet of socialist feminism, Rowbotham (2013: 97) states that “In order to act effectively we have to try to work out the precise relationship between the patriarchal dominance of men over women, and the property relations which come from this, to class exploitation and racism.” Regarding the distinction between the Marxist and Socialist feminism, Tong (1997: 39) outlines that “Whereas socialist feminists believe that gender and class play an approximately equal role in any explanation of women’s oppression, Marxist feminists believe that class ultimately better accounts for women’s status and function(s).” Thus the thorny issue among them is whether class or sex is at the core of differentiating ‘men and women’.

Clara Zetkin (one of the earliest exponent and activist of socialist feminism) “emphasised again and again that the larger historical context of the battle for women’s liberation was the working class drive for socialism” (Davis, 2012: 14). One of the most seminal works addressing the issues of socialist-feminism is the Zillah Eisenstein (ed.) *Capitalist patriarchy and the case for Socialist Feminism* (1979). This however does not undermine the earlier work by Clara Zetkin and in recent times Gayle Rubin and Nancy Chodorow, and others in a similar theoretical framework. Introducing the work, Zillah Eisenstein in the beginning itself states that “This volume makes public a political and intellectual commitment to understanding the problem of women’s oppression in terms of a real synthesis between the two [Marxist analysis and feminist theory]. This does not mean merely adding one theory to the other but rather redefining each through the conflict that derives from and between both traditions..... Male supremacy and capitalism are defined as the core relations determining the oppression of women today. This volume is dedicated to understanding the dynamic of power involved which derives from both the class relations of production and the sexual hierarchical relations of society” (1979: 1). She herself wrote two essays titled ‘*Developing a theory of Capitalist patriarchy and socialist feminism*’ and ‘*some notes on the relations of capitalist patriarchy*’ in this anthology.

Socialist feminist in a way views and addresses the issue of body, sexuality, reproductive rights, etc. intrinsically bound with the economic issues. It is so because the economic system of capitalism is crucial for a patriarchal system. In an important way it outlines the discriminatory aspect of sexual division of labour which both creates and reinforces gender differences. These differences are subsequently modelled around the lines of patriarchy and result in the subordination of women. Hartmann (2003: 212) argues that “The material base upon which patriarchy rests lies most fundamentally in men’s control over women’s labor power.” Gayle Rubin has outlined the notion of sex/gender system which can be seen at the base of women’s oppression. For her, “a ‘sex/gender system’ is the set of arrangements by which a society transforms, biological sexuality into products, of human activity, and in which these transformed sexual needs are satisfied” (Rubin, 1975: 159). Herein we see that the domestic sphere is closely tied to the needs of the capitalist society.

In a significant way, socialist-feminists pointed out that women’s domestic work is very much crucial for capitalism to survive. In this context, both patriarchy & capitalism become mutually beneficial to each other. Ehrenreich (1991: 47) has put forth certain virtues of such theorisation. These are, “First, it gave patriarchy, a ‘material base’ in ‘men’s control over women’s labor power’. Second, it revealed a vivid parallel between ‘the private sphere’, where patriarchy was still ensconced, and the ‘public sphere’, where capital called the shots. In the

public sphere, men labored at production, and in the private sphere women labored at 'reproduction'. Finally, it showed how essential patriarchy was to capitalism; most capitalist institutions produced only things, but the quintessential patriarchal institution, the family, produced the men who produced things – thanks to the labor of women.

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#### 4.8.4 RADICAL FEMINISM

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Radical feminism emerged in the late 1960s as the offshoot of the women's liberation movement. Though it was more visible in America it later spread to other European countries. According to Buchanan (2011: xix), "The era of the radical feminist is generally identified as the mid 1960s to the mid 1970s." Outlining its basic contours; Echols (1989: 3) states that "Radical feminism rejected both the politico position that a socialist revolution would bring about women's liberation and the liberal feminist solution of integrating women into the public sphere. Radical feminists argued that women constituted a sex-class, that relations between women and men needed to be recast in political terms, and that gender rather than class was the primary contradiction." The 1960s slogan of "The personal is political" fairly resonated with the ideas of radical feminism. Feminist and writer Carol Hanisch's essay titled 'The Personal is Political' appeared in the anthology *Notes From the Second Year: Women's Liberation* in 1970. According to Jaggar, "It reveals how male power is exercised and reinforced through such 'personal' institutions as childrearing, housework, love, marriage and all kinds of sexual practices" (1983: 101) and thus "bringing sexual, childbearing and child-rearing practices into the domain of politics" (1983: 106).

Rowland and Klein (1996: 11-12) have outlined the general principles of radical feminism shared by its various strands. According to them, "The first and fundamental theme is that women as a social group are oppressed by men as a social group and that this oppression is the primary oppression for women. Patriarchy is the oppressing structure of male domination. A second central element characteristic of radical feminism is that it is created by women for women. That women form a group that can be likened to a social class is an inherent part of radical feminist theory." Some of the key texts in radical feminism are *The dialectic of sex: The case for Feminist Revolution* (1970) by Shulamith Firestone and *Gyn/Ecology: The metaethics of Radical Feminism* (1978) by Mary Daly. Radical feminists argue that such patriarchal oppression is universal in its nature and extent i.e. it as a universal value system. Additionally, it took up the issues of control over one's own body and the pursuit of equal opportunity. Regarding the former, women's bodily autonomy is central to the women's liberation. It is centred on the issue of right to abortion and its crucial importance to women as such.



Echols (1989: 139-202) outlined different varieties of radical feminism which include Redstockings, Cell 16, The Feminists and New York Radical Feminists. Roxanne Dunbar formed Cell 16 in 1968 in Boston while teaching Boston Draft Resistance group. She was instrumental in publishing one of the earliest journals titled *No More Fun and Games* dedicated to radical feminism. The members of Cell 16 were staunch advocates of revolutionary internationalism, of understanding how race and class connected to gender, and of revolutionary action. Echols (1989: 160) states that “Whereas Redstockings argued that women’s behaviour was determined by their material conditions, Cell 16 attributed women’s behaviour to their sex-role conditioning.” Ti-Grace founded The Feminists, a radical feminist group that remained active from 1968 to 1973 in New York. Major radical feminist publications of that time were *Notes from the First Year* (1968), *Notes from the Second Year* (1970) and *Notes from the Third Year* (1971). The radical feminist activist group, Redstockings, was founded in 1969 by Shulamith Firestone and Ellen Willis. The ‘*Redstockings Manifesto*’ was launched by Redstockings of the Women’s Liberation Movement on July 7, 1969. Regarding its role and activities in women’s liberation, “Redstockings women would go on to champion and spread knowledge of vital women's liberation theory, slogans and actions that have become household words such as consciousness-raising, the personal is political, the pro-woman line, sisterhood is powerful, the politics of housework, the Miss America Protest, and ‘speakouts’ that would break the taboos of silence around subjects like abortion.” As per its Manifesto, “Male supremacy is the oldest, most basic form of domination. All other forms of exploitation and oppression (racism, capitalism, imperialism, etc.) are extensions of male supremacy.” New York Radical Feminist was founded by Shulamith Firestone, Pam Allen and Robin Morgan among others in 1969. It issued their manifesto titled ‘*The Politics of the Ego*’ which elaborated that “the oppression of women as a fundamental political oppression wherein women are categorized as an inferior class based on their sex.”

It used to happen during those times that activists / members of a particular group after getting disillusioned from her parental group used to join the other one. For example, Ti-Grace was a prominent member of the feminist organization NOW and due to certain differences, later on founded her own group. However, irrespective of such shuffling, they all rallied around the basic tenets of radical feminism. With the changing times and irreconcilable differences among its members, it was later ‘taken over’ or transformed into another version of feminism known as cultural feminism. The transformation was to a major extent complete by 1975 itself. Thus, within a span of ten years or so radical feminism touched upon so many lives and addressed women’s issues in such a passionate way, that its ripples can be still felt across feminist activism

and writings. Radical feminism was radical in a sense as it touched upon the issue of body (sexuality, reproduction & abortion) in times when these were considered as taboo and it was the destiny of the women to suffer the negative consequences of these in silence. Radical feminism opened up new spaces from where women spoke out.

Check your progress

Note: Write your answer in the space given below

1. What is socialist feminism?
2. Write about the “The personal is political”

#### **4.8.5 Multicultural feminism**

Multicultural feminism takes an interdisciplinary, cross-cultural approach to the study of women from diverse racial, ethnic, sexual and class backgrounds. The focus is on the ways in which race, class, and gender intersect in women’s lives and to examine critically representations of women in American culture. Many of the studies used to explain the identity and community of women are from a feminist standpoint, and are interpreted using feminist epistemology. The literature explains that traditional feminist perspectives hold that men and women are equal and therefore should have equal rights. Furthermore, all women are viewed as a unified whole facing the same impediments and challenges as they strive for greater equity with men. Multicultural feminism differs from mainstream feminism in that it is broad, embracing many communities and practices and multiple oppressions. An alliance based on multicultural feminism could improve the quality of life of women of Color. Multicultural feminism aims to address the knowledge about and definitions of women of Color among other women of Color. Multicultural feminism highlights the “political intersectionality” of all the axes of stratification (Crenshaw, Gotanda, & Peller, 1996). As a situated practice, multicultural feminism takes as its starting point the cultural consequences of the worldwide movements and dislocations of people (Shohat, 1998). It aims at a feminist re-imagining of community affiliations and cultural practices, articulated not in isolation but rather in relation. The political concerns of feminism and multiculturalism reinforce the mutual embeddedness between the two. Multiculturalism does not simply evoke the mere existence of multiple cultures, rather it designates a project that calls for envisioning world history and contemporary social life from the perspective of the racial equality of people as a political process of affiliation, disaffiliation, and re affiliation.

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### **4.9 LET US SUM UP**

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Feminism as an ideology and practice addresses the issue of women’s oppression and subjugation in its own specific manner and

subsequently attempts to provide a possible solution of the same. In doing so, various feminists have outlined varying outlooks either locating patriarchy at the centre of the oppression or some have viewed the industrial-capitalistic society as women's prime opponent and 'enemy'. Such a praxis has resulted in various feminist perspectives which (as already highlighted in the Introductory part itself), though appear to be different in their approaches finally merge with each other in their struggle towards women's liberation, gender equality and the advancement of women. At this point, the inter-linkages between feminism and gender theory can be spelled out. By now, we have come to a shared understanding that gender is the social construct of the biological identity of any individual i.e. sex. The 'sex' either male or female transforms into masculine and feminine through the process of socialization; major agencies of which as C.H. Cooley pointed out, are the family, neighbourhood and peer groups. Sometimes, one can also witness 'Third Gender'.

As the male sex has to be socialized in a way that it adheres to the man & masculine framework outlined by the society and the female sex to be realised through becoming 'woman' & feminine; any deviance on the part of either man or woman is frowned upon and most of the times meets with negative sanctions. On the other hand, adherence to the gender schema meets with the highest standard of approval and subsequent 'awards and prizes' from society. Gender schema can be understood as a system of existence and practice wherein male is masculine and female is feminine. In this way, the male has to be masculine and female has to be feminine. Being masculine entails being rational, instrumental, objective, powerful (both in terms of physique and mental faculties), domineering, assertive among similar other personality traits. On the other hand, being feminine entails emotional, lack of decision-making sense due to weak mental faculties, vulnerable to sexual assault by men due to fragile biological structure, dependent, subjugated, 'voiceless' existence among similar other personality traits.

Feminism and feminist theory challenge the sex-gender system along with gender schema. In due process, it critiques the essentializing of women in terms of her bio-medical features. As argued earlier, gender schema does not allow transgressing personality attributes assigned to men and women. Feminism argues that such a restriction on changing one's outlook denies women the option to advance and transform her life. Gender schema additionally subjugates women in most of the socio-cultural setup as it clearly demarcates public and private spheres of activities assigned to men and women respectively. Feminism speaks out in favour of women coming out in huge numbers in the public sphere so as to ask for her rights & entitlements. Her coming out in the public sphere can be seen as both the cause and effect of feminist activism and movements. The Gender system ties men and women to different set of

roles and thus creates a kind of sexual division of labour wherein though both men and women are joined together in child bearing activity, yet child rearing is solely seen as the women's domain. Feminism argues that such domesticity is the violation of women's rights as they are also entitled to get educated, employed and have a sense of freedom and satisfaction. Thus, the centrality of gender schema is to essentialize women (and men) according to their anatomy, and feminism and feminist activism attempts to fracture such frameworks of existence.

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#### 4.10 UNIT END EXERCISE

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1. Discuss about the concept of feminism
2. List out the various types of feminist theories

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#### 4.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK PROGRESS

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- The term feminism can be used to describe a political, cultural or economic movement aimed at establishing equal rights and legal protection for women. Feminism involves political and sociological theories and philosophies concerned with issues of gender difference, as well as a movement that advocates gender equality for women and campaigns for women's rights and interests.
- **Feminism** is a range of social movements, political movements, and ideologies that share a common goal: to define, establish, and achieve the political, economic, personal, and social equality of the sexes.
- The **Three Waves of Feminism**. The term **feminism** describes political, cultural, and economic movements that aim to establish equal rights and legal protections for women.

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#### 4.12 SUGGESTED READINGS

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- Scholz, Sally J. (2010), *Feminism: A Beginner's Guide*. N.p.: Oneworld Publications.
- Beauvoir, Simone D. (1949). *The Second Sex*. Alfred A. Knopf
- Friedan, Betty. (1963). *The Feminine Mystique*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company
- Smith, Bonnie G. (2013). *Women's Studies the Basic*. London:Routledge

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## UNIT V -EMERGING CONCEPT OF FEMINISM AND FEMINIST MOVEMENT

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*Emerging Concept of Feminism and  
Feminist Movement*

NOTES

### Structure

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Objectives
- 5.3 Emerging Concept Of Feminism
- 5.4 Feminist Movement
- 5.5 Suffrage Movement
- 5.6 Civil Disobedience Movement
- 5.7 Dravidian Movement
- 5.8 Backward Class Movement
- 5.9 The Telengana Movement
- 5.10 The Chipko Movement
- 5.11 Social Reform Movement
- 5.12 Social Reform Movement
- 5.13 The Navnirman Movement
- 5.14 The Anti Arrack Movement
- 5.15 Let Us Sum Up
- 5.16 Check your progress
- 5.17 Unit End Exercise
- 5.18 Answers to Check Progress
- 5.19 Suggested Readings

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### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

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The term feminism is described by the Cambridge advanced learners dictionary as "the belief that women should be allowed the same rights, power and opportunities as men and be treated in the same way, or the set of activities intended to achieve this state". Feminism is a widely spread phenomena in the western world during the early of 18th century, in the beginning of feminism, the women initiated to liberate themselves from the domination and sub-ordination from the men in the working places. Later on the idea increased and took a great ambition to seek equality between women and men in terms of economy, politics, social, intellectual and other rights.

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### 5.2 OBJECTIVES

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- To know about the emerging concept of feminism
- To acknowledge feminist movements
- To know about the role of women in national movements

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### 5.3 EMERGING CONCEPT OF FEMINISM

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The term feminism is a relatively modern one and there are debates over when and where it was first used, but the term „feminist“ seems to have

*Self-Instructional Material*

first been used in 1871 in French. According to Susan James characterizes feminism as follows: Feminism is grounded on the belief that women are oppressed or disadvantaged by comparison with men, and that their oppression is in some way illegitimate or unjustified. Under the umbrella of this general characterization there are, however, many interpretations of women and their oppression, so that it is a mistake to think of feminism as a single philosophical doctrine, or as implying an agreed political program. (James 1998, 576) James seems here to be using the notions of “oppression” and “disadvantage” as placeholders for more substantive accounts of injustice (both normative and descriptive) over which feminists disagree.

Feminism is thus a term that emerged long after women started questioning their inferior status and demanding an amelioration in their social position. Even after the word feminism was coined, it was still not adopted as a term of identification by many of those who campaigned for women’s rights. Even many of the women’s rights organizations in the late 1960s and early 1970s did not call themselves feminist: the term feminism had a restricted use in relation to specific concerns and specific groups

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## 5.4 FEMINIST MOVEMENT

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The feminist movement (also known as the women’s liberation movement, the women’s movement, or simply feminism) refers to a series of political campaigns for reforms on issues such as reproductive rights, domestic violence, maternity leave, equal pay, women’s suffrage, sexual harassment, and sexual violence, all of which fall under the label of feminism and the feminist movement. The movement’s priorities vary among nations and communities, and range from opposition to female genital mutilation in one country, to opposition to the glass ceiling in another. Feminism in parts of the western world has gone through three waves. First-wave feminism was oriented around the station of middle- or upper-class white women and involved suffrage and political equality. Second-wave feminism attempted to further combat social and cultural inequalities. Third-wave feminism is continuing to address the financial, social and cultural inequalities and includes renewed campaigning for greater influence of women in politics and media. In reaction to political activism, feminists have also had to maintain focus on women’s reproductive rights, such as the right to abortion.

Check your progress-1

Note: Write your answer in the space given below

1. What is feminist movement?

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## **5.5 SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT**

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The woman suffrage movement actually began in 1848, when a women's rights convention was held in Seneca Falls, New York. The Seneca Falls meeting was not the first in support of women's rights, but suffragists later viewed it as the meeting that launched the suffrage movement. For the next 50 years, woman suffrage supporters worked to educate the public about the validity of woman suffrage. Under the leadership of Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and other women's rights pioneers, suffragists circulated petitions and lobbied Congress to pass a constitutional amendment to enfranchise women.

At the turn of the century, women reformers in the club movement and in the settlement house movement wanted to pass reform legislation. However, many politicians were unwilling to listen to a disenfranchised group. Thus, over time women began to realize that in order to achieve reform, they needed to win the right to vote. For these reasons, at the turn of the century, the woman suffrage movement became a mass movement.

Check your progress

1. Write about women suffrage movement

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## **5.6 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT**

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One of the most important features of the Civil Disobedience Movement was the large scale participation of women. During Gandhiji's salt march, thousands of women participated in marches, manufactured salt and picketed foreign cloth and liquor shops. Many went to jail. In urban areas, these women were from high caste educated family e.g. Sarojini Naidu, Satyavati Devi, Kamala Nehru, Vijaylakshmi Pandit, Kasturba Gandhi, etc. In rural areas, women came from rich peasant households. Bengal being the nerve centre of female education in India, increased the women's participation in nationalism. In 1930, women rallied before Bethune College, Calcutta in support of Gandhiji's Civil Disobedience Movement. Therefore, the large section of women was influenced by Gandhiji's idealism and participated in National Movement. But all these participation were symbolic as women did not hold any position of authority for a long time.

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## **5.7 DRAVIDIAN MOVEMENT**

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The roots of the Dravidian movement can be traced to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century political activity around the issue of greater representation of non-Brahmins in the political sphere. The movement worked towards the upliftment of the lower castes through education. It awakened ethnic fervour among the Tamils, linking Tamil/non-Brahmin identity. The

alienation of a growing class of affluent merchants and landowners gave rise to the Justice party. Sir P.T. Thiagaraya Chettiar, Sir P.T. Rajan, and V.V. Ramaswami Nadar were a few of the prominent leaders of the party. John Christopher Baker in *The Politics of South India* observed that most industrialists of that period were non-Brahmins. As Brahmins had better access to English education they were absorbed into government services and other fields such as medicine, law, engineering etc.

In 1921, The Justice Party, put forth a plea for communal representation in government services hoping to attract non-Brahmin voters. By the 1940s, this had evolved into a demand for a separate Dravida Nadu and the party was reconfigured as the Dravida Kazhagam. It was during this period that E.V. Ramaswami 'Periyar' came on the scene. He was greatly attracted to the non-cooperation movement started by Gandhi and plunged wholeheartedly into the activities of the Congress and the struggle for Swaraj. He advocated the use of Khadi and urged people to give up untouchability. The Dravidian movement was successful in allowing women to express themselves on a public platform. Women successfully debated on public issues and were involved in social work and were on a par with men in bringing about social reforms. The entire credit for bringing about this change goes to Periyar. Women were able to function as an independent group in organising their own conferences. The movement used these conferences to take up women's issues and encouraged women's participation in politics. The first provincial Self-Respect conference was held at Chengleput, near Madras in 1929. It discussed issues including the Simon commission and caste oppression. A demand for equal property rights for men and women was made. The 2<sup>nd</sup> conference at Virudunagar in 1931 argued that women should not be recruited only for professions like teaching and medicine but that they should be inducted into the army and police. They also called for local magistrates to identify those temples which encouraged the devadasi system.

The anti-Hindi agitations also elicited considerable participation by women. The women wore sarees with the Tamil flag printed on it and chanted anti-Hindi and pro-Tamil slogans. A meeting was organised in Madras on September 11, 1938 and was addressed by Ramamritham Ammaiyar, Narayani Ammaiyar, Va. Ba. Thamaraianni Ammaiyar, Munnagaara Azhagiyaramong others. Activists like Dr. Daramambal, Ramamirthammaiyar, Malar Mugathammar, Seethammal, Unnamulaimmar, Bhuvanewari Ammaiar, Sivasankari, Sarojini Ammaiar



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## **5.8 BACKWARD CLASS MOVEMENT**

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Some of the most important backward class movement in India are as follows: 1. Satya Shodhak Samaj 2. Shri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam Movement 3. Justice Party 4. The Self-respect Movement.

The socio-religious reform movements of the nineteenth century were led by the upper-caste Hindus who condemned the caste system and untouchability. But they achieved only limited success. Several factors and forces in the nineteenth and twentieth century's created class-consciousness among the lower castes who took upon themselves to struggle for caste equality.

Their efforts led to the organization of several lower caste movements in southern and western India. These movements were encouraged by a combination of several factors such as the British policy of divide and rule, the growth of Western system of education, introduction of a common Indian Penal Code (1861), and Code of Criminal Procedure (1872), the extension of the railway network, growth of national consciousness, and the popularity of the modern political thought. These created a social and political climate in which the caste system could not be defended.

### **Satya Shodhak Samaj:**

In Western India, Jyotirao Govindrao Phule struggled for the upliftment of lower castes through his Satya Shodhak Samaj. Belonging to the Mali caste, which supplies flowers to the Peshwa's family, he had suffered humiliation, which made him to turn against caste inequalities. He strongly criticized the Brahmanical domination in the name of religion. He was also critic of Indian National Congress for neglecting the weaker sections.

The aim of his organization was to achieve social justice for weaker sections of the society. He opened a number of schools, orphanages for the children and women belonging to all castes. He was elected as a member of the Poona Municipal committee in 1876. His writings include Dharma Tritiya Ratna, Ishara, Life of Shivaji, etc.

In 1888, he was honored with the title of Mahatma. Soon Dr B.R. Ambedkar took up the mantle of fighting for the cause of depressed castes in the twentieth century as part of Indian National Movement. His efforts culminated in the form of enactment of the reservation system for socially underprivileged sections in the Constitution of India.

### **Shri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam Movement:**

The non-Brahmin movement found reflection in Kerala under the leadership of Shri Narayana Guru who belonged to the backward Ezhava caste. He established the SNDP Yogam with its branches outside the Kerala State also. He launched a two-point program for the upliftment of the Ezhavas to root out-the practice of untouchability.

As a second step Narayana Guru built a number of temples, which were declared open to all castes. He also simplified rituals regarding marriage, religious worship, and funerals. Narayana Guru achieved a notable success in transforming the untouchable groups into a backward class. He criticized Gandhi for his faith in Chaturvarna, which he considered the parent of the caste system and untouchability. He gave a new slogan “one religion, one caste and one God for mankind”.

### **Justice Party:**

In reaction to the incipient nationalist movement, represented by the nineteenth century Hindu revivalism, which led to improving the position of the Brahmin caste, the non- Brahmins of Madras Presidency sought to ally with the colonial regime, hoping that foreign rule would protect their position and somewhat neutralize power differences within the population. Mindful of the importance of literacy as the base of the Brahmins’ virtual monopoly of government offices, the non-Brahmin elite sought to advance their communities through education.

Dr T.M. Nair, P. Thyagaraja Chetty, and C.N. Mudaliar came together and founded the Justice Party in 1916. It was resolved to form an association of non-Brahman Hindus under the name of South Indian Peoples’ Association. Chetty asked all non-Brahmins to unite and draw the attention of the government to the grievances voiced in the Manifesto.

He said, “Let all non-Brahmins do everything needful to ensure a continued educational, social, political, and economic development as broad and enduring basic; and, then, their future as British subjects will be brighter and more prosperous than it is today.”

With the proclamation of the non-Brahmin Manifesto, it was argued that an association for the political advancement of the non-Brahmin community should also be formed to function alongside the South Indian Peoples’ Association. In August 1917, the South Indian Liberal Federation came into existence.

It was announced that the Justice Party’s objective was justice for all Dravidians through the establishment of a separate state under the watchful guidance of the British rule. His idealism, however, was influenced by the immediate practicalities of securing required reforms for the betterment of the non-Brahmin community.

Nair said that the movement could be replicated in northern India too. Nair was critical of the Congress Party for the adoption of “independence” as its new political faith. The Justice Party set itself up against all “negative” methods of passive resistance and non-cooperation, which Nair saw as subversive to any ordered and stable government.

### **The Self-respect Movement**

When Justice Party was very close to demise by the end of 1920s, with substantial sections of former activists and sympathisers leaving the Party to join the ranks of Indian National Congress, a series of highly

significant socio-political and ideological developments facilitated the emergence of yet another very powerful socio-cultural movement started by E.V.Ramaswamy Naicker in 1925.<sup>43</sup> He organised the 'Self-Respect Movement', designed as a Dravidian uplift endeavour, seeking to expose Brahmin tyranny and the deceptive methods by which they controlled all spheres of Hindu life. He carried on active propaganda in an attempt to get rid of Puranic Hinduism from the people and wean them away from religious ceremonies requiring priestly service of the Brahmins. The movement insisted on equality between men and women, attracted the lower castes and classes, spread rationalist and egalitarian thinking based on the idea that religion and caste institutions are the core of all evil. Unlike the Justice Party, the 'Self-Respect Movement' was powerfully oriented towards oppressed groups in the caste hierarchy, including untouchables. It adopted concrete measures to involve women and youth.

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## **5.9 THE TELENGANA MOVEMENT**

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The Telengana movement in 1948 was a women's movement in Hyderabad state that was promoted by peasant women who struggled for their land, for better wages, abolition of *vetti* and against exorbitant interest on grains and cash loans. It can be said that the Telengana movement, was a revolutionary one among the Telugu people in terms of struggling for land right and leads to land reform. This movement involved huge numbers of women to pressure the landlords and struggle against cultural domination. The immediate aftermath of Partition and Independence saw a steady increasing sense of betrayal on the part of workers and peasants, communists and socialists. The delay of the Congress in the fulfillment of its promises of speedy and effective lands distribution influenced the Kisan Sabhas with a new spirit of opposition at a time when the impact of the Chinese revolution was being felt by Indian communists and there were share croppers rallies, strikes and demonstrations, led by the Kisan Sabhas, criticising government measures as insufficient and demanding laws reform. Most of these agitations were suppressed by the Government through the arrest of Peasant leaders but this was not possible in the case of one of the earliest and most militant share croppers movements, the 1948-50 Telengana movement in Andhra Pradesh.

Under the leadership of Maoist influence, members of the CPI (Communist Party of India) some two thousand five hundred villages in Telengana district were liberated, share-croppers debts were cancelled, rent payments were suspended and land redistributed.

In September 1948 Indian troops took over the state, arresting peasant leaders and firing upon demonstrators. The CPI was outlawed and the movement forced underground, where it took to guerilla tactics.

Though thousands of women had been active in the strikes and rallies, and the leaders of the Telengana movement were unusual in the attention, they paid to such women problems as wife beating making it known that they would chastise offenders, the attitude towards women remained one of benevolent paternalism, and when the movement went underground, women were not allowed to join the Guerillas but were expected to perform the ancillary tasks of providing shelter, acting as messengers etc. The exceptional women who did manage to push themselves into guerilla movement later confessed how lonely they had felt, for while they were treated as having shed their womanliness, they were never accepted as being on par with men.

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### **5.10 THE CHIPKO MOVEMENT**

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In 1970, an organized resistance to the destruction of forests spread throughout India and came to be known as the Chipko movement. It began in the hills where the forests are main source of livelihood. The Chipko movement got its name from the Hindi word *chipko* which means 'to cling'. This clinging to trees was a particular action people used, to save trees which were crucial to their lives, from being felled. The movement began in 1973 in the small hilly town of Gopeshwar in the Chamoli District. It sparked off when representatives from a sports factory came to cut trees. Women joined the movement under the leadership of an activist Chandi Prasad Bhatt, went to the forest and formed a circle around the trees preventing the contractor from cutting trees. It was the women of the Chipko who brought to public attention the importance of trees and the need to protect the environment. The success achieved by this protest led to similar protests in other parts of the country. The supporters of the Chipko movement, mainly women, were successful in getting the felling of trees banned in a number of regions and influenced the natural resource policy in India. Dhoom Singh Negi, Bachni Devi, Gaura Devi and many other village women were the first to save the trees by hugging them. They coined the slogan: what do the forests bear? 'Soil, water and pure air.' The success of chipko movement in the hills saved thousands of trees from being felled.

Some other persons have also been involved in this movement and have given it proper direction. Sunderlal Bahuguna, a Gandhian activist and philosopher, whose appeal to Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India resulted in the green felling ban. Mr. Bahuguna coined the chipko slogan 'ecology is permanent economy.' He encouraged the development of local industries based on conservation and sustainable use of forest wealth for local benefits. The Chipko protest in Uttar Pradesh achieved a major victory in 1980 with a fifteen years ban on green felling in the Himalayan forests of that state by the order of the then Prime Minister ([edugreen.teri.res.in/explore/forestry/chipko.htm](http://edugreen.teri.res.in/explore/forestry/chipko.htm)).

