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**INVESTIGATE THE STATUS OF WOMEN, PROBLEMS AND PREDICAMENTS
ACCORDING TO SOCIAL NORMS OF THE SOCIETY**

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the status of women, along with the problems and predicaments they encounter due to prevailing social norms and traditional societal expectations. Despite significant progress in education, employment, and legal rights, women continue to face multiple forms of discrimination, gender inequality, limited decision-making power, economic dependence, and social restrictions. Deep-rooted patriarchal values, cultural practices, and stereotypes often hinder their personal, educational, and professional development while exposing them to various forms of violence, harassment, and unequal opportunities. The study examines how social norms shape women's roles within families, workplaces, and communities, influencing their access to resources, justice, and equal participation in society. It also highlights the impact of education, legal reforms, and women's empowerment initiatives in challenging discriminatory practices and promoting gender equality. By analyzing the relationship between societal attitudes and women's lived experiences, the study emphasizes the need for inclusive policies, social awareness, and collective efforts to create a just, equitable, and empowering environment where women can realize their full potential and contribute meaningfully to sustainable social development.

Keywords: Women's Status, Gender Equality, Social Norms, Patriarchy, Gender Discrimination, Women's Empowerment, Social Justice, Cultural Practices, Women's Rights.

INTRODUCTION

Every nation's social, economic, cultural, and political growth is greatly influenced by women, who make up about half of the world's population. Unfortunately, many women still encounter prejudice and injustice as a result of long-established societal conventions and patriarchal practices, even if there have been significant improvements in education, employment, legal protection, and social awareness. Many women still face barriers to economic independence, political engagement, education, decision-making power, and freedom due to traditional views of gender roles. The gender wage gap, discrimination in the job, limited career advancement prospects, and domestic abuse are just a few of the problems that women face as a result of these social expectations. Cultural values and social institutions control women's daily life, which is why their position is strongly tied to them. This research looks on women's position and the challenges they face within the context of current societal standards. In order to promote gender equality, women's empowerment, and inclusive development, it also stresses the significance of educational reforms, legislative changes, and social transformation.

REVIEW OF LITRETURE

Patil, Dr. (2021) The purpose of this research is to examine the evolution of women's standing in Indian society. Specifically, it looks at how women's social standing changed throughout time. In patriarchal countries, women's standing has always been subordinate to men's, according to this study's results. The cultural, religious, social, educational, marital, and economic standing of women is lower than that of males in our culture. Women in India's patriarchal culture still face discrimination in the modern day. The results of this research make an effort to examine women's social position in a patriarchal culture from every angle. Women in Indian society play a supporting role in many spheres of life, including the home, the church, the court system, and the news. Culture governs all aspects of society, including sexuality, reproduction, labour force, and means of production. It is for this reason that women are relegated to the same social standing as men in all these instances. When looking at the dynamics between men and women at many social levels, it becomes clear that women do not have equal status to males in all spheres of society, including but not limited to: family, religion, culture, and caste. To her, men are nothing more than property, slaves, and belongings. Political, religious, cultural, and familial rights have all been denied to women throughout society. The sexually stimulated attitude toward women is referred to as "Chool

and Mool" or "Muki Bichari- Kunihi Haka."

Qurban, Shafiq & Ali, Rubina (2019) Being a patriarchal country, Pakistan views empowering women as its greatest policy issue. As a general rule, women are less powerful and occupy lower social positions in society. A number of policy documents aimed at empowering women were approved by the government, but they were left unused on office shelves. Gender discrimination is one of the main causes of women's under-representation and the inequality it fosters in many areas of society, including the home, the workplace, the political arena, schools, and hospitals. The purpose of this article has been to examine, via a feminist lens, ways to lessen gender inequality and increase possibilities for men and women alike. Lastly, this study asserts that feminist theory has brought attention to power imbalances and highlighted policy inadequacies related to power distribution. The only way to empower women in Pakistan and remove these obstacles is to enact the specific legislative changes advocated for in this paper.

Kalam, Abul (2014) The modern social norms and barriers to women's development in Bangladesh are the subject of this research. One popular framework for advancing gender parity and social justice is the advancement of women in leadership roles within organisations and in politics. The goal of this research is to examine the discourses surrounding these events, as well as the positions of women and other political, economic, and social variables. The environment of gender inequity and societal standards on a global, national, community, and household level compounded the difficulties faced by women in Bangladesh. Among the many obstacles to women's empowerment and the realisation of the government's vision-2021, child marriage stands out. As a result of patriarchal capitalism, women in Bangladesh are socially and economically relegated to a subservient position, and this subordination is sometimes shown in violent ways.

Pistor, Katharina et al., (2010) The "Rule of Law" has been linked in numerous empirical studies to a variety of desirable outcome variables, such as GDP levels, financial market development, investment rates and trade volumes, human rights, and reductions in child mortality, among many others. In this research, we address the conundrum that women's status does not have the same beneficial connection for all nations save the wealthiest. Using data at the national level, we demonstrate that there is a small correlation between women's status and several Rule of Law indices, and that this link vanishes completely in economically impoverished nations. Similarly, there is a strong relationship between gender equality and rule of law metrics in high-income nations. In contrast, no such association

exists for low-income nations. We are here to clarify this riddle. We find some empirical evidence for the idea that societal norms regarding gender equality, rather than legal structures, mostly govern women's social rank. The correlation between social norms, economic progress, and rule of law should be reevaluated in light of these results. They also make us wonder how the existing indexes understand the Rule of Law and how that understanding may impact our findings.

