



Progressive Education Society's
MODERN COLLEGE OF ARTS, SCIENCE AND COMMERCE

Ganeshkhind, Pune-411016, Maharashtra, India

Department of Psychology.

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VOLUME XIV

KALEIDOSCOPE

Progressive Education Society's
MODERN COLLEGE OF ARTS, SCIENCE AND COMMERCE
Ganeshkhind, Pune, 16.

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

KALEIDOSCOPE
Volume XIV

TABOOS

2021-2022

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I would like to thank my colleague Nashome Crasto who has helped in coordinating the online and offline meetings for discussion, following through with students and active participation in all the tasks connected with making Kaleidoscope Volume 14. Thanks to my colleague Swati Jagtap for taking care of the section in Marathi. Thanks to my colleagues Akanksha Deo and Prajakta Jori for help in alignment and basic proofreading. I wish to congratulate all the students who have written for the journal. Student members of Disha, who have written articles and thematic pieces, have contributed in making this issue of Kaleidoscope during COVID times see fruition with the same enthusiasm and diligence as always. Shubham Jadhav MA part II has designed the Cover page suitable to the theme. Thanks Shubham!

Several students have contributed artwork as colorful additions to the Magazine, a big thank you to all of them. Tanseem Khanjade helped with typing the articles in Marathi, we are grateful to her.

This Volume too like the previous one is an E magazine. I am happy to place the **Fourteenth Volume of KALEIDOSCOPE** before all of you, our readers.

Dr. Sadhana Natu
Associate Professor and Head
Department of Psychology.
P. E. Society's Modern College of Arts, Science and Commerce,
Ganeshkhind, Pune 16
March 2022

From the Principal's Desk...



Kaleidoscope, the Annual Magazine of the Department of Psychology is in its 14th year and I could not be prouder of the achievements of the Department .It is a monumental task to consistently come out with a magazine every year but Dr Sadhana Natu with her students and staff colleagues has completed this wondrous feat!

I had the pleasure to interact with some students who have been writing for the magazine and they shared about their articles in the current magazine. The way the students have expressed the theme Taboo is very interesting and I was impressed to see the level of efforts put in by the students.

I would like to congratulate all the students who have written for Kaleidoscope and I also extend my wishes to Dr. Sadhana Natu and her colleagues for putting together another successful volume of the Psychology Magazine.

Dr.Sanjay Kharat,
Principal.

P. E. Society's Modern College of Arts, Science and Commerce,
Ganeshkhind, Pune 16.



Vice Principal Speaks...



On the occasion of the release of the Fourteenth Volume of Kaleidoscope, I wish to congratulate all the members of Disha who have worked extremely hard in putting up this magazine consistently for 14 years.

The theme of the magazine is something readers will be interested in and will find relevant. I congratulate the Head of the Department, Dr. Sadhana Natu and faculty members of the Department of Psychology who work tirelessly to make Disha and Kaleidoscope a successful endeavor.

Dr. Jyoti Gagangras,
Vice Principal, Arts
P. E. Society's Modern College of Arts, Science and Commerce,
Ganeshkhind, Pune 16

EDITORIAL



A fledgling effort that started in 2009 as an attempt to train students in thematic writing in Psychology has grown and flourished in the last 14 years! KALEIDOSCOPE is fourteen in 2021. The name of the journal refers to the 'myriad **aspects of the human mind**' which remains an '**enigma, unfathomed**'! Like a Kaleidoscope, **the human mind is multi-hued, as the direction changes, so does the perspective**'. A fitting title/name for a journal of Psychology.

Over the years many forms of writing and expression have been added: academic, thematic writing, art work, poems, calligraphy and more; all related to psychological themes. My colleagues and I are justifiably proud of both our 'first time' writers who are taking baby steps as well those who have now honed their skills and are getting better each year. Getting students to write, hand holding so that they write well, is a task that needs empathy, dialogue, discussion and follow up! This time too, the entire process lasted for 2 months. We have managed to do that for a long time with a small group of faculty members. I am happy that we have sustained the momentum, without a break for fourteen years, with goals set higher each year, in terms of achieving perfection.

This year's theme is 'Taboos' a marker of the discontent and angst with the establishment. The theme was suggested by a student, and of course resonated with our post millennial students and it had many takers. Students have touched upon taboo topics encompassing sexualities, marriage, divorce, sexuality education, adoption, fashion, mental disorders, menstruation, violence, inter caste marriages to give you a flavour of what the volume holds. The topics listed are a bird's eye view of social

pressure and control and shows how 'taboos and censorship exists ' in all walks of life and is all pervasive.

The poems and artwork reflect the various types of creativity that the students possess and which needs to be harnessed. Our Annual Report will give the readers an idea about the vision behind our activities aimed at cognitive, affective and behavioural progress of our students. The photographs of our posters encompass glimpses of the activities of last year. Kaleidoscope is bilingual (articles in English and Marathi) and we have welcomed articles written in Hindi too.

Our students from Marathi medium bring their own locations and criticality in terms of understanding to the topic and their writing and Kaleidoscope is richer in terms of representing their efforts.

It is my experience that students who start with KALEIDOSCOPE, can later move on to research writing with more ease than those who have not attempted thematic writing. Our students and alumni from the last fourteen years who have contributed to Kaleidoscope, have enriched their CV through this writing and are admired when they move on to further education and later into work domains. In fact, thanks to students who moved elsewhere in the country or abroad for further studies, the journal has really gone places! In appreciation of this consistent and high-quality writing for the last ten years, our Respected Principal, has given the journal an ISBN, since Volume 10 and we are thankful to him.

Thematic, focused writing is both creative and cognitive. Learning the language of Psychology is also an uphill task, I am really happy that so many of our students have tried to master this in the last 14 years.

Dr Sadhana Natu
Associate Professor and Head
Department of Psychology,
P. E. Society's Modern College of
Arts, Science and Commerce, Ganeshkhind, Pune 16

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ADOPTION: STILL A TABOO?

By

Mariyam Mithaiwala

TYBA

Adoption is a blessing and not a curse. Although large joint units have long been replaced by small nuclear clusters and adoption has become increasingly more common throughout time, yet this is still a taboo in many orthodox families injected with conventional ideologies, and its taboo label has yet to falter. On one hand, progressive parents want to ensure a healthy environment for child-rearing. On the other, blind superstitions hinder a childless couple from adding glee to their nest with a cute, adorable baby.

Even as more people are looking to adopt to start a family and birth parents are searching for an adoption plan to give their child a better life, there is still a small stigma around it. Here are some reasons adoption continues to be a taboo subject.

Adopting a child has the same weight and responsibility as taking care of a child with whom you're biologically related. Often, parents who are looking to adopt consider the process to be similar to buying a pet for the house. They express whims and demands in the child they chose. They look for their desired caste, complexion, physical dexterity, sex in the child. These whims would not be possible if the child were a product of natural birth. There is no returning a child of your body, due to some defect which you might find unflattering. Then why have such a fussy attitude when adopting. Adoption is meant to be a child centric process, not parent centric.

Adoptive parents are often apprehensive about the questions society will ask when they go for adoption. These questions may be voiced or just an inner dialogue amongst oneself. They fret about people calling into question their manhood, virility or them being barren and impotent. The parents feel that society will see them in a lower light. This orthodox and retrograde mindset shouldn't come in the way of the parents and their future child's happiness.

Instead of fostering such taboos that have plagued adoption for so long, parents shall divulge into an honest conversation on the subject and bring all views and feelings into the open. Having reservations about adoption is natural. Many fear if they'll be able to relate to an adopted child, the way they would to a biological one.

Or the other way round, if the child would have a proper familial connection with them. There's always a dilemma about telling the kid if they are adopted or not. Or how to break this news to them in the best possible way and how they would react when told the news. Will this break down their confidence and self-esteem? Will it create a rift in the family as they might start questioning everything? Would they continue to love you the same?

“Adoption has its own challenges to meet with. But one good outcome of socio-legal amendments over the years is breaking those draconian, customary barriers and allowing

single mothers to lend an identity to their children in absence of a father. Similarly, it is proven that a father too can take double parental responsibilities to nurture a child,” notes Kolkata based psychologist and research scholar Sanchita Pakrashi.

Myths About Adoption

- It takes years to adopt.
- You have to be married to adopt.
- Fosters kids are out of control and dangerous.
- Adoption from foster care is expensive.
- Biological parents can take their kids back.
- You have to own a home to adopt.
- Most birth mothers are teenagers.
- Placing a child with a family of another race or ethnicity is bound to cause problems for the child.

Nurturing a child is never easy, and adoption can add extra burden to this already challenging task. But it stands to reason, isn't it a fair bargain to undergo all these hardships in return for emotional succor who will shower you with unrequited love and adoration for the rest of your life. One shouldn't fear adoption, because you are worried that you won't be able to relate to other parents who have biological children, or vice-versa. Living in a conservative bubble, won't help you and your family reach their goals of contentment; only conquering these taboos will.

There isn't anything wrong, immoral or vile about this process. It is as pure and natural as biological birth. At the end, both go home with a beautiful stranger whom you make your own.

“Be Curious, Not Judgmental.” -Walt Whitman

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ART FORMS WE CHOOSE TO EXPRESS OURSELVES IN, THAT ARE INVALID IN OUR SOCIETY.

By
Sayoni Yogesh
SYBA

Expressing oneself has to be one of the most liberating sets of emotions that we feel. And to choose different forms of art to be able to express ourselves, has to be a very personal choice we make. Cooking, dancing, writing, painting, reading, singing, sports and athletics are a few forms of expression, but the ones that don't get spoken about a lot are- tattoos, piercings, dying of hair, etc.

We have now successfully made it to 2022 and tattoos are still seen as a taboo in our society. Tattoos as a form of art are barely acknowledged, let alone accepted and people with ink on their body are highly discriminated against by the normal crowd. People with tattoos are seen as unethical, unprofessional, abnormal individuals and/or sometimes even thought of as mentally unstable. Tattoos have a very long history since centuries and it's an age-old practice to ink a human body. Our ancestors got hand-poked ink on their bodies to portray their rebellion in times of war as well as, to honor their lost beloveds. But in today's day, we often see industries as grand as the corporate and healthcare discriminating against tattoos and truly missing out on the real talent and potential in our youth, which chooses to be expressive in nature. We rarely see parents being supportive of their children wanting to get inked, let alone encourage this form of expression. The question still remains: do our tattoos have anything to do with our capability and understanding of how good we are at our chosen field of work?

Piercings are held as odd and are frequently and openly termed as "hippies wear" in our society. People with multiple piercings are easily assumed to be battling through something in their personal life. It's not necessarily a compulsion that people who choose to get creative piercings and wear expressive jewelry are mentally unstable, or abnormal, or reckless and/or irresponsible. Choosing to have multiple piercings does not necessarily define an individual's mental stability, or ethical being or even their professional work experience/background for that matter. Like tattoos, our history stands as evidence in case of piercings as well. In earlier times too, women wore flamboyant jewelry that was made for their piercings, including royal queens and members of the royal family. And yet, we see people being made fun of, misunderstood, and being made assumptions about because they chose to express themselves unapologetically.

Coloring our hair into various vibrant colors has to be one of the best things that happened to our generation. Pink, blue, green, purple, yellow, pastels, gold, and grey- you name it, and they did it. This generation wants to feel alive and they choose to express their spontaneity

through their style of hair, but all they really get in return are comments and assumptions being made about their sexuality, their gender, and their mental stability. Just because a person chooses to color their hair in a beautiful color, does not necessarily have to mean they are queer. Just because a person chooses to be themselves and not settle for the unwritten rules and boxes our society has been segregating us in, does not mean they are fighting with abnormalities or mental illnesses. Just because they choose to step out of this rectangle they were born in, without choice, does not mean they will want to stay in it.

As we move forward and make remarkable progress in our society with all varieties of taboos and problems we're facing, I think it's also important that we sit down, take a breath, and willingly choose to have these conversations that have made many generations before us uncomfortable. Sex and sex education, feminism, tattoos/piercings/hair color, homosexuality, queer rights, and so many more conversations that haven't been spoken about. It's important we talk about what makes us shift in our seat with discomfort, because unless we talk about it, how are we ever going to understand and navigate our way through it?

With this being said, i hope we can soon, safely imagine a world where we can see inked software engineers walking around, pierced healthcare professionals treating the needy, and colored hair lawyers fighting for the right things as normal people with stable mental health, not necessarily queer and absolutely capable and passionate towards their work. All of them, normal people of our society, living in peace and acceptance. Live and let live.

"The most strongly enforced of all known taboos is the taboo against knowing who or what you really are behind the mask of your apparently separate, independent, and isolated ego."

— Alan Watts

ASEXUALITY: THE ASCENT OF THE ‘INVISIBLE’ SEXUAL ORIENTATION

By

Aabha Joshi and Isha Joshi

SYBA

Long in the shadows, Asexuality is finally becoming increasingly visible.

Case Study:

A 20-year-old, male, graduate, currently unemployed, Christian by religion, belonging from a lower-middle socioeconomic class from Imphal, Manipur, India presented to the psychiatry outpatient department (OPD) with self-identity issues. He found himself not conforming to the universally accepted male or female sex. He repeatedly tried to convince for the existence of some other sexual orientation that is on asexuality. He stated "I don't know who has made this social norm! Well if I don't get attracted to the opposite sex or even the same sex for that matter does it mean I am diseased? I don't feel anything about sex. I consider human beings as humans only, not like males or females. I don't like the way it's been followed till now and the behaviors which are restricted to that male, female boundary. I don't want to consider myself as a male or female either. I don't want to follow the trend which these stupid people are doing blindly for years."

On general physical examination, no abnormalities were found without any signs and symptoms of gonadal dysfunctions with normal genito-urinary functions. No active psychopathology was found on his mental status examination. Although increased thinking about his uniqueness was present, his social functioning was not hampered and these thoughts were not much distressing to self. Interactions with friends and family were adequate. His masturbation was not affected but he did not fantasize about any humans while doing it, although the frequency of which is reduced (once in a month or so). No future ambitions of getting married and procreating but rather live a solitary life with his friends and family together.

Asexuality is generally defined as the lack of sexual attraction to others or low interest in sexual activities and it has been called as ‘the Invisible Orientation.

It's common for asexual people to have romantic relationships. Asexuality is their orientation; as they say, ‘we are built that way’. It tends to be misunderstood and underdiscussed; people don't believe that someone can really be Asexual. One of the many misconceptions about Asexuality is that it equates to celibacy, and that it is a choice, which is of course, not true. It is not a mental disorder, and people don't become asexual overnight.

There is only about 1% of people in the world who have publicly accepted their sexuality that belong to this community. In olden times, asexuality was never even talked about and considered a huge TABOO. The people belonging to the Asexual community are called as "ACE". The life for "ACE" community people has been very difficult because their orientation was considered abnormal, uncultured, and unnatural hence they were made to seek therapy and change their personality to what was considered 'normal' and 'natural'.

The concept of Asexuality first rose in the late 1890s. The German Sexologist – Magnus Hirschfeld made a reference to people without any sexual desire as 'ANESTHESIA SEXUAL'. The modern concept/ understanding of asexuality was consolidated in the 20th century. This term gained prominence in the following decades since the 1970s and was used to expand received ideas about sexuality. There was a time when its existence was tabooed and was expected to stay away from the common people - outside the city. It was also believed that it was a disease and could be contracted by physical touch.

A limited awareness of asexuality has made it harder for past generations of young people around the world to realize their identities – even as recently as millennials. Unfortunately, we have very minimal research available at hand.

There is a presumption put forth by the medical community, that the lack of sexual desire can be a result of pituitary tumors, which has been hindering their capabilities of natural human instincts for sexual desire. Hunger, thirst, sex, and sleep are considered to be the "Four Natural Human Instincts for Survival". Another bio-psycho-social opinion states that it's the libido (also known as sex drive) released in the body that determines the experience of sexual attraction, and the quantity of libido secreted - more or less, will determine the possible experience of sexual attraction.

One of the very undermining statements is that people say – 'it's just a phase, you'll get over it'. Such demotivating responses directly disqualify their views as an individual and largely affect their mental health. The asexual community still has a variety of unique physical and mental needs. It is mainly anthologized and mainly misdiagnosed/ improper treatment. The key parts of their identity are mainly ignored when it comes to therapy.

Asexual are more prone to experience a higher prevalence of

- Societal pressure
- Continuous Distress
- High chances of major depressive disorder
- Anxiety
- Social anxiety phobia
- Body dysmorphic disorder

- Suicidality
- Interpersonal problems

Why Asexuality Is Not a Sexual Dysfunction:

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) recognizes several sexual dysfunctions, such as Hypoactive Sexual Desire Disorder (HSDD) and Female Sexual Interest/Arousal Disorder (FSIAD). Both are relevant to a lack of interest in sex. The key difference between such sexual dysfunctions and asexuality is that people with disorders experience significant personal distress because of their lack of sexual attraction. Asexuals do not. They aren't worried about their asexuality (except for the disapproval it can bring from other people) and they are uninterested in seeking professional help to deal with it, they feel safe and comfortable with their feelings and choose not to change.

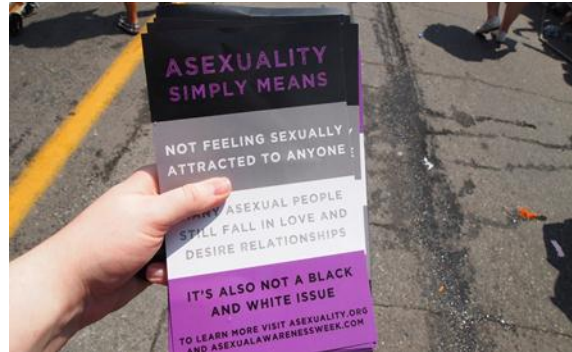
There is a growing population, and various modes of communication, there is also increasing awareness among common people about ASEXUALITY. As a result, along with the new international holiday celebrated on the 6th of April since 2021, initiatives are popping up to take asexuality out of the shadows – making it easier for people to come out as asexual all over the world. There is a significantly greater acceptance level in the older generations. “ASEXUAL AWARENESS WEEK” was founded by Sara Beth Brooks in 2010, which takes place from 25th to 30th October every year. There is also an asexual flag that consists of four horizontal stripes of - **Black, Grey, white and purple.**

AVEN - Asexuality Visibility and Education Network, hosts the world's largest online Asexual community. It strives to create open and honest discussion about Asexuality among sexual and asexual people. It was established on 10th March 2001 by David Jay.



Online, we find many people trying to do that - break the many myths surrounding the asexuality spectrum (Gupta, Pal, feminism in India, Anasuya, Sen, Sharma). There are many personal narratives found online. In the past few years, many websites that advocate for

LGBTQ+ issues have also brought awareness to asexual as a sexual orientation as opposed to religious celibacy or even a sexual disorder (Guha). There is even an asexuality website and forum called asexualindia.org to help guide questioning people and provide a community for people of the asexual spectrum.



Even then, there are issues like the fact that since these articles are in English, meaning only a small group of people who read English and have access to the internet can access the articles. According to co-founder of Asexuality India, Poornima (Gupta), this is further hindered by the fact that there is no academic research on the history or relevance of asexuality in India. This lack of research on the topic of asexuality was also mentioned by the researchers.



Straight Pal's Views:

Although there is growing acceptance for this orientation, yet Asexuality is still considered taboo in many parts of the country. There are a few celebrities who have come out as Asexual publically. Some of them are – David Bowie, Yasmin Benoit, etc.

Despite confusion and dismissal, Asexual voices have been getting louder and demanding recognition over the past decade. Along with ace communities' historical struggles to gain wider visibility, the Asexuality spectrum has also been included in the pride group, by including 'A' standing for Asexuality (LGBT to LGBTQIA).

BENEATH THE MYTH

By
Yashvi Gala
SYBA

Taboo, also spelled **tabu**, is the prohibition of an action based on the belief that such behavior is either too sacred and consecrated or too dangerous and accursed for ordinary individuals to undertake. The list of taboos and their importance may change over time. Some taboos may weaken or even disappear, while others may become stronger and more dominant. For example, child insurance and life insurance were for a long-time taboo and then became acceptable. There are even claims that the famous incest taboos are disappearing in complex societies. There are various explanations for the origin of taboos. The typical anthropological argument is that the origin of taboos is cultural experience. The alternative explanation is psychoanalytical, emphasizing the strong subconscious prohibitions that pass-through generations.

India is a country with so many different cultures and traditions. Hence, it is a sure fact that India has embraced new ideas and customs with both hands. But, still, there are certain groups of people with a mindset that block the new ideas and customs completely. Due to diversity in India, there might be a change in the opinions of different people of different generations.

Let us discuss some taboos regarding health and wellness.

Menstruation products.

Products like pads and panty liners are very common among the females, but they are still unaware or skeptical of tampons, menstrual cups and reusable pads. They still feel awkward when it comes to discussing their health and hygiene. 71% of the women declared that they had hidden a pad or tampon from view on their way to the bathroom. This is not just a taboo but also an element of shame for women as they are taught to keep “periods” a secret affair.

As menstruation gains traction as a social issue, a number of astonishing problems are gaining increased visibility: lack of access to basic products to manage menstruation, practices and traditions that threaten women’s security.

For nearly a century, brands have reinforced narratives of secrecy and embarrassment, promising solutions that would save women from revealing to anyone that they were menstruating. Advertisements created needs and insecurities in consumers, in order to then suggest the purchase of a certain product which would solve them. The message was clear: the best sanitary product is the one that keeps women safe, doesn’t leak, and hides their “condition” from the outside world. To differentiate themselves from mainstream pad and tampon brands, the social enterprises have depicted their own products as sustainable, transparent, and innovative alternatives. However, mainstream brands and activists alike raise

doubts about the actual environmental and social impact of offering organic cotton products in the Western market or introducing reusable solutions in underprivileged communities. Disposable solutions are safer in terms of hygiene, because they don't require proper washing and drying and can be either thrown away or burned once used. However, they represent a significant challenge in terms of trash, considering that in many developing countries there is little—if any—waste infrastructure available. Reusable products, however, come with the risk of girls not washing, drying, and storing them properly, potentially raising the risk of infections. Besides, the provision of underwear is crucial as some girls and women do not own underwear, which is of particular importance in emergency settings.

Tampons

These are actually cylindrical pads made of cotton. But unlike the traditional sanitary pads, tampons are inserted into your vagina to soak up menstrual blood. Some tampons come with an applicator that helps you put the tampon inside your vagina. Tampons have a string attached to the end that allows you to easily pull them out. What's more, tampons keep your private parts from rashes, allergies and smelling during menstruation. As it absorbs period flow before it can leave your body, a tampon is considered the best product to use for swimming on your period. Plus, there is no need to worry about signs of your period showing in the water. If inserted correctly, you can barely feel them and thus they offer more freedom of movement.

Menstrual cups

These are flexible, funnel-shaped cups made of rubber or silicone that you insert into your vagina to catch and collect period fluid. Menstrual cups are the most modern and economical menstrual products, promoted as an eco-friendly alternative to tampons and pads. But not all cups are reusable, so be sure to read the label while buying a menstrual cup. Cups can hold more blood than other methods, and they can be worn for up to 12 hours at a time. They come in a variety of colors, sizes, and styles. You can't feel them once they're inside your body properly and result in less period smell. Plus, you can swim in them and even wear them during a workout without bleeding. Reusable menstrual cups are those which you can rinse and wear again. This means you save a lot of money. A menstrual cup can last for up to 10 years. This translates to less landfill waste and fewer trees being cut down to make paper-based packaging.

Reusable pads

Reusable pads are cloth pads that can be used dozens of times. They absorb menstrual blood, and the pad should stay put for about four to five hours, depending on your menstrual flow. After use, you need to wash the cloth really well before you can reuse the same pad. These super-pads are usually made in several absorbent layers of either cotton, hemp, or bamboo, and never any plastic. The myth that 'cloth-based pads are unhygienic' is now busted. However, the concerns that hold these adsorbents unhygienic are quite understandable. It is a common misconception among menstruators that cloth-based pads are

harmful and can cause infection. But the real picture states that these pads are as healthy and safe as disposable pads. “Reusable cloth pads are a great alternative to disposable sanitary pads, tampons, and menstrual cups if washed and dried properly after their use.

While institutions seem not to have grasped the urgency of the grand challenge of menstruation, activists throughout the globe have started using their platforms and voices to denounce the taboo that connects women confined to menstrual huts in Nepal (Bowman 2018); young girls skipping school days in the UK (Marsh 2017; Brooks 2018; George 2017); women’s feelings of shame about their bodies; and under-regulation of the Femcare industry. Street marches and protests against the “tampon tax” started taking place, with campaigners calling for free menstrual products for girls in need, in the workplace, and in schools (Radnor 2017). Menstrual activism seems to offer a new angle to those fighting for gender equality, one that is inclusive and connects to common struggles.

Masturbation.

Vedic India pioneered the use of art, sculpture, and literature as early sexual educative guides. While the oldest teachings of Hinduism and Buddhism do indeed hope up the views that sex is meant for the marital bed, and should be considered a deeply private affair, they still very much understood how important sexual expression was. Around 500 BCE, the Kama Sutra was written. A text that described human desire, pleasure, and how to explore sensuality within a marriage. These teachings suggested that sex was sacred and important. That pleasure should not be synonymous with shame, but instead with love. While friends, older siblings, and the internet at large can all be excellent resources for all sorts of wild and wonderful taboo knowledge, what they generally fail to leave out are things like acceptance and safety.

Myths and Misconceptions about Female Masturbation

A common misconception is that women simply don’t masturbate. Women of different ages and with different sexual preferences enjoy masturbation. Studies have found that young adult men masturbate more than young adult women do. However, this does not mean that women don’t masturbate at all, and may mean that men are more comfortable than women disclosing that they masturbate. In fact, many psychologists believe masturbation can help people prepare for sex with another person because they will be better able to communicate their preferences to their sexual partner.

Conclusion: Females have been and, in some cases, still are an oppressed population and have many taboos attached to them such as being forced to stay silent on the subjects of their financial opinions, their political opinions, their bodily functions such as menstruation, and their sexual pleasure. Personally, I have been lucky to grow up with a family that has been extremely liberal and has allowed me to explore my identity in different ways. The “sex talk” is often not given in Indian families because it is “shameful” however my mother made sure to educate about it to me. A lot of series are now coming up that break these taboos such as sex education and lust stories that explore the sexual spectrum of individuals without guilt

and shame. Sex is natural and sexual pleasure is something that should be fun and safe for all individuals. They should be given the opportunity to explore what works best for them, may it be masturbation, using sex toys, lubrications, etc. personally, in my opinion, I do not see sexual pleasure as something women should be ashamed about, regardless of how they choose to receive it (masturbation, sex toys, multiple partners etc.). Every individual's sexual identity and sexual journey is unique and I believe that every individual should have the birthright to explore this identity of theirs without feeling shameful and guilty about it. One way to promote healthy sexual activity is to educate and create awareness of the repercussions of unprotected sex and sexual health, however, it is necessary to create this vulnerable and open-minded environment first. To do so, the taboo that exists about sex, the female sexual pleasure, masturbation and other such components should be broken down by encouraging individuals to share and connect over experiences and to create a safe and non-judgmental environment for individuals to come forward and embrace their sexual identity, sexual preferences and sexual activity.

The selling of sex toys manually through street vendors is prohibited and punishable whereas, selling of sex toys online is not banned and punishable as long as the retailer is keeping in mind the marketing strategy and the rules and regulations laid down by the government i.e., 'Obscenity' of any kind or manner should be prohibited whether it is in graphical form or physical representation. Laws regarding the online selling of sex-toys in India are speculative.

One of India's largest e-commerce players i.e. "Snapdeal" was dragged to court in 2015 for selling different types of "Sex toys and accessories." Delhi-based Supreme Court lawyer, Suhaas Joshi, filed a complaint saying e-commerce players were selling products which were "aiding or promoting gay sex." India is a developing country, both economically and socially and is rapidly pursuing the western culture and its following. Hence, online selling of sex toys is not banned in India.

Men Skin Care & Makeup

In the globalization era, improvement of technology, science, society, economy and education provide people with a better standard of living and styles. Most people would like to be beautiful, healthy and good looking. It is a normal fact that most people want to look like the models. Men and women are alike, a smooth and bright skin with an ideal body shape for a wonderful life

This desire and trends are growing and seen as a gold mine for the beauty care market. Currently men are more aware of their body and the demand for beautifulness, aesthetics, youthfulness, healthiness, and thinness which drag them away from old opinion about "only sanitation"

In the past, men might be familiar with aftershave, deodorant and soap but now there are many kinds of skin care products available for men. Moreover, shelf space for male cosmetic and skin care products were limited to a few products but now there are many kinds of skin care products available for men such as facial foam for men, day and night cream, anti-aging

cream, sun protection, etc. Even though these trends motivate men to take care and concern more on themselves, not all men are turning to use skin care products because these products are associated to a female, so the consumption of cosmetics by men is still labeled gay.

Nevertheless, even though men buy more beauty products as grooming and skin, it is predicted that these products are still bought approximately 80% by their wife or companions. As a result, the percentage drives us to study if there is any internal or external reason which can be a factor affecting men purchasing this kind of skin care products, just because men do not have many experiences against the products, or there is any masculine issue involved. In general, some fear to buy these kinds of products directly can lead into question their virility, associating them to a female, effeminate or homosexual universe. In contrast, male have not exactly the same “toiletory” speech as females which mention the product’s failure issues related to packaging consideration to be too womanly characteristics. The use or purchase of skin care products is possibly not the same in every period of time through the different generations of people.

In earlier periods, it seems to be not a traditional one that most men would often think of looking after their beauty compared to the present. Using a moisturizer, exfoliating formulas, facial scrubs, skin toner, specialized shampoos and conditioners, specialized face product, lotion and many more were realized as feminine. It affects the rapid development of beauty care in the women market rather than in men. As generally shown, there are many bulky companies creating and launching loads of different kinds of skin care products designed specifically for women’s needs. Thus, there are many manufacturers that have paid attention to the women's segment rather than another. Fortunately, there is a dynamic of the beauty care aspect in the past 15 to 20 years in order to offer products for men, excluding only shaving cream, aftershave, deodorant, body spray and hair products. It is increasing the space for the men to step on their taking care themselves after years of waiting, give the credit to the dynamics of the market surrounding as mentalities of the new masculine generation, appearance of “metro-sexual”, social liberalization of homosexual, and even the fact that men want to stay young, have better and clean look. The gap or distance between men and beauty products or skin care products has shorten by the bridge nowadays, their demand for skin care products are revealed to fulfill their pleasure and wellness, start from clean their skin, use the cream, feed the skin nutrition, anti-aging treatment, body and hair cares, spa centers or even beauty institutions

For this generation, appearance is power. So why should only girls look their best?

Perception is generally built for men who wear makeup every day or follow the latest beauty tips for men. Makeup is associated with the LGBTQ community in India. Many feel that those men who keep up to date with grooming and makeup are either gay or bi-sexual. The linking of makeup and the urge to look pretty and well-groomed to date is more of a feminine character in many societies in India.

Few statements said, Men Should Look Rough & Tough, Not Smooth & Silky! Is He

Gay! So Feminine! Has He Lost His Masculinity!

Men wearing makeup in India means the man is losing his masculinity. Honestly, this depends upon preference and opinions, men are meant to be rough and tough with scars and rough skin but women should be smooth and silky. So any initiative by men wearing makeup to have even skin and highlight their features makes them feminine. Today, we still live in a world that's still massively shaped by the narrow, Enlightenment definition of gender.

I came across a debate online with the question 'Should Men Wear Makeup?' This response had 84% yes and 16% no. I thought I would look into the 'No' section just to see what people are saying – as they had to back up their choice with an answer. The first thing that really caught my attention was this comment. "It destroys our manhood and physical appearance" and then also goes on to say "confuses younger generations". It made me think I can agree in a sense because men have got a stereotype to be 'dominating' and 'strong'. Men are meant to bring home the money, look after the family and keep them safe. But it really shouldn't be this way because generations are changing by the minute!

This is the 21st Century and over the years so much has changed, people should start to become more accepting and people coming out as homosexual is a common thing now. Everything is changing, males are wearing makeup because they want to feel comfortable in their own skin, what's the big deal? Females are allowed to wear it so why can't men! I can agree with the statement made about "confusing younger generations" because they are being brought up into a world that wasn't the same 30 years ago. They will go out and see a man wearing makeup and think it's the norm, this then might influence them to possibly try it out, and then their parents might punish them as they think it's wrong.

'Have you ever been a witness to comments being made about males wearing makeup? – positive and negative.' Majority of the response to this was I've heard people say, 'it makes them look gay'. This really makes my blood boil because it's a male's own choice whether they are gay or not, to be able to feel comfortable in their own skin and live life the way they want to. It is also a male's choice to wake up in the morning and apply makeup to their skin.

However, this is the 21st Century and that is definitely not happening anymore, everyone is so experimental these days and so be it! There are so many more opportunities out there now. They are being hired as makeup artists or being sponsored by companies to promote their products as they have such a big fan base on social media. However, I do feel though that there are no products made for men when it comes to makeup, equality is massive nowadays and there seems to be none of that when it comes to makeup, apart from the fact that both men and women wear it. But all these products are directed towards women, that is what I see as wrong. If there was more exposure through promoting products, television adverts, big campaigns etc. Then maybe people wouldn't find it 'weird' or 'gay' and men would feel more confident to actually wear it. What is so different to a man applying hair dye when they are embarrassed that they are starting to go grey, than a man using foundation to cover up his skin because they are insecure? Wallet and Suits are entitled to men, so why can't a bit of

glittery eyeshadow and mascara be as well?

In a world where even girls are still heavily criticized for how much makeup they do or do not choose to wear. In conclusion I can see both sides as to why people think it is seen as wrong for men to wear makeup, but also, I can see why they wear it, and that is the statement I agree with. Men should be able to wear makeup just as much as women can. One that really stood out to me was this; 'the message that both males and females don't wear makeup to impress others, but to boost their confidence, be creative and have fun. The power of makeup is unbelievable when it comes to changing the way we look each day'. I agree that men should wear makeup, nothing will change that because everyone deserves to be who they want to be, and do what they want to do. Metrosexual is a word that uses to describe group of men who pay an attention on taking care of their appearance by going to gym, focusing on fashion and using grooming products, etc. Some people mistake a metrosexual for a gay guy.

“I think it would be wrong of us to say that only Indian society has this negative perception or stigma around men in beauty. I think this world in general, even in the West, it is the same story, there are homophobic people and we live in a very misogynistic world. We have a long way to go but our style of aesthetic, Indian couture, the way we dress, men traditionally applying *surma* or *kajal* (kohl), putting *mehndi* (henna) when they get married, our culture is very fluid. Yes, we have toxic masculinity like any other country, but we are moving forward and breaking barriers.

Masturbation as I have always been taught is an absolute no- no!

ants stood out as having ‘normalized’ masturbation early in their youth, with several participants indi-

cating that they had “always” felt comfortable and positive

about masturbation. However, it was much more typical for

participants to begin a process of

Aesthetic Surgery

Generally, cosmetic surgery is traditionally framed as artificial, man-made, and socially unacceptable. A casual online search for “plastic surgery” will uncover negative connotations around plastic surgery in most of the results. However, the trend is changing and positive news and comments about cosmetic surgery can increasingly be found online.

There is also likely an element of class envy/concern, since elective plastic surgery is expensive so feels like a pay-to-win approach. There is, of course, a subjective element to this as there are other ways to spend money on the situation, such as designer clothing and cosmetics (which admittedly are less permanent approaches). Most cosmetic surgeons are only in it for the money. Cosmetic surgery is generally only accessible to the wealthy. Makeup is accessible to the masses. That’s pretty much it. Cosmetic surgery is perceived as a

luxury. Like most other luxury items or services, it is viewed with disdain by the working class.

What a lot of people don't realize (including governments and health insurances) is there are completely valid and applicable uses of plastic surgery.

- breast reconstruction on breast cancer patients
- breast reduction
- removing excess breast tissue from men (gynecomastia)
- helping someone breath with nose surgery
- tummy tuck with abdominoplasty, especially in women who have given birth
- reconstruction of skin of burn victims
- removing liters upon liters of fat from lipedema patients (the boat I'm in, have had over 35 liters removed so far)

Cosmetic surgery is a kind of plastic surgery that aims to enhance and improve a person's appearance. With this in mind, one benefit of having cosmetic surgery is the significant impact it has on a person's self-esteem and confidence. This enables an individual to relate well to his/her self as well as to other people.

Another benefit would be the improvement of the body in relation to health issues. For women with large breasts, cosmetic surgery helps alleviate back pain through breast reduction. In a similar way, removal of breast tissues in men can lessen the risk of cancer.

Cosmetic surgery can also be used to correct deformities. This gives a chance to people with deformities to live a normal and functional life sans discrimination. Repairing a cleft lip is performed by a cosmetic surgeon and helps the child swallow better. Constructing eyelids for a burn patient helps them keep their eyeballs moist. Giving someone born without an ear, an ear, helps direct sound down the ear canal so they can hear better. These are all cosmetic surgeries but they increase functionality. Most surgeons that specialize in cosmetic surgery do so to drastically improve people's quality of life, to give the grossly disfigured the opportunity to live a bigger life, one not limited by their appearance or disability.

Before undergoing any cosmetic surgery, it is best that you consult with a board-certified plastic surgeon. Board-certified plastic surgeons undergo years of study and extensive training to ensure that you get the care that you deserve. They can also give the proper advice as to what will work best with your desired outcome from the procedure. It's the 21st century. Trends change. People change. Faces change. Bodies change. Change is, in fact, the only constant in the world.

The Marriage of Plastic Surgery and Social Media: A Relationship to Last a Lifetime. Body-sculpting procedures such as buttock augmentations, which improve the contour, size, or

shape of your butt, and thigh lifts, which reduce excess skin and fat of your upper legs, also saw an increase.

Why are cosmetic procedures on the upswing?

Doctors who perform cosmetic procedures point to a number of reasons why people preach “Don’t let anyone judge your appearance!” online yet still shell out money to change their own. Now, with the rise of social media, people are in the recovery room, posting about what they went through and sending pictures to friends that show the bandage on their nose,”

“People are much more comfortable owning their self-care rituals — including those that involve needles and knives,”

1. More screen time

2. More acceptance

3. More technological advances

4. More health benefits.

5. More self-confidence

A Troubled Past

“One of the things that [Indians] struggle with is that- in fact- this prudish and puritanical culture is not actually our culture.” They say. Plastic Surgeons in India are numerous by way of devising new instruments, research and publications (papers and books). To mention all is beyond the scope of this paper. Today every state in India has multiple plastic surgery training centers. Each center trains a number of postgraduate students every year who have spread all over India and abroad serving the community to their fullest. The specialty continues to grow and advance in all the fields of Plastic Surgery.

BEYOND BLACK AND WHITE

By

Neha Shingne

Anusha Bhanap

SYBA

Mumbai/Nagpur/Mangaluru: 40 year old, Kiran, along with her guru Uttam Sapan Senapati, was arrested on June 4, 2019 following a murder. The police accused eleven persons out of which 5 were trans women. Kiran asserts that they were framed. The accused were arrested and booked under Section 302 of the Indian Penal Code for murder.

Every day for 17 months spanning 6 notebooks, she wrote about the days she spent in Nagpur Central prison. The diary was titled Kiran-e-dastan, (memoirs of Kiran). The constable or warden, Kiran says, would demand to read her personal journal. “They would read it aloud, poking fun at me and my body each time. And before leaving, pages narrating their misdeeds would be torn off.”

As one of the five transgender women lodged among 2,000 male prisoners, Kiran knew the risks involved. “Protesting would mean only one thing – get raped,” Kiran hesitantly shares. Staying silent reduced the chances of her physical harm. She explained how the jail staff, convicts and prisoners would regularly inflict mental and sexual assaults on her.

Kiran accuses several prisoners, and jail staff, all cisgender men, of molesting and raping her and the other transwomen arrested along with her. In the prison, Kiran says, they dropped many complaint letters in the grievance box, meant only for the magistrate. Similar complaints were also made to the prison superintendent. However, no one came to their rescue.

After the lockdown, informing the lawyer became difficult as a lockdown was imposed and jail visits were halted.

“Each time we went with our complaints and demanded to be shifted out to the women’s section, the prison head would tell us there was no such provision available in the prison rule. But under what rule were we being stuffed in the male prison and violated every day?” Kiran asks.

Kiran and her confidante Dolly Kamble, also a transwoman and a co-accused in the case, met at Kiran’s residence in Nagpur. Out of fear of the local police, a family member had to constantly stand outside the house as the two continued to share their stories. Kiran’s family, staunch Ambedkarites (followers of Dr B.R. Ambedkar), has been her biggest support.

The bail condition had a harsh impact on them. Being uprooted from their immediate ecosystem meant not just a loss of livelihood but also exposure to bodily threats. Attacks and public humiliation have been a common experience, Dolly admits. Recently, the two found refuge in a gharana in Madhya Pradesh. They had to depend on friends or engage in sex work

for survival. “Most Gharanas would not take us on board simply because we are accused of murder,” Dolly says.

“But my stay at both Sakkardara and Bardi police station was rather smooth. We were at least treated like human beings. Reality, however, hit us only on entering the Nagpur central prison five days later (on June 9, 2019),” she recalls. Kiran assumed that they would be taken to the women’s prison. Instead, all of them were sent to the men’s section of Nagpur Central Prison, despite the availability of the women's section. “How could they even imagine that a woman could survive unscathed inside the male prison? Why did they not ask me if I preferred being among the women prisoners?” she asks bitterly.

In the Nagpur prison, two male constables had asked them to undress. “We were herded together like sheep. We were asked for our names, caste and occupation and then told to strip.” They refused. “There was no way I was going to allow any man to strip me,” Kiran says. Rani Bhosale, a woman prison superintendent, asked the women prison guards to search. “But they all claimed they are “scared” of us,” Kiran recalls. Bhosale had to raise her voice and get the women guards to perform their duty.

They were made to stand in a queue with their legs and hands wide open. The guards made them squat several times and a body cavity search was forced upon them.