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## **5.11 SOCIAL REFORM MOVEMENT**

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The 19th century occupies a very significant place in the history of modern India. This was the period when many images of India and Indians were constructed, mis-constructed and reconstructed by the British imperial power as well as the revivalists, radicals and the reformists. In this process, the question of women was at the centre. What is significant to note is that though the question of woman was at the centre during the 19th century reform movement, voices of women remained at the margin. Forbes (1998) rightly writes that "in the 19th century, the 'woman question' loomed large. This was not a question of 'what do women want' but rather 'how can they be modernized". [Forbes, 1998]. In fact, in the early 19th century, as a response to colonial encounter and imperial allegation of backwardness of the Indian society, women were converted from the "object of oppression" to the "site of reform". The issues of social reform movement related to women were mainly determined by the male social reformers. In fact, apart from the revivalist/reformist divide, the social reform movement can be divided into three categories: social reform movement by upper caste male reformers; social reform movement by low caste male reformers, and social reform movement by women reformers. However, these three categories cannot be understood in total separation with each other, because one created space for the other.

During the early phase of the social reform movement, the male social reformers were the dominant actors. To illustrate, Raja Rammohan Roy raised his voice against the inhuman practice of sati. In his historical article, "A Conference between an Advocate for and an Opponent to the Practice of Burning Widow Alive" he argued that none of the scriptures prescribe the practice of sati. His attempt was widely opposed by the orthodoxy. However, finally efforts of Roy and many of his supporters led to promulgation of Bengal Sati Regulation, 1829 which declared the practice of Sati illegal and punishable by the criminal court.

Legal abolition of Sati though paved the way for right to life for Hindu widows, but still, the right to a dignified life for widows was a far goal to achieve due to the hardships imposed on them. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar took up the cause of widows and it led the campaign for legalizing widow remarriage which ultimately resulted in the passing of the Hindu Widow Remarriage Act, 1856. He also challenged the Hindu practice of polygamy and presented a petition to the government signed by twenty five hundred persons to legally prohibit polygamy.

Another major issue taken up by the reformers was child marriage. Social reformers like Behram Malabari and G.H. Deshmukh blamed the practice as responsible for weakness of the Indian nation and race. These

reformers fought for raising the age of consent and this time women also came forward to support the cause. A petition signed by sixteen hundred women was sent to Queen Victoria for raising the age of consent in 1890. Amid the oppositions by the orthodox and nationalists, the social reformers kept on fighting for the cause and could get the Age of Consent Act passed in 1891.

Unlike the issues of Sati, child marriage, tonsure of widows, widow remarriage and polygamy, the issue of education for women got acceptance of reformists, revivalists as well as of radicals. However, though all these groups agreed that women should be educated, but there was disagreement on 'what to teach women' and 'why to teach women'. The major issue was whether to educate women as individuals to develop their rational faculty or as wives and mothers to enable them to perform their roles in a better way. However, the main stress was on educating women to be better wives and mothers.

Unlike the elite upper caste male social reformers who were mostly either conservative or moderate in their approach, Jyotirao Phule, representing the depressed section of the society, unravelled the connection between the subordination of women and caste hierarchy. He openly challenged Brahmin patriarchy through his radical arguments and social reform initiatives.

The above account makes it clear that the male social reformers did not form a homogeneous group. But it cannot be denied that these male social reformers whether moderate, revivalist or radical-knowingly or unknowingly, intentionally or unintentionally created a space for women and hence facilitated their participation.

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## **5.12 SOCIAL REFORM MOVEMENT**

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Since the question of woman constituted the core of the 19th century social reform movement, there are few questions relating to women's participation which need to be answered, like where were the voices of women in the social reform movement? How did women look upon the woman's question? Was there any difference between the perspectives of female and male social reformers?

So far the matter concerned with the issues, we find that both the male and female social reformers fought for almost similar causes. Few major names of women who played a very significant role in the social reform movement are Francina Sorabjee, Parvati Ayyappan, Ramabai Ranade, Rakhmabai, Pandita Ramabai, Mataji Maharani Tapaswini, Begum Rokeya Sakhawat etc. Like male social reformers, these female social reformers also raised their voices against social evils, but their main focus was on educating women, to mention a few significant steps taken by women reformers in this direction. Francina Sorabjee founded three schools at Poona and also started a Teachers Training School in 1872;

Lakshmi Bayamma from Andhra Pradesh founded Saradaniketan, a residential school for women at Guntur; and Ramabai Ranade, along with her husband Justice Ranade, founded Seva Sadan and the Seva Sadan Nursing and Medical Association.

Further, when we look at the approach of women social reformers, we find that women social reformers may be classified into two different categories: first, those women who did not raise their independent voice rather followed the agenda set by their male counterparts—either reformist or revivalist; second; women who directly challenged patriarchy by raising their voices against female subordination and other social evils in their personal life as well as in public life by leading social campaigns against such practices. The second category of women can be regarded as the forerunners of modern day feminists. But these two categories are overlapping and hence no watertight compartment can be made between the two.

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### 5.13 THE NAVNIRMAN MOVEMENT

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The Navnirman Movement, originally a student movement in Gujarat against soaring prices, black marketing and corruption launched in 1974, was soon joined by thousands of middle class women. Their modest protest ranged from mass hunger strikes, mock funerals and *prabhat pheri*. This was the first successful agitation after independence that ousted an elected government. It inspired Jay Prakash Navarayan to launch the 'Total revolution movement' fighting to reform as well as to limit state power, arguing that the *rajniti* had become corrupt and decayed and the time for *lockniti* had come. The urban middle was unhappy because of the high price of essential commodities, while the countryside was demanding wages and food security. But what sparked off the agitation was the student protests in Ahmedabad in December 1973 because of high mess bills and poor quality of food.

There were clashes between the police and students, and the students committee later known as Nav Nirman Yuvak Samiti was formed to voice grievances. Their demand was reduction in education fees, more campus facilities, distribution of quality food and arrest of black marketers.' Under mounting pressure Chiman Bhai Patel, the Chief Minister was asked to step down. The governor suspended the state assembly and president's rule was imposed. Navnirman was a buzz word for students and their mentors. However, it also provided grounds for reactionary forces to flourish. Thus whether the anti-prices rise and Nav Nirman movements can be called anti- patriarchal or not is an open question. Yet women's collective public opinion is generally regarded as posing an implicit threat to patriarchy since both the anti-price rise and Nav Nirman movements involved thousands of women in public action. Perhaps both movements allowed anti-patriarchal ideas to germinate

indirectly for several of their activities manifested themselves in feminist activities in the late seventies.

1975 signaled another eventful period. The United Nations had declared the year as the International Women's Year (IWY) and the first world conference on women was held in Mexico in June 1975. Considering the grave conditions of women in all countries, it was decided that the next ten years would constitute the women's decade. Due to the declaration of 1975-85 as the women's decade the Government was forced to appoint commissions and committees to introduce certain relief measure for promoting gender equality. During the 1980s this phase was marked by the Shah Bano Case, the Roop Kanwar sati incident and the reservation policy. Homogeneity with the women's groups declined. A number of differences arose in conceptualizing problems as well as in deciding strategies. The issues, methods and thrusts of action were considerably different in the women's movement. There is no exaggeration in saying that many of the measures introduced by the ruling government have been due to the struggles launched by women. The enactment of amendments to the rape law or to the dowry act, the institution of structures such as family courts and the national commission for women, women police cells and gender sensitisation programmes are a few examples.

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### **5.14 THE ANTI ARRACK MOVEMENT**

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The anti-arrack movement of women in Andhra Pradesh was one of most historic and significant movements of the decade of 1990's. The historic bangle waged by the women in Andhra Pradesh against the social evil of alcohol drinking is a magnum war in Indian social history. Women have played a historic role in bringing about a ban on consumption and sale of distilled liquor in Andhra Pradesh. The movement indeed was not just for elimination of liquor but for the protection and survival of their own culture. The rural women in the villages raised their voices lifted their hand to arrest the degeneration of the progress of their families and the damage caused by their men to their children and themselves.

The movement was started in a small village Called "Dubagunta" in Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh. The main reason for the movement was said to be the successful literacy mission that has been going in Nellore district. In one of the adult education classes under the National Literacy Mission (NLM), The National literacy Mission (NLM) was officially launched in Nellore District from 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1990 and was implemented from January 1991 after an intensive preparation of four months. This program was implemented in a very innovative way. At the core of the program was recognition of development as an instrument of change and empowerment of women.



Hence both the Chipko and the anti-arrack movement, one by raising its voice against the destruction of environment and bringing a crises to the economy and the other by raising its voice against liquor and bringing in a lot of violence in the domestic sphere raised questions about these issues in the public forum to bring about a change in women's status.

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### **5.15 LET US SUM UP**

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Women's movements in India can be seen before and after independence. These movements have achievements in different fields including the political arena, social welfare and the legal domain and campaign against purdah and women's suffrage. The hurdles to the progress of women are caused by a patriarchal mindset and system. The caste system has also limited women in getting opportunities, especially in the colonial era. Right now, women's movements are struggling for justice and equality. History shows that the struggle for women's rights is long one. The women's movement thus has a long way to go in its struggle for bringing about new values, a new morality and new egalitarian relationship into the society

#### **5.16 Check your progress**

1. Describe the participation of women in chipko movement  
What is anti-arrack movement

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### **5.17 UNIT END EXERCISE**

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1. Discuss about feminist movements
2. Elaborate the role of women in post independent era.

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### **5.18 ANSWERS TO CHECK PROGRESS**

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- Feminist theory focuses on analyzing gender inequality. Themes explored infeminism include discrimination, objectification (especially sexual objectification), oppression, patriarchy, stereotyping, art history and contemporary art, and aestheticsThe women's liberation movement (WLM) was a political alignment of women and feminist intellectualism that emerged in the late 1960s and continued into the 1980s primarily in the industrialized nations of the Western world, which affected great change (political, intellectual, cultural) throughout the world.

- First-wave feminism was a period of feminist activity and thought that occurred during the 19th and early 20th century throughout the Western world. It focused on legal issues, primarily on gaining the right to vote.
- The environmental movement (sometimes referred to as the ecology movement), also including conservation and green politics, is a diverse scientific, social, and political movement for addressing environmental issues.
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### **5.19 SUGGESTED READINGS**

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- Neelam, (2011), *Role of Women in National Freedom Movement, 1919-47*, New Delhi: Wisdom Publication.
- [www.mkgandhi.org/articles/women\\_empowerment](http://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/women_empowerment).
- [edugreen.teri.res.in/explore/forestry/chipko.html](http://edugreen.teri.res.in/explore/forestry/chipko.html)
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# UNIT VI - STATUS OF WOMEN IN INDIA

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*Status of Women  
In India  
NOTES*

## **Structure**

- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Objectives
- 6.3 Statuses of women during the early Vedic Period
- 6.4 Status of Women in Mughal Period
- 6.5 Status of Women in Colonial Period
- 6.6 Check your progress
- 6.7 Status of Women In Modern Period
- 6.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 6.9 Women Entrepreneurship
- 6.10 Women Entrepreneurs
- 6.11 Status of Women Entrepreneurs Entrepreneurs
- 6.12 Challenges Faced By Women
- 6.13 Check your progress
- 6.14 Let Us Sum Up
- 6.15 Unit End Exercise
- 6.16 Answers to Check Progress
- 6.17 Suggested Readings

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## **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

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Women in India have passed through a turbulent range of social transformation and upheavals, historical phases and political struggles. The present status of women is due to the efforts of social reformers, women's organisation and the Constitution of India that removed the hurdles for women's equality. But in reality, the obstacles to the liberation of women have not all been eliminated. The basic issue of women's inequality and traditional role of women were not challenged. Women have been facing inequality from several centuries. In fact, tracing the women's status in India from a historical perspective is not an easy task because systematic documentation on the status of women in different social- religious group at different point of time began only recently. Using available and authentic sources of information an attempt has been made in this lesson to analyse the status of women during different periods of history.

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## **6.2 OBJECTIVES**

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- To study about the status of women in India
- To understand the concept women entrepreneurship
- To able to know the status of women entrepreneurs in India

The status of women has been divided these into four major periods:

- ✓ Early Vedic period

*Self-Instructional Material*

- ✓ Mughal period
- ✓ Colonial period and
- ✓ Modern period.

The position of women has also been discussed in different religions and philosophical thoughts. Throughout this work the concern has been to analyze the situation from a feminist perspective. During this process the attempt has not been to enter into debate on the nature of historiography or the state or other issue which have been engaging the scholars of women's studies. However, reference has been made to most of the debates on women's issues and also drawn attention has been drawn to certain issue affecting women's life.

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### **6.3 STATUS OF WOMEN DURING THE EARLY VEDIC PERIOD**

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The earliest known source of information available about the status of women during the early vedic period is the Rigveda. The age of the Rigveda, is from 2500 to 1500 *bc* Though one cannot clearly state that this age was characterized by totally equality between men and women; it is evident from available data sources that many liberal attitudes and practices pertaining to women existed during this period. Women enjoyed a fair amount of freedom and equality. They participated in all spheres like men. They studied in the Gurukuls and enjoyed equality in learning the Vedas. Girls in higher societies were allowed to undergo upanayana rite. Great women like Gargi, Ateryi, Ghosa, Apala, Lopamudra, Visvara, Indrani, and Yami inter alia, were accomplished in art, music, dance and even warfare. Men and women together performed religious duties, enjoyed and carried out other functions. Women had an absolute equality with men in the eye of religion; they could perform sacrifices independently and were not regarded as an impediment in religious pursuits. The marriages of girls used to take place at a fairly advanced age. Educated brides of this age had naturally an effective voice in the selection of their partners in life. Very often there were love marriages, which were later blessed by parents. There was no seclusion of women; they used to move freely in society. The position of the wife was an honoured one in the family. The word *Dampati*, so often used in the Vedas, characterises both wife and husband. If a wife had the misfortune to be widowed, she had not to ascend her husband's pyre. The *sati* custom was not in vogue at all.

However feminist historians have criticised Altekar's and other nationalist historians work on the position of women in Vedic societies. Uma Chakravarti and Kumkum Roy have pointed out the limitations of their work, according to them the lack of conceptual rigour in analysing a given society of which women were a part is also evident in Altekar's attempt to account for the absence of queens in the Vedic age, which was an unnecessary exercise, given the fact that specialised political

institutions were barely developing during the period. Uma Chakravarti in own scholarly article ‘Whatever Happened to the Vedic Dasi?’ has questioned these historical writings about the socially privileged situation of Vedic women. She argued that the past itself was a creation of the compulsions of the present and these compulsion determined which elements where highlighted and which receded from the conscious object of concern in historical and semi historical writings. These historians have focused on the need to examine the relationship between women and the productive process as mediated through the connections between women and men, including variations as well as variations between different recognised categories of women based on the varna- jati system.

#### **6.4 STATUS OF WOMEN IN MUGHAL PERIOD**

The Mughal period in Indian history began with the battle of Panipat in 1526 in which Babur defeated Ibrahim Lodi. After the establishment of Muslim regimes, the status of women further deteriorated. There are a number of debates and versions of the status of women during the Mughal period. Some of the Mughal emperors like Akber, Jahangir and Aurangajeb tried and issued orders to prohibit the practice of sati but it could not be suppressed. However the Muslim woman had some distinct advantages. After the death of her husband, she was allowed to remarry, after waiting for a period of three months which was called “iddat”. Purdah system was a part of Mughal culture and this system was observed strictly during Mughal period. Girls were not allowed to go outside. Arrangements for education of princesses were made in the palace. As in Hindu society, similarly among the Muslims, rich people used to arrange for education of their girls in their own homes. Music was taught to princess in the palace by carefully selected ustads (teachers). But even during the Mughal period there were some very learned women who made unique contribution to the development of literature. The empress Nurjahan was a learned woman. She very well carried on the state administration. Sultan Razia, princess Gul Badan, princess Zebunnisa are examples of learned royal ladies. However only the royal, princess and ladies and daughters of very rich people received education during the Mughal period; the education of common women as in Hindu society was completely ignored. There was no question of having any political status for women. The legal status of muslim women was equally pathetic with easy “talak”, inroads in to inheritance right and strict confinement within the home.

However there is no consensus amongst historians about the precise period when *purdah* originated in Indian society. In the well-known book, 'Mediaeval India', renowned historian Satish Chandra writes that during the Delhi Sultanate period, beginning in 1206, ‘the practice of keeping women in seclusion and asking them to veil their

faces in the presence of outsiders became widespread among the upper class women'. Historian Kegan Paul traces the practice of the custom back to the Vedic period. According to Nandita Prasad Sahi, "Most historians consider the Muslim invasion as a watershed when *pardah* is said to have become more widespread as a defensive reaction in troubled times among the Rajput royalty trying to protect their women. In fact, the case is unproven in the absence of statistical material that could establish a change in the extent of the practice of *pardah* . It seems plausible, however, that the practice became more widespread amongst the Rajput royalty in trying to imitate the custom of the new ruling classes, Interestingly, the peasant and working class women did not observe *pardah* . It was a feature primarily among upper classes."

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## 6.5 STATUS OF WOMEN IN COLONIAL PERIOD

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In the mid of 19<sup>th</sup> century, the British had gained direct or indirect control over almost all over India. In the early year of British colonialism, there was no real effort made to address women's question or social oppression of women. Social evils such as sati, suppression of widows, denial of the right to education for women and child marriage flourished unchecked. With the dawn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, for the first time, due to various reasons, the women's question came to the forefront.

The British set in motion in area of social reform when they imposed a ban on the imposed a ban on the inhuman practice of sati in the year 1829. The famous social reformer Raja Rammohan Roy started a campaign against sati practice, in which he was later supported by Debendra nath Tagore. He appealed to the Governor General Lord William Betick, to pass a law banning sati practice. His persuasion and positive response from the Governor General bore fruit and the practice was banned by sati prohibition Act 1829 in Bengal Presidency, which was later extended in 1830 to Madras and Bombay presidency. Religious fundamentalists and traditionalist put up a stiff resistance of this Act by claiming that the British government had meddled with a custom sanctioned by religion. Raja Rammohan Roy referred to various Sanskrit texts to prove that this practice was not prescribed by religion. The voice of region prevailed and the British government refused to withdraw the Act. However, a distinction was made between voluntary sati and forced sati. Also, the passage of this Act did not put an end to the practice of sati.

Because of the ban on the widow marriage and lack of opportunities for education, women who were rescued from the practice of sati had undergone a great deal of suffering. Many widow preferred to die, because life held no meaning for them. It was the plight of young and tortured widows that moved great social reformer

Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, who led the movement for lifting the ban on widow marriage. Due to his effort the widow remarriage Act of 1856 was passed on dated 26 July 1856. Though there was no significant increase in the number of widow marriage, the passage of this Act paved the way for ending a longstanding oppressive custom. Social approval of widow marriage was also not forthcoming immediately. Vidyasagar had to often bear the wrath of hostile fundamentalists. Like Raja Rammohan Roy, Vidyasagar also took the support of the Sanskrit texts for social approval of widow remarriage and demonstrated that the system of polygamy without restriction was not sanctioned by the ancient Hindu shastra. The role of Vidyasagar in promoting the cause of women's education also deserves special mention.

The social reform movement, which started in West Bengal, spread to other parts of India too. Like Vidyasagar, Durgaram Mehtaji in Gujarat felt that the denial of education to women was responsible for many of their problems. Behramji M Malabari's crusade to end the suffering of child widows and to raise the age of consent was noteworthy. Due to special effort of Behramji Malabari the age of consent bill passed on dated 19 March 1981. D.K Karve, Gopal Hari Deshmukh, M.G Ranade and Karsandas Mulji were among the notable person who contributed to the betterment of women's status.

While many of the reformers were inspired by the liberal ideas of the west, some preferred to go back to the "glorious" tradition of ancient India. Revivalist such as Dayanand Saraswati and Vivekanand made effort to improve the status of women by evoking the ancient Indian norms of purity and duty. On the other hand some bold voice challenged the set patterns.

Joytirao Phule boldly raised the question on the blind faith on god and religious text. Joytirao Phule along with his wife worked for equality and the education of the oppressed class and women. He started a school for girls in 1848 and in 1852 established the first school for Dalit girls. He also initiated widow remarriage and stabilised a home for upper caste widows in 1885, as well as a home for new born infants to prevent female infanticide. Tarabai Sinde and Pandita Ramabai both dared to challenge the old age traditions and hollowness of Brahminical Patriarchy, which was responsible for women's operation. This period saw immense humanitarian activity by many Indian in different parts of the country. In South India, M Krishna Nair, Sri C.P Ramaswami Iyer and R.Venkata RatnaNaidu questioned the practice of Devdasi and pleaded for its abolition. Another south Indian social reformer Kandukuri Veeresalingam fought for the education of women and remarriage of widows.

There were also a number of other progressive pieces of legislation during the British period, prominent among these being the

Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1929. Haribildas Sarda took initiative in leading the campaign for increasing the age of marriage and in recognition of his role the Act also came to be known as the Sarda Act.

The Colonial period was also remarkable for two other important reasons. First, women realised they needed their own forum and some women's organisation came in existence. In this context, three major organizations, the Women's India Association (1917), the National Council for Women in India (1925) and the All India Women's Conference (1927), particularly the All India Women's Conference, played a major role in articulating women's issue. Second, the large-scale participation of women in the freedom movement. Women's participation in the freedom struggle changed many perceptions and helped them to liberate themselves from some age-old social taboos and traditional norms.

While the nationalist struggle provided women with an opportunity to enter the public sphere and bring about changes in their lives, but it could not totally transform the reality. Thus in short, during the colonial period, awareness was created for the removal of social malaise, while education and organizing political participation increased women's mobility. The law also was on their side as several legal enactments rectifying women's unequal position were passed.

### **6.6 Check your progress**

1. Write about the status of women in ancient India

### **6.7 STATUS OF WOMEN IN MODERN PERIOD**

The Modern period began with Independence. On 15 August 1947, India kept her tryst with destiny, and the constitution of the free India was implemented from 26 January 1950 as a vehicle of social transformation to realise the goal of the freedom movement. The framers of the constitution were aware of the problem of emancipation of the female sex. It was evident that in order to eliminate inequality and to provide opportunities for the exercise of human rights it was necessary to promote education and protect the economic interest of women. It became the objective of the state to protect women from exploitation and provide social justice. All these ideals were enshrined in the preamble of the constitution. The fundamental rights as guaranteed by the constitution tries to remove the inequalities which Indian women had suffered. Article 14 promises equality before the law and equal protection by laws. Article 15(1) prohibited discrimination against any citizen on grounds of sex; through article 15(3) and also laid down that the state can make special provision for women.



Article 16 guarantees equality of opportunity in public employment. Article 39 directs the state to adopt a policy of equal pay for equal work for both men and women. A number of laws were also implemented for liberating women from oppressive social customs and protecting their rights. Prominent among these laws are:

#### The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955

As part of the Hindu Code Bill, the Hindu Marriage Act was enacted in 1955 by the Indian parliament. It is an act to amend and codify the marriage law among Hindus. Its purpose was to regulate personal life among Hindus, especially the institution of marriage, its validity, condition for invalidity and applicability. This Act made monogamy compulsory and created a provision for divorce.

#### The Hindu Succession Act, 1956

The Hindu Succession Act, 1956, is a law that was passed by the parliament of India in 1956 to codify the law relating to intestate or unwilled succession, among Hindus. The act lays down a uniform and comprehensive system of inheritance and applies to persons governed by both the Mitaksara and Dayabhaga schools. The Act was amended in 2005 by the Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act 2005. The amended Act allowing daughters of the deceased, equal rights with sons.

#### The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961

The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 is a piece of social legislation which aims to check the growing menace of the social evil of dowry and make it punishable not only the actual receiving of dowry but also the very demand of dowry made before or at the time or after the marriage where such demand is preferable to the consideration of marriage. The Act was amended in 1984 and 1986.

#### The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961

The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, grants maternity benefits to women who have completed 80 working days in a given job and prohibits the dismissal or discharge of women during the leave period. Under this act women shall be entitled to leave with full pay for 12 weeks. This Act extends to factories, mines, plantations, shops and any other establishment where 10 or more person are employed.

#### The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976

The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 was passed to provide for the payment of equal remuneration of men and women workers and for the prevention of discrimination, on the grounds of sex, against women in the matter of employment and for matters connected there with or incidental thereto.

#### The Indecent Representation of Women(prohibition) Act, 1986

The Indecent Representation of Women (prohibition) Act, 1986, prohibits indecent representation of women through

advertisement or in publication, writings, paintings, figures or in any other manner and makes it a punishable offence.

#### The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005

The Act is primarily meant to provide protection to the wife or female live-in partner from domestic violence at the hands of the husband or male-in-partner or his relatives. It also provides protection to women living in a household such as sisters, widows or mothers. Domestic violence under the act includes actual abuse or the threat of abuse whether physical, sexual, verbal, emotional or economic.

#### Sexual Harassment of women at Workplace (prevention, prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013

This act is a legislative act that seeks to protect women from sexual harassment at their place of work. The Act came into force from 9 December 2013.

Along with the above mentioned Acts, there are many legislations such as the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956, the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 amended in 1986, the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971, the Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987, the Indecent Representation of Women (prohibition) Act, 1986 the National Commission for Women Act, 1990, the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 that have been passed in independent India to bring about major changes in the lives of women.

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## 6.8 LET US SUM UP

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In ancient times the women of India were highly respected and honoured by the Indian society. As time passed and the mentality of people changed towards women. Slowly there was a practice of polygamy, sati pratha, dowry system, female infanticide, etc. started and became dominant which has given a rise to the male-dominated society in India.

There has been a lot of development in the status of women in India after independence. After a long time, women started enjoying equality with men in society. Now women have all the rights and privileges in every area as possessed by men. The Indian constitution has given equal rights, privileges and freedom that is provided to men. Even after so much of exploitation, women feel happy and free. Half of the population in India is covered by women so the development of the country depends on the status of both sexes equally. As the situation was very bad in the country when 50% of the population was restricted to perform many activities and was not given equal rights. Nowadays, women are in the top positions in various fields of life such as in political leaders, social reforms, entrepreneurs, business personalities and administrators, etc. The Government of India has taken up the problems

of divorce, dowry, rape, etc., with a view to find solutions, which will ensure equality of women with men.

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## **6.9 WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

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Entrepreneurship serves as a catalyst of economic development of the country. It is one of the largest sections for capital accumulation. In fact economic growth is the result of the efforts taken by the entrepreneurs. Similarly entrepreneurs can dictate the economic growth by their actions and decisions. Now many have begun to realize that for achieving the goal of economic development, it is necessary to promote entrepreneurship both qualitatively and quantitatively in the country. Only active and enthusiastic entrepreneurs fully explore the potentialities of the country's available resources – labour, technology and capital.

In under developed economies the need of entrepreneurship is been recognized as the major factor of growth in an economy. As the number of entrepreneurs increasing in an economy the growth rate is high, reduction of employment and it also helps in the economic growth of the country. Entrepreneurship serves as a catalyst of economic development of the country. It is one of the largest sections for capital accumulation. In fact economic growth is the result of the efforts taken by the entrepreneurs. Similarly entrepreneurs can dictate the economic growth by their actions and decisions. Now many have begun to realize that for achieving the goal of economic development, it is necessary to promote entrepreneurship both qualitatively and quantitatively in the country. Only active and enthusiastic entrepreneurs fully explore the potentialities of the country's available resources – labour, technology and capital.

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## **6.10 WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS**

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Government of India has defined women entrepreneur is “an enterprise owned and controlled by a women having a minimum financial interest of 51% of the capital and giving at least 51% of the employment generated in the enterprise to women”.

In most countries, regions and sectors, the majority of business owner/managers are male (from 65% to 75%). However, there is increasing evidence that more and more women are becoming interested in small business ownership and/or actually starting up in business. In addition, rates of self employment among women are increasing in several EU countries. Although there are no official statistics relating businesses to the gender of their owner/manager, there is a good deal of evidence to suggest a significant increase in female entrepreneurship.

According to the Women's Financial Network, women start businesses at two times the rate of men. While women are starting more businesses than men, they find it harder at the outset to grow their businesses and access venture capital. Women entrepreneurs constitute 10 % of the number of entrepreneurs in our country. "All over the world there is a realization that the best way to tackle poverty and enable the community to improve its quality of life is through social mobilization of poor, especially women into self help groups. Ever since independence a number of innovative schemes have been launched for the upliftment of women in our country. Indian government has taken lot of initiatives to strengthen the institutional rural credit system and development programmes. Viewing it in the welfare programmes of Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) and shifting the concept of Development to Empowerment. The Indian government adopted the approach of Self Help Groups (SHGs) to uplift the rural poor women. The empowerment of women through Self Help Groups (SHGs) would lead to benefits not only to the individual woman and women groups but also the families and community as a whole through collective action for development. Most women business owners in Indian organization were either housewives or fresh graduates with no previous experience of running a business, These women business owners were in traditionally women - oriented business like garments, beauty care, and fashion designing, which either do not require any formalized training or are developed from a hobby or an interest into a business, The classic example will be of herbal queen Lady Shehnaz Hussain who started her herbal-based treatment from a relatively small scale. Infact, she started literally from her kitchen domain to a chain of beauty parlors spread out across the nation and world

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## **6.11 STATUS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS**

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Since the 21st century, the status of women in India has been changing as a result to growing industrialization and urbanization, spasmodic mobility and social legislation. Over the years, more and more women are going in for higher education, technical and professional education and their proportion in the workforce has also been increased. With the spread of education and awareness, women have shifted from the kitchen, handicrafts and traditional cottage industries to non-traditional higher levels of activities. Even the government has laid special emphasis on the need for conducting special entrepreneurial training programs for women to enable them to start their own ventures. Financial institutions and banks have also set up special cells to assist women entrepreneurs, this has boomerang the women entrepreneurs on the economic scene in the recent years although many women's entrepreneurship enterprises are still remained a much neglected field. However, for women there are several handicaps to enter into and

manage business ownership due to the deeply embedded traditional mindset and stringent values of the Indian society.

