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Feminism and Women's Movement in India

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ABSTRACT:

A political, cultural, or economic movement that aims to provide women equal legal protection and rights is called Feminism. Feminism is another name for the viewpoint that says women should have the same rights as men. "feminism" refers to a collection of concepts and viewpoints that address issues relating to gender inequality in society, politics, and culture.¹ In addition to promoting gender equality for women, this movement also promotes the rights and interests of women. According to studies by Maggie Humm¹ and Rebecca Walker², there have allegedly been three significant waves of Feminism throughout history. The early twentieth century saw the start of the first wave of Feminism; the 1960s and early 1970s saw the start of the second wave; and the 1990s saw the start of the third wave, which is still strong today. Feminist philosophy was developed as a result of these different feminist movements. It has been studied in various academic fields, including feminist history, feminist geography, and feminist literary criticism. Because of the pre-colonial social structures and women's function, Feminism was conceptualised differently than in the West. Due to the essentialisation of "Indian culture" by the invaders and the rebuilding of Indian womanhood as the apex of that culture by social reform groups, nationalism rather than Feminism alone arose as the dominant political doctrine in India³. Despite the advances that have been made "on paper," many obstacles still prevent people from effectively utilising the new rights and opportunities that have been established. According to the Constitution of India, women are considered a "weaker section" of society and deserve help to participate equally in society.

This study looks at the connections between Feminism, feminists, and women's movements regarding Indian society and the rights given to women there. The focus of this investigation is India.

KEYWORDS: Feminism, Women's Movements, Rights of Women, Impact, Indian society

INTRODUCTION:

The feminist movement has directly altered the mainstream perspectives in several facets of Western civilisation. The judicial system is one of these realms, along with culture.³ Feminist activists have fought for women's rights to abortion, access to contraception, quality prenatal care, protection from sexual assault, harassment, and rape, rights at work (such as maternity leave and equal pay), opposition to misogyny, and other issues of gender inequality.⁴



Scholars and feminists have split the movement's history into three main "waves." When referring to the women's suffrage campaigns in the late 19th and early 20th centuries that were primarily concerned with the right of women to vote, the term "first wave" is usually used.

The "second wave," which refers to concepts and actions linked with the women's liberation movement that originated in the 1960s and battled for women's legal and social rights, is a part of this group. The 1990s saw the emergence of the "third wave" of Feminism, which is both a development of the "second wave" and a reaction to its "perceived failures."

Types of Feminism:

The feminist worldview has no single, distinct, or consistent interpretation. Both in terms of those who identify as feminists and the viewpoints they hold, there is a wide range of variety within the feminist movement. Here is a brief introduction to a few varieties of Feminism.

Liberal Feminism:

An emphasis on individualism combined with an emphasis on equality is one of the characteristics that set liberal Feminism apart. This line of reasoning holds that there is no pressing need to make significant changes to society as a whole; rather, it is necessary to change the rules that regulate society and provide access to opportunities so that women and men can be treated equally. That is to say, and there is no urgent need for major changes to be made to society as a whole. According to a liberal feminist, the biggest indicator of progress is the rise in the proportion of women in traditionally male-dominated fields, especially in positions of prominence. This is because liberal feminists think that only when women occupy positions of authority will gender equality be realised. Liberal Feminism is the branch of Feminism that is often viewed as being the most mainstream in most of the Western world, including the United States.

Socialist Feminism:

A subclass of Feminism known as Marxist Feminism, often known as socialist Feminism, links the exploitation of women to Marxist notions of oppression, exploitation, and labour. Socialist feminists contend that because of women's uneven status in the home and workplace, they are at a disadvantage in society. Socialist feminists see marriage, household work, prostitution, and child care as instances of how women are



oppressed. Socialist feminists believe patriarchal governments do this because they devalue women and the important labour that women do. Socialist feminists are more interested in broader social issues that affect society as a whole than they are in the respective rights of women. They recognise the necessity to work with all groups, not just men since they see women's oppression as a part of a bigger pattern that affects everyone participating in the capitalist system. They thus believe it is crucial to work along with all other groups, not only men⁵

According to Marx, if class oppression were to vanish, gender oppression would take its place.⁶ Certain of those feminists hold the notion that certain socialist feminists also consider gender discrimination as a kind of economic oppression.⁷ is erroneous, and socialist feminists have devoted a significant amount of their efforts to distancing gender and economic issues. Some socialist feminists have criticised these traditional Marxist viewpoints for being essentially mute on gender oppression, save from the fact that they bury it behind larger class oppression. The argument against it is that these ideas bury it behind more generalised forms of class oppression. Most of these additional socialist feminists are affiliated with the Radical Women and Freedom Socialist Party groups.