In jail, the transwomen were placed in a ‘separate ward’ assigned only to those suffering from infectious diseases like tuberculosis, leprosy, scabies and HIV. Kiran says they would be in a constant fear of getting infected.

Kiran says the prison administration believes that it gives them “special attention” by restricting their movement and access. They would be kept confined to a tiny room most of the time. But when it came to bathing and daily ablution, they were forced to carry them out in the common space. “We would somehow manage to save ourselves through the day but during the bathing hour, hell would break loose. We went without a bath for several days just to protect ourselves,” Kiran shares.

Unlike other under trial prisoners, all arrested trans women were denied their right to wear civil clothes and were forced to wear white striped shirts and white shorts. “Even undergarments were denied to us,” Dolly says.

Understanding transgender

A person's internal sense of being male, female or not identifying with either is their gender identity. Transgenders are individuals whose gender identity and gender expressions are not restricted to their biological sex. Persons who are assigned a sex at birth, but who feel that this is a false or incomplete description of them. This includes people whose gender identity is the opposite of their assigned sex, and people who are not completely masculine or feminine or a combination of male and female. For cisgender, or non-transgender people, their gender identity matches their sex at birth.

Some transgender people who want medical assistance to transition from one sex to another identify as transsexual.

Mostly the youth, face great challenges in coming to terms with one's own gender identity and/or gender expression which are opposite to that of the gender identity and gender role imposed on them on the basis of their biological sex.

First published in 1968, DSM-II, listed homosexuality as a mental disorder. In this, the DSM followed in a long tradition in medicine and psychiatry, which in the 19th century appropriated homosexuality from the Church, promoted it from sin to mental disorder. In 1974, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) asked all members attending its convention to vote on whether they believed homosexuality to be a mental disorder. 5,854 psychiatrists voted to remove homosexuality from the DSM II, and 3,810 to retain it. The APA then compromised, removing homosexuality from the DSM but replacing it, in effect, with "sexual orientation disturbance" for people "in conflict with" their sexual orientation. Not until 1987 did homosexuality completely fall out of the DSM.

The fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) refers to this as "gender dysphoria." "It is important to note," DSM-5 says, "that gender nonconformity is not in itself a mental disorder. The critical element of gender dysphoria is the presence of clinically significant distress associated with the condition."

World Health Organization removed homosexuality from its ICD classification with the publication of ICD-10 in 1992, although ICD-10 still carries the construct of "ego-dystonic sexual orientation". In this condition, the person is not in doubt about his or her sexual preference, but "wishes it were different because of associated psychological and behavioural disorders".

In the previous version of International Classification of Diseases, published by WHO, ICD-10 - this was considered a gender identity disorder, in the chapter entitled mental and behavioral disorders.

In the latest manual, called the ICD-11, gender incongruence is defined as a marked and persistent incongruence between a person's experienced gender and assigned sex. It states that trans gender is not a mental health condition.

How did we learn

- We know about trans persons because we see them begging on streets. They are blatantly ignored or shooed away. This negative attitude has been imbibed since childhood by most of the people around us. Thus, in an attempt to stick to the social norms, children grow up and develop the same attitude. And the vicious cycle continues.
- Bollywood usually shows trans persons in a negative light. Men dressed in drag are used as comic relief. This reinforces the idea of conforming to strict masculine attire.

The character of Lajja Shankar Pandey from the film ‘Sangharsh’, 1999 was a transwoman who was a Kali (Hindu Goddess) worshiper and was played by Ashutosh Rana. The trans character in the film abducted little children and sacrificed & cannibalized them at Kali’s altar. ‘Sadak’ movie, 1991, features a character named Maharani played by actor Sadashiv Amrapurkar, whose role is to be an evil brothel owner who tortures and traffics young women. Additionally movies like ‘Kya Cool Hai Hum’ and ‘Partner’, labels them as sexual predators. When men dress in drag in Bollywood films, the loss of their masculinity through that act is constantly highlighted, and to perform the more physically able roles, they have to transform back into their masculine selves.

- Several shows have tagged them as comic stereotypes by using physical comedy with offensive transphobic humor. e.g.- ‘The Kapil Sharma Show’ stars Krushna Abhishek, an actor who portrays Sapna often using offensive and derogatory humor. Another show, ‘Shakti’ portrays Soumya who is highly melodramatic and ruins the reputation of the transgender society. Also, it focuses on all the TRP fetching elements like romance between the lead couple. And the Kinnar society is shown to be oppressive.

Indian Statistics- For the first time, in 2011, the Indian census counted trans persons. It recorded 487,803 trans persons. Indian Census has never recognized third gender i.e. Transgender while collecting census data for years. But in 2011, data of Transgenders were collected with details related to their employment, Literacy and Caste. In India, total population of transgender is around 4.88 Lakh as per 2011 census.

However, it is important to note that nearly 85% of trans persons’ government approved ID cards are pending. For e.g.- Aadhar card, Pan Card, Voter ID Card.

Problems faced by Transgender:

- **Discrimination in the Family:** Upon realizing that their children are a transgender, some parents and families would disown and send him/her/them away rather than being caring and supportive. This leads to negative self-image, loss of social support, higher risk of anxiety disorders and depression.
- **Discrimination in Employment:** Transgender find it extremely difficult to get suitable employment of their choice. Due to social discrimination in employment most of them are forced into sex work. Discrimination in employment is very common and evident, transgender do not get good job opportunities they are always given a low-collar job and a minimum salary. Apart from this, the low levels of literacy in the community also cause social, economic and political powerlessness of the community.
- **Discrimination by the Medical Field:** Healthcare providers do not understand the sexual diversities and they do not have knowledge about the health issues of sexual minorities. Barriers in accessing HIV testing and sexual health services have been

well documented. Types of discrimination reported by transgender communities in the healthcare settings include: deliberate use of male pronouns in addressing transgender, registering them as 'males', and admitting them in male wards; humiliation faced in having to stand in the male queue; verbal harassment by the hospital staff and co patients; and lack of healthcare providers who are sensitive to and trained on providing treatment/care to transgender people and even denial of medical services. Thus, transgender people face barriers when accessing public or private health services.

- **Ignorance of Mental Health:** Currently, mental health needs of Transgender communities are barely addressed. The trans person is affected by mental health problems like depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation and self-harm, depression. There is a stigma attached to seeking help for the mental disturbance which would also cause fear of judgement while getting treated.
- **Sexual Orientation Discrimination:** Transgender people are harassed because they are perceived to be homosexual. Assumptions about a person's sexual orientation may often arise either because of clothing the person wears or because of their gender presentation.

The transgender protection right Bill-2019

1. The Bill defines a transgender person as one who is partly female or male; or a combination of female and male; or neither female nor male. In addition, the person's gender must not match the gender assigned at birth and includes trans-men, trans-women, persons with intersex variations and gender-queers.

2. A transgender person must obtain a certificate of identity as proof of recognition of identity as a transgender person and to invoke rights under the Bill.

3. Offences such as compelling a transgender person to beg, denial of access to a public place, physical and sexual abuse, etc. would attract up to 2 years' imprisonment and a fine.

4. The Bill prohibits discrimination against a transgender person in areas such as education, employment, and healthcare.

Section 377

1. On 6th September 2018, the Supreme Court struck down Article 377 of the Indian Penal Code recognized the sexual orientation of an individual is natural and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is a violation of freedom of expression.

2. The LGBT Community has the same rights as any ordinary citizen. The Supreme Court's decision to decriminalize homosexual behaviour is the first step towards providing equal status and rights to the LGBT community in India.

3. Further, it opens doors for the community to claim their right to marry, adopt and have a

family.

Conclusion

International Classification of Diseases, published by WHO, does not attribute homosexuality and Trans people with disorders of the body and mind. It clearly states, ‘sexual orientation by itself is not considered a disorder’.

With rapidly growing awareness and sensitivity, laws are also gradually changing. Legally they have obtained the same rights and privileges as cis persons do. They fare equally well in sectors of education and employment on their merit, despite of these domains being dominated by cis persons.

Unfortunately, the backward and close minded attitude which prevails in the society because of the entertainment industry and social norms leads to alienation of the trans community in India.

Did You Know

1. Prithika Yashini: India's first transgender police officer, win acceptance- After fighting social dogma, gender bias and many glass ceilings, Yashini has become the first transgender to be appointed as a police officer in Tamil Nadu.
2. Joyita Mondal: India's first transgender judge- A woman who became India's first transgender judge in July 2018 says she continues to fight for justice and respect. Joyita Mondal was appointed as a LokAdalat judge in north Bengal in a historic appointment that she hopes will pave the way for others.
3. Odisha: Odisha has become the first state in the country to provide food grains, pension, health, education and housing benefits to the transgender community, thus including them in the Below Poverty Line (BPL) category.
4. Three in four respondents could not register their preferred gender identity.

TRANS PRIDE FLAG

Monica Helms, an openly transgender American woman, created the flag in 1999. The light blue and light pink are the traditional colors for baby girls and baby boys, respectively, the white represents intersex, transitioning, or a neutral or undefined gender. Helms says, the flag is symmetrical so “no matter which way you fly it, it is always correct, signifying us finding correctness in our lives.

IS FAT REALLY THE WORST THING A HUMAN BEING CAN BE? NOT TO ME

By
Pooja Rajkor
SYBA

Did you ever stop and think about how often we are told to change our appearance? Magazines constantly offer tips about how to lose weight “in days”, appear slimmer “instantly”, and hide our “imperfections”, without actually knowing anything about us, much less our appearance. This is one example of body-shaming, and it is everywhere. Movies and series so frequently use overweight characters’ bodies as the basis of many of the show’s jokes.

Body shaming (criticizing yourself or others because of some aspect of physical appearance) can lead to a vicious cycle of judgment and criticism. Messages from the media and from each other often imply that we should care about looking slimmer, smaller, and fairer. And If we don’t, we worry that we are at a risk of being the target of someone else’s body-shaming comments.

What is Body-Shaming?

Body shaming can be defined as the act of making inappropriate and negative comments about another person’s weight or size. This is something that overweight people are subjected to. Body shaming is ubiquitous (found everywhere).

Body Shaming Faced in Day to Day Life:

Clothing Stores

I would like to share an incident with you so that it will be easier to understand what do I mean by clothing stores.

Characters:

Mallory (saleswoman) - description: slim

Ashley (customer) - description: obese, overweight

Daisy (saleswoman)

Ashley walks into the clothing store, and looks for jeans. Mallory saw that and reaches her.

Mallory: Um, are you getting a gift for someone?

Ashley: No, I am shopping for myself. Why? I think I’ll try these jeans on!

Mallory: Absolutely not! I can tell you are way too big for them. We are not a plus-size store.

So, I don't think we'll have anything big enough for you, no offense.

Mallory to Daisy: Can you show the big girl where the nearest, like, plus size store is?

With this I'll conclude my point.

Clothing Brands

“Dress for the job you want, not the job you have.”

It's advice we've all likely heard at some point throughout our careers. If you want your bosses to see you as someone who can take on more authority, you need to act that way. Part of that is in how you present yourself. For thin women, it's good advice. It's easy to be fashionable when you're thin. But for curvy women, one couldn't dress for a position because all the major brands' clothes ended at size 10 or small 12? Do we really need to lose weight to be any better at any job? Plus-size women represent 68% of shoppers, and yet are not inclusive.

Employment

Jobs site Fairygodboss recently carried out a survey of 500 hiring professionals, who were shown a picture of an overweight woman and asked if they'd consider employing her. Only 15.6% of them said that they would. Plus, they characterized the woman as 'lazy' and slightly more called her 'unprofessional.' There are several decades of research evidence demonstrating weight bias in the context of employment, and what we see is the evidence of bias at the very essential stage of hiring and employment cycle. What's more, “the standards for physical appearance are stricter for women than men. Women are more likely to be evaluated on their physical appearance.” Weight bias is very prevalent and in a lot of ways socially acceptable.

Baby Weight

After giving birth, the absolute last thing on your mind should be your weight. In general, women are pressured to shed their 'baby weight' once they've had a child.

One woman shared her experience. She told how she had been with her husband for around five years, and gave birth to her baby two months ago. He said 'I have a question. You lost all the fat and weight in the past for your ex. Why don't you love me enough to do it for me?'

'I was in shock and could not believe what I heard. In the past I had lost a lot of weight before I dated him, but that was in my early twenties and I ate nothing and was miserable all the time, that's not a fair comparison she shared.'

When I went to the dietician myself, she told me that most of the clients that come to me are postpartum, to lose weight just because their husbands have been forcing and taunting them too, that they look ugly now.

Exclusion from Friendships

In a survey, researchers found that overweight people are excluded from friendships, call classmates friends when the feeling is not mutual and are disliked by peers. And overweight people dislike more classmates than their thinner peers.

These heightened negative relationships take a mental, social and physical toll. The finding is alarming because if we continue to have social environments where fat shaming is the norm, these kids will continue to be banished. Those adverse interactions increase the risk of loneliness, depression, poor eating habits and illness. The study shows that overweight people are generally involved in more unreciprocated friendships.

Social Media

When the pandemic hit, we began to spend a lot more time scrolling through Instagram and Tiktok. Every person was stunningly beautiful. It seemed like everyone had a perfect figure, and it just felt weird about not having one.

A series of studies has shown a correlation between activities like scrolling through Instagram and negative body image. A 2020 study of undergraduate women further showed that those who were asked to scroll through Instagram- but not Facebook, which emphasizes text more than photos- showed significantly decreased body satisfaction than those who were asked to do the reverse. NBC news spoke to seven women in their teens and 20s who said that the content they viewed on the app had “pushed them to fixate more on their diets and exercise regimens to a dangerous extent.” Sheridan, a 16-year old actress and social media star who is often cited as “body goals” among Tiktokers, tweeted this year that “I liked my body before I downloaded Tiktok”. Tiktok and Instagram are spaces which prove toxic for young women’s body image.

I would like to add one more point under social media context is that, when a slim Instagram influencer posts a picture eating burgers, pizzas and chocolates, or laying in the bed binge watching rom-coms while eating a tub of ice-cream considered cute and normal and looks like someone is having a best time of life but on the other hand when the same thing is done by an overweight Instagram influencer is considered to be the promotion of an unhealthy lifestyle and being commented I have no sympathy for these people, they bring it on themselves.

STOP BODY SHAMING!

We’ve all heard the phrase “everyone’s different” from a young age. We’ve probably accepted this for almost every area of our lives. We have friends who are hilarious, others serious, some close to genius and others aloof. We see success in all different forms and associate with people from various religions. Most of us have never thought to assess the value of these differences, they just are what they are, and we appreciate the richness they add to our lives.

What about when it comes to weight and appearance? Most of us also have friends and family of all different sizes. But do we have the same acceptance of this? Or do you find yourself at times critiquing other people's bodies? "Pooja has gained some weight hasn't she?" Or do you find yourself discussing how others should try this diet, eat different types of food, exercise more or in a different way? Do you ever nudge your friend to point out a body shape that you find amusing or something to pity? Do you feel sorry for "that poor woman" because you assume they could not be happy within a body of that size? Do you make comments like "no wonder she's so big eating at a place like that" as you pass the line at McDonalds? It's all subtle – and sometimes not – but it is so harmful. It is body shaming and we can and must stop it.

Body shaming isn't only directed toward others, we often do it even more ferociously to ourselves. Dieting for that upcoming wedding, commenting that you need to "get back on track" after "letting go lately", criticizing our various body parts, wishing them to be different, refusing them to be seen or touched, sometimes even by those that are closest to us. Again, it's subtle, but it is so harmful. It is body shaming and we can and must stop it.

Start Encouraging Acceptance of Shape Diversity

How about we change our perspective of our bodies? How about we accept differences in size the way we do other features in our friends? Children do this naturally and maybe we can learn something from them. If your child points to another child and says "Mom, look at that girl's long hair", do you shush him and tell him not to point? Or do you engage with his observations and say something like "Gee it is long isn't it. I bet it takes a long time to brush!"?

What if he points to another child and says "Mom, look at how fat that girl is!"? Most of us, because it is so ingrained in us that "fat" is something to be ashamed of, will shush our children and tell them not to say that. But this only teaches and reinforces the harmful belief that fat is shameful. What if instead we encouraged acceptance and diversity: "Yeah she is fat isn't she? She's strong too, look how high she's climbed up that climbing frame!" This way our children are not taught to agree with society that big is bad and fat should be feared, but just as hair length is, body size is just another difference between us human beings.

Similarly, if an African child comes home from school saying, "Mom, Sam called me black!" how would you respond? How about something like "Yeah your skin is black because we come from a part of the world where people have black skin. We'll take you there one day, it's really amazing." What if your child who is bigger than the average child comes home and says "Mom, Tina said I'm fat!" How do you respond? How about being honest and showing them that how they are is perfect for them? "Yeah you have more fat on your body than Tina – that's just the way your body likes to be. It probably helps you be so strong too and might be why you can kick the football so far".

We can also encourage and work on body acceptance by not getting caught in compliments or conversations about appearance. Make a conscious effort not to follow greetings by

commenting like “Wow, you’ve lost weight, you look fantastic”. This only reinforces the importance of looks in relationships and self-worth. Instead try exploring something more meaningful. “Weren’t you heading back to study? How’s that going?” Remember the more you do this the more you are modelling to those close to you that our society doesn’t have to be this way.

Focus on Health not on Size and Weight

We often think that it is ok to body shame because we believe it will encourage people to lose weight, and improve their health and quality of life. But there are some major problems with these assumptions. Firstly, the relationship between weight and health is nowhere near as clear cut as popular media and even many well intentioned health professionals would have us believe. In fact research shows that health does not deteriorate with weight gain unless it is very extreme and the person becomes ‘morbidly obese’. Secondly, research also shows that body shaming does not motivate change and only makes people feel worse and more isolated. Thirdly, the assumption that someone changing their weight will improve their life is completely flawed and based entirely on myths and stereotypes created from body shaming in the first place.

So when we have family or friends with health problems, can we not automatically assume that weight loss is the solution and have an open mind to explore what other things could be considered to improve their health?

Appreciate the Human Body for all it can do

We tend to spend so much time analyzing and judging appearance but comparatively so little time appreciating abilities. I can’t help but think what a different society we would live in if all the appearance-based words like fat, skinny, disgusting, gross, pretty were replaced with ability-based words like strong, fast, high, gentle, precise. Maybe we would have a society that values our amazing bodies for all that they allow us to do.

It takes courage to make the decision to stop participating in body shaming, and by doing so forge a better future for us all. My final question to you is:

DO YOU HAVE THE COURAGE?

CENSORED

By
Shreeya Panda
TYBA

Shush, we don't say its name!
Maa said when I first felt cramps
in my stomach, started bleeding
and, rushed in tears to ask her
why was God doing this to her child,
did I do anything wrong, Maa?
It's a pain bore by every woman
to bring God's child into this world,
and support the human race.
It is God's gift to you to be kept as a secret, Maa said,
but shush, we don't say its name.
Shush, we don't say its name!
We just abide by some rules,
follow them strictly on the days we bleed,
don't touch anything or anyone,
'kyunki bimari choone se failti hai'
for its a disease that spreads by touch
and makes everything adulterated,
don't cry out loud even if
we're dying of pain, 'warna log kya kahenge'
it isn't something to seek attention for,
if someone asks about it, just say

shush, we don't say its name.
Shush, we don't say its name,
whenever we go to a chemist
to buy sanitary napkins, we whisper in a soft voice,
so that nobody ever finds out
when he gives it to us
covered with a newspaper and,
a black plastic bag,
we hide it under our dress and,
keep it at the secret place when we reach home,
but, shush, don't dare take its name.
Shush, we don't say its name!
For its profane and impure,
and questions a woman's sanctity
who is glorified and worshiped?
as a goddess every day except
for the days her uterus decides
to get rid of its lining without her wish,
as the Goddess in her takes a back seat
getting abandoned to enter the temple
she was once idolized in.
Ideals die and hypocrisy avail
every single day when a woman
is denied doing something
while she is on her *censored*
Shush, we don't say its name.

TABOO: WHAT IT SIGNIFIES TO ME

By
Anirudha Rudra

Taboo according to my understanding is something that incites such strong emotion especially that of dread that people will go to huge lengths to avoid the practice or situations where such practices take place or people who engage in these practices of such things.

So what creates taboos?

To understand what creates taboo I think analysis of the scenarios which incite taboo and the emotions involved in the feeling of taboo must be studied and linked together and an analysis based on this link must be made in order to reveal the nature of taboo. The analysis should be scientific and deductive.

For this analysis let us consider various examples in Indian society

The biggest taboo in Indian society is that of religious corruption and all other taboos are subsets of this main taboo since religion directs all aspects of life since it is a philosophy for the formula of how to live your life.

For this I am going to give my subjective experience on the matter which through discussion I have found to be universal. In India religion is a central theme around which all of life is built. That topic is so important that going against one's religion can mean psychologically that you have done something that might take away your very life. This is especially true in Indian religions where the concept of karma and sin are very important. It is true not only of Hinduism but all other religions found in India that is Islam and to a lesser extent Christianity, Buddhism, Jain, Zoroastrianism and Judaism. Now since there are so many religions the very basic definition of religious corruption is not that you have gone against your religion but you have gone against your religion by practicing something that is practiced in other religions. And considering the historic conflict between Islam, Christianity and Hinduism in India this sentiment is a strong one.

This negative emotion is further strengthened because of the fact that in Hindus things that are considered extremely impure are sometimes acceptable in Islam and vice versa things that are extremely objectionable in Islam. I practiced in Hinduism so instead of remaining a philosophical difference it starts becoming tangent on the very basis of one's worldview.

Here a discussion of Hinduism and Islam are made because they represent the majority but there are similar conflicts between Christian and Hindu or Islamic and Christian Buddhist, Islamic or Hindu or Christian philosophy.

This is the psychological aspect now for the analysis of the practises themselves the Hindu perspective is that people of the Islamic faith consume meat especially cow meat And subscribe to polygamy. On the other hand the people of the Muslim faith believe that Hindus

worship idols have multiple gods and subscribe to practices such as consumption of psychoactive substances and music in worship and burn bodies instead of burying them

In analysis of these situations if one were to step into a butcher shop one might naturally encounter distasteful things like strong smells unpleasing textures and above all the site of disembowelment and death but what Hindus do not realize that in conditions of the desert where Islam was founded meat is the only major food source which is contradictory to India's agrarian history. Polygamy has actually the same philosophical motive as does monogamy it is to ensure that your genes are passed on albeit they have different ways of approaching the subject.

On the other hand the very Muslim faith is built on monotheism where in the founder had to fight those who are polytheistic all be it very different from Hindus even though the context of the worship in the presence of idols is different in Hinduism this might not be clear to the casual observer. Also, psychoactive substances and music too may be associated with negative emotions, those lack of inhibition, sacrifice of dignity, and odd and violent behavior. Since this is the case of the intricacies of their use in worship, they may not be easily understood.

Here we can clearly see that taboos are generated from things that are natural to incite strong emotion in any human.

Here we have seen an example where the taboos of two separate parties Based on the contradiction of each other let us now consider where two separate parties share a taboo.

Sexuality in Indian society sexuality is universal taboo common to all religions and sections .Except in certain esoteric practices

Psychological perspective on sexuality and the act thereof can incite strong emotion like those of Lust, guilt, shame, embarrassment, attraction, insufficiency, vulnerability, and any act that involves the body and bodily secretions is bound to create feelings of disgust which is in itself contradictory to the idea of attraction. Fulfillment of this pursuit might lead to the feeling of such satisfaction that it may lead to an existential crisis and at the same time can incite strong emotions in the onlooker like those of jealousy resentment and although it might not seem so the memories of negative emotions are also a mental barrier.

Guilt and shame are more social emotions than they are individualistic which means that guilt and shame are based on reprisal of SoC rather than simple judgment of right or wrong on the part of the individual himself according to his self-interest These two emotions are the direct result of the negative emotions onlookers themselves experience. Strong attraction is similar in its negative aspect to the use of psychoactive substances which leads to loss of inhibition, addiction and sacrifice of dignity and extreme stress when the object of attraction is not obtained this directly will lead to feelings of insufficiency also another aspect of insufficiency is that the pursuant wants to satisfy his partner to an extent that he feels nothing is good enough. Lust is similar to attraction in all its negative aspects. More importantly the deep

seated psychological fears of contradiction loss of meaning and existential crises are brought bare vulnerability and at the same time desire, lack of inhibition, loss of motivation are all unresolved psychological issues. These psychological conflicts worsened by the fact with the animalistic sexuality is observed and is compared with the human it should be noted that animals are inherently less intelligent than humans are and do not have complex psychological processes.

When it comes to the onlooker it may be almost natural to be jealous of someone who has something that everybody desires at the same time the onlooker has his own memories of negative emotions he or she experienced in pursuit of sexuality. Who will naturally blame the concerned individuals and separate himself from it as he is not in that scenario.

The process itself as mentioned before is compared to that of animals, is sometimes distasteful and requires self-sufficiency in the context of defending oneself because of the inherent vulnerability hence also the need for privacy and trust.

Here it must be said that resolution of all psychological conflicts is the only way to feel comfortable about sexuality. Here too it can be seen that whatever induces strong negative emotions transforms into a taboo. For the same reasons it can be argued that unsightly or deadly diseases become taboo.

In conclusion

Considering this personal explanation I believe taboo might have a useful role in survival. By serving as an indicator that a person is in a very negative environment but only sometimes at other times it detracts from this very quality by becoming a harmful social phenomenon where people will go to huge extents including murder to avoid taboo.

And as said before resolution of psychological conflict

Development of mental fortitude in order to face these conflicts is the only way out of taboos. But perhaps in some contexts like those of religion this might not always be possible unless philosophical sharing takes place.

There seems to be another way that of desensitization but as the study of psychology has established behavioral therapies are not as substantial as resolution of deep seated psychological problems.

But at the same time even after resolution of psychological problems one must not become desensitized to the negative aspect of taboos which two are valid emotions it is just that instead of creation of taboos one must make choices good choices based on both the positive and negative aspects of situations which insight strong psychological responses

TABOOS CONCERNED WITH MENSTRUATION

By
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“The only thing required to be a woman is to identify as one”.

As we know there are millions of women worldwide having a menstrual cycle. None of us would exist without it and yet it remains one of the most tenacious biological taboos. Many reporters and advertisements have talk publically about sex, period, hygiene but in many isolated areas and some religions there is moderate awareness.

All over the world different countries or religions have different rituals related to menstruation. Many traditional religions considered menstruation as ritually unclean and sacred while western industrial societies believe that it should remain hidden. In Some societies, menstrual rituals are experienced by women as protective and empowering, offering women space set apart from male gaze and from unwanted sexual or domestic pressure and demand. In other words the idea that seclusion of menstruation may be perceived as banishment of women seems to be impure and taboo or as welcome space. Also some societies restrict entry of women in “temples and kitchen ” during periods. They also believe that during these days women must stay in separate rooms only. These treatments adversely affect girl's and women's health emotionally, mentally and physically which can destroy their lifestyle. It directly affects the hygiene level i.e many women face problems like infection of urinary tract, rashes etc . In India 23% of girls drop out from school when their period starts. There are some organizations which work on menstrual literacy programs in such areas so it can assist the realization and help to reduce superstitions about menstruation in society.

Lots of females in society use cloth during menstruation. It is because of the unavailability of pads and other facilities in rural areas. It results in many unexplored products. The compromised hygiene and diet may lead to various problems like irregular periods and sometimes death.

It is very important to acknowledge the depth of this issue and try to resolve it. As we know some institutions are working for isolated areas and provide materials essential for girls and women but that is not as much sufficient. So the government must work on it which can be beneficial for isolated areas. Also it can arrange programs at school level to create awareness in teenage girls about various aspects related to menstruation like hygiene, diet, overall process. There should be some arrangements of materials required for menstruation in school as well as separate washrooms in school and public places. It is the responsibility of each and every human being to view it scientifically. If everyone can see it like this then all the taboos might disappear automatically.

Menstruation is the way to analyze if the woman is pregnant or not or it is a way of being

pregnant so we have to see it in a good way. It is a good reason for women as well as society as each woman wants to be a mother and it also keeps the recreation of human life on earth. Now avoid cursing anybody.....and end with a new approach. As everything begins and ends in our mind so give power to this thought in a scientific way. If everybody made this view, then this world might be free from such taboo.



ungender

“

Dalit feminist standpoint which emerges from the practices and struggles of Dalit woman, may originate in the works of Dalit feminist intellectuals but it cannot flourish if isolated from the experiences and ideas of other groups who must educate themselves about the histories, the preferred social relations and utopias and the struggles of the marginalised. A transformation from ‘their cause’ to ‘our cause’ is possible for subjectivities can be transformed.

Sharmila Rege

I AM NOT WRONG!

By
Sejal Panchpor
TYBA

Throughout India's history, we have seen the changing roles of sexuality and gender expression, molding and developing as time passes. Skip to present times, we see rigid patriarchal boundaries binding us not only as people but society as a whole. Anything even resembling something out of the norm is shamed and punished.

As we grow up, boys are taught not to cry and be strong 'like a man' while girls are persuaded to explore more "feminine" hobbies and interests. We are raised in these values and unknowingly become victims of a system, etched in the very foundation of our society. It's not something that is done deliberately, but slowly and discreetly. Maybe our parents don't even realize that they are a cog in patriarchal oppression. Maybe we too have been a part of it.

I did not learn about the LGBT+ community until I was in 6th standard. It never occurred to me that anything other than a heterosexual relationship could exist, that one is free to choose how they live. The only instances where I had encountered non-cishet representation was in Bollywood movies where they are portrayed as a comedic relief and nothing more. It took me a long time to learn and unlearn my biases, and of course I still learn new things every day.

The normalization of not only ignoring but also erasing the very existence of an entire community of people just goes to show the hold that our 'value system' has on us. Whenever I try to talk about the LGBT+ community and their rights, I can feel the discomfort that most of the adults around me are in. That is exactly what we want. We want to make people uncomfortable; we want to shake them up. We can only make changes when we get out of our comfort zone. Even though section 377 of the penal code of India has been decriminalized, we continue to fight for the basic rights and respect of the members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Our fight cannot stop here. We shall not allow ourselves to be silenced. To quote June Jordan, who in her poem 'Poem about my Rights' writes,

*I am not wrong: Wrong is not my name
My name is my own my own my own
and I can't tell you who the hell set things up like this
but I can tell you that from now on my resistance
my simple and daily and nightly self-determination
may very well cost you your life.*

SEX-ED: PARENTS AND CHILDREN

By

Priyanka Jaisinghani

TYBA

Let's admit it that most of our parents didn't talk about sex. Sex-ed since years has been stuffed in a box and buried deep own in our so called 'traditions', I think it is a part of a much bigger problem. Indian parents in general believe all their children are 'Kids' until they are 20 and then they magically turn into full-blown 'Adults'. In fact, getting a job, marriage, kids etc. are seen as 'adult duties' towards the family.

This means most people deny the existence of the 'Teenage Phase' where you gradually transform from dependent to independent through trial and error, a lot of hurt and confusion.

When it comes to sex, as a child you're 'NOT' supposed to know anything about it, and when you are an adult, you're magically supposed to know everything about it.

Especially in India, sex education or even sex itself is only about procreation and other important aspects of sex or sex education doesn't even get any focus. It has made sex a hush-hush topic because apparently you make babies in privacy in a bedroom so we must not talk about it in public.

Many of us while growing up wanted to know and get answers from our parents to so many curiosities about babies, what we saw in advertisements, cartoon, movie scenes or heard adults talkingthis can go on and on. What did you get to hear when you wanted to know more?

Most along the lines of

'you don't need to know that now'

'you'll come to know later by yourself'

And worse, some of the parents simply ignore or simply narrate an imaginary story to put an end. If the child won't be satisfied with the answer that's when the risk of getting incorrect and harmful information maximizes along with that it cuts off the communication channel and trust of being honest with each other. This harms the relationship between the child and parent at an early age of growth by laying a weak foundation. When it gets cut at a young age, how will it magically start working during puberty? Suddenly during the teenage years no child can openly talk and make parents best friends. The set pattern of not opening up since 14-15 years continues to follow. Opening up is a gradual process in any relationship. It is difficult to do one fine day.

Only when things are closed, it needs opening up. I hope that parents understand the importance of having an open communication channel with children

Sex education is vital and is very important not just to prevent sexual abuse but for life. Those who think children don't need sex education are simply

People who think children develop brains and observation skills only after they become teens.

People who think sex-ed ruins their childhood where as it just empowers them with confidence about their bodies, the right knowledge to navigate healthy and unhealthy relationships and understand consent and have clear boundaries with people around.

Sex education is not just about body and sexuality, it is a life skill. As far as we see crimes in this country, there is no age criteria at all. Abusers and rapists don't wait for children to be a certain age. So why should education and awareness wait? The earlier the better.

"It is the restrictions placed on vice by our social code which makes its pursuit so peculiarly agreeable."

—Kenneth Grahame

THE D-WORD

By
Tanaya Mahamuni
SYBA

One might look at the Indian culture and sing praises about our values as a collective society who always put family first. And while that is a good characteristic, if we zoom in and take a closer look, it often comes at the cost of the individual self. One such example of this is the forbidden D-word...

Yes, divorce.

India ranks the lowest in divorce rates with less than 1% marriages ending in divorce. A BBC report of 2016 stated, "Out of 1000, only 13 marriages end in divorce in India. 1.36 million people in India are divorced. That is equivalent to 0.24% of the married population, and 0.11% of the total population."

What is the reason for this? Do all married Indian couples get their happily ever after? The answer is no.

As much as a high divorce rate is problematic, an almost non-existent one is also a cause of worry. We think divorce is not so terribly taboo anymore. But then why aren't there more of them? We must not generalize based on what we see in our circles. I don't know anyone who found getting a divorce easy or wasn't shamed for it in some way or the other. In fact, the idea of divorce is still very outlandish in rural areas.

Marriage Culture

Marriages in India are considered to be the affairs between two families rather than just the two individuals. Even though many youngsters these days have opted to choose their own partners, arranged marriages are still very much prevalent in our country. These marriages are arranged by families, neighbors and other relatives. Given the high rate of arranged marriages in the country, divorces are frowned upon because of the intense involvement of families on both sides. Whenever a problem arises in the marriage, the family members intervene and turn into counselors asking the couple to adjust. This integrated social structure holds back couples from taking the legal route. Moreover, in the Hindu religion, marriage is a sacrosanct union which means it is too important and special to be questioned or changed. The dissolution of marriage like a civil contract is a distinctly modern concept for a lot of Indians which is why it is gaining acceptance very slowly.

Patriarchy at Work

The end of a marriage is especially traumatic for the woman and her family due to the deep-rooted patriarchy that largely governs Indian society even today.

The social stigma of being a 'divorcee' is worse than being unhappily married. Many individuals suffer for their lifetime under abusive and/or unhappy marriages just to escape the tormenting life divorce brings with itself. The 'ideal' woman is groomed to sacrifice everything at the altar of patriarchy. What shouldn't go unmentioned is that a staggering number of women are not financially independent, which limits their options severely.

According to a study, within India, divorce rates are lowest in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana and Rajasthan, where patriarchy still has a stronghold on society. This clearly shows that even today women are not in a position to speak up against their families or support themselves financially and emotionally, if they choose to walk out of their marriages. Low divorce rates don't mean happy marriages, they just reek of a system that doesn't allow agency or autonomy, especially for women. A legal divorce will mean alimony, possible child custody and child support and in a lot of cases, freedom from oppressive control, and the patriarchal system just won't allow it.

Sanskar over Happiness

So it's not just women who suffer from bad marriages. Indians, in general, are just never taught to prioritize individual happiness. It is considered selfish. Women, especially, are raised to believe that the ability to compromise unconditionally for the sake of the family is the right thing. The family's reputation and the feelings of those around us (read: log kya kahenge?) are supposed to be more important than following your heart. Therefore, divorce comes with the stigma of abandoning your family duties and damaging the so-called family name in the process. Compatibility, friendship and equality within marriage are secondary or foreign concepts for most families and are not considered legitimate reasons for divorce and are considered unrealistic.

Gender Disparity

It is no secret that women are shamed more for going through a divorce than men.

According to the BBC report and the census data, more women declared themselves to be divorced than men. This shows that it is much easier for men to remarry.

I have heard people call men "brave" for remarrying while women are shamed for wanting the same. It is believed that a woman can't 'live' after a divorce and is expected to just be alive wallowing in misery.

Other Reasons for Low Divorce Rate

Many married couples prefer to just split up instead of getting a divorce officially. This could be because of two reasons. One, due to divorce being such a taboo, and second - they just don't want to go through the tedious and overtaxing legal process for divorce that happens in India. Judges are after all the products of society and they too often suggest the couples make adjustments. Another reason for the low divorce rate is that in India, especially in rural parts, many marriages are not registered legally. No official registration means no need for official

divorce and hence we have no record of it.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that love requires certain adjustments and compromises but it shouldn't be done at the cost of an individual's physical or mental health. Mutual respect, understanding and one's own freedom and independence are equally important for a successful marriage. If either of these things are missing, then choosing to have a divorce should be normalized.

Hopefully, as more women become financially independent and societal norms relax, divorce will be freed of social stigma, and people will be able to place their happiness above a sense of false morality. Besides, more awareness of mental health and the importance of leading a fulfilling and happy life among the young is bringing about a much-needed change in the whole institution of marriage.

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ALL ABOUT TABOO?

By
Shubham Jadhav
MA II

Human conduct isn't administered exclusively by sane independent direction. Social orders frequently have shared qualities and guidelines of adequate conduct that individuals from the general public are urged to follow. A culture or a general public aids the conduct and the considerations of their individuals by settling upon assumptions and rules. The rundown of conduct rules is ordinarily alluded to as accepted practices and restrictions. These standards and restrictions hugely affect our lives. The manner in which we act, dress, eat, and drive, just as our sexual coexistence, are completely represented by the standards and restrictions of the social orders we have a place with.

What is Taboo?

A social or strict custom denying or limiting a specific practice or prohibiting relationship with a specific individual, spot, or thing. Taboo is a wide peculiarity across the world and it has become so delicate that the word taboo itself is a taboo. According to Encyclopedia Britannica, taboo is defined as “the prohibition of an action based on the belief that such behavior is either too sacred and consecrated or too dangerous and accursed for ordinary individuals to undertake.” Taboo can be said to be a social norm but, a strong and a different one from other social norms. As this norm of taboo not only governs your actions but it also governs your thoughts, behavior more of it can be considered as 'unthinkable'.

Origin

The term taboo has Polynesian origin (the words “tabu” or “tapu” in the Tongan language). In Polynesian peoples’ journals tabu is a local word which signifies standing for forbidden such when a thing is not allowed to be eaten, touched or entered. The term was first acclaimed by Captain James Cook during his visit to Tonga in 1771. He introduced it into the English language in the eighteenth century.

We've been adapted by cultural standards to keep specific subjects – frequently including our wellbeing and prosperity – wrapped up inside ourselves. Yet, neglecting to face issues, for example, how our bodies change with age, our psychological and our sexual wellbeing, impacts the soundness of millions of individuals. Through botched freedoms for help and treatment, our aggregate assumptions for what is and isn't OK to discuss can have crucial ramifications for prosperity.

There are many taboo topics such as menstruation, sex, nudity, sex work, condom, orgasm, sexual harassment by family members, sexual orientation and sexuality, talking about mental health, patriarchy, certain religious custom and rituals, STD/STI, HIV aids, all kinds of sexual problems, inequality due to caste, race, ethnicity and many more things.

Taboo exists because it is difficult and discomfoting to talk about certain topics. People in society have never really been taught to have a conversation about these topics openly. We've always made sure to hide it indirectly because of the shame and embarrassment. But, unless and until we start having dialogue about them, taboo will always be there. It's our choice to decide which path to follow. What one can do is at least start questioning the quietness.

“There have been only two taboos in the world: sex and death. It is very strange why sex and death have been the two taboos not to be talked about, to be avoided. They are deeply connected. Sex represents life because all life arises out of sex, and death represents the end. And both have been taboo - don't talk about sex and don't talk about death.”

— Osho

MARRIAGE TO DIVORCE

By
Ketaki Joshi
SYBA

They say a pure relation it is
But do they know what a pressure it is
Some of them face many difficulties
Difficulties which could lead to casualties

When the situation gets carried away
Divorce is the only way
They see it as a crime
Thinking about society all the time

When someone decides to do it
Others are there to criticize it
Suddenly, there is eavesdropping
Others enjoy the gossiping

The whole family is in distress
They start to feel helpless
When they try to break the marriage
They have to hold on to all the carriage

Why can't divorce be a beginning
Beginning for a life that is stunning
Not everything is finished
Life is still there to be cherished

BUSTING MYTHS AND BREAKING THE TABOO OF SUICIDE

By
Rushabh Shah
FYBA

Note: Content includes talk of suicide in detail.

The Taboo

Suicide is the act of killing oneself intentionally. Try talking naturally about suicide. You're not allowed to? That's because it has been a taboo subject. A taboo subject is by rule of thumb something intensely restricted and sometimes even feels or is sanctioned. Taboos vary from one society and/or culture to another. And suicide, one such taboo, hasn't been spoken about that openly so far.

The number of deaths by suicide in India, when adjusted by per lakh population, was 11.3 in 2020, by data according to the annual Accidental Deaths and Suicides (ADSI) report, released by the NCRB.

Suicide has a lot shame, denial and stigma attached to it. Even acknowledging it can be hard in itself. Suicide has been considered as something 'sinful' and that, therefore, should be hidden. It has tended to be hidden by those who survived the suicide of a loved one, which is relevant considering that, in the past, sins had very negative social and civil consequences, beyond religious scruples. We typically don't like to talk about sad things, suffering, or pain. Suicide thus becomes a secondary taboo within a greater general taboo: death, loss, suffering, finitude.

It's a broad and increasing public-health concern with a million different faces, affected by many factors. While approaching a stigmatized topic as such can be extremely uncomfortable and confusing, it's necessary.

Myths and Misconceptions

Myth: If an individual is suicidal, they will always be suicidal.

Fact: Suicidal ideation is often transitory. The key is to provide proper assistance and support, making a difference.