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## **6.12 CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS**

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The problems and constraints experienced by women entrepreneurs have resulted in restricting and inhibited the expansion of women entrepreneurship. The major barriers encountered by women entrepreneurs are displayed in the chart

### **Finance**

The majority of women business owners have had to rely to a significant extent on self generated finance during the start up period of their business. Bank loans and grants have only been used in a minority of cases and have usually been accompanied by some form of self generated finance. The availability of bank credit appears to increase once businesses become established and/or a good relationship with the bank has been developed. Banks are reported to have been more forthcoming in the provision of loans once a business has begun to demonstrate a track record. Because of limited funds, they are not able to stock new materials and spend on advertising.

### **Administrative and Regulatory Requirements**

Problems with administrative and/or regulatory requirements were judged to be major issues of female entrepreneurs. Micro enterprises of all types can experience problems in meeting administrative and regulatory requirements, because of the disproportionate effect of compliance costs on small companies compared with large firms. As a consequence, it is not surprising that almost half the support organizations specializing in support for female entrepreneurs identified a problem for their clients in this respect. At the same time, with a few exceptions, administrative and regulatory barriers more significant for female owned businesses than for male owned firms of a similar size

### **Lack of Management Skills or Training**

Women entrepreneurs lacked management skills to a greater extent than small businesses in general, perhaps because of their lower propensity to have had previous business experience. Although difficulties in accessing business advice or support appears to be a minor rather than major problem for women entrepreneurs, a significant minority of specialist organizations felt that women are particularly disadvantaged in this respect. Difficulties with language caused problems for their clients or members, with five feeling that women faced specific difficulties in this respect.

### **Marketing**

A lack of sales and marketing skills was the most commonly reported problem faced by female entrepreneurs, after finance. The fact that this

is a characteristic shared with many other micro enterprises and small firms does not make it any less important to female entrepreneurs. It may be seen as part of a general need to raise the level of management skills and competencies in female owned and other small businesses

### **Technology**

Access to technology and problems with intellectual property protection were regarded as problems for women entrepreneurs. The lack of computer knowledge of employees is a major problem as computer skills are a key part of the business. Another firm used computer extensively for word processing, desk top publishing, e-mail and research purposes but saw no value in increasing their use further.

### **Lack of Confidence**

As women are accepting a subordinate status, as a result they lack confidence of their own capabilities, Even at home, family members do not have much faith in women possessing the abilities of decision-making

### **Lack of Working Capital**

To be women and to do something on their own becomes quite difficult for them because of lack of access to funds as women do not possess any tangible security and credit in the market. Before marriage she has to depend on father and after marriage she has to follow the footsteps of the husband. As such, women do not enjoy the right over the property of any form and they have limited access over external sources of funds, even getting loans from either a bank or financial institution becomes exceedingly difficult

### **Limited Mobility**

Due to primary household responsibilities towards her family, her time gets divided between the two worlds. She has restricted timings for work due to which, she is not in a position to travel frequently and be away for longer periods. Thus, her mobility is restricted. This also has an implication on business.

### **Male Dominated Society**

A woman is dominated by men in her family as well as business. Often she has to obtain permission from men for almost everything. They are not treated as equals. Her freedom is restricted. She always has to consult and get approval of men

### **Low Risk Bearing Ability**

This is so because right from the childhood, her parents take decisions for her and after marriage her husband takes over. She is protected throughout and thus the risk bearing ability gets reduced.

### **Socio-Cultural Barriers**

Woman has to perform multiple roles be it familial or social irrespective of her career as working woman or an entrepreneur. In our society, more importance is being given to male child as compared to female child. This mindset results in lack of schooling and necessary training for

women. As a result this impediments the progress of women and handicap them in the world of work.

### **6.13 Check your progress**

1. State the position of women in modern India.

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## **6.14 LET US SUM UP**

In most countries, regions and sectors, the majority of business owner/managers are male (from 65% to 75%). However, there is increasing evidence that more and more women are becoming interested in small business ownership and/or actually starting up in business. Women are working in this multifaceted world. The organization scenario changes like a kaleidoscope with every responsibility, accountability and multiple pulls and pushes, which women have faced and came out with success. In addition, rates of self employment among women are increasing in several countries. Although there are no official statistics relating businesses to the gender of their owner/manager, there is a good deal of evidence to suggest a significant increase in female entrepreneurship. One consequence of this is that women are a relatively new group of entrepreneurs compared with men, which means that they are more likely to run younger businesses. This in turn has some implications for the problems they face and their ability to deal with them.

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## **6.15 UNIT END EXERCISE**

1. State the position of women during early Vedic, Colonial and Modern period
2. What are the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in India?

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## **6.16 ANSWERS TO CHECK PROGRESS**

- The status of women in India has been presented as existing in different period of history. These are: a) Early Vedic period b) The Mughal period c) Colonial period and d) Modern period
- Early Vedic period-There is too much debate on the status of women in early Vedic period. On the basis of available Vedic literature some scholars have argued that in early Vedic Period women lived in a liberal social atmosphere. On the other hand some other historians have questioned it
- Colonial period-In the 19th century, the women's question came to forefront, when social reformer started the campaign against the evil practices such as Sati, Ban on widow remarriage, Child marriages, Illiteracy etc.

- Modern period-In independent India, the constitution protected women from exploitation and removed the gender based inequality through different Act and laws. Through different five year plans government have also tried to overall development of women

### **6.17 SUGGESTED READINGS**

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# UNIT VII – WOMEN IN UNORGANIZED SECTOR AND THEIR PROBLEMS

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## Structure

- 7.1 Introduction
  - 7.2 Objectives
  - 7.3 Unorganized Sector: An Overview
    - 7.3.1 Definition
    - 7.3.2 Employment in unorganized sector
    - 7.3.3 Gender inequality in work participation rate
    - 7.3.4 Categories of unorganised labour
    - 7.3.5 Characteristics of unorganized workers
  - 7.4. Women in unorganized sector
    - 7.4.1 Composition of Women in Unorganised sectors
    - 7.4.2 Problems faced by the women workers in unorganized sector
    - 7.4.3 Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA)
    - 7.4.4 Acts and Programs for Women in Unorganized Sector
  - 7.5 Let Us Sum Up
  - 7.6 Unit – End Exercises
  - 7.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
  - 7.8 Suggested Readings
- 

## 7.1 INTRODUCTION

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“Empowering Women is a prerequisite for creating a good nation, when women are empowered, society with stability is assured. Empowerment of women is essential as their value systems lead to the development of a good family, good society and ultimately good nation” – Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

The term unorganized sector was first used by Hart in 1971 who described the unorganized sector as that part of urban labour force, which falls outside the organized labour market. In the unorganized sector, work situations are not in official record and working conditions are not protected by law. So the problems of female workers in unorganized sector are not properly known. It has been pointed out by Hart that one of the major problems is that working conditions are worst. Due to population growth and urban migration, the active labour force was growing at a much faster rate than availability of jobs in the organized sector. The focus of development policies was gradually shifting from pure economic to growth with equity and the eradication of poverty. Interest was, thus generated in sectors outside the organized economy

that was providing a livelihood to a large section of the poor. Hence, the concept of the unorganized sector was born.

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## 7.2 OBJECTIVES

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After going through the unit you will be able to:

- Understand the meaning of unorganised sector, types and its characteristics
- Gain knowledge on problems of women working in unorganised sector and welfare programmes for women in unorganised sector

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## 7.3 UNORGANIZED SECTOR: AN OVERVIEW

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### 7.3.1 Definition

The first National Commission on Labour, under the Chairmanship of Justice Gajendragadkar, defined the unorganised sector as that part of the workforce 'who have not been able to organise in pursuit of a common objective because of constraints such as (a) casual nature of employment, (b) ignorance and illiteracy, (c) small size of establishments with low capital investment per person employed, (d) scattered nature of establishments and (e) superior strength of the employer operating singly or in combination.' The Commission listed 'illustrative' categories of unorganised labour: 'These are: (i) contract labour including construction workers; (ii) casual labour; (iii) labour employed in small scale industry; (iv) handloom/ power-loom workers; (v) beedi and cigar workers (vi) employees in shops and commercial establishments; (vii) sweepers and scavengers; (viii) workers in tanneries; (ix) tribal labour; and (x) 'other unprotected labour'

The National Commission for Enterprises in the unorganized sector (NCEUS), Government of India defined the unorganized sector which consists all unincorporated enterprises owned by individuals or households less than 10 total workers involved in sale or production of goods and service on proprietary and partnership

Ministry of Labour and Employment defines, Unorganized sector *an enterprise owned by individuals or self-employed workers and engaged in the production or sale of goods or providing service of any kind whatsoever, and where the enterprise employs workers, the number of such workers is less than ten.*

“Unorganized worker” (UW) means a home-based worker, self-employed worker or a wage worker in the unorganized sector and includes a worker in the organized sector who is not covered by any Acts mentioned in Schedule II of the Unorganized Workers Social Act 2008.

### 7.3.2 Employment in unorganized sector

The term unorganized sector includes all those workers who have not been able to formally and legally organize themselves in pursuit of their common interest due to certain constraints like the casual nature of employment, ignorance and illiteracy, and small and scattered size of the establishment etc. The Second Commission on Labour (2002) specifies the characteristics of unorganized labour as - apprentices, casual and contract workers, home based artisans and a section of self employed persons involved in jobs such as vending, rag picking, rickshaw pulling, agriculture workers, migrant labour and those who perform manual and helper jobs. The rise of female participation in the unorganized sector is due to the economic compulsion in families and the employer's preference for female employees being available as a flexible, and often pliable, labour force. The different types of activities that include in unorganized sector are agricultural labour, rural workers engaged in animal husbandry and livestock rearing, workers engaged in cottage and village industries and those working in tanneries, workers engaged in collecting forest produce, collecting tendu leaves, workers in brick kilns, workers engaged in stone quarries, building and construction workers, beedi workers, workers engaged in timber and felling, industries, mills, salt workers among other categories and petty traders/vendors domestic workers and those engaged in home based work.

### 7.3.3 Gender inequality in work participation rate

#### At National Level

India has one of the lowest labour force participation rates for women in the world. As per Census 2011, the work participation rate<sup>2</sup> is 39.8 per cent which is marginally higher than the work participation rate of 39.1 per cent in 2001. Although WPR is low, there has been progress in improving WPR for both males and females in India over the last several decades. In 1971, only 11.9 per cent of women and 52.5 per cent of men were engaged in economic activity. By 2011, about 25 per cent of women and 53 per cent of men are economically active. Thus, there has been a large increase in the proportion of women who are economically active in 40 years. However, male work participation rate remained same during this period. The average gender participation gap – which is the difference between male and female labour force participation – has been declining since 1971, but remains significant. This may be due to a variety of structural constraints such as social environment dominated by patriarchy, legal frameworks which are not completely gender neutral and unequal access to education and skill training. These include the restrictions imposed on women's movements outside the household as also discouragement by the husband and in-laws.

### At Regional Level:

According to Census 2011, gender gap in work participation rate is 27.8 per cent. The gender gaps vary strongly by region, with the highest gap observed in the western region, i.e., 31.2 per cent, followed by northern region, i.e., 28.37 per cent . It is lowest in north-east region, i.e., 18.75 per cent.

### At State Level:

There are large inter-State variations in work participation rates of women. The maximum rate for any State, 44.8 per cent is in Himachal Pradesh and the minimum, 10.6 per cent, is in Delhi . The States fall into the following three groups:

#### Distribution of States by Female WPR in 2011

Work Participation Rate	States
Below 20 per cent	Delhi, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Kerala
20 to 30 per cent	Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Odisha, Assam, Tripura, Goa, Gujarat
Above 30 per cent	Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu

### 7.3.4 Categories of unorganised labour

The Ministry of Labour, Government of India, has categorised the unorganised labour force under four groups depending on occupation, nature of employment, especially distressed categories and service categories.

#### 1 Under Terms of Occupation

Small and marginal farmers, landless agricultural labourers, share croppers, fishermen, those engaged in animal husbandry, beedi rolling, labelling and packing, building and construction workers, leather workers, weavers, artisans, salt workers, workers in brick kilns and stone quarries, workers in saw mills, oil mills, etc. come under this category.

#### 2. Under Terms of Nature of Employment

Agricultural labourers, bonded labourers, migrant workers, contract and casual labourers come under this category.

#### 3. Under Terms of Specially Distressed Category:

Toddy tappers, scavengers, carriers of head loads, drivers of animal driven vehicles, loaders and unloaders come under this category.

#### 4 Under Terms of Service Category

Midwives, domestic workers, fishermen and women, barbers, vegetable and fruit vendors, newspaper vendors, etc., belong to this category.

### 7.3.5 Characteristics of unorganized workers

- The unorganized labour is overwhelming in terms of its number range and therefore they are omnipresent throughout India.
- As the unorganized sector suffers from cycles of excessive seasonality of employment, majority of the unorganized workers does not have stable durable avenues of employment. Even those who appear to be visibly employed are not gainfully and substantially employed, indicating the existence of disguised unemployment.
- The workplace is scattered and fragmented.
- There is no formal employer – employee relationship
- In rural areas, the unorganized labour force is highly stratified on caste and community considerations. In urban areas while such considerations are much less, it cannot be said that it is altogether absent as the bulk of the unorganized workers in urban areas are basically migrant workers from rural areas.
- Workers in the unorganized sector are usually subject to indebtedness and bondage as their meagre income cannot meet with their livelihood needs.
- The unorganized workers are subject to exploitation significantly by the rest of the society. They receive poor working conditions especially wages much below that in the formal sector, even for closely comparable jobs, ie, where labour productivity are no different. The work status is of inferior quality of work and inferior terms of employment, both remuneration and employment.
- Primitive production technologies and feudal production relations are rampant in the unorganized sector, and they do not permit or encourage the workmen to imbibe and assimilate higher technologies and better production relations. Large scale ignorance and illiteracy and limited exposure to the outside world are also responsible for such poor absorption.
- The unorganized workers do not receive sufficient attention from the trade unions.
- Inadequate and ineffective labour laws and standards relating to the unorganized sector

According to the study conducted by ILO in 1972 as reported in Shramshakti report, the characteristics of unorganized sector are:

- Ease of entry

- Reliance of indigenous resources
- Family ownership of enterprise
- Small scale operations
- Labour intensive and adopted technology
- Skills acquired outside formal school system
- Regulated and competitive market.

The unorganized sector covers most of the rural labour and a substantial part of urban labour. It includes activities carried out by small and family enterprises, partly or wholly with family labour. In this sector wage-paid labour is largely non-unionized due to casual and seasonal nature of employment and scattered location of enterprises. This sector is marked by low incomes, unstable and irregular employment, and lack of protection either from legislation or trade unions. The unorganized sector uses mainly labour intensive and indigenous technology. The workers in unorganized sector are so scattered that the implementation of the Legislation is very inadequate and ineffective. There are hardly any unions in this sector to act as watch-dogs. But the contributions made by the unorganized sector to the national income, is very substantial as compared to that of the organized sector. It adds more than 60% to the national income while the contribution of the organized sector is almost half of that depending on the industry

### **Check your Progress- 1**

Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below

- b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit
- i. Define Unorganised sector

## **7.4. WOMEN IN UNORGANIZED SECTOR**

Women are more likely than men to work in an informal environment. As per the ILO report (2014) in South Asia, over 80 per cent of women in non-agricultural jobs are in informal employment, in Sub-Saharan Africa, 74 per cent, and in Latin America and the Caribbean, 54 per cent. The informal sector is the primary source of employment for unsalaried women, in the form of self-employment (selling directly to the consumer), contract labour (producing for another organization regularly), casual labour (working on and off for other organizations) or contributing family members. The most prevalent forms of work are as street vendors or home-based producers (that is, without leaving the confines of the home for production). According to a 2011

paper of the *International Labour Organization*, 83.8 % of South Asian women are engaged in so called vulnerable employment'. The work that these women are doing can in most cases be qualified as 'casual labour', piece-work such as the manufacturing of garments and other small items, produced within the restraints of the workers' household. Informal labour is generally qualified by the absence of decent labour conditions as recommended by the ILO and a lack of any sort of secure and sufficient wages. Women workers present a considerable share of this so called informal workforce, a share that has in fact risen substantially over the last 20 years.

Millions of women all over the world has brought them as paid labour, but compared with men their workforce is far behind when it comes to unorganized sector. Whereas gender inequalities has made women at the lowest level of the global value chain which involves in less paid jobs, subcontracted work, insecurity of self-employment, denial of social protection. Half of the world women require access to decent living, quality of work, parental leave, maternity leave which is denied in the unorganized sector. On the basis of economic growth also if women play an equal role with men it can increase the GDP of US\$ 28 trillion by 26 percent by 2025.

#### **7.4.1 Composition of Women in Unorganised sectors:**

Women Unorganised sectors can be categorized as three major activity status, viz. self-employed, regular wage/salaried employees and casual labour in work other than public work. A major portion of women workers in India are engaged as self-employed. It is found from NSS data that in 2009-10, 77.5 per cent of all women workers in informal non-agriculture in rural areas and 64.9 per cent in urban areas was employed as self-employed. Only a negligible proportion informal non-agricultural women worker was employed as regular wage or salaried employees (4.9 per cent) in rural areas. In the urban areas, however, comparatively high (20.4 per cent) unorganized female workers were employed as regular wage/salaried employees. Again, 17.5 per cent informal women workers in rural areas was worked as casual labour and such figure for urban areas was 14.7 per cent. Self-employed women workers are again classified as own account workers, employers and unpaid family workers. Women were mainly work as own account workers in both rural (42.3 per cent) and urban (40.6 per cent) areas. Employers had a very little share 0.1 per cent in rural areas and 0.7 per cent urban areas. It is found that 35.1 per cent of all informal women workers in rural areas and 23.7 per cent in urban areas were worked as unpaid family workers. The unpaid family workers are the most disadvantaged group of labour market. A larger proportion of women workers engaged in this category indicate their low economic status.

### **7.4.2 Problems faced by the women workers in unorganized sector**

Problems of women in unorganized sector A large number of women from rural areas migrate to cities and towns all over India. Most of these women and girls are illiterate and unskilled. They work in inhuman conditions in cities as their living standard is extremely poor. It is a recognized fact that there is still no society in the world in which women workers enjoy the same opportunities as men.

#### **1. Lack of education:**

2. Illiteracy is the biggest problem because they do not get time to educate themselves. In childhood, they have to start working early which do not allow them to go school.

#### **2. Insufficient skill & knowledge:**

Majority of female do not have proper training and skills aligned to their task. This result is excessive stress and inefficient working.

#### **3. Exploitation of the female labour:**

Female worker are more vulnerable to exploitation by employer. They can be easily threatened of their job for indecent favours.

#### **4. Insecure job:**

Absence of strong legislation controlling the unorganized sector makes the job highly insecure in this sector.

#### **5. Non sympathetic attitude of employer:**

Temporary nature of employment in this sector does not allow the bond between the employee and employer to establish and become strong.

#### **6. Extreme work pressure:**

Female are overworked, they work twice as many hours as worked by their male counterpart. In agriculture sector the condition is the worst. When measured in terms of number of tasks performed and the total time spent, it is greater than men. Study conducted in Himalayas which found that on a one-hectare farm, a pair of bullocks' works 1064 hours, a man 1212 hours and a woman 3485 hours in a year.

#### **7. Irregular wages payment:**

There is lack of controlled processes in unorganized sector which results in to untimely payment of wages to the workers. When it comes to payment to female, it is even worst.

#### **8. Wage discrimination:**

Female do not get similar payment to the male for same work.

#### **9. Seasonal employment:**

Many of the unorganized sector industries are seasonal. These industries includes fruits processing, pickle making, agricultural sector, construction sector etc. They have to fetch another employment when there is no work during offseason.



### **10. Physical problems:**

The working conditions are not healthy. Work place is not ergonomically designed. This results into workers facing fatigue resulting physical problems. Female workers are mostly on such tasks where they need to remain in one position such as agriculture. This results on to saviour problems such as backache and knee-ach.

While it is true that workers, irrespective of sex, are exploited in the unorganized sector, women suffer more by the fact of their gender. The changing patterns of economic development in the liberalization era have put a heavy burden on women, which is reflected in their health status. The small farmers, landlessness, forced migration both temporary and permanent, have undoubtedly affected women's health, nutritional and emotional status. The growth of small and cottage industries has depended heavily on female labour. Women work in industries like tanning, tobacco, cashew, coir, textiles, garment, fish processing and canning, construction and domestic work, etc. In all these industries, they toil long hours at low paid, skilled or unskilled workers. As a result they face serious health problems related to work place, hazards of pollutants on women who work during adolescence, and pregnancy have serious consequences on women. Women work the most; paradoxically they earn the least in life. The additional social responsibility shouldered by them, their subordinate status in society, patriarchal family set up, socio-economic backwardness, proneness for occupation in the unorganized sector with low productivity and marginalization in employment opportunities account for their poor or low earning skills, illiteracy, ignorance and surplus labour and thus face high level of exploitation. This hampers their bargaining power for higher wages and any opportunities for further development.

#### **7.4.3 Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA)**

A pioneering Indian woman named Ela Bhatt found a solution when she formed the first ever women's trade union of self-employed women in 1972, and successfully registered a group of informal women workers as a union. SEWA was able to negotiate with textile manufacturers on behalf of these self-employed women who were doing piece work at home and in factories, while it developed at the same time services that improved the women's economic literacy, skills and bargaining power. It expanded to form other cooperatives, such as those of street vendors or vegetable sellers or craft producers. In time, it established a microenterprise loan program that became adopted by the Grameen bank. The success of this grass root organization in organizing and growing the economic capacity of informal women workers who form its membership has been such that India's government invited sewa in 2006 to help formulate a national policy on home-based work. Now

with its 1.2 million members nationwide, SEWA also succeeded in lobbying the government to pass a social security bill for informal sector workers. SEWA has been instrumental in forming global partnerships that resulted in the founding of HOMENET, an international alliance of home-based workers, and STREETNET, which is an alliance of street vendors.

#### **7.4.4 Acts and Programs for Women in Unorganized Sector**

Government of India has formulated some act and programs for women workers in unorganized sector-

1. **Domestic workers and social security Act, 2010:** Women and child are more vulnerable exploitation so government has formulated this act for providing them better working conditions including registration.

2. **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA):**

MGNREGA has played a remarkable role in employment of women workers in unorganized sector. It has created better working conditions same wage to women and men.

3. **Unorganized sector workers Act 2008:** Social Security Schemes Under Schedule-I of the Unorganised Workers Social Security Act,2008 are :

- Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS)
- National Family Benefit Scheme
- Janani Suraksha Yojana
- Handloom Weavers' Comprehensive Welfare Scheme
- Handicraft Artisans' Comprehensive Welfare Scheme
- Pension to Master Craft Person

In Tamil Nadu, the Tamil Nadu Manual Workers (Regulation of Employment and conditions of Work) Act 1982, covers the employment and directs establishment of Boards for the implementation of welfare schemes for the workers. The Tamil Nadu Manual Workers (Construction Workers) Act 1994, aims for the welfare of construction workers and provides financial assistance for accident, death and funeral, disablement, marriage, maternity, children's education etc.

#### **Check your Progress- 2**

Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below

b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit

- i. List out the characteristics of unorganized sector
- ii. Expand the term SEWA

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## 7.5 LET US SUM UP

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In this unit, you have learnt the meaning, definition, characteristics of unorganised sector, problems of women working in unorganised sector and Acts and programmes that improves the working conditions of women in unorganised sector. This knowledge would help you to realise the status and problems of women working in unorganised sector.

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## 7.6 UNIT – END EXERCISES

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1. Elucidate the status of women working in unorganised sector
2. List out the acts and programmes that safeguards the women in unorganised sector

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## 7.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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1. Ministry of Labour and Employment defines, Unorganized sector *an enterprise owned by individuals or self-employed workers* and engaged in the production or sale of goods or providing service of any kind whatsoever, and where the enterprise employs workers, the number of such *workers is less than ten*.
2. The characteristics of unorganized sector are: Ease of entry, Reliance of indigenous resources, Family ownership of enterprise, Small scale operations, Labour intensive and adopted technology, Skills acquired outside formal school system, Regulated and competitive market.
3. Self-Employed Women's Association is founded by Indian woman Ela Bhatt in 1972, which was the first ever women's trade union of self-employed women.

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## 7.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

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4. Kumar, H. & Varghese, J. (2005). Women's empowerment: Issues, challenges and strategies. Regency Publications, New Delhi, 2005.
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## **UNIT VIII – WOMEN IN FAMILY AND MARRIAGE: GENDER ROLE DIVISIONS, INVISIBILITY OF WOMEN'S ROLE**

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### **Structure**

- 8.1 Introduction
  - 8.2 Objectives
  - 8.3 Women in Family and Marriage
    - 8.3.1 The Family
    - 8.3.2 Characteristics of the Family
    - 8.3.3 Marriage
  - 8.4. Types of Family
    - 8.4.1 Patriliney
    - 8.4.2 Matriliney
  - 8.5 Gender Role
    - 8.5.1 Meaning of gender role
    - 8.5.2 Types of Gender Roles
    - 8.5.3 Gender role divisions
    - 8.5.4 Invisibility of women's role
  - 8.6 Let Us Sum Up
  - 8.7 Unit – End Exercises
  - 8.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
  - 8.9 Suggested Readings
- 

### **8.1 INTRODUCTION**

In every society there are certain basic social needs, and it is a must for that society to meet these needs for the survival and satisfaction of its members. In each society, therefore, people create social institutions to meet these needs. What is an institution? The sociological concept of the term is different from its common usage. An institution is not a building; it is not a group of people; it is not an organization. Institutions are structured processes through which people carry on their activities. According to Horton and Hunt (1980), 'An institution is an organized system of social relationships which embodies certain common values and procedures and meets certain basic needs of the society.' Five important basic institutions in complex societies are the family, religion, political order, economic, and education.

In this unit the focus is on women in family and marriage, gender role divisions and invisibility of women's role

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### **8.2 OBJECTIVES**

After going through the unit you will be:

- Aware about the types of family, characteristics of family and types of gender roles
- Understand the significance of hidden women's role in family and society

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## **8.3 WOMEN IN FAMILY AND MARRIAGE**

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### **8.3.1 The Family**

The family is the most basic of all social institutions. It existed among our ancestors long before the human species evolved to its present physical form, and it remains the basic social unit in every society. The family institution is universal, but its composition and structure differs from society to society and from time to time.

The family is an intimate primary group, a socially approved organization for meeting specific human needs. It is a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. It includes at least two adults of different sexes (these days it can be the same sex also) who maintain a socially approved sexual relationship and have children-their own or adopted.

### **8.3.2 Characteristics of the Family**

First, family consists of a group of people who are in some way related to one another. Second, its members live together for long periods. Third, the adults in the group assume responsibility for any offspring. Fourth, the members of the family form an economic unit – often for the production of foods and services (when the members share agricultural tasks) and always for the consumption of goods and services. We may say that the family is a relatively permanent group of people related by ancestry, marriage, or adoption, who live together and form an economic unit and whose adult members assume responsibility for the young.

We lead our lives in two kinds of families. One is the family of orientation, into which we are born (where he/she has a father, a mother and siblings) and the other is the family of procreation (where he/she has spouse and children), which we later create ourselves.

### **8.3.3 Marriage**

In every society marriage is the foundation of the family. Marriage is a socially approved sexual union of some permanence between two or more people. The rules and regulations which deal with the regularization of sex life of the human beings come under the purview of the marriage institution. The children from such a union are considered legitimate, because their parents – both mother and father – are known and they both take the responsibility of the care and protection of the infant. Children born into a family that has not been formed through marriage may be considered illegitimate, because although their

mother is known, there may be nobody to assume the social role of a father.

Social anthropologists and sociologists have tried their hand to work out a universally acceptable definition of Marriage, but have failed in this exercise. Marriage is culture specific. The rules and regulations relating to marriage differ from one culture to another. We can identify certain basic features of this institution.

1. A heterosexual union including at least one male and one female.
2. The legitimizing or granting of approval to sexual relationship.
3. A public affair rather than private matter.
4. Rules which determine who can marry whom.
5. A binding relationship that assumes some permanence.

These features show that boundaries of marriage are not always precise and clearly defined. It is, however, a very important institution for society as it helps in the replacement of an old and dying population. Marriage is an institutionalized relationship within the family system. It fulfils many functions attributed to the family in general. Many of these functions do not require marriage for their fulfilment but they are enhanced by marital system. In fact, evidence suggests that marriage is of great significance for the well being of the individual. Researchers have shown that married persons are generally happier, healthier, less depressed and disturbed and less prone to premature deaths than the unmarried ones. Marriage, rather than becoming less important or unimportant is becoming increasingly indispensable.

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## **8.4. TYPES OF FAMILY**

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The birth of a new child in any society inevitably affects the rights and privileges of other members. Some assume new obligations, others may gain new rights. The prospects of others are altered with respect to such matters as inheritance, succession and marriage.

### **8.4.1 Patriliney**

Patriliney means tracing the descent exclusively through the male members of a family. It is also called Patrilineal. Under the patrilineal descent, the child is affiliated to the consanguine kins of the father. In such a case, the child is known by the name of the father. As a result, patrilineal groups have at their core a set of men linked by male descent to a common ancestor. This does not mean that a person has no interaction with his mother's relatives, but these relationships are distinct from and subordinate to his ties with his patrilineal kinsmen. The eldest male member is the owner and administrator of the family property, all persons living under his roof are subordinate to him. He presides over the religious ceremonies of the family and he is the guardian of the family Gods.

Unmarried women belong to their father's kinship group in a patrilineal system, but the status of wives varies from society to society. Sometimes they retain membership in the kin groups of their father's and sometimes they join their husband's groups.

This type of family was prevalent among Hebrews, the Greeks, the Romans and the Aryans of India. In the case of Indian women, all their lives they were under the command of one man or the other. An Indian woman had to obey her father before marriage, her husband during his life time and her son in her widowhood. Even today in India, we have the patriarchal family system and we follow the patrilineal mode of descent and patrilocal residence.

