

1. What do you understand by gender stereotyping? What are its socio-economic implications? Examine.**Introduction**

Stereotype is a generalized view or preconception about attributes or characteristics that are or ought to be possessed by members of a particular social group or the roles that are or should be performed by, members of a particular social group.

Gender stereotyping is the practice of ascribing to an individual woman or man specific attributes, characteristics, or roles by reason only of her or his membership in the social group of women or men. A gender stereotype is, at its core, a belief and that belief may cause its holder to make assumptions about members of the subject group, women and/or men. In contrast, gender stereotyping is the practice of applying that stereotypical belief to a person.

Gender stereotypes can be both positive and negative for example, “women are nurturing” or “women are weak”.

Body**Socio-economic implications of gender stereotyping**

- It limits women’s or men’s capacity to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers and make choices about their lives and life plans. Both hostile/negative or seemingly benign stereotypes can be harmful. It is for example based on the stereotype that women are more nurturing that child rearing responsibilities often fall exclusively on them.
- Women’s role within the family leads to a division of labour within households that often result in time poverty for women and lower levels of education.
- It results in a violation or violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms. An example of this is the failure to criminalize marital rape based on the stereotype of women as the sexual property of men. Another example is the failure of the justice system to hold perpetrator of sexual violence accountable based on stereotypical views about women’s appropriate sexual behaviour.
- Traditional attitudes by which women are regarded as subordinate to men perpetuate widespread practice involving violence and coercion.
- Investigation of cases of violence and the sanctioning of perpetrators are underpinned by patriarchal notions and stereotypes that negatively affect their objectivity and impartiality.

- A range of UN human rights mechanisms have highlighted how stereotypes about women’s role can be incorporated in discriminatory legislation, for example preventing women from acquiring ownership of land since only the “head of the household” is authorized to sign official documentation.
- Economic Implications
 - Female labour force participation rate ~ 26% (Niti Aayog)
 - Gender pay gap ~ 34% (ILO)
 - Glass ceiling
 - Feminization of informal sector and de-feminization of formal sector.

Conclusion

“Moving beyond recognition that gender stereotyping is an obstacle to women’s rights to meaningful progress in implementing human rights obligations to address harmful stereotypes and wrongful stereotyping will require all of us – treaty bodies, special procedures, States Parties, civil society, academics and many others – to give this issue the serious attention it deserves.” OHCHR commissioned report – ‘Gender Stereotyping as a human rights violation’

2. What are your views on the Sabarimala temple controversy? Should equal rights for women be given precedence over age old tradition? Substantiate.

Introduction

Sabarimala Temple controversy is all about the conflict between tradition and women rights. The shrine at Sabarimala is an ancient temple of Ayyappan, worshipped as a ‘Naishtika Bramhachari’ or a celibate for life. As per traditions and customs, women between 10 and 50 years of age were not allowed to enter into Sabarimala Temple.

Body

The Supreme Court verdict paved the way for the entry of women of all ages into the Ayyappa temple at Sabarimala in Kerala.

The five-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice of India, in its 4:1 verdict, said banning the entry of women into the shrine is gender discrimination and the practice violates the rights of Hindu women.

Supreme Court view on Sabarimala temple

- Religion is a way of life basically to link life with divinity.

- The court observed that it can't be oblivious to the fact of the case that a class of women is disallowed due to physiological reasons (menstruation).
- Devotion cannot be subjected to discrimination and patriarchal notion cannot be allowed to trump equality in devotion.

Dissenting view of Justice Indu Malhotra

- Issues which have deep religious connotation should not be tinkered with to maintain a secular atmosphere in the country.
- Essential religious practice must be decided by religious community, not the court.
- Religious freedom is presence of religious institution rather than individual rights.

Equal rights for women should be given precedence over age old tradition

- Preventing women from entering the places of worship goes against articles 14, 15, 19, and 25 of the Indian constitution, which deal with the right to equality, the right against discrimination based on gender, freedom of movement and freedom of religion.
- Barring them access to the inner sanctum of the shrine violated their fundamental right under Article 25(1) to freely practice their religion.
- Right to manage its own religious affairs under Article 26(1) cannot “override the right to practice religion itself”, as Article 26 cannot be seen to overrule the right to practice one's religion as guaranteed under the Constitution of India.
- Restricting the entry of women into places of worship is one of the ways of imposing patriarchy. Often the restrictions are based on patriarchy and not religion.
- Banning entry to the temple is discriminatory since it subverts the idea of everyone being equal to God.
- In April 2016, the Shani Shingnapur temple, which had barred women from entering its core area for over 400 years, allowed women to pray inside the temple following the court's orders.