Radical Feminism:

In truth, these two schools of thought are occasionally mixed. Both radical and socialist Feminism highlight the necessity for considerable societal change to attain full equality for women. Radical Feminism and socialism have numerous similarities. Women who are extremist⁸ think that patriarchy permeates society and that unless and until patriarchy is confronted and transformed, injustice will continue to exist in the system. Some extreme feminists around separatist feminists consider it appropriate for men and women to continue engaging in different activities and having separate relationships.⁹

Third-Wave Feminism:

Most of those who support the Third Wave of Feminism are younger women, many of whom are the progeny of feminists who were active in the 1970s and are known as Second Wave Feminists. Post-secondary feminists are another name for Third-Wave feminists. One of the distinguishing features of Third Wave feminism is a strong emphasis on individualism, akin to liberal Feminism. However, Third Wave feminism



emphasises an individual's liberty as a platform for societal change. This is not to imply that participating in politics is not vital, but rather to emphasise that Third Wave feminism lays a higher focus on personal liberty. The Third Wave of Feminism is a type of Feminism that supports the development of unique identities in the setting of a complex and postmodern society. Additionally, it empowers women to choose how they wish to identify from a wide range of options, independent of how others may see them.

Feminism in India:

It is often believed that India's history of Feminism is mostly nonexistent and consists largely of pragmatic initiatives. This point of view is widely accepted. The United States has not contributed nearly as much theoretical work to Feminism as other nations have, in comparison.

Defining Feminism in the Indian Context:

It is plain to see from India's pre-colonial social structures that the concept of Feminism was developed differently from how it was in the West. The fact that there is a discernible difference between the two shows that this is the case. The formation of political theory in the form of nationalism rather than Feminism as a stand-alone ideology resulted from the essentialisation of "Indian culture" by the colonial power structure and the reconstruction of Indian femininity as the pinnacle of that culture through social reform movements. This was since "Indian culture" was essentialised by colonialism, and social reform movements helped to restore Indian womanhood as the apex of that culture.¹⁰

India has a rich cultural past and traditional beliefs; therefore, women's struggles differ from Western feminist discourse. Patriarchal societies accept the concept of "powerful" women via religion. As a result, women may now access social groups once regarded as "cultural spaces," preserving their presence in all spheres of society. Additionally, it's critical to remember that in the West, the concept of "self" is built on the competitive, individualistic worldview, which maintains that people are "born free yet everywhere in chains." But in India, the individual is frequently considered as only a component of a larger social collective whose survival depends on cooperation and self-denial for the sake of everyone.

To give Feminism in India a unique identity, feminist researchers and activists in India would have to put in a lot of effort. They give a time- and place-specific definition of Feminism to avoid merely copying Western concepts without critical analysis. Indian women must traverse a variety of constricting patriarchal home



arrangements to survive. Some of these systems include age, ordinal position, and their ties to men through their families of origin, marriage, and childbirth. In addition to kinship, caste, community, village, market, and State, patriarchal traits like dowry and the requirement to have males also exist. Bengali families, some Maratha clans, and the Nairs of Kerala are just a few instances of Indian societies that tend toward matriarchy, which implies that the eldest female, rather than the eldest male, is the family's leader. Several things need to be considered. Many believe there is little difference between men and women in Sikh society.