#### **8.4.2 Matriliny**

Matrilineal system reckons kinship through the female line. The core of these groups is a line of females descending from common ancestress. In a matrilineal society, women generally have greater autonomy than their counterparts in male dominated societies. The woman in a matrilineal society represents the clan and her children carry on the name of her clan. Males generally belong to the lineage of the mother, as do all the females. The children are known by mother's name. In this form of family, authority vests in the eldest female and the rules of descent work through her. She is the owner of the property. The main characteristics of this form of family are:

1. Descent is traced through the mother and not the father.
2. In most cases, though not always, descent is associated with matrilineal residence. The husband sometimes is merely a privileged visitor and, in this respect, has a secondary position in the home where his own children live.
3. Authority within the family belongs to the husband and to some representatives of the wife's kin, often the mother's elder brother.
4. Such families are predominantly agricultural and have a division of labour in which women perform many of the key tasks.

Briffault (1921) in his book "The Mothers" discusses the prevalence of matrilineal and matrilineal instructions in primitive communities and indicates that in some of them, women held a social position equal to and sometimes superior to that of men. He further argues that the earliest form of family was matriarchal and it was only with the development of agriculture and economic dominance of men that the patriarchal family emerged. The matriarchal family is said to have prevailed among the Hopi Indians, the Trobri and Islanders of New Guinea, the Sucker of Congo etc. The Nairs and Mappilles in Kerala, the tribal groups of Minicoy Island and the Khasis and the Garos of Meghalaya are followers of the matrilineal system. The matrilineal system of the African countries differs considerably from that of the South-east Asian groups. Even within India, the system differs from one

group to another (Kapadia, 1966). Among these groups, difference is mostly observed in the type of residence after marriage. The pattern of duo-local residence exists among the Nayars of Central Kerala. However, the Khasis of Meghalaya, generally follow the residential pattern known as “matrilocal residence”, where the husband resides with his wife's matrilineal kin or in the other case, couples settle down together in a new residence in and around his wife's maternal place.

### **Check your Progress- 1**

Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below

b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit

Institutions are best defined as

1. What is matrilineal system?

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## **8.5 GENDER ROLE**

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### **8.5.1 Meaning of gender role**

A gender role is a set of societal norms dictating the types of behaviors which are generally considered acceptable, appropriate, or desirable for people based on their actual or perceived sex or sexuality. Gender roles are usually centered on conceptions of femininity and masculinity, although there are exceptions and variations. The specifics regarding these gendered expectations may vary substantially among cultures, while other characteristics may be common throughout a range of cultures. The term gender role was first coined by John Money in 1955, during the course of his study of intersex individuals, to describe the manners in which these individuals expressed their status as a male or female in a situation where no clear biological assignment existed. The term gender role refers to society's concept of how men and women are expected to act and how they should behave. These roles are based on norms, or standards, created by society

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### **8.5.2 Types of Gender Roles**

Gender roles are a specific set of social and behavioural actions which are considered to be appropriate for the given gender. The concept of gender roles has been developed from the work of Caroline Moser. She explains this concept as follows: Gender planning recognises that in



most societies low-income women have a triple role: women undertake reproductive, productive, and community managing activities, while men primarily undertake productive and community politics activities.

Reproductive Role	Childbearing/rearing responsibilities, and domestic tasks done by women, required to guarantee the maintenance and reproduction of the labour force. It includes not only biological reproduction but also the care and maintenance of the work force (male partner and working children) and the future work force (infants and school-going children).
Productive Role	Work done by both men and women for pay in cash or kind. It includes both market production with an exchange-value, and subsistence/home production with actual use-value, and also potential exchange-value. For women in agricultural production, this includes work as independent farmers, peasant wives and wage workers.
Community Managing Role	Activities undertaken primarily by women at the community level, as an extension of their reproductive role, to ensure the provision and maintenance of scarce resources of collective consumption, such as water, health care and education. This is voluntary unpaid work, undertaken in 'free' time
Community Politics Role	Activities undertaken primarily by men at the community level, organising at the formal political level, often within the framework of national politics. This is usually paid work, either directly or indirectly, through status or power
Multiple Roles	Both men and women play multiple roles. The major difference, however, is that Men: typically play their roles sequentially, focusing on a single productive role Women: usually play their roles simultaneously, balancing the demands of each within their limited time constraints

### **8.5.3 Gender role divisions**

In this socialization process, children are introduced to certain roles that are typically linked to their biological sex. The term gender role refers to society's concept of how men and women are expected to act and how they should behave. These roles are based on norms, or standards, created by society. In Indian culture, masculine roles are usually associated with strength, aggression, and dominance, while feminine roles are usually associated with passivity, nurturing, and subordination. Role learning starts with socialization at birth.

In most of the societies the family systems are based on the gender roles and it is the predesigned gender roles that help members of the family to run the family with bound responsibilities. Even when parents set gender equality as a goal, there may be underlying indications of inequality. For example, when dividing up household chores, boys may be asked to take out the garbage or perform other tasks that require strength or toughness, while girls may be asked to fold laundry or perform duties that require neatness and care. It has been found that fathers are firmer in their expectations for gender conformity than are mothers, and their expectations are stronger for sons than they are for daughters. This is true in many types of activities, including preference of toys, play styles, discipline, chores, and personal achievements. As a result, boys tend to be particularly attuned to their father's disapproval when engaging in an activity that might be considered feminine, like dancing or singing.

Gender socialization occurs through four major agents of socialization: family, education, peer groups, and mass media. Each agent reinforces gender roles by creating and maintaining normative expectations for gender-specific behaviour. Exposure also occurs through secondary agents such as religion and the workplace. Repeated exposure to these agents over time leads men and women into a false sense that they are acting naturally rather than following a socially constructed role.

### **8.5.4 Invisibility of women's role**

Work is defined as any activity undertaken in lieu of remuneration. The value of work is determined by the level of remuneration. Therefore, any work undertaken without remuneration is considered non-valuable and non-work. On the other hand, any work done outside, such as office, factory, fields considered more valuable than work done at home. The conclusion therefore is, men work outside, get remuneration so their work is valuable. Women work at home, get no remuneration, therefore their work is considered non-work having no or little value. This is the reality of women's work across the world. Their contribution to the family and society is not valued as most of their work is considered as household work which as women and the role given to them by society they are obliged to perform. It remains unseen, invisible

and unrecognised and in conventional terms, yielding no economic benefits.

India has one of the largest gender pay gaps in the world, with women earning approximately 25% less than men as of 2016. Women are systematically marginalised unless they prove their worth in male-dominated fields of work. In addition to this, women also carry the burden of additional work, which receives neither respect nor remuneration. A UN report shows that over 51% of the work done by women is unpaid, and is not counted in the nation's GDP and other statistics.

Unpaid labour does not only affect women, but it affects them the most. A large part of their work, from working for the household farm or business to domestic and caregiving work is delegitimised as women's work and is not considered 'real' work. For instance, maintaining the house and raising children is still considered the woman's prerogative, while men 'help out' when they can. So a significant part of women's work remains socially unrecognised till this date.

#### **Check Your Progress – 2**

- (i) What do you mean by Gender Role?
- (ii) List out the various types of Gender Role.

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### **8.6 LET US SUM UP**

In this unit you have learnt about the meaning of marriage, family, its types and characteristics, types of gender role, gender role divisions and significance of invisibility of women's role. This knowledge helps to realise the place of women in family and marriage and sensitize you on types of gender role and gender role division which would be helpful for you to sensitize your students and community in general.

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### **8.7 UNIT – END EXERCISES**

What is the difference between patriliney and matriliney?

1. Write a note on the place of women in family, marriage
2. What is gender role division?

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### **8.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

1. Established ways of doing things to fulfil basic societal needs
2. Matrilineal system reckons kinship through the female line. In a matrilineal society, women generally have greater autonomy than their counterparts in male dominated societies.
3. Gender Role: A gender role is a set of societal norms dictating the types of behaviors which are generally considered acceptable, appropriate, or desirable for people based on their actual or perceived sex or sexuality. Gender roles are usually centered on conceptions of femininity and masculinity, although there are exceptions and variations
4. Types of Gender Role:

- Reproductive role
- Productive role
- Community Managing Role
- Community Politics Role
- Multiple Roles

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## **8.9 SUGGESTED READINGS**

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# UNIT IX – PROBLEMS OF WORKING WOMEN AND DUAL ROLE BURDEN. ROLE CONFLICT AND COPING MECHANISMS.

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*Problems of Working Women and Dual role Burden. Role Conflict and Coping mechanisms.*

NOTES

## Structure

- 9.1 Introduction
  - 9.2 Objectives
  - 9.3 Domestic and Professional Roles of Working Women
    - 9.3.1 Importance of Work of Women
    - 9.3.2 Work Life Balance
    - 9.3.3 Dual responsibility of working women
  - 9.4 Problems Faced by Working Women in India
    - 9.4.1 World Health Organization's (WHO) definition on Health
    - 9.4.2 Role Conflict
    - 9.4.3 Family-Work Conflicts
  - 9.5 Let Us Sum Up
  - 9.6 Unit – End Exercises
  - 9.7 Answers To Check Your Progress
  - 9.8 Suggested Readings
- 

## 9.1 INTRODUCTION

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Women's occupational status has been closely associated with the home and family. By taking up employment, they have to play a dual role: housewife and career woman. There is a clear conflict between the society -approved status of women as housewives and mother of children on one hand and their status as more productive workers on the other. Family duties have also imposed restrictions on their role in their employment. As such, there is role conflict faced by working women. The role conflict and dual role of working women has resulted stress, tension, anxiety, obesity, etc and consequently, working women are facing frequent ill health, both psychological and physical. The women working in unorganized sector have more physical health problems and women working in organized sector have more psychological health problems due to role conflict, dual role and stress. Majority of the women with multiple roles face the problems associated with role conflict but frequency of the role conflict varies among the women and it depends on various socio-economic attributes of the women.

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## 9.2 OBJECTIVES

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After going through the unit you will be:  
Familiarize with the term work life balance and role conflict

*Self-Instructional Material*

Able to understand the problems and dual responsibilities of working women and coping mechanisms to overcome those problems

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## **9.3 DOMESTIC AND PROFESSIONAL ROLES OF WORKING WOMEN**

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### **9.3.1 Importance of Work of Women**

Work is an essential part of human life; it creates profitable living standards, pleasure, and satisfaction. It is important for the physical, mental, economic and moral development of an individual or a woman. An educated woman wants to develop her capabilities and wants to prove herself through her working efficiencies outside her home. In the changing scenario, women are contributing to the workforce in all spheres, whether it is primary sector, secondary sector or service sector. There are two main reasons behind the entry of women in the world of paid work: firstly, it may be the economic crisis when women feel the burden of family expenditure and then, therefore they share this responsibility with their spouse or family. Secondly, many women work just because of the changes in the economy have made it necessary for them to work. Living costs such as housing, eatables, and luxury items prices have risen. The income from one person is not enough to support the family.

### **9.3.2 Work Life Balance**

Work life balance is a term used to describe the balance between an individual's personal life and professional life. A healthy work-life balance assumes great significance for working women particularly in the current context in which both, the family and the workplace have posed several challenges and problems for women. The dynamics of the work environment have exerted enormous pressure on working women as they need to cope with virtually two full time jobs – one at the office and the other at home. Working women experience greater difficulty than men in balancing work and family. Work-family balance is an art of managing both the work and family domain effectively. Work family balance suggests that work should not hinder other things which are important in people's lives, such as quality time with their family, leisure time or recreational activities, personal development, etc. Balancing these two roles equally will not result in work-life balance, nor will the setting aside of an equal number of hours for each role lead to work-family balance. The balance which seems appropriate today may seem inappropriate tomorrow. The ideal balance in a person's life may vary across the different phases of one's life, i.e. before marriage, after marriage, with children, when starting a career or after retirement. In sum, there is no one-size fits all or picture-perfect work-family balance. Moreover, in recent decades, the work pressure has been intensifying for both men and women. Different factors associated with work have

resulted in excessive stress and strain among workers. As a result, there is a work domination of family life created by work demands, which in turn results in work family imbalance. In order to be successful in both the roles, women try to organise and balance their work and family domains, for which a great deal of adjustment and accommodation is required.

### **9.3.3 Dual responsibility of working women**

From times immemorial, every society and economic system has utilised women as work force, either at home or outside or at both places. In our society, previously the employment of women outside the domestic domain was looked down because of some religious taboos, social customs, natural factors, family notes and other prevailing norms. But now these inhibitions are fast weakening and women are moving out of their domestic sphere more and more in search of employment in the jobs like teaching, nursing, medicine, family welfare and administration etc. Often the underlying assumption in arguments for women's employment is that economic independence is the pre-requisite factor for status mobility. It is pursued that women's work outside the home has become necessity for society as well as for the women. The work done at home by the women is regarded as non remunerative. However women who work outside their homes are not relieved from their traditional domestic obligations. If at all her services are needed outside the home under economic pressure etc, and to play a constructive role in society, it is equally important that her domestic role must be balanced with professional role so as to avoid the chances of role conflict. The major problems for working women arise out of their dual responsibilities - house work and the office work. Even though the employment of women is accepted, most of the relatives, in-laws of working women and majority of husbands have not accepted the changing life pattern. They are not prepared to share the responsibility of the household and of looking after children. The average working women are expected to return home to take care of domestic responsibilities. Working women have to face this problem of adjustment among their varied role expectations. They are required by their position to play a dual set of roles - one as home makers, wives and mothers, and the other as employees. Being simultaneously confronted with dual responsibilities or demands of home and work, they are liable to face adjustment problems. At home in addition to biological functions there are other duties which they are expected to perform because of the prevailing cultural norms and values of our society. The problems of working women because of their dual responsibilities are multi-dimensional. Women in joint family nuclear or extended family face their own problems. Even the atmosphere at the work place, attitude of fellow workers, age of women

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working, kind of work, timing of work and distance of work place from the house etc, are important factors in the lives of working women.

Fogarty and his associates found five types of dilemmas in working women:

- Dilemmas arising from sheer over load.
- Dilemmas from experiencing in one environment strongly conflicting ideas and the directions about what is considered right and proper in a given area of behavior.
- Dilemmas caused by conflicts within ourself about whether one is a good person (good human being, good wife and mother, good woman) in leading a certain type of adjustment.
- Dilemmas produced by conflicts in obligations, attachments, desires, and so on related to ones net work of relatives, friends and associates.
- Dilemmas due to the conflicts between roles that may be variable in their demands at different times, for example, the marital role demands in relation to the work demands of each partner at different points in the lifecycle.

The Working women are constantly facing the problems of role conflict or dual role. Work–family conflict has been associated with a number of dysfunctional outcomes, including burnout (Bacharach, et al, 1991), decreased family and occupational well-being (Kinnunen and Mauno, 1998), psychological costs and physical complaints (Frone, et al, 1992) and job and life dissatisfaction (Netemeyer, et al, 1996). Due to role conflict, there are reports of psychological distress, mental tension, anxiety, etc, which affect the psychological well being of working women.

**Check your Progress- 1**

Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below

b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit

1. Mention the five types of dilemmas in working women
2. What is Work Life Balance?

**9.4 PROBLEMS FACED BY WORKING WOMEN IN INDIA**

Even though working women in organized and unorganized sector are playing significant role in earning for family as well as part of national income, they have many problems such as career related problems, social problems such as domestic violence, health problems such as psychological distress due to role conflict, mental stress, tension, anxiety, physical health problems such as Anemia, arthritis, etc.



Occupational problems as stress: In women Occupational stress is stress involving work. Work and family are the two most important aspects in women's lives. Balancing work and family roles has become a key personal and family issue for many societies. There are many facets in working mother's lives that subject to stresses. They deal with home and family issues as well as job stress on a daily basis.

#### **9.4.1 World Health Organization's (WHO) definition**

Occupational or work-related stress "is the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope."

#### **Reasons of occupational stress**

Imbalance between work and family leads to occupational stress. Imbalance between work and family life arises due to a number of factors. Various factors are following.

##### **1. Mental harassment**

It is an age old convention that women are less capable and inefficient in working as compared to men. The attitude which considers women unfit for certain jobs holds back women. In spite of the constitutional provisions, gender bias creates obstacles in their recruitment. In addition to this, the same attitude governs injustice of unequal salaries for the same job. The true equality has not been achieved even after 61 years of independence. Working in such conditions inevitably puts strain on women to greater extent as compared to men, thus making them less eager in their career.

##### **2. Sexual harassment**

Today, almost all working women are prone to sexual harassment irrespective of their status, personal characteristics and the types of their employment. They face sexual harassment on way on transports, at working places, educational institutions and hospitals, at home and even in police stations when they go to file complaints. It is shocking that the law protectors are violating and outraging modesty of women. Most of the women tend to be concentrated in the poor service jobs whereas men are in an immediate supervisory position, which gives them an opportunity to exploit their subordinate women.

##### **3. Discrimination at Workplace:**

However, Indian women still face blatant discrimination at their workplaces. They are often deprived of promotions and growth opportunities at work places but this doesn't apply to all working women. A majority of working women continue to be denied their right to equal pay, under the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 and are underpaid in comparison to their male colleagues. This is usually the case in factories and labour-oriented industries

#### **4. No Safety of Working Women While Travelling**

Typically, the orthodox mindset in the Indian society makes it difficult for a working woman to balance her domestic environment with the professional life. In some families, it may not be acceptable to work after six o'clock. Those families that do accept these working hours may experience considerable anxiety every day about a woman's safety while traveling. So many issues affect a working woman because she is closely protected or watched by her family and the society.

#### **5. Lack of Family Support**

Lack of proper family support is another issue that working women suffers from. At times, the family doesn't support women to leave the household work and go to office. They also resist for women working till late in office which also hampers the performance of the women and this also affects their promotion

#### **6. Insufficient Maternity Leaves**

Insufficient maternity leave is another major issue that is faced by a working mother. This not only affects the performance of women employees at work, but is also detrimental to their personal lives.

#### **7. Job insecurity**

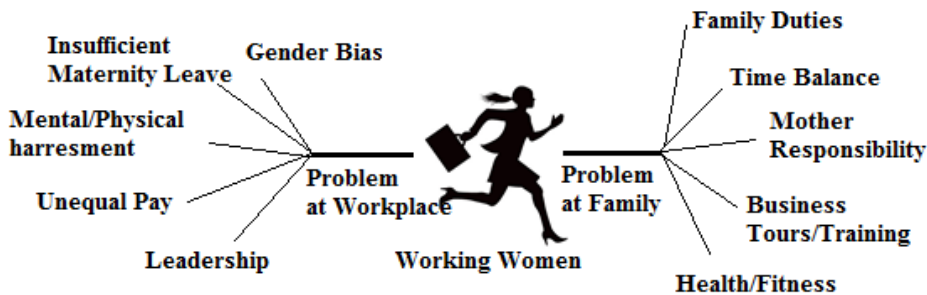
Unrealistic expectations, especially in the time of corporate reorganizations, which sometimes puts unhealthy and unreasonable pressures on the employee, can be a tremendous source of stress and suffering. Increased workload extremely long work hours and intense pressures to perform at peak levels all the time for the same pay, can actually leave an employee physically and emotionally drained. Excessive travel and too much time away from family also contribute to an employee's stressors

#### **8. Workplace Adjustment**

Adjusting to the workplace culture, whether in a new company or not, can be intensely stressful. Making oneself adapt to the various aspects of workplace culture such as communication patterns of the boss as well as the co-workers, can be lesson of life. Maladjustments to workplace cultures may lead to subtle conflicts with colleagues or even with superiors. In many cases office politics or gossips can be major stress inducers

#### **9. Other reasons**

It includes Personal demographics like age, level of education, marital status, number of children, personal income and number of jobs currently had where you work for pay and Work situation characteristics like job tenure, size of employing organization, hours worked per week.



## **Challenges faced by Working Women**

### **9.4.2 Role Conflict**

With the challenging demands of time, energy and commitment, millions of women struggle to maintain a balance between their work and family life . A number of concepts describe the link between work and family domains such as ‘work-family conflict,’ ‘work family interference,’ ‘work-life balance,’ and ‘spillover’. The term Work-Family Conflict (WFC) is a kind of inter-role conflict arising out of work. Demands at work may give rise to WFC making it difficult to get tasks completed relating to one’s family which range from childcare, care of the ageing and sick and other household work. Family-to-Work Conflict (FWC) occurs when family roles hold back due to work-related obligations which may include hours of paid work at times accompanied by overtime, work-related travel, and sometimes completing the pending work at home.

### **9.4.3 Family-Work Conflicts**

Family-Work Balance means the women has power to equilibrium the hours of personal and professional life. But sometimes some circumstances occur in such a way that conflict will be occurring either socially or professional side to balance Family- Work life. She is unable to set her priorities. As a result she withdraws from her work due to simple reasons like taking care of her children, aged in laws/parents, and other family pressures. If the man is able to share some of her responsibilities, she would be successful women. They bring up children; look after partners, relatives and friends; maintain households; take part in voluntary organizations; and undertake civic duties. It is widely accepted that the lack of women in senior, corporate positions is due to conflict between family and career; and that women feel the need to choose between their career and family. Some women avoid promotion in order to avoid the extra stress from balancing family and work. Some employers were resistant to promoting women, assuming that women

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would put their families first therefore slacking in their work duties. Women who are successful in balancing their work and family life tend to redefine the structural and personal roles that have been assigned to them by the workplace and society.

Work-family conflict, as defined by Kahn *et al.* (1964), is a form of inter role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respects. Each role within the family and work environment imposes demands requiring time, energy and commitment.

Hall (1972) has identified three types of coping behaviour for dealing with inter role conflict. The three types of coping behaviour were logically derived from three role components by Levinson (1959)-structurally imposed demands on personal role conception and role behaviour.

Type I coping, or structural role redefinition, involves altering structurally imposed expectations held by others about appropriate behavior. It is considered active coping because the individual is directly attacking the source, or root, of the problem, and is attempting to modify or change the situation (e.g., changing a spouse's expectations). Research suggests that structural role redefinition is the most effective way of managing work-family conflict.

Type II coping, personal role redefinition, involves changing one's attitudes and perceptions of role demands rather than attempting to change the demands themselves. With this strategy, individuals modify the meaning of the situation by changing their personal concept of role requirements or by changing self-expectations for career and family. This might involve setting priorities (e.g., work supports the family so it comes first), changing one's perception of what it takes to be "successful" at work or at home (e.g., ignoring social pressures to bake cookies from scratch for the school bake sale), and keeping things in perspective (e.g., focusing on the positive aspects of one's life).

Hall's third type of coping, reactive role behavior, involves trying to meet everyone's expectations. Instead of trying to confront the source of the stress or change the meaning of the stressful situation, individuals try to plan or schedule better, work harder to meet everyone's expectations, or use no conscious strategy at all. Most research suggests that this third style of coping is not very effective as it does nothing to change the source of the stress

## **Check your Progress- 2**

Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below

b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit

i. Define the term Occupational Stress

*Problems of Working Women and  
Dual role Burden. Role Conflict and  
Coping mechanisms.*

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## **9.5 LET US SUM UP**

In this unit, you have learnt the problems of working women, role conflict and coping mechanisms to overcome those challenges. The coping mechanisms would help you to lead a happy and healthy life.

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## **9.6 UNIT – END EXERCISES**

1 Elaborate the problems of working women

2 Describe the Hall's coping strategies for working women

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## **9.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

1. The five types of dilemmas experienced by working women are:
  - Dilemmas aroused from sheer over load.
  - Dilemmas from experiencing in one environment
  - Dilemmas caused by conflicts within oneself
  - Dilemmas produced by conflicts in obligations, attachments, desires
  - Dilemmas due to the conflicts between roles
2. Work-family balance is an art of managing both the work and family domain effectively that is balancing the personal life and professional life.
3. Occupational or work-related stress “is the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope”

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## **9.8 SUGGESTED READINGS**

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*Self-Instructional Material*

*Problems of Working Women and  
Dual role Burden. Role Conflict and  
Coping mechanisms.*

*NOTES*

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# UNIT-X NETWORK AND SUPPORT SYSTEM – GENDER AND HEALTH: REPRODUCTIVE – HEALTH PROBLEMS

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*Network and Support System –  
Gender and Health: Reproductive –  
Health Problems*

NOTES

## **Structure**

- 10.1 Introduction
  - 10.2 Objectives
  - 10.3 Gender and Health
    - 10.3.1 Reproductive Health of Women
    - 10.3.2 Factors that determines sexual and reproductive health of women
  - 10.4 Maternal Health
    - 10.4.1 Violation of Women’s Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
    - 10.4.2 Reproductive Health Problems and AIDS
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  - 10.8 Suggested Readings
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## **10.1 INTRODUCTION**

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The emotional, sexual, and psychological stereotyping of females begins when the doctor says, “it’s a girl.”

**- Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm**

Gender is one of many social determinants of health which includes social, economic, and political factors that play a major role in the health outcomes among women in India. Thus, improving the status of women will enhance their decision making capacity at all levels, especially as it relates to their sexuality and reproductive health. Women’s health agenda was first articulated at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995. In the resulting Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, a roadmap for gender equality and women’s empowerment was outlined, with a major focus on Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) issues, which were the main killers of women then. As a result of this focus, major gains have been made in this area, with the maternal mortality in India coming down from 5.7% in 1990 to 2.8 % in 2015. At the same time, the issues affecting women’s health have undergone a drastic change, and currently such as

*Self-Instructional Material*

cardiovascular disease, stroke, kidney disease, respiratory diseases and trauma are the leading causes of death for women worldwide – in high as well as low-income countries. Despite a longer life expectancy, women have a higher burden of disability due to Non Communicable Diseases, like back and neck pain, depressive disorders and respiratory diseases. Social constructs and biases also leave girls and women more disadvantaged, as evidenced by high rates of sexual violence. International Covenant on Economics, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) emphasized the responsibilities of the state to protect the right of all groups and individuals to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. Right to health is a basic human right. Unfortunately, women in India do not access such basic right. There is a need for necessary steps for more community participation in various development programmes of government as it may be helpful to remove the poverty and improve the literacy rate among the females, which may be positively, affect the health outcomes of them. Government of India has been making several efforts in developing health and population policies. However, there are several obstacles in its implementation due to poverty, illiteracy and gender discrimination in India. Media, social activists, NGOs, different government agencies, can bring a massive awareness towards gender equality and empowered them socially and economically. Thus, there is a need to promote gender – equity as gender equity positively associated with better health outcomes of women as well as economic development.

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## 10.2 OBJECTIVES

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After going through the unit you will be:

Understand the importance of women's health maternal and reproductive health problems of women

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## 10.3 GENDER AND HEALTH

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Earlier health was viewed from the narrow perspective of mere 'absence of disease'. In 1948, the World Health Organization (WHO) came up with a much more holistic definition of health. According to WHO, "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (WHO, 1948). The Cairo ICPD (International Conference on Population and Development) Program of Action (POA) on Gender made a commitment to the empowerment and autonomy of women and the improvement of their political, social, and economic and health status as fundamental to the achievement of sustainable development. Since Cairo, the concept of health has moved from a narrow biomedical model, the absence of disease, focus on childbearing and child rearing, to health as a right to emotional, social and physical well-being within the larger social, political and economic context. This shift from the medical model to the



rights model challenges the cultural and economic conditions under which women in diverse cultures receive Reproductive Health services. The narrow medical models in which the service provider decides what is best for women clients are more successful in curative care, seeking relief from pain and physical distress, than in promotive and preventive care and economic context. This shift from the medical model to the rights model challenges the cultural and economic conditions under which women in diverse cultures receive Reproductive Health services.

### **10.3.1 Reproductive Health of Women**

Gender and reproductive health are integrally associated and must be examined together in order to achieve better health outcomes and more equitable societies. Good sexual and reproductive health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being in all matters relating to the reproductive system. It implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life, the capability to reproduce, and the freedom to decide if, when, and how often to do so (UNFPA). The World Health Organization (WHO) defines reproductive health as, “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity in all matters relating to the reproductive system and to its functions and processes”. This definition suggests that people with adequate reproductive health have satisfying and safer sexual lives, and can make a choice as to whether, when and how they would like to have children

According to Fathalla (1997), health needs of women can be broadly classified under four categories.

First, women have specific health needs related to the sexual and reproductive function. Second, women have an elaborate reproductive system that is vulnerable to dysfunction or disease, even before it is put to function or after it has been put out of function. Third, women are subject to the same diseases of other body systems that can affect men. The disease patterns often differ from those of men because of genetic constitution, hormonal environment or gender-evolved lifestyle behavior. Fourth, women are subjected to certain social and cultural norms and barriers which impact their physical, mental or social health such as, female genital mutilation, sexual abuse and domestic violence.

When sexual and reproductive health needs are not met, individuals are deprived of the right to make crucial choices about their own bodies and futures, with a cascading impact on their families' welfare and future generations. And because women bear children, and also often bear the responsibility for nurturing them, sexual and reproductive health and rights issues cannot be separated from gender equality. Cumulatively, the denial of these rights exacerbates poverty and gender inequality. According to the United Nations Population Fund Report, in developing countries, reproductive health problems are a

leading cause of ill health and death for women and girls of childbearing age. Impoverished women suffer disproportionately from unintended pregnancies, unsafe abortion, maternal death and disability, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), gender-based violence, and other related problems.

### **10.3.2 Factors that determines sexual and reproductive health of women**

Here one could look out for four major factors that determine the SRH of women. First, the providence that determines our genetic constitution, including the diseases to which we are more susceptible. And gender plays a big role in the determination of our health.

Second is the people's lifestyle behaviour that can promote or undermine their own health or even affect other's health. Thirdly the socio-economic conditions of the society in which we are born and in which we live. Politicians and legislators too play an important role in shaping societies. Laws and policies can both advance or obstruct women's autonomy and choices regarding decisions relating to their reproductive and sexual health. Lastly, providers of health care who can restore the health of people through advances in medical knowledge and technology.