Myth: If a person is serious about killing themselves then there's nothing you can do.

Fact: Often, feeling actively suicidal is temporary, even if someone has been feeling low, anxious or struggling to cope for a long period of time. This is why getting the right kind of support at the right time is so important.

Myth: People who attempt suicide are selfish, weak or cowards and take the easy way out.

Fact: Research has consistently demonstrated that people who terminate their lives do so out

of a deep sense of hopelessness, helplessness and despair. From their perspective, their current circumstances are so dark and no end in sight.

Weakness and selfishness have often got negative connotations attached to them which aren't always correct. Besides, people who are suicidal have been strong for too long. They are not simply 'thinking of themselves' but rather going through something very serious which uses up their energy, time and resources to a vast extent.

Myth: People who are suicidal want to die.

Fact: The majority of people who feel suicidal do not actually want to die; they do not want to live the life they have. The distinction may seem small but is very important. It's why talking through other options at the right time is vital.

Myth: People who say they are going to take their own life are just attention seeking, that they won't actually do it and shouldn't be taken seriously.

Fact: People who say they want to end their lives should always be taken seriously. People who kill themselves have often told someone that they do not feel life is worth living or that they have no future. Some may have actually said they want to die. It's possible that someone might talk about suicide as a way of getting attention, in the sense of calling out for help.

Myth: You have to be mentally ill to think about suicide.

Fact: 1 in 5 people have thought about suicide at some time in their life. And not all people who die by suicide have mental health problems at the time they die.

However, many people who kill themselves do suffer with their mental health, typically to a serious degree. Sometimes it's known about before the person's death and sometimes not.

Other life stressors such as relationship problems, criminal/legal matters, social exclusion, persecution, eviction/loss of home, death of loved ones, devastating or debilitating illness(es), family and caregiver troubles, job loss/issues, financial stress, trauma, abuse, rejection, and recent or impending crises, etc. are also associated with suicidal thoughts and attempts. Thus, to cut it short, suicide may have no single cause but rather psychological, biological, socio-economic, political, environmental, and many more complex factors at play. A lot of it depends on the context and hence this is in no way an exhaustive list.

Myth: Talking about suicide is a bad idea as it may give someone the idea to try it.

Fact: Suicide is a taboo topic. Often, people who are feeling suicidal don't want to worry or burden anyone with how they feel and so they don't discuss it.

But, by asking someone directly about suicide, you give them permission to tell you how they feel. Evidence shows asking someone if they're suicidal can protect them. They feel listened to, and hopefully less trapped. Their feelings are validated, and they know that somebody cares about them. Once someone starts talking they've got a better chance of discovering

options that aren't suicide.

However, with all that being said, talking about suicide should be carefully managed.

Myth: The only effective intervention for suicide comes from professional psychotherapists with extensive experience in the area.

Fact: All people who interact with those in crisis can help them by way of emotional support and encouragement. It is true that being able to access and use appropriate professional help might benefit them a lot as well. Psychotherapeutic interventions also rely heavily on the person's supposed support systems such as family, friends, etc.

Myth: Suicide attempts or deaths happen without warning.

Fact: The survivors of a suicide often say that the intention was hidden from them. It is more likely that the intention was just not recognized.

These warning signs include:

- Recent suicide, or death by other means, of a loved one.
- Previous suicide attempts.
- Preoccupation with themes of death or expressing suicidal thoughts.
- Depression, problems with adjustment such as substance abuse, or any mental condition/disorder particularly when two or more of these are present.
- Giving away prized possessions / making a will or other final arrangements.
- Potentially dangerous behavior, such as reckless driving, engaging in unsafe sex, increased use of drugs or alcohol, etc.
- Major changes in sleep patterns - too much or too little.
- Sudden and extreme changes in eating habits / losing or gaining weight.
- Withdrawal from friends/family or other major behavioural changes.
- Changes such as nervousness, outbursts of anger, or apathy about appearance or health.
- Frequent irritability or unexplained crying.
- Lingering expressions of unworthiness or failure.
- Lack of interest in the future, hopelessness, etc.
- Possible unexplained physical pain along with other signs.
- A sudden lifting of spirits or sense of calm, when there have been other indicators, may point that a decision has been made by the person to end the pain of life through suicide.

Myth: Giving someone a hotline number to call is enough.

Fact: Suicide hotlines can be effective but sometimes not enough. The best thing to do is ask how you can help. Help might look different for everyone.

If you are (or anyone you know is) experiencing suicidal ideation, please reach out to anyone

you can trust, a mental health professional or a hotline. Reaching out can save lives.

<https://itsoktotalk.in/find-help/>

Conclusion

We can start by admitting it: suicide happens. And we can acknowledge, too, that it happens a lot.

It is okay to talk about suicide openly.

This on-going cultural transition may be awkward, because as people become more willing to have these conversations, that doesn't mean they know how to have them at times.

By speaking out and demystifying the subject, it allows for a greater understanding and the recognition that suicidal ideation is a real struggle for many people that live in silence. Talking about it helps break the barriers of stigma and encourages awareness, compassion and support.

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Responsible Musings

By

Musings by Prajakta Jori

Worded by Akanksha Deo

"Let me be happy! Let people around me also be happy!"

Candles flickered and went off. She chuckled as the birthday song broke the excitement around her. Her smile turned into a laugh. It was her 24th birthday.

The knife cuts through the cake. The icing was sweet; chocolate, her favourite! A single piece of cake was passed around. First it went to her mother, then it went to her father. Hugs and kisses from her parents were the norm but today was special, so those became extra special as well! The second piece made its way to another important person in her life.

He came into her life a few years ago, and occupied a place in her universe effortlessly. They were in love; falling in love came gradually, one day at a time. They were sooner rather than later going to embark on a journey together.

The birthday party was in full swing when her best friend twirled her around to welcome the guests who just arrived. Her in-laws were late. She rushed forward to touch their feet; blessings followed.

Her parents were sitting with her to be in-laws, and he was accompanying them while she arrived with a tray full of food.

"I was about to go and help you with the plates." *He* muttered in a fleeting tone. She smiled and shook her head in exasperation.

Conversations were buzzing all around her. But, only one of them had her undivided attention. Her mother-in-law laughed, "One year from today you will be visiting us on our daughter-in-law's birthday." Her parents laughed, her in-laws laughed, *his* eyes brightened...her lips twitched but couldn't turn into a smile.

~

Considering how much her body was tired, slumber should have enveloped her sooner rather than later. But even after tossing and turning for a long time, fragments of sleep were nowhere to be found. Restless mind, swirling thoughts, responsible musings surrounded her, accompanied with a set of her own demons.

Marriage...such a colossal change.

"Will it be expected from me to change my name? Will my identity be lost in the expectations of being someone's wife, someone's daughter-in-law? Will I have to stop being my parents' daughter? I am much more than the mould of these social roles! Will personal space become

another fantasy for me? Will 'compromising' become my default state? How many sacrifices will befall upon me? Will I even be able to prioritize myself? Will it just be a give-and-give bonding, where I am the strong one, and will have to hide my sorrows? I hope 'he' and I will mostly remain on the same page, but will that be possible after marriage?! Will my parents' stop seeing me as their daughter? Will I be as pampered as I am now? Will I stay as a secondary person in the new family? Will I become secondary in my natal family too...? I will be everyone's pillar of strength, but who will be my support system in that novel setting? Will I be able to fit in someone else's family framework? Do I have to? How do you call a house a home when your parents are not there? How many changes will I have to go through? How many of those changes will happen with my consent? Will I be allowed to question things? Will my opinion even matter?"

"I am not just someone's someone, I am a free citizen with my own rights. But will anyone care?"

"Will I have to grow up.....?!"

"Whenever a taboo is broken, something good happens, something vitalizing. Taboos after all are only hangovers, the product of diseased minds, you might say, of fearsome people who hadn't the courage to live and who under the guise of morality and religion have imposed these things upon us."

—Henry Miller

LGBTQ YOUTHS AND TABOOS

By

Bela Pandharpure

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SYBA

Adolescence can be a period of experimentation, and many youths may question their sexual feelings. Becoming aware of sexual feelings is a normal developmental task of adolescence. Sometimes adolescents have same-sex feelings or experiences that cause confusion about their sexual orientation. This confusion appears to decline over time, with different outcomes for different individuals.

For some young people, this process of exploring same-sex attractions leads to a lesbian, gay or bisexual identity. For some, acknowledging this identity can bring an end to confusion. When these young people receive the support of parents and others, they are often able to live satisfying and healthy lives and move through the usual process of adolescent development. The younger a person is when she or he acknowledges a non-heterosexual identity, the fewer internal and external resources she or he is likely to have. Therefore, youths who come out early are particularly in need of support from parents and others.

Brief History of LGBTQ

Prior to the late-nineteenth century, the concept of having a distinct sexual identity did not exist, though people in the past lived lives similar to our modern understanding of what it means to be LGBTQ. Gay identity, as both a personal and political category, did not fully emerge until the mid-twentieth century. Historical terminology used to describe sexuality and gender often lacked the specificity that exists today.

The British sexologist Havelock Ellis, for example, referred to both people who we would today identify as gay or transgender as “sexual inverts,” which he defined as persons who exhibit same-gender attraction and a gender presentation socially contrary to the sex one was assigned at birth. The German scholar and human rights activist Karl Ulrichs similarly used the term “Urning,” which he described as a third gender existing between men and women, to refer to persons whom today we might describe as gay, trans, or genderqueer. Male Urnings, in Ulrichs’ formulation, were “male-bodied” people with the souls of women, and female Urnings were “female-bodied” people with the souls of men.

The term “homosexual,” coined in 1869 by the Hungarian doctor Karoly Maria Benkert, who wrote under the pseudonym K.M. Kertbeny, was not in popular usage till the early twentieth century. Mid-twentieth-century homosexual activists preferred the term “homophile” over homosexual, seeing it as a more neutral and acceptable option because it removed the word “sexual” while positively affirming same-gender attraction.

“Gay” emerged as an underground term in the early-twentieth century and came into popular usage in the 1960s. The term was preferred by the Stonewall generation, who, contrary to their predecessors, were less likely to see being gay as shameful or a mental defect. Post-Stonewall activists sought to articulate a more radical position removed from the image of respectability homophile organizations sought to cultivate. Though today “gay” typically refers to men who are attracted to men, it was historically used as a broad term that encompassed the entirety of the modern LGBTQ initialism.

The term “lesbian” comes from the Greek island of Lesbos, associated with the poet Sappho, whose surviving writing lyrically describes erotic love and attraction between women. Despite the use of “gay” as an umbrella term for gender and sexual minorities, the advent of the mid-to-late twentieth-century Women’s Movement (also referred to as the second wave of the U.S. feminist movement) gave gay women the consciousness to articulate how their experiences differed from both heterosexual women, who comprised the majority of the Women’s Movement, and gay men. The articulation of a distinct lesbian identity was often necessitated by exclusions gay women faced in feminist and gay organizations.

Yet, until the 1990s, “gay” was often used as a shorthand to refer to the entire spectrum of sexual and gender minorities. This usage shifted with the rise of bisexual, transgender, and queer movements, giving birth to the four-letter LGBT initialism, which was seen as more inclusive than broadly referring to the community simply as “gay.”

“Transgender” was also adopted by persons who did not identify with the earlier label “transsexual,” due to its association with medical transition across the gender binary.

The letter “Q” was sometimes added to the initialism, alternatively referring to “queer,” or to include those who were “questioning” their sexual orientation or gender identity.

History of LGBTQ in India

Homosexuality did exist in Ancient India. Therefore it has always been a part of India’s history. For instance it was represented in several Hindu temples where we could see images of same-sex people embracing or showing their genitals to one another. It’s also mentioned in other types of documents: for example, we track down proof of its existence in religious books, most specifically in Sanskrit religious sources such as Manusmriti and Shikhandi or even a chapter of the Kamasutra of Vatsyayana.

The text states that King Dilip had two wives, and he died without leaving an heir. Following this, Lord Shiva appeared in the dreams of the queens and told them that they would bear a child if they made love to each other. The widowed queens did as directed, and one of them got pregnant, eventually giving birth to King Bhagiratha. He is a famous king known to have brought River Ganga from heaven on earth.

Mahabharatha has the story of Shikhandini or Shikandi, who was responsible for the death of Deveratt Bhishma. She was born as a daughter to King Dhruvad but raised as a man. Later in

her life, she took the help of a yaksha to become a man to enter the battlefield of Kurukshetra and defeat Bhishma. Matsya Purana has an intriguing story where Lord Vishnu transitioned into a beautiful woman, 'Mohini'. He intended to trick the demons so that gods drank all the amrut (holy water). Further, upon seeing Mohini, Lord Shiva fell in love with her, and their union led to the birth of Lord Ayyappa.

According to research by the Gay and Lesbian Vaishnava Association (GALVA), it was around 3102 B.C. (during the Vedic Age) that homosexuality or non-normative sexual identity was recognised as "tritiya prakriti", or the third nature.

Why is LGBTQ Still Considered a Taboo in India?

As we can see LGBTQ did exist in India since ancient times, but as times changed people got more and more rigid and small minded. Thinking that LGBTQ is 'mental illness' or 'just a phase'.

Today, homosexuality and queer identities may be acceptable to more Indian youths than ever before, but within the boundaries of family, home and school, acceptance of their sexuality and freedom to openly express their gender choices still remain a constant struggle for LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) people.

Far away from gay pride parades, meet-ups and heated discussions on Twitter, families in rural India have their own ways of dealing with LGBT individuals. In some parts, secret honour killings are planned so that the only way for a young gay man to survive is to run away in the cover of the night to some city, with no money or social support.

In other parts, lesbian women are subjected to family-sanctioned corrective rapes, which are often perpetrated by their own family members. Vyjayanti Vasanta Mogli, a transwoman LGBT activist and public policy scholar at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Hyderabad, who has openly spoken about her abuse at school, says that lesbian women and transmen in rural areas end up at the bottom of the hierarchy when it comes to basic human rights within the unit of family and village.

Most lesbian, gay, bisexual, (LGB) youth are happy and thrive during their adolescent years. Having a school that creates a safe and supportive learning environment for all students and having caring and accepting parents are especially important. Positive environments can help all youth achieve good grades and maintain good mental and physical health. However, some LGB youth are more likely than their heterosexual peers to experience negative health and life outcomes.

LGBT, LGBTQ+, rainbow community, queer pride parades — even a decade and a half back these were terms that were rarely ever discussed or deliberated upon publicly in the Indian context. Today these may have found greater acceptance in drawing room conversations of the urban elite, and we have more media attention on issues concerning the rights of the LGBT community. But little has changed in terms of social attitude and acceptance in

immediate circles of youth who ‘come out’.

Homophobia in Indian schools and the complicity of school authorities is a largely unaddressed problem. We forget that young school students who are in the process of figuring out and settling into their individual identities and orientations require support. Discrimination and abuse within schools is overlooked because the victims are young, queer people. These students suffer silently, and there is a pressing need to bring this issue to light.

A boy from New Delhi writes, “[Teachers] would constantly nag me about my hairstyle, how it made me look very feminine, and that it almost made them wonder if I were ‘the unspeakable’ ”.

A similar experience is shared by a student of a renowned boys’ school in Bengaluru, who says that he has been ‘screamed at’ on multiple occasions by his teachers for effeminate body language and mannerisms. At the other end, a girl student who has not divulged the name of her school, writes, “They think all short haired people are lesbians. My principal acts against every tomboy who has got a short haircut.”

While schools may not be the centre of focus in the discourse around rights of LGBTQ+ people, it is not difficult to imagine the kind of treatment that students identifying with the community receive, especially given the historical attitude that Indian schools have displayed in relation to anything to do with ‘sex’. In schools, as in society at large, sexual awareness and education among youth is not just avoided, but often actively discouraged.

Being a teenager is tough. Being a lesbian, gay, transgender or queer (LGBTQ) youth is much more than just tough. It can be dangerous. At a time in one’s development when conformity is the rule, LGBTQ youth are often ostracized and bullied. They can even be victims of violence because of differences.

Different Areas of Society and Impact on Mental Health

LGBTQ people are more likely to experience intolerance, discrimination, harassment and the threat of violence due to their sexual orientation than those that identify themselves as heterosexual. Particularly vulnerable are young LGBTQ people who experience estrangement from family and friendship networks, harassment at school and invisibility, which can lead in some cases to underachievement at school, school drop-out, mental ill- health.

Such issues can have a serious impact on mental health. LGBTQ youth show increased risk for a number of negative mental health outcomes, which research has linked to minority stressors such as victimization. Biased-based bullying (i.e., bullying or victimization due to one’s perceived or actual identities including, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and disability status) amplifies the effects of victimization on negative outcomes. When compared to non-biased-based victimization, youth who experience LGBTQ-based victimization report higher levels of depression, suicidal ideation, suicide attempts, substance use, and truancy, regardless of whether these

experiences are in person or via the Internet. Biased-based victimization is also related to psychological distress and overall well-being in young adulthood and such experiences in school carry forward to later developmental stages.

At the sociocultural level, the lack of support in the fabric of the many institutions that guide the lives of LGBT youth (e.g., their schools, families, peer groups) limits their rights and protections and leaves them more vulnerable to experiences that may compromise their mental health. Along with lack of support, society also discriminates against these youths leading to homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, and feeling identity-based shame which develops into trauma for vulnerable youths. The LGBTQ community faces many forms of discrimination, including: labelling, stereotyping, denial of opportunities or access, and verbal, mental and physical abuse. Such discrimination can contribute to a significantly heightened risk for PTSD among individuals in the LGBTQ community compared to those who identify as heterosexual and cisgender.

A. Harassment of LGBTQ Students in Schools

LGBTQ students face harassment in schools. Being a teenager is tough enough without fearing harassment in a place where you're supposed to feel safe. All over the country LGBTQ students get harassed every day in school. Students who may be even just perceived as being LGBT also get harassed. According to studies done on LGBTQ community, suggest that nearly 9 out of 10 LGBT students face harassment. The 2007 National School Climate Survey found that not only LGBTQ students were harassed, but that 31.7% of LGBTQ students missed a class and 32.7% missed a day of school in the past month because of feeling unsafe. If students don't go to class, they can't learn and their grades begin to reflect it. The only thing teenagers should worry about in school is learning the material presented. Obviously, most teenagers have much more on their minds than that, however harassment shouldn't be one of them. Too many LGBT students find it hard to speak up about harassment because it is so embedded in our culture. LGBTQ harassment is one of the last forms of harassment that is still allowed in popular culture.

B. Family support and rejection

Parent and family rejection is strongly associated with mental health problems, substance use, and sexual risk. For many in the LGBTQ youths, coming out can be a difficult or even traumatic experience. It can be difficult to cope with rejection of something as personal as one's identity from family or close friends.

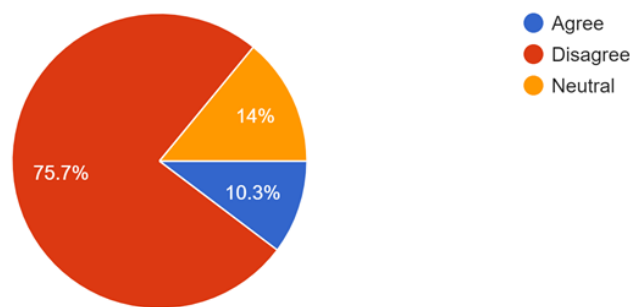
Perceived family support is associated with better mental health and less substance use. Parental rejection has also been linked to increased depression, suicide, and substance use among LGBTQ youth. When two parents are present in a household, there are often differences between parents in levels of acceptance, and the limited existing evidence suggests that mothers are more engaged with their LGBTQ children and that LGBTQ youth who come out to their parents tend to come out to mothers before fathers.

Survey

To get a better understanding of the societal attitude towards LGBTQ we conducted a survey through Google forms where we gave a few statements related to LGBTQ and asked people (whose age is 15 and above) if they agree, disagree or have a neutral opinion about the statement. We received 107 responses in total and following is a graphical representation of the response we got from the survey.

Homosexuality (the quality or characteristic of being sexually attracted solely to people of one's own sex) is a mental disorder.

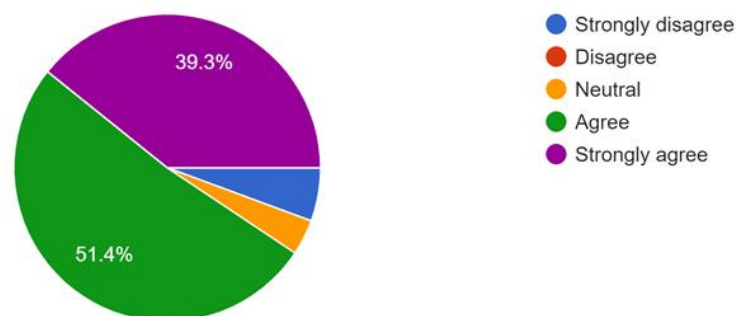
107 responses



As we see in the above pie chart, even though there is a lot of progress in bringing awareness in society about the LGBTQ community there are still 10.3% people who believe homosexuality is a mental disorder.

Lack of support, biases and discrimination is making it difficult for LGBTQ youths to come out.

107 responses



As discussed earlier, discrimination in different forms and in different parts of society against LGBTQ youth has been very prevalent. Considering the pie chart, 39.3% people strongly agree and 51.4% agree that discrimination does make it difficult for LGBTQ youths to come out.

We also asked people what their opinions were about “There is a need for introduction of sex education among adolescence.” and here are 6 best responses out of total 95 responses that we received:

1. I strongly believe that in India we need to talk more openly about sex education as soon as the child enters the teen age. It's better that parents talk to them before they get to know half-baked and wrong info from their age group friends who are equally inexperienced which may lead to exploration in a wrong way. The more open we are about it and let our kids know about the pros and cons, do's and don'ts the more balanced will be their mental state. The family bonding should be close and friendly so as to first listen to what each one has to say before judging. In India we lack such kind of open communication which should be encouraged.
2. Yes. Of course! I think there should be more than 2 genders included in textbooks. I guess people from LGBTQ community should conduct these sex education sessions so that people can get hands on experience of them. People will actually see those people, their hardships. I think those people are the most accepting and loving people in the world. Maybe at the age of 15 or 16, teachers should make us aware about these things like just revisit yourself and your thoughts about others. Educational institutes should invite these lovely people as guests and treat them as normal people. Why there has to be only a male and/or female guest. Gays and transgenders can also be a part of it so naturally people will start accepting if institutes at these level make it normal. I am, maybe, not able to answer it right but yeah there is need to educate not only adolescents but every generation. And adolescents know everything or eventually they come across these things but the real issue is to accept them. So rather than just giving lectures, we should meet those people so that we get to know them and their beautiful souls and then maybe staying with them will increase our acceptance level. So yeah just try to accept it.
3. It should very much be necessary, especially here in India, to change people's mindsets as they've grown up in an environment where others invalidate people's feelings of their sexuality.
4. I agree. Especially in the Indian setting. People need to be made aware (especially women). Sex education is a powerful tool as it gives people the right to take decisions about their own body and social stigma regarding sex education will reduce only when more people start talking about it.
5. I completely agree. The need for proper introduction exists not just among adolescents but also among parents of all ages. It should be more openly talked about in households. More advertisements and movies should be made normalizing the existence of LGBTQ community.
6. I think it is always prejudiced to introduce this subject in teaching. Often it is tabooed

when anyone speaks in this regard and stepped upon to entirely crush the subject. Introducing won't cause harm, but would create awareness. To speak a little boldly, many adolescents seek and comply with censored websites out of Idiosyncrasies and curiosity. Being open about this topic can definitely create a perception to view this in a new light, rather than something "hidden". Absolutely, it is a need.

What Can We Do to Bring a Change?

A. Need For Sex Education:

It is not difficult to imagine the kind of treatment that students identifying with the LGBTQ community receive, especially given the historical attitude that Indian schools have displayed in relation to anything to do with 'sex'. In schools, as in society at large, sexual awareness and education among youth is not just avoided, but often actively discouraged.

We need to educate people. Educate the youth, educate authorities, and educate whoever we can reach out to, because homophobia is often a product of ignorance. We also need to create formalized support and resource groups for LGBTQ Indians. We need sex education, social awareness workshops, redefined curricula. We need healthy media representation. We need to make sure that this generation and the next understand queerness, and how normal it is.

B. Reducing Prejudice and Discrimination:

Heterosexual people who wish to help reduce prejudice and discrimination can examine their own response to antigay stereotypes and prejudice. They can make a point of coming to know lesbian, gay and bisexual people, and they can work with people from LGBTQ community to combat prejudice and discrimination. Heterosexual allies can encourage nondiscrimination policies that include sexual orientation. They can work to make coming out safe. When lesbians, gay men and bisexual people feel free to make public their sexual orientation, heterosexuals are given an opportunity to have personal contact with openly gay people and to perceive them as individuals.

C. How Can Schools Help?

There is consistent evidence of discriminatory bullying and unsafe school climate for LGBTQ students, hence education policy is particularly related for LGBTQ mental health is a need of the hour. It has identified school policies and practices that promote positive school climate and individual student well-being, including feelings of safety, achievement, and positive mental health. At the level of educational programs and practice, teachers clearly play a key role in establishing a positive school climate for LGBTQ and all students. Also at the level of individual student daily experiences and interpersonal interactions, the presence and visibility of information and support on LGBTQ issues in school, are strongly correlated with more affirming interactions with peers, positive school climate, and better student adjustment.

D. How Can Peers and Parents Help?

At the interpersonal level, studies of LGBT youth have consistently shown that parental and peer support are related to positive mental health, self-acceptance, and well-being. Noteworthy is support specifically related to and affirming one's sexual orientation and gender identity, which appears to be especially beneficial for youth. Research found that sexuality-related social support from parents, friends, and community during adolescence each uniquely contributed to positive well-being in young adulthood, with parental support providing the most benefit. It has been noted that LGB youth who retained friends after disclosing their sexual identity had higher levels of self-esteem, lower levels of depressive symptomatology, and fewer suicidal thoughts than those who had lost friends as a result of coming out. Similarly, LGB youth who reported having sexual minority friends experienced less depression over time, and the presence of LGB friends attenuated the effects of victimization.

"Our fears and taboos are largely social conditions imposed upon us by the ruling powers in order to keep us oppressed. They manipulate us with our fears. Now let us be fearless."

—Kathy Change

IS LOVE REALLY A SIN?

*By
Simran Malu
SYBA*

As complicated as it might seem, Love is as simple as a profoundly tender, passionate affection for another person, a feeling of warm personal attachment or deep affection for someone. Caring for someone, being affectionate towards them and being yourself around a person is how easy it is to be in love.

Love encompasses a range of strong and positive emotional and mental states, from the most sublime virtue or good habit, the deepest interpersonal affection, to the simplest pleasure. An example of this range of meanings is that the love of a mother differs from the love of a spouse, which differs from the love for food. Most commonly, love refers to a feeling of a strong attraction and emotional attachment.

What is LGBT+?

LGBT is an initialism that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender. In use since the 1990s, the initialism, as well as some of its common variants, functions as an umbrella term for sexuality and gender identity.

LGBT+ refers to the people who do not identify as straight, or heterosexual. Basically meaning homosexuality, the people who identify as 'Queer', another umbrella term for homosexuality experience romantic or sexual attraction towards same genders or more than just one gender.

The acronym LGBTQIA+ is an ever growing and evolving acronym. It is an inclusive term covering people of all genders and sexualities, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, queer, intersex, asexual, pansexual, and allies.

Why is LQBT a Taboo?

Deviant from the norm of a girl and a boy being together, the concept of homosexuality has long been a taboo subject. Considered something of an abnormality, homosexuals have received and faced hate and violence for a long time. Most people argue that homosexuality isn't natural, the natural order of a male and female breeding. This evolution is also seen as a threat by many societies, making it illegal to even be in a same sex relationship. It is religiously considered a sin.

But is loving someone really a sin? Is it wrong to be in love with someone a person wants to be with?

Regardless of gender, everyone should be free to love whoever they want, whoever their heart feels like loving. The heart only knows love and affection, and not genders, financial

backgrounds, societal statuses, classes; only the other person's heart. And heart doesn't have any distinctions; it's just a muscular organ in the body.

Acceptance for LGBT

In the 22nd year of the 21st Century, it's time that lgbt+ is accepted and respected. Loving someone of the same gender isn't abnormal or a sin, it's what the heart wants and listening to the heart is what bring everyone happiness. It's time the society chooses everyone's happiness over the rigid old rules that benefit no one.

Spreading awareness and making people aware of the community's existence and teaching people from the base that being homosexual is not something that is bad or wrong is our time's requirement. Every human has a right to choose how they want to live their life and should be given that right without fearing rejection from society, fear of being subjected to violence and outcasted from the society.

"The moment we choose to love we begin to move against domination, against oppression. The moment we choose to love we begin to move towards freedom, to act in ways that liberate ourselves and other."

—Bell Hooks

MEN IN FASHION

By
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Cosmetics have been connected with femininity and seen as a part of a woman's daily regimen. Makeup and fashion have been the most debatable topics when it comes to men. With social norms constantly reminding us, "Men do not wear makeup. Fashion makes a man feminine. Makeup is only for women", Gen-Z values breaking free from outdated standards and trends that limit their sense of style and identity. The LGBTQ community around the world has applauded this trend. When switching from masculine to feminine components, or vice versa, people feel more fluid and flexible.

In 2022, new and slightly feminine products will be the new fashion trends for males. Men's clothing will include pink shirts, attractive handbags, and even camisole tops. In order to add characteristics of masculinity, women have always adopted men's fashion. However, significant feminine characteristics have recently been added, changing masculinity into a more feminized appearance. These, it appears, were laying the groundwork for future fashion trends.

As a result, men's fashion is becoming more androgynous as a result of these feminine influences. It's been dubbed "girly menswear," despite the fact that men have been wearing flowing hemlines for ages.

Older Civilizations and Fashion

Many ancient costumes were based on the idea of the skirt, purely because they were easy to construct and provided enormous freedom of movement. Gauzy wraps and loincloths for Egyptians, togas denoting class and status for Greeks and Romans, ornate military costumes for Aztecs: many ancient costumes were based on the idea of the skirt.

Pants became a "masculine" necessity as civilizations became more gender-divided in terms of who rode the horses, fought, and rounded up the livestock.

Before the 14th century, European males wore skirts. Young American boys wore skirts until they were old enough for trousers until the nineteenth century. This is how the skirt came to be identified with women rather than men.

Until the 19th century, European children wore skirts, regardless of gender, until they reached an age that could be called "adult." For portraits, prominent families would dress children of

both genders in highly expensive outfits that mimicked adult fashion.

To demonstrate that they had progressed beyond infancy, little boys were given their first pair of trousers (breeches) in the 19th century. New theories about childhood and children's brains contributed to this, as did altering perspectives on what defines a "man."

Skirts on men only become taboo through the Western gaze.

Contemporary Views

It's customary for males to wear simple gowns in so many places in Africa and Asia, such as the East African kanga and the Southeast Asian sarong. Similarly, lungis are traditional Indian skirts worn by men in the south. The lavalava, a rectangular wrap-around skirt worn by Polynesians, and the longyi, a tube skirt worn by men and women in Myanmar, are two other examples.

Others, on the other hand, may wear skirts to display their culture or identity. Men's skirts are devoid of eroticism. Skirts for men add a new dimension to men's fashion, allowing designers to explore new possibilities. The decision to wear a skirt every day should be rooted in the belief that clothes have no gender.

The idea of a feminized man has entered the culture, pushing the boundaries of human existence.

However, men's skirts have been met with widespread opposition, with many believing that because the skirt is intrinsically feminine, a man wearing one is either feminine, harkening back to a less sophisticated past, or seeking attention. They feel that if men become more feminine in order to provide women with the equality they need, this implies that women are still the weaker sex.

People began to ask why a woman dressed as a man is regarded as powerful, yet a man dressed as a woman, especially if he goes full drag queen, is regarded as humiliating. That inquiry was not answered in a nice or comfortable manner. Being a woman is regarded as demeaning in our society, which is founded on an ancient patriarchal system in which people are divided so that a small minority can rule, and everything culturally feminine is seen as weak.

Egalitarians should keep in mind that equality means respect for all types of lifestyles and styles, as long as they do not harm others or reduce everyone to the same denominator. A man can be strong while wearing a dress. He can even be powerful while wearing an evening gown.

Fashion has become more expressive than it has ever been in recent years. A male in a skirt was prohibited a little over ten years ago, and it would be extremely dangerous for that individual to leave the house. People are becoming more open-minded as time passes,

making it safer for people to be themselves.



Over the decades, the term **metrosexual** has become a staple in the study of men. The dictionary meaning of metrosexual is- a heterosexual man who lives in a city and is interested in things like fashion and shopping. In simple words, a heterosexual man who enjoys shopping, fashion, beauty, and similar interests that are traditionally associated with women or homosexuals.

Doing skincare or having a proper skincare routine only makes a man feel good about himself. The same goes for makeup. Makeup for men is more or less the same for men. It has the same impact on both of them. Makeup helps us to feel more confident about ourselves, our skin. Men who are conscious about their skin and groom themselves are often considered gay or feminine even today.

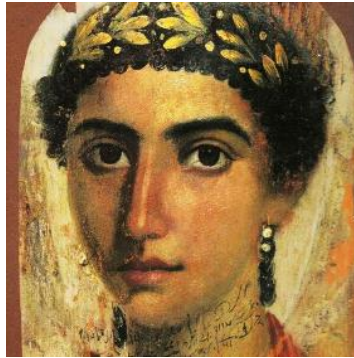
History of Male Makeup

For generations, makeup has been seen as a “girls-only” enterprise. But we forget that it wasn’t always that way. Men have used cosmetics in a variety of ways for millennia, dating from 4000 BCE through the 18th and 19th centuries. Makeup was not confined to one end of the gender spectrum until the mid-1800s.

Masculinity was an important aspect of *ancient Egyptian culture*. Makeup played an important role. Men used black pigments to create elaborate cat-eye patterns back in 4000 BCE. Also, Kohl eyeliner, green malachite eye, and red ochre lip and cheek stains became fashionable a few millennia later. Green eye makeup was supposed to recall the gods Horus and Ra, and so protect from deadly illnesses. The use of dramatic eyeliner was once considered a sign of riches and rank.



In the 1st century AD, *Roman males* were known to use crimson pigment on their cheeks, powder to brighten their complexion, and a mixture of pig fat and blood to paint their nails. The Romans appear to have shaped clear perspectives on what attributes each gender has, where gender is “*the roles that people of each sex have in the society, describing all those characteristics that are attributed to males or females by the society or the culture*” (Allana, 2014)



During *Queen Elizabeth I's* rule (mid-16th-17th century) in England, makeup was wildly popular among men, who valued ghost-white powdered skin. This was also when face makeup was dangerously cakey and made with lead, which often caused serious health problems, including-but-not-limited-to premature death.



Fast forward to the 18th century, France *King Louis XVI* brought in the obsession with wigs when he went bald in his early 20s. During this time, men who worked for the court painted on beauty marks.



Cosmetics were considered obscene by *Queen Victoria I* of Great Britain at the time (1819-1901). Cosmetics was seen as "an abomination" by both the crown and the church throughout the Victorian era, resulting in strong, widespread links between makeup, vanity, femininity, and "the Devil's work."

Both men and women in ancient India used a variety of makeup products. While most people think of makeup as purely cosmetic, it was a way for Indians to practise their religion and culture. Some products were only worn on special occasions, while others were worn on a regular basis to improve the wearer's luck, beauty, spirituality, and status.

As religious ideas spread throughout the world, conventional ideas of masculinity became more limited. *"Due to the stigma against men who use makeup during this period, the link between vanity and the feminine associations of homosexuality may have formed. The femininity of such may have besmirched the church's name, therefore, resulting in the ridicule of makeup-wearing men."*(Graham)

Many societal factors may have influenced men's use of cosmetics from the reign of Queen Victoria I to the present day, such as the pressure to be masculine in a war-driven and homophobic society.

Role of Social Media and Pop Culture

There is no denying that male makeup is becoming more accepted and that the stigma associated with it is fading away. Makeup is now a form of self-expression for both men and women, rather than a question of gender or sexuality. Social media and "pop culture" definitely play an important role in this.

The younger generation looks forward to Harry Styles's new fashion avatar. K-pop has an influence over people as well. Seeing people defy stereotypes is intriguing, whether it's Harry's stunning gown, Kai of EXO's perfect crop tops, or stray kids with their makeup.

Although male makeup was a taboo in India, things have definitely changed for good. Men have been wearing makeup for decades in India, whether in the theatre, the movie industry, or at weddings, still there are many negative stereotypes about men who wear makeup on a regular basis.

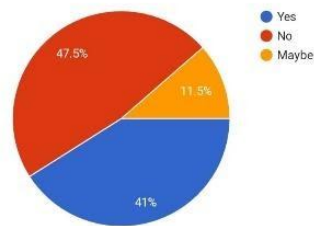
The role of social media in breaking stereotypes is significant. This change and revolution, brought about by social media and digital media channels, is aimed at bringing gender equality and dismissing the myth that MAKEUP IS ONLY FOR WOMEN! The rise of platforms like YouTube, Tik Tok, and Instagram has allowed men interested in makeup to share their passion with the world and showcase their creativity on a larger scale thanks to technological advancements.

Some of the Indian influencers like Siddharth Batra, Ankush Bahuguna, Shantanu Dhope, Deep Pathare, Yashwant Singh are promoting male makeup and are redefining beauty

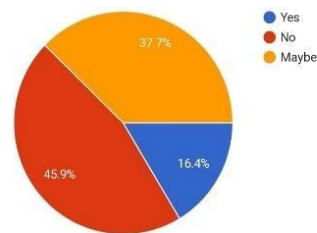
standards.



If your son applies nail polish would be comfortable?



As a male, would you be comfortable wearing feminine clothes?



We circulated a survey form to find the social views on Men in Fashion. The questions began with seemingly ordinary adolescence behaviour. Example- growing hair, applying skincare, wearing loud prints. The responses were mostly in favour. However, as the intensity was increased gradually to nail polish, jewellery and societal decided feminine outfits, the responses widely ranged from maybe to no. Almost all answered that they didn't believe that make up was only for women, but when it came to supporting men who are defying the clothing norms, the responses again ranged with majority opting for maybe or no.

This indicates that fashion awareness is high. Which can be attributed to Bollywood, advertisements on television, and western influencers who are publicly setting standards for male cross-dressing, fashion and casual make up. Largely, the attitude is against fashion adoption.

Upon observation in both formal and informal settings, one notices the distinct fashion consumption strictly adhering to male norms. The likelihood of women buying from the men's section is higher than men shopping through women's.

This study includes a deeper understanding of the role of appearance in non-verbal

communication and in informal social control.

Men police their clothing to avoid “masculinity dilemmas”, when their appearance would be contradicting the prevalent ideas of male appearance. Toning down, sticking to solids, imitating the popular style of the social setting are some examples. The size of the industry or hierarchical position does not affect this much.

Fashion is now an individual expression. Several men aren't afraid to stand out by wearing attire that's different from the perceived 'normal'. While conformity is still valued, being distinct is as well. And fashion has moved beyond traditional choices and preferred social norms. Makeup isn't lagging behind either. Several global and Indian influencers promote and support the movement of removing gender or sexuality from makeup, leaving it open for all without stigmas and mockery.

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MENSTRUATION: WHEN BELIEFS ALTERED OVER THE AGES

By
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Introduction

Menstruation - A very natural biological process is often viewed from a tabooed lens. Women succumb to these taboos, are compelled to follow these unjust practices, and have hampered their lives for ages together.

Over the ages, the idea of menstruation and its beliefs have altered. It is what we can call a "dualism implicit in women's social position". From one aspect the woman who may not be approached is inviolable, holy; while in another aspect she is polluted and unclean. She is what the Romans call *Sacra*, sacred and accursed.

Menstrual taboos are religiously followed by most women in our society. But have we ever given a thought about where these taboos have their origin

Let us have a look at how menstrual beliefs evolved through the ages.

Ancient Period

In ancient times, the menstrual process was a subject of fear and wonder in human beings. As scientific reasoning did not take place both men and women believed that women's blood set them apart in a mysterious and magical way. This bleeding came and went with a regularity that no human act could change but did not cause death or disability either. Only an even greater mystery, the creation of human life, could alter its pattern! And, this led them to glorify it even further.

Some of the ancient Greeks and Romans believe that menstruating women had great powers and 'could stop hailstorms, whirlwinds, and lightning, and kill crops'.

Women in ancient Egypt "menstruation was believed to have a "healing effect" and was a 'time for cleansing." It was believed that menstrual blood could cure leprosy, warts, birthmarks, gout, goitre, haemorrhoids, epilepsy, worms, and headache in the past.

When Patriarchy Steps In...

Patriarchy in its wider definition means the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women in society. It implies that men hold power in all the important

institutions of society and that women are deprived of access to such power.

Marking the woman's body as "a body which leaks, which bleeds, which is at the mercy of hormonal and reproductive functions" allows for easier subjugation of both the blood and of the person who bleeds. Indeed, menstrual blood and its bleeders are given meaning based on the ideals of male, heterosexual desire, i.e., menstrual blood is dirty and so are menstruating women. This point of view birthed the menstruation taboo, which persists because of society's association of menstrual blood with a bodily type of pollution.

Having talked about these unjust menstrual practices, let us also look at what were the further restrictions and taboos regarding menstruation that were associated with this thinking.

Taboos and Menstruation

Many Cultural norms associate menstruation with evil spirits, shame, and embarrassment surrounding sexual reproduction. This is why women bury their clothes used during menstruation to prevent them from being used by evil spirits.

Ancient Persians confined menstruating women to an isolated portion of the house, where no fire was to be kindled, all wood was removed, and the floor was strewn with dust. Post-period, they were said to be treated to washing with bull's urine.

In some parts of India, perceptions of Hinduism centre on notions of purity and pollution.