The diversity of the Indian experience demonstrates the variety of patriarchal institutions and feminist ideals, as well as the variety of feminisms. Feminism in India, as a result, is not a particularly distinctive theoretical position; rather, it has evolved through time in response to shifting historical and cultural situations as well as the diversity of knowledge, views, and actions among both individual women and women as a collective. The term used most often is "an awareness of women's oppression and exploitation in society, at work, and within the family, and conscious action by women and men to change this situation." Recognising the existence of sexism in daily life and working to combat and eradicate it may pave the way for a society that is more equal for men and women. This can be accomplished by dismantling the mutually exclusive ideas of femininity and masculinity as biologically set categories.

The fact that males have traditionally spearheaded social reform initiatives to address various societal concerns calls into question the notion that males and females in India are opposed and that the former oppresses the latter. Women now lead these movements. The patriarchal hierarchy is but one among many different hierarchies. Women linked to one another through blood face more unfavourable societal hierarchies. In this scenario, female contestants face off against one another. In difficult situations, some women can express their dominance. The identities of caste and community exacerbate all other forms of social inequality. The respected representations of female goddesses, which are distinct from yet supportive of those of male deities, are part of the polytheistic Hindu pantheon.

History:

First phase: 1850–1915:

Ideas like democracy, equality, and individual rights were introduced due to the colonial spread of modernity. Social movements to alter caste and gender relations were sparked by the emergence of nationalism and an



awareness of the negative impacts of discriminatory practices. To end the societal evil known as sati (widow immolation), permit widow remarriage, outlaw child marriage, combat illiteracy, regulate the legal consent age, and protect property rights, males in India started the first wave of Feminism. Women, alongside lower castes, were seen as subjects of social changes and welfare at this time rather than being acknowledged as independent agents of change. To better accommodate women, this was done. The main goal was to forge new ground while maintaining the conventional notions of women as carers. The ladies engaged were from better caste Hindu homes, received a Western education, and had connections to other males who were activists.

Second Phase: 1915–1947:

The colonial government's authority was facing a sharp rise in resistance. The nationalist movement was quickly seen as the most important one. The assertion of Indian superiority created an essentialist image of Indian women, which served as a platform for cultural revivalism. It had characteristics of the Victorian femininity ideal in that it was unique while maintaining its distance from the public realm. As a result, an essentialist image of Indian women was created. Initiating Indian women into the nonviolent civil disobedience movement against the British Raj was one of the ways Gandhi contributed to legitimising and enhancing the public deeds of Indian women. In this undertaking, Gandhi's efforts were successful. He elevated the traditionally female roles of caregiving, self-sacrifice, tolerance, and sacrifice, and he gave women a position in society to carry out these responsibilities. There was an upsurge in the number of organisations founded exclusively for women, such as the National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW) and the All India Women's Conference (AIWC). Women found it difficult to find answers for issues, including the level of women's political engagement, voting rights for women, the sharing of communal benefits, and leadership roles within political parties.

Women's crucial awareness of their status and rights in an independent India was directly attributed to their participation in the independence movement. Their participation in the movement directly led to the development of this consciousness. This led directly and immediately to including women's civic rights, including the ability to vote, in the Indian Constitution. The policies developed for women's advancement included affirmative action, maternal and child health care, equal pay for equal work, and other similar measures. The State took a condescending stance toward the nation's female residents. Women in India did



not encounter the same barriers to obtaining fundamental rights as their counterparts in the West. Because the institutions of society and culture, as well as the dominant social and cultural ideals, could not honour the recently gained ideas of democracy and fundamental rights, the utopia was destined to collapse.

The Concepts of Feminism and Equality:

The idea of "equality" was utterly foreign to India when it was first brought to the nation in the early nineteenth century by Indians who had received extensive exposure to Western education and culture. However, it wasn't until India gained its independence in 1947 and instituted a democratic system of governance that the phrase acquired its modern meaning or became a guiding principle in daily life there. In addition, it took India some time after the country's establishment of a democratic form of government for the term to become a guiding principle in daily life. Following that, the Indian Constitution was amended to protect all of these rights, including religious freedom, equality, freedom from discrimination based on gender, and freedom from religious persecution. In addition, seven different five-year plans were created to aid women in social services, education, health care, and career opportunities. And in the sixth Five-Year Plan, women are referred to as "partners in development." This is a significant advance.