Thus barriers to women's health are rooted in social, economic, cultural, legal and related conditions. Women's vulnerability to sexual and other abuses both within and outside of marriage, increase their risk of unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortion. The social, religious, and economic customs become embedded in the law, and historically have been used to provide a justification for discrimination against women.

#### **Check your Progress- 1**

Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below

b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit

1. Define the term Reproductive Health

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## **10.4 MATERNAL HEALTH**

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When a women dies during pregnancy, or within 42 days of the delivery or termination of pregnancy, or caused by pregnancy or its management, it is regarded as maternal mortality (WHO 1992). The definition however, excludes incidental and accidental deaths of pregnant women. According to the World Health Organisation estimates, each year nearly 5,36,000 women die globally due to pregnancy related complications and childbearing (cited in Vora et al. 2008). In 2010, 2,87,000 avoidable maternal deaths occurred in low and middle-income countries (cited in Say et al.). Around twenty percent of the burden of maternal deaths is shared by India in spite of the initiation of several national and regional level interventions to curb it (cited in Vora et al.

2008). India on the one hand has become an acclaimed assisted reproductive service industry internationally due to its highly advanced health care facilities at much lower costs compared to developed nations, while it struggles on the other hand to save its own women dying of avoidable factors caused during pregnancy and childbirth. Although the maternal mortality ratio in India has declined sharply from 556 in 1990 to 174 in 2015, yet we have been unable to achieve the target of 109 (MDG 5). Preventing the loss of women's lives due to maternity related complications has taken central place in the global developmental agenda with a dedicated Millennium Development Goal (MDG5- Improving Maternal Health) further pushing developing nations like India to reduce maternal mortality. Realizing the narrow outcome based MDG5, the international women's movement pushed for the “universal access to reproductive health” which was incorporated later in 2005 as MDG5B

The complications that endanger maternal health can be classified in three stages depending on the term of conception a woman is in, namely, prenatal, antenatal and postnatal complications. The most common prenatal complication includes iron deficiency causing anaemia. More than fifty percent of the pregnant women in India were anaemic according to NFHS 2 (1998-99) as well as NFHS 3 (2005-06). Various socio-economic and demographic reasons stand behind such a state. Although it is usually a woman who cooks for the entire family, yet in most Indian families, she is the last to consume food. The nutritional requirement of women is not given due attention because it is a man who goes out and earns and hence is perceived as needing a better diet. Such prevailing customs impede the attainment of healthy life for women and thus adversely affect their, as well as the foetus's life during pregnancy. Moreover, less spacing between subsequent pregnancies also leave women with anaemic bodies. Sepsis and obstructed labor constitute the main antenatal complications leading to 16 percent of the maternal deaths (Vora et al. 2008). Merely 39 percent of the deliveries in India were institutional according to NFHS-3 report (2005-6) thus leaving more than 60 percent women in the hands of unskilled, traditional birth attendants and causing most maternal deaths in India. Lastly, the most overlooked aspect of the maternal health is postnatal care. The optimal care required by weak infants as well as mothers in the eight weeks after delivery is crucial for their survival. However, unfortunately in India barely 42 percent of the women received postnatal care for even two months of the delivery (NFHS 3). Haemorrhage, or excessive blood loss within first 24 hours of delivery (primary post-partum haemorrhage), or after 24 hours within 6 weeks of delivery (secondary post-partum haemorrhage) is a leading cause of maternal mortality taking 1,27,000 lives annually (WHO 2008).

Anaemia is one of the significant factors responsible for haemorrhage. Maternal health involves not merely strengthening the obstetric services but addressing the over-all physical, mental and psychological well being of women by guaranteeing them the right to go through pregnancy and childbirth safely without risking their or their child's' life.

#### **10.4.1 Violation of Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights**

From the above, we clearly understand the roots for the culmination of violations of women's sexual and reproductive health and rights. The denial of a right to SRH takes place in different ways, ranging from denial or restricted access to services that only women require, providing poor quality services to women's needs and requirements, subjecting the woman to third party authorization, performing the procedures without the consent of the woman such as forced sterilizations on sexual and reproductive health of women, forced virginity examinations and forced abortions. Forced early marriages are also certain practices that challenge the SRHR of women.

##### **1. Motherhood**

Most of the times maternal mortality and morbidity are seen as public health concerns rather than woman's human rights issues. With the nature of health facilities being distributed unevenly in many parts of India or with lack of resources to provide these services at public health facilities accompanied by lack of emergency obstetric care facilities many women lose their lives in the process of pregnancy, delivery or during the postpartum period of their lives. Along with the societal values of early marriage and pregnancy, those pregnancies that are too closely held without spacing between two births, often with the expectations to produce male offspring clearly put women's health at risk and have devastating effects on women. Such fatal consequences are rooted in other aspects of life as well. For illustration, the iron deficiency and anaemia mostly pertinent to girls contribute to increased maternal and newborn mortality, impairs health and development, limited learning capacity, impaired immune function, and reduced productive capacity. While anaemia may not directly cause maternal death, it can cause death from other causes. In pregnant women with sickle cell anaemia, deaths may result from the effects of embolism, or bacterial infections during the last four weeks of pregnancy, labour, and the first week after delivery.

##### **2. Harmful Practices**

Harmful practices violate the right to the "enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health" broadly recognized under international law of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. There are several harmful practices that this society follows against women and children. These form a violence against women and

girls that are grounded in discrimination on the basis of age, sex, gender, caste and other factors. Such a discrimination emerges from the societal view that girls and women are inferior to boys and men. For instance, few sections of the Indian population practice female genital mutilation, when the girls are of very young age. This practice has various immediate and long-term health consequences, including severe pain, shock, infections and complications during childbirth (affecting both the mother and child), long-term gynaecological problems such as fistula, psychological effects and death. Women who have been mutilated have expressed their lack of self-confidence in themselves and grief and their confrontation on issues related to sexual pleasure and their bodily appearance that has been tarnished.

Other harmful practices include forced child marriages, polygamy, crimes committed in the name of so-called honour and dowry-related violence. While several harmful practices exist, the laws to prohibit these practices may not be enforced, as in the case of FGM, where customs, traditions and religious laws encourage these practices. In such contexts, where laws could affect the sentiments and practices of certain communities or groups, states should conduct comprehensive awareness raising programmes to change the cultural and social attitudes, traditions and customs that underlie the behaviours that promote such harmful practices.

### **3. Violence against women**

While practices are ingrained in beliefs of a particular society or groups, violence perpetuated by men seems to be a universal phenomenon to exercise authority and control over women. Violence happens at different domains ranging from domestic, social, and institutional. Women who are inflicted by violence are found to have a greater risk of depression and more likely to have induced abortions. The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women defines “violence against women” as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.” Many times during communal riots and conflict situations, women and girls are the victims of rape, incest, sexual harassment and are the worst affected. They are brutally and sexually assaulted and cannot access safe services due to humiliation and fear. Further women represented by specific groups such as women with disabilities, migrant women and lesbian, bisexual and transgender women, are particularly vulnerable to violence. For example, lesbian women face violence such as rape, battering, sexual harassment and child abuse based on their sexual orientation or gender-identity. However, lesbians not only have to

contend with violence as women, but also as lesbians. The criminalization of homosexuality in India along with absence of rights against discrimination or rights to partnerships renders lesbians vulnerable to violence. In a dominantly heteronormative society, for a lesbian to assert her sexuality invites danger as experiences of Ramabai and Jaya that happened in India in 1991 demonstrate. Such criminalization laws also affects access to health services and knowledge and counselling on various issues pertinent to their sexual and reproductive health. Similarly, gender based violence perpetuated among girls, put them at a risk of acquiring STI and HIV. Similarly, decriminalization of sex work, puts women at varied risks of infections and diseases and restricts them to access any services when they are affected or sexually or generally assaulted.

#### **10.4.2 Reproductive Health Problems and AIDS**

In a broader sense sexual and reproductive health also includes Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNCH) which refers to the health and well-being of women during pregnancy, childbirth and post delivery, and the health of newborn babies and children until the age of five. Every year around eight million children die of preventable causes, and more than 350,000 women die from preventable complications. In order to respond effectively, interventions must ensure that women and children have access to a universal package of family-planning information and services, antenatal, newborn and postnatal care, emergency obstetric and newborn care, skilled care during childbirth at appropriate facilities, safe abortion services (when abortion is not prohibited by law), and the prevention of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

AIDS and reproductive health are very closely related as most HIV infections AIDS Alliance, the risk of acquiring and transmitting HIV can also be increased by the presence of certain Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). STIs and Reproductive Tract Infections (RTI) enhance chances of acquiring and transmitting HIV infection manifold. Hence control and prevention of STI/RTI is one of the key prevention strategies for HIV (NACO report, 2013-14). Sexual and reproductive ill-health and HIV also share root causes: lack of access to information and services; poverty; harmful gender norms and inequality; cultural norms; and social marginalization or criminalization of key populations.

#### **10.4.3 Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS**

The first and the foremost thing to prevent AIDS is having adequate information. Lack of information leads to multiple myths associated with the problem. So, communication is the key to generating awareness on prevention as well as motivating access to testing, treatment, care and support. In India the National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) is the body responsible for formulating policy and

implementing programmes for the prevention and control of the HIV epidemic. National AIDS Control Program (NACP) IV aims at communicating the population about AIDS, which includes:

- To increase knowledge among the general population (especially youth and women) on safe sexual behaviour
- To sustain behaviour change in at risk populations (high risk groups and bridge populations)
- To generate demand for care, support and treatment services
- To strengthen the enabling environment by facilitating appropriate changes in societal norms that reinforces positive attitudes, beliefs and practices to reduce stigma and discrimination.

India is running free anti-retroviral treatment (ART) clinics for free since 2004 where testing and counseling, nutritional advice and treatment for HIV and other opportunistic infections like tuberculosis are taken care of.

Due to this sustained commitment, India has made significant progress in tackling its HIV epidemic, but still more could be achieved by HIV education, awareness, gender sensitivity and gender equality.

#### **10.4.4 Some Milestones Achieved In Maternal Health**

In 1990, the estimated MMR (Maternal Mortality Ratio) was 437 per 1,00,000 live births. In order to meet the MDG (Millennium Development Goal) target, the MMR should be reduced to 109 per 1,00,000 live births by 2015. As per the latest estimates, the MMR status at all India level is at 167 in 2011-13. As per the historical trend, MMR is likely to reach the level of 140 maternal deaths by 2015; however, assuming the recent sharper decline is sustained, India is likely to be slightly nearer to the MDG target.

#### **10.4.5 Challenges in Addressing Reproductive Health Needs of Women**

According to the National Health Policy 2015, the greatest challenge in reproductive and child health is to address the social determinants of health. Maternal and perinatal mortality is highest in population sub-groups which are poorer, more malnourished, less educated, have lower age of parity and have too many children or too soon. It is also a reflection of patriarchal mindsets and lack of gender equity which makes women more vulnerable. Thus child and maternal survival is a mirror that reflects the entire spectrum of social development (NHP, 2015). Additionally, it is also found that women have little or no autonomy regarding control over their fertility and little freedom to take decisions before seeking health care for themselves. Husbands usually make decisions about the wife's access to birth control and to limit family size. Even where family planning methods are adopted, these remain primarily the concern of women.

In one report of NFHS-III, female sterilization accounts for 19% of family planning methods used as against male sterilization which is as low as 1% (NFHS-III, 2005). So, women's health wants and needs were being superseded by the husband's decisions.

More importantly, the implementation of more gender and adolescent friendly reproductive health services through legislation, policy, and institutional changes may need to be instituted within the existing health care structures.

The MTP Act in India guides us as to when, where and under 'what' conditions abortion is allowed. The Act allows abortion under medical supervision and aims to regulate and ensure access to safe abortion care. According to the MTP Act, the termination of pregnancies up to 12 weeks can be authorised by one doctor while those between 12 to 20 weeks necessitate the opinions of two doctors. The Act also enjoins doctors to take cognisance of the "actual or reasonable foreseeable environment" that run the risk of injuring the pregnant woman's health. In this connection, a pregnancy following rape (marital rape not included) or failure of contraception (for married women) are mentioned as specific indicators in two separate explanatory notes. The other health conditions visualised, are "physical or mental abnormalities" that might "seriously handicap" the unborn child.

### **Check your Progress- 2**

Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below

b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit

1. What is maternal mortality?
2. Expand the term MTP

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## **10.5 LET US SUM UP**

In this unit you have learnt the meaning of maternal and reproductive health, the barriers that prevent women to access better health facilities, reproductive health issues and Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act. This would help you to educate and empower women as they are often the health care gatekeepers for their entire family.

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## **10.6 UNIT – END EXERCISES**

1. Elaborate the reproductive health issues of women
2. Discuss about the grey areas in MTP

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## **10.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

1. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines reproductive health as, "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity in all matters relating to the reproductive system and to its functions and processes".



2. If women dies during pregnancy, or within 42 days of the delivery or termination of pregnancy, or caused by pregnancy or its management, it is regarded as maternal mortality

3. Medical Termination of Pregnancy. MTP Act in India guides us as to when, where and under ‘what’ conditions abortion is allowed. The Act allows abortion under medical supervision and aims to regulate and ensure access to safe abortion care.

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## **10.8 SUGGESTED READINGS**

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## UNIT XI

# GENDER AND PARENTING ROLE – FEMALE HEADED HOUSEHOLD – SINGLE PARENTHOOD

### Structure

- 11.1 Introduction
- 11.2 Objective
- 11.3 Gender and Parenting Roles
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    - 11.3.1.1 Changing gender roles in marriage
    - 11.3.1.2 Gender identity
  - 11.3.2 Gender role identity
    - 11.3.3 Gender roles feminism
      - 11.3.3.1 Goal of feminism
      - 11.3.3.2 Gender stereotypes
    - 11.3.4 Parenting role
  - 11.3.5 Pre-pregnancy
  - 11.3.6 Pregnancy and prenatal parenting:
  - 11.3.7 Parenting Skills
  - 11.3.8 Parenting influenced by gender roles
    - 11.3.8.1 A Biological Basis for Parenting Approaches
    - 11.3.8.2 Bonding
    - 11.3.8.3 Communication
  - 11.3.8.4 Discipline
- 11.4 Female Headed Household
  - 11.4.1 Female headed maintained families
  - 11.4.2 The ignored factor in development planning:
  - 11.4.3 Social and Economic Implications:
  - 11.4.4 Poverty in Female-Headed Households
- 11.5 Single Parenthood
  - 11.5.1 Single-Parent Families
  - 11.5.2 Mother only Families
  - 11.5.3 Father only Families
  - 11.5.4 Challenges of Single-Parenting
  - 11.5.5 The Effects on Children
  - 11.5.6 Single Parenting Problems
  - 11.5.7 Positive Effects of Single Parenting
    - 11.5.7.1 Strong Mother-Child Bonding
    - 11.5.7.2 Strong Sense of Community
    - 11.5.7.3 Share Responsibilities
    - 11.5.7.4 Maturity
    - 11.5.7.5 Parental Role Modeling
    - 11.5.7.6 Lack of Parental Conflicts
  - 11.5.8 Negative Effects of Single Parenting

- 11.5.8.1 Financial Troubles
- 11.5.8.2 Low Parenting Quality
- 11.5.8.3 Children after a Divorce
- 11.5.8.4 Emotional Problems
- 11.5.8.5 Loneliness
- 11.5.8.6 Adjustment Difficulties

11.6 Let Us Sum Up

11.7 Unit – End Exercises

11.8 Answer to Check Your Progress

11.9 Suggested Reading

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## **11.1 INTRODUCTION**

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Parents are among the most important people in the lives of young children. From birth, children are learning and rely on mothers and fathers, as well as other caregivers acting in the parenting role, to protect and care for them and to chart a trajectory that promotes their overall well-being. While parents generally are filled with anticipation about their children's unfolding personalities, many also lack knowledge about how best to provide for them. Becoming a parent is usually a welcomed event, but in some cases, parents' lives are fraught with problems and uncertainty regarding their ability to ensure their child's physical, emotional, or economic well-being.

At the same time, this study was fundamentally informed by recognition that the task of ensuring children's healthy development does not rest solely with parents or families. It lies as well with governments and organizations at the local/community, state, and national levels that provide programs and services to support parents and families.

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## **11.2 OBJECTIVE**

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- To determine Gender roles impacts how they expected to act, speak, dress, groom and conducts ourselves based upon our assigned sex.
- To identify the proposing solution for one the most important problems facing women.
- To provide an interdisciplinary forum for informed discussion and development of our understanding of the way that intensive motherhood and the new parenting culture works and informs contemporary child-rearing practices
- To track the way practices such as infant feeding, sleeping, disciplining etc. are influenced and modified by the demands of our parenting culture
- To consider gender and parenting culture, and in particular to track change and continuity in cultures of fatherhood, and how this relates to change and continuity in fathering practices

- To involve post post-graduate and early career stage colleagues in this project
- To bring together researchers, parenting organizations, policy makers from Britain and abroad in order inform the deliberation of the public on this issue

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## **11.3 GENDER AND PARENTING ROLES**

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The parents were primarily middle class and upper class, with approximately 5% identifying themselves as from a lower socioeconomic background. Parents were asked to tell their son or daughter stories about when the parent was growing up. All parents completed measures of child behavior and a subset of parents completed the Bem Sex Role inventory. Stories were coded for the strength of affiliation, achievement, and autonomy themes. No gender differences were found for parents or child in the strength of affiliation themes. An interaction was found between gender type of parent and gender of child for strength of achievement theme. Traditional gender-typed parents told stories with stronger achievement themes to their sons, and nontraditional gender-typed parents told stories with stronger achievement themes to their daughters.

### **11.3.1 Gender Role**

A gender role, also known as a sex role, is a social role encompassing a range of behaviors and attitudes that are generally considered acceptable, appropriate, or desirable for people based on their actual or perceived sex. Gender roles are usually centered on conceptions of masculinity and femininity, although there are exceptions and variations. The specifics regarding these gendered expectations may vary substantially among cultures, while other characteristics may be common throughout a range of cultures. There is ongoing debate as to what extent gender roles and their variations are biologically determined, and to what extent they are socially constructed.

#### **11.3.1.1 Changing gender roles in marriage**

Over the years, gender roles have continued to change and have a significant impact on the institution of marriage. Gender roles can be defined as the behaviors, values, and attitudes that a society considers appropriate for both male and female. Motivated by the women's rights movement and various other movements gender roles have begun to change, resulting in the changing economic landscape, women entering the workplace and many more. Traditionally, men and women had completely opposing roles, men were seen as the provider for the family and women were seen as the caretakers of both the home and the family. However, in today's society the division of roles are starting to blur. More and more individuals are adapting non-traditional gender roles into their marriage in order to share responsibilities. This revolutionary view

on gender roles seeks out equality between sexes. In today's society it is more likely that a man and woman are both providers for their family. More and more women are entering the workforce while more men are contributing to household duties. Despite the fact that there is still a gap between gender roles, today, roles are less gendered and more equal in comparison to how they were traditionally.

### **11.3.1.2 Gender identity**

Gender identity is the personal sense of one's own gender. Gender identity can correlate with assigned sex at birth or can differ from it. All societies have a set of gender categories that can serve as the basis of the formation of a person's social identity in relation to other members of society.

### **11.3.2 Gender role identity**

Gender roles are an integral part of virtually every culture. Although the exact content of roles for women and men may vary as a function of culture and social class, women's roles virtually always must be compatible with their reproductive role. Children observe and are taught their culture's gender stereotypes and role expectations, and by age 7, have internalized them to achieve a stable gender identity. By young adulthood, this gender identity becomes part of an individual's unique personal identity and may take a variety of different forms.

A gender role is a set of behavioral norms associated particularly with males or females in a given social group or system, often including the division of labor between men and women and the attendant complex of child-rearing and socialization processes leading youth toward maturing to perpetuate the same pattern. Gender-based roles coincident with sex-based roles have been the norm in many traditional societies, with the specific components and workings of the gender/sex system of role division varying markedly from society to society

### **11.3.3 Gender roles feminism**

Most feminists have argued that traditional gender roles are oppressive for women. They believe that the female gender role was constructed as an opposite to an ideal male role, and helps to perpetuate patriarchy. Furthermore, there has been a perception of Western culture, in recent times, that the female gender role is dichotomized into either being a "stay at home-mother" or a "career woman." In reality, women usually face a double burden: The need to balance occupations and child care deprives women of spare time.

#### **11.3.3.1 Goal of feminism**

The goal of feminism is to give the opportunity of becoming the best by using women's fullest capabilities. According to her until all women become lesbians there will be no true political revolution. Feminism is a part of progress within democratic freedom applying only to women.

- The integration of subjective and objective element of the universe.
- Integration between the rational and intuitive element of the world.
- Integration between mystical and scientific aspects of the world.
- Integration between the abstract and concrete aspects of the universe.

All these are incomparable elements yet feminism considers them as harmonious part of the world instead of treating them in opposition to one another.

### **11.3.3.2 Gender stereotypes**

A man might say women aren't meant for combat, while a woman might say men do nothing but watch sports. Such expressions represent gender stereotypes, which are over-generalizations about the characteristics of an entire group based on gender. While women were barred from serving in military combat in Western nations until the latter half of the 20th century, in recent times they have served in combat roles as capably as men. And while many men may watch sports, not all men would necessarily do so.

### **11.3.4 Parenting role**

The individual roles that a mother and father play in childrearing vary widely. In “traditional” families the mother most often plays the lead role and the father is the primary provider and assists with childrearing. Today many different arrangements are common. Whatever the arrangement, child psychology experts agree that it is important that both the mother and father play an active supportive and loving role in child upbringing. Children need (yes, need) to feel secure in both their physical and emotional environment in order to be able to develop a healthy emotional self.

### **11.3.5 Pre-pregnancy**

Family planning is the decision regarding whether and when to become parents, including planning, preparing, and gathering resources. Prospective parents may assess (among other matters) whether they have access to sufficient financial resources, whether their family situation is stable, and whether they want to undertake the responsibility of raising a child. Worldwide, about 40% of all pregnancies are not planned, and more than 30 million babies are born each year as a result of unplanned pregnancies. Reproductive health and preconception care affect pregnancy, reproductive success, and the physical and mental health of both mother and child.

### **11.3.6 Pregnancy and prenatal parenting**

During pregnancy, the unborn child is affected by many decisions made by the parents, particularly choices linked to their lifestyle. The health, activity level and nutrition available to the mother can affect the child's development before birth. Some mothers, especially in relatively wealthy countries, eat too much and spend too much time resting. Other mothers, especially if they are poor or abused, may be overworked and may not be able to eat enough, or not able to afford healthful foods with sufficient iron, vitamins, and protein, for the unborn child to develop properly.

### **11.3.7 Parenting Skills**

Back when our parents were born, parenting skills were learned from the extended family. If parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles didn't live in the same house, they usually lived within a few miles. They were always available to impart their considerable wisdom to the younger generation on the subjects of pregnancy, childbirth, and raising children. Now, we have become such a transient society; it is rare that the extended family is even in the same state!

Since the late 20th and early 21st centuries, parents have had to learn creative ways to raise their children. We surf the Internet, read books, take classes, talk to our parents on the telephone, and make friends with parents who have "been there and done that." We then filter these things through our own morality, sensibilities, and personalities to make them work for our own families.

## **11.3.8 PARENTING INFLUENCED BY GENDER ROLES**

### **11.3.8.1 A Biological Basis for Parenting Approaches**

It should be no surprise that there are significant sex-based differences in parenting styles. Even the most enlightened parents are still controlled to some degree by their biological instincts. Generally, mothers tend to be nurturing communicators while fathers often alternate between being stern and playful. While your individual approaches influence your relationship with your child, how well you blend those two parenting styles actually has the most impact on your child's emotional and cognitive development.

### **11.3.8.2 Bonding**

Mothers largely provide the emotional nourishment that children need, especially during the first three years. As a result, Mom most often becomes the sought-after parent for doling out hugs when children get hurt or cranky. Women also tend to take the lead in bonding activities, such as reading a book, playing a board game or solving a puzzle, which all require close contact, as well as take ownership of educational and spiritual instruction.

### 11.3.8.3 Communication

Typically, more comfortable verbalizing their feelings, moms most often answer those endless “But, why?” questions that spew out of little mouths as well as patiently provide explanations for rules and punishments. Moms also offer more positive nonverbal communication signals, such as smiles and snuggles.

While Dad is more likely to utter the dreaded words, “Because I said so!” he has an enormous influence through his nonverbal communication--his actions. Fathers play a critical role in their children entering successful, happy relationships. Children learn what their parents’ model is.

### 11.3.8.4 Discipline

As communicators, mothers are more likely to be mediators and to adjust punishments to fit the crimes. Yet, as exacting taskmasters, moms have little patience when their rigid timelines are derailed by shuffling feet. A bit more overprotective, moms are prone to issue more warnings when their children are approaching an activity. Fathers’ are usually the stricter disciplinarians and the more permissive playmates. He pushes his child to learn independence through exploration, although he often imposes firmer limits upon girls.

#### Check your progress-1

- Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below  
b. compares your answer with those given at the end of the unit.
1. Distinguish between gender role and parenting role

## 11.4 FEMALE HEADED HOUSEHOLD

A **female headed household** is a family where the primary decision maker is female due to the absence of an adult male person capable of playing this role. Female heads of household that find employment often work informal, part-time jobs at clothing stores, grocery stores or as housekeepers. The woman always takes her children to work with her because she cannot afford childcare.

### 11.4.1 Female headed maintained families

The subject of targeting public and private sector programs to female headed households in developing countries in order to attack poverty and social disadvantage is controversial and lacking in rigorous evidence. One argument is that women who head households are worthy of special attention because they are triply disadvantaged. They experience the burdens of poverty, gender discrimination and absence of support as head household.



### **11.4.2 The ignored factor in development planning:**

This study emphasizes the importance of female-headed households in developing societies in development planning. Micro-data (data on female-headed households is obscured at the macro-data level) on female-headed household are translated into aggregate data for 74 developing countries. Results of the analysis show that the average percentage of potential female-headed household is: 22% for sub-Sahara Africa; 20% for C. America and the Caribbean; 16% for N. Africa and the Middle East; and 15% for S. America. Also included in this report is a separate case study of female households in the Caribbean which provided a model for generating data on female-headed household by way of national censuses, and which focused on the disadvantaged position of women who are heads of household compared to the general female population and to the male-headed households.

Women play a critical role in all countries around the world. Their roles have not been recognized for a long time but with the several campaigns and movements aimed at fighting for the rights of women, the society is beginning to appreciate the role of women. Women make more than 50% of the world population today. The population of women in the rural areas is unusually high because most men are increasingly migrating to cities and towns of the world in search of employment. The high rates of migration of men to urban areas and absence of adult males has led to most households being headed by a female in developing countries. A female headed household is a family where the primary decision maker is female due to the absence of an adult male person capable of playing this role

### **11.4.3 Social and Economic Implications:**

Culturally women are considered weaker leaders in the house. Therefore, they will be discriminated in the society and those under their leadership. The males being led by her will likely rebel and not respect most of her decisions. Dual tasks of parenting and provision by a single person put a lot of constraints on the women who head households. These strains if not regulated might lead to depression, chronic diseases, and death. The high rate of unemployment among the women has resulted in an economic burden on the female heading households leading to poverty, lack of access to basic facilities such as education and health. In the Middle East, the religion and cultural norms favor men, and most and women remain disadvantaged as household leaders.

### **11.4.4 Poverty in Female-Headed Households**

Buvinic and Gupta (1997) identify three channels that are likely to determine why female-headed households are poorer than male-headed counterparts. First, female headed households in general have more dependents and thus have higher non-workers to workers ratio compared to other households. Second, female heads typically work for

lower wages and have less access to assets and productive resources compared to men owing to gender bias against women. Third, women typically bear the burden of household chores that result in time and mobility constraints compared to male-heads.

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## 11.5 SINGLE PARENTHOOD

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A single parent is a person who lives with a child or children and who does not have a wife, husband or live-in partner. A single parent may have either sole custody of the child or joint physical custody, where the child lives part-time with each parent. Reasons for becoming a single parent include divorce, break-up, abandonment, death of the other parent, childbirth by a single woman or single-person adoption. A single parent family is a family with children that is headed by a single parent.

### 11.5.1 Single-Parent Families

Single-parent families can be defined as families where a parent lives with dependent children, either alone or in a larger household, without a spouse or partner. There was a rapid and drastic increase in the number of single-parent families in the latter half of the twentieth century. This change has been used by some to argue that we are witnessing the breakdown of the family (defined as a married couple residing with their dependent offspring) with negative effects for children, families, and society (Popenoe 1996). Others suggest that single-parent families have been present in all societies over time and should not be viewed as deviant or problematic, but rather as an alternative family form (Coontz 1997). Regardless of how family diversity is viewed the increase in and prevalence of families headed by one parent has a major influence on the social, economic, and political context of family life. Single-parent families are generally categorized by the sex of the custodial parent (mother-only or father-only families).

### 11.5.2 Mother only Families

Mother-only families include widows, divorced and separated women, and never-married mothers. In the case of divorce, mothers are usually given custody in the United States and other developed countries. In Italy, in 1997, for example, 90 percent of children whose parents divorced went into the custody of their mothers. Since the vast majority of single parents are mothers, most of the research focuses on female-headed families. However, regardless of sex, single parents share similar problems and challenges (Grief 1985).

#### Check your progress-2

- Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below
- b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit
- i. Define female headed household

### **11.5.3 Father only Families**

A study by Child Trends researchers published in 2010 used a sample of nearly 4,000 adolescents from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth to study the characteristics of single-father families and the “effects of fathers’ involvement and parenting on outcomes” like graduation from high school. This study was unique in that instead of grouping cohabiting fathers with lone fathers, it distinguished between them. Among the study’s findings: cohabiting single-father families had fewer family routines, like eating dinner together, and single fathers who were living with a partner “had lower levels of closeness and awareness than did parents in all other family times.” The authors concluded that “offspring who reside with a custodial father and their cohabiting partner may face additional challenges and unique circumstances that cannot be fully explained (mediated) by differences in father involvement and parenting styles.”

