

# Philosophical essay discussion- 5



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# Philosophical essay-

## ► Important Points to remember-

1. Easier than normal essay as many dimensions can be included.
2. Anecdotal Introduction or poem etc.
3. Linking paragraph with various question statements.
4. Main body with various dimensions (MR. SPEECHLIT)
5. Pre conclusion having solutions or best way.
6. Conclusion with poem or anecdotal ending.
7. Flow and coherence (connecting words within lines and within paragraphs)
8. Chronology of examples.

POV

Normal essay - Scope

Reality  
want to be  
words

Scope

women's political

Soci of political

Example

data

real story

fictional story

Questions

flow

Headings  
Solutions

poem

Character

dot essay

Moreover  
For instance

flow

1) Anecdote (real story) \*

2) linking paragraph

Questions

Feminism is not just  
equality but full humanity  
of women.

7:27 \*



# Feminism is not just equality but full humanity of women.

## Introduction- Anecdote

**Aabha**, a receptionist in a very reputed private organisation is living in the city of Gurugram, away from her family. One day, on insistence of her colleagues, she went to a party, but was drugged by her colleagues. Later she was raped by them. When she came to her senses, she was made to realise that, she was enjoying the sexual act while drunk and don't remember her consent. She could not muster the courage to come out and didn't made any complaint against him, though she felt that sexual activity was without consent.

There are many Aabhas, who have faced traumatised sexual harassment but chose to stay quiet. According to a report, by Indian Bar council association- only 38% victims complaint against sexual harassment related to workplace. However, in this case, #metoo movement gave a glimmer of hope to Aabha, and she shared her traumatic experience and complained against her colleagues with the help of an NGO. This feminist movement have actually proved to be a game changer for many more Aabhas.





## Linking paragraph-

It should also be emphasised that according to a world bank report of 1980, although women makes up half of the population and does **2/3<sup>rd</sup> of total work hours** but they only earn 1/10<sup>th</sup> of the total income and own 1/100<sup>th</sup> of total property owned. This has been the outcome of age old patriarchal and patrilineal mindset, which is subjecting women to various atrocities.

Moving forward, in this essay, we will firstly analyse what does feminism mean and why it exists. Subsequently, we will understand how patriarchy is a barrier to gender equality. Then, we will ponder upon how feminism is not only limited to equality but also ensuring full humanity of women. Finally, we will look into plausible solutions to overcome the patriarchal hold over women and ensure their full development. Let us start first by analysing feminism.





## Feminism: a liberator-

*“Slavery of all kinds have been ended but the slavery of women continues till date”- JS Mill*

**Feminism** is considered to be an ideology aiming to define social, political, economic, personal and social **equality of the sexes** and incorporates the position that society prioritises the male viewpoint and women are neglected and treated in an unjust manner.

Various feminist movements till now has demanded for **equal rights for** women so far- voting rights, public offices to women, earning equal pay, owning property, receiving education, having equal rights within marriage, maternity leave, access to contraception, bodily autonomy and protection of women from rape, sexual harassment and domestic violence.

This is precisely the reason that feminism as an ideology exist, as society is usually seen from men's perspective and women's rights and needs are put at backburner. The entrenched patriarchy is making sure that feminism thrives and demands for not just equality but full humanity. Thus, patriarchy becomes the reason for the existence of feminism as an ideology to achieve equal rights for a scientifically equal half of population.



## Patriarchy: a barrier to gender equality-

**Patriarchy** is a social system in which men dominate over others, but can also refer to dominance over women specifically. It is extended in various manifestations- domestic violence, ownership of property, child rights to men, patrilineage and so on. It is indeed a barrier to full development of women.

Patriarchy can be witnessed in historical times also. To illustrate, how Draupadi was put on stake by her husbands or how Manusmriti sees women in negative light to the inhumane practise of Sati, which was ended by the efforts of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. Similarly there have been many more instances in past as well as present that prove to be a barrier for gender equality.