It is crucial to recognise that there is a conception of Indian women held by the West that Indian women themselves do not share at all. This is so because Indian women are stereotyped in the eyes of the West. The idea of "feminism" is unique within Indian culture; it is challenging to compare it to the idea of Feminism that is pervasive in Western culture. However, this problem must be seen as having a bearing on "human rights" in India.

Additionally, Indian women view as signs of "sorrow", the features that individuals in Western societies view as proof of "oppression." Western cultures define "oppression" differently than other cultures. To accurately understand how Indian women and Western women are likely to have radically different viewpoints on some of the same issues, one must be conscious of the difference, which is considerable. Terms that are similar to this include:

- Hunger
- Poverty



- Disease
- Infant deaths
- Use of their bodies in labour by landlords
- Ruthlessness of custom
- Burden of tradition
- Unrelenting demands of ritual
- Beating without reason

Beginnings of the “Feminist” Movement in India:

Males in India were the ones who launched the movement, in contrast to how the feminist movement began in the West; women didn't join the movement until much later. Some of the most powerful men participating in the activities made up this group:

- Raja Ram Mohan Roy
- Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar
- Keshav Chandra Sen
- Malabari Phule
- Gopal Ganesh Agarkar
- Mahadev Govind Ranade
- Dhondo Keshav Karve

These men sought to put an end to the sati custom, in which a widow was made to burn herself to death on her husband's burial pyre.¹² the custom of disfiguring widows, the marriage of upper caste Hindu widows, the promotion of women's education, the acquisition of legal rights for women to own property, and the demand that the law recognises women's status by granting them fundamental rights in areas like adoption.



The demand that the law recognise women's position by offering them fundamental rights in adoption is one of the other difficulties. Child marriage as a practice. The practice of deforming widows. The union of Hindu widows from higher castes. The law governing minor marriages. The ban on Hindu widows from upper caste households being married again. The ban on Hindu widows from upper caste households being married again. The promotion of women's educational possibilities. The promotion of women's educational opportunities¹³.

Obstacles:

Even if these new possibilities and privileges exist "on paper," many obstacles still prevent people from fully using the advancements that have been made. As an illustration, the Indian Constitution acknowledges that women are a "weaker section" of the population. As a result, the Constitution declares that women need aid to meet the obligations of being equals.

The Indian people have also practised many rituals and traditions for hundreds of years, which are an integral part of their culture. These customs and traditions have been handed down through the generations. The "personal laws" enacted by each separate religion, also known as religious standards and expectations, sometimes run counter to the provisions of the Indian Constitution. Because of this, women in India do not have access to the rights and authority to which they are constitutionally entitled. Despite these uncertainties in the law, the Indian government does not interfere with religious practice or the privacy rules that adherents of many religions accept.¹⁴ In certain other religions, like Hinduism, women are expected to devote themselves completely to both their husbands and God. They have a word for it; it's called pativrata, and it describes a wife who has learned that her husband and their family are the biggest and most important religious and moral duties she has to herself. Indian culture places a lot of emphasis on developing hierarchical institutions inside Indian households and communities. Age, gender, ordinal rank, family ties (within families), caste, ancestry, wealth, vocations, and allegiance to the governing power (within the society) are a few variables that can be used to categorise these hierarchies further. The effects of vulnerability and stability are amplified for females raised in lower socioeconomic status homes when societal norms and economic needs combine to create hierarchies within the family. This is due to the likelihood that females would serve as these households' main breadwinners. Girls may believe they are always entitled to less than their brothers no matter what the topic—playtime, food, or education. Whether



the subject at hand is recreation, food, or education, females are inherently entitled to less from birth. Girls also have restricted access to their family's wealth and resources, a situation particularly acute in rural, impoverished Indian homes. Even fewer resources and money are available to girls in these families. The fact that women would be required to conduct demanding work and shoulder heavy obligations for the remainder of their life, and receive little to no appreciation or payment for their efforts has been recognised since the beginning of time. This is one constant thing. Every single time, this is accurate.¹⁵

India is also a patriarchal society, which is a phrase that, by definition, refers to cultures in which men are perceived to be in authority and the designated leaders of the household as fathers or husbands. One of the world's most populated nations is India. In India, the scenario is the same. Ancestry and inheritance are passed down through the male line in a patrilineal system, sometimes called a patriarchal system. Male family members are typically in charge of allocating the family's resources. This kind of organisation is sometimes referred to as a patriarchal system.