### **11.5.4 Challenges of Single-Parenting**

Parenthood is challenging under the best of conditions. With one parent, the challenges are multiplied. Coping with childrearing for single parents becomes more difficult because of responsibility overload, when one parent makes all the decisions and provides for all of the family needs; task over-load, when the demands for work, housework, and parenting can be overwhelming for one person; and emotional overload, when the single parent must always be available to meet both their own and their children's emotional needs. Alone or in combination these result in problems for the single parent, including loneliness, anxiety, and depression.

### **11.5.5 The Effects on Children**

In the United States, the effects of single-parent family life on children fall into two categories:

- (1) Those attributed to the lower socioeconomic status of single parents
- (2) The short-term consequences of divorce that moderate over time.

Four factors are predictive of the children's adjustment to the divorce of their parents: the passage of time, the quality of the children's relationship with their residential parent, the level of conflict between parents, and the economic standing of the children's residential family. In the first few years after a divorce, the children have higher rates of antisocial behavior, aggression, anxiety, and school problems than children in two parent families. However, some of these problems may be attributed to a decrease in available resources and adult supervision; many of the negative effects disappear when there is adequate

supervision, income, and continuity in social networks (McLanahan and Sandefur 1994).

### **11.5.6 Single Parenting Problems**

The following are the issues of single parenting:

- It will be hard to maintain discipline in the home as a single parent will be the only disciplinarian, which can give rise to behavioral problems in children.
- You may feel intense sorrow when your child envies pals who live with both parents.
- Making new relationships are difficult especially when your little one is jealous or suspicious.
- A single parent attaches to her children so badly for company and support that it makes difficult for the child to leave the house.
- The various responsibilities of child raising, housework, and earning, will not give the parent enough time for themselves. It moreover results in adding stress, fatigue and pressure.
- The income is small which may give less access to child health care.

Let us understand the positive and negative effects of single parenting.

### **11.5.7 Positive Effects of Single Parenting:**

#### ***11.5.7.1 Strong Mother-Child Bonding***

Spending one-on-one time with your little one creates a unique bond which will be stronger than the one if you were a nuclear parent. It goes in the case of custodial parents (one who has sole physical custody of the child) and also non-custodial parents who play a significant role in their child's lives.

- Realize your sole importance and do not try to diminish it.
- If you think your bond is not strong, try to work on it.
- Your child's connection with you will not end, and it continues to grow and evolve even after they turn 18.

#### ***11.5.7.2. Strong Sense of Community***

As with the phrase discussed above "it takes a village to raise a child," it works with single parent families as well. Children who have single parents will also have many supporters. Most cases, the extended family members will play a unique role in a child's life. Single parents who do not live with their extended families will try participating in

community groups which may include single parent support groups, synagogues and churches.

- Join sole parent support groups
- Involve yourself in your child's academics

#### ***11.5.7.3. Share Responsibilities***

Children raised by single parents will not just have token responsibilities to do, but their contribution to the complete family system is necessary. In this way, children will understand the value of their contribution and can take pleasure in their work.

- Let your children recognize the efforts they put in
- Praise them for doing the house chores
- Be specific while asking them to offer the help

#### ***11.5.7.4. Maturity***

Children will find their parents working hard, and it will force them to collaborate and work along with their parents. Additionally, the children will also learn to manage their disappointments in life.

- If you find your child is disappointed, respond with support, empathy and encouragement.
- These experiences will help children become empathetic and caring adults.
- You may not prevent them from feeling disappointed or sad all the time, but you can manage their emotions.

#### ***11.5.7.5. Parental Role Modeling***

Children brought up in single parent families will realize their importance in their parents' lives. It is a healthy approach which will help them to prepare for the real world. Children will feel secure about their ability to negotiate the challenges of future life.

- Let your children balance their needs with needs of the family.
- Teach them to consider other's needs as well.

#### ***11.5.7.6. Lack of Parental Conflicts***

There will be no parental conflict, and it eases tension and stress for both the parent and the child. It will be true in the case of the former partner being abusive or the relationship was controversial. If there are no arguments or conflicts, the child will feel more secure in her living environment.

## **11.5.8 Negative Effects of Single Parenting**

### **11.5.8.11. Financial Troubles**

Most single parents work long hours to meet the financial needs of the family. It is necessary to run the household and raise the children. There may be chances when you have to deny your kids from their requirements, and you may have to juggle repeatedly between financial commitments. Your child may thus be not able to take the opportunities he always dreamt of due to financial concerns.

### **11.5.8.2. Low Parenting Quality**

Your way of parenting suffers when many responsibilities add to your everyday life. Your long hours of working may make you miss your child's important school functions. You may not afford a babysitter to take out some valuable down time. You may react more if you see your child being untidy. You may also disclose your personal, professional or financial issues with your child. But they will not have the maturity and emotional strength to deal with the situations so as to help you. Take out some time and find ways to have the individual time with each of your children.

### **11.5.8.3. Children after a Divorce**

If your reason for single parenting is divorce, your children will also suffer from adjustment problems or may have the feeling of being ashamed. If your partner stops looking out after your kids as he or she used to do before, your children may badly suffer resentment. There are also chances they still hold on to bad memories of your divorce. If you notice your child having trouble sleeping or experiencing problems at school, you should counsel her or take her for counseling.

### **11.5.8.4. Emotional Problems**

Your children are likely to suffer from self-esteem problems. They may crave for affection, which they will not get enough because of your busy schedule. Thus, they may lose expectations in their relationships later in life. They will take all the blame for their living conditions. It may be difficult for you to stop them from drawing comparisons, but you can help your children build self-regard. Things like acknowledging her when she has done something good and posting a card in her room about her worth will help build self-esteem.

### **11.5.8. 5. Loneliness**

It is another challenge most single parent's face. They will not only be able to share their difficulties with their spouse but also cannot share their joys as well. If the parent is single because of spouse's death or any tragedy, it will be even harder for the parent to bear all sorts of responsibilities.

### **11.5.8.6. Adjustment Difficulties**

Children will also face the issues along with their single parents. They may be a sense of loss, poverty and continuous exposure to parental arguments. While the parent's sense of loss is because of the missing spouse, a child's loss will be a guide or a protector. It will be tougher for children at their young age.

#### **Check your progress-3**

Note: a. Write your answer in the space given below

b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit

1. What are the problems of single parenthood?

*Gender and Parenting Role – Female  
Headed Household – Single  
Parenthood*

*NOTES*

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## **11.6 LET US SUM UP**

In this unit, you will learn about the gender and parenting role and it describes about the male and female genders and the aspects of parenthood in caring the children. In the female headed parenthood, it discusses about the problems faced by the women and the sacrifices for the child in parenting. The single parenthood either male / female headed in the family it discusses about the effects of the childhood in single parenting and affecting the growth of the child.

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## **11.7 UNIT – END EXERCISES**

1. Why are female headed household at greatest risk for poverty.
2. What are the challenges of single parenting?

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## **11.8 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

1. A gender role is a set of behavioral norms associated particularly with males or females in a given social group or system, often including the division of labor between men and women and the attendant complex of child-rearing and socialization processes leading youth toward maturing to perpetuate the same pattern.
2. The parents' roles are of the maximum importance for personality development of the children.
3. Female headed household is a family where the primary decision maker is female due to the absence of an adult male person capable of playing this role.

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## **11.9 SUGGESTED READINGS**

1. A Text Book on Women Studies Principles (Theories and Methodologies), Chapter IV Women's Studies and Feminism. Author by Gokilavani S, pp. 45-102.
2. Buvinic, M., and Gupta, G.R. (1997): "Female-Headed Households and Female-Maintained Families: Are They Worth Targeting to Reduce Poverty in Developing Countries? Economic Development and Cultural Change, Vol. 45 (2), 259-80.

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3. [https://www.momjunction.com/articles/effects-of-single-parenting\\_00373930/](https://www.momjunction.com/articles/effects-of-single-parenting_00373930/)
4. <https://www.allaboutparenting.org/parenting-skills.htm>
5. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parenting#Pre-pregnancy>

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# **UNIT-XII PROBLEM OF WOMEN: PRODUCTION VS REPRODUCTION, HOUSEHOLD WORK, INVISIBLE WORK, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

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*Problem of Women: Production Vs  
Reproduction, Household Work,  
Invisible Work, Domestic Violence*

*NOTES*

## **Structure**

- 12.1 Introduction
- 12.2 Objectives
- 12.3 Problem of women: production vs. reproduction
  - 12.3.1 Production
  - 12.3.2 Reproduction
  - 12.3.3 Production and Reproduction - A Conceptual Analysis
  - 12.3.4 The Interlinkage between Production and Reproduction
  - 12.3.5 Some of the major problems modern women are still facing mentioned below
    - 12.3.5.1 Violence against women
    - 12.3.5.2 Gender discrimination
    - 12.3.5.3 Employment
    - 12.3.5.4 Dowry system
    - 12.3.5.5 The Debate over Reproductive Right
    - 12.3.5.6 Life Changing Realities of Teen Pregnancy
    - 12.3.5.7 The Cycle of Domestic Abuse
    - 12.3.5.8 The Betrayal of Cheating Partners
    - 12.3.5.9 Safety and Security
- 12.4 Household Work
  - 12.4.1 Difficulties faced by working women
  - 12.4.2 Implication in Household Chores and Work Family
- Conflict (WFC)
- 12.5 Invisible Work
  - 12.5.1 The Invisible labour of Women
  - 12.5.2 Work and Inequality
- 12.6 Domestic Violence
  - 12.6.1 Types of Abuse
    - 12.6.1.1 Physical abuse
    - 12.6.1.2 Sexual abuse
    - 12.6.1.3 Emotional abuse
    - 12.6.1.4 Economic abuse
    - 12.6.1.5 Psychological abuse
    - 12.6.1.6 Threats
    - 12.6.1.7 Stalking
    - 12.6.1.8 Cyber stalking
  - 12.6.2 Violence against Women
  - 12.6.3 Effects of violence against Women

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**NOTES**

- 12.7 Let us Sum up
- 12.8 Unit End Exercise
- 12.9 Answer to check your progress
- 12.10 Suggested Reading

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## **12.1 INTRODUCTION**

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Women have always worked, whether in paid jobs, or in the home, and often in both. But their work is generally unrecognized and undervalued. Today, women comprise nearly half of the UK's workforce. While there have been many important changes in recent decades, there are many continuities in the issue's women workers face in the workplace. Many people think that the majority of women did not do waged work until the second half of the twentieth century brought social change, the women's liberation movement and equality legislation. This is a myth, and we now have evidence that women's paid work has a long history dating back to even before the industrial revolution. This section gives an account of women's waged work in the UK from the 19th century onwards. The issues examined here include the nature and types of work available to women, pay and conditions at work, women's struggles for rights and the particular issues facing migrant women workers.

The study of women's role has been and continues to be of crucial importance to feminists, because they are concerned not only with the identification of the processes and structures, which generate gender inequalities and gender segregation, but also devising appropriate strategies in equalizing the position of women and men in the productive and reproductive spheres. The interest in this area also provides opportunities to understand better how gender divisions intersect with class and caste inequalities. However, women's oppression is inexplicable without an understanding of the connections between the division of labour at work and in the home. In assessing the factors which might account for the position of women as wage labourers, it is impossible to escape the conclusion that family structure and the ideology of domestic responsibility play an important part in this context.

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## **12.2 OBJECTIVE**

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- To understand the problems faced by women in the society
- To enable the students to know about challenges of modern women
- To assess the invisible labour of women in the community
- To study about the various forms of violence faced by the woman in private and public arena.

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## **12.3 PROBLEM OF WOMEN: PRODUCTION VS. REPRODUCTION**

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*Problem of Women: Production Vs  
Reproduction, Household Work,  
Invisible Work, Domestic Violence*

### **12.3.1 Production**

The productive role is a role undertaken by men and women to get paid / wages in cash or to produce goods that are not consumed by themselves. Including market production with an exchange rate, and household production with a use value, but also a potential exchange rate. For example, working in formal and informal sectors such as farming, trade, farming Labourers and so on.

### **12.3.2 Reproduction**

The reproductive system is a system of sex organs within an organism which work together for the purpose of sexual reproduction. Many non-living substances such as fluids, hormones, and pheromones are also important accessories to the reproductive system.

Reproductive role is a role that is associated with the responsibilities of child care and domestic tasks required to ensure the maintenance and reproduction of labor regarding the continuity of the family. For examples giving a birth, cooking, nurture and care for children, fetching water, washing, cleaning, and so on.

### **12.3.3 Production and Reproduction - A Conceptual Analysis**

Prior to the examination of controversies pertaining to the conceptual analysis of 'production' and 'reproduction', it is essential to provide a general interpretation of these two concepts. Activities spanning the entire spectrum of reproduction and production create value and are, therefore, potentially 'income generating'. 'Domestic' tasks such as housework and childcare, carried out by women household members, are unwaged in all societies and therefore, it is being mistaken that they do not constitute a category of 'work'. All domestic activities, in fact, contribute income to the household unit in the form of saving, budgeting or the provision of unpaid services (Mies, 1980; Papanek, 1979). Thus, in most parts of the world, involvement in production is interpreted as 'recognizable income-generating activity' (the creation of exchange values), which is accorded greater importance than involvement in the subsistence or reproductive sphere (the creation of use values). The former is usually considered to be the domain of men and the latter to be the purview of women (Molyneux, 1979; Sen, 1983). The overall status of those engaged in wage earning, self-employment, cash cropping and so on is generally considered to be higher than those confined to the domestic sector.

Thus, in conventional economics, the term production is used in reference to remunerated work in the market or subsistence agricultural production. Both are defined as economic activity in distinction to reproduction, which is understood to include the conversion of crops and wages into usable goods in the home. All such activities at home, much

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of it done by women, are included under consumption, and a clear distinction is made between production which takes place in the market and reproduction in the home. National accounting systems, even in developing countries, have been modeled on market economics and therefore, households in these countries have been characterized as consumption or reproduction units. The applicability of concepts of economic activity to rural conditions has been questioned given the difficulties of separating production and reproduction in non-wage situations (Mies, 1982a, 1982b).

The domestic mode of production is basically patriarchal by nature. It includes that system of household labor in which the household members produce use values for direct consumption or accumulation within the household. It is an exploitative mode of production, because the labor is almost wholly produced by the female dependents within the household and because the male head of household is expropriating surplus labor when he consumes the use values produced by his dependents. He benefits from this relation of exploitation, both in the use values he appropriates and, on the leisure, time resulting from the necessary labor time he relinquishes. As for any other mode, the domestic mode of production should be understood to include not only the direct relations of production and expropriation, but also other social and ideological activities necessary to sustain and reproduce the domestic mode of production (Hartmann, 1979; Molyneux, 1981). Hence, those in the working class of the domestic mode of production are interpreted as 'dependents' and those in the leisure class as 'heads of households'. But it does not mean that household subordinates are really or normatively dependent on their household heads. In a sense, of course, the relations of dependency are actually the reverse, since leisure classes are always more dependent for their survival on the support of producing classes than vice versa.

#### **12.3.4 The Interlinkage between Production and Reproduction**

Reproduction is one of the central concepts of Marx's political economy. The major part of his analysis is devoted to understanding how it takes place in the capitalist mode of production specifically. In general, Marx means, by reproduction, an ongoing process of production by which a society each day, simultaneously:

- a) Replaces the material goods which it has consumed;
- b) Puts back into its stock of productive capital (that is, means of production) at least as much as has been depreciated; and
- c) Reinforces or recreates the institutional structure (relations of production) by once again perpetuating the work role experiences of the past into the present.

Every act of production is necessarily, at the same time, an act of social and economic reproduction. The relation of patriarchal household to capitalist firm is not that reproduction takes place in the former and

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production in the latter. Both are, at the same time, productive and reproductive organizations. The social and economic reproduction that takes place in the household could not have happened without the production that takes place at the same household. Likewise, capitalist production would be impossible without capitalist reproduction. Whatever the articulation between these two modes of production, it is nothing so simple, as the idea persists that households do the reproduction for capitalism (Barrett, 1980; Beneria, 1979).

For the clear understanding of the 'relations of reproduction', it is essential to understand the 'relations of production'. It is impossible to have a notion of production which does not involve reproduction. It is important to understand the interrelationship between the two as part of a single process and consider the ways in which these have been historically transformed. Marxist economists thus define labour as the ultimate resource, and labour is seen to create either use value or exchange value. For them, production refers to labour used to create exchange value in the market and reproduction refers to labour used to create use value in the home. Here, the term reproduction refers to biological reproduction as well as the reproduction of maintenance of the labour force and includes household 'production' of use value, that is, goods and services for immediate consumption in the home. So, home is considered as both a unit of consumption and reproduction (Hartmann, 1976; Mackintosh, 1977).

**12.3.5 Some of the major problems modern women are still facing mentioned below**

***12.3.5.1 Violence against women***

Women are getting affected by violence almost every day which is disrupting the society. Women are being victims of violence at huge level day by day because of increasing crimes against women (according to the report of Crime Record Bureau of the Central Home Ministry). Woman is getting kidnapped at every 44 minutes, raped at every 47 minutes, 17 dowry deaths every day, etc. They may face violence within the family or outside the family.

***12.3.5.2 Gender discrimination:***

Women are considered as weaker section of the society than men and given less importance. Girls' children are becoming real victims of the discrimination. There are also discrimination of power and work between men and women because of the patriarchal system families in India. Gender discrimination affects women in the areas like nutrition, education, health, care, decline of female population, job, public life, etc.

***12.3.5. Employment:***

Women are getting more problems in searching their suitable work. They become more prone to the exploitation and harassment in the work areas. They are given more work and hard tasks by their boss

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intentionally. They have to prove their devotion, seriousness and sincerity towards work time to time. They have to live whole life with fear of divorce. In some cases, they have to finish their life because of unbearable conditions.

**12.3.5.4 Dowry system:**

Dowry system is another huge problem in the society which is increasing day by day. Women are ill-treated, man-handled, disrespected, tortured and suffer other cruelties (violence, murder and suicide) because of the lack of dowry at the time of marriage. It causes degradation of women status to a great extent.

**12.3.5.5 The Debate over Reproductive Right:**

There is one fundamental difference between men and women: women can give birth. The debate over reproductive rights circles around birth control and abortion. Since "The Pill" was approved for contraceptive use in 1960 and the Supreme Court took on *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, reproduction rights have been a very big issue. Today, the abortion issue is the hotter topic of the two with pro-life supporters vying against those who are pro-choice. With each new president and Supreme Court nominee or case, the headlines get moving again. It is, indeed, one of the most controversial topics in America. It's also important to remember that this is also one of the hardest decisions any woman may face.

**12.3.5.6 Life Changing Realities of Teen Pregnancy:**

A related issue for women is the reality of teen pregnancy. It has always been a concern and, historically, young women would often be shunned or placed in hiding and forced to give up their babies. We tend to not be as harsh today, but it does pose its challenges. The good news is that teen pregnancy rates have been in steady decline since the early 90s. In 1991, 612.8 in every 1000 teen girls became pregnant and by 2014, that number dropped to just 24.2. Abstinence education and access to birth control are two of the factors that have led to this drop.

**12.3.5.7 The Cycle of Domestic Abuse:**

Domestic violence is another top concern for women, though this issue affects men as well. It's estimated that 1.3 million women and 835,000 men are physically assaulted by their partners each year. Even teen dating violence is more prevalent than many would hope to admit. Abuse and violence do not come in a single form, either. From emotional and psychological abuse to sexual and physical abuse, this continues to be a growing problem. Domestic violence can happen to anyone, yet the most important thing is to ask for help. There are many myths surrounding this issue and one incident can lead to a cycle of abuse.

**12.3.5.8 The Betrayal of Cheating Partners:**

On the personal relationship front, cheating is an issue. While it's often not discussed outside of the home or a group of close friends, it is a concern for many women. Though we often associate this with men

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behaving badly, it is not exclusive to them and a number of women cheat as well. A partner who has sex with someone else damages the foundation of trust that intimate relationships are built on. Surprisingly, it's not often just about sex. Many men and women point to an emotional disconnect between them and their partners as the root cause. Whatever the underlying reason, it is no less devastating to find out that your husband, wife, or partner is having an affair.

**12.3.5.9 Safety and Security:**

In today's times, probably this is the biggest obstacle for women in India. The security blanket is at its thinnest thus making women hesitate to take on roles that demand long hours and interactions with a world of strangers. The rise of social crime and the need for safety pushes everything down the priority list when there is a demand to spend late hours at getting work going. While urban women are taking the plunge after much thought, the silver lining is when women from rural areas turn Entrepreneurs in their own small ways with things such as opening a small grocery store or something as simple as rearing cows to sell dairy products. A small step in the rural world can be a huge motivation in the urban one.

Despite these bottlenecks that most urban women face in India, there are many who have risen above them and built successful businesses. Communicating with the family and thinking the business idea out with a long-term sustainable plan can act as a key to succeed. Most important of all, developing an attitude to persevere despite all odds goes a long way in being successful.

**Check your progress-1**

**Note:** a. Write your answer in the space given below

b. Difference between production and reproduction

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## **12.4 HOUSEHOLD WORK**

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Household refers to a person or group of persons who occupy the same dwelling and do not have a usual place of residence elsewhere in Canada or abroad. The dwelling may be either a collective dwelling or a private dwelling. The household may consist of a family group such as a census family, of two or more families sharing a dwelling, of a group of unrelated persons or of a person living alone. Household members who are temporarily absent on reference day are considered part of their usual household.

Housework encompasses different tasks, the amounts and types of which depend on household size, composition, and cultural expectations. If children are present, caring for them is a primary household duty that brings with it a range of other housework tasks. Similarly, caring for

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aging parents is common and includes supplemental domestic responsibilities. People hire domestic help to do housework or to care for the young or old when they can afford to, but in most homes, the women of the household do these tasks without financial reward.

Woman in her life has heavier responsibilities than men. Double play of a woman today has not only responsibilities at home as a housewife, but also out of door as career woman. In a simple way, Suwondo (1981) suggests that roles of women are

a. Being member of a country in regard to civil rights and politics; it includes fair deal to female labor force participation, also called as external function.

b. Being a mother in a family and wife in the husband-wife household, also called as internal function.

These internal and external functions are foundation for woman, especially for those who have career, so woman has to be capable of managing roles to prevent two-side roles negligence. Negligence will bring imbalance when some women frequently prefers one role and leave the others. Therefore, woman who takes one role only is not so favorable for life establishment. For this reason, those outstanding and unbeatable women shall fight for meeting the challenge if they take both roles. However, there must be mutual understanding between husband and wife and they have to complement each other in their family.

Applicable tradition in Indonesia up to now indicates that it is not an obligation of married woman to work in formal area, but it depends on economic capacity and permission of the husband. On the basis of this tradition, relationship of husband and wife or relationship of woman and family may raise an issue if the woman is working.

#### **12.4.1 Difficulties faced by working women**

Working women faced many difficulties in their life.

First working women's need to maintain the healthier relationship between their husbands compares to mother those stay at house. After the long working hours as the wife they should organize meals and other works if in their house do not have maids.

These make them terribly tired. So, they are spending less time with their husband. Furthermore, from there create misunderstanding problems between both husband and wife. Finally, these problems end up with divorce if they do not get solution to these problems. According to (Ludovisi, 2011), one of main factor of family breakages is misunderstanding problems between working husband and wife. Moreover, working mothers also need give enough attention to their husbands in term of love to maintain the relationship between their husbands.

Next, the major problem the working mothers faced is more concern about their children than mothers who remain at home. The working mothers must make special arrangements such as day-care



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center or a reliable person to take care of their children. Working mothers looking for child care to their children because they want their children be comfortable, safety and healthy according to (Georgia Health Decision, 2007). In additionally, the working mothers although more worry about their children's health. For example, the working mothers cannot concentrate on their works if their children get sick. Besides, working mothers also feel anxious because of their absence can hurt their children's emotional. Therefore, the children get problems in their academic achievements.

#### **12.4.2 Implication in Household Chores and Work Family Conflict (WFC)**

Time required for household chores and caring for the family is one of the most important factors in the conflict coming from the family sphere, especially in families with children. So, the dual-income couples with children tend to have a greater number of conflicts between the partners and a higher level of stress than their counterparts without children (Michel and Hargis, 2008). From this point of view, the gender roles model assumes that the nature of the role demands differs in men and women, and these roles act as moderators of WFC (Barnett et al., 1995).

The highest level of family to work interference in women comes from the different implication of women and men in household chores, including the care of children. This different implication has been proven by various studies and research (Bianchi et al., 2000; Korabik, 2015; Borelli et al., 2017) and still persists in society as has been found in different surveys (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2014; Eurobarometer, 2015).

In concrete, this model keeps very persistent in Spain, where women spend almost double the amount of time on unpaid work as men (National Institute of Statistics (INE), 2018). This time is spent on activities such as caring for children (38 h a week woman versus 23 men) or family members (20 h women versus 14 men) or household chores (20 h women versus 11 men). So although women have begun to strongly form part of the labor force and to spend more time with their children taking care of them, they neither assume a decrease in their salary as much as women do for work interruptions due to family issues nor stay at home to take care of their children (Gerstel and Sarkisian, 2006). Most men still maintain full involvement in their work because their feminine couple assumes the responsibility for caring their children. Thus, we can deduce that women will suffer more by the interference of the family at work, because their greater involvement in the family will can subtract them time, strength and dedication to their work; however, men will suffer more by the interference of work in the family. In fact, a high implication in the family sphere has been shown linked to a higher family-to-work interference only in women (Hammer et al., 1997).

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**Check your progress-2**

**Note:** a. Write your answer in the space given below

b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit

i. Define household work.

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**12.5 INVISIBLE WORK**

Invisible work includes tasks or obligations that others take for granted or fail to understand. The forever unfolding to-do list that most women carry in their heads is a major cause of women’s depression, anxiety, and eventual burn out. It is driven by cultural bias. It is called invisible work. Here are some common examples:

**Childcare** (a mother is “looking after” her children; a father is “babysitting” mother is considered the default caregiver and must ask for time away from her children whereas the father is more free to come and go as he pleases)

**Emotional caregiving** (everything from helping family members discuss and regulate feelings, coordinating gifts and holiday plans that maintain friendships and family relationships, to “coloring within the lines” and following a script about what it means to be feminine [aka, beautiful, pleasing, thin, and kind])

**Household work** (also known as “the second shift”– even with modern men taking on more of the household work, they are still doing far less than 50% on average)

**12.5.1 The Invisible labour of Women**

There was a time when women used to handle the home, and the men would go out to work. Now even though more and more women are joining the workforce, they’re still the ones taking care of the house. And while men may be willing to help out, women are still the ones planning and organizing everything. She’s the one who cooks, receives the guests, serves the food, cleans the teacups, oh and also bathes the children. All of this increases the burden on women and contributes to their mental load.

Be it at home, at work or in the society, women are always seen juggling multiple roles. They’re always focusing on everybody else’s needs, and this is because the rhetoric of selflessness has always been preached to women. From our religions to the films we watch, to the news, women are always held to a higher standard than men.

The concept of female selflessness has been trending for a long-time subjecting woman to carry the majority of the mental load. The only way we can and should lighten this mental load is by introducing and encouraging the concept of Peer Marriage. It is the kind of marriage where the partners agree to an equal division of all aspects of marriage.

### **12.5.2 Work and Inequality**

In the context of employment in the organized and unorganized sectors of the economy, it needs to be noted that

- A marginal 4 percent of women and 10 percent of men work in the formal sector.
- The share of organized sector jobs held by women increased from 12 percent in 1981 to 15 percent in 1995. Data from the Ministry of Labour show that the number of women in the organized sector increased from 28 lakhs in 1981 to 43 lakhs in 1995.
- Within the organized sector, 56.8 percent of women are in community, social and personal services, 17.7 percent in manufacturing and 5.2 percent in finance, insurance and real estate.
- Within urban areas, 46 percent of women work in the tertiary sector especially in domestic services and education.
- In rural areas, 86 percent of women are in agriculture, especially cereal crop production and animal husbandry. In the secondary sector they work in household industries such as beedi manufacture, cashew processing, coir products and processing of minor forest products.
- In rice cultivation for example, seeding, transplanting, weeding and threshing are women's jobs. Ploughing is done by men. In mining and quarrying they are engaged in stone quarrying as irregular casual workers. In the secondary sector in household industries they work as helpers. In construction work, men do the skilled work of brick laying while women mix mortar and carry head loads.
- Wages paid to women are lower than wages paid to men. In some villages where the husband is a permanent labourer, the wife works for the same employer without a contract.
- Activities which are in the male domain, such as ploughing, irrigation, leveling and so on are paid more. Those in the female domain, e.g., weeding, transplanting, winnowing etc. are paid less.
- Operations, which use machinery and draught animals, are performed by men. Operations, which demand direct manual labour, are performed by women.

#### **Check your progress-3**

**Note:** a. Write your answer in the space given below

- b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit
- i. What are the reasons for some statistical invisibility?

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*Self-Instructional Material*

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## **12.6 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

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Domestic violence is not physical violence alone. Domestic violence is any behavior the purpose of which is to gain power and control over a spouse, partner, girl/boyfriend or intimate family member. Abuse is a learned behavior; it is not caused by anger, mental problems, drugs or alcohol, or other common excuses.

The prevalence of domestic violence is arguably one of the top health concerns in the country. Understanding its definition can help you to take more effective action against its many manifestations of abuse. In some cases, abusers may not even realize that they're inflicting domestic violence on someone else. On the flipside, victims may not take action against their abusers if they don't realize that the behavior, they're experiencing is indeed domestic violence. Also important is that friends and loved ones of victims are in a better place to help if they understand what domestic violence looks like. Therefore, it's important that people understand the definition of domestic violence and the many forms it can take.

