



Mains Practice Question

Q. “Though women in post-Independent India have excelled in various fields, the social attitude towards women and feminist movement has been patriarchal.” Apart from women education and women empowerment schemes, what interventions can help change this milieu? (250 Words)

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Approach

- First provide a brief background explaining how women got empowered post-Independence and what are the issues faced in the backdrop of patriarchy.
- Then, discuss the initiatives that can be taken to tackle this issue.

Introduction

Patriarchy is a social system in which men hold primary power, moral authority, special privilege, and control over property. Despite the prevalence of patriarchy in India, the status of women in post-Independent India has continuously changed with changing socio-economic and political realities. This change has been a result of external agents and catalysts like government initiatives and women-led movements.

Women have been empowered by spread of education, communication, media, political parties, and general awakening. Women like Kalpana Chawla, Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw and Late Sushma Swaraj represent diverse fields of social work and professional life. But issues like the Sabarimala controversy, Triple Talaq, Madhya Pradesh HC judgement in POCSO Act, etc. highlight that patriarchal barriers to women empowerment remain deeply entrenched in society.

Body

Apart from special focus on women education and women empowerment schemes, collective interventions are the need of the hour to change the conception that India is a patriarchal society. This can be done through:

- Imbibing gender equality ideas needs to start within homes, in attitudes of parents, spouse and siblings.
- Women must have the freedom to take important decisions of life such as which career to pursue, when to marry, etc.
- Setting up of specially designed courts (Fast Track Courts) for trying cases of violence against women. These courts could be mandated to finalise the case within a stipulated period.
- The cause of gender equality at work will be helped by balancing maternity leaves with paternity leaves.
- Administrative reforms need to factor in gender inclusion, especially in police. It can help deemphasise the culture of violence in public life.
- Concepts like 24×7 cities can combine urbanisation, needs of public safety, and promote greater participation of women in economy and public life.

Conclusion

Thus, education and empowerment schemes are necessary to support the feminist movement, but issues hindering gender equality in India require more fundamental and practical approach.

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