- Water is considered to be the most common medium of purification. This highlights the possible reason why menstruating women are not allowed to take a bath especially for the first few days of their menstrual period.
- Women reported that during menstruation they were forbidden from touching water sources, or places where food; such as pickles, spices, was stored as apparently touching anything while menstruating left it polluted—too dirty for anyone else to use.
- During her cycle, a woman is forbidden from entering not only temples but also her own kitchen; she must not take naps, wear flowers, cut her nails, and have sex.
- It is believed that if a girl or woman touches a cow while she is on her period, that the cow will become infertile – leading girls to associate their own bodies with curse and impurity.

Women interviewees talked about how at the end of their menstruation, they were instructed to bathe, as well as wash the items that they used separately from everyone else during the fourth day of their period.

Many are ostracized and banished to remote menstrual huts. In Pindar valley, girls are kept in cattle sheds where they're believed to be in the process of getting purified as cow's urine is

considered to be pure.

A horrifying incident happened with a 12yr old girl who died in Nov 2018 during the Gaja cyclone as she was forced to stay in a small hut made of coconut leaves behind her house because just a few days ago she started menstruating and wasn't allowed to leave!!

- Islamic women are not supposed to touch the Quran, enter a mosque, or offer ritual prayer during menstruation.
- A verse in the Quran specifically forbids sexual contact as well. During the holy month of Ramadan, menstruating women are not permitted to participate in the required fast between sunrise and sunset during the days they have their period.
- In the Eastern Orthodox Christian Church, partaking of sacraments during menstruation, especially communion, or touching holy items like the Bible or religious icons is strictly off-limits.
- It is believed in Buddhism that menstruation causes women to lose or leak some of their Qi-life force or spiritual energy.

And then, just when all hope in any period-loving spirituality is lost, there's Sikhism which professes positivity around the menstrual cycle and reassures that a woman's blood is a natural and fundamental component of life. It strongly counters and condemns those who deem menstruation unclean. There are no restrictions placed on menstruating women, who are free to carry out fundamental religious principles as well as go about their daily lives.

Even though taboos around menstruation exist in our society, changes are being welcomed to bring a difference worldwide.

Current Progressive Changes

With the resurgence of the feminist movement in its fourth wave, conversations are now trending in the media regarding women's periods with the goal of changing society's perceptions about menstruation.

Even commercials advertising menstrual products do not actually show menstrual blood in their demonstrations; rather they demonstrate a product's 'absorption power' with a pretty blue liquid. They never depict women in agonizing pain, using the product in the restroom, or even mention what the product is used for. These advertisements remain conspicuously euphemistic, all depicting unrealistic expectations for women.

Fortunately, the long silence has been broken. Not only are women beginning to talk to each other frankly and casually about their common bond; contemporary feminist artists are forcing us literally to look at our bleedings. In the summer of 2016, Fu Yuanhui, a Chinese swimmer, made news worldwide when she talked about her period on TV during the

Olympic Games. Yuanhui's mention of period cramps was a rare display of openness about menstruation in athletics but was even more notable considering her cultural background. Similarly, marathoner Kiran Gandhi made news last year when she chose to use nothing, bleeding through her running clothes during the London Marathon.

In certain parts of Assam and Orissa, the rituals of the menstruation of the goddess are celebrated during the monsoon season. A common belief was that both the fertile earth and woman must rest, be venerated, and celebrated.

In our country, various voices have sprung up and they are initiating various movements and campaigns to raise awareness about menstruation and educate them about menstrual hygiene, care, maladaptive practices, and debunking the myths and taboos of menstruation.

Grassroots Level and Other Initiatives

- The Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram adolescent health strategy has made headway in providing solutions by offering affordable sanitary products. Here, counselors provide psycho-social and menstruation-related information to girls.
- 'Menstrupedia' is a 90-page comic book and online platform that integrates fun real-life stories and colourful illustrations to build menstrual awareness.
- Goonj, the NGO, is the brainchild of Roman Magsaysay Award winner Anshu Gupta. As a part of its initiative--Not Just a Piece of Cloth--Goonj provides clean cloth sanitary pads to women in villages.
- The Delhi-based NGO, Sacchi Saheli, conducts sessions on menstrual awareness in various slums of the city. The Break the Bloody Taboo campaign of the NGO aims to break the common myths about menstruation among the female population
- Breaking the Silence Campaign, "in conjunction with in-person training", has raised awareness about menstruation through social media, introducing interviews, information, a hotline, and quizzes to engage both women and men."

Social Media Campaigns

Various people from different sectors of societies have started raising their voices against these unjust menstrual practices via social media campaigns and petitions. Here is the list of a few social media initiatives.

- "Breaking the Silence Campaign", has raised awareness about menstruation through social media, introducing interviews, information, a hotline, and quizzes to engage both women and men.
- The Times of India launched "#CutTheShame" to raise awareness about menstrual health, period poverty and to break the silence around the age-old practice of

menstrual shame.

- Red Dot Challenge, a social media campaign initiated by Post for Change a nonprofit organization in partnership with UNICEF India aims to spread the message of menstrual hygiene.
- #UngenderMenstruation is India's first-ever gender-inclusive menstruation campaign. It aims to make menstruation in India truly gender-inclusive, petitioning menstrual products and hygiene brands to replace "women" with "menstruators" on all their branding and communication.
- #HappytoBleed was a campaign initiated by Nikita Azad to counter menstrual taboos and stigma in India.

Summary

- Throughout history, the phenomenon of menstruation has been manipulated and altered according to the social norms to subjugate women.
- Traces of these patriarchal thoughts still exist in today's time due to the mentality of men thinking of women just as a tool of use and their assumed right to pressurize them.
- Today's need is to change this perspective of men, to make them aware and accept women's biology for what it is and not associate it with any supernatural force or impurity. It is important that we learn to empathize with all the women who face these issues every month. If this happens, there can be a huge change in tackling the worldly issues related to menstruation and also in leading a healthier lifestyle.
- We believe that if menstruation itself was not so negatively interpreted, people's experiences would be more positive, not just in the case of people whose corporeal identity does not fit with their periods, but for all people who do (or do not) menstruate.
- We need to understand menstruation as more than an identity process, as one more corporeal process which may serve as a space of resistance, creativity, dissidence, and subversion.

MENTAL DISORDERS AS A TABOO

By
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Why should people with a mental disorder be treated differently?

Let's talk about what stigma really is. Stigma refers to when negative stereotyping, labelling, rejection and a loss of status occurs, it takes place in 3 forms.

- 1) Public Stigma - When members of a society discriminate people with a mental disorder
- 2) Label Avoidance - In order to avoid the label of being called "crazy" people needing care may avoid seeking it.
- 3) Self Stigma - When people with mental illness internalize negative stereotypes and in turn discriminate against themselves.

It is surprising to see mental disorders coming with the baggage of stigmas and it is believed as a taboo to speak about it and to be with individuals who are facing such adversities. 7.5 % of India's population suffer from some form of mental disorder. An estimate of 26% American's aged over 18 and about 1 in 4 adults suffer from diagnosable disorders in the studied year. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, this number is on the rise.

I recently came across a case study which will help shed some light on this flabbergasting situation. There is an Indian male in his early 50s who is diagnosed with schizophrenia, he complained of hearing voices; exhibited apprehensive behaviour, fatuous laughter and hesitancy and also engaged in third person conversations.

He was diagnosed with schizophrenia after marriage. He and his wife have a strained relationship and they've continued their marriage for the sake of their children. They have one daughter who is a doctor and a son who is a slow learner and has an intellectual disability. The son is 22 years old and he has just passed 12th grade. It's time for their daughter's marriage now, in spite of being highly educated, good looking and being a great dancer; she is not getting a favourable suitor for marriage. Initially when the daughter and the prospective partner speak everything is well, but when the boy and his family see her father and brother they realize this is not the right household to get attached with and hence don't offer a marriage proposal.

I feel what is the girl's fault in all of this? She has all the 'normal' prerequisites for marriage and just because families are not comfortable with mental disorders the girl ends up suffering.

As we know in an Indian society having children after marriage is given great emphasis. Everyone wants a successor and heir to the family. It's not fair for the ones who are going through mental disorders or have a family member going through it just to be neglected and

not taken into consideration. General public is afraid that the mental disorder can get transferred genetically. Mental disorders such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder, ADHD and Autism spectrum disorders are transferred genetically but not in all cases. People forget to take into account that the environmental and psychosocial factors are just as important as hereditary one's.

There is this huge stigma about mental disorders and the people going through them. The public is naïve and lacks correct information about mental disorders. They feel that the ones going through a mental disorder are unstable, a threat to society, not fit to be treated how “normal people” should be treated. It'll be shocking to know that the so-called "normal people" are committing crimes like theft, property crimes, and violent crimes. Murder has risen by almost 30 % in 2020.

In my opinion people going through mental disorders or mental issues need kind love and support. May it be through family & friends, psychologists, psychiatrists or through medication. What we need to understand is that they are in a sensitive fragile place in their life, and thus need to be heard and uplifted rather than being shamed by society/relatives/friends. At such a point they should not feel alone as this will only contribute in an adverse manner. They should not feel excluded as even small things pile up in the head of the person who's going through a mental disorder. They feel alienated which makes their state of mind cloudy and they start feeling emotions of guilt and unworthiness. It's high time that taboos need to be abolished as the human kind is ever evolving. Indian cinema has made a positive contribution towards this cause by making films centred on mental illnesses.

Let us look at a fine example of *Taare Zameen par*. It started a conversation about learning disabilities and shows us that even with a learning disability other talent can be inculcated like drawing, dancing, and singing. These children should be taught to harness their abilities rather than only focusing on academics. The subject was approached in a realistic manner; we got to witness the reality of mental pressure and bullying.

Karthik calling Karthik. The story revolves around Farhan Akhtar who's diagnosed with schizophrenia, which leads to multiple issues in his personal and professional life. What's novel about the movie is that it didn't over dramatize schizophrenia, Karthik wasn't shown as a crazy man, he was a normal person who had a mental illness and was learning how to cope with it.

My name is Khan. It shows Shah Rukh Khan a man afflicted with Asperger's syndrome, this condition is classified by difficulty in social interaction. Khan is different from his family and peers nevertheless the film portrays the condition not as something that is limiting, but rather as something that enriches both him and everyone around.

Positive mental health promotion can be done by -

1. Having open discussions about mental health and Mental health education at school level.
2. Encourage kind language
3. Attending / coordinating a mental health screening event – this will help people take action regarding their mental health
4. Leveraging social media – Platforms like Facebook, twitter, Instagram help people in becoming open minded and gaining information regarding mental health
5. Encouraging physical activities that support mental health – we need to make people understand that physical health has a direct impact on mental health. Eating healthy, getting plenty of exercise and sleep all play a part in a person’s mental and emotional state.

In this day and age, we should be liberal enough to look beyond a person’s mental disorder and appreciate them for the individual that they are. We should accept and assimilate different situations and people.

“Understanding is the first step to acceptance, and only with acceptance can there be recovery.”

"There is no policy too sensitive to question, and no subject so taboo that you cannot even mention it."

— Lee Hsein Loong

PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION (PDA) IN INDIA

By
Shivani Malpani
TYBA

Public Display of affection are acts of physical intimacy in the view of others- some say it's completely okay and some are absolutely against it. It includes everything from hugging to kissing to even having sexual intercourse in public. What is acceptable and what isn't is decided by the public. In the Indian context, however, partaking in PDA can be downright dangerous at times, with couples even being beaten down in some cases by the public.

In 2018, the Dum Dum metro station incident in Kolkata was of moral policing, in which a young couple was forced out of a Kolkata Metro Railway coach by fellow middle-aged men and thrashed at the metro station for hugging inside the coach. The 5-6 middle-aged men dragged the couple on the station and started beating up the guy. When the girl tried to save him, she was then beaten too by the same enraged men. However, the couple was then rescued by the youth and women and escorted out of the station.

But why is it that hugging is considered an indecent act, but abusing a couple is not? That's the question we need to ask ourselves.

Under section 294 of the Indian Penal Code, causing annoyance to others through 'obscene acts' is a criminal offense

Section 294: Obscene acts and songs- Whoever, to the annoyance of others-

- a) does any obscene act in any public place, or
- b) sings, recites or utters any obscene song, ballad or words, in or near any public place, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three months, or with fine, or with both.

However, the law doesn't give a detailed definition of what comes under obscene acts. Just because the law does not explicitly define 'obscene acts' it's outright misused by the police and the public to harass couples.' The public gets to decide what's obscene. So depending on the geographical area what's considered obscene can change. While holding hands in a city like Mumbai would not be a big deal, it would be unacceptable in a lot of villages.

The age of the couple seems to decide how people react to them. The younger the couple is the more it's unacceptable, with young couples being harassed by the police and public. Whether a couple is married or not also plays an important role in society. When married people partake in PDA it's considered admirable even. Why does age have anything to do with couples showing their affection towards each other? Love should have no age group.

People fall in love at all ages and it showing love at all ages should be normalized.

When celebrities indulge in PDA it's romanticized so much to the point where there are multiple fan accounts, blogs, with pictures of celebrity couples kissing, and sometimes even more; but when it comes to normal couples we can't seem to withstand them hugging or even giving a light peck on the cheeks. This is the innate double standard in our society that nobody wants to talk about.

Well, I am not denying the fact that there has to be some limit with PDA and there are couples who go overboard, which is definitely unacceptable because it can make people around them feel uncomfortable, but PDA is not bad, and no one should have the right to harass people just because they are in love.

"Taboo has a lot of hidden meanings. We're going to leave that up to your imagination."

—Jeff Gaulton

Taboo of Divorce

By

Prathamesh Namdas

FYBA

Divorce may be a common Phenomenon in the western world. The eastern world is one of the biggest critics of this family issue even today divorce is a topic of social taboo. A man and woman may get hitched in a lavish wedding and may seem to be the happiest people on earth but what happens after, is unknown. They may either continue living a life of fairytales or end up getting the worst nightmares. The process of divorce is fairly new in Nepal. While the number of divorce cases is on a rise in the urban areas of the country, the rural area is still very unaware about the whole provision, also illiteracy and ignorance have played an important role in shaping society's thoughts and ideas. People are so concerned about their family reputation in society that they are not even to think about divorce. In many cases, parents try to resolve the problems between the married couples so that they do not jump into a hasty divorce.

The mediation may restore peace and harmony of the family but there are also some cases in which couples continue staying that can be called a driving factor behind the continuation of unsuccessful and broken marriages.

In reality, divorce itself is not a very big problem As human beings everyone aspires for freedom there, and some burdensome relationships are meant to be broken but it is our patriarchal society of ours that exaggerates the issue of divorce this is why Women suffer the most. They become a victim of either extreme criticism or unbearable empathy. Divorce women are forced to believe that they are weak and that they cannot survive the harsh world without; male support; their advances for a second marriage or a relationship are rejected by the society degrading terms such as damaged goods are used to describe them. Contrary to this, men live in a peaceful environment even after their divorce. Whatever may be their ages, they are still considered a bachelor and this should not mean that only women suffer. Men too suffer but their ratio is lower in comparison to women.

Marriage and divorce are inevitable. While marriage teaches you to adjust with a different person and family, divorce teaches you to become stronger mentally and responsible for yourself adultery cruelty, desertion, religious conversion, mental disorder, and venereal diseases, among others, are some of the grounds for divorce in Nepal.

In the past, the divorce law was much inclined towards women this indirectly shows a hint of law being influenced by patriarchal beliefs and nations. But after the amendment of the civil codes in 2018, the law now treats both men and women equally. In the western world, individualism is considered to be the most important therefore, men and women so on their independent path once they feel they should be out of the.

MY WAR

By
Sejal Panchpor
TYBA

A war cry, a scream for help,
a plea for survival, an apology
I don't know why we are fighting,
when we want the same things.
I want to love the one I love
and so do you.
So why do you get
everything we both want
and I get arrested
for asking for the same.
For how long will I be imprisoned?
When will you let me out of this cage?
How can I walk out of here with my dignity and pride?
And if I do, will I also have to carry
the burden of your disappointment?
Perhaps the cage can be my home,
for I cannot imagine
how I might survive under the shame that I might bring to you,
if.... I leave my cage.

SEX EDUCATION: A TABOO IN INDIA

By
Bhakti Rajhans
MA I

In India, a country with a population of 138 crores, there still doesn't exist a basic sex education in the curriculum. It's really intriguing how so many people in this country have sex but never talk about it as if they've never done it! What makes it even more interesting is that there are many people who are ready to jump up and oppose the introduction of any such education in the schools. Why such disgust and aversion towards something that can create a new life?

Sex education is very important and crucial if we want our society to be healthy and happy. It's very important that youngsters know the whole process of sex, sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, contraception, consent, masturbation, LGBTQ communities, sexual abuse etc. Youngsters in general are very curious about this but they do not have access to credible and authentic information about sex. So they are forced to find their answers on the internet which is often misleading and misinformative.

Nowadays teenagers have started watching porn because it is so easily available on the internet. This is often very detrimental because they can get addicted to it. It is important to educate young adults that real sex is often very different from what they see in porn. Sex-Ed is necessary for the smooth psychological transition of adolescents into adulthood.

Lack of Sex-Ed can give rise to misconceptions and myths related to one's own sexuality, sexuality of the partner and can lead to anxiety, sexual disorders and marital disharmony.

We need good teachers at the school level who can clear the doubts that children often have in mind. But when will we reach that stage, because even teachers in India feel embarrassed to talk about sex and reproduction.

Shalini (name changed) a 22 year old girl says, "Our biology teacher skipped the part of a biology chapter which had information about reproductive systems in males and females". This is startling yet not so uncommon in our country. Thus it is really important that our teachers get knowledge of sex education and training about how it can be imparted to the children.

Nowadays more and more young adults are in relationships which are physical so shouldn't they be educated about contraception? Consent is important in every relationship. It's the most important when two people have sex. If we teach our youngsters about consent then so many crimes against women will decrease.

People in our country are okay with sleeping with absolute strangers on their wedding nights when they have an arranged marriage which is very unnerving and uncomfortable on so many

levels. But if anyone talks or discusses about sex, then it is considered to be uncomfortable and awkward by many people.

This reluctance about talking and discussing sex often instils a sense of shame in people right from their childhood. There are so many boys who feel scared about masturbating and girls in India do not have the courage to even discuss it with their friends because they feel so ashamed about it.

In our country there exist ancient books like Kamasutra which are so beautifully written without any sense of shame. We have temples like Khajurao which freely depict sex. We were a country which liberally talked about these things in our ancient past, then why not now?

The situation in our country is such that even if the government introduces sex education into the syllabus there are certain elements in the society which get triggered so much that they hold protests and call for banning it. How illogical is that? Are they not concerned about sexual health? They say that sex education is a foreign concept but is sex also a foreign concept and not Indian then? These questions must be asked.

Even when the schools aren't providing sex ed, it can always be taught at home. Parents should learn how to talk to their children about this, even if their own parents didn't teach them. They should be friendly and amiable with their children and should try to create a bond with them that can be trusted, so that children feel free and comfortable to discuss their doubts and concerns about sexuality.

Aren't we all here because of sex? Then how can it be dirty and unholy? It should be treated with respect and sex education should be a part of the curriculum.

Sex education is not a taboo, ignorance is.

*"It's been taboo for so long to admit you had a mental health problem."
—Rosalynn Carter*

THE UNSPOKEN/ UNHEARD/ UNSEEN MEN.....

By

Sidra Saleem Faruki

Kad Tanaya Mukund

SYBA

Article Information

Good mental health is as important as oxygen. You need it to survive. But there are many different reasons why men are less likely to speak up about mental health problems like depression.

They don't want to go to the pharmacy and pick up an anti-depressant because they are afraid they will be judged. They don't want to go to a therapist because they don't want to share with a stranger. But if they don't talk about it, it can be tough for friends or family members to know something is wrong. Men don't always show the signs we often associate with depression, like sadness and hopelessness. Instead, they might appear angry or aggressive, making it easier for doctors and loved ones to miss the signs that something is wrong. As a result, men might miss out on the treatment they need to feel better.

Abstract

Men are built that way like naturally strong (certain hormones play role). It's for tough for them to accept the fact that they lack something or they are not good enough for something. There is always a conflict going in their mind whether to fit in societal standards or to follow their own heart.

Introduction

Women show relatively stronger emotional expressivity, whereas men have stronger emotional experiences with angry and positive stimuli. The self-report results are identical to those reported in several previous studies. Women often report more intense emotional responses, particularly for negative emotion.

Men often express feelings outwardly through body language such as physical gestures, **facial changes, muscles tensing and gritting teeth**, instead of expressing those emotions with words. Men are so not good with words so they choose their actions but sometimes even that doesn't help them to express their feelings in a proper way and that leads to misunderstandings and complications in relationship.

Both boys and girls express emotions similarly in infancy. That shows both are on the same page naturally. But as they grow, they look around and see that men and women are different when expressing. They pick this up spontaneously and effortlessly. I think it is only the conditioning that leads to a difference in the way boys and girls express their emotions.

Okay, it is not something that can be totally controlled but it is always a good thing if parents can step in and say that bullying or displaying anger is not a good thing. Some things can be cultivated and parents have a big role to play. So basically the humans around the infants guide them to the future life they are going to live.

According to a recent study led by Tara M. Chaplin of the Department of Psychiatry at Yale University School of Medicine [New Haven, United States], boys and girls have very different emotional tendencies but these fluctuate depending on age and context.

Content

When women behave in ways that don't fit their gender stereotype — for example, by being assertive — they are viewed as less likable and ultimately less hireable. Does that same hold true for men? Are they similarly penalized for straying from the strong masculine stereotype?

The short answer is yes. Research demonstrates that men too face backlash when they don't adhere to masculine gender stereotypes — when they show vulnerability, act nicer, display empathy, express sadness, exhibit modesty, and proclaim to be feminists. This is troubling not least because it discourages men from behaving in ways known to benefit their teams and their own careers. Let's look at each of these behaviours:

Showing Vulnerability:

Men are socialized to not ask for help or be vulnerable — and they can be penalized when they challenge this notion. An informative set of studies from 2015 finds that when male (but not female) leaders ask for help, they are viewed as less competent, capable, and confident. And when men make themselves vulnerable by disclosing a weakness at work, they are perceived to have lower status. This is problematic, as not seeking help when you need it or admitting areas for improvement inevitably leads to mistakes and less development.

Being Nicer:

Given that many of us want more nice guys at work, we might assume that men would be celebrated for being calm and unassuming. Wrong. Research has found that men who are more communal and agreeable (e.g., warm, caring, supportive, sympathetic) made significantly less money than more stereotypically masculine men. More agreeable men across multiple industries made an average of 18% less in income and were evaluated as less likely to have management potential as compared to less agreeable men.

Similarly, “nice guys” were evaluated as less competent and less hireable for managerial roles. One experimental study found that male managers in consulting who tended to advocate more for their team than for themselves were judged to be lower in agency and competence and more likely to be considered for job dismissal. Unfortunately, given the costs — real and psychological — of being a nice guy at work, men may be less likely to engage in

these behaviours that could help their own career and make them better colleagues.

Displaying Empathy:

Empathy is an important part of leadership. However, women are more likely to receive “credit” for it than men. A recent study found that female leaders who displayed empathy (as reported by their employees) were less likely to be in danger of career derailment — e.g., problems with interpersonal relationships, difficulty building and leading teams, difficulty changing and adapting, failure in meeting business goals and objectives, and having too narrow a functional orientation. Men did not get this boost — there was no relationship between male leaders’ empathy and their bosses’ assessment of potential career derailment. These findings are consequential because displaying empathy is critical for leading effectively.

Expressing Sadness:

U.S. men are socialized to be stoic. What happens when they show emotions other than anger? Research demonstrates that men who show sadness at work are thought of as less deserving of that emotion as compared to sad women. A study from 2017 found that men who cry at work are perceived as more emotional and less competent than women who cry. And when men cry in response to performance feedback, the feedback provider rates them as a lower performer, less likely to get promoted, and less capable, as compared to women who cry. While we don’t want men or women regularly crying at work, an authentic work environment has to allow all employees to experience the same emotions without penalty.

Exhibiting Modesty:

What happens when men display modesty? Research demonstrates that men who were more humble in expressing their qualifications were evaluated as less likeable, less agentic, and weaker than modest women. Similarly, men in the hiring process who were more self-effacing were evaluated by potential employers as lower in competence and less desirable to hire, as compared to self-effacing women. With the increasing awareness of the detrimental effects of narcissism at work, we should encourage men’s modesty rather than penalize it.

Being a Feminist or Feminine:

As noted previously, a sizeable percentage of American men self-identify as being a feminist. However, research shows that feminist men are more likely to be the victims of sexual harassment — from being told inappropriate jokes to being the recipient of unwanted sexual advances. In addition, research shows that men are more likely to be harassed when they work in male-dominated jobs and are perceived as too feminine. Research finds that men who ask for family leave, something that was historically in the purview of women, are viewed as poorer workers and are less recommended for rewards, compared to female counterparts. We should be welcoming feminist men, rather than derogating them for not being “man enough.”



Can We Stop Penalizing Good from Men?????

Why not....? I mean why should one get penalized just for being good. If a woman is acknowledged for being good, then why should a guy/man should get penalized?????

When organizations provide diversity training, highlighting how men and women are both victims of gender stereotypes can help invoke compassion from all trainees.

Do not “gender police.” Gender policing means imposing normative gender expressions in terms of behaviour or appearance. Research shows that trying to make men adhere to gender norms, for example, in terms of attire, is detrimental in terms of allowing men to fully express themselves at work. Workplaces that allow for authentic expression in terms of dress and demeanour will be more attractive to employees, especially millennials.

It is an important time to encourage a more modern form of masculinity. Organizations can and should celebrate traditional aspects of masculinity such as responsibility, assertiveness, and competitiveness, as well as compassion, humility, and kindness. This is not only the right thing to do but also will create the type of environment in which men, women, and organizations will thrive.

Sexual assault can happen to anyone, no matter your age, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Men and boys who have been sexually assaulted or abused may have many of the same feelings and reactions as other survivors of sexual assault, but they may also face some additional challenges because of social attitudes and stereotypes about men and masculinity.

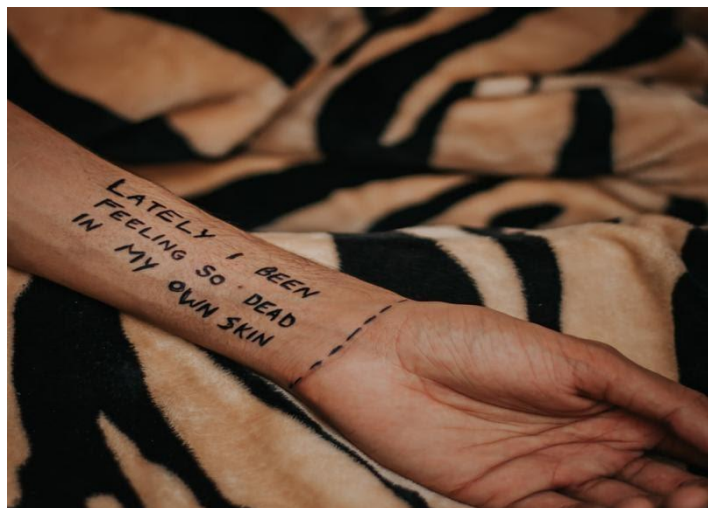
Men and boys who have been sexually assaulted may experience the same [effects](#) of sexual assault as other survivors, and they may face other challenges that are more unique to their experience.

Some men who have survived sexual assault as adults feel shame or self-doubt, believing that they should have been “strong enough” to fight off the perpetrator.

The following list includes some of the common experiences shared by men and boys who

have survived sexual assault:

- Anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, flashbacks, and eating disorders
- Avoiding people or places that remind you of the assault or abuse
- Concerns or questions about sexual orientation
- Fear of the worst happening and having a sense of a shortened future
- Feeling like "less of a man" or that you no longer have control over your own body
- Feeling on-edge, being unable to relax, and having difficulty sleeping
- Sense of blame or shame over not being able to stop the assault or abuse, especially if you experienced an erection or ejaculation
- Withdrawal from relationships or friendships and an increased sense of isolation
- Worrying about disclosing for fear of judgment or disbelief



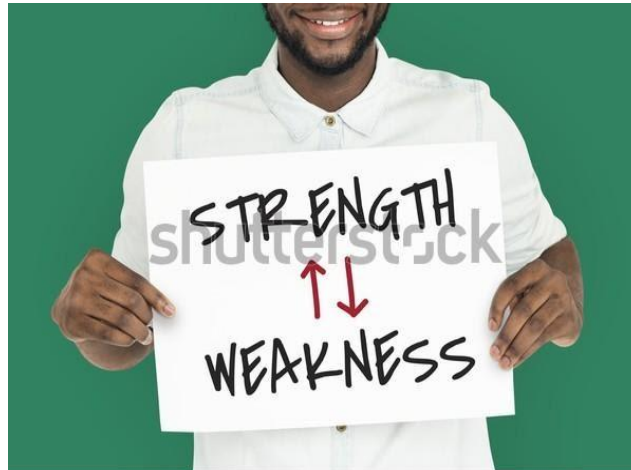
Does The Prevalence of Mental Health Differ Across Gender?

These are a few statistics from the National Mental Health Survey that was conducted by the National Institute Of Mental Health And Neurosciences (NIMHANS) in 2015:

- Around 16.75% men will experience some mental health issue in their lifetime, as opposed to 10.80% women
- The current prevalence of mental health issues in men is around 13.9% as opposed to 7.47% in women

- Around 2.15% men will suffer from serious mental health issues like Bipolar Affective Disorder and psychotic disorders in a lifetime, compared to 1.73% among women
- 35.67% of men have been diagnosed with substance use disorder as against 10.05% women.

The numbers clearly indicate there is a great need to focus on men's mental health and understand their help-seeking tendencies.



Reasons Behind Lack Of Help-Seeking

Despite there being a higher prevalence of mental health issues in men, there seems to be a gap when it comes to seeking help. Men are less likely to reach out and seek help. Some of the reasons researchers have explored are:

Conforming to traditional gender roles:

At a very young age, society teaches us what are appropriate behaviours for our respective gender. “Men are generally under pressure to not show vulnerability as the traditional idea of a man is that of a protector/provider. Men will usually reach out when it starts to affect their productivity and will drop out as soon as the distress is resolved,” says Paras Sharma, counselling psychologist. Men are often taught to restrict their emotional expression, and focus largely on being successful and powerful. Therefore, many view asking for help as a sign of weakness.

Perceived loss of control:

Men may be more likely to try and fix the problems themselves because they believe the problem exists within them and they can control it. Asking help then can result in a loss of autonomy or control.

Reciprocity:

One of the factors that determine whether men may or may not seek help is the ability to offer something in return. This is to say some men will reach out in a distressing time if they feel they can offer something to the person they are seeking help from, at some point in the future. Research has attributed this to ‘maintaining of status’ and ‘preserving the image of being strong and competent’.

Social support:

Social support can play a significant role in determining whether one will seek help. Research has found that men tend to find it harder to reach out because most of their social circles are focused on shared activities rather than emotional support. Therefore, most men may try to resolve feelings of distress by themselves.

Men and Women Cope Differently:

Another important point to note is that men and women may choose to deal with stress differently.

Violence against men is a subject that is rarely reported or talked about. It is often hidden, endured by the victim, and usually not taken seriously if reported. An extensive amount of stigma and mockery around the topic is what makes it taboo, rarely being viewed as a problem.



What Do Statistics Say?

Worldwide statistics show that boys are beaten more than girls during childhood, and hence they grow up believing that men are violent. Not only are they viewed to be perpetrators of violence, but boys are most often victims of violence. According to a study conducted by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD), India, in 2007:

- 54.68% of children who were physically abused (by beating or other forms of physical violence) were boys

- 52.91% of children who experienced physical abuse in their family environment were boys; in most cases, by their parents
- 65.99% of boys living on the street reported being physically abused by their family members and other people

Data collected by the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4) 2015-16 states, “The proportion of deaths that are due to non-medical reasons (accidents, violence, poisoning, homicides, or suicides) is higher among men (12%) than women (8%). This peaks at ages 15-29 years for both men and women, reaching a high of half of all deaths for men of age 20-29 years.” The numbers and the reasons for violence vary in the rural and the urban areas.

While the findings are alarming, it is also true that several male voices are never heard due to the fear of being labelled, rejected, made fun of, being bullied or losing one's job. Thus, burying the issue further.

How Does It Impact Them?

So, what might happen to boys who are exposed to violence? Are adult men more likely to perpetuate violence if they experience it as children? Let's understand this a little better.

A young boy's experience of physical abuse (for instance, being beaten by the father or other members of the family) and sexual abuse could lead to:

- **Helplessness**: The sense of a loss of control, powerlessness, fear of not being able to do anything, displaying passive behaviour in a negative situation, lack of motivation to escape the abuse. Helplessness is learned and can be a recurring feeling every time the abuse occurs.
- **Becoming a victim of bullying**: The victim's emotional and physical health is affected, and this could be short or long-term. Their self-esteem can be damaged, and they are likely to have a higher risk for mental health problems, behavioural problems, social problems, emotional problems, depression, substance abuse, physical injury and headaches.
- **Becoming a bully himself**: There's a high likelihood that the victim may engage in violent and other risky behaviour when they reach adulthood. They may also engage in substance abuse, get into fights, show destructive behaviour, abuse their loved ones, and also get into criminal activities.
- **Experiencing health issues**: In adulthood, these issues could manifest as anxiety disorders, depression, personality disorders, aggressive behaviour, substance abuse and several physical health problems.

The impact of domestic violence as an adult (for instance, being hit by a spouse), often leads

to a breakdown of the patriarchal notion which could further affect the man's sense of self, leaving him helpless or frustrated. If the man is not violent or has never been beaten before, violence from a spouse who has anger issues or behavioural issues could:

- **Make it difficult for him to face or deal with the situation:** The helplessness could be a recurring feeling, further leading to low self-esteem and depression.
- **Increase his risk of addiction to alcohol and smoking:** This could, in turn, lead to serious mental health issues such as depression or anxiety, and physical health issues like heart disease and respiratory problems.
- **Lead to anger issues, depression, suicide:** Making it difficult for themselves and their loved ones to cope with.
- **Lead to difficulty in functioning:** Simple everyday activities - completing tasks, remembering details, being on time - become difficult to carry out.
- **Make him prone to a number of physical and mental health issues:** heart disease, hypertension, depression, anxiety, are some of the conditions that could affect the person.

Conclusion

Our message to all the men out there is simple. We need to talk openly about mental health. Suffering in silence isn't a safe or healthy option for the men in our lives. Check in with them. Ask them how they're feeling, especially if one of them has experienced a recent event that could trigger depression. Look for changes in his behaviour and watch out for depression symptoms. If you think someone you love has depression, offer your support, listen, and be patient. Encourage him to talk to his doctor or a mental health professional, or you can help him find treatment services in his area. Living with depression can feel overwhelming and isolating, so let him know he's not alone. Help is available, and he can feel better.

"Restrictions will set you free."

—W.A. Mathieu

WOMEN DRINKING AND SMOKING A TABOO!

By

Jasleen Kaur

Angela Ranji Pothan

SYBA

The society we live in demonizes females who smoke and drink. Drinking or consumption of alcohol and smoking of cigarettes is as harmful to the male as it is to the female. Yet here is a word of caution to all young girls and women out there. To this day, a woman who smokes or consumes liquor is considered rebellious, immoral or a threat to other women.

In a country such as ours where women are smoking to get a sense of liberation, are we going to judge a women's character on this very criteria? Does this somewhere show that we still want to show women 'their place' in society? Is this judgement another one of our many ways to oppress women? Do not go and buy a pack of cigarettes from that store near your house or in your locality girls! For, your character is at stake. Do not drink alcohol and stir out in the open, because your character will be judged and don't dare smoke out in the open because again your character will be judged!

If a woman was to hold a cigarette in her hand, it would cause raised eyebrows because it would make her look unfeminine, unseemly, bold, and progressive. It is time we create some gender-neutral norms which serve both sexes to become better versions of themselves.

Having said all that, it does not mean that women must be given a free pass to smoke or drink excessively. These are bad habits indeed and judgement if any at all must be restricted to its implications on one's health rather than associated with the same with anybody's character.

"All good things in life are illegal, immoral or fattening."

—Oscar Wilde

TABOOS CONCERNED WITH MENSTRUATION

By

Kimaya Sameer Aslekar

FYBA

Cultural norms and religious taboos on menstruation are often made up by traditional associations with evil spirits, shame and embarrassment.

Every day, girls around the world have their first menstrual cycle. A period is a natural and healthy part of women's reproductive health. For some girls, their first period is a nightmare. They may never have had someone explain to them what menstruation is and how their bodies will change. Some girls even think they are dying when they see their own menstrual blood for the first time. Around the world, period taboos and resource limitations prevent girls from managing their periods with dignity.

Common period taboos include the idea that women are impure, dirty, or sinful while they are menstruating. Some women are discouraged from touching or washing their genitals during their periods to eliminate the possibility that they might contaminate the water of a communal bathing area.

In reality, menstrual blood is the same as anybody fluid and bathing regularly prevents bacterial infections. In some communities, girls first period is seen as a signal that she is ready for marriage and childbearing, while menstruation does indicate the beginning of a transition into womanhood, but no girl is ready for marriage or childbearing. Girls can begin menstruating as young as 7 or 8 years or as late as 16 or 17 years old.

The menstruation taboo extends too many parts of a women's physiology and sexuality, but it primarily involves the stigma around discussing and caring for menstrual needs. This taboo often leads to the exclusion of women from social, domestic, and educational activities. The taboo also makes people feel like the topic of periods is uncomfortable, embarrassing, and even dangerous to discuss in some societies. This often leads women to use code words or slang to refer to periods.

In the last two centuries, scholars, authors, and psychologists have attempted to specify what exactly has contributed to taboos around periods. Whatever the reasons behind these stigmas, menstruation taboos have real and serious effects on the health, education, safety, and happiness of women. Menstruation is nothing but a very normal biological phenomenon, and adolescent girls and women should understand that they have power of procreation only because of this virtue.

TABOOS IN MARRIAGE: CHILD MARRIAGE EDITION

By
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SYBA

India as a country, is a potboiler of various cultures, traditions, rituals and most importantly, **taboos**. On an average, an Indian subconsciously practices some type of taboo every day, whether it be; not walking on the same road after a black cat has crossed it, menstruating women not being allowed to touch pickle jars, Love marriages and so on.

At present, we will be looking at one particular aspect of ‘Taboo’ and that is – **Marriage**.

Here, our focus will not be on regular heterosexual marriage, the centre stage of our discussion will be given to **Child marriage**. But before we look at Child marriage, let’s understand the concept of, *what is marriage?*

According to the **Merriam Webster Dictionary**, Marriage is the “state of being united to a person of the opposite sex as husband or wife in a consensual and contractual relationship recognized by law or the institutions whereby individuals are joined in marriage or an intimate or close union”.

Now that we have seen the dictionary definition of marriage, we can look at the central part i.e., Child marriage -It is defined as a marriage of a girl or boy before the age of 18 and refers to both formal marriages and informal unions in which children under the age of 18 live with a partner as is married.

The practice of Child marriages has been prevalent in our country since the ancient times, and is being observed to this day. One of the major reasons of child marriages are societal norms, especially social norms regarding female children. A girl child (in most cases born in poverty) is considered to be a liability for the family and is married off before the legal age to prevent expenses.

By marrying off this child; her family is levied from paying for her education, her lifestyle, her existence in general. After marriage this female child becomes the ‘property’ of her husband. This opens the innocent girl to a world of abuse and unwanted early pregnancies and number of health problems. In order to eradicate this heinous practice, Government of India introduced ‘Child marriage act 2006’ repealing the earlier legislation of the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929.

This legislation is armed with enabling provisions to prohibit child marriages, protect and provide relief to victims and enhanced punishment for those who abet, promote or solemnize such marriages. These oncoming laws and policies did make the loudest noise in the country, but did the sound reach the ears of all citizens? Were the rules and regulations abided with?

The answer is a resounding **NO**.

Estimates suggest that each year, at least 1.5 million girls under 18 get married in India, which makes it home to the largest number of child brides in the world - accounting for a third of the global total. Nearly 16 per cent adolescent girls aged 15-19 are currently married. While these are the social aspects of the now a shunned practice, the Mental and physical implications on female children that fall prey to this custom do not fare well either.

Child Marriage requires pre-teen (mostly female) children to take on adult roles that they are not mentally or physically ready to carry out; this puts a lot of pressure on them and makes trauma prevalent from a very young age. Child brides often find themselves struggling to cope with anxiety and depression and find little sympathy or support in their marital home. They also often fall prey to extensive abuse and hence are prone to Mental disorders. Suicide ideation is also common among the victims of child marriage.

As we discern the data, statistics and outcomes of Child Marriage, the question arises, what now? What can be done to immobilize this age-old Taboo? The noxious social norm that is harming the youth of this country.

The answer is practically complex but at the same time simple- **Don't just watch; Act**.

Ending child marriage is no small task, but many small actions can create big change. We don't have to stand by and accept practices that hurt children and communities - instead, here are three actions we can all take:

1. Report any child marriage happening around you to the proper authorities
2. Educate your friends, family and community about why child marriage is harmful
3. Promise to never be a part of any event that promotes child marriage.

From our neighbour, to our aunty to our bus driver - there are many people around us who we can help to educate about child marriage.

Here are four strong messages you can share with anyone in your community about child marriage. If you're trying to change someone's mind, it's a good idea to listen to their ideas, speak clearly and stay calm.

Child marriage is illegal in India. Every child has a right to go to school and not face violence but getting married early often denies them these rights.

Every child marriage hurts our entire family and community. When a girl or boy gets married before they turn 18, they are less likely to finish school. This can limit their chances at getting a skilled job, lower their lifetime income and create a worse life for their children in the future.

We all want girls and babies in this community to be healthy and safe. When a girl gets married as a child, she's more likely to give birth too early. When young girls have babies, they're more likely to be in danger during childbirth and so are their babies.

In conclusion, every year, fewer and fewer children in India are getting married. Government of India has increased the age of marriage of girls from 18 years to 21 years respectively, to promote education and financial independence of women.