### **12.6.1 Types of Abuse**

When the general public thinks about domestic violence, they usually think in terms of physical assault that results in visible injuries to the victim. This is only one type of abuse. There are several categories of abusive behavior, each of which has its own devastating consequences. Lethality involved with physical abuse may place the victim at higher risk, but the long-term destruction of personhood that accompanies the other forms of abuse is significant and cannot be minimized. Many types of abuse are included in the definition of domestic violence:

#### ***12.6.1.1 Physical abuse***

Physical abuse can include hitting, biting, slapping, battering, shoving, punching, pulling hair, burning, cutting, pinching, etc. (any type of violent behavior inflicted on the victim). Physical abuse also includes denying someone medical treatment and forcing drug/alcohol use on someone.

#### ***12.6.1.2 Sexual abuse***

Sexual abuse occurs when the abuser coerces or attempts to coerce the victim into having sexual contact or sexual behavior without the victim's consent. This often takes the form of marital rape, attacking sexual body parts, physical violence that is followed by forcing sex, sexually demeaning the victim, or even telling sexual jokes at the victim's expense.

#### ***12.6.1.3 Emotional abuse***

Emotional abuse involves invalidating or deflating the victim's sense of self-worth and/or self-esteem. Emotional abuse often takes the form of constant criticism, name-calling, injuring the victim's

relationship with his/her children, or interfering with the victim's abilities.

#### **12.6.1.4 Economic abuse**

Economic abuse takes place when the abuser makes or tries to make the victim financially reliant. Economic abusers often seek to maintain total control over financial resources, withhold the victim's access to funds, or prohibit the victim from going to school or work.

#### **12.6.1.5 Psychological abuse**

Psychological abuse involves the abuser invoking fear through intimidation; threatening to physically hurt himself/herself, the victim, children, the victim's family or friends, or the pets; destruction of property; injuring the pets; isolating the victim from loved ones; and prohibiting the victim from going to school or work.

#### **12.6.1.6 Threats**

Threats to hit, injure, or use a weapon is a form of psychological abuse.

#### **12.6.1.7 Stalking**

Stalking can include following the victim, spying, watching, harassing, showing up at the victim's home or work, sending gifts, collecting information, making phone calls, leaving written messages, or appearing at a person's home or workplace. These acts individually are typically legal, but any of these behaviors done continuously results in a stalking crime.

#### **12.6.1.8 Cyber stalking**

Cyber stalking refers to online action or repeated emailing that inflicts substantial emotional distress in the recipient.

### **12.6.2 Violence against Women**

The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women defines "violence against women" as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. And identifies three forms of such violence: that which occurs in the family, that which occurs within the general community, and that which is perpetrated or condoned by the State. It also states that "violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women".

Violence against women remains a widespread problem, fueled, especially outside the West, by patriarchal social values, lack of adequate laws, and lack of enforcement of existing laws. Social norms that exist in many parts of the world hinder progress towards protecting women from violence.

Specific forms of violence that affect women include female genital mutilation, sex trafficking, forced prostitution, forced marriage, rape, sexual harassment, honor killings, acid throwing, and dowry related

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violence. Governments can be complicit in violence against women, for instance through practices such as stoning (as punishment for adultery).

### **12.6.3 Effects of violence against Women**

Violence against women can cause long-term physical and mental health problems. Violence and abuse affect not just the women involved but also their children, families, and communities. These effects include harm to an individual's health, possibly long-term harm to children, and harm to communities such as lost work and homelessness.

Victims of domestic violence may be physically injured. Physical injuries can include bruises, black eyes, cuts, scratches, broken bones, lost teeth, and burns. Injuries may prevent victims from going to work regularly, causing them to lose their job. Injuries, as well as the abusive situation, may cause embarrassment, causing victims to isolate themselves from family and friends.

Victims may develop symptoms that have no obvious physical cause. These symptoms can include headaches, abdominal or pelvic pain, and fatigue. Many victims also get sexually transmitted diseases and have problems during pregnancy. Victims may have to move often a financial burden to escape the perpetrator. Sometimes the perpetrator kills the victim.

Victims of domestic violence may develop depression, anxiety, or drug or alcohol abuse. They are in greatest danger of serious harm after their partner knows they have decided to leave. As a result of domestic violence, many victims have psychological problems.

For example, among battered women,

- About 50% have posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- About 60% have depression.

Many women develop depression and PTSD as a result of abuse. Battered women can also develop anxiety disorders, eating disorders and substance abuse. Domestic violence may also exacerbate symptoms of preexisting mental disorders. Women who are more severely battered are more likely to develop psychological problems.

Even when physical abuse decreases, psychological abuse often continues, reminding the woman that she can be physically abused at any time. Psychological abuse can be more damaging than physical abuse. Psychological abuse increases the risk of depression and substance abuse.

#### **Check your progress - 4**

**Note:** a. Write your answer in the space given below

b. Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit

i. Write about the violence against Women

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## **12.7 LET US SUM UP**

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In this unit, you will learn about the problem of women in production vs. reproduction, household work, invisible work and Domestic violence. The above concept will also help to gain knowledge about safety and security of women.

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## **12.8 UNIT – END EXERCISES**

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1. Discuss about the problems of women
2. What are the challenges faced by women?

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## **12.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

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1. The productive role is a role undertaken by men and women to get paid / wages in cash or to produce goods that are not consumed by themselves.
2. Reproductive role is a role that is associated with the responsibilities of child care and domestic tasks required to ensure the maintenance and reproduction of labor regarding the continuity of the family
3. Housework encompasses different tasks, the amounts and types of which depend on household size, composition, and cultural expectations. If children are present, caring for them is a primary household duty that brings with it a range of other housework tasks.
4. Statistical invisibility:
  - Bias of the interviewer.
  - Bias of male head of household/respondent.
  - Poorly constructed questionnaires.
5. Violence against women remains a widespread problem, fueled, especially outside the West, by patriarchal social values, lack of adequate laws, and lack of enforcement of existing laws.

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## **12.10 SUGGESTED READINGS**

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1. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/270671479\\_'Production'\\_and\\_'Reproduction'\\_in\\_Feminism\\_Ideas\\_Perspectives\\_and\\_Concepts](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/270671479_'Production'_and_'Reproduction'_in_Feminism_Ideas_Perspectives_and_Concepts)
2. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6086200/>
3. <https://feminisminindia.com/2017/09/04/unpaid-domestic-labour/>
4. <https://www.longdom.org/open-access/the-roles-of-woman-as-leader-and-housewife-2167-0374-1000125.pdf>

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*Self-Instructional Material*

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**UNIT- XIII**  
**WOMEN WORKS AND TECHNOLOGY.IMPACT  
OF DEVELOPMENT POLICY, LIBERALIZATION  
AND GLOBALISATION ON WOMEN**

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- 13.1 Introduction
- 13.2 Objectives
- 13.3 Women works and Technology
  - 13.3.1 ICT- Women Empowerment
    - 13.3.1.1 Knowledge acquisition
    - 13.3.1.2 Women's access to the internet
  - 13.3.2 Technological Tools-Women Empowerment
    - 13.3.2.1 Livelihoods
    - 13.3.2.2 Health
    - 13.3.2.3 e-Education
    - 13.3.2.4 Capacity building of Women
  - 13.3.3 Cultural Forces and Women in Technology
  - 13.3.4 Barriers to women in STEM and ICTs
- 13.4 Women Development Policy
  - 13.4.1 Health and Family Welfare:
    - 13.4.1.2 Food and Nutrition Security
    - 13.4.1.3 Education and Training
    - 13.4.1.4 Welfare and Development
    - 13.4.1.5 Women and Environment
  - 13.4.2 Economic Empowerment of women
  - 13.4.3 Social Empowerment of Women
  - 13.4.4 Schemes for achieving gender Equality and Emancipation of Rural Women
- 13.5 Liberalization on Women
- 13.6 Globalization
  - 13.6.1 Women & Globalisation
  - 13.6.2 Impact of Globalization
    - 13.6.3 Impact of Globalization on Females
  - 13.7 Conclusion

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**13.1 INTRODUCTION**

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Women's empowerment includes empowerment within the family and empowerment in the society. Involvement of women in decision making, earning, sharing of basic needs and commanding respect for self is a pre-requisite to the empowerment of women in modern society. Women are also required to participate actively in the process of development namely policy making, planning, implementing



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and evaluation along with their male counterpart. The raising social status of women, increasing educational opportunities, obtaining employment opportunities, sharing economic resources, raising of standard of living, active participation of women in governance and so on constitute the process of 'empowerment of women' in letter and spirit. In recent times, with the growing complexity of life, the tasks regarding women empowerment in relation with economic globalization have very much increased in both number and their worldwide significance. The present need of women empowerment with regard to economic globalization requires a thorough revision. The role of women in the employment scenario of India is increasing day by day. During the last fifty years, India has witnessed a positive transformation in women's employment, economic development and social awareness while retaining a great diversity in the political and social system. Analysis of their occupational structure shows that they are engaged in the activities of all the sectors of the economy in agriculture, industry, transport, communication and so on. But still there are some constraints, some restraints, some hurdles, some backlogs, some problems, some discrimination, some bias, some exploitation, some hesitation, some avoiding, some negligence and some ignorance which make all of us to think and analyze the social, economic and employment position of education and uneducated, rural and urban, poor and rich. Though they are in all sectors, their productive role is increasing, but still most of them are in an unsatisfactory status and are mostly in unorganized and informal sector of the economy.

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### **13.2 OBJECTIVES**

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- To acquire knowledge on women and technology
- To find out the impact of liberalization and globalization on women empowerment.
- To study about the impact of development policy for women in India

### **13.3 WOMEN WORKS AND TECHNOLOGY**

Technology revolution has not only opened up new opportunities for economic growth and social development but has also posed problems and challenges. It can shape and enhance wide range of developmental applications in agriculture, industry and social sectors and is influencing all sections of the society. ICT provides unique opportunities for human development. At the same time, ICT has been widening the gaps between and within countries, regions, gender while increasing disparities divide between the rural-urban, rich-poor, elite neglected and also within the different categories of women in various spheres of activity. It is necessary to build up women capacities to involve them in productive activities, institutional building, family and

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social transformation, decision-making process, political representation, trade and commerce, entrepreneurial development and social leadership. There is a need to enhance opportunities to women to enable them to own, manage and control industries and service enterprises including IT-based units. ICT has to address to all these problems of women as a whole and has to be used to facilitate to build a women empowered society. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has become a potent force in transforming social, economic, and political life globally. ICT can be an important tool in meeting women's basic needs and can provide the access to resources to lead women out of poverty. Women work two thirds of the world's total working hours spending mainly on growing food, cooking, raising children, caring for the elderly, maintaining a house, hauling water, etc. which is universally accorded low status and without pay.

**13.3.1 ICT- Women Empowerment**

Despite the numerous challenges to equity in the ICT arena, many social actors have exploited ICTs as tools for social transformation and gender equality. Women artisans are directly accessing global markets through e-commerce initiatives and are using the Internet to support their activities with market and production information. E-governance programmes have been initiated using ICTs for delivering government services; in some cases with an explicit strategy to ensure these services reach women and others who face barriers to access. Health educators have used the radio to communicate information related to women's sexual and reproductive health. Email, online newsletters have enabled women to communicate on a global scale, resulting in increased collaboration to push the agenda of gender equality. New technologies do offer remarkable advantages in terms of ease of communication, unprecedented possibilities for interaction, and efficiency in information storage and retrieval; however they are not universally available.

**13.3.1.1 Knowledge acquisition**

In today's developing environment usage of Information Technology has become a day-to-day activity which has exposed women to the new technologies, and hence are not difficult to be trained on them. It is observed that women in general have good concentration power owing to their nature of work, and hence are easily trained to acquire any new skills. As the women at lower strata are constrained to the homes, if we can get the technology to the women at home we will be sure to succeed in empowering them. NGO's and Government departments have to plan training programs, to provide the required skills and establish groups for the follow up action.

**13.3.1.2 Women's access to the internet**

The gender divide within the digital divide can be seen in the blower numbers of women users of ICTs compared to men. One illustration of this is the number of women Internet users. The majority

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of the world's women do not use the Internet. They are excluded from the World Wide Web. The digital divide within countries broadly reflects the gender divide. Women are in the minority of users in almost all developed and developing countries. The trend for differentiation in use starts early, as seen in the United States where boys are five times more likely than girls to use home computers and parents spend twice as much on ICT products for their sons as they do for their daughters. It is extremely difficult to get data on use by gender by country for developing countries.

### **13.3.2 Technological Tools-Women Empowerment**

#### **13.3.2.1 Livelihoods**

New Technology provides opportunities to reorganize economic activities in ways that can bypass the traditional dependence of women producers on male-dominated and exploitative market structures, including “middle-men”. In many places, initiatives are being tried that link women artisans directly to global markets through the Internet, as well as support their activities with market and production information. The ‘Inter-city Marketing Network of Women Entrepreneurs’ project in Chennai, India has set up a communication network among women’s community-based organizations (CBOs) to market their produce. The CBOs are provided with cellular phones, and women have been trained to maximize the use of telephones for selling not only in their immediate neighborhoods but also reaching new markets within the city. The impact is that poor women from CBOs constrained by pressures of time and mobility are able to assess and aggregate market demand by trading through their peer CBOs, and evolve cost-effective mechanisms to increase business turnover by making the most of business networking.

#### **13.3.2.2 Health**

The technologies are being successfully used in many places for information dissemination about health. The Self Employed Women’s Association (SEWA), a trade union of women workers from the informal sector in India uses video to convey basic health information to its women members. Women themselves have produced video footage on how to address diarrhea through oral rehydration therapy, and they distribute this through their networks. New ICTs can also play a critical role in health delivery. They can enable health education and information dissemination; bring communities and health facilities closer to each other through regular and systematic information exchange, and offer simple solutions for collecting and analyzing information about disease and health-seeking behavior to help health interventions become more locally relevant.

#### **13.3.2.3 e-Education**

ICTs like satellite, radio and TV offer many possibilities for non-formal and continued education, which can have important gender

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implications. They can deliver education content to the doorstep, which, for women with constraints on mobility and access to public places, can be a significant starting point. Technologies are being used the world over for open and distance learning. In India, computers are being introduced in schools, as a tool to support the learning process and ICT interventions is a precondition to ensure equal access and effective use by girl students of computers in the classroom environment. ICT is a viable tool of information and communication which goes a long way in empowerment of women. Apart from being used as a tool of information and communication and employment, application of ICT has created avenues for women empowerment.

**13.3.2.4 Capacity building of Women**

Several organizations are building the capacities of girls and women to make ICTs accessible and useful to them. At one level, girls and women are being provided general training in ICTs for ICT-related jobs; at another, women in business, women entrepreneurs and women in the professions, are systematically being supported for skill enhancement, career growth and greater work efficiency.

**13.3.3 Cultural Forces and Women in Technology**

India's high attrition rate can be traced back to many of the same issues that women face across the world — unconscious bias, stereotyping and the difficulty to find work-life balance. But other deeply ingrained cultural factors make it particularly difficult for Indian women to stay and thrive in the technology field. Recently an Indian laundry detergent kicked off a conversation about these cultural challenges with their advertising campaign, In the video ad, a father watches his daughter juggle — literally and figuratively — her responsibilities around work, her marriage, children plus all the household chores. He reflects on this steadfast stereotype that Indian women must perfectly balance career, family and social responsibilities, and how he has perpetuated this stereotype in his own family.

This ad, which has more than 1 million views, captures the unique cultural challenges Indian women face (in and out of the tech industry).It's this societal pressure to be the sole family caretaker while single handedly managing the home that prevents many Indian women from staying and thriving in technical roles. It's true that women are underrepresented in technology all over the world – but the hurdles Indian women face are deeply tied to the social structure and expectations that are intrinsic to India's culture.

**13.3.4. Barriers to women in STEM and ICTs**

**Gender-science stereotypes:**

Most people associate science and math fields with “male” and humanities and arts fields with “female”. Men are stereotypically considered as more competent than women in technology, engineering,

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and innovation. Such stereotypes can lower girls' aspirations for science and engineering careers from an early age, as many young women and girls believe that they need to be exceptional to succeed in these "male" fields. This creates even greater barriers for women who want to pursue leadership positions, as leadership behaviors that depend on the task-oriented "take charge" traits of men were categorized as "masculine", and women are often regarded as not capable or not interested in reaching higher ranks.

**Biases in recruiting, promoting and evaluating processes:**

Currently, the recruitment, promotion and evaluation in most innovation, technology and entrepreneurship businesses are either gender-blind or rely heavily on informal networks (online social networking, personal referrals, or word-of-mouth communication), prioritizing the status quo groups and putting women at a disadvantage.

**Lack of access to flexible schedules and work-life policies:**

As women are still the main caregivers of the family, difficulty to balance work and family responsibilities is another hindrance to innovative and entrepreneurial activities by women. The reality, however, is that flexible work schedules are technically available, but managers (predominantly men) make accessing them difficult, either through their authority or through informal comments.

**Lack of role models for female innovators and entrepreneurs:**

As many as 40 percent of US women in science, engineering and technology jobs reported lacking role models - nearly half reported lacking mentors, and 84 percent reported lacking sponsors. This makes it more difficult for women to access informal peer networks for advice, contacts and support and to navigate "unwritten" company rules and norms that link with the recruiting, promoting and evaluating process mentioned above.

**Check your progress-1**

Note: Write your answer in the space given below

1. Write About Role of ICT In Women Empowerment

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**13.4 WOMEN DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

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Women are thus precluded from equitable enjoyment and participation in personal and communal growth, as well as access to the fruits of their production. *Shared Prosperity* investigates the financial realities of Indian women, and how their fiscal circumstances affect India's economy. How does gender inequality stunt India's economic progress? How do women contribute to India's growth, and by what means can these contributions be maximized through increased gender equality measures? These are the overarching questions *Shared Prosperity* tackles. Through examination of relationships and

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connections between unpaid labour, education, literacy, informal/unorganized employment, and lack of access to economic resources (such as land ownership rights), to women's prosperity outcomes and, by extension, national economic advancement, the result of this research provides an overview of Indian women's economic positions, as well as policy proposals toward improved economic results for Indian women and India as a whole. *Shared Prosperity* analyzes aspects of Indian women's current prosperity as well as the potential economic impact reform can have for Indian women, and moves on to propose broad policy recommendations to enhance Indian women's prosperity. The conclusion outlines how increased equality for women and girls will make India a more productive and prosperous country.

Empowerment in its broadest sense is the expansion of freedom of choice and action meaning thereby increasing one's authority and control over the resources and decisions that affect one's life. As people exercise real choice, they gain increased control over their lives. The choices of disadvantaged groups including women are extremely limited, both by their lack of assets and by their powerlessness to negotiate better terms for themselves with a range of institutions, both formal and informal. Since powerlessness is embedded in the nature of institutional relations, empowerment is thus the expansion of assets and capabilities of the target group to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives. India is among the few developing countries where gender equality and improvement in the status of women are specifically stated to be central goals of development and social policy

#### **13.4.1.1 Health and Family Welfare**

While taking note of the importance of the Life-Cycle Approach adopted in the Ninth Plan for meeting the health needs of the target groups viz. women, mothers, the adolescent girls and the Girl Child, the Tenth Plan proposed to improve the accessibility and utilisation of services of primary health care and family welfare with a special focus on the under-served and under-privileged segments of population through universalizing RCH services. The other effective measures to continue in this direction proposed to be focused on the essential obstetric care through early registration of pregnancy and screening of all pregnant women at least thrice during this period to detect risk factors; identification and management of high risk mothers; appropriate management of anaemia and hyper-tension disorders; providing referral care to 'at-risk' mothers and to ensure safe delivery. Services for the prevention, detection and management of RTIs and STIs will also continue as a priority area and as part of the essential RCH care.

#### **13.4.1.2 Food and Nutrition Security**

Recognizing the fact that women also deserve a life-cycle approach in respect of nutrition as they face high-risk with the problems

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of under/malnutrition and the resultant deficiencies and diseases during the critical stages of infancy, childhood, adolescence and motherhood. Therefore, all the direct and indirect nutritional supplementary feeding programmes were reinforced with necessary support services like health check-ups, immunisation, ante-natal and post-natal care, health and nutrition education and awareness etc., so as to achieve the goals set in the National Nutrition Policy. Also, the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) also proposed to be streamlined as a support system for household food security.

**13.4.1.3 Education and Training**

Through the specially targeted programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), launched in 2000, efforts are being made to reach the un-reached women and the girl child. To achieve the set goal of 'Education for Women's Equality' as advocated by the National Policy on Education, 1986 (revised in 1992) steps are proposed to be initiated to remove gender bias and stereo-types in the curricula, textbooks and learning material; create a gender-sensitive educational system; promote gender sensitization of teachers on a regular basis; appoint more women teachers at primary level (at least 90 per cent); reduce drop-out rates and increase enrolment and retention rates of girl children through special incentives like free supply of uniforms, text books, mid-day meals, scholarships, flexible school timings and attached hostels and crèches; and improve the quality of education besides facilitating life-long learning through correspondence courses, distance learning and self-study programmes for women and girls who drop out from the formal system of schooling. Simultaneously, plan also envisaged to encourage eligible women/girls with suitable incentives to join vocational education/training so that the facilities available both at the general/ exclusive Training Institutions for women are utilised optimally.

**13.4.1.4 Welfare and Development**

Plan proposes to expedite implementation of 'Swadhar' – an innovative intervention for 'Women in Difficult Circumstances' with a special focus on the rehabilitation of sex workers, women/girls offered to temples, viz. devadasis, basvis, jogins, women/girls in social and moral danger, destitute/young/elderly widows; single women in difficult circumstances; women-headed households; displaced women

Plan envisages to address the need for a well-planned media strategy not merely for bringing about a massive awareness and education on the gender issues but also for preventing derogatory, demeaning and degrading portrayals of women in the media. Private sector partners and media networks will be involved at all levels to ensure equal access for women particularly in the area of information and communication technologies.

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### **13.4.1.5 Women and Environment**

It is proposed to involve women in propagating the use of solar energy, biogas, and other rural applications so that these measures could have both visible and viable impact in influencing the eco-system and also in changing the lifestyles of rural women. Horticulture, small animal husbandry, poultry, fisheries etc. reach women in proportion to their numbers.

### **13.4.2 Economic Empowerment of women**

Organizing women into Self-Help Groups under various poverty alleviation programmes, viz.Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY), Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK), Support for Training and Employment Programme (STEP), Trainingcum-Production Centers for Women (NORAD) etc. and offering them a range of economic options along with necessary support measures to enhance their capabilities and earning capacities with an ultimate objective of making them economically independent and self-reliant.

Ensuring that women in the Informal Sector who account for more than 90 per cent are given special attention with regard to improving their working conditions as the same continued to be very precarious without even minimum or equal wages, leave aside other legislative safeguardsSince women comprise the majority of the population below the poverty line and are very often in situations of extreme poverty, given the harsh realities of intra-household and social discrimination, macroeconomic policies and poverty eradication programmes will specifically address the needs and problems of such women.

### **Women and Agriculture**

In view of the critical role of women in the agriculture and allied sectors, as producers, concentrated efforts will be made to ensure that benefits of training, extension and various programmes will reach them in proportion to their numbers. The programmes for training women in soil conservation, social forestry, dairy development and other occupations allied to agriculture like horticulture, livestock including small animal husbandry, poultry, fisheries etc. will be expanded to benefit women workers in the agriculture sector.

### **Women and Industry**

The important role played by women in electronics, information technology and food processing and agro industry and textiles has been crucial to the development of these sectors. They would be given comprehensive support in terms of labour legislation, social security and



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other support services to participate in various industrial sectors. Women at present cannot work in night shift in factories even if they wish to. Suitable measures will be taken to enable women to work on the night shift in factories. This will be accompanied with support services for security, transportation etc.

### **Support Services**

The provision of support services for women, like child care facilities, including crèches at work places and educational institutions, homes for the aged and the disabled will be expanded and improved to create an enabling environment and to ensure their full cooperation in social, political and economic life. Women-friendly personnel policies will also be drawn up to encourage women to participate effectively in the developmental process.

### **13.4.3 Social Empowerment of Women**

Equal access to education for women and girls will be ensured. Special measures will be taken to eliminate discrimination, universalize education, eradicate illiteracy, create a gender-sensitive educational system, increase enrolment and retention rates of girls and improve the quality of education to facilitate life-long learning as well as development of occupation/vocation/technical skills by women. Reducing the gender gap in secondary and higher education would be a focus area. Sectoral time targets in existing policies will be achieved, with a special focus on girls and women, particularly those belonging to weaker sections including the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes/Other Backward Classes/Minorities. Gender sensitive curricula would be developed at all levels of educational system in order to address sex stereotyping as one of the causes of gender discrimination.

### **Health**

A holistic approach to women's health which includes both nutrition and health services will be adopted and special attention will be given to the needs of women and the girl at all stages of the life cycle. The reduction of infant mortality and maternal mortality, which are sensitive indicators of human development, is a priority concern. This policy reiterates the national demographic goals for Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) set out in the National Population Policy 2000. Women should have access to comprehensive, affordable and quality health care. Measures will be adopted that take into account the reproductive rights of women to enable them to exercise informed choices, their vulnerability to sexual

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and health problems together with endemic, infectious and communicable diseases such as malaria, TB, and water borne diseases as well as hypertension and cardio-pulmonary diseases. The social, developmental and health consequences of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases will be tackled from a gender perspective. The use of Indian and alternative systems of medicine will be enhanced within the framework of overall health infrastructure available for women.

### **Nutrition**

In view of the high risk of malnutrition and disease that women face at all the three critical stages viz., infancy and childhood, adolescent and reproductive phase, focused attention would be paid to meeting the nutritional needs of women at all stages of the life cycle. This is also important in view of the critical link between the health of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women with the health of infant and young children. Special efforts will be made to tackle the problem of macro and micro nutrient deficiencies especially amongst pregnant and lactating women as it leads to various diseases and disabilities. Widespread use of nutrition education would be made to address the issues of intra-household imbalances in nutrition and the special needs of pregnant and lactating women.

### **Housing and Shelter**

Women's perspectives will be included in housing policies, planning of housing colonies and provision of shelter both in rural and urban areas. Special attention will be given for providing adequate and safe housing and accommodation for women including single women, heads of households, working women, students, apprentices and trainees.

### **Environment**

Women will be involved and their perspectives reflected in the policies and programmes for environment, conservation and restoration. Considering the impact of environmental factors on their livelihoods, women's participation will be ensured in the conservation of the environment and control of environmental degradation. The vast majority of rural women still depends on the locally available non-commercial sources of energy such as animal dung, crop waste and fuel wood. In order to ensure the efficient use of these energy resources in an environmental friendly manner, the Policy will aim at promoting the programmes of non-conventional energy resources. Women will be involved in spreading the use of solar energy, biogas, smokeless chulahs and other rural application so as to have a visible impact of these

measures in influencing eco system and in changing the life styles of rural women.

### **Science and Technology**

Programmes will be strengthened to bring about a greater involvement of women in science and technology. These will include measures to motivate girls to take up science and technology for higher education and also ensure that development projects with scientific and technical inputs involve women fully. Efforts to develop a scientific temper and awareness will also be stepped up. Special measures would be taken for their training in areas where they have special skills like communication and information technology. Efforts to develop appropriate technologies suited to women's needs as well as to reduce their drudgery will be given a special focus too.

### **Women in Difficult Circumstances**

In recognition of the diversity of women's situations and in acknowledgement of the needs of specially disadvantaged groups, measures and programmes will be undertaken to provide them with special assistance. These groups include women in extreme poverty, destitute women, women in conflict situations, women affected by natural calamities, women in less developed regions, the disabled widows, elderly women, single women in difficult circumstances, women heading households, those displaced from employment, migrants, women who are victims of marital violence, deserted women and prostitutes etc.

### **Violence against women**

All forms of violence against women, physical and mental, whether at domestic or societal levels, including those arising from customs, traditions or accepted practices shall be dealt with effectively with a view to eliminate its incidence. Institutions and mechanisms/schemes for assistance will be created and strengthened for prevention of such violence, including sexual harassment at work place and customs like dowry; for the rehabilitation of the victims of violence and for taking effective action against the perpetrators of such violence. A special emphasis will also be laid on programmes and measures to deal with trafficking in women and girls.

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## **Rights of the Girl Child**

All forms of discrimination against the girl child and violation of her rights shall be eliminated by undertaking strong measures both preventive and punitive within and outside the family. These would relate specifically to strict enforcement of laws against prenatal sex selection and the practices of female foeticide, female infanticide, child marriage, child abuse and child prostitution etc. Removal of discrimination in the treatment of the girl child within the family and outside and projection of a positive image of the girl child will be actively fostered. There will be special emphasis on the needs of the girl child and earmarking of substantial investments in the areas relating to food and nutrition, health and education, and in vocational education. In implementing programmes for eliminating child labour, there will be a special focus on girl children.

## **Mass Media**

Media will be used to portray images consistent with human dignity of girls and women. The Policy will specifically strive to remove demeaning, degrading and negative conventional stereotypical images of women and violence against women. Private sector partners and media networks will be involved at all levels to ensure equal access for women particularly in the area of information and communication technologies. The media would be encouraged to develop codes of conduct, professional guidelines and other self regulatory mechanisms to remove gender stereotypes and promote balanced portrayals of women and men.

### **13.4.3.1 Schemes for achieving gender Equality and Emancipation of Rural Women**

The Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing various schemes/ programmes for achieving gender equality and emancipation of women including rural women such as:

- i. **BetiBachaoBetiPadhao (BBBP):** to address the declining Child Sex Ratio (CSR) and related issues of empowerment of women over a life-cycle continuum. It is a tri-ministerial effort of Ministries of Women and Child Development, Health & Family Welfare and Human Resource Development. .
- ii. **Pradhan MantriMatruVandanaYojana (PMMVY),** (erstwhile Maternity Benefit Programme) to contribute towards better enabling environment by providing cash incentives for improved health and nutrition to pregnant and nursing mothers.