Women in Indian culture have been accustomed to the way of life it entails and has learnt to expect it because certain customs and ways of living have been practised for such a long period. Indian women do not fully exercise the rights mentioned in their Constitution. This is partially caused by the fact that they are not sufficiently aware of their constitutional rights and are not completely informed about them. Women also regard their political authority less favourably than men, and they know less about politics than men. Women are less likely to exercise their right to vote due to this. It is a problem if women are not provided with correct information about issues or encouraged to seek accurate information when it is accessible. Political parties do not devote a significant amount of resources or time to women candidates because they believe they do not have a significant lot of potential or promise and are a waste of money. Political parties think that supporting female candidates is a waste of money, which is why this is the case.¹⁶

The ratio of women to men in India is around 933 to 1000, which shows that much fewer women live there than men. This is due to several circumstances, including the murdering of newborns, which affects female infants more frequently, and the inadequate care provided to infants and pregnant mothers. Infants who are female are more commonly killed as neonates. Infant murder is a common practice in rural India, even though it is against the law.¹⁷ Continually receiving more recognition is the group and. Due to the dowry families are expected to pay when their daughter marries, they cannot afford to produce female offspring.



Rural areas are severely affected by this issue. Even though it is illegal, paying dowry is fairly widespread in India's rural communities. Another activity that fits under this category is infanticide. If a woman cannot have a male kid, her husband can consider her "worthless," Consequently, she might experience a lot of physical and mental abuse.¹⁸

In India, many fewer women than should be in the workforce. Ten per cent more women than males drop out of elementary and intermediate school, which is more than double the rate for men. Women also have lower literacy rates than males do. Due to India's high unemployment rate, it is easier for businesses to take advantage of legal weaknesses. This is particularly true regarding how women are treated because it is customary for Indian women to avoid conflict with men. Additionally, labour unions do not take into account the needs of women. Women must also use job options that allow them to carry out their domestic, parental, and marital duties.

Hindu Women in India:

Regarding efforts to change the laws governing gender equality and family law, the Hindu faith has progressed. Even while this represents a substantial improvement over other Indian religions, it has not yet achieved complete success regarding Feminism and the reduction of "oppression."¹⁹ Gandhi is credited with creating the term "stree shakti," which refers to the idea of femininity. Hinduism does not limit its deities to the male gender, unlike Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. Hinduism is a religion that upholds the ideals of femininity and argues that women are intended to complete and complete their male counterparts. Remembering that female goddesses stand for both prosperity and knowledge is important.

Muslim Women in India:

Although Indian law recognises that all men and women are equal subjects, the Muslim religion does not hold this perspective. The nation's treatment of Muslim women is the most notable instance of how inhabitants of India are denied equal protection under the law and have their constitutional rights ignored. They are said to be the most marginalised, poor, and politically excluded segment of Indian society. They are also regarded as being the most economically and socially vulnerable group. Most Muslim women never have any paid employment outside the home. They are governed by Muslim Personal Laws, or MLPs, which take precedence over the Indian Constitution and are skewed disproportionately in favour of men due to



discriminatory gender dynamics. But the issue of cultural context and relativism resurfaces when we look at Muslim women and their situation. Feminist activists must first strive to "help" Muslim women comprehend their situation and recognise the injustices they face before they can attempt to support them in their fight for equality and the rights guaranteed by their nation's Constitution. Then, things might start moving. It's critical to stress that such a decision cannot be made on their behalf.