Beyond the wall of privilege of upper class and upper middle class, there is a long way that our communities and our country as a whole; has yet to achieve in the path of saving our children. As Davinder Kaur (Author of the book- **FORCED TO MARRY HIM: A Lifetime of Tradition and the Will to Break It**) has rightly said, "Culture is no excuse for abuse".

SAME SEX MARRIAGES – A TABOO IN INDIAN SOCIETY

By
Deeksha Kumar
SYBA

One of the serious issues in our society is homosexuality and same-sex marriages. It is a hotly debated issue and remains a taboo for a large portion of Indian society, even among the youth.

According a survey conducted by Mint, less than half of India's urban youth approve of same sex relationships. In south India, acceptance of same-sex relationships is even lower, even among urban groups. Social acceptance of homosexuality is the highest in Delhi-NCR, closely followed by Mumbai. About 50% of the youth are supportive of same-sex relationships in these cities.

When homosexuality has only 50% approval, that too from only urban groups in some cities, same-sex marriages can face huge opposition from the people.

Netherlands was the first country to legalize same sex marriages in 2001. In the USA, same sex marriages were legalized in all 50 states by the Supreme Court in 2015. It was legal in some states starting with Massachusetts in 2004. The last country to legalize same sex marriage is Costa Rica in 2020.

It is more than three years since homosexuality was decriminalized in India, but public morality around same-sex relationships continues to be a thorny issue. It is still a taboo in India. Gays have been represented in Bollywood movies as a comic relief with no sensitivity. A movie like 'Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan' although a comedy tries to depict the sensitivities involved in such a relationship. In 1996 a movie called Fire starring Shabana Azmi and Namrata Shirodkar was banned due to violent protests by the public. Even now, in October 2021, an ad celebrating lesbian love during Karva Chauth was forced to be taken off air.

Until 2018, homosexuality was considered a crime in India. In September, the Supreme Court ruled that Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code was unconstitutional. It was hoped that this would lead to the grant of certain freedoms to people on the LGBTQIA+ spectrum. While the change in law paved the way for same-sex couples to lead a more dignified private life than was possible before, the judgment stopped short of allowing same-sex couples to marry or be entitled to have rights that are available to heterosexual couples in India.

Although, same sex relationships are not illegal, it is still a taboo as marriages of LGBTQIA+ are more or less unimaginable among many. Thus, the boundaries of the rights of LGBTQIA+ remained vague and dependent on the prevalent value system of the day.

Being denied the right to marry reinforces the stigma associated with a minority sexual

identity. Living in a state where same-sex marriage is outlawed can lead to chronic social stress and mental health problems. Such stigma may undermine the healthy development of adolescents and young adults.

The families and friends of lesbian and gay couples who are denied marriage rights may also experience negative physical and mental health consequences similar to those experienced by their loved ones.

Marriage bestows economic and social support to couples in committed relationships, which can result in substantial health benefits.

The situation in India is grim for same sex relationships as although it is not a criminal offence, but the marriage is not recognized by law.

When the relationship has no legal status, it becomes difficult to transfer property rights, make medical decisions for each other in case one is incapacitated or, in short, enjoy rights heterosexual married couples in India take for granted. Such partners are literally strangers according to the law.

To summarize, in India, the internet, media, films and court cases have brought LGBTQIA+ topic into the open. The same-sex relationships are now not a criminal offence. But same-sex marriage is still not legalized. And overall, there is a stigma attached to such relationships.

“Either you repeat the same conventional doctrines everybody is saying or you say something true and it will sound like it’s from Neptune.”

—Naom Chomsky



THE RED SPOTS.....

By
Sakshi Jadhav
Loukik Satoskar
(Assisted by Swarali Kelkar)
SYBA

'Period Shaming' - A college in India forces female students to strip to underwear.

"पुरुषांना मासिक पाळी विषयी सज्जन करण्याची गरज!"

23 million girls drop out of school every year when they start menstruating in India!

"मासिक पाळी दरम्यान नदी ओलांडण्यावर निर्बंध."

Period shaming drives 11 year old girl to attempt suicide, teacher held responsible for the torture in Tamil Nadu!

Why are menstruating women getting their wombs removed?

Some common whispers are heard among girls in groups. When a girl is menstruating, they usually refer to it by various phrases like, '*Uska Happy Wala Birthday chal raha hai*', '*the monthly visitor has arrived*', or '*Dharan Phutlay*' and other phrases used in the regional languages.

Menstruation or period is a normal vaginal bleeding that occurs in females as a part of their monthly reproductive cycles. The scientific explanation behind the phenomenon is that every month the ovaries release an ovum/egg along with the hormone oestrogen. The hormone causes the inner lining of the uterus to thicken and prepares it for pregnancy. If the egg/ovum is not fertilized the uterus sheds its inner linings along with the ovum and blood.

Periods- for some in paucity is an occasion to celebrate fertility and a monthly period is as normal as a daily chore while for others in large masses it is end of schooling, source of immense stress and pain, harassment, guilt and a sense of inferiority. For generations together women are made to accept this domination and they religiously pass on the suffering to the young girls and daughters-in-law under the name of tradition and culture and women continue to suffer silently.

Menarche Awareness

Menarche is the first menstrual cycle or first occurrence of menstruation.

Around 71% of the Indian girls are unaware of menstruation till they start their first period. Menstruation education goes missing not only in schools and educational institutions but even mothers find it uncomfortable to discuss about menstruation with their daughters before they experience it for the first time.

When we conducted a survey the respondents replied that only 20% of the total 46 respondents were comfortable on talking about menstruation in school and 37.8% of the respondents had open discussions of menstruation in family.

74.4% of the respondents agreed that women experience a sense of guilt during menstruation. It was found in the Indian Council of Medical Research report in 2012 that only thirty-eight percent of girls spoke openly about the onset of menstruation or the problems they face during menstruation.

The topic is very often skipped in biology lectures as the teacher finds it difficult to teach it in the presence of boys and there is great social stigma associated with the topic. Young girls often experience great stress while on their first period and consider it as an end to their freedom. Menstruation is always projected as impure and never taught that it is just natural phenomenon. Furthermore the ill-treatment given to girls surrounded by social taboos right since their first period makes their first encounter even more traumatizing.

Initiation of healthy discussions about menstruation right from the family and making girls and boys equally aware of menstruation via mediums like educational institutions, special

sessions by doctors, NGOs or even gram panchayats inclusive of its cause, sanitation and care, maladaptive practices and its effects, hygiene management with affordability and breaking the taboos will play a pivotal role in menarche awareness and making their menarche experience more comfortable.

School Dropouts Due to Menstruation

According to a survey conducted under the integrated Child Development Scheme launched by the Union ministry of women and Child Development one fourth of adolescent girls enrolled in upper-primary schools in the age group of 11-14 years dropped out of schools in 2018-19.

Most of the schools in villages don't have access to basic sanitation facilities. Few of the teachers themselves consider menstruation as impure as they are brought up in the same society and a girl menstruating finds it difficult to communicate with any of the teachers or even friends as it is subject to humiliation and teasing, girls find it difficult to discuss if she genuinely has a problem. Talking to male teachers is also a problem for girls.

There are high chances of period stains as they are very less chances of changing pads, washing the cloth used or using other options where there aren't basic sanitation facilities.....these stains are further associated with period shaming .In many cases school locations are set far away and long distance walking is a problem during menstruation. Also in many of the families there are strict norms to be followed which are a result of social taboos.

Menarche is considered as a sign of fertility and in many families girls are married off after starting their periods. Thus in this way social taboos and other mentioned reasons are leading to hindrances in girls education and impeding the growth of female literacy in India.

Societal Education Regarding Menstruation:

- The only possible way to get rid of menstrual taboos is educating the society and redefining menstruation because the very origins of taboos are deep-rooted in the same society.
- While conducting a survey to know of menstrual beliefs in the society we realized that only 20% of the males decided to fill up the forms in contrast to 80% of the females.
- While interviewing a few females of varied age groups most of them opined that customs should change but all of them had strong resistance on talking to males about menstruation considering it as only a woman's problem.
- Many menstrual norms are laid down by the society and girls and women on menstruation diligently follow them even today while a few who show reluctance are

compelled to follow them .A few of these taboos are that women are not supposed to go to temples or worship places as they are considered impure during menstruation, they are to be isolated , not to cook or touch pickles and papads , not touch any other family members, not touch plants of specific religious importance and not following these restrictions is considered sinful.

- Most of the mothers themselves lack the knowledge about what is exactly menstrual hygiene and how to explain it their daughters. Yet due to taboos and myths they refuse to seek help from professionals.
- Many women take pills to delay periods so that they don't have to go through this humiliation and they can attend functions of religious importance while many a times they are unaware of the serious consequences on their health.
- As a result of lack of access to affordable menstrual products and enough education regarding menstruation women and girls use old clothes, blouses, ash, sand, leaves, ay, newspapers, sawdust or even sand to get rid of the blood that can cause serious infections.
- Many girls stop school education once they have menarche.
- A lot of humiliation and guilt is accompanied by a period stain.
- The only way to get rid of or at least minimize these problems in our society is to increase awareness in the society and educating the young and the old by all possible mediums. As there will be more acceptance and education the stigma will reduce.

The Red Spot

In 2017, a 12 year old girl from southern India was allegedly humiliated by a teacher and made to show her period stain in front of the entire class which made the girl end her life as she chose to die than live with this embarrassment and guilt. This horrific incident sheds light on the period stain and social stigma which makes girls and women go through immense suffering.

Though menstruation is a natural process and it is quite obvious to have a few stains due to over bleeding the stains are subjected to humiliation in educational institutions, workplaces, households, public places and further embarrassment and guilt. As many girls can't afford costly menstrual products and there aren't basic sanitation facilities in school period stains are common and this is a reason why they skip school for 5 days every month.

For majority of the girls it is taught from the households that the very fact that you are menstruating is to be kept secret and never be disclosed. If blood spots or stains are seen on a woman's clothing's, they are being judged for not being able to maintain hygiene and criticized for being careless. When women and girls themselves consider menstruation as

impure or experience a sense of guilt associated with that period stain then how do we expect the society to be more acceptable?

As women and girls we should first support each other and not whisper about the period stain and let menstruation be a matter of pride than a matter of shame.

Menstrual Taboos and its Effects On Mental Health

For generations together women and girls are compelled to follow various restrictions during menstruation laid upon them by the society. Right from the family settings girls are taught to take up the secondary position. During menstruation they are isolated from the rest of the family and given inferior and inhumane treatment and are treated as impure.

For many of the girls the onset of menstruation is an end to schooling and most of them are married off. Many of the schools lack basic sanitation facilities where changing pads or washing cloth is next to impossible and hence girls skip schooling for every 5 days a month. The period stain is subjected to humiliation and embarrassment in every setting; be it home, school, office or any public space.

These acts of cruelty have detrimental effects on their minds....they lose their confidence and consider themselves as impure and inferior. Many of them live with a constant sense of guilt and blame themselves for this ill-treatment. This also affects their body image and their psycho-social development.

To avoid menstruation during religious functions or some important events women and girls take up over the counter pills to delay periods without knowing their serious implications on their health .Sometimes these ill treatments given to woman and girls are so fatal that girls prefer to die than live in such a society.

While menstruation taboos still rule over large part of the society mental health and their consideration always take a back seat. It's time that we take into account the serious implications of these taboos on mental health and reconstruct a society devoid of these practices.

Initiatives and Awareness Programmes

The only way to break the taboos and reduce the social stigma towards menstruation is creating awareness, educating people and increases their acceptance towards this natural process of menstruation.

The government launched the National Menstrual Hygiene Scheme under 'Rashtriya Kishor Swastya Karyakram ' program in 2014. The objective of the scheme was to promote menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls in rural areas by supplying as well as training self -help groups to make sanitary napkins.

Many NGOs like the Ammada Trust, Goonj, Eco Femme, Sacchi Saheli are taking concrete steps to break the stereotypes and are working on Menstrual education in rural and slum areas.

Dr. Rani Bang is working on menstruation and reproductive education in the youth and in women in Gadchiroli. A youth from Pune, Pravin Nikam founded the Roshni Foundation , an NGO that actively works towards issues of gender, sexuality, menstrual health management, sexual and reproductive health rights and improving health conditions through educational tools and storytelling.

Many movies in India like the Oscar winning ‘*Period-the end of sentence, Padman, Anandi Gopal* are heading towards breaking the taboos related to menstruation and educating people on menstruation.

Conclusion

In our society we refer a woman as Durga or Goddess; we have various metaphors to emphasize on the greatness of a mother and her motherhood. In the same society, we consider menstruation as impure even today. These taboos surrounding menstruation makes us rethink and ponder upon these titles of greatness given to a woman. A very natural, biological process that gains a girl her femininity like menstruation still remains a whisper.

The phenomenon of menstruation is not unique only to Humans females; it is also found in other higher primates like Gorillas, monkeys and Orangutans. However humans are the only species that is intolerant towards the natural process at multiple levels. What happens in case of Menstruation is another example of how natural phenomena that can be explained scientifically are altered and the masses are manipulated to control and suppress the women and feed patriarchy.

Several initiatives are taken by feminist activists to generate awareness among young girls and women about menstruation, debunking the myths related to it and regain their self respect over their guilt. It is time that we question these traditions bestowed upon women whose roots lie in patriarchy and understand the difference between the just and unjust practices that society promotes. It is time that a woman supports every other woman to get over her guilt and take pride in her femininity.

When every woman and girl decides to take pride in her femininity, and whispers about menstruation change to comfortable discussions, every period stain receive no special stare and a girl finds no shame talking about periods to a male then transformation is not far but is possible!

NEVER-ENDING GOSSIPS

By
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The Still-In-Closet Taboo

At the risk of sounding poetic, companionship is an iron gate covered in flowers and vines that open the doors to happiness and satisfaction. Man is a social animal carved specifically to crave belongingness and companionship. It is strictly necessary for a man to want to be with someone to have and to hold, for better and worse, for richer and poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish. This companion can be a friend, parent(s), sibling(s), a dog and most significantly the significant other. Finding a romantic life partner or a soulmate, per say is what is considered to be general populations' primary goal of life. As promoted by classic Rom-Coms, love is hard to find and even harder to hold on to and many a times a Live-in relationship makes that more effortless than what is advertised by marriage. Like teenage lingo updates every 3 months the old age lingo also updates every 3 years, mostly the goal of their lingo is to pick out the wrongdoings of the young generation; and currently the senior citizens are complaining about the increasing rates in divorce. Unlike the senior citizens, the young generation does not feel the moral obligation to continue their marriage if there are constant signs of reduced compatibility. Even younger generation feels that in order to preclude the exhaustingly long processes of marriage and divorce, cohabitation before marriage is beneficial.

As the famous saying goes, 'It's the little things that matter '. It's the little things that make you angry, it's the little things that make you happy, it's the little things that inspire you, it's the little things that make you sad and it's the little things that make you, you. Cohabiting with each other is the most subtle way to experience these little things with your partner. As the age old tradition of marriages still stand strong in Indian cultures, it is standing on the leg of ' To be never broken ' mentality of people. Therefore, newlyweds tend to neglect the little things only to angrily rant about them decades later. Whereas, if they would have gotten the chance to live-in together before marriage, these little things would have been the brightest highlights of their marriage. Then may it be their tendency to organise or their 'chai' timings, their reaction to spiders or their bravery when it comes to the neighbours, their tonal see-saw or their cricket fanatic-ness.

Just like cricket is Indians' national religion, in spite of the traditional diversity, there are several common factors in every corner of India, such as instant criticism towards live-in relationships. And unfortunately in India, the decision between right and wrong is decided upon the number of rains one has experienced. But the rains have changed, the rains have taken up the liberty to open their arms and welcome reality, the rains have adapted the rumoured approach of self-love, the rains have accepted that nothing lasts and now the Gen-Z

is eager to be thoroughly drenched in these rains. However, if the 'lok kya kahenge' generation continues to protect the Gen-Z with the raincoat of their rains, how will we taste the unsalted joy of these new clouds. We accept the involuntary need of parents to protect their children, though do you remember watching the movie 'Trapped ' starring Rajkumar Rao, we all felt the anxiousness and feeling of being caged along with him, imagine feeling the same in a relationship. The one thing we all Indian youngsters have in common is being envious of 'Sharma ji ka beta' for making us feel the innate guilt of disappointing our parents, doing something as bold as being in a live-in relationship evokes the same guilt. Another thing we have in common not only youngsters, but every Indian is that we never watch a movie without a trailer, we never buy the whole bottle of shampoo without trying the sachet first, we never buy clothes without trying them on first, then why do people jump into marriage before reading the disclaimer. Live-in is like a disclaimer to marriage, then may it be love or arranged. Instead of believing the fantasy of seven lives together, consider the reality of being happy as long as together.

This is the part of the article where we burry you under statistical data and convince you to roll in our side, and why won't we, when about 80% of India's young population support and happily accept the concept of Live-in Relationships and about 60% of them are open to try out such living arrangement. Ideologically, about 35% to 40% youngsters would take into consideration the possibility of live-in relationship as per the circumstances. Live-in relationships technically were never illegal and that was justifiably proven in 2010 after the judge passed a positive judgement in *S. Khushboo vs Kanniammal* case, where it was stated that Live-in relationships are within the ambit of the right under Article 21. It is legally permissible for two consenting adults to romantically reside together without any marital bonding. Later, this right was edited and divided in two categories in 2013, specifying other intimate relationships of the two respective adults. Where we still lack the unbarred approach towards the same, any children born out of this relationship are considered legitimate and have a right over their parents' self-acquired property.

There always are two sides of story, glass half full or half empty, two sides of one coin, two ends of a stick, for now let's talk about one of the sides of this subject, that side in this living arrangement is full of wonderful things, to name some: it is much easier to step out of this relationship without dragging each other into court and drilling a hole in our own pockets, one understands and learns to take and share responsibility, one gets to acquaint and adapt to each other's smallest of habits and gestures of appreciation towards one another, and the list keeps extending. Psychologically speaking, marriages that are succeeded from live-in relationship have proven to be more successful, successful as in happy and not long lasting. Statistically speaking, Live-in relationships or living in sin, is looked down upon by generations of faith in sacred bond of marriage, because anything that does not touch the seemingly auspicious, yet narrow radius of sacredness is sin, plain and simple. And at the centre of this circle stands the evergreen religious and traditional values. Well, allow us to put forward a counter argument, there are eight classical types of Hindu marriages (Brahma, Daiva, Arsha, Prajapatya, Asura, Gandharva, Rakshasa, Paishacha) out of which Gandharva

Vivah, is a form of marriage where two consenting adults choose to live together, and can consummate the relationship. In this type of classical marriage there is no absolute need for consent from parents or the attendance of any witnesses. In fact, as stated in Vedic Texts Gandharva Vivah or Live-in Relationships, is one of the earliest and highly practiced forms of marriage in Rigvedic period. So, now that we know that Live-in relationships are legally, logically and religiously acceptable, then why are we even having this conversation?

On interviewing a live-in couple, who wish to stay anonymous, they were able to present the problem on unvisited premise. The main goal of living together for them was to be able to be with each other in vicinity of homely comfort instead of hotels and other places. Unfortunately, as their parents are not accepting of such a relationship they have to remain silent about it and gossiping neighbours are a completely different story. For neighbours to exist in the first place, they faced a lot of trouble in search of a place where live-in relationships were 'allowed'. Everywhere they went there were two types of apartments on rent, either live-in relationship wasn't given president to or the surrounding area was highly unsafe, but it doesn't stop at finding a place to live, there are other problems such as signing the contract papers for the rent. However, after passing these hurdles, they have positively reported that they have benefited from living together, it brought them closer and gave them a closer look towards each other's likes and dislikes, comforts, nature, earning ability, qualities of home management, as well as they also came to know that if they are comfortable to be physically involved or not. Regardless of the world's opinion they personally prefer live-in over directly jumping to marriage.

Long after modernization was put into motion our society is still hesitant in accepting an individual's personal choices. Not only the concept of live-in is hard to swallow for this societal system, but it is also looked down upon, shamed upon and casted away. Taboos surrounding pre-marital sex and children born out of it are surprisingly orthodox for the age of social media and yet these taboos exist rather prominently. Let us all vow to not be those neighbours who shame their own neighbour instead let's welcome them with a box of homemade ladoos. Let us all be the generation that finally understands the importance of person's choice and respect it irrespective of whether or not you approve. In a century where we have adopted the approach of normalising formerly inadmissible concepts and choices, let's normalise Live-in Relationships.

The Mother of all Taboos

Motherhood, the word alone carries the aroma of love and belonging. Motherhood, a highly delicate yet the most adventurous phase of a woman's life that proves her own self to herself to be strongest and the most dependable version of herself. A mother is not only born with the magical powers of selflessness but also has to learn the art of eternal patience, and somewhere along the process she learns to handle and manage frisky situations better than the Ring Master of a Circus. When you add professional life into this equation, an employed and ambition driven mother is truly an incarnation of God. Naturally, when this Goddess slowly becomes fluid in balancing between both ends of the tight rope, this trait of independency and

sheer self-confidence is passed onto her children. So, when it comes to raising self-sufficient adults, who not only believe in equal opportunity but respect it, who is better than a self-sustaining and proudly pioneering mother.

It is a basic rule of nature; when living two different roles, it is inevitable for one to intervene with another, then may it be PTA meetings colliding with business calls or child's doctor appointments crashing with business trips. As a professional and a mother, role conflict is a classic constant in a woman's life. A professional and a mother are not the only roles a woman juggles between, but she has to be an ideal daughter, responsible daughter-in-law and a loving wife as well. While swerving from one role to another sun sets quicker than it rises.

As we walk towards modern world and its ways, family members knowingly or unknowingly keep coming up with modern ways to impose implicit resistance on the employed mother. From her culinary skills, teaching capabilities, negotiating with vegetable vendor mastery, cleaning wizardry, to her workplace relations and her superpowers of 'Flash' to be home before her husband are always tried and tested in forms of taunts and basic impending doom to a point of wear and tear. Speaking of a mother's all-rounder abilities, one should without fail discuss her brilliant management skills when packing bags and cooking a range of master chef dishes at 5 in the morning for a family vacation, for which she fought tooth and nail to complete her work in time and obtain absence from work that will match with her husband's beforehand scheduled calendar. When it comes to adjustments and compromises, women especially, earning mothers have sharpened that blade by running the metal back and forth on the whetstone multiple times. For instance, relatives tend to have a habit of showing at your doorstep unannounced, sweets in hand and expectations flickering in their eyes, hence, the mother who is working with utter dedication has to yet again utilize her 'Flash' superpowers and rush to her home while analysing an easy to cook 5-step snack recipe. Well, now that the relatives are already in the house, let's talk about some of their special abilities. Permit us to paint a scenario, first the relatives enter your house with utmost sincerity and love, then they will begin medium talk (we Indians never participate in small talk), then will slide on to the great achievements of their children, some will diverge to politics and global news, but eventually all of them come back to the point where they will by hook or crook, or with sarcasm or narrowed words remind the husband how his wife is more successful than him. In this situation a loving and supportive husband will take pride in his wife's remarkable skills in maintaining the equilibrium of motherhood and professional achievements. But as Indra Nooyi once said, "You can't have it all".

For a women, working hard is just like looking in the mirror, that doesn't mean her hard work is always paid off. The men - women salary gap in India is 19%. If you think this is bad you should hear about motherhood penalty. Motherhood penalty is the most convenient way of the corporate world or the respective bosses to tell a woman to sit at home and look after her children and family. It is also a sleek method of warning childless women how financially their life will be affected post pregnancy. The percentage of motherhood penalty is greater than the men - women payment gap. A woman earning a lot more than her husband before

giving birth will automatically drop down by 35 - 45% afterwards. Motherhood penalty not only is a clear sign of discrimination, it also works as a tool to demotivate women to pursue their dreams and be a mother at the same time. Whereas, a Harvard University study shows that children of employed and career oriented mothers have better understanding of equal relationships and they tend to be more positively individualistic.

A study by British household panel survey data show that the children whose mum works more than 35 hours per week are willing to pursue higher education. These children are quick to adapt to changing environment and manage to excel in difficult conditions. Also they have better careers, better jobs, and higher salaries as they have seen their mothers being a hero at the end of every day. Even though employed mothers are considered to have superpowers, they sadly do not have the superpower of being in multiple places at the same time and that somewhere and somehow leaves a mother with a guilty conscience that she wasn't able to live up to societal standards of a perfect mother. There is a vast difference between the expectations from a father and mother though they both are called parents; the mother is forced into the role of a child's sole nurturer.

People are a peculiarly similar type of species, who are zealous in adapting to modern advancements that come along with rapidly flowing sky. One of the simple mandates of human nature is conformity, as time changes, we as humans learn to accept and assimilate with the stereotypes that are brought to you by majority and common conceptions. We break stereotypes to build new stereotypes. It is obvious for a woman to lose her professional efficiency or be overly emotional after childbirth, or so at least every employer assumes. They assume that a woman loses her professional stamina because of past, present or future pregnancies, hence the employers with goodwill in heart, wishing to be the saviour, take matters into their own hand and try to 'relieve' the mother of the duty to be able to live up to her own professional potential. That is when a woman hits a scientific term called 'Maternal Wall', a wall that is built by others against her will or behind her back, to prevent her from reaching her career destiny, because if she does, then she might not reach the goal of being the 'perfect mother'. When you google 'most influential women (who are mothers as well) of all time' and many more employed mothers whom google has failed to recognise, the proud faces that you will receive, are the faces of women who have managed to punch down a window in that wall and get past through it despite of concrete resistance from all directions. We as a whole unit, as a country have shown progressive results in terms of gender neutrality, without any doubt, in fact last year we saw the highest number of women elected to Indian Parliament, however almost one-third of India's house makers' population convey the desire to be employed. 73% of new mothers are cornered into leaving their jobs, 50% are left with no option but to resign at the age of 30 to look after their children, and only 27% of mothers sustain themselves enough to be able to work after a hiatus. Statistics and numbers always keep changing, sometimes in favour and sometimes against, but what never changes is a mother's unconditional love and fierce bond with her children, the thing that also never dies in a mother is the ambitions and dreams that once her own mother taught her to follow to the

last of her nerve.

In a family where the pay of the central bread winner is on daily work basis, other family members have to chip in their share of hard work and are bound to bring in regular salary as well, then may it be the woman of the house or children past legal working age. However, in a much well off household once a woman transforms into a mother she is stereotyped into the confinement of motherhood and household duties. As the class rises upwards, she is frequently imbued with the saying 'why do you need to work, you have everything at the tip of your finger'. Where the 'Super-powered' part of the world fights with Racism, we are still fighting with horrors of history, all inclusive of caste discrimination, class discrimination, gender discrimination, and every other term that ends with just basic discrimination. However, there is no discrimination in the discrimination that employed and career oriented mothers face on daily basis. No matter the caste, or class, or creed or anything, every mother with a flaming passion for her career is a prey to be judged, and made assumptions about, by men and women and others. It is 'considered' that along with babies, they also push out all the incredible qualities that previously made them a credible asset in a workforce. It is 'considered' that they are the ones who wouldn't know where their child's socks and under-wears are kept, when their child is due for what vaccination, their favourite bedtime story, the colour of their toothbrush, the names of their friends, and sometimes even what grade they are in. It is 'considered' by their employers that it is okay to cast them from great assets to some mere employee, or for neighbours to term them irresponsible, but the father stays the same asset or the same amount of responsible. It is 'considered' that, if the husband and wife are working in the same workplace or have the same crazy timings of returning home, the wife (now mother) should start coming home sooner than ever because she is supposed to be the sole nurturer, but her husband (now father) should be putting in extra hours of work because he is the sole earner. Now, consider this, a mother who has managed to make ends meet, maybe by walking on heated coals or maybe by carrying the water over her head, is not bothered by baseless assumptions and considerations, she is very much busy in taking the world by storm. And let's not talk about her healthy relations with her male colleagues, shall we?

A relationship between mother and her child/children is just that, a relationship between them, just like their relationship with their mothers, there is no need or space for anyone else to tarnish it with silly assumptions. Motherhood as it is, comes with a combo package of constant worry and unconditional love with the sidings of self-analysed responsibilities, that a mother fully comprehends without the world having to dictate it to her. When you put career into the picture, her stress levels are already skyrocketing every minute. Who better to explain it than mothers already living these lives?

"Here, household chores are counted as more of women oriented responsibilities than family oriented responsibilities. In a house where a woman is working, it is undoubtedly expected of her to spend all her earnings for the family. Balancing motherhood and career is like a string workout."

—Neeta Shende, an incredible mother of twins, a lawyer, an actor, and an all-time spontaneous organizer.

"Being a mother and a career ambitious woman includes being held responsible for child's educational performance and family members' health. Sometimes self-guilt is responsible for low esteem, at times, you are charged to maintain the work life balance. It's our state of mind to handle everything."

—Anjali Tengshe, a proud mother of self-sufficient daughter, director of a company, and a forever promoter of 'never sit idle'.

"It is a great experience, however, without whole family's co-operation it is very difficult to hold both responsibilities efficiently."

—Sangita Khandve, a transparent mother of two very perceptive children, a Private Secretary, a Zonal Table Tennis player, and a staunch idol of hard work.

"I can't think of a subject that is taboo for me, unless it's one I simply don't know anything about."

—Chris Crutcher

TABOO OF DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

By
Yuti Gandhi
MA I

The moment somebody says that he/she is unmarried people start checking up on them. Even after so many years as India has progressed, people still look at unmarried people in a suspicious manner. Even though getting a divorce is slowly starting to be socially accepted still people that are even educated tend to judge people that go through divorce. Education should liberate the society to a different level, and spread awareness about things that are untold and necessary.

The word divorce can invariably be taboo in this world. The word is already coined for people that couldn't cope up with one another. And that word is 'divorced', and people don't like divorced people. Take it or leave it this can be a reality.

Traditionally, the parents were not allowing their female children to study and not sending them to schools for studies. And the girls were totally dependent on their parents before marriage and similarly they were dependent on their husbands or in-laws after marriage. This can be a giant issue as a result of they were dependent and that they want to tolerate all the violence and different tortures and in their wildest dreams, additionally they cannot consider divorce.

Statistically, divorce rates in India are lesser as compared to western counties. There has been a general rise within the trend, however, this can be restricted to urban-metro cities. Once we check up on the teeny-weeny villages, tier two cities and different rural and semi-rural regions, divorce rates are very minimal. This is as a result of us Indians being happy in our marriages, and that we don't extremely have problems with compatibility and happiness with our spouse.

The Family Reputation

We Indians board a close-knit community. Family, friends, neighbours society etc., are interlinked and blended into our lives. Their influences are sturdy and opinions affect us. Thus, we've got grave issues regarding any quite negative opinion they might brew regarding our family name.

Respectable Family Women Don't Divorce

Absurd because it could seem, a family's respect lies within the conduct of the women folks. And divorce is checked out as associate "not respectable" act. Walking out of a wedding might place an issue or mark on the so-called respect that the family commands.

Living alone isn't Straightforward. It's a Dangerous World Out There.

However financially independent a woman is also, living a life on her own isn't easy to be straightforward. A woman invariably desires the support of her man. And staying alone from him would in all probability usher in a lot of hassle. She may be labelled as "readily available" and unwanted men could pry on her.

The Social Outcasts/Stigma

Here is another absurd reason. The idea of being "Suhagan" (staying married to a living husband) has been promoted in Indian society. On most social gatherings and occasions, "Suhagans" are given importance and are well attended to as compared to a widow or an adult female. Often, such people are unbroken alone from necessary rituals.

The Question of Re-Wedding

Though our society has unfolded significantly to the concept of a wedding, there still measure problems that happen just in case of divorced re-wedding, beginning with a giant doubt on the character of the women. And a divorce with a child? Well, it might simply get more durable.

Taboo of Re-marriage

We live in a Patriarchal society where a woman is constantly oppressed and cannot be as equal as a man. The people of Indian society view women as inferior because of their upbringing and old beliefs written down in them. 'Women are the slaves of their husbands'. This saying may not be clearly stated in the form of words but is certainly carried out in the style, customs, beliefs and practices of our Indian society. In an institution called marriage where both husband and wife should always be equal, the wife is always considered inferior to her husband. A woman's life revolves around her husband only. Basically, the only reason she stays with her husband.

Remarriage in India is not the same as remarriage in Western or other developed countries, most people still see this view as inappropriate or negative. Remarriage often results in variable family situations such as when widows and widowers remarry, someone remarrying someone who was previously married, or someone who has a child, or two people who have children of previous marriages and remarried. Recognition of remarriage is a slow process in society. A recent study conducted in 2016 found that remarriage is preferred by less than 1% of divorced people and men marry twice as often as women.

In India, marriages are viewed as a lifelong commitment. In fact, traditionally, you choose to have someone not only for this life, but also for the next seven! In that sense, it is impossible to dismiss the fact that someone chose to break the sacred bond of marriage and decided to

leave the relationship.

Most of the time when you marry an Indian you end up living with his whole family. Adapting to new family members' wishes is not an easy task for a girl, especially if you are getting married late. These issues of reconciliation are often the cornerstone of building a relationship that leads to marital discord. If the issues are not resolved in a loving and patient manner, the chances of the couple being reconciled are slim.

Too often, people who have suffered in a broken marriage are looked down upon and labelled as unjust, heavy, and flawed. People often avoid such relationships, and even their families are ostracized.

In a number of cases of abuse of family members and children at the hands of foster parents, people are generally unwilling to seek cooperation especially with divorced boys or girls.

Taboo of Abortion

Although pregnancy is often celebrated in Indian society and is considered a gift, abortion in India has long been regarded as unacceptable.

Abortion is not the kind of process a woman wants to go through.

In India, as in other countries, women choose to terminate a pregnancy for a variety of reasons that often reflect their social and economic circumstances. Unintended pregnancies and subsequent abortions may also be indicative of women's inadequate access to modern contraceptive use, and the gender inequality that often threatens women's ability to negotiate contraceptive use when they do not wish to become pregnant.

The most commonly known reason women report for abortion is limiting family size. Other common reasons are to increase the space between births or to protect their health in situations where lower health conditions will be worse during pregnancy or childbirth.

One of the other major reason in Indian Society for abortion is son's favourite and gender-based abortions. There are many social, cultural and economic factors that influence a son's love, including son hood and inheritance practices, the national marriage system, the expectation that the sons will help with farming or family business and provide protection from their parents in old age, and religious traditions. Daughters, on the other hand, often go to great lengths to pay their dowry and even to leave home, often to support their aging parents.

Taboo of Adoption

Adoption continues to be an undesirable option because the links between the adopted child and the co-parent become a public, expressive, and tangible confession of childbearing is undeniable.

Indians, however, still believe that a child born through their biological process is their own. Also, the adopted is considered a stranger. People say that an adopted child has a genetic of different culture, race, and religion. Thus, the Indians are not ready to accept this change. They still live under a cube where race, religion, ethnicity, etc are the top most priority and it matters the most. They fail to understand that children are Gifts of God, angels sent to earth.

Adopted parents are often apprehensive about the questions society will ask when they have children. These questions can be raised either by internal conversation. They worry about people asking about their manhood, their manhood or being barren and powerless. Parents feel that the community will look down on them.

Conclusion

The root cause of any problem in the society is the mindset of the people. In order to make our country developed we need to develop our mentality also, then only there will be overall growth in the society. The old mindset of the people needs to be changed according to changing needs of the society as society works on dynamics and it is not static. So, we should also not keep our mentality static. If the mentality of the people will be changed and they will not be judgemental then no such thing will exist such as taboo, unacceptability, fear of getting judged, stigma, embarrassment etc.

"It's fun to explore areas that are taboo that you're not allowed to in real life as an actor."

— Michelle Pfeiffer

Women and Masturbation

By

Madhavi Menon

TYBA

The expanses of art, culture, education and even pornography lack an appropriate form of representation of females. According to a 2015 national survey, almost one in five women say that they've never masturbated in their lifetime! Which is a substantial number considering that masturbation is the safest form of sexual practice along with additional benefits of releasing dollops of happy hormones, reducing menstrual cramps, improved sleep quality along with empowering women to have a better understanding of themselves and their sexual needs.

Agreed, that masturbation in general is at a lot of times linked to guilt and shame, but females and masturbation is often met with reactions that oscillate between being labelled as 'slutty' or declared as fictitious. Twice as many men as women had ever masturbated and those who did so three times more frequently during early adolescence and young adulthood than the women who masturbated during these same age periods (NIH). Moreover, for many staunch believers of religion masturbation isn't just a taboo, it's forbidden and it's believed that sexual pleasure must exist only between a husband and wife.

In conversations about expression of male pleasure, it's spoken about as a fact of life whereas female pleasure is often criticized or simply deemed to be non-existent. When a woman is allowed to explore her sexuality and embrace the intricacies of pleasure in a hospitable atmosphere, it can result in a boost in self-confidence along with having an egalitarian relationship with their male counter-part (in heterosexual relationships). Lack of education around female masturbation also leads to what is called as an 'orgasm gap', which refers to the disparity in orgasms between couples. This again would specifically apply to heterosexual relationships because studies revealed that lesbian and bisexual women have considerably more orgasms than heterosexual women. Dr. Laurie Mintz believes that the orgasm gap is a cultural problem where she doesn't blame penises for it, but rather the men who own it.

Academics from another study ascertained that the group that most likely always orgasms during sex were heterosexual men (at a whopping chunk of 95%) whereas heterosexual women formed the lowest demographic band of this study with just a mere 65%. Another reason that weighed in on the orgasm gap was lack of understanding of the female anatomy. The stereotypical banter of the clandestine nature of the clitoris has led to massive confusion in both males (59%) and females (45%) where neither gender being able to label the vagina correctly. Having an understanding of one's anatomy can intensely alter your sex life as knowing your own body vests in you the confidence to guide your partner along with prioritising your sexual needs in a relationship.

Male self-worth is associated with 'providing': a primitive characteristic dating back to the Stone Age. Masturbation for singletons those in long-distance relationships, can be a heavy blow to the ego & self-confidence of men. The male ego when it comes to sexual competency

is very fragile for a substantial portion of men, leaving them frustrated and annoyed. Thereby, discouraging women to explore themselves sexually and denting their own sex life. Having an understanding of one's body, expectations and likings can be beneficial in guiding their partner onto a similar path. A female orgasm should be experienced, desired, enjoyed as a part of sexuality, and not as something males give to females as an example of their prowess.

"The naked truth is still taboo."

—Bob Dylan

Theatre and Psychology

By

Tanaya Jadhav

FYBA

‘Theatre and Psychology’, sounds a bit strange right? Yes, it is quite obvious for people to think that how can it be correlated with Psychology? Or vice-versa. The common understanding about ‘Psychology’ is a science that is being used for treating mentally challenged and ill persons. Partially, it is true. But the word ‘partially’ is important. Psychology is not just for treating mental disorders through counselling and psychotherapies but also can contribute to enriching and promoting the healthier life of any human being by understanding, observing, analysing, and predicting human behaviour. Indeed, all these words and concepts were totally new for me before joining the Psychology stream, now I find them very interesting. However, I heard about human behaviour, personality, emotions, expressions, thinking processes through ‘theatre’. In simple words, the theatre is a medium for entertainment with a full mixture of all emotions, personalities that exist in society.

So what is common in psychology and theatre? I believe that the connecting thread between them is ‘Human being and his/her behaviour’. Students of psychology study the behaviour of an individual. However, an actor/actress studies a character to be performed whereas a psychologist studies personality and behaviour of an individual for bringing improvement in him/her.

In other words, linking and psychology is actually fascinating as the aspect that differentiates both ‘REAL’ and ‘REEL’. When we talk about theatre, the most important aspect is imagination i.e. playing a character that doesn’t actually exist. Whereas psychology follows reality. There is a complete package of various emotions, anxieties, behavioural patterns, thoughts, etc. for you to understand in a real sense. Also, in the case of theatre, everything is quite predictable, the situation is already decided and specifically under control. In contrast, when we talk about psychological conditions, experts try to understand and analyse past experiences, behavioural patterns, the personality of an individual, and provide direction towards improving behaviour through therapies. In this whole process, it is very difficult to predict or control the behaviour of an individual.

Various psychological concepts like personality, conflict, motivation, emotions, memory, decision-making, etc. form a common circumference to work for a psychologist as well as an actor/actress. For example, an actor has to study these concepts in order to perform the character considering his/her thought process. In the same way, a psychologist has to work on these concepts in order to understand the patient. Also, interpersonal behaviour is the basis of ‘act-react’ phenomena in the theatre. It includes verbal communication, non-verbal cues like body language, facial expression, posture, etc. which help an actor/actress to gracefully present his/her character.

Another most interesting common element among psychology and theatre is ‘teamwork’. Yes, both fields require great teamwork, in order to fulfil their goals. Most of you will agree

that yes, for a drama to be performed, teamwork between the make-up men, lights men, costume designer, set-in charge, actors/actresses, etc. is essential and critical.

But, what about psychology? Why would psychology need a team to work? Psychology revolves around main elements – Psychiatrist, Psychologist, Physiologist, and Patient. Therefore, for a patient to be cured, it requires coordination and efficient functioning among these pillars of psychology. Any miscommunication among them may affect the mental health of the patient. Likewise, lack of coordination between actors and other team members can lead to a fiasco.

Unfortunately, in the Indian context, the scope for theatre, and psychology, is restricted to a certain extent. Like, in India, theatre is mainly confined to the purpose of entertainment. People believe that is all about enjoying and as a piece of cake that you have every weekend with your family. Whereas, the condition of ‘Psychology in India’ isn’t really good as people are still attached to stigmas and taboos around mental health and eventually psychology. Hence, I strongly believe that theatre can play a major role not only in reducing the stigma around mental health but also contribute as one of the psychotherapies. There are ‘Theatre Exercises/Games’ which are being used to train an actor/actress as well as provide methods for improving the personality of an individual. Hence, I would like to conclude that both psychology and theatre are meant to provide happiness to people though their paths may be different.

आंतरजातीय विवाह

By
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जब लडका लडकी राजी तो क्या करेगा काजी "हे वाक्य तर सर्वानीच ऐकल असेल, पण जेव्हा ही गोष्ट "आंतरजातीय विवाह" यावर येते तेव्हा मध्ये येतो तो सर्वात मोठा शत्रू तो म्हणजे 'समाज'.