Equal rights for women should not be given precedence over age old tradition

- Referring to the presiding deity Lord Ayyappa as a Naishtika Bramhachari, many point out that it is the celibate nature of the deity that forms the basis of the practice and not misogyny.

- Sabarimala was a separate religious cult with its own rules.
- Article 15 of the Constitution does not apply to religious institutions. Article 15(2) provides citizens with the right to access to places such as hotels, shops and so on but nowhere does it mention public temples.
- Such traditions are protected by Article 25(1).
- Article 25(2) pertains to only secular aspects and it is only pertaining to social issues, not gender or religious-based issues.

Conclusion

The main issue is not an entry, but equality. The religious exclusion has a public character, and that it is not just an issue of a sacred tradition but one of the civil rights and material and symbolic equality.

Beliefs and customs of devotees cannot be changed through a judicial process. The reforms should come from within the society. So long as that does not happen, we are likely to see religious issues being repeatedly taken to court.

3. Why is sexual violence against women a recurring and pervasive societal reality in India? Analyse.

Introduction

India has been named the most dangerous country in the world for women in a recent Thomson Reuters Foundation survey which exposes a vicious cultural agreement that women have little value in our society in spite of being modern, liberal and a functioning democracy based on a constitution which guarantees equality for all.

Body

- Violence against women has taken the form of a global epidemic which has taken its toll on the physical, psychological, sexual and economic life of the female. It impacts the cultural forces and the implementation of laws that impact how women are actually treated in a culture, despite formal law, education, employment or income.
- India is in denial of the fact that a majority of its women do not feel safe alone on the streets, at work, in markets, or at home, even though they have learned how to cope with this existential anxiety.
- National Crime Records Bureau statistics for 2012 to 2016 show that approximately 40% of female reported rape victims were minors and 95% knew the rapist. The rapists belonged to the “circle of trust” of extended family and friends. This clearly showcases the recurring and pervasive social reality of sexual violence against women.
- Further, the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4) suggests that 30 percent of women in India in the age group of 15-49 have experienced physical violence since the age of 15. The report further reveals that 6 percent women

in the same age group have experienced sexual violence at least once in their lifetime. About 31 percent of married women have experienced physical, sexual or emotional violence by their spouses.

- The deeply entrenched patriarchal attitudes of most of the members of society is one of the factors for recurring and pervasive social reality of sexual violence against women.
- Not engaging with “men and boys” as change agents but acknowledging the expectations linked to masculinity which further perpetuates the cycle of masculine sexual violence and repression of women.
- Not recognizing sexual and reproductive health and rights of women by not promoting and protecting women’s right to have control and decide freely over matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, family-planning choices and access to comprehensive sexuality education which perpetuates sexual violence against them.
- Not reclaiming the spaces for women to increase their presence in visibility through political and economic participation and not diversifying their engagement in nontraditional sectors which relegates them to limited spaces.
- Another aspect is the cost incurred due to sexual violence, be it direct or indirect. The direct costs for violence against women include lives lost as well as cost of services provided such as expenditures on medical treatment and psychological counseling, legal protection, providing housing and shelters for women, and social services. Indirect costs include days of work lost leading to reduced productivity and its impact on overall economy.
- India has been slow in its pace for action against violence on women, but the brutal gang rape of a 23-year-old New Delhi girl on December 2012, aroused the Indians from their deep slumber on this issue. This incident led to a sudden outpouring of anger and frustration about the situation that allowed such attacks to take place.
- The irony is that without wide media coverage there is no possibility of cultural shift, and with media coverage, the illusion of women’s safety breaks and ratings plunge. India – and the rest of the world – would do well to make women’s safety and freedom central goals of democracy and development, and learn about the science of cultural change.
- As a result of Nirbhaya effect, the parliament passed the criminal law (amendment) Act 2013, which provides for amendment of the Indian Penal Code, Indian Evidence Act, and the code of criminal procedure.
- It also enacted the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prohibition, Prevention, and Redressal) Act 2013, 16 years after the Supreme Court directed the Indian Government to provide legal framework to deal with the issue of sexual harassment. Five exclusive fast track courts were set up to deal with cases of sexual violence against women.