Divorce and Marriage:

The parents of the couple typically predetermine marriages in the Muslim faith. India is a patriarchal nation; thus, wives typically move in with their husbands and family. Once there, wives are usually forced to break all ties to their parents, save for asking them for a dowry by their husbands and in-laws. If their husbands are ready to take on another wife or wife, women have the same opportunity to join a polygamous household as men. The practice of divorce is another example of the inequality that exists between men and women in Muslim society. A Muslim man can divorce his wife (or one of his wives) without going through the courts by pronouncing the word "talaq" about her. To achieve this, he only needs to make this declaration; he does not even need a good reason for wanting a divorce. The woman does not need to be present throughout this process, and in some circumstances, she may not even be informed of the divorce from her husband; instead, she may learn about the divorce indirectly, such as through a letter or an advertisement in the newspaper. Contrarily, it is more challenging for women to initiate the divorce process. The law states that a wife must ask her husband for permission to end their union, knowing that she will likely have to forfeit any mahr, or sum of money or another asset, pledged to her while they were still married. However, if their spouse treats them unfairly compared to another woman in the marriage, women in polygamous marriages have the right to file for divorce. Women in polygamous marriages may use this as one of their reasons for divorce. The mother is only qualified for temporary custody of the kids during a divorce. A girl can be theirs until she reaches puberty, whereas a son can be theirs for up to seven years of age. Then, if the biological father so wished, he would be given the legal right to claim his children back.²⁰

A Uniform Civil Code (UCC) of personal law has been proposed under the Constitution, and it would apply to all people, regardless of their affiliation with any faith. The main issue that the UCC will solve is the gender bias in the current Muslim Personal Laws. The biggest issues with MLPs are that men are allowed to have up to four wives at once, that they are allowed to divorce a wife outside of the court system, and that



after a divorce is finalised, men are released from all parental responsibilities for their wives for a period of three months.²¹

Women at Work:

Indian women are typically viewed as being a financial burden. Their contributions to their family's and households' well-being are typically disregarded. Therefore they have minimal effect on total production. In 2000, Indian women accounted for over 36% of all employment in the agricultural and related industries, 19% in the service industry, and 12.5 % in the manufacturing sector. Women are compelled to work in jobs that pay less, involve less training, and provide less job stability than those held by men due to the high illiteracy rate among women. This is a tragic fact. Women are more likely to be paid less than males for doing the same amount and quality of labour, even in agricultural industries where the tasks done by men and women are relatively equivalent.²²

Women and Education:

Girls are expected to help their mothers at home, have been taught that domestic work is their calling, have illiterate mothers who cannot educate their children, are financially dependent on men, and occasionally are forced into child marriage. These are some of the main causes for why females are less likely to complete their education at the highest levels. The fact that girls are occasionally forced into underage marriage is one of the other causes.

In India, the National Policy on Education (NPE) was created in 1986, the same year the government launched the Mahila Samakhya program to promote women's professional growth. The program aims to give women a learning environment where they may realise their full potential, develop the confidence to ask for information and obtain the knowledge required to take charge of their lives. There are regions of India where things are improving, and there has been a noticeable increase in young women entering the teaching field and enrolling in educational programs. To raise the level of education obtained by female students to the same standard as that of male students, ongoing efforts have been made.

It is important to emphasise that educated women in India have lower reproduction rates, and efforts are being made to increase the use of contraception among Indian women without formal education. This is something that has to be thought about.



Modernisation:

Due to contemporary influences impacting the younger generations in such areas, girls in some parts of India are starting to reject more traditional Indian ways of life and challenge gender norms. In parts of the country with strong economic growth, the idea of "dating," or the practice of publicly dating, has grown common. The terms "girlfriend" and "boyfriend" are used. Some women have made names for themselves in respectable fields, and you can see them on Bollywood movie billboards and advertising. However, this is not the norm throughout the nation; anti-liberal conservatives strongly oppose such modernisations and the women pushing them. Extreme male dominance still prevails nationwide, and movements that defy accepted gender and sexuality standards are not tolerated.

Constitutional and Legal Rights for Women in India:

If the Indian Constitution promises gender equality, why are Indian women treated as second-class citizens in their own country? If so, then the question itself contains the solution. In addition to giving women a written guarantee of equality, the Constitution also allows the State the power to implement laws that positively discriminate against women. On the other hand, it is hardly a positive trend that women in India experience such a wide range of forms of discrimination. The National Commission for Women was created in 1990 by an act of the British Parliament to defend women's legal rights and privileges. "Seats in Panchayats and Municipalities can now be reserved for women thanks to the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Indian Constitution from 1993. This has established a solid foundation for women's involvement in local decision-making.