बोलायचं झालं तर भारतात फक्त ५% लोकं अशी असतील की ते आंतरजातीय विवाहाला परवानगी देतात आणि बाकीचे ९५% लोकं बळजबरीने घरगुती लग्न करून ३ ते ४ परिवार बरबाद करतात कारण बहुतेक पालकांना आपल्या मुलांना काय वाटत यापेक्षा समाज काय म्हणेल, लोकं तोंडात शेंण घालतील. स्वतः च्या जातीतली सोडून दुसऱ्याच्या जातीतली पोरगी घरी आणली तर समाजाला तोंड कसं दाखवावं? हे आणि असे बरेच समस्याजन्य प्रश्न पडतात. ज्यामुळे पालकांना intercast marriages मध्ये problem असतो.

भारतात सर्वात पहिला आंतरजातीय विवाह ४/फेब्रुवारी/१८८९ मध्ये यशवंत आणि राधा यांचा झाला होता. यशवंत म्हणजे जोतीराव आणि सावित्रीबाई फुले यांचा मुलगा आणि राधा म्हणजे जानोबा कृष्णा ससाने यांची मुलगी आणि ह्या गोष्टीला जवळपास एकशे तीस वर्ष उलटून गेली तरीही आपले बुरसुटलेले विचार अजून तिथल्या तिथेच आहेत ही खंत आहे. मान्य आहे की तुम्हाला मुलीपेक्षा तुमची इज्जत आणि समाज काय म्हणेल हे जास्त महत्त्वाचं आहे, मान्य आहे की तुम्ही ज्या समाजात लहानाचे मोठे झालात, त्यांना बाजूला ठेवून तुम्ही त्यांना सोबत आहेत, त्याचा विचार नका करू जे कधी तुमच्यात नव्हतेच. समाज तुमच्यात नाहीये! तर तुम्ही समाजात आहात याचं भान असावं असं मला वाटत जे तुमच्यात कधी नव्हतेच त्यांच्यासाठी का हा त्याग!

समाज आणि त्या समाजातील लोकं हे तर महत्त्वाचं आहेच... पण सर्वात महत्त्वाचं म्हणजे ती तुमची family, तुमची मुलगी, मुलगा तुमचे आई, बाबा, पत्नी आणि जर तुम्हाला असं वाटतंय की कोणी तुम्हाला चुकीचं समजेल, तुमच्या मुलांना चुकीचं समजेल, तुमची मस्करी करतील, तर विचार करा हे आहेत जे आज तुम्हाला नावं ठेवतायेत, उद्या दूसर कोणाला, तर परवा तिसरच कोणाला तरी असेल मग ह्या अशा लोकांसाठी तुम्ही तुमच्या मुलांना

आयुष्यासाठी का त्रासात टाकायचं. म्हणतात ना 'नाचता येईना, अंगण वाकडे' हे खरं आहे. कारण त्यांना त्यातलं तथ्य काय हे सिद्ध करता येत नाही म्हणून काहीतरी कारण शोधून इतरांना अडथळे निर्माण करणं हे त्यांचं कामच आहे. खरं तर ह्या लोकांना तुमच्याशी काही देणं – घेणं नसतंच पण तुम्हाला कायम भीती असतेच की लोकं काय म्हणतील! हे किती आश्चर्य आहे की "स्वतः च्या जातीतल्या गाढवासोबत लग्न झालं तरी चालेलं, पण दुसऱ्याच्या जातीतला घोडा सुद्धा नको. "म्हणून तुम्ही बळजबरीने तुमच्या मुलाचं लग्न दुसऱ्या कोणासोबत तरी लावून दिल तिथे तुमचा समाज हे मान्य करेल आणि तुमच्या मुलांनी सुद्धा हे बळजबरीने लावून दिलेलं लग्न केलं तर नंतर पुढे काय? तुम्ही काय Guarantee देऊ शकता की पुढे तुमची मुलं खुश राहतीलच आणि समोरची व्यक्ती चांगली निघेलच. मग का आपल्या मुलांच्या आयुष्याशी खेळता. ते फक्त समाजासाठी आणि तो पण असा समाज जो कधी तुमच्यात नव्हताच.

अशी लोकं एक दिवस तुमच्या मुलांच्या लग्नाला येतील, डोक्यावर चार अक्षदा टाकतील, नंतर चर्चा रंगवतील: मुलगा – मुलगी काय करतात, त्यांचं खानदान कसलं आहे, तुम्ही लग्नात खर्च किती केला, किती तोळे दागिने दिले, कपडे कसे घातले, आणि या सगळ्या गोष्टींवर तोंडसुख घ्यायला जर काही कारण नाहीच भेटलं तर घरी जाऊन ते म्हणणारच आहेत की "भाजीत मीठ जरा कमीच होतं बर का.....!"

थोडक्यात सांगायचं झालं तर ज्या लोकांना नावं ठेवायची आहेत ती कोणत्याही प्रकारे, कशीही ठेवणारच आहेत. मग तुम्ही कितीही आणि काहीही करा. तर मग कशाला स्वतःला ह्या असल्या संकटात टाकून द्यायचं जिथे लोकं तुम्हाला judge करतील.

पालकांचे एक महत्त्वाचा प्रश्न म्हणजे "आमच्या जमान्यात Divorce कमी व्हायचे किंवा व्हायचेच नाहीत" तर मला अशा लोकांना एवढच सांगायचं आहे की असं नाहीये की तुमच्या जमान्यात लोकं जास्त खुश होते. ते फक्त समाजासाठी, जे आहे त्यात adjust करून कसेबसे जगत होते. "पदरात पडलं आणि पवित्र झालं " असंच काहीतरी! पण आजकालचा जमाना एवढ सहन करत बसतचं नाही. पटत नसेल तर दोघे वेगळे होतात, Divorce घेतात आणि पुन्हा आपल्या life मध्ये आपापल्या पद्धतीने जगतात.

शेवटी एक विचार नक्की करा की जेव्हा आपण ह्या जगातून निघून जाऊ, तेव्हा ती आपली स्वतःचीच मुलं असतील जी त्यांच्या मुलांना आपल्याबद्दल गोष्टी सांगून जिवंत ठेवतील

तो समाज नव्हे ज्याला आपण आता इतके महत्त्व देतोय आणि मुलांसाठी सांगायचं म्हणालं तर तुम्ही स्वतः आधी शिकावं, मोठ व्हावं, नोकरी करावी, आणि व्यवस्थितपणे सेटल व्हा म्हणजे उद्या तुमच्या घरच्यांनी हा विचार नक्की करावा की आंतरजातीय विवाह आहे तर ठीक आहे पण दोन्ही मुले स्वतः च्या पायावर उभी आहेत, काबील आहेत, दोन्ही बाजूंनी समान आहेत, तर आपण पुढचा विचार करायला हरकत नाही.

धूम्रपान करणाऱ्या महिला

By
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भारतात रोज सिगारेट ओढणाऱ्या महिलांची संख्या झपाट्याने कमी होत असली तरी महिलांचे धूम्रपान करण्याचे प्रमाण वाढत चालले आहे. धूम्रपान करणाऱ्या महिलांमध्ये अमेरिकेपाठोपाठ भारत दुसऱ्या स्थानावर आहे. धूम्रपानासंबंधी आरोग्य मंत्रालयाने संसदेत ताज्या आकडेवारीनुसार २०१४-१५ मध्ये ९६.२ अब्ज सिगारेटची विक्री झाली आहे. USA मध्ये धूम्रपान हे मृत्यूचे कारण बनले आहे. रोग नियंत्रण आणि प्रतिबंध केंद्रानुसार दरवर्षीपेक्षा जास्त महिला धूम्रपान करून आपला जीव गमावतात देशात ४४% महिलांची संख्या असून १३ ते १४% महिला आज आपला जीव गमवत आहे.

आजच्या किशोरवयीन मुलांनी धूम्रपानाच्या धोक्याबद्दल जागरूक असणं गरजेचं आहे. अशा सर्व इशारे असून वास्तविक पाहता आज जवळजवळ सर्व नवीन धूम्रपान करणारे किशोरवयीन आहेत. CDC ने २०२० मध्ये असा अहवाल दिला होता. ३.९% किशोरवयीन मुली सिगारेट ओढतात आणि २२.५% काही प्रकाराचे तंबाखूजन्य पदार्थ वापरतात ज्यात ई – सिगारेट हुक्का सिगारेट याचा समावेश होतो.

धूम्रपान करणाऱ्या महिलांची संख्या पुरुषांपेक्षा जास्त आहे. त्यामुळे आरोग्याच्या समस्या निर्माण होतात जसे कर्करोगाचा धोका (फुफ्फुस, तोंड स्वर – यंत्र, घशाची पोकळी अन्ननलिका, मूत्रपिंड, स्वादुपिंड, मूत्राशय आणि श्वसन रोग होऊ शकतो परंतु तेथे हे धूम्रपान संबंधित आरोग्य धोके देखील आहेत. जे स्त्रियांसाठी अविद्यतीय आहे.

आंतरजातीय विवाह: एक अवाहन

By
Harshada Sontakke
FYBA

आंतरजातीय विवाह इंग्रजी मध्ये यालाच (Inter-Caste Marriage) असे म्हणतात हा एकाच धर्मातील परंतु भिन्न जातीच्या दोन व्यक्तींमधील विवाह होय.

भारतीयांच्या जीवनात जातीचा विचार किती खोलवर रुजला आहे याचा अभ्यास करण्यासाठी २०१४ मध्ये करण्यात आलेल्या एका सर्वेक्षणात भारतातले केवळ ५% विवाह हे आंतरजातीय विवाह आहेत ९५% लोकांनी विवाह करताना जातीचा विचार केलेला आहे. आंतरजातीय विवाहाच्या बाबतीत मध्य प्रदेश मागे आहे तर गुजरात आणि बिहार आघाडीवर आहे आंतरजातीय विवाहाचे हे प्रमाण खेड्यात कमी आहे आणि शहरात जास्त प्रमाण आहे.

नॅशनल काँउन्सिल फॉर अप्लाइड इकॉनॉमिक्स रिसर्च या संस्थेच्या मनुष्यबळ विषयक सर्वेक्षणानुसार समाजाच्या विविध गटांतील ४२ हजार कुटुंबांतील १५ ते ४९ वर्ष वयोगटातल्या ५.४% महिलांचे लग्न परजातीच्या पुरुषांशी झाले आहे. २००४ साली अशीच पाहणी करण्यात आली होती. तेव्हा मध्य प्रदेशात आंतरजातीय विवाहाचे प्रमाण सर्वात कमी म्हणजे केवळ १% दिसून आले होते. हे प्रमाण तेव्हा गुजरात आणि बिहारात सर्वात जास्त म्हणजे ११% होते, आताही या प्रमाणात आणि या क्रमांकात काही फरक पडलेला नाही.

राज्यात अस्पृश्यता निर्मूलनाच्या कार्यक्रमाचा एक भाग म्हणून आंतरजातीय विवाहास प्रोत्साहन देण्यासाठी आर्थिक साहाय्य म्हणून आंतरजातीय विवाह प्रोत्साहन योजना राबवली जाते. आंतरजातीय विवाह योजना २०२१ व्दारे जातीभेद कमी करून सर्व धर्मांमध्ये समानता आणण्याचा प्रयत्न केला जातो. आपल्या देशात निरनिराळ्या जातीचे लोक राहतात. जातीच्या बाबतीत लोकांमध्ये खूप भेदभाव सुरु आहेत. हा भेदभाव कमी करण्यासाठी महाराष्ट्र सरकारने सदर योजना अमलात आणली आहे.

समाजातील जातीभेद व असमानतेची दरी दूर करून समाज एक संघ व्हावा या उद्देशाने सुरु करण्यात आलेल्या 'आंतरजातीय विवाह प्रोत्साहन योजनेत' आता आमूलाग्र बदल करण्याचे राज्य सरकारने ठरविले आहे. भारताच्या राज्यघटनेचे शिल्पकार डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकर यांच्या व्दितीय पत्नी डॉ. माई साहेब आंबेडकर यांच्या नावाने नवीन योजना सुरु करण्यात येणार आहे

त्यानुसार आंतरजातीय विवाह करणाऱ्या जोडप्यांना शासकीय नोकरीत प्राधान्य देण्याचा विचार असून तसा प्रस्ताव तयार करण्यात येत आहे. अशी माहिती सामाजिक न्यायमंत्री राजकुमार बडोले यांनी 'लोकसता' ला दिली.

अस्पृश्यता निवारणार्थ

अंतरजातीय विवाहाला प्रोत्साहन देण्यासाठी शासनाकडून ५० हजारांचे अर्थसाहाय्य दिले जाते. भारतीय घटनेने जातीयता नष्ट केली आहे. ती पाळणाऱ्यास शिक्षा तसेच दंडाचीही तरतूद आहे. एकीकडे जातीयवाद्यांना कायद्याचा धाक आणि दुसरीकडे जातीच्या भिंती पडणाऱ्यांना प्रोत्साहन असे शासनाचे धोरण आहे.

ती आणि तिची मासिक पाळी

By
Shaila Kumbhar
SYBA

सकाळची वेळ होती ऐरवी सकाळी बोलायला वेळ नसणारी माझी ताई ओसरीवर निवांत बसली होती. आणि वेळेवर काम पूर्ण नाही झाले तर तिच्यावर ओरडणारी माझी काकी आज ताईची सगळी कामे करत होती हे बघून मला काहीतरी चुकल्यासारखं वाटलं म्हणून आजीला विचारलं तर आजी म्हणाली, "काही नाही गं, तुझ्या ताईला कावला शिवलाय" समजलं नाही म्हणून मी आजीला पुन्हा विचारलं तर, "तू लहान आहेस, तुला नाही समजणार अस उत्तर मला मिळालं पण आज त्याचा पुरेपूर अर्थ समजतो".

आज २१ व्या शतकात जगाची गाडी आधुनिकतेचा पटरीवर सुसाट पळत असताना मासिक पाळी म्हणजे चारचौघांत न बोलण्याचा विषय मासिक पाळी असे शास्त्रीय नाव असताना देखील 'अडचण आहे' वेगळी बसलीये' 'कावळा शिवलाय अशा तुच्छेतेच्या नावाने ओळखला जाणारा विषय काय आहे मासिक पाळी? का म्हणायचं तिला अपवित्र?

मासिक पाळी हा महिलांच्या जीवनातील फार महत्त्वाचा विषय आहे. जोवर स्त्रीला पाळी येत नाही तोवर तिला पूर्णत्व नाही अशी समाजात धारणा आहे त्याचं कारणही तसचं आहे. पाळी आल्याशिवाय स्त्रीला मातृत्व प्राप्त होत नाही. इतकी महत्त्वाची असलेली ही पाळी आज अंधश्रद्धेने ग्रासलेली आहे. कुठेही स्पर्श करायचं नाही, देवघरात जायचं नाही स्वयंपाक घरात जायचं नाही, घराबाहेर बसायचं अशी बंधने स्त्रीवर लादली जातात. घरात मुलीला पाळी सुरु झाली तर लवकर कोणाला सांगितले जात नाही. घरातील पुरुषांसमोर त्याविषयी बोलले जात नाही त्यामुळे पाळीविषयी मनमोकळे पणाने चर्चा होत नाही. केमिस्टकडे सॅनिटरी नॅपकीन दबक्या आवाजात मागितला जातो. केमिस्टही तो अगदी कागदात गुंडाळून देतो. कशाला हवी ही लपवा – छपवी?

मासिक पाळी म्हणजे दर महिन्याला स्त्रीच्या शरीरातून गर्भधारणा न झाल्यामुळे योनी मार्गाद्वारे होणारा रक्तस्राव आपण सर्वजण जन्माला आलो ते याचमुळे आणि आपणच त्याला अपवित्र म्हणायचं? अपवित्र, अशुद्ध, विटाळ मानायचं? या नैसर्गिक प्रक्रियेला एवढा बाऊ का करावा? परमेश्वराने जग निर्माण केलं म्हणता मग त्याचं जगाचा इतका महत्त्वाचा भाग

अस्पृश्य कसा असेल?

आसामच्या कामाख्या देवीचं मंदीर एक शक्तीपीठ म्हणून पाहिलं जात कामाख्या देवीला 'मासिक पाळीची देवी' असा दर्जा आहे. एकीकडे शक्ती पीठ म्हणून देवाची पूजा करायची आणि दुसरीकडे प्रत्यक्षातील स्त्रीशक्तीला अपवित्रतेचा दर्जा द्यायचा. केव्हा बदलणार आपण आपली मानसिकता? मला आठवतं मी ७ वी किंवा ८ वी त असेल. मुलींना मासिक पाळीविषयी माहिती देण्यासाठी एक महिला डॉक्टर आल्या होत्या. लगेच सर्व मुलींना एका वर्गामध्ये बोलवण्यात आलं मग त्यांनी मासिक पाळीविषयी बोलायला सुरुवात केली. एवढे असूनही मुली मासिक पाळीविषयी बोलायला तयार नव्हत्या. मुळात त्यांना मासिक पाळी येते हे सांगायलाच त्या लाजत होत्या कारण घरातील वातावरणानेच त्यांना तसा विचार करायला भाग पाडलं होतं. घरात कधीच मनमोकळेपणाने यावर चर्चा होताना दिसत नाही. मुलीचे वडील तिला मासिक पाळी बोलताना क्वचितच दिसतील.

बदलत्या जगासोबत विचारही बदलले पाहिजेत. अंधश्रद्धेच्या जोखडातून स्वतःला मुक्त करून घेतलं पाहिजे. वाद झाला तरी चालेल, संवाद हा मात्र व्हायला हवा जाता-जाता.

हे नारी, क्यों ये रिश्ते पडते तुझपर ही भारी,

तोड बेडियाँ, अब नहीं है तू बेचारी!

शर्म नहीं है मासिक धर्म,

पंच दिवसीय सहनशक्ती की परिक्षा है ये हमारी!

कलम 377 - एक दृष्टीकोन

By
Shivani Javle
SYBA

"आदमी मुसाफिर हैं
आता हैं जाता है
आते-जाते रास्तो में
बस यही, अपराध कर जाता हैं की,
आदमी होकर आदमी से
प्यार कर जाता हैं...!"

तारीख 6 सप्टेंबर 2018. एक ऐतिहासिक दिवस. ब्राझीलचा ऑस्कर विजेता पावलो कोएलोच्या "द-अलकेमिस्ट" मध्ये नमूद केल्याप्रमाणे प्रेम अर्थात जगाची भाषा तर याच भाषेला आजच्या दिवशी खरा न्याय मिळाला. एका अजरामर निकालातर्फे अर्थात कलम 377 रद्द होऊन.

आता मुळात आयपीसी कलम 377 रद्द होऊन गेलं. पण हे कलम नेमकं काय आहे हे समजून घेणं मला गरजेचं वाटतं. या कलमाद्वारे समलैंगिक संबंध हा गुन्हा मानल्यात आला असून दोन समान लिंगधारक लोक संमती अथवा संमतीशिवाय अनैसर्गिक लैंगिक संबंध प्रस्थापित करतील तर तो गुन्हा ठरविण्यात येतो तसेच या कलमान्वये संबंधित आरोपिंना 10 वर्षांपासून ते जन्मठेपेपर्यंतची शिक्षा देण्याची तरतूद आहे, असे हे थोडक्यात कलम. आता या कलमान्वये गुन्हा असणारा मुळात समलैंगिकता हा विषय आपल्यापासून जरा वंचितच राहिलेला पाहावयास भेटतो आणि चुकून जरी कानावर पडला तरी मोठा चेष्टेचा आणि एकप्रकारे काहीतरी विचित्र जणुकाही जागतिक पापच!

असा हा समलैंगिकता हा शब्द. समलैंगिकता म्हणजेच Homosexuality. एकदम सोप्या भाषेत सांगायचं म्हंटलं तर समान लिंग असणाऱ्या व्यक्तींबद्दल वाटणारं आकर्षण. जे की so called नैसर्गिकरित्या आपल्याकडे स्त्री-पुरुषांमध्ये होतं ते सर्वच फक्त स्त्री-स्त्री (Lesbian). पुरुष-पुरुष (Gay) यांच्यात होणे आणि ही स्पष्टता झाल्यानंतर पडणारा पहिला प्रश्न आणि उमटणारी प्रतिक्रिया अर्थात असं कुठे असतंय काय?

निसर्ग अर्थात जगातील सर्वात सुंदर गोष्ट आणि प्रेम त्याची संकल्पना आणि स्त्री व पुरुष

त्याने निर्माण केलेल्या आकृत्या - अविष्कार मुळात निर्मात्याने दोघांमध्ये सहसा फरक केलेला दिसून येत नाही. असेल फरक तो ही गरज आणि मर्यादा राखून पण जर प्रेमाचा विचार केला तर ही एक अशी संकल्पना ज्याला मुळात मर्यादा नसते. नाहीतर उगाचच मोठमोठ्या फिल्मसचा डायलॉग राहिला नसता "All is fair in Love and War".

प्रेमात आणि युद्धात सर्वकाही माफ असतं अशा या प्रेमात कधीच कुठलं बंधन नसतं. ज्याने जसं केलं जसं घेतलं तशी त्याची व्याख्या. मुळात प्रेमाला काही ठराविक व्याख्या नसते, असतात ते पैलू आणि त्याच पैलूंची नीट सांगड घातली गेली तर मानवाचं वैयक्तिक जीवन आनंदमय -सुखी बनेल, वैयक्तिक अशा साच्यात बसेल आणि अशा प्रेमाला जात, पंथ, धर्म, वंश, लिंग यांचे बंधन का बरे असावे? एक माणूस म्हणून आपल्या वैयक्तिक गोष्टी ठरवण्याचा माणसाला पूर्ण हक्क आहे. आपला जोडीदार कोण असावा? आपण कोणाच्या सोबतीने आयुष्याचा प्रवास करावा या सर्व व्यक्तिगत बाबी आहेत पण हे ठरवत असताना नेहमी आपला समाज व समाजातील लोकांची मानसिकता आड येते. विज्ञान-आधुनिक युगात मानव प्रवास करत असूनही लोकं संकुचित विचार, दृष्टीकोन बाळगताना दिसतात.

खरंतर 2001 मध्ये 'नाज' फौंडेशनने समलिंगी संबंधांना कायदेशीर मान्यता मिळावी म्हणून उच्च न्यायालयात याचिका दाखल केली आणि अथक संघर्षानंतर तब्बल 18 वर्षांनंतर या संघर्षाला न्याय मिळाला. सर्वोच्च न्यायालयाचे सरन्यायाधीश मा. श्री. दीपक मिश्रा यांच्या नेतृत्वाखालील जस्टीस्ट रोहीन्गटन, नरिमन, ए. एम. खानविलकर, डी वाय चंद्रचूड आणि इंदू मल्होत्रा यांच्या खंड पिठाने हा ऐतिहासिक निकाल देत हे जाहिर केलं की, समलैंगिकांनाही सन्मानाने जगण्याचा पूर्ण अधिकार आहे. हा संबंध गुन्हा अथवा आजार नसून लोकांनी आपली मानसिकता व दृष्टीकोन बदलावा मुळात जो जसा आहे तसा त्याचा स्वीकार झाला पाहिजे. हे स्पष्ट केले.

तब्बल 72 देशात समलैंगिकता हा गुन्हा मानण्यात आला असून 25 देशात कायद्याने त्याला वैधता प्राप्त करून दिली आहे. सर्वात आधी नेदरलँडने त्याला डिसेंबर 2000 मध्ये संमती देत जगापुढे आदर्श ठेवला. स्वतः समलिंगी असणारा एक भारतीय 'सारंग' नामक युवक जेव्हा आवाज उठवत नमूद करतो की, आम्हाला विरोध करणारी मंडळी आजही एका विशिष्ट मानसिक गुलामगिरीत जगत आहेत. प्रेमासारख्या सुंदर - निर्मळ भावनेला विकृत ठरवत आहेत. ना यात विकृतीचा लवलेश ना संस्कारांचा दोष. शेवटी लिंग हा आपल्या शरीराचा भाग असतो, आपल्या आत्म्याला कोणतेही लिंग नसते आणि विशेष म्हणजे अशा व्यक्तीकरता सारंग सांगू

इच्छितो ज्यांना आपल्या भारतीय संस्कृतीची, धर्म परंपरेची जरा जास्ती काळजी वाटू लागते त्यांच्यासाठी इतिहास साक्षीदार आहे. आपले महाभारत तसेच 'खजूराहो' येथील शिल्पस्थळे याची ज्वलंत व जिवंत उदाहरणे आहेत. फक्त गरजेचा आहे तो अभ्यास आणि उदात्त असा दृष्टीकोन.

'अमेरिकन अकॅडमी ऑफ पेडियाट्रिक्स' (AAP) आणि अमेरिकन सायकोलॉजिकल असोसिएशन' (APA) यांच्या मते, लैंगिक ओळख ही प्रत्येकाच्या स्वभावाचा भाग असते. समलिंगी आकर्षण असणे हे मानसिक बिघाडाचे लक्षण नसते. 'इंडियन सायकिअट्रिस्ट सोसायटी' देखील याला एक आजार मानत नाही.

आज एका गोष्टीचं समाधान वाटतं की, काही दिवसांपूर्वी समलैंगिकता, Gay, Lesbian. कुठे तरी दबलेले शब्द समोर येऊ पाहतायेत, उभारू पाहतायेत. आज मनोरंजन विश्वाच्या माध्यमातून विविध संस्था-संघटनांच्या माध्यमातून का होईना उभारी घेऊ पाहतायेत, काहीजण उघडपणे आपले लिंग जगासमोर सांगतायेत. मग त्या विविध वेबसिरीज असोत अथवा 'अलिगढ', 'फायर' सारखे नामांकित राष्ट्रीय दर्जा प्राप्त करणारे सिनेमे असोत. महत्वाचं ठरतंय ते म्हणजे या बाबतीतलं प्रबोधनात्मक जागृती. समाजात सकारात्मक ही नांदी असली तरीही मुळात ही प्रक्रिया घाव घालते मानसिकतेवर. समलिंगी संबंध जोपसणारी देखील माणसचं आहेत त्यांनाही मानवी हक्क आहेत याचा विचार होणं आज कुठे तरी गरजेचं आहे. अशावेळी केवळ कायद्यात सुधारणा होऊन पुरेसं नाही तर त्यासाठी समाजमन बदलणं आवश्यक आहे. मुळात समाजानं या सुधारणा स्वीकाराव्या लागतील. कायद्यातील बदल हे सुधारणांच्या दिशेने पडलेले पहिले सकारात्मक पाऊल आहे परंतु या वाटेवर चालताना समाजमन घडविण्याची जबाबदारी आपल्या सर्वांची आहे. गरज आहे ती फक्त एका बदलाची, दृष्टीकोणाची, माणसाने-माणसाशी-माणसासम वागण्याची !

*"हीच आमुची प्रार्थना,
अन हेच आमुचे मागणे
माणसाने माणसाशी
माणसासम वागणे!"*

VIRGINITY....? एक टॅबू....!

By
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SYBA

१५ ऑगस्ट १९४७ ला; आपला भारत देश स्वतंत्र झाला आणि 26 नोव्हेंबर 1949 रोजी; स्वातंत्र्य, समता आणि बंधुता यांचा पुरस्कार करत नीतिमूल्यांची सांगड घालणार असं आपलं संविधान अंगीकृत व अधिनियमितपणे स्वतःप्रत अर्पण केले आणि यानंतर 26 जानेवारी 1950 ला भारत प्रजासत्ताक झाला आणि त्याच बरोबर अनेक मुद्दे उपस्थित होऊ लागले. जात, धर्म, रूढी-परंपरा आणि या सर्व गोष्टींना विरोध करण्याकरिता काही शिक्षित मंडळी समोर आली व त्यांनी या जुलमी व अमाणूष परंपरांना विरोध करायला सुरुवात केली. यात त्यांना काहीस यशही मिळालं आणि या सर्व गोष्टींच्या प्रवासात भारत 21 व्या शतकाची वाट धरत. आधुनिक जगाकडे मार्गक्रमण करू लागला. परंतु, आजही स्त्रियांवरती अन्याय - अत्याचार व त्यांच्या खासगी आयुष्यातील गोष्टींवर सामाजिक स्तरावरती या बाबींचं भांडवल केलं जातं. अशा अनेक प्रथा आजही आपल्या भारतात आहेत. ज्या माणूसकीला काळीमा फासणाऱ्या आहेत. त्यांचा एकंदरीत अभ्यास करता.., कुठेतरी आपली मानसिकता यास कारणीभूत असल्याचं दिसून येतं.

कौमार्य चाचणी अर्थात virginity test...! काय आठवलं...; तेच ना ? एखादा समाज..... त्यात आजवर चालत आलेली परंपरा.....; एक स्त्री.... तिच्या लग्नाची पहिली रात्र... आणि त्यानंतर तिच्या चारित्र्याचा व कौमार्य असण्याचा दिलेला पुरावा.

मुळात कौमार्य चाचणी कोणाची केली जाते तर ती स्त्रियांची, आपल्या पितृसत्ताक समाजात स्त्रियांना नेहमीच दुय्यम दर्जा दिला जातो स्त्रीच्या योनीशुचितेला अधिक महत्व दिले जाते या मागे मुळात पितृसत्ता हेच एकमेव कारण आहे. स्त्रीची अब्रू म्हणजे काचेचं भांड मानलं जात. पण पुरुषांच्या अब्रूसाठी असं कोणतंही मापक नाही त्याच्यासाठी लैंगिक स्वातंत्र्य तर स्त्रीच्या लैंगिकतेवर नियंत्रण ठेवण्यासाठी कौमार्य चाचणीचे बंधन घातलेले आहे.

कौमार्य चाचणी ही प्रथा भारतातील खासकरून कंजारभाट समाजात दिसून येते. या प्रथेनुसार स्त्रीला तिच्या लग्नाच्या पहिल्या रात्री जोडीदारासोबत शारीरिक संबंध प्रस्थापित करावा लागतो. परंतू हे करत असताना काही लाजिरवाण्या गोष्टींना सामोरे जावं लागतं. स्त्रीच्या

योनीमार्गात प्रवेश करण्या अगोदरच एक पातळ असा पडदा असतो तो अर्थात Hymen. काही वेळेला तो काही स्त्रियांमध्ये जन्मतःही अनुपस्थित असू शकतो, यात काही वाद नाही. पण, आजच्या या धावपळीच्या जगात कधी केलेल्या जास्तीच्या शारीरिक हालचालींमुळे जसे की, Horse riding, Gymnastics , Running Cycling यांमुळेही तो #Hymen Break होऊ शकतो. याचा अर्थ असा की, केवळ शारीरिक संबंधा वेळीच 'Hymen break' होतो असं नाही हे सिद्ध होतं. याला वरील बाबीही कारणीभूत असू शकतात. परंतु, तरीही आपण संभोगावेळी रक्तस्राव नाही झाला तर तिचे लग्नाअगोदर इतर व्यक्तीशी शारीरिक संबंध असण्याचा दावा करतो. ही या वैज्ञानिक युगातील किती अशास्त्रीय व चुकीची अशी गोष्ट आहे.

खरंतर मुळात कौमार्य चाचणी करण्याची गरजच का पडते? जरी एखाद्या स्त्रीचे लग्नाअगोदर इतर पुरुषाशी संबंध असले तरी त्यात गैर काय? व्यक्ती स्वातंत्र्याचा जर का आपण पुरस्कार करत असू तर कोणाच्याही वैयक्तिक आयुष्यावर आपण घाला घालू शकत नाही. असं म्हणतात की, 'प्रेमाने जग जिंकता येतं' अगदी पुरातन काळापासून प्रेमाविषयी चे अनेक उदाहरणं आहेत मग ते राधा-कृष्णाचं प्रेम असो वा आताच्या काळातील अमृता प्रीतम व साहिर यांच असो; मुळात प्रेम ही संकल्पना एक वेगळी व निबंध अशी गोष्ट आहे जिला कोणतीही मर्यादा नसते. तरीही आजच्या या 21व्या शतकात प्रेमाकडे एक 'लफडं' म्हणूनच पाहिलं जातं... म्हणजे आज कालची एक मानसिकता झाली आहे की, "गर्लफ्रेंड ला हात लावायला सगळ्यांना पाहिजे पण, बायको मात्र हात न लावलेली पाहिजे." आणि ही अशी मानसिकता ठेवल्यामुळे आजही स्त्रियांना अमानुष अत्याचाराला, टीकेला आणि या कौमार्या सारख्या घृणास्पद रूढी-परंपरांना सामोरे जावं लागतं.

जर ती स्त्री कौमार्य चाचणी पास झाली नाही तर, तिला समाजामध्ये अतिशय हिन व खालच्या दर्जाची वागणूक दिली जाते. तिला समाजात तसेच कुटुंबात महत्वाचे स्थान दिले जात नाही. एवढेच नव्हे तर तिला आदर-सन्मान या गोष्टींपासून वंचित ठेवले जाते. तिच्या मुलाबाळांच्या हितवादी निर्णयात तसेच कौटुंबिक निर्णयात तिला काडी-मोलाची ही किंमत दिली जात नाही. ही सगळी प्रथा किती चुकीची व निंदाजनक आहे मुळात एखादी स्त्री Virgin आहे की नाही, हे ठरविणारे आपण कोण? जगातील कोणतही तंत्रज्ञान, विज्ञान व्यक्ती अथवा डॉक्टर ती स्त्री Virgin आहे की नाही हे ठरवू शकत नाही. केवळ त्याच स्त्रीला ती virgin आहे की नाही हे माहित असते. अशा सर्व जुन्या रूढी-परंपरा, जात पंचायतीना, समाजव्यवस्थेला आपण सुसंस्कृत म्हणवून घेणाऱ्या युवा वर्गाने कडाडून विरोध केला पाहिजे. परंतु, बऱ्याच वेळा

असे दिसून येते की, या कौमार्या सारख्या गोष्टींना त्याच समाजातील शिक्षित व सन्माननीय व्यक्तींकडून खतपाणी घातलं जातं. असे नक्कीच नाही की, या गोष्टींना सर्व समाज साथ देतो... याविरोधात कित्येक तरी युवा रस्त्यावर उतरले आहेत, सोशल मीडियाच्या माध्यमातून आवाज उठवत आहेत. त्यातलंच एक महत्त्वाचं उदाहरण म्हणजे तुमच्या आमच्यातला "विवेक तमाईचेकर" हा युवक जो स्वतः कंजारभाट समाजातील एक पुरुष असूनही या प्रथेविरुद्ध आवाज उठवत... '#StopTheVRitual', नावाचा व्हाट्सअप ग्रुप काढून जनजागृतीचे काम करत आहे. परंतु, हा मार्ग सोपा नक्कीच नव्हता. या मार्गात त्याला स्वतःच्याच समाजाच्या या विरोधाला सामोरे जावं लागलं, अत्यंत जीवघेण्या बाबींनाही तोंड द्यावे लागले. आणि आज "विवेक" हा जागतिक स्तरावरती एक उत्तम उदाहरण बनला आहे. परंतु हे सगळे बदल केवळ एका विवेक मुळेच शक्य होणार नसून गरज आहे ती असे अनेक विवेक निर्माण करण्याची म्हणूनच आपण आपल्या प्रत्येकातील विवेक जागृत केला पहीजे.

मुळात स्त्रीच्या चारित्र्य हननाचा अधिकार आपणास कोणी दिला? ती Virgin आहे की नाही हे ठरवणारे आपण कोण? एकीकडे प्राचीन काळापासून स्त्रीला, सर्व शक्तिशाली, आदी देवता, देवी म्हणून भजत होतो. तर एकीकडे आज ही 21व्या शतकात पुरुषसत्ताक मानसिकतेमुळे स्त्रीचा छळ होतो आणि म्हणूनच आपण ही मानसिकता बदलली पाहिजे कारण स्त्री ही एक स्वतंत्र जीव, व्यक्ती असून तिला निसर्गतः तिचे वैयक्तिक निर्णय घेण्याचे अथवा तिचे विचार मांडण्याची व स्वतःची भूमिका स्पष्ट करण्याची क्षमता आणि सर्वस्वी हक्क मिळाला पाहिजे व तीने तो बजावलाच पाहिजे..! आणि हे सगळं तेव्हा शक्य होईल जेव्हा आपण आपली मानसिकता बदलू, स्त्रीला समाजामध्ये आदराचे स्थान देऊन तिला एक माणूस व स्वतंत्र व्यक्ती म्हणून व्यक्त होण्याची संधी देऊ! थोडक्यात काय तर आपण समतेने वागू, समतेची वागणूक देऊ आणि हे सगळे बदल करण्यासाठी आधी आपण आपल्यातील बाधित विचारांचा त्याग करून; सद्सद्विवेकी बुद्धीचं... उत्तम विचाराचं... आधुनिक वाटचालीचं.... वैज्ञानिक दृष्टिकोनाचं; या सर्वांचे "बाळकडू" स्वतः सोबत समाजातील प्रत्येक घटकात व त्या घटकातील प्रत्येक व्यक्तीत रुजवण्याचा प्रयत्न केला पाहिजे.

कौटुंबिक हिंसाचार

By
Sagar Jadhav
FYBA

स्त्रियांच्या होणाऱ्या कौटुंबिक छळास प्रतिबंध करण्यासाठी केंद्र शासनाने कौटुंबिक हिंसाचारापासून महिलांचे संरक्षण अधिनियम २००५ व नियम २००६ संपूर्ण भारतात २६ ऑक्टोबर २००६ पासून लागू केला कायद्याची माहिती नसेल तर त्याच्या पिडीत महिला लाभ घेऊ शकत नाही कौटुंबिक हिंसाचार कशास म्हणावे हे सर्वसामान्यांना समजावे एवढ्यासाठीच हा अल्पसा प्रयत्न.

वास्तविक स्त्री ज्या परिवारासोबत वा साथीदारासोबत एकाच छताखाली राहत असेल आणि तिचा छळ त्या पुरुषाकडून होत असेल तर ती कौटुंबिक हिंसाचार कायद्यान्वये न्यायदंडाधिकाऱ्याचे संरक्षण मागू शकते थोडक्यात पिडीत महिला व तिच्या सुरक्षितेचा आर्थिक संरक्षणाचा आदेश न्यायदंडाधिकारी देऊ शकतात. छळापासून संरक्षण मग ते शारीरिक लैंगिक, आर्थिक तोंडी किंवा भावनिक अत्याचार असोत महिलांना त्याविरुद्ध न्याय मागता येतो.

शारीरिक छळ कशामुळे होतो.

शारीरिक छळात मारहाण तोंडात मारणे, तडाखा देणे, चावणे, लाथ मारणे, गुद्दे मारणे, ढकलणे, लोटणे, जोरात मारणे इतर कोणत्याही पद्धतीने शारीरिक दुखापत करणे किंवा वेदना देणे या बाबतीत शारीरिक छळाचा समावेश होतो, यालाच शारीरिक छळ असे म्हणतात.

सुनेवर होणारे परिणाम

आज स्त्रियांनी स्वावलंबी होणं आवश्यक आहे पण त्यासाठी कौटुंबिक स्तरावरही प्रयत्न आणि प्रोत्साहन मिळणं आवश्यक आहे. महिलांवरील अत्याचाराच्या घटना या दिवसेंदिवस वाढताना दिसत आहेत. त्या घटना रोखण्यासाठी महिलांनी प्रथम स्वतः खंबीर होण्याची गरज आहे पत्नीच्या चरित्रावर संशय घेणे, तिचा मानसिक छळ करणे, मारहाण करणे, घटस्फोटाच्या नोटीसा पाठवून हैराण करणे आदि घटना या तिच्या मानसिक खच्चीकरणासाठी कारणीभूत ठरतात. यातूनच मग स्त्रिया आत्महतेचा मार्ग निवडताना दिसतात.

कायद्याच्या कचाट्यातून सुटण्यासाठी कौटुंबिक त्रास कायमचा संपवण्यासाठी स्वतःलाच संपविण्याचा निर्णय घेतात. सासरच्या छळाला कंटाळून घेतले जाणारे निर्णय हे त्या तिच्या जीवावर बेतणारे ठरतात आणि यावेळी मग कायदाही हतबल ठरतो.

महिलांवरील अत्याचार रोखणे शक्य आहे का? या प्रश्नाचं उत्तर खरोखरच अनुत्तरीत करणार असलं तरी होकारार्थी दृष्टीकोनातून पाहिजे तर त्यासाठी स्त्रीने न घाबरता पुढे येणे गरजेचे वाटते तिने स्वतःच सक्षम असणे आवश्यक आहे पोलीस स्टेशन कायद्याच्या आधार घेऊन ती जर पुढे आली तर समाजात घडणाऱ्या अत्याचाराच्या घटनांना आपोआप पूर्णविराम मिळायला फारसा वेळ लागणार नाही. नवरा नादवंत नाही. सासू छळ करते किंवा काहीही कारण नसताना सासरची मंडळी त्रास देऊन सुनेला मोहरी पाठवून देतात असे प्रकार ठिकठिकाणी घडत असताना आणि कौटुंबिक अत्याचार कायदा अस्तित्वात असतानाही संसार मोडला स्त्रीवर अन्याय अत्याचार आला तरी साधी तक्रार नोंदवली जात नाही यावरून गेल्या अनेक पिढ्या स्त्रियांवर होणाऱ्या अत्याचाराचा अंत होणार का एक अनुत्तरीत प्रश्न राहिला आहे.