Conclusion

While government's efforts to end the caste system and overturn women's disempowerment by advocating for policies focused on gender equality, fight against sexual violence, the government's failure to enforce these policies due to corruption has left patriarchy and the caste system intact which helps in propagation of sexual violence against women and makes India stay away from its civilizational ideal of women being respected and honoured with empowerment.

4. With the evolving public policy discourse in India, the role of women and women organisations has gained much traction as a factor essential for the success of any scheme/ project. Illustrate with the help of suitable examples.

Introduction

Women in India make up 7.5% of the world's total population. In spite of this the representation of women in the level of policy making is abysmally low. The report Women In Politics ranked India at 148 position in representation of women in executive government.

Body

Constitutional provisions for women in Political Participation:

The Constitution of India guaranteed justice-social, economic and political, liberty of thought, and equality to all citizens. Constitution provided for equality of women and called State to take measures to neutralize the socio-economic, educational and political disadvantage faced by women.

- Article 14: It guarantees equality before law and equal protection of law with in the territory of India.
- Article 15: It prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth. According to article 15(3), State can make special provisions for the benefit women and children.
- Article 16: Equality of opportunity for all citizens in matter relating to employment. No citizen can be denied employment on grounds of religion, race, cast, sex, decent, place of birth residence or any of them.
- Article 39: Article 39(a) provides for an adequate means of livelihood for all citizen. Article 39 (b) has provisions for equal pay for equal work for both men and women. Article 39 (c) has provisions for securing the health and strength of workers, men and women, and not to abuse the tender age of children.
- Article 42: It guarantees just and humane condition of work and maternity relief. Article 42 is in accordance with Article 23 and 25 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- Article 325 and 326: They guarantee political equality, equal right to participate in political activity and right to vote, respectively.
- Article 243 (D): It provides for the political reservation to women in every panchayat elections. It has extended this reservation to elected office as well.

Women and women organization also tends to act as pressure group for the discourse of any public policy, for examples

- Gulabi gang: Sampatlal devi started a society called the Gulabi Gang with a group of women from her village to fight various forms of social injustice. This developed into an organized women's movement with tens of thousands of members spread over several districts in Uttar Pradesh.
- Nirbhaya vahini: Nirbhaya Vahini is a volunteer unit of the Honour for Women National Campaign founded by Manasi Pradhan. It helps to mobilize public opinion and launch a sustained campaign for the implementation of the movement's Four-Point charter of demand such as ban on liquor trade, self-defence training for girls, special protection for women security in every district, and Fast-track court and special investigating & prosecuting wing in every district.
- The RAHI Foundation (Recovering and Healing from Incest): This specializes in working with adult women survivors of incest and childhood sexual abuse and offers services that are uniquely important to their recovery process located in Delhi.
- Sabala: This focus on the "empowerment of women", including the tribal Lambani, through enabling financial freedom, political voice, social acceptance, and educational opportunities, located in Bijapur, Karnataka.
- Sanlaap: Sanlaap is a developmental organization that works towards correction of social imbalances which present themselves as gender injustice and violence against women and children. The primary work is focused against trafficking of women and children for commercial sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and forced prostitution located in Kolkata.

Conclusion

Women role in society has come a long way, which benefits not only women but society as a whole, still a lot needs to be done in our country to bring women at par with men in social status, a lot needs to change to modernise societal mindsets, and men also have a big role alongside women to further this cause. There is a need for women to organize themselves to be able to carve a niche in all sectors of the society and fight for their needs.

5. Critically evaluate the status, challenges and opportunities for women entrepreneurs in India.

Introduction

Women are the largest untapped reservoir of talent and women entrepreneurship is the most unexplored part of the economy, especially in developing countries like India. Women entrepreneurship is gaining importance in India in the wake of economic liberalization and globalization.