SOCIAL NORMS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON WOMEN'S LIVES

What govern people's activities inside a community are its social norms, which are the generally acknowledged standards of conduct, beliefs, and expectations. From infancy until adulthood, these standards define women's duties, responsibilities, rights, and opportunities, greatly impacting their life. Traditionally, women have been expected to take care of the home, the children, and the family's welfare in many civilisations, while males are expected to make the key financial and decision-making decisions. As a result of these stereotypes, women are less likely to be self-reliant and have less opportunities to advance in their careers, in leadership roles, and in public policymaking. Consequently, even if they have the skills and talents needed, many women face obstacles to their personal progress and economic independence.

Attitudes about women's reproductive rights, marriage, professional choices, and education are influenced by societal standards as well. Several communities still have issues that hinder women's social and economic growth, such as early marriage, a preference for male offspring, movement restrictions, and restricted access to higher education. In the workplace, women face discrimination in recruitment, promotions, salaries, and recognition due to gender stereotypes that depict them as less capable of leadership, scientific accomplishment, or management duties. As a result of these long-held assumptions, women lack self-assurance and are less likely to strive for advancement in their careers.

As a result of damaging societal norms, there is an increase in gender-based violence, domestic violence, harassment, and community and family inequality. There is a risk of social marginalisation, psychological strain, and criticism for women who question conventional wisdom. Persistent conservative cultural views can undermine the effective application of constitutional safeguards and legal frameworks that promote equality. Social

attitudes are changing, nevertheless, due to rising levels of education, economic engagement, internet access, media literacy, and women's empowerment programs. The fight against sexism and for gender equality can only be won through the power of education. More and more, community awareness initiatives, civil society organisations, and government laws are working to remove gender prejudice and promote women's rights. Gender equality, women's empowerment, and inclusive and sustainable society development can only be achieved via the transformation of limiting social norms through education, inclusive policies, and collective social responsibility.

MAJOR PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

While women in today's society have achieved great strides in many areas, including education, work, politics, entrepreneurship, and leadership, they still confront many obstacles that impede their overall advancement and equality. One of the biggest problems is that women still face discrimination based on their gender, which limits their possibilities for advancement, fair pay, healthcare, and education. Traditional ideas and assumptions still impact decision-making in families, companies, and communities, despite the fact that many nations have passed laws encouraging gender equality. Despite having the credentials and abilities needed for senior management and political positions, many women still face the "glass ceiling," which prevents them from advancing in their careers and being represented in these positions.

Domestic violence, sexual harassment, human trafficking, child marriage, online harassment, maltreatment connected to dowries, and other forms of gender-based violence also pose a significant threat. The psychological, emotional, and financial repercussions of these types of abuse are just as devastating as the physical dangers they pose to women. Discrimination, salary disparity, and insecure jobs all contribute to women's lack of economic autonomy and career advancement opportunities. Physical and mental tiredness are common outcomes for women who are responsible for both paid and unpaid household labour, childcare, and caregiving on top of their already heavy workloads. Cultural norms and patriarchal beliefs limit women's agency, agency in decision-making, property ownership, and public engagement in many communities.

Poverty, illiteracy, a lack of healthcare facilities, and insufficient access to technology and financial resources exacerbate the difficulties experienced by women from economically disadvantaged sectors, rural regions, and marginalised populations. They are much more at risk due to digital inequalities and a general lack of knowledge on their legal rights. There are a lot of government welfare programs and constitutional safeguards, but societal opposition and institutional obstacles make it hard to consistently put ideas into action. To overcome these obstacles, we need strict adherence to the law, high-quality education, economic independence, gender-sensitive policies, public awareness initiatives, and the joint efforts of families, schools, and government agencies. Achieving sustainable development, social justice, and long-term gender equality requires building an inclusive society that recognises and protects women's rights, provides equal opportunity, and eradicates discrimination.

CONCLUSION

Educational opportunities, employment, access to justice, and civic engagement. Yet, gender stereotypes, patriarchal attitudes, and long-established societal conventions still pose formidable obstacles to gender parity and individual agency. The following issues persist: economic reliance, restricted involvement in decision-making, discrimination, and uneven opportunities based on gender. Both their personal development and society's social and economic progress are impeded by these obstacles. Education, knowledge, and the promotion of inclusive cultural values are essential for changing outdated views and achieving true gender equality. To safeguard women's rights and dignity, it is crucial to have laws that are strictly enforced, equitable access to resources and economic opportunities, and public policies that are supportive. To eradicate discrimination and promote equitable participation in all areas of life, families, schools, governments, and civil society must collaborate. Social justice, sustainable development, and inclusive growth may be more easily attained by a society that prioritises women's empowerment, respect, and worth.

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