The Indian Constitution's Article 14 ensures equality in society's political, economic, and social spheres. Everybody has an equal chance to pursue public jobs and other positions of public trust, thanks to Article 16.

Discrimination against any individual based on race, religion, caste, sex, or any other attribute is prohibited under Article 15 of the Constitution. Article 15 Section 3 of the Indian Constitution gives the State the power to enact whatever special measures it considers appropriate for the welfare of women and children.

According to Article 39's paragraph (a), the State must focus its policies on preserving everyone's right to a means of sustenance. This includes both men and women—clause (c) of Article 39 guarantees equal reward for equivalent labour.



The State must preserve fair and acceptable working conditions for its residents, according to Article 42.

Every citizen is obligated under Article 15(A)(e) of the Constitution to refrain from engaging in acts derogatory to women's dignity, and this responsibility falls fully on their shoulders.

The Indian Penal Code's Section 509 is yet another legislation that protects women from what would be seen as a less serious infraction. As a result of this law, those who have violated a woman's modesty might face legal ramifications. This law forbids harassing a woman in any form, including by entering her space and using derogatory language, sounds, or gestures. Outraging a woman's modesty is another offence covered under Section 354 of the Indian Penal Code. According to this law, anybody who assaults a woman, uses unlawful force against her, or otherwise insults her modesty faces a sentence of up to two years in jail. The use of force against a woman is another possible violation.

Among the laws that defend women from "traditional" crimes like rape, abduction, dowry, torture, molesting, sexual harassment, and selling girls into slavery are the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, the Sati Prevention Act, the Dowry Prohibition Act, and the Indecent Representation of Women (Prevention) Act. The Dowry Prohibition Act and the Indecent Representation of Women (Prevention) Act are further legislation. According to Section 306 of the Indian Penal Code, the husband of a suicide victim may get a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison if found guilty.

CONCLUSION:

Some people believe that Feminism has accomplished its goals and is no longer relevant. They contend that it was necessary a century ago because women needed it at the time and did not have the power to vote or own property. There were no female Supreme Court justices or space shuttle pilots when I was a little girl. This occurred more than thirty years ago. Though some people think Feminism is a relic of the past, given the world we live in today, women may be anything they want to be. They acknowledge that the struggle for women's rights opened doors, but they question whether Feminism can still be applied in light of these new opportunities.

The answer to that question is indeed affirmative, and some strong arguments favour this claim. When I interact with young women, like the high school and college interns at the National Organization for Women, I see bold women pursuing their goals and, to put it lightly; their objectives are aspirational. I see ladies who



dare to pursue their dreams when interacting with young women. They have a wonderful fortune, along with my children, to be growing up in a world that offers them almost a limitless number of alternatives, and I am glad that this is the case. Conversely, I frequently hear individuals lamenting how unfair the world is compared to how they would like it to be. I concur with these people. At schools and on college campuses, some male students harass and even physically abuse some female students. Both public and private higher education institutions experience this. Many female students still feel hesitant to speak out in class, and many say that coming home alone late at night makes them anxious. This is true, particularly when there are only one or two other individuals.

Girls get a constant onslaught of disapproving messages about how they should show themselves, which come from both popular culture and advertisements. These messages imply that women must be slender, attractive, and seductive regardless of the career they hope to pursue. The struggle for reproductive freedom is always under attack, although many young women believe it to be a right that is legitimately theirs. Even though they do the same occupations as men, women are still paid less than males, and there are still relatively few women in executive roles at major firms. The position of Vice President and the office of President of the United States has never been held by a woman or a member of a historically underrepresented minority up to this point. If you didn't feel at ease, if your body wasn't your own, and if you weren't loved and accepted for who you were, it wouldn't matter if you had access to every opportunity in the world. It wouldn't matter if you had every chance in the world. First and foremost, there needs to be real progress achieved in society for women to engage in all aspects of it.



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