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- iii. **Scheme for Adolescent Girls** aims at girls in the age group 11-14, to empower and improve their social status through nutrition, life skills, home skills and vocational training.
- iv. **National Nutrition Mission (NNM)**: aims to attain a "Suposhit Bharat" and has also the objective of improving the nutritional status of pregnant women and lactating mothers and reducing anaemia among women along with children.
- v. **Rastriya Mahila Kosh (RMK)**, for extending micro-finance services to bring about socio-economic upliftment of poor women,
- vi. **Mahila e-Haat**, a unique direct online digital marketing platform for women entrepreneurs/ SHGs/ NGOs,
- vii. **Pradhan Mantri Mahila Shakti Kendra**, which will empower rural women through community participation to create an environment in which they realize their full potential,
- viii. The Ministry also conducts **Training of Trainers of Elected Women Representatives of Panchayati Raj** to deliberate upon issues related to empowerment of women and functioning of PRIs; describe processes of participatory planning in local governance; and enable women to identify their own leadership potential to contribute effectively as change agents.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing various schemes/programmes for combating all forms of discrimination and violence against women in the country including rural women such as:

- i. **One Stop Centres (OSCs)**: for facilitating access to an integrated range of services including police, medical, legal, psychological support and temporary shelter to women affected by violence.
- ii. **Women Helpline**: to provide women with a 24x7 service, Women Helplines with the uniform code 181 have been set up across the country. These Helplines provide 24 hour emergency response to women affected by violence, and also provide counselling through phone and awareness about government schemes.
- iii. **Mahila Police Volunteers**: The Ministry has recently started the engagement of Mahila Police Volunteers (MPVs) in States/UTs. These MPVs will act as a link between police and community and facilitate women in distress.
- iv. **Swadhar Greh**: this scheme caters to primary needs of women in difficult circumstances.
- v. **Ujjwala**: a comprehensive scheme to prevent trafficking of women and children for commercial sexual exploitation, to

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facilitate rescue victims and placing them in safe custody, to provide rehabilitation services by providing basic amenities/needs, to facilitate reintegration of victims into the family and society, to facilitate repatriation

**Check your progress-2**

Note: Write your answer in the space given below

1. Write About Critical Area Of Women Development Policy.

**13.5 LIBERALIZATION ON WOMEN**

In the context of increasing contribution of developing countries in world trade, an important question is whether trade can be used as an instrument to stimulate higher participation of women in the labour market? Trade and industrial liberalization undertaken during the 1990s and 2000s marked the end of India's nearly four decade experiment with state directed, heavy industry based, and import substituting industrialization. In this context, we analyse the role of various trade and technology related factors in determining female employment intensity (FEI), in a panel of India's manufacturing industries for the period 1998-2008. We find that import tariff rates exert a negative effect on FEI, supporting the hypothesis that firms, when exposed to international competition, tend to reduce costs by substituting male with female workers. By contrast, greater use of new technology and capital intensive production biases the gender composition of workforce against females. Liberalization has not led to large growth of female employment in India's organized manufacturing sector because the resource reallocation effect has not been strong enough to offset the negative technology effect. India has pursued a policy of economic liberalisation over the past decade. In marked contrast to the post independence developmental strategy of self-reliant economic growth the current reforms are aimed at making the economy more efficient through increased market orientation. The central strategy is to secure a greater share of the global market in industry, trade and services through increased productivity. A growing numbers of global corporations are now established in India. They offer new employment opportunities to the emerging middle classes, which is said to have expanded as a result of the globalisation of the economy (Lakha 1999). While a number of scholars have explored emergent middle class Indian femininities precipitated by practices of consumption (John 1998; Munshi 1998; Mankekar 1999), the ambiguous and contradictory impacts of globalisation on women remain under.

**13.6 GLOBALIZATION**

Globalization is a multi-dimensional phenomenon. Globalization means opening up the economy to facilitate its integration with the world economy. In such a situation it becomes easy to sell goods and services world over and also acquire the same from anywhere

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in the world. The term “Globalization” has been widely used in 1960’s in the Western World and in India in 1990. It is a controversial term and has been defined in several different ways. Globalization indicates that the world today is more interconnected than before. According to Advered S. Herman, “*Globalisation is the expansion across international borders of management and process. At the same time, it is a condition of facilities and economic relation which is constantly expanding and it’s simultaneously changing.*” The Constitution of India guarantees equality of sexes and in fact grants special favours to women. These can be found in three articles (Article 14, Article 15 (3) and Articles 15 (A)(e) All these are fundamental rights. Therefore, a woman can go to the court if one is subjected to any discrimination. The most important issues stand as those pertaining to marriage, children, abortion, crimes against women, and inheritance. Crimes like rape, kidnapping, eve teasing and indecent exposure can be grouped as crimes against women. The roles of women in India have been changing and they are now emerging from the past traditions into a new era of freedom and rights. The basic objective of this paper is to examine the changing role of women due to globalization in Indian society. This concern is not merely academic but is central to the process of emerging development in India. There is a need to evaluate the impact of globalization on women in India and also to know the positive and negative impacts of it on the position of women in India at present. India today, a country where women are becoming more prominent, yet increasing numbers, women are fighting long-standing prejudices. Women still faces enormous pressure to conform to social mores - conforming to traditional roles within families poses as much of a barrier to businesswomen in India as the still-too-thick glass ceiling at companies. Though women have made great strides in the corporate world in the last three decades, women from all income classes are still too often discouraged by family members from having careers that infringe too much on family life.

Within the past two decades, globalization has had a huge impact on the lives of women in developing nations. Globalization may be denoted as a complex economic, political, cultural, and geographic process in which the mobility of capital, organizations, ideas, discourses, and peoples has taken a global or transnational form. The global economic institutions are seen to be privileging western culture and political norms, and present them as models of the rest of the world, while ignoring and marginalizing women’s indigenous movements in the Global South. Recent feminist’s philosophers contend that neo-liberalism prioritizes on economic growth, efficiency, and profit making over other values such as the promotion of economic justice and enhancing democracy and good governance.

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### **13.6.1 Women & Globalisation**

The current wave of globalization has greatly improved the lives of women worldwide, particularly the lives of those women in the developing world. Nevertheless, women remain disadvantaged in many areas of life including education, employment, health and civil rights. In particular care for women during maternity is still lacking in many parts of the world. Approximately 529000 women die annually during pregnancy and childbirth (Gender statistics 2010). Countries with the lowest maternal mortality rate (deaths per 100000 live births) includes Estonia (2), Singapore (3) and Greece (3) while the highest mortality rates can be found in Chad (1100), Somalia (1000) and sierra Leone (890) (CIA world fact book ). To help remedy worldwide gender disparities, the UN's millennium development goals prioritize gender equality and empowerment of women. Politicians and scientists stress the opportunities of an international division of labor in order to increase the prosperity of nations and of individuals (Lafontaine 1997). Are, however opportunities distributed equally along gender lines?

In the industrialized countries, the process of globalization bears a different impact on women than on men. Nevertheless, they are not affected as a group, but in different ways according to their class and ethnicity. More women than men belong to temporary staff. Those, who drop out of gainful employment, are also predominantly women. Already in seventies, the international division of labor was accelerated by transferring labor intensive steps of production of the clothing and electronic industries from the industrial nations of the north to the countries of south. Thus, cost of wages and additional wage costs were reduced step by step in the highly industrialized countries. This happened already at the expense of jobs for women, as labor intensive production was and still is performed predominantly by the female gender. Often this is called "remaining work" that could not yet be replaced by machines, at least not more cost effectively than women do. Women work in "low wage countries" for a lower wage, as the name already points out, local companies lead by these low wages. They are also interested in saving.

### **13.6.2 Impact of Globalization on women**

The word 'Globalization' has been correlated with main sectors of modifications that have taken to a merchandizing revolution of the world sequence. At a governmental stage the method of free trade and liberalization has taken to a possible reduction of region and a normal diminution of state and a general expectation that all regions everywhere should move towards more democracy and protection 'improved governance' towards their society. At the stage of the finances, development has been connected with the movement towards growing



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financial liberalization. This has been shown in deregulation and more free trade workers, improved and economic markets. Particularly, in the inferior and advancing nations, females have been overwhelmed by development, due to no job, extended work hours, emigration, household issues, child labour and governmental contribution. These are the most augmentable impacts of the upcoming international economy. At its most comprehensive, the universal 'concept' has been given as a indeterminate globe, in which domestic financial limits or national economic boundaries are disappearing and all nations are corporate into a united world sequence. The conclusion is an 'interlinked economy' in which there is unrestrained exchange of money, humans, products, services and knowledge, and where domestic administration is replaced by world government (Ohmae, 1990). More evaluations of the impact of development in particularly advancing nations have come from effects of the broadening of multinational and the upcoming global division of workers. The focus of research was on both disadvantages and advantages, especially on females. Female labours have largely worked, particularly in advancing nations, in the unofficial divisions of developed regions. The unofficial division was featured by extended working hours, very poor income and baseless companies. In 1984 about 45 percent of population was employed (Afshar, *et al.*, 1999). Longer working durations, comparable lesser income, the measurement of influx of females into salaried job, unprotected job circumstances in the developed finances have lead to family issues. In most of the nations that are already developed or in the stage of development, the number of divorce cases continuously are increasing and only a very less number of couples are getting married (Vicker,1991). This awakens our memories of the ancient times of the industrial transformation and that was one of the most essential communal impacts of the new kind of economy

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### **13.7 UNIT-END EXERCISES**

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1. What Do you denote Globalization?
2. Explain the Impact of Globalization's on Gender Equality

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### **13.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

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1. Despite the numerous challenges to equity in the ICT arena, many social actors have exploited ICTs as tools for social transformation and gender equality.
2. E-governance programmes have been initiated using ICTs for delivering government services; in some cases with an explicit strategy to ensure these services reach women and others who face barriers to access.

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3. Email, online newsletters and List Serves have enabled women to communicate on a global scale, resulting in increased collaboration to push the agenda of gender equality.

4. New technologies do offer remarkable advantages in terms of ease of communication, unprecedented possibilities for interaction, and efficiency in information storage and retrieval. New initiatives have been most effective where they go beyond issues of access and infrastructure to consider the larger social context and power relations.

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### **13.9 SUGGESTED READINGS**

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# UNIT- XIV CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN INDIA

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*Contribution of Women in India*

**NOTES**

## **Structure**

- 14.1 Introduction
- 14.2 Contribution of women in India (First phase: 1850–1915)
- 14.3 Contribution of Indian women (Second Phase: 1915–1947)
- 14.4 Contribution of women in India (Post-1947)
- 14.5 Contribution of Women in Indian Social System
  - 14.6.1 Birth ratio
  - 14.6.2 Marriages
  - 14.6.3 Clothing
  - 14.6.4 Employment
  - 14.6.5 Globalization
  - 14.6.6 Education
- 14.7 Contributions of Women in Nation Building
- 14.8 Conclusion

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## **14.1 INTRODUCTION**

The 19th century was the period that saw a majority of women's issues come under the spotlight and reforms began to be made. Much of the early reforms for Indian women were conducted by men. However, by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century they were joined in their efforts by their wives, sisters, daughters, proteges and other individuals directly affected by campaigns such as those carried out for women's education. By the late 20th century, women gained greater autonomy through the formation of independent women's own organisations. By the late thirties and forties a new narrative began to be constructed regarding "women's activism". This was newly researched and expanded with the vision to create 'logical' and organic links between feminism and Marxism, as well as with anti-communalism and anti-casteism, etc. The Constitution of India did guarantee 'equality between the sexes,' which created a relative lull in women's movements until the 1970s. During the formative years of women's rights movements, the difference between the sexes was more or less taken for granted in that their roles, functions, aims and desires were different. Over the course of time, this difference itself became a major reason for initiating women's movements. Early 19<sup>th</sup> century reformers argued that the difference between men and women was no reason for the subjection of women in society. However, later reformers were of the opinion that indeed it was this particular difference that subjugated women to their roles in society.

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## **14.2 OBJECTIVES**

- To acquire knowledge on women and technology

*Self-instructional Material*

- To find out the impact of liberalization and globalization on women empowerment.
- To study about the impact of development policy for women in India

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### **14.3 CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN INDIA (FIRST PHASE: 1850–1915)**

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The colonial venture into modernity brought concepts of democracy, equality and individual rights. The rise of the concept of nationalism and introspection of discriminatory practices brought about social reform movements related to caste and gender relations. This first phase of feminism in India was initiated by men to uproot the social evils of sati (widow immolation), to allow widow remarriage, to forbid child marriage, and to reduce illiteracy, as well as to regulate the age of consent and to ensure property rights through legal intervention. In addition to this, some upper caste Hindu women rejected constraints they faced under Brahminical traditions. However, efforts for improving the status of women in Indian society were somewhat thwarted by the late nineteenth century, as nationalist movements emerged in India. These movements resisted 'colonial interventions in gender relations' particularly in the areas of family relations. In the mid to late nineteenth century, there was a national form of resistance to any colonial efforts made to 'modernize' the Hindu family. This included the Age of Consent controversy that erupted after the government tried to raise the age of marriage for women.

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### **14.4 CONTRIBUTION OF INDIAN WOMEN IN SECOND PHASE: 1915–1947**

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During this period the struggle against colonial rule intensified. Nationalism became the pre-eminent cause. Claiming Indian superiority became the tool of cultural revivalism resulting in an essentializing model of Indian womanhood similar to that of Victorian womanhood: special yet separated from public space. Gandhi legitimized and expanded Indian women's public activities by initiating them into the non-violent civil disobedience movement against the British Raj. He exalted their feminine roles of caring, self-abnegation, sacrifice and tolerance; and carved a niche for those in the public arena. Peasant women played an important role in the rural satyagrahas of Borsad and Bardoli. Women-only organisations like All India Women's Conference (AIWC) and the National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW) emerged. Women were grappling with issues relating to the scope of women's political participation, women's franchise, communal awards, and leadership roles in political parties.

The 1920s was a new era for Indian women and is defined as 'feminism' that was responsible for the creation of localized women's associations. These associations emphasised women's education issues,

developed livelihood strategies for working-class women, and also organised national level women's associations such as the All India Women's Conference. Women therefore were a very important part of various nationalist and anti-colonial efforts, including the civil disobedience movements in the 1930s.

After independence, the All India Women's Conference continued to operate and in 1954 the Indian Communist Party formed its own women's wing known as the National Federation of Indian Women. However, feminist agendas and movements became less active right after India's 1947 independence, as the nationalist agendas on nation building took precedence over feminist issues.

Women's participation in the struggle for freedom developed their critical consciousness about their role and rights in independent India. This resulted in the introduction of the franchise and civic rights of women in the Indian constitution. There was provision for women's upliftment through affirmative action, maternal health and child care provision (crèches), equal pay for equal work etc. The state adopted a patronizing role towards women.

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## **14.5 CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN INDIA (POST-1947)**

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Post independence feminists began to redefine the extent to which women were allowed to engage in the workforce. Prior to independence, most feminists accepted the sexual divide within the labor force. However, feminists in the 1970s challenged the inequalities that had been established and fought to reverse them. These inequalities included unequal wages for women, relegation of women to 'unskilled' spheres of work, and restricting women as a reserve army for labor. In other words, the feminists' aim was to abolish the free service of women who were essentially being used as cheap capital. Feminist class-consciousness also came into focus in the 1970s, with feminists recognizing the inequalities not just between men and women but also within power structures such as caste, tribe, language, religion, region, class etc. Now, in the early twenty-first century, the focus of the Indian feminist movement has gone beyond treating women as useful members of society and a right to parity, but also having the power to decide the course of their personal lives and the right of self-determination.

The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted to protect women from domestic violence. It was brought into force by the Indian government from 26 October 2006. The Act provides for the first time in Indian law a definition of "domestic violence", with this definition being broad and including not only physical violence, but also other forms of violence such as emotional/verbal, sexual, and economic abuse. It is a civil law

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meant primarily for protection orders and not meant to penalize criminally.

The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 is a legislative act in India that seeks to protect women from sexual harassment at their place of work. The Act came into force from 9 December 2013. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013 introduced changes to the Indian Penal Code, making sexual harassment an expressed offence under Section 354 A, which is punishable up to three years of imprisonment and or with fine. The Amendment also introduced new sections making acts like disrobing a woman without consent, stalking and sexual acts by person in authority an offense. It also made acid attacks a specific offence with a punishment of imprisonment not less than 10 years and which could extend to life imprisonment and with fine.

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## 14.6 CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN INDIAN SOCIAL SYSTEM

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There are many traditions and customs that have been an important part of Indian culture for hundreds of years. Religious laws and expectations, or "personal laws" enumerated by each specific religion, often conflict with the Indian Constitution, eliminating rights and powers women should legally have. Despite these crossovers in legality, the Indian government does not interfere with religion and the personal laws they hold. Indian society is largely composed of hierarchical systems within families and communities. These hierarchies can be broken down into age, sex, ordinal position, kinship relationships (within families), and caste, lineage, wealth, occupations, and relationship to ruling power (within the community). From birth, girls are automatically entitled to less; from playtime, to food, to education, girls can expect to always be entitled to less than their brothers. Girls also have less access to their family's income and assets, which is exacerbated among poor, rural Indian families. From the start, it is understood that females will be burdened with strenuous work and exhausting responsibilities for the rest of their lives, always with little to no compensation or recognition.

India is also a patriarchal society, which, by definition, describes cultures in which males as fathers or husbands are assumed to be in charge and the official heads of households. A patrilineal system governs the society, where descent and inheritance are traced through the male line and men are generally in control of the distribution of family resources. Indian women often do not take full advantage of their constitutional rights because they are not properly aware or informed of them.

The female-to-male ratio in India is 933 to 1000, showing that there are numerically fewer women in the country than men. This is due

to several factors, including infanticides, most commonly among female infants, and the poor care of female infants and childbearing women.

#### **14.6.1 Birth ratio**

Between the years of 1991 to 2001, the female-male ratio of the population of India fell from 94.5 girls per 100 boys to 92.7 girls per 100 boys. Some parts of the country, such as Kerala, did not experience such a decline, but in the richer Indian states of Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat, and Maharashtra, the female-male ratio fell very sharply. The Indian parliament has banned the use of sex determination techniques for foetuses due to this, but enforcement of this law has been largely ignored.

#### **14.6.2 Marriages**

Most of the average Indian woman's life is spent in marriage; many women are still married before the legal age of 18, and the incidence of non-marriage is low in India. Childbearing and raising children are the priorities of early adulthood for Indian women. Thus, if they enter the workforce at all, it is far later than Indian men. Urban Indian men reach the peak of their labour force participation between the ages of 25 and 29, while urban Indian women do so between the ages of 40 and 44. Because of this, women have less time for the acquisition of skills and fewer opportunities for job improvements.

#### **14.6.3 Clothing**

Another issue that concerns women is the dress code expected of them. Islam requires both men and women to dress modestly; this concept is known as *hijab* and covers a wide interpretation of behavior and garments. There is mixed opinion among feminists over extremes of externally imposed control. Women from other religions are also expected to follow dress codes.

In 2014, an Indian family court in Mumbai ruled that a husband objecting to his wife wearing a kurta and jeans and forcing her to wear a sari amounts to cruelty inflicted by the husband and can be a ground to seek divorce. The wife was thus granted a divorce on the ground of cruelty as defined under section 27(1)(d) of Special Marriage Act, 1954.

#### **14.6.4 Employment**

In general, women are seen as economic burdens in the rural sections of Indian society. Their contributions to productivity are mostly invisible as their familial and domestic contributions are overlooked. Indian women were contributing nearly 36 percent of total employment in agriculture and related activities, nearly 19 percent in the service sector, and nearly 12.5 in the industry sector as of the year 2000. High illiteracy rates among women confine them to lower paying, unskilled jobs with less job security than men. Even in agricultural jobs where the work of men and women are highly similar, women are still more likely to be paid less for the same amount and type of work as men. Although the Government of India has tried to eliminate inequality in the workforce, women still receive unequal treatment. "Men are more likely

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to get promotions than women—besides, for men the nature of their jobs often changed with these promotions, unlike women, who usually only got increased responsibility and higher workload.

#### **14.6.5 Globalization**

Feminists are also concerned about the impact of globalisation on women in India. Some feminists argue that globalisation has led to economic changes that have raised more social and economical challenges for women, particularly for working-class and lower-caste women. In addition to this, multinational corporations are seen to advertise a homogenous image of ideal women across the country is argued to cause an increase in the commodification of women's bodies. This is also manifested in the form of nationalist pride exhibited through Indian women winning international beauty pageants. However, many other feminists feel that such commodification of female bodies has only served the purpose of feeding to male fantasies.

#### **14.6.6 Education**

Some of the main reasons that girls are less likely to reach optimal levels of education include the fact that girls are needed to assist their mothers at home, have been raised to believe that a life of domestic work is their destined occupation, have illiterate mothers who cannot educate their children, have an economic dependency on men, and are sometimes subject to child-marriage. In 1986, the National Policy on Education (NPE) was created in India, and the government launched the programme called MahilaSamakhya, whose focus was on the empowerment of women. By 2001 literacy for women had exceeded 50% of the overall female population, though these statistics were still very low compared to world standards and even male literacy within India. Efforts are still being made to improve the level of education that females receive to match that of male students.

In 21<sup>st</sup> century, women have to come out of her long cherished male supremacy and her weaknesses. She must have capacity to battle the issues of this globe. We have a few ideals of successful women in every field except these numbers can be checked just on fingertips. In India, women occupying highest offices of Prime Minister, President, Lok Sabha Speaker and most eminent positions in the corporate segments yet without a doubt despite everything we witness abusive behavior at home, dowry deaths and mistreatment of women. The female feticide is not an uncommon wonder. The census of 2014 demonstrates that the present sex proportion of India, 943 females per 1000 males is still far from satisfactory. Women's contribution in the state assemblies and Parliament was just 8 to 10% respectively. Today, women are missing of chances in different fields of employment and are segregated on account of they are women. Deep biases and severe poverty against women create a pitiless cycle of inequity that keeps them from satisfying their maximum capacity. The incidence of rape and cruel attacks is alarming.



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Empowerment is the helping tool for women to attain equality with men and to reduce gender bias noticeably. Women play an important role in the development of different sectors and contribute for economic improvement in the visible and invisible form. Hence there is a need of social, political, economical and cultural empowerment of women simultaneously to remove this cruel cycle in which Indian women have been entrapped very badly. The actual truth is dreadful conditions and exploitation of women

Women's empowerment is a not a very new phrase in gender literature. It refers to empowering women to be self-dependent by providing them access to all the freedoms and opportunities, which they were denied in the past only because of their being women, enhancing their position in the power structure of the society, where women have the power or capacity to regulate their daily lives in the social, political and economic spheres -a power which enables them to move from the periphery to the centre stage.

From micro-level there is need for reframing policies for access to employment and quality of employment. Benefits of growing global economy have been unevenly distributed leading to wider economic disparities, the feminization of poverty, increased gender inequality through deteriorating working conditions and unsafe working environment especially in the informal economy and rural areas. Strategies will be designed to enhance the capacity of women and empower them to meet the negative social and economic impacts which may flow from the globalization process.

A report by International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) evaluation came up with four main areas to enhance women empowerment:

- Improved Women Mobility and social interaction,
- Improved labour pattern, which also means women should have equal access to all jobs Opportunities and receive equal pay as their male counterparts,
- Access and control of resource i.e., opportunity to manage country's national resource and the right to own property should not be left to the males alone.

Women too should feel a sense of ownership and power over property, and finally involvement of women in the decision-making process, i.e. women should be allowed to participate fully in the decision making process right from their households to the national government. must be made available/ applicable more or less in the different countries of the world, with slight variations, as well as India.

Our Constitution has given equal rights to women. No distinction has been made on the basis of caste, religion or sex. Their rights have thus been safeguarded. But in spite of all this, women's empowerment is

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still a myth today at least in practice, though may have been successful theoretically. Notwithstanding the remarkable changes in the position of women in free India, there is still a great divergence between the constitutional position and hard reality of deprivation and degradation. In most cases, the urban women have become emancipated, while women belonging to the rural areas are still totally untouched by the wind of changes. They still have been living in miserable conditions, amidst poverty, ignorance, superstition and exploitation. There still exists a wide gulf between the goals enunciated in the Constitution, legislations, policies, plans, programmes and related mechanisms on the one hand and the situational reality on the status of women in India, on the other. The human rights scenario in the country continues to be dismal and depressing. Women are being brutalized, commodified, materialized and subjected to inhuman exploitation and discrimination.

Women constitute one-half of the world's population and but the majority of the poor are women in the world, not only in terms of financially but all the other prospects like education, poverty, health etc. Vivekananda tried to explain the capability by giving example that if some amount of money is given to men then there is possibility that he would not use it for benefit of family but in the case of women, she would definitely utilize it for the benefit of family, he also added women manage money much better than men. Developing women and their capability and empowering them is the safest and definite way of gaining economic growth

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### **14.7 CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN NATION BUILDING**

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When our countrymen were struggling and fighting to attain the freedom, the women folk also fought shoulders to shoulders and whole heartedly supported the struggling freedom fighters. During India's struggle for freedom, the position of women took a favorable turn. After India became independent it was realized by most of the national leaders including Nehru. Gandhi. Dr. Rajendra Prasad that emancipation of Women is necessary and also realized that so long as the conditions of women were not improved, and granted equal status with men, India could not progress. The role of women in the freedom struggle cannot be undermined. Sarojini Naidu. Mira Ben, Suchita Kapalani. VinaylaxmiPandit. AninaAsafAli, all played very crucial and enthusiastic role in the struggle for attaining freedom. Women constitute approximately 40% population of a nation. If she is given the task for the development of the country she can make a wonder. She is more dedicated, harder working, more sincere, more devoted to the cause. Many social evils like; dowry, illiteracy among the females, killing of girl child in the womb, ignoring the hygienic values, polio etc. can well be tackled by the active involvement of the women.

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Many women have proved themselves, dynamic, vibrant, sincere, and perfecting many fields. Smt. Indira Gandhi, Sirimao Bhandemaike, Chandrika Kumaratunga, Goldamir, Margaret Thatcher, Vijaya Laxmi Pundit, Super cop Kiran Bedi have proved themselves in all manners better than their male counterpart. These names made both the society and the women folk proud of them. The myth that certain fields were only meant for men has been proved wrong by women. Modern women in the present age occupy top rank and attained immense success in all the fields such as politics, police, administration, medicine, services etc. Mother Teresa, P.T. Usha, Mrs. Mohsina Kidwai, Mrs. Subu Laxmi, Mrs. Sushma Swaraj, the great environmentalist and social activist Medha Patkar and Promilla Kalhan, Mrs. Kiran Bedi, Kalpana Chawla, Mrs. Sonia Gandhi have become well recognised names in their respective fields.

Today the educated women have come out of their inferiority complex and are shouldering all kinds of responsibilities, as Managers, Officers, TV and Radio news-readers, Pilots, Ministers, Anchors, Musicians, Clerks, Stenographers, Ministers, Prime Ministers and whatnot? There are veteran MPs and Ministers in the centre and the State, Ms. Mayawati, Ms. Jayalalitha, Mrs. Sushma Swaraj, Ms. Mamta Bannerjee, Mrs. Rabri Devi, Uma Bharti, Mrs. Vijaya Raje Scindhiya have proved to be the astute Politicians. The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act passed in 1992. Lay upon the women of our country more responsibilities in accelerating the development of the country. These amendments provide 33% reservation for women in the Panchayat Raj. Women elected to Panchayat and Municipal Councils, because of the reservation. Have started asserting themselves. Now the women in local governments are taking the basic issues as water, health facilities, family planning, polio eradication, more seriously, more sincerely. Now they can play better role in the development of their area of operation whether village or municipality, which in turn will result into the overall development of the State and the country as a whole.

Women are more dedicated and devoted to their duties and have much patience and politeness than man by nature. There is no doubt that women had played very important role in the national building, but the man is still not in favor of giving them the given due powers. The example is that the women's reservation bill for 30% reservation in State Assemblies and Parliament has not been made the law so far. The bill was introduced several times since 1996 but couldn't take shape of an Act so far. The empowerment of women by itself cannot place women on equal footing with men. The need of hour is the change of social attitudes towards women. Many social evils, like dowry, illiteracy among women, infanticide of female child, elimination of girls fetus, are required to be fully rooted out. The crime against women like, eve teasing, rape, are to be dealt with strongest hand though several measures but half-hearted are

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being taken by the government in this direction, yet a change of social attitude and honesty, on the part of politicians, is must to make the women participate in the nation building at grass root level, "Rightly" said by Dr. Rajendra Prasad.- "our women have a very great pan to play in the progress of our country the mental and physical contact of women with life is much more lasting and comprehensive than that of men ".What can't be done by women? If the men can help in the national building, the women can do much better! A woman is no fewer creatures than that of men. Women, undoubtedly, can play a very important role in the betterment of the nation if men give them chance.

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### 14.8 LET US SUM UP

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Due to early trends in feminism, the perception that woman is what she can do, still lingers in society. The early feminists had to struggle against discriminatory laws and socio-cultural attitudes that were founded on the supposition that women were inferior to men. In a bid to counter this, women fought for the right to do all that men could do as a means of proving equality. On the basis of such a view, it has been concluded that women in the 21<sup>st</sup> century have made important inroads in the quest for equality. To support this, evidence is sought to show that most women today enjoy at least in theory equal rights of participation in social and political life, The new roles of women are regarded a part of who.

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### 14.14 UNIT END EXERCISE

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1. What is the Contribution of Women in Social System?

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### 14.15 ANSWERS TO CHECK PROGRESS

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1. The challenge of balancing between the need for unity and the recognition for diversity in the course of nation building is manifest not just in the interaction between Indian of different racial and ethnic backgrounds but also between the different genders

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### 14.16 SUGGESTED READINGS

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