एखादी घटना घडल्यानंतर प्रतिक्रिया उमटतात मात्र ती घटना घडू नये म्हणून सामाजिक स्तरावर कोणते प्रयत्न केले जातात? या गोष्टीकडे लक्ष देणे गरजेचे वाटते कारण सामाजिक स्तरावर या अत्याचाराला वाचा फोडणे गरजेचे आहे. महिलांना कौटुंबिक पातळीवर होणारा त्रास तिचा होणारा छळ, मानसिक कोंडी त्यासाठीच वेगवेगळ्या माध्यमातून स्त्रियांचा आर्थिक स्तर उंचावणे गरजेचे आहे या स्त्रिया विविध क्षेत्रात स्वतःचे वेगळे स्थान निर्माण करू शकतात ही जाणीव ठेवून एक खारीचा वाटा म्हणून मी बचत गट असो किंवा स्त्रीयासाठीच्या शासकीय योजनांच्या माध्यमांतून स्त्रियांना सक्षम करण्यावर भर देत आहे त्यातूनच स्त्रियांच्या सामाजिक, आर्थिक, राजकीय क्षेत्रातील सहभाग वाढून त्यांना आत्मसन्मानाची दिशा मिळाली तरच समाजातील स्त्रिया या स्वावलंबी व सन्मानपूर्वक आयुष्य जगतील अशी आशा वाटते.

२००५ मध्ये जरी हा कायदा पारित झाला तरी ही कुटुंब व्यवस्था जाचक आणि शोषक असल्यामुळे कौटुंबिक हिंसेचा उच्चार करणे, न्याय आणि दाद मागणे स्त्रियांकरता आज ही निषिद्धच आहे. आणि हीच खरी शोकांतिका आहे.

महिला हक्क आणि समानता

By
Akshada Waghvase
FYBA

- घटनेने स्त्रियांना समान मानले असले तरी प्रत्यक्षात बाईला समान हिस्सा मिळत नाही असे का?

महाराष्ट्र राज्यात १९९४ पूर्वी ही स्थिती होती. १९९४ साली हिंदू वारसा कायद्यात एक महत्त्वाची दुरुस्ती केली गेली. अशी दुरुस्ती करणारे महाराष्ट्र राज्य हे देशातील एकमेव राज्य आहे.

ज्यानुसार २२ जून १९९४ नंतर मुलीला मुलाप्रमाणे जन्मत : च मालमत्ता विषयक अधिकार मिळाले. मात्र २२ जून १९९४ पूर्वी झालेल्या वाटणीस या कायद्यातील तरतूद लागू नाही. या कायद्यानुसार जोपर्यंत संयुक्त कुटुंबाची सामायिक मालकी आहे. (वाटणी झाली नाही तोवर) मुलगी वाटणी मागू शकते. सामायिक मालकी (एकत्र) असेल आणि त्यातूनच खर्चही होईल मालमतेतून मिळालेल्या फायद्याइतकीच कर्जाची वा तोट्याची जबाबदारीही मुलीला घ्यावी लागेल. अर्थातच ती तिच्या हिस्श्याच्या प्रमाणात असेल.

- बॉम्बे कोर्ट फी अक्ट....१९५१

शासन निर्णय क्रमांक एस.टी.पी. १०९४/सी आर. ३१५९/एम. १. दी १०/१०/९४.

महिलांचे स्थान समाजात पुरुषांबरोबरीने असावे या भावनेने शासनाने महिला धोरण घोषित केले आहे.

यात अंतर्भाव केल्यानुसार महिलांच्या संपत्ती – विषयक पोटगी, हिंसाचार व घटस्फोट विषयक केसेसना कोर्ट फी माफ होत आहे. यानुसार या तक्रारीसाठीचे अर्ज करताना अथवा स्मरणपत्रे पाठवताना लागणारी फी स्त्रियांना माफ करण्यात येत आहे.

- राहत्या घराची मालकी

बाई लग्न झाल्यावर पतीच्या घरी जाते पण त्या घरावर तिचा काहीच हक्क राहत नाही असे

का ?

सर्वसाधारणतः पतीपत्नीचा बेबनाव झाला की सहजगत्या पत्नीला घरातून चालती हो असे सांगितले जाते.

बाई संसारासाठी, कुटुंबासाठी कितीही खपली तरी घर- संसार यावर नवऱ्याचेच नाव असते. ही परिस्थिती बदलण्यासाठी आता नवा नियम करण्यात आला आहे.

त्यानुसार सरकारी गृहनिर्माण संस्था जमिनीचा पट्टा, भुखंड हे आता पती- पत्नी या दोघांच्या सामायिक मालकीचे होईल.

• स्त्रियांना नवऱ्याच्या संमतीशिवाय गर्भपात करून घेण्याचा अधिकार आहे का?

कुटुंबनियोजन साधनांचा शोध हे आधुनिक स्त्रीला मिळालेले वरदानच आहे. त्याचबरोबर नको असलेली संतती टाळण्यासाठी आपल्या देशात १९७१ साली एक महत्त्वाचा कायदा केला गेला तो म्हणजे 'गर्भपाताचा कायदा'.

जगातील अनेक देशातील स्त्रिया आजही गर्भपाताच्या हक्कासाठी लढत असल्याने आपल्याकडील कायद्याचे महत्त्व लक्षात येईल. गर्भपात हे कुटुंबनियोजनाचे साधन नाही. विशिष्ट परिस्थितीत एखादी लादलेली गोष्ट टाळण्यासाठी तो एक मार्ग आहे. कुटुंबनियोजनाची साधने वापरून संतती टाळणं हेच खर तर योग्य आहे. प्रत्येक गर्भपातात स्त्रीच्या शरीरास थोडी फार इजा पोचत असल्याने या कायद्याचा वापर जरा जपूनच करायला हवा.

आधुनिक नारी

मैं अबला नादान नहीं हूँ, दबी हुई पहचान नहीं हूँ!

मैं स्वाभिमान से जीती हूँ

रखती अंदर खुदारी हूँ!

मैं आधुनिक नारी हूँ!

पुरुष प्रधान जगत में मैंने, अपना लोटा मनवाया जो काम मर्द करते,

आये हर काम वो करके दिखलाया मैं आज स्वर्णम अतीत सदृश, फिर से पुरुषो पर भारी हूँ

मैं आधुनिक नारी हूँ!

मैं सीमा से हिमालय तक हूँ और खेल मैदानों तक हूँ!
मैं माता, बहन और पुत्री हूँ मैं लेखक और कवियत्री हूँ!
अपने भुजबल से जीती हूँ बिजनेस लेडी, व्यापारी हूँ

मैं आधुनिक नारी हूँ !

• पत्नीला खर्चाचा अधिकार आहे का ?

पत्नीला पतीकडून खर्चाची रक्कम घेण्याचा अधिकार आहे. जर नवऱ्याने बायकोला खर्च दिला नाही तरी ती न्यायालयातर्फे नवऱ्याकडून खर्च घेऊ शकते. हा अधिकार हिंदू दत्तक आणि भरणपोषण अधिनियमांतर्गत (१९५६) दिला गेला आहे.

जर काही ठळक कारणांमुळे बायको नवऱ्यापासून वेगळी राहत असेल, तरीही ती नवऱ्याकडे खर्च मागू शकते.

जरी :-

1. नवऱ्याने तिला सोडून दिले आहे.
2. नवऱ्याच्या दुर्व्यवहाराच्या भीतीने बायको वेगळी राहू लागली आहे.
3. नवऱ्याची आणखी एखादी जिवंत बायको आहे.
4. नवऱ्याला काही आजार आहे.

हा कायदा प्रत्येक स्त्रीला लागू होतो.

महिला संरक्षण कायदा : कौटुंबिक छळ महिला संरक्षण प्रतिबंधक कायदा स्त्रीला कौटुंबिक सामाजिक, आर्थिक व शारीरिक संरक्षण देतो हा कायदा सर्व जातीधर्माच्या लोकांना सारखाच लागू आहे. कौटुंबिक सामाजिक न्यायालय कायदा : दाम्पत्य सोडविण्यासाठी कौटुंबिक अधिनियम १९८४ लागू करण्यात आला आहे.

सक्षम है बलधारी है

सजग, सचेत, सबल, समर्थ आधुनिक युग की नारी है!

मत मानी अब अबला उसको, सक्षम है बलधारी है!
बीत गई वो कल की बेला जीती थी वो घुट घुट!
कुछ न कहती, सब कुछ सहती पीती आसु छुप छुप कर!
आज बनी युग की निर्माता, हर बाधा उस से हारी है!
चारदिवारी का हर बंधन तोड़ के बाहर आई है!
घर समाज और देश में उसने अपनी जगह बनाई है!
उंचे उंचे पढ़ पर बैठी, सन्मान की वो अधिकारी है!
मत समजो निर्बल बेबस, लाचार आज की नारी है!
स्नेह, प्रेम व ममता का भण्डार आज की नारी है!
हर जंग जीते शान से यह अभियान अभी भी जारी है!

- काही गावांमध्ये स्त्रियांना पुरुषांबरोबरीने वागणूक मिळत नाही स्त्रियांना कमी लेखले जाते. असे का ?

जसे की :-

1. स्त्रियांनी घराच्या बाहेर पडू नये.
2. घरा बाहेरच्या पुरुषांबरोबर बोलू नये.
3. डोक्यावरचा पदर खाली पडू नये.
4. मानसिक पाळी मध्ये स्त्रियांनी वेगळ्या खोली मध्ये राहणे व स्वतःचा स्वयंपाक स्वता करणे

अशा कित्येक गोष्टी स्त्रियांसाठी लागू होतात. पुरुषांने बाहेरच्या स्त्रीला बोललेले चालते उशिरा घरी आलेले चालते मग बाईसाठी हे नियम का?

पुरुषांने रात्री उशिरा पर्यंत ऑफिसमध्ये काम केले तर तो खूप कष्टाळू आणि बाईने केले तर ऐवढा काय महत्त्वाचा काम आहे जे रात्री पर्यंत करावा लागत आहे.

जग कुठे चालय आणि लोक माघे ते माघेच राहिले.

समाजात स्त्रीजातीचा जवळपास निम्मा हिस्सा आहे. स्त्रियांना हतोत्साहित करणारे वर्तन

करून त्यांचा जीवनस्तर उंचावण्याकडे दुर्लक्ष करण्यापासून ते त्यांचा छळ आणि अत्याचार करण्यापर्यंत अनेक प्रकारे तिरस्काराची वागणूक स्त्रीजातीला मिळत राहिली आहे. हा भेदभाव दूर करून स्त्रियांच्या प्रगतीस पोषक वातावरणाची निर्मिती आणी त्याचे सुचालन करणे आणि लैंगिक समतेद्वारे समाजाने संतुलन साधणे यासाठी पुरोगामी आणि विवेकी समाजाने बाळगलेला दृष्टीकोन केलेली कृती यांचा समुच्चय म्हणजे स्त्री सक्षमीकरण.

महिलांनी फक्त 'चूल आणि मूल' याकडेच लक्ष दिले पाहिजे असे अनेक जणांना वाटते. पण आता महिलांनी चुला आणि मुलासोबतच 'देश आणि विदेश' ययांकडेसुद्धा लक्ष देण्याची गरज आहे.

"क्या हार में, क्या जीत में,
किंचित नही भयभीत मैं
कर्तव्य पथ पर जो भी मिला,
यह भी सही, वो भी सही
वरदान नही मांगूंगी
ही कुछ पर हार नही मानुंगी"

मुलगी वाचवा, मुलगी शिकवा! (Save Girl)

By
Kalpana Munjewar
FYBA

असे म्हणतात की देवाला सर्वत्र पोचता येत नाही म्हणून त्याने आई बनवली आहे. आपण म्हणजेच काही लोक आईलाच देवाच्या रुपात पाहतो. आई हे मुलीचे पूर्ण रूप आहे मुलगी वाचवणे आणि तिला शिक्षण देणे ही काळाची गरज बनली आहे.

भारतात तसेच अनेक देशात काही कथा ऐकण्यात येतात ,ज्यात असे सांगितले जाते की तिथे मुलींना जन्माला घालू देत नसे.

भारतात राज्यस्थानमध्ये पूर्वी तेथील राजवंशात जन्मलेल्या मुलींना मारले जात, अंगणात पुरले जात.भारताला स्वातंत्र्य मिळून ७० वर्ष पूर्ण झाले तरीही मुलगी किंवा स्त्री स्वतंत्र झाली नाही, कारणे अशी की ती गर्भाशयात देखील सुरक्षित नसते, आजही काही ठिकाणी अशी परिस्थिती दिसून येते की सोनोग्राफी मध्ये जर लक्षात आले की मुलगी होणार आहे, हा गर्भ मुलीचा आहे, तर तिला मारण्याचा प्रयत्न केला जातो . जन्माला आली की सगळ्यांना मुलगी नको असते कारण घराला वंशाचा दिवा पाहिजे मुलगी काही करू शकत नाही, मुलगा करू शकतो. या विचाराने अनेक निष्पाप मुलींचा जीव गेला आहे. तसेच मुलींचा देह व्यापार, बाल मजुरी यांच्यासाठी देखील उपयोग केला जातो.

सन २०१५ साली महिला आणि बालविकास मंत्री यांनी म्हटले होते की, दररोज २००० मुलींना ठार मारले गेले,त्यात बऱ्याच मुलींना जन्मापूर्वी आणि आणि नंतर मारले गेले त्यानंतर सरकारने ही योजना २२ जानेवारी २०१५ रोजी मोठ्या प्रमाणात मुली आणि महिला यांच्याबद्दल जागरूकता निर्माण करण्यासाठी सुरु केली. आपल्या देशात मुलींची संख्या मुलांच्या तुलनेत दिवसेंदिवस घटताना दिसत आहे. आज आपल्या देशाच्या जडणघडीत स्त्रियांचा मोलाचा वाटा आहे पण भविष्यात तो पुरुषांच्या बरोबरीचा असणार आहे. भविष्यात आपला देश जर उत्तमरीत्या घडवायचा असेल तर मुली वाचायला हव्यात. जर या जगात मुलांना शिक्षणाचा अधिकार आहे तर मुलींना सुद्धा तो पूर्णपणे दिला पाहिजे.

समाजात आजही ठिकठिकाणी अशी समज आहे की, जर मुलगा शिकला तर तो आपल्याला म्हातारपणी आधार देईल. आपले संगोपन करेल त्यांचे बरोबर आहे त्यात मी चुकीचे काहीच

मानत नाही, पण मुलगा होण्यासाठी म्हणून त्याच्या अगोदर जर तीन – चार मुली झाल्या तर त्यांना त्या ओझ का वाटू लागतात का त्यांच्या मनात असं समज असतो की ही आपल्यासाठी काही करू शकत नाही आपण जर हिला शिकवले मोठे केले शिक्षणावर खर्च केलेतरी ही नवऱ्याच्या घरी जाणार आहे. म्हणजे आम्ही शिकवून आमचा यात काहीच फायदा नाही असल्या वाईट विचारांची माणसे या जगात अजूनही आहेत. याचा मला खेद वाटतो . तसं पाहायला गेलं तर बऱ्याच मुलींना शिकून मोठ्या पदांवर जाण्याची इच्छा असते, पण समाजाच्या विचित्र मानसिकतेमुळे मुलीच्या सर्व इच्छा एकापाठोपाठ कोलमाडून पडतात.

आज सर्वत्र मुली – मुलांसोबत खांद्याला खांदा लावून पुढे जातात, काम करतात याचा मला आनंद आहे. आज जगात प्रत्येक ठिकाणी महिला पुढे असतात प्रत्येक क्षेत्रात ती आपली कामगिरी पार पाडताना दिसते कारण त्यांना शिक्षणाचे महत्त्व माहित असते, समाजात किंवा ग्रामीण भागात आज असे दिसून येते की मुलींची दहावी किंवा बारावी झाली की लग्न करूया असा समज असतो, कारण त्यांना शिक्षणाचे महत्त्व माहित नसते, आणि ज्यांना माहित असते त्यांना शिकू दिले जात नाही, कारण सर्वात मोठे कारण म्हणजे पालकांच्या मनात ही भिती असते, की मुलींची शिक्षणासाठी जास्त खर्च होईल, जर तिला आपण शिक्षणासाठी दूर पाठवले तर ती कोणाच्या प्रेमात पडेल का? (जातीबाहेर च्या मुलाच्या प्रेमात) जर ती कुठे लांब शिकायला गेली की ती स्वतः तिचे संरक्षण करू शकेल का? कारण आज जगात बलात्कार, निरक्षरता, लिंगभेद, स्त्रीभ्रूण हत्या, अपहरण, आत्महत्या असे प्रकार वाढले आहेत. त्यामुळे काही असे लोक असतात की लग्न केले ना तर मुलगी सुरक्षित राहिल, आणि आम्ही पण आमच्या जबाबदारीतून मुक्त होऊ. अश्या अनेक कारणांमुळे मुलींना शिक्षण घेऊ दिले जात नाही.

आधुनिक पालक आपल्या मुलींना अभ्यासाचे आणि त्यांना हव्या त्या मार्गाने चालण्याचे स्वातंत्र्य देत आहेत. इंदिरा गांधी – पहिल्या महिला पंतप्रधान, छवी राजावत भारताच्या पहिल्या सरपंच, पिल्लूश – धावपटू, चंदा काचेर इत्यादी अश्या अनेक महिला आहेत ज्यांनी त्यांच्या संयमाने आणि पालकांच्या मदतीने यशाचे सर्वोच्च पर्वत सर केले, आणि आजही असेच पालक मुलगा व मुलगी समान मानून दोघांना शिक्षण देत आहेत. व अश्याच पालकांमुळे आज जगभरात मुलांप्रमाणे मुलीही सर्व क्षेत्रात पुढे दिसतात, काही ठिकाणी तर आज मुलांपेक्षा मुली पुढे आहेत. शिक्षणात देखील शैक्षणिक निकालात मुली नेहमी पुढे असतात, चांगल्या मार्कांनी पास होतात.

२०११ च्या भारतीय जनगणनेनुसार भारतात एकूणच लिंगपातळीचे प्रमाण वाढत असल्याचे

प्रमाण दिसून आले आहे. बाल लैंगिक प्रमाण दर १,००० पुरुषांसाठी फक्त ९१४ महिला आहेत. यामुळे भारतातील मुलगी वाचविण्याचा जागरूकता मोहिमेला सुरक्षेची हमी देऊन आणि बालिकेवरील हिंसाचार आणि गुन्हेगारी, विशेषकरून भ्रूणहत्या आणि लैंगिक असमानता रोखण्यासाठी जनजागृतीचा जागर वाढला आहे. अलीकडच्या काळात, महिलांमधील गुन्हे आणि अत्याचारांमधील वाढीचे प्रमाण जास्त आहे, परिणामी मुलींची संख्या घटत आहे. सरकारची बरोबरी करणे महिलांनी घरगुती हिंसाचार कायदा २००५ पासून संरक्षण मिळवून नवीन सकारात्मक पावले उचलली होती. मुलगी कोणत्याही क्षेत्रात मुलांपेक्षा कमी नाही; स्त्रिया मुलांपेक्षा अधिक आज्ञाधारक असतात. एक स्त्री ही एक आई, पत्नी, मुलगी, बहिण, असू शकते आणि पुरुषांसाठी कोणत्याही रूपात भविष्य घडवते. मुली माणुसकीच्या अस्तित्वाचे अंतिम कारण आहेत.

कोण पाहिजे?

*जन्म द्यायला आईचं पाहिजे
राखी बांधायला बहिण पाहिजे
गोष्टी सांगायला आजी पाहिजे
हट्ट पुरवायला मावशी पाहिजे
पुरणपोळी भरवायला मामी पाहिजे
जीवनाच्या सोबतीला मैत्रीण पाहिजे
आयुष्याच्या साथीला बायको पाहिजे
पण हे सर्व करायला आधी*

एक मुलगी जगली पाहिजे, एक मुलगी जगली पाहिजे!

भारतातील सर्व आणि प्रत्येक नागरिकाने मुलीला वाचविण्यासाठी तसेच समाजातील त्यांचे स्तर सुधारण्यासाठी सर्व नियम आणि कायद्यांचे पालन केले पाहिजे आणि त्यांना सर्व क्षेत्रात समान संधी दिल्या पाहिजेत!

विरंगी मी, विमुक्त मी

By
Swati Jagtap

"आयुष्याच्या प्रवासात सामाजिक बंधनांनी
तुमच्या मार्गात काटे पसरावेत आणि तुमच्या
पायातून
सदैव भळभळ रक्त वाहत राहावं, हा दुःखान्त
नसतो. तुम्ही रक्तबंबाळ पायांनी एका अशा
जागी शेवटी येऊन थबकलेले असता, जिथून पुढे
चालण्यासाठी कुठलाच रस्ता तुम्हाला आमंत्रण
देत नसतो हा दुःखान्त असतो.

'विरंगी मी विमुक्त मी' या अंजली जोशी लिखित आणि शब्द पब्लिकेशन प्रकाशित कादंबरीचा प्रकाशन सोहळा मुंबईत पार पडला त्या निमित्ताने या कादंबरीतील संपादित अंशरूपी लेख लोकसत्ताच्या 5 जूनच्या चतुरंग पुरवणीमध्ये आला होता,तो माझ्या वाचनात आला आणि तो लेख मला खूपच भावला. मराठीतील खूपच वेगळ्या प्रकारचं हे लिखाण वाटलं म्हणून ही कादंबरी वाचली. स्त्रियांच्या लैंगिक सुखासाठी पुरुषांची गरज नाही. ती आपले कामसूख हस्तमैथुनाद्वारे उत्तमरित्या प्राप्त करून घेऊ शकते. हे धाडस अमेरिकेतील एका स्त्रीनेच आपल्या कृतिशील प्रयोगातून करून जगाला विचार करायला भाग पाडले. हा नवा विचार प्रथमच मराठी भाषेत 'विरंगी मी विमुक्त मी' या कादंबरीच्या माध्यमातून मांडण्याचं धाडस 'अंजली जोशी' यांनी केलं आहे.

'विरंगी मी विमुक्त मी' ही तीनशे छत्तीस पानांची कादंबरी तिच्या मूखपृष्ठापासूनच लक्ष वेधते. मराठी कादंबरीच्या परंपरागत अलिखित नियमांना दूर सारते. गडद काळ्या रंगावर अर्धनग्न चित्र दर्शवून मूख पृष्ठाने आपली वेगळी छाप पाडली आहे. या कादंबरीचा सारांश नाही पण सत्यांश सांगण्याचा मी प्रयत्न करतेय.

मानवी जीवनातील अनेक गरजांपैकी काम प्रेरणा ही एक नैसर्गिक प्रक्रिया असते. त्यात अपराधीपणाची भावना नसते. लैंगिक स्वातंत्र्यावर या कादंबरीमध्ये जास्त भाष्य केले आहे. लैंगिक स्वातंत्र्य हा सर्व स्वातंत्र्याचा पाया आहे असे कथेची नायिका बेटी डॉडसन यांचे

म्हणणे आहे. त्या म्हणतात की ज्या समाजात लैंगिक स्वातंत्र्य आहे, त्या समाजात दांभीकता कमी असेल तिथे राहणारी माणसं स्वतःच्या नैसर्गिकतेशी प्रामाणिक असतील यावर त्या ठाम आहेत.

तत्त्वज्ञान सांगते की ज्या संस्कृती लैंगिकतेविषयक भेदभाव करतात त्या लैंगिकतेच्या अविष्कारांबद्दल नकारात्मक दृष्टीकोन बाळगतात. अशा संस्कृतीत व्यक्तींच्या लैंगिक सहज प्रेरणांचं दमन अधिक प्रमाणात होतं. दमन केलेल्या या सहज प्रेरणा सहजासहजी नाहीशा होत नाहीत. त्या प्रगट होण्यासाठी व्यक्तींवर जोरदार दबाव आणतात. त्या समाजमान्य नसल्यामुळे अर्थातच सरळ मार्गाने बाहेर येऊ शकत नाहीत, मग त्या कशातरी वेड्यावाकड्या मार्गाने बाहेर येतात म्हणूनच अशा संस्कृतीत लैंगिक गुन्ह्यांचे प्रमाण जास्त आढळते. थोडक्यात कुठलीही वर्गवारी न करता लैंगिकतेच्या सर्व आविष्कारांना मोकळीक दिली तर समाजात बेबंद माजेल, या गृहीतकाला काहीही आधार नाही उलट अशी मोकळीक दिल्याने लैंगिकतेबद्दल जे विकृत आकर्षण निर्माण होतं त्याला अटकाव होईल व लैंगिक गुन्हेगारीचे प्रमाणही कमी होईल.

लैंगिक स्वातंत्र्याचा अर्थ हा जास्त व्यापक आहे. लैंगिक स्वातंत्र्य म्हणजे शरीरासह मनालाही प्रगल्भ पातळीवर नेणारं प्रेम करण्याचं स्वातंत्र्य! असं स्वातंत्र्य प्रत्येक स्त्री -पुरुषांना मिळालं तर समाज सुखी होईल. समाजातल्या वाढत्या लैंगिक हिंसाचारचे मूळ कारण पोर्नोग्राफी नाही तर कामेच्छेचं प्रचंड प्रमाणात होणारं दमन आहे.

फ्रेंच मानसशास्त्रज्ञ 'एमील कुथे' यांचा 'Law Of Reverse effect' म्हणजे 'विपरीत परिणामांचा नियम' असं सांगतो की ज्या गोष्टीपासून आपण स्वतःला दूर ठेवण्याचा आटोकाट प्रयत्न करतो, नेमक्या त्याच गोष्टीवर आपलं सगळं लक्ष केंद्रीत होतं.

तसं पाहिलं तर सगळ्यांच्याच आयुष्यात घडणाऱ्या या नैसर्गिक क्रिया आहेत, त्यांच्याकडे मोकळेपणाने व खुलेपणाने पाहण्याची दृष्टी आपण आत्मसात करायला हवी पण आजही सुसंस्कृत मानसिकता फार कमी प्रमाणात दिसून येते.

विवाह संस्थेचे समर्थक नेहमी एक मुद्दा मांडतात, कुटुंबसंस्था टिकवून ठेवण्यासाठी विवाह संस्था आवश्यक आहे. खरं तर हव्याश्या वाटणाऱ्या सोबतीबरोबर सुंदर आयुष्य जगण्यासाठी लग्नाची आवश्यकता आहे हाच अवास्तवी विचार आहे.

कुटुंबसंस्था म्हणजे काय?

स्त्री पुरुषांनी एकत्र राहण्याची व मुलं स्वावलंबी होईपर्यंत त्यांचं पालन पोषण करण्याची व्यवस्था. खरं म्हणजे मला तरी असं वाटतं की सहजीवनाची आणि अपत्य संगोपणाची नैसर्गिक ओढ स्त्री पुरुष दोघांनाही असते. विवाह संस्था असो वा नसो कुटुंब संस्था टिकून राहणारच! ती टिकून राहावी म्हणून तिला विवाह संस्थेचा टेकू असलाच पाहिजे असं नाही.

कामतृप्ती कशी करावी हा ज्याचा त्याचा वैयक्तिक प्रश्न आहे. दोन प्रौढ व्यक्ती जर स्व खुशीने काम संबंध ठेवत असतील तर ती त्या दोघांची खाजगी बाब आहे त्यामध्ये कायद्याने नाक खुपसण्याचं कारण नाही. त्या संबंधी कायदे करणं म्हणजे मूलभूत व्यक्ती स्वातंत्र्यावर घाला आहे. मी सांगू इच्छिते की, आपले वैचारीक अधिष्ठान प्रगल्भ पातळीवर घेऊन जाण्याच्या प्रवासात कुठेतरी नक्कीच मदत होते.

अतिशय मनस्वी लेखिका अमृता प्रीतम यांचे ही असे म्हणणे आहे की, आयुष्यातल्या प्रत्येक टप्प्यावर स्त्रीला व्यक्ती म्हणून जगण्याचा, निर्णय घेण्याचा अधिकार आहे, या विचाराशी प्रामाणिक राहत हाच स्त्री स्वातंत्र्याचा विचार 'रसिदी टिकट' मधून त्यांनी सर्वापर्यंत उत्कटपणे पोचवल्याचे दिसून येते.

अमृता प्रीतम या great वाटतात ते यासाठी की, स्त्रीने काय करावं आणि काय करू नये हे सुचित करणाऱ्या अनेक लक्ष्मण रेषा आजही स्त्री भोवती असलेल्या बघायला मिळतात, ग्रामीण भागातील काही कुटुंबात तर जास्त! पण शंभर वर्षांपूर्वी जन्माला आलेली एक अमृता आत्मशक्तीच्या जोरावर या साऱ्या लक्ष्मण रेषा एकेक करत शांतपणे ओलांडत जाते, सामाजिक नितिनियमांना झुगारून देत स्वतःच्या इच्छांचा, भावनांचा आदर करणारे निर्णय घेते आणि विशेष म्हणजे अशा निर्णयानंतर एकाकी न पडता दडपशाही करणाऱ्या त्याच समाजाचा आदर, मान सन्मान ही ती प्राप्त करते. एक व्यक्ती म्हणून,माणूस म्हणून स्वतःच्या जगण्यातून तिनं दाखवलेला हा रस्ता अवघ्या स्त्री जातीला आजही बळ देणारा ठरतो.

ज्या काळात 'लिव्ह इन रिलेशनशिप' हे शब्द सुद्धा लोकांच्या कानावर पडले नव्हते, आजही लोकांची मानसिकता नसते लिव्ह इन रिलेशनशिप मध्ये राहण्याची आणि त्या काळात सर्व सामाजिक बंधनांना झुगारून अमृता प्रीतम इमरोज सोबत चाळीस वर्ष लग्नाशिवाय राहिल्या.

स्त्रियांच्या अनेक प्रश्नांवार चर्चा होत असते पण काम जीवनातल्या त्यांच्या कोंडमाज्यावर मात्र सगळ्या अळीमिळी गुपचिळी का होऊन बसतात, याचे उत्तर आहे लैंगिकतेकडे पाहाण्याचा समाजाचा रोगट दृष्टीकोन! परंपरागत रूढी व संस्कारांनी हा दृष्टीकोन पक्का केला आहे.

मला असं वाटतं...

आत्मनिर्भरतेचा प्रवास करू इच्छिणाऱ्या सर्वांसाठी अशा प्रकारच्या कादंबऱ्या अंतर्मुख करणाऱ्या आहेत.

मानसशास्त्र विभागाचा अभिप्राय (2019-20)

By

Kamakshi Joshi

विस्मरणातून कधीही न जाणारे गणेशखिंड मधील मॉडर्न महाविद्यालय... महाविद्यालयातील आगळ्या वेगळ्या मानसशास्त्र विभागातील अविस्मरणीय अनुभव... आयुष्यावर प्रभाव टाकणाऱ्या, प्रत्येक गोष्टीकडे आनंदाने सकारात्मकतेने बघणाऱ्या, गप्पा मारतांना समोरच्याला विचार करायला लावणाऱ्या, गप्पाही कधी गंभीर होऊ न देणाऱ्या अनेकांच्या, माझ्या सदैव स्मरणात असलेल्या आदरणीय डॉ. साधना नातू मॅडम. सर्वप्रथम मला व्यक्त होण्याची संधी दिली याबद्दल मानसशास्त्र विभाग व डॉ. नातू मॅडम यांचे मनःपूर्वक धन्यवाद!

पदवी व पदव्युत्तर शिक्षण घेत असतांना मॉडर्न महाविद्यालय गणेशखिंड मध्ये राबविण्यात येणाऱ्या विविध योजनांमधील 'कमवा व शिका' या योजनेअंतर्गत मला मानसशास्त्र विभागात काम करण्याची संधी मिळाली. मी अर्थशास्त्र विभागाची विद्यार्थिनी असून देखील नेहमीच 'मानसशास्त्र विभागाकडे' आकर्षितली गेली. याचे कारण विभागातील मैत्रीचे व उत्साही वातावरण. महाविद्यालयातील सर्वच शाखेतील विद्यार्थ्यांना हक्काच वाटणारं, विद्यार्थी प्रेमी विभाग म्हणजे मानसशास्त्र विभाग. विभागामध्ये दिशा चर्चागट, कलाईडोस्कोप, साय वर्ल्ड, प्रशिक्षण शिबिरे असे अनेक उपक्रम विद्यार्थ्यांसाठी घेण्यात येतात. या उपक्रमांमुळे विद्यार्थ्यांना एक हक्काचे व्यासपीठ उपलब्ध होते. विभागात काम करत असतांना या उपक्रमांमध्ये मदत करण्याची संधी मला मिळाली. नोटीस तयार करणे, संगणकाचा वापर योग्यरित्या कशाप्रकारे करावा यासाठी नाशोम मॅडम यांचे मार्गदर्शन लाभले. डॉ. नातू मॅडम यांनी मी पदवीच्या द्वितीय वर्षाला असतांना विविध सामाजिक संस्थांपैकी एक असणाऱ्या 'आलोचना' या संस्थेमध्ये इंटर्नशिप करण्याची संधी मला उपलब्ध करून दिली. त्यामुळे चार भिंतीच्या पलिकडे जाऊन लोकांसोबत काम करण्याचा अनुभव मला मिळाला. तसेच डॉ. नातू मॅडम यांच्या मार्गदर्शनामुळे सावित्रीबाई फुले पुणे विद्यापीठ येथील 'लिंगभाव, संस्कृती आणि विकास हा कोर्स' करता आला.

मी शिक्षण घेत असतांना मानसशास्त्र हा विषय (जनरल विषय म्हणून) अभ्यासत असले तरी मानसिक स्थिती, आत्म निरीक्षण, जीवनातील विविध परिस्थिती पाहणे, वर्तनाचे संतुलन आणि

क्रियाकालपाचा टोन या संकल्पनांच्या बाबतीतील माझा विकास हा विभागात काम करत असतांना झाला आणि आता कामाच्या ठिकाणी मला या गोष्टींचा फायदा होतो आहे हे नक्कीच नोंदवावेसे वाटते. विभागात घेतले जाणारे उपक्रम नेहमीच विद्यार्थ्यांच्या सर्वांगीण विकासासाठी असतात हे मला विभागात काम करत असतांना नेहमी प्रकर्षाने जाणवले. त्यातीलच एक, विद्यार्थ्यांना नविन पुस्तक हाताळण्यास मिळावी म्हणून विभागात एक स्वतंत्र ग्रंथालय सुरु केले गेले आहे. मानसशास्त्र विषयाशी निगडित विविध पुस्तके यात आहेत. या विभागात काम करत असताना मला देखील ही पुस्तक हाताळण्यास मिळाली. आपले आरोग्य हे जितके शारीरिक घटकांवर अवलंबून असते. तितकेच किंवा त्यापेक्षाही जास्त ते आपल्या मानसिक स्थितीवरही अवलंबून असते. विद्यार्थीदशेत मानसिक स्वास्थ्य उत्तम रहावे यासाठी विभागात 'समुपदेशन' केले जाते. समुपदेशनासाठी विभागात येणाऱ्या प्रत्येक विद्यार्थ्यांची दखल मॅडमांकडून घेतली जाते. विद्यालयातील अनेक वेगवेगळ्या विभागातील विद्यार्थी समुपदेशनासाठी विभागात येत असतात. कमवा व शिका या योजने अंतर्गत मानसशास्त्र विभागात काम करत असतांना विभागात मला येणाऱ्या अडचणी सोडवण्यापासून ते मला नविन गोष्टी करण्यास प्रोत्साहित करण्यासाठी नाशोम मॅडम, स्वाती मॅडम यांचे मोलाचे मार्गदर्शन मला मिळाले. मानसशास्त्र विभागाच्या विभागप्रमुख आदरणीय डॉ. साधना नातू मॅडम यांनी तसेच स्वाती मॅडम व नाशोम मॅडम यांनी सर्वांगीण विकासासाठी आवश्यक असणाऱ्या गोष्टींचे धडे मला दिले. त्यामुळे मानसशास्त्र विभाग आणि डॉ. नातू मॅडम यांचे मी मनपूर्वक आभार मानते.

मानसशास्त्र विभागाचा अभिप्राय (2017-18)

By
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आपल्यामधील अमर्याद अवकाश, क्षमता आणि शक्यतांची जाणीव करून देण्यासाठी शिक्षण फार महत्वाची भूमिका बजावते. शिक्षणाच्या प्रवासामध्ये वेगवेगळ्या टप्प्यांवर वेगवेगळे मार्गदर्शक, साथी-सोबती आपल्याला अनेक अर्थाने समृद्ध करत असतात. या प्रवासाचा शेवट जरी नसला तरी वर्तमानातील कोणत्याही क्षणी आपण स्वतःकडे पाहिलं कि जाणवते, आपले व्यक्तिमत्व आणि एकूणच जगणे ह्या प्रवासावर उभं राहिलेलं आहे. कधीतरी त्याचे सिंहावलोकन करत संपूर्ण प्रवासाप्रती कृतज्ञता व्यक्त करणे आवश्यक वाटते.

मागे एकदा श्री. राजू केंद्रे यांच्या सहयात्री वाहिनीवरील मुलाखतीमध्ये बोलताना ते म्हणाले कि, “मी ग्रामीण भागातून येत असल्याने मला मातीत खेळता आले, शेतात घाम गाळता आला, गावातील जगणे समजून घेत त्याचा भाग होता आले आणि पुढे तीच माझ्यासाठी एक शिदोरी सिध्द झाली”. ह्याची जाणीव पुढे गेल्यावर प्रत्येक ग्रामीण भागातील होतकरू विद्यार्थ्याला होत असावी पण प्रवासादरम्यान अनेक चढ उतार टाळता येत नाहीत. केवळ ग्रामीण भागातून येत असल्याने त्याची तीव्रता आणि झळ या विद्यार्थ्यांना जास्त बसते. हे वातावरण एकदम साचेबद्ध आणि व्यवस्थेमध्ये चांगलच मुरलेलं असल्याने टाळता येणे अपरिहार्य आहे. मराठवाडासारख्या तथाकथित मागासलेल्या भागातील लेकरांना उच्च शिक्षण घ्यायचं म्हटलं की पुणे सारख्या शहरामध्ये रवाना झाल्याशिवाय सहसा पर्याय असत नाही. घरात शिक्षण घेणारी माझी पहिली पिढी असल्याने चाकोरीच्या बाहेरील मार्गदर्शन मिळणे फार कठीण. पण घरातून कायमच शिक्षणासाठी साथ आणि पोषक वातावरण होते. आई बाबांचे म्हणणे खूप साधे होते आणि आहे कि, 'आमची जिंदगी जशी शेतात कष्ट करण्यात कुजून जात आहे तशी तुमची जाऊ नये म्हणून शिका आणि स्वतःच्या पायावर उभा रहा'. या अतिशय मोजक्या आणि माफक अपेक्षेतून शिक्षणाचा प्रवास सुरु झाला.

आई अंगणवाडीमध्ये मदतनीस असल्याने लहानपणापासूनच लिहिण्या-वाचण्याकडे तिचे नेहमीच लक्ष असायचे. आम्ही गावापासून दूर शेतात राहतो. गावात चौथी पर्यंत शाळा आणि त्यानंतर शेजारच्या गावात दहावी पर्यंत. दहावीला जे मार्क्स मिळाले त्यावरून प्रचलित परंपरेप्रमाणे डोळे झाकून विज्ञान शाखेत प्रवेश घ्यावा लागला. जीवशास्त्र सोडले तर बाकी कशातच फार रस वाटत नव्हता. शिवाय इंग्रजी माध्यम असल्यामुळे रद्दा मारल्याशिवाय पुढे

पर्याय नव्हता. प्रचंड अस्वस्थता आणि तणावात बारावीमध्ये जेमतेम मार्क घेऊन पास झालो. त्यानंतर कला शाखेत प्रवेश घेऊन स्पर्धा परीक्षा करण्याचा निर्णय घेतला. २०१५ व त्या अगोदर आणि नंतर चार चार वर्षे ही 'स्पर्धा परीक्षांची वर्षे' म्हणून वैयक्तिक आयुष्यातील इतिहासात नक्कीच नोंद होतील. ग्रामीण भागातील फार मोठा तरुण वर्ग ह्या जाळ्यामध्ये अडकला गेला आहे. यशाचा शॉर्ट कट मार्ग म्हणून शेतकरी-कामगार घरातील आणि ग्रामीण भागातील तरुण वर्ग मोठ्या प्रमाणात स्पर्धा परीक्षांकडे वळला आहे. शब्दात्त सांगणे कठीण, मात्र हा काळ स्पर्धा परीक्षांनी अतिशय भारावून टाकला होता. आम्हा विद्यार्थ्यांचे अतिशय साधे गणित होते; पुणेसारख्या ठिकाणी पदवीसाठी कला शाखेत कॉलेजला प्रवेश घ्यायचा, कॉलेजमधील लेक्चर वगैरे न करता (शक्य असेल तर कोचिंग क्लास लावून) अभ्यासिकेत स्पर्धा परीक्षांचा अभ्यास करत राहायचा, आणि लवकरात लवकर कलेक्टर वगैरे होऊन घर, समाज अन् स्वतःची स्वप्न पूर्ण करायचे.

विविध स्पर्धा परीक्षा मार्गदर्शन केंद्रे आणि निवड झालेल्या अधिकाऱ्यांची भाषणे यांनी ह्या प्रक्रियेला मोठ्या प्रमाणात चालना दिली. मॉडर्न कॉलेज, गणेशखिंड येथे बी. ए. च्या माझ्या वर्गातील ९०% पेक्षा जास्त विद्यार्थी स्पर्धा परीक्षा करण्यासाठी आलेले होते. मी सुद्धा ह्याच गटातील होतो. स्वतःमधील क्षमता आणि कल याचा कोणताच विचार न करता आणि सभोवतालच्या वातावरणाचा बळी म्हणून ह्या स्पर्धा कमी चेंगरा-चेंगरीमध्ये मोठ्या संखेने तरुण-तरुणी सहभागी झाले. ह्यातील कित्येक जण डेडिकेशन आणि १००% फोकसच्या नावाखाली पाठीमागील आणि पुढचे सगळे दोर कापून टाकून एकमेव स्पर्धा परीक्षांचा आव्हानात्मक रस्ता पकडला गेला. ह्याचे दूरगामी परिणाम आमच्या पिढीवर नक्कीच दिसून येणार आहेत. या स्पर्धा परीक्षेच्या जाळ्यामध्ये अनेक चांगले शिक्षक, उद्योजक, चित्रकार, गायक, शेतकरी, डॉक्टर, इंजिनिअर, राजकारणी, समाजसेवक, इत्यादी वर्षानुवर्षे गुंतून पडले आहेत. त्यातील अनेक जणांचा कदचित निर्घुणपणे गळा घोटला जाईल.