Body**Status of Women entrepreneurship in India:**

- In a survey conducted by Dell and Global Entrepreneurship and Development Institute (GEDI), India was ranked 16th/17 countries only above Uganda. Countries like Turkey, Morocco and Egypt has outperformed India.
- Only about 16 percent of Indian women own or run businesses, according to the Economic Census conducted by IMF. More than 90 percent of companies run by women are microenterprises, and about 79 percent are self-financed.
- At present, women's entrepreneurial role is limited in the large-scale industries and technology-based businesses. But even in small scale industries, the women's participation is very low. As per the third all India census of Small-Scale Industries, only 10.11% of the micro and small enterprises were owned by women, and only 9.46% of them were managed by women
- The participation of women has increased in the past decade. Yet, women constitute only one third of the economic enterprises.
- The government has introduced schemes like Skill India Mission, Stand Up India, Mudra scheme etc., which have helped Indian women to start their own business.
- The Self-Help Group promotion through schemes like Bank linkage or Kudumbashree / Jharcraft etc., have generated women run business all over the country.
- Many women start a business due to some traumatic event, such as divorce, discrimination due to pregnancy or the corporate glass ceiling, the health of a family member, or economic reasons such as a layoff.

A new talent pool of women entrepreneurs is forming today, as more women opt to leave corporate world to chart their own business plans. Skill, knowledge and adaptability in business are the main reasons for women to emerge into business ventures.

Challenges:

- Conflicts between Work and Domestic Commitments: Women's family obligations also bar them from becoming successful entrepreneurs especially in developing country like India.
- Heavy household responsibilities leave a demand on women especially those in rural areas who have more children. They are required to perform their traditional role as housewives and therefore, they have fewer hours of free time than men, both during the weekend and on weekdays.
- Lack of family support- Sometimes the family may make the women feel guilty of neglecting household duties in her pursuit of business obligations.

Cultural traditions may hold back a woman from venturing into her own business. Male members think it is a big risk financing the ventures run by women.

- Marketing and promotion of business poses challenge to women entrepreneurs specially with the patriarchal and stereotyped mindset of the society. E.g. A school in Bihar rejected a proposal to supply books as it was run by a women.
- Lack of confidence and faith-lack of role models undermines the self Confidence of women entrepreneurs. The activity of selling is considered abhorrent to the female gender. As per ILO report there is a prevailing stereotyping in India against women entrepreneurship especially in rural areas.
- Unlike men, women mobility in India is highly limited due to many reasons. E.g. A single women asking for room is still looked with suspicion.
- Indian women give more emphasis to family ties and relationships. Married women have to make a fine balance between business and family.
- Gender gaps in education: HDI reports shows that the Gender gap is as much as 100% in several of the states (E.g. Mean years of schooling for women is around 5 years compared to 7.2 years for men). they often lack the Combination of education, vocational and technical skills, and work experience Needed to support the development of highly productive businesses.
- Lack of finance: impeded by lack of personal identification, lack of property in their own name and the need for their husband's countersignature on many documents.
- Legal constraints in family law- The institutional and legal environment is critical to the growth of female-owned enterprises. Laws regulating the private sphere specifically those regarding marriage, inheritance and land can hinder women's access to assets that can be used as collateral when securing a loan

Opportunities:

Economic development of the today's woman is crucial for economic development of any country specially a country like India. The dependency on service sector has created many entrepreneurial opportunities for women that they can utilize to enhance their social standing and reputation.

- Increasing awareness among parents is shattering the patriarchal mindset and stereotyping within the families and hence women are seen as potential resources to do business.
- Increasing Urban population has shattered the patriarchal mindset about women which has increased opportunity for women. E.g. the incidents of dowry have come down and marriage of women is not a liability and hence provide additional capital for ventures.
- Government promotion to women entrepreneurship through various schemes by providing capital support.

- International recognition of women entrepreneurial potential and increasing international support. Recently NITI Aayog organized Women Entrepreneur Summit with Ivanka Trump as chief guest which saw numerous investment support.
- Increasing Literacy and education level of the present generation women which has provided an opportunity to involve in business activities.
- Promotion to traditional crafts through various government schemes like Tribes India etc., has increased the self-help groups which are mainly driven by women.
- The rising digital market has increased the market exposure and ease in setting up of enterprise which has helped in mobility constraints of women.

Conclusion

When women move forward, the family moves, the village moves and then ultimately the Nation moves forward. The glass ceilings are shattered and women are found indulged in every line of business. The entry of women into business in India is traced out as an extension of their kitchen activities. There is a need for more Awareness programme, training Programmes, skill development, loans and subsidies, grievance forums etc., promoting women entrepreneurship.

(Note: Distinguish Sociology points from governance points. Practice writing sociology points in paper 1)