या सगळ्या पार्श्वभूमीवर कॉलेज आणि शिक्षकांची भूमिका फार फार महत्वाची आहे. विद्यार्थ्यांना परिस्थितीची जाणीव करून देत त्यांच्यातील कला, गुण आणि कल यांना वाव देणे आवश्यक असते. लेकरांच्या उमेदीच्या काळात त्यांना वैयक्तिक जडण घडण आणि आयुष्याची एकूण दिशा ठरवण्यासाठी पूरक वातावरण आणि मार्गदर्शन उपलब्ध करून देणे ही प्रत्येक शैक्षणिक संस्थेची प्राथमिक जबाबदारी असायला हवी. महाविद्यालयामध्ये डॉ. नातू मंडमने अतिशय आत्मविश्वासाने स्पर्धा परीक्षा सोडून इतर क्षेत्रांत सुद्धा करिअरच्या संधी असू

शकतात याची कल्पना आणि आत्मविश्वास दिला. त्या दृष्टीने विद्यार्थ्यांचा कल लक्षात घेऊन त्यांना वैयक्तिक मार्गदर्शन केले. 'टाटा सामाजिक विज्ञान संस्था' यांचा ग्रामीण परिसर माझ्या उस्मानाबाद जिल्ह्यात तुळजापूर येथे आहे, हे मला मॅडम कडूनच समजले. हे मात्र विशेष कि माझ्या जिल्ह्यात गावापासून जवळ टाटा सामाजिक विज्ञान संस्था सारखी नावाजलेले शैक्षणिक विद्यापीठ आहे हे समजण्यासाठी मला पुणे येथे दोन - तीन वर्षे शिकावे लागले.

पदवीचे शिक्षण घेत असताना मॉडर्न कॉलेज, गणेशखिंडने वैयक्तिक विकासासाठी अनेक संधी उपलब्ध करून दिल्या. एन. एस. एस. व शिबिर, 'कमवा आणि शिका', 'विविधा' सारखा सांस्कृतिक महोत्सव, भाषण, कविता वाचन, पथनाट्य अशा स्पर्धा, सहली आणि फील्ड एक्स्पोझर, इत्यादींच्या माध्यमातून स्वतःची ओळख होत होती. या सोबतच आम्हा विद्यार्थ्यांना हक्काचं, आपलं वाटणारं आणि विद्यार्थ्यांचा कायम गजबजाट असणारा विद्यार्थी प्रेमी विभाग म्हणजे 'मानसशास्त्र विभाग'. हा विभाग फक्त मानसशास्त्र विषयाच्या विद्यार्थ्यांसाठीच नाही तर संपूर्ण महाविद्यालयाला आपला वाटतो. दिशा चर्चागट, कलाईडोस्कोप, साय वर्ल्ड, प्रशिक्षण शिबिरे, असे अनेक उपक्रम कलागुणांना वाव देत विद्यार्थ्यांसाठी एक हक्काचे व्यासपीठ उपलब्ध करून देतात. येथे कविता, भाषण, छोटे लेख, संवाद व चर्चाद्वारे व्यक्त होण्यासाठी एक अवकाश होता.

यासोबतच डॉ. नातू मॅडम यांनी चार भिंतींच्या पलीकडील प्रात्यक्षिक अनुभव घेण्यासाठी विविध सामाजिक संस्थांसोबत इंटर्नशिप उपलब्ध करून दिल्या. मला स्वतःला 'महिला सर्वांगीण उत्कर्ष मंडळ (मासूम)' आणि 'स्त्री मुक्ती संघटना' या संस्थांमध्ये इंटर्नशिप करण्याची संधी मॅडमने उपलब्ध करून दिली. त्यामुळे चार भिंतींच्या पलीकडे लोकांसोबत काम करण्याचा आणि सामाजिक क्षेत्रात काम करणाऱ्या संस्था समजून घेण्यास वाव मिळाला. स्वच सेवा सहकारी संस्था येथे प्रभार समन्वयक म्हणून काही महिने काम करण्याची संधी डॉ. नातू मॅडममुळेच मला मिळाली. त्यामुळे शिक्षण घेत असताना आर्थिक बळ सुद्धा मिळाले. शिक्षण घेत असताना फक्त पुस्तके वाचण्यापेक्षा त्यासोबत अनुभवातून शिकण्याची संधी मिळणे ही एक विद्यार्थी म्हणून फार मोठी गोष्ट आहे. मॅडमच्या पाठपुराव्याने सावित्रीबाई फुले पुणे विद्यापीठ येथील 'लिंगभाव, संस्कृती आणि विकास' हा कोर्स करता आला. ग्रामीण भागातील विद्यार्थ्यांना समजून घेत त्यांना भावनिक आणि नैतिक आधार देणे फार महत्वाचे असते. पाठ्यक्रम आणि पुस्तकांसोबत मानसशास्त्र विभागाच्या आदरणीय डॉ. नातू मॅडम, नाशोम मॅडम, स्वाती मॅडम यांनी मैत्रीपूर्ण वातावरणामध्ये आम्हा विद्यार्थ्यांच्या सर्वांगीण विकासासाठी

पूरक अवकाश उपलब्ध करून दिले असे मला नमूद करावं वाटतं. ह्या प्रोत्साहनामुळे माझ्यातील बुजलेपणाची भावना, न्यूनगंड आणि भीती कमी होऊन एक विद्यार्थी म्हणून आत्मविश्वास बळावला. स्वतःचा कल, करिअर मार्ग लक्षात येत गेला.

डॉ. नातू मॅडमने माझा कल लक्षात घेऊन टाटा सामाजिक विज्ञान संस्थेचा ग्रामीण परिसर मराठवाड्यातील तुळजापूर येथे आहे असं सांगितलं. त्यासाठी असणारी प्रवेश परीक्षा आणि आवश्यक तयारी संदर्भातील मार्गदर्शन केले. भाषा कौशल्य, SOP, मुलाखत कौशल्य आणि लेखन कौशल्य यासंदर्भात विशेष तयारी करून घेतली. आदरणीय कोपर्डेकर मॅडमने सुध्दा तयारी दरम्यान मदत केली. आणि मला हव्या असलेल्या 'एम. ए. सोशल वर्क इन रुरल डेव्हलपमेंट' या कोर्स साठी टीस मध्ये निवड झाली. हा दोन वर्षांचा टिस प्रवास अनेक अर्थानी खूप काही शिकवून गेला. पण याची सुरुवात मॉडर्न महाविद्यालय आणि मानसशास्त्र विभागामध्ये झालेली आहे याची कायम जाणीव आणि कृतज्ञता आहे. आता हळू हळू सूर सापडत आहे असं म्हणायला हरकत नाही. आपला सभोवताल हा असंख्य समस्या, शक्यता, सद्भाव अन् सुंदरतेने भरलेला आहे. आपल्या असण्याने सभोवतालच्या सुंदरतेत, चांगुलपणामधे भर पडावी असं प्रामाणिकपणे वाटतं. मानसशास्त्र विभाग आणि डॉ. नातू मॅडमनी व्यक्त होण्याची संधी दिली त्याबद्दल मनःपूर्वक आभारी आहे. खूप खूप धन्यवाद...!

मानसशास्त्र विभागाचा अभिप्राय

By
Yogesh Fadtare

आदरणीय प्राध्यापिका

साधनाताई,

आपण आपल्या महाविद्यालयातील विद्यार्थ्यांना व एकलव्य फाउंडेशन यांना सोबत घेऊन मानसिक आरोग्यासाठी बनवलेली पुस्तिका आम्ही मधुकर गीते फाउंडेशन चे नवोदय व्यसनमुक्ती केंद्र आणि निराधार मनोरुग्ण पुनर्वसन केंद्र, मेंढी, सिन्नर, नाशिक येथील आमच्या व्यसनमुक्तीच्या कामादरम्यान अनेकदा वापरली. ही पुस्तिका आम्हाला अत्यंत उपयुक्त ठरली. सर्वाधिक आढळणारे मानसिक आजार समजावून सांगत असताना तर मला अनेकदा या पुस्तिकेचा चांगला आधार मिळाला. सदर पुस्तिकेच्या मी एकूण चार प्रती प्रिंट काढल्या. त्यातील दोन माझ्या सोबत काम करण्यासाठी आलेल्या मानसशास्त्रज्ञांना वापरण्यास उपयुक्त ठरल्या.

एक प्रत आमच्या केंद्रात अभ्यासासाठी सोपी व सुटसुटीत पुस्तिका म्हणून रेकॉर्डला ठेवली आहे. एक प्रत मी स्वतः अनेकदा वापरली व माझ्याजवळ संग्रही ठेवली आहे. आपण केलेला हा प्रयत्न अत्यंत स्तुत्य उपक्रम होता आणि तो फळास पोहोचला. त्याचा नाशिक पासून दूर गाव-खेड्यातल्या आमच्या केंद्रात वापर झाला ही आनंदाची बाब आहे. आपल्या सुंदर आणि उपयुक्त कामाची ही पोचपावती मी आपणास पोचवतो आहे. व सोबत असेच अधिक काम करण्यासाठी शुभेच्छा देतो.

आपल्या संपूर्ण टीमचे खूप खूप आभार...

धन्यवाद.

योगेश विद्याधर फडतरे

माजी रहिवासी मानसशास्त्रज्ञ

मधुकर केरू गीते फाउंडेशन संचालित

नवोदय व्यसनमुक्ती केंद्र

मेंढी, ता. सिन्नर, जि. नाशिक

**Disha Session on 3rd Jan 2022, Remembering Savitribai Phule: Reading
from Feminist Texts and Poems**

*Compiled by
Yashvi Gala*

Name: Savani Nibandhe

Poem Recited: *Still I Rise* by Maya Angelou

"Still I Rise" is an empowering poem about the struggle to overcome prejudice and injustice. It is one of Maya Angelou's most famous and popular poems. When read by victims of wrongdoing, the poem becomes a kind of anthem, a beacon of hope for the oppressed and downtrodden. It is a reminder of the abuses of power by those who sit in government, the judiciary, the military, and the police force. For members of the public, it sends out a clear, repeated message of hope. No matter what the circumstances, there must always be hope to cling to. "Still I Rise" is primarily about self-respect and confidence. In the poem, Angelou reveals how she will overcome anything through her resilience and struggle. She shows how nothing can get her down. She will rise to any occasion and nothing, not even her skin color, will hold her back.

Name: Sakshi Jadhav

Poem Recited: *Pasaydan* by Neerja

Savitribai Phule was a revolutionary thinker, educator, feminist and the first woman teacher of India. Commemorating her birth anniversary was indeed an honour for us. The poem I chose was Pasaydan written by Neerja which is an urge to every woman to find her own true self, reach the skies and rebel against patriarchy, stop succumbing to the societal domination. I found this poem really intriguing because it urged the women to find their true potential left unknown and unexpressed as their voices were oppressed and it felt like a perfect tribute to Savitribai.

Name: Tanaya Mahamuni

Poem Recited: *Her Kind* by Anne Sexton

I chose to recite "Her Kind" by Anne Sexton because in the poem she writes about a woman who celebrates her individuality. An independent woman who lives her life on her own terms is often shamed for it but the woman in the poem is proud of who she is and she's not going to lose that for anyone. The remarks about the witch, cave-dweller, and rustic woman present an air of freedom. They had internal freedom. Society can't touch it with its normative hands. It instils within me a sense of courage to go live my life the way I want to without any hesitation.

Name: Loukik Satoskar

Poem Recited: *Phenomenal Women* by Maya Angelou

I choose the poem because it makes a comment on the unhealthy and biased standards of beauty in the society. Maya Angelou criticizes those standards and states that even though she doesn't fit them, she is still charming and beautiful in her own way.

Name: Yashvi Gala

Poem Recited: *A Woman Speaks by Audre Lorde*

I chose the poem because it argues that Black women have all too often been left out of the "futures" envisioned by both white feminist women and Black men fighting for racial justice. But the very fact that Black women have been marginalized both in terms of gender and race makes their voices powerful and their perspectives necessary. Lorde had too many things to say to stay confined within the walls of a sonnet. Thank goodness she pushed through and found her voice and created her own world.

Name: Isha Paranjape

Material: *An Extract from Intercourse by Andrea Dworkin*

Andrea Dworkin is characterized as being a radical feminist who has driven into the ground and dug up the deepest and the most brutal parts of misogyny in the culture. She is unpopular for she's blunt and uncompromising, but that is exactly why I admire her and subsequently chose her; an indomitable courage makes up the core of a feminist who intends to and succeeds in making a change in the world.

Name: Madhavi Menon

Poem Recited: *Suno Draupadi, Shastra Uthalo, by Pushyamitra Upadhyay*

"I took up this poem because I believe it urges women to become their own saviors and shatter the old 'damsel in distress' situations. It encourages them to be their own 'knight in shining armor' and fight for their rights, dignity, and self-respect. I hope the works of Pushyamitra Upadhyay reaches more and more people!"

Name: Pooja Rajkor

Poem Recited: *'Mujhe padhna hai' by Kamla Bhasin.*

On Savitribai Phule Jayanti, I chose to recite 'Mujhe padhna hai' by Kamla Bhasin who was an Indian developmental feminist activist, poet, author. Her work focused on gender and human development. This poem shows the need of a girl to be educated so that she can be the change and even bring the changes in the society. She struggles for achieving equality between the genders. Every girl can relate to this poem, hence I chose to recite it.

नाम: मुरुमकर अविनाश.

कविता: तु सहना छोडकर कहना शुरु करती तो अच्छा था/होता.

मुझे लगता है कि इस कविता से कहीना कही समाज के अंधुनी हिस्से में अत्याचार से दबी पड़ी स्त्री को ए कविता अत्याचार के खिलाफ आवाज उठाने की प्रेरणा देती है साथ ही हमें ज्ञात करती हैं की हम भले ही स्त्री शक्ती का सम्मान करने कि कोशिश करें लेकिन आज भी महीलावों कि स्थीती समान्य नहीं है।

इसी सोच के साथ मैंने ए कविंत पेश की ती।

Name: Shreya Subbannavar

Material: *They Shut Me Up in Prose by Emily Dickinson*

I chose 'They Shut Me Up in Prose' by Emily Dickinson because she is one of my favourite poets and also because the poem talks about the entrapment of women and the constant deliverance of virtuous rules upon their presence by men. It's a pity that this hasn't faded out of existence since the 19th century.

Name: Anagha Bhangale

Poem: *Pocket-Sized Feminism by Blythe Baird*

Pocket-Sized Feminism by Blythe Baird sums up the general over view of what Feminism looks like in the real life of many young women. I especially like the part where the poet speaks about being ashamed about initiating or bringing up feminism only when it is convenient or extremely necessary. She emphasizes on the severity of the lack of safe environments for women that even the basic objects used in daily life had to be modified to be used as weapons or shields against harm. This poetry ends on a note of calling out the hypocrisy of people's behaviour when it comes to protecting women. I chose to read this poem because of how well it covered a wide array of experiences women around me and I have faced and it felt empowering and heard to read it and have it put down in words by someone.

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

The Department of Psychology had a productive year despite the challenges of online teaching. Listed below are the activities conducted:

Induction Program: Staff members from the Department of Psychology conducted a session on 'Mental Health and Counselling Services offered by the College' for Induction Programs across Faculties of the College. The Department also conducted an in-house induction for students of Psychology special and MA Psychology.

Program for all staff: 7 July 2020 a session title 'Mental Health Care and Decoding Student's mental health against the backdrop of COVID 19' was conducted for staff by Dr Sadhana Natu.

Release of Mind Scape Research Compendium: Papers written by students are published every year and this year the Fifth Volume was released at the hands of Principal Dr Sanjay Kharat, on 14th Aug 2020. Students had presented these papers at various national conferences.

Disha, Psychology Study Circle: Under the Disha activity group discussions on various topics were conducted. The activities were conducted on virtual platforms and attended by current as well as past students. Some of the topics discussed are listed below:

14th Aug 2020- Freedoms Lost during COVID times. 150 participants.

29th Sep 2020- Which way is Higher Education Heading? 95 participants.

9th Nov 2020- Structural and Gendered Violence: Inequalities and Injustice- 85 participants

4th Jan 2021- Remembering Savitribai Phule: Tracing meanings and mis meanings of Feminism

World Suicide Prevention Day- 10th September was commemorated in a unique way with students making E Posters on the theme 'Suicide is Preventable'. A representative from Connecting NGO spoke about raising the Awareness on Suicide Prevention.

World Mental Health Day- 10th October, a Google form was sent out to students to fill out their queries and concerns regarding Mental Health. Dr Sadhana Natu addressed those concerns and the queries on Google Meet.

Release of Kaleidoscope Volume XIII, 29th Jan 2021- The theme for Kaleidoscope this year was COVID 19 Crisis- Ringside View of Human Psychology. Students contributed to thematic sections about their experiences of dealing with the Pandemic. The volume was released online at the hands of Principal Dr Sanjay Kharat.

Careers in Psychology- Three sessions were held under the activity Careers in Psychology.

On 6th March 2021 Alumni of the Department, Sqn Leader Vaishnavi Tokekar, Hemant Rughoonath (Erasmus Mundus Scholarship Winner) and Shantanu Kulkarni (Sports Psychologist) spoke about their journey in their respective fields. Dr Sadhana Natu conducted two more sessions for TY and MA Part II students titled Careers after BA and Careers after MA, Psychology.

Ummeed- On 21st January, 2021 staff members of Department of Psychology conducted a workshop with 40 Peons of the college on the importance of Mental Health

Khoj Encouraging Undergraduate Research- This year the students were presented with the topic Generation Z and asked to write about different areas of Interest. 5 sessions were held in the year to orient the students with research writing. Around 20 students have written papers with the help of guidance given under Khoj.

Koshish Internship Program- This year 11 students from PG and 13 students from UG are interning at different organizations like Doorstep School, School for Development, Sathi Haath Badhana, Bebaak Collective, Eklavya and CIMH.

Master Mind Quiz- As a part of Yuva Saptaha a quiz was conducted based on Psychological Concepts. The first round was attempted by 110 participants. Four rounds were conducted virtually, and the winners were declared.

Masculinities and Mardangi in Asia- Five Students participated in a Focused Group Discussion conducted by Asia Foundation and Men Against Violence and Abuse on 16th March 2021.

In House Training- Dr Sadhana Natu conducted 3 training sessions for staff members.

Undergraduate Conference- A virtual conference on the theme Generation Z was held to give student researchers a chance to present their papers.

Alumni Achievements- Few students who got placed are Vasudha Parkhi- Brainberg, Sanjana Pugalia- Sathi Haath Badhana, Revathy Varma- Trust Center for Mindful Living, Simran Alekar- Brainability Autism and ADHD Centre, Dipak Sable- Talathi in Taluka Akole, Ananya Sankarambadi has been selected for a Graduate Program at University of Lille, France.

Research Project: A self-funded research was conducted titled 'Exploring COVID 19 related Distress: A Mixed Approach'. Dr Sadhana Natu led the team as Principal Investigator. The team consisted of Nashome Crasto, Adwaita Deshmukh and MA students Ishitta Shinde and Apurva Sapkal. The paper published on the study has been published in the Journal of Psychosocial Research.

Individual Reports and Achievements

Dr Sadhana Natu

Resource Person

1. 16 June 2020 VMWare Software Company - Topic 'Sensitization to Gender Spectrum' for Senior Managers
2. 29 June 2020 Sama Women and Health Resource Group, New Delhi – Topic 'Inequalities and Mental Health'
3. 4 July 2020 Musalsal Discussion Group – Topic 'Decoding Mental Health'
4. 16 July Nari Samata Manch – 'Impact of COVID on psychosocial health'
5. 6 August Erawadi Day for Bapu Trust on Mind and Discourse on 'Importance of Intersectionality in mental health'
6. 28 August Psy lens Surat 'Careers in Psychology: Social Psychology'
7. 18 September 2020 VMWare Software- Topic Sensitization to Gender Spectrum for Senior Managers
8. 12 October SSLA Sociology of Health
9. 22 October 2020 VMWare Software- Topic Sensitization to Gender Spectrum for Senior Managers
10. 27 October 2020 NCW Maulana Azad College National Conference Resource Person Topic: Mental Health and Well Being of Women at the Workplace
11. 1 March 2021 FDP Course Resource Person on 'Ethics in Social Science Research and Feminist Research Methodology', Tarabai Shinde Women's Studies Centre, Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad
12. 8 March 2021 TC College Baramati 'Relevance of International Women's Day and Women and mental health'
13. 10-12 March 2021 Faculty Development Program Module on Gynagogy and effective teaching for professors at Symbiosis International University
14. 27 March Matters That Matter, Resource Person on Gender Bias
15. 10 June Bebak Collective, Mumbai, spoke on 'Women and mental health: challenges during COVID19 first and second wave.'

Consultancy and Expert

1. Leadership For Equity, Prevention of Sexual Harassment Committee
2. 26 March 2021 Siddhivinayak College LIC Subject Expert
3. 28 May 2021 MIT WPU Subject Expert for Selection Interviews of Psychology faculty

June 2021 Selected a Chairperson of Syllabus framing Committee of BA (Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts) of Qatar Campus, Dubai, of Savitribai Phule Pune University.

Editorial and Peer Review Work

Psychological Studies 5 papers
Confluence Journal Symbiosis Centre of Liberal Arts
Indian Journal of Medical Ethics

Research Work and Guidance

1. 4 PhD students: Sumita Chavare and Nandini Thatte have submitted their thesis and 2 are continuing with their work.
2. 6 MA students were guided for MA dissertation project.
3. Anika Khandekar was guided for a research project on Sexuality Education.
4. Research Project on COVID Distress completed with Dr Natu leading the project.
5. Member, Research Advisory Committee of Women's Studies Centre, Savitribai Phule Pune University.
6. Member, Research Advisory Committee Leadership for Equity

Conferences

1. 27 October 2020 Resource Person National Conference Maulana Azad College and National Commission for Women. Spoke on Mental Health and Well Being of Women at the Workplace
2. 19 March 2021 Adwaita Deshmukh and Dr Sadhana Natu presented a paper titled 'OCB and Indian parameters' at National Online Conference NAOP organized by IIT Kharagpur.
3. 10 June 2021 attended World Health Organization Mental Health Division, online meet on 'Quality Rights in Mental Health'.

Extension

Contributed to the relief work of several Civil Society Organizations in the pandemic. Prepared a video on Mental Health Self Care for police officials of Sindhurg district.

Publications

1. Lockdown te Unlock: Streeyanche Manasik Arogya in punhasrtiuvach.blogspot.com, July 2020.
2. COVID and Crisis of Care: Feminist Psychological View in miloonsrayajani.in, August 2020
3. Viewing Death from the Front Row: Exploring Doctors' View of Death in the Age of Chronic Conditions, Terminal Illnesses and Varied Mortal Fears. Nandini Thatte, Dr Sadhana Natu, *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) Volume 25, Issue 3, Series. 8 (March. 2020) 56-60 e-ISSN: 2279-0837, p-ISSN: 2279-0845. www.iosrjournals.org*

4. Life of Indian Women with Rheumatoid Arthritis: A Qualitative Study Sumita Chavare, Dr Sadhana Natu *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) Volume 25, Issue 3, Series. 5 (March. 2020) 01-12 e-ISSN: 2279-0837, p-ISSN: 2279-0845. www.iosrjournals.org DOI: 10.9790/0837-2503050112 www.iosrjournals.org*
5. 'Exploring COVID 19 related Distress: A Mixed Methods Approach' in Journal of Psychosocial Research, New Delhi Jan- June 2021
6. 'Tracing Organizational Citizenship Behaviour Across Disciplines' Deshmukh A, Natu, S in **Dnyanamay, Oct 2019- Jan 2020, ISSN number 2395-7484.**

Chapter in Springer Book

Disha: Building Bridges-Removing Barriers: Where Excluded and Privileged Young Adults Meet in *International Perspectives in Value-based Mental Health Practice: Case Studies and Commentaries*, Drozdstoy, Fulford et al (Eds.), Springer, International, December 2020.

Collaborative Work

Indian Association of Women's Studies Election Teller at Women's Studies Centre, Savitribai Phule Pune University.

Staff Members:

Nashome Crasto- Was part of a Project conducted by the Department of Psychology, 'Exploring COVID-19-related Distress: A Mixed Methods Approach'. Completed a State Level Course in Basic Astronomy.

Swati Jagtap- Successfully qualified for SET Certification.

Dr Sadhana Natu
Associate Professor and Head
Department of Psychology



Congratulations Toppers

FYBA

Utkarsh Ingale
Loukik Satoskar
Avnisha Thakur
Abhishek Bangar
Aavishkar Dhudhal
Rigved Chinchulkar
Sonal Raut
Sanika Jadhav
Kanteelal Hodshil

TYBA

Shantanu Kunte
Shreeyaa Kale
Pratik Dhote

SYBA

Madhavi Menon
Rishikesh Bandal
Shivani Malpani
Charulata Bhadale
Samruddhi Kamble
Sejal Panchpor
Shraddha Shelar
Anisha Nankani
Anagha Bhangale
Fatima Ayaz
Kaushal Katariya
Shreeya Panda
Aditi Sarwade



Congratulations Toppers

MA I

Aasawari Kulkarni
Gayatri Lokhande
Maansi Oak
Shivani Bundela
Nandini Vernekar

MA II

Ishitta Shinde
Niskrti Sharma
Sanobar Patel
Holyjoy Runsung
Ravi Kumar
Maheema Kate



Remembering Savitribai Phule

Reading from Feminist Texts and Poems



The Light in Darkness – Savitribai Phule, an Exceptional Lady who First Ignited the Spark of being the First Female Teacher in India.



SAVITRIBAI PHULE

- ❑ The First Female Teacher of Modern India
- ❑ Her work in the Satyashodhak Samaj along with Jyotiba Phule is a milestone.
- ❑ The school she ran along with Fatima Sheikh is a pioneering effort in education.
- ❑ She is one of the first intersectional feminists of Modern India who worked on gender and caste
- ❑ Savitribai and Jyotiba as an egalitarian couple are an inspiration for our personal, professional and political lives



MAYA ANGELOU'S

STILL I RISE BY

RECITED BY:

SAVANI NIBANDHE





NEERAJA 'S

PASAYADAN

RECITED BY:

SAKASHI JADHAV





ANNE SEXTON'S

HER KIND

RECITED BY:

TANAYA MAHAMUNI





**MAYA ANGELOU'S
PHENOMENAL WOMAN**

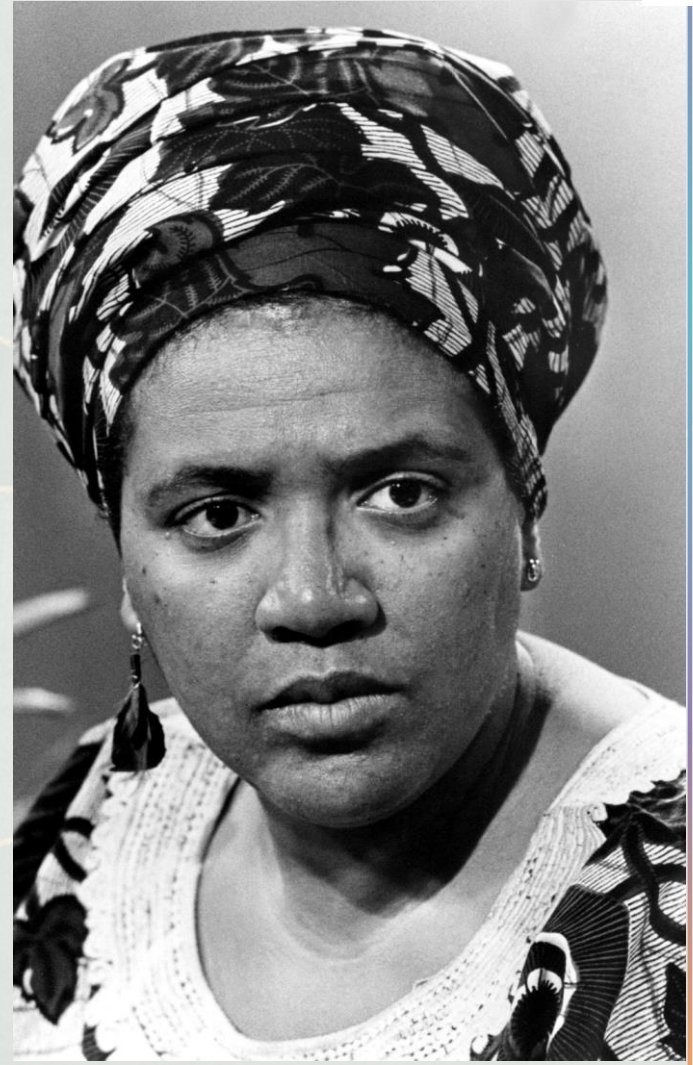
**RECITED BY:
LOUKIK SATOSKAR**





**AUDRE LORDE'S
A WOMAN SPEAKS**

**RECITED BY:
YASHVI GALA**





ANDREA DWORKIN'S

**AN EXTRACT FROM
INTERCOURSE**

RECITED BY:

ISHA PARANJAPE



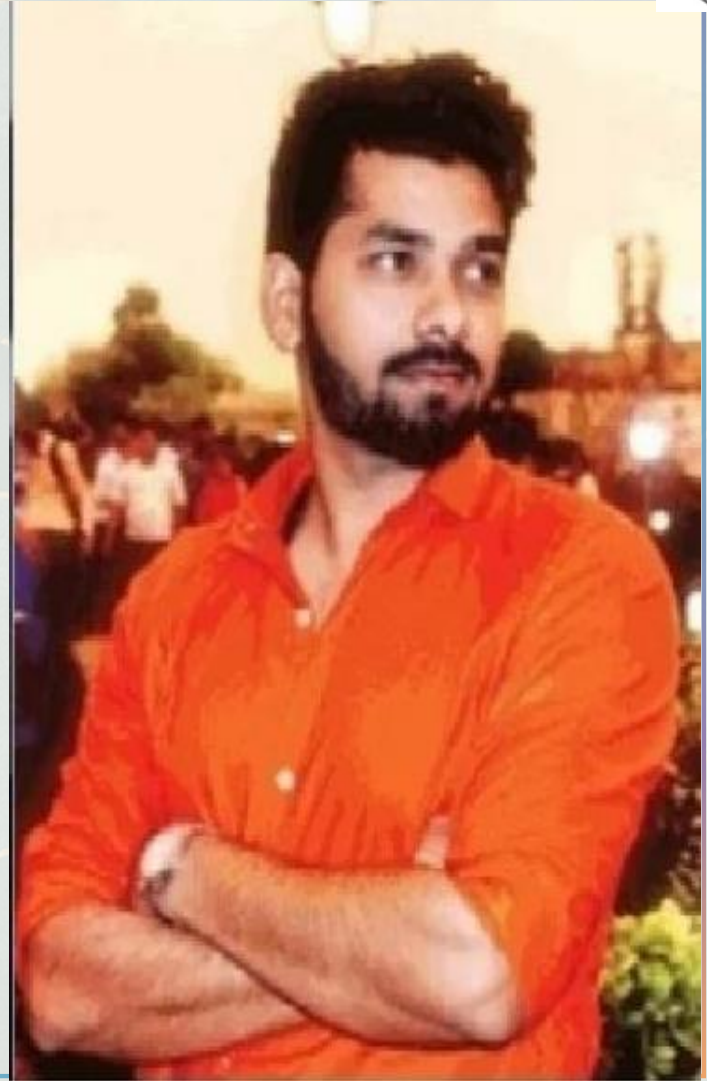


**PSUH KYAMITRA
UPADHYAY'S**

**SUNO DRAUPADI, SHASTRA
UTHALO**

RECITED BY:

MADHAVI MENON





**KAMLA BHASIN'S
KYUNKI MAIN
LADKI HOON,
MUJHE PADHNA
HAI.**

**RECITED BY:
POOJA RAJKOR**





**EMILY DICKINSON'S
THEY SHUT ME UP IN PROSE**

**RECITED BY:
SHREYA
SUBBANAVAR**





KAMLA BHASIN'S
TU SEHENA CHODKAR
KEHENA SURU KARTI TOH
ACCHA HOTA

RECITED BY:
AVINISH
MURUMKAR





V.N. ANDHALE'S

AAI MALA JANM GHEU DE

RECITED BY:

SAKSHI JAGTAP





Blythe Baird

POCKET-SIZED FEMINISM

RECITED BY:

ANAGAHA

BHANGALE





***"Awake, Arise And
Educate Smash
Traditions-
Liberate!"***

- Savitribai Phule

-

Ψ



THANK
YOU!!!

Progressive Education Society's
Modern College of Arts, Science and Commerce
Ganeshkhind Pune.

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
AND
DISHA PSYCHOLOGY STUDY CIRCLE

INVITES ONE AND ALL FOR THE
INAUGURAL SESSION OF DISHA PEER SUPPORT GROUP



Google Meet: <https://meetgoogle.com/gok.dxae.gcr>

Join in to express your views, listen to other's views and participate in an animated discussion in Hindi, Marathi as well as English.

Respected Principal Dr. Sanjay Kharat will inaugurate the Disha Group Discussion and also release Mind Scape V- the Research Compendium of Department of Psychology. Alumnus and Past Disha Coordinator, Deepali Kshirsagar will be joining us.

Dr. Sadhan Natu,
Associate Professor and Head,
Department of Psychology.

Please join the meeting 10 minutes before 3.00pm.

Progressive Education Society's
Modern College of Arts, Science and
Commerce,
Ganeshkhind, Pune.

Department of Psychology

OCTOBER 1
4 PM

WHICH WAY IS
HIGHER EDUCATION
HEADED?
उच्च शिक्षणाची
गाडी कुठे चालली
आहे?



Alumnus Archana Pawar, Superintendent
of Junnar Ashramshala will be joining us

Department of Psychology

DISHA SESSION
THEME: STRUCTURAL AND
GENDERED VIOLENCE:
INEQUALITIES AND
INJUSTICE

लिंगभाव विषमता: हिंसा व
असमानता

9th November
Monday - 4pm

PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION SOCIETY'S MODERN COLLEGE OF ARTS,
SCIENCE AND COMMERCE GANESHKHIND PUNE

Department of Psychology presents
MASTER MIND
psychology quiz

come one, come all from all faculties and classes!
register independently or in teams of two!


multiple rounds involving


PERCEPTION


MEMORY

ATTENTION

BASIC GK

 10th January 2022

 11:00 AM

 MS Teams

 Register here: <https://forms.gle/uJNkWAhNdp6oNj6k6>



(Last date: 5th January 2022)



Progressive Education Society's
Modern College of Arts, Science and Commerce ,
Ganeshkhind, Pune.

Department of Psychology

World Suicide Prevention Day Program .



Let us work
together and make
suicide
preventable

Date: 9th September 2021
Time: 12:00pm
Platform: Google Meet
Link:<http://meet.google.com/kci-zsnq-ysd>

Progressive Education Society's
Modern College of Art, Science and Commerce ,
Ganeshkhind, Pune.

Department of Psychology



10 September World Suicide prevention day
Awareness program

Theme: Working together to prevent
suicide
Connecting NGO will also participate
Join in at 4 pm

Progressive Education Society's
Modern College of Arts, Science and Commerce ,
Ganeshkhind, Pune.

To mark the significance of
10th October, World Mental Health Day

Department of Psychology. & Sruti Disability Rights
Centre Kolkata,

Are collaborating to present a Talk on the
Topic
Mental Health from a Feminist
Disability Lens

There will be a Sign Language Interpreter present.



Date: 8th October 2021

Time: 3pm onwards

Platform: Google Meet.

Link: <http://meet.google.com/kci-zsnq-ysd>

WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

**“YOUR
FEELINGS
ARE VALID
AND NO ONE
CAN TELL
YOU
OTHERWISE.”**

**“IT IS OKAY,
TO NOT BE
OKAY.
JUST DON'T
GIVE UP.”**

10 10 20
JOIN US THIS SATURDAY
VENUE- Google Meets
TIME-4 pm to 5 pm

THE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY,
MODERN COLLEGE GANESHKHIND
WOULD LIKE TO INVITE ALL OF YOU TO JOIN
US THIS
'WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY'
TO UNDERSTAND ITS SIGNIFICANCE AND
SPREAD ITS AWARENESS.

WHY MUST PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH
BE DISCRIMINATED WHEN THEY BOTH
EQUALLY CONTRIBUTE TO A PERSON'S
WELLBEING?



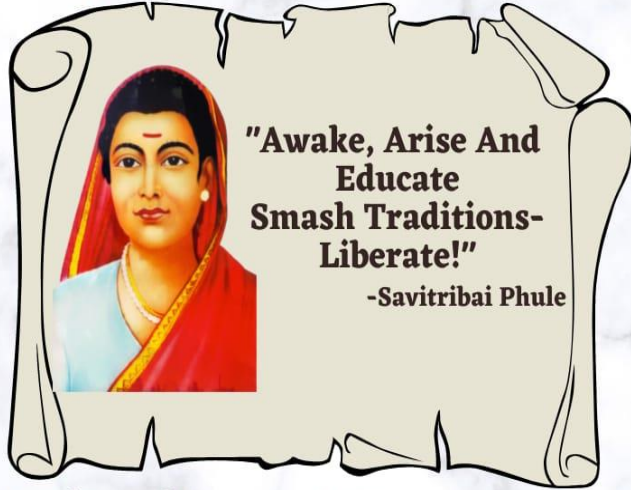



PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION SOCIETY'S
MODERN COLLEGE OF ARTS, SCIENCE AND COMMERCE
GANESHAKHIND PUNE

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
AND
DISHA PSYCHOLOGY STUDY CIRCLE
INVITES ONE AND ALL TO

Remembering Savitribai Phule

Reading from Feminist Texts and Poems



 Date: Monday, 3rd January 2022

 Time: 4 PM.

 Platform: Google Meet

 [Link: meet.google.com/ozf-cnkj-akq](https://meet.google.com/ozf-cnkj-akq)

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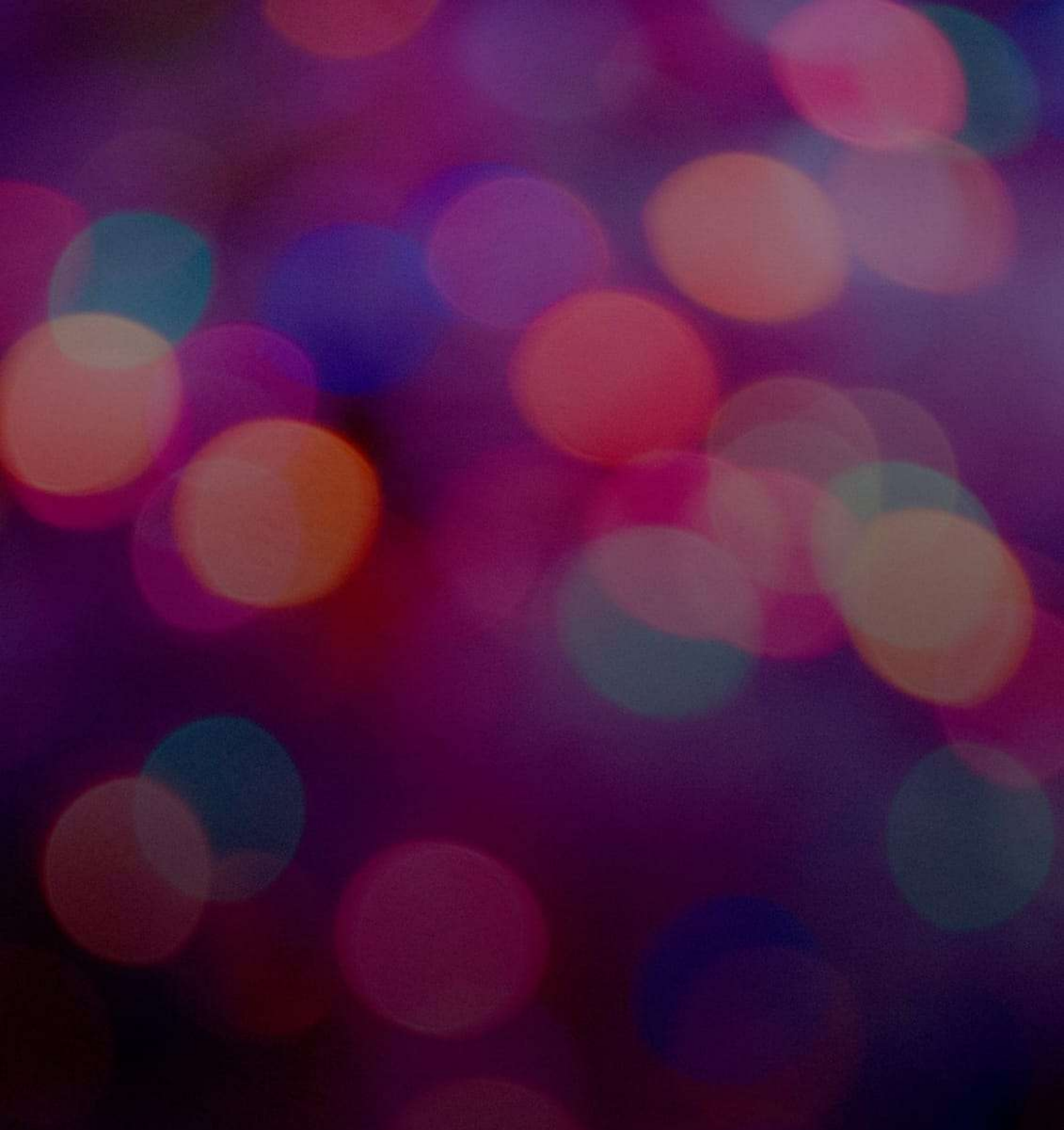
Invites one and all for
Disha Group Discussion

Remembering Savitribai Phule: Tracing meanings
and mis meanings of Feminisms

सावित्रीबाई फुले जयंती: स्त्रीवादाचे अनेक अर्थ, अन्वयार्थ



Date: Monday, 4 January, 2021
Time: 4 pm
Platform: Google meet



DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY



Kaleidoscope

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