Similarly, following life cycle approach in case of women highlights female foeticide and infanticides, which was also emphasised by economic survey 2017-18 as 6.3 crore missing women. Also, Girl children not allowed education, and pushed into child marriages, facing dowry related violence and also other sorts of domestic violence. This continues till she dies as her children also engages in violence during her old age.

Domestic violence saw 36% rise during covid-19 lockdown. Also, 21 deaths/day takes place due to dowry related harassment. Also, Acid attacks are also a grave issue that needs adequate attention. Also women's nutrition and care is also not a priority in patriarchal society, where 54% women suffer from anaemia according to NFHS-5. Marital rapes have also been in news for a quite a while showcasing how marriage has led to perpetual consent for sex against the wish of women.

Not just in social domain, this can be witnessed on other areas as well. For instance, in political domain, the representation of women is quite low at **14%** in **17<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha** according to **association for democratic reforms** and the number of women ministers is even low at **9%**. Also, reservation at local level is also not bringing much impact as the **defacto ruler** is still the husband, as found out by the concept of **Sarpanch pati**.

Also, In economic domain also, it is visible that gender equality is far from reality. According to gender wage gap report of ILO, women are paid 34% less for the same job with same experience as compared to men. Women are also not considered for managerial positions as only 27% managers worldwide are women, this is the result of motherhood penalty and a glass ceiling, stopping women from achieving according to her potential. Even according to Gender gap report that includes educational, health, economic and political dimensions, India is one of the most gender despaired country with 140<sup>th</sup> rank in 156 countries.

In a similar manner, mostly women are engaged in pink collar jobs i.e receptionists, nurse, teachers and are looked down. The current labour force participation rate for female is quite less at 24% showcasing women's economic dependence on men.



Likewise, at judicial level also, this stark difference in representation is visible, with only 28% of judges and 15% advocates at all levels being women. The misogyny, represented by patriarchal mindset is also witnessed in judiciary because of this. With the judgements propounded by Bombay HC that unless there is no skin to skin contact, it is not sexual harassment or by MP HC to get rakhi tied by victim to rape accused. Thus, can be considered to be a barrier to gender equality.

Moreover, in educational domain, STEM courses are not considered to be for women or girls, and their representation is low. It is stereotyped that women are not fit for these technical courses and should work only in the domain of humanities. Even, the low representation of women in civil services emanate from this point of view that they cannot govern. Now we will look into how feminism is not just about equality but have become much more.

Also, at military level, up until now there was no permanent commission for women in combat role, and the reason given by Army to supreme court was that “men are not ready to take command from women”, this highlights patriarchal notions in armed forces as well. Even after getting permanent commission, now women officers are scaled arbitrarily for consideration to permanent commission, making it a very difficult road for them.





## Feminsm: leading to full humanity of women-

Initially feminism as an ideology was striving for equality of sexes in all domain, but off/late it has shifted its course to a much more holistic developmental strategy for women. As we are already aware that women have gotten political equality i.e. voting rights, right to public offices but still there have been issues. No matter how much we strive for gender equality, it cannot come until there are certain fundamental shifts in the way society thinks and values are transmitted. ✓

In this dimension, it strives to bring sensitisation in society about how women have been an important part of society, have their role in evolution and linking the concept of procreation with that of mother Earth and generating a positive view point in favour of women. \*

Eco-feminism as an ideology emphasizes that both women and nature must be respected. And oppression of both nature and women needs to be stopped. If the nature is to be saved from the impact of deforestation and climate change, women's participation is required. This way feminism has expanded the scope of movement. The likes of Greta Thunberg or Sallumarada Thimakka are doing good work in this domain. ✓

Similarly, feminism has also engaged into providing psychological comfort to other women, making sure that they can fight all adversity against the entrenched notions of women being unproductive, cue, passive and weak. It has been understood that, demanding equality is bringing backlash to the women, to suppress them and this has led to feminism changing the course to change things at much more basic level.

In this manner, there have been shift of focus on ensuring cultural and social changes at a much more ground level. There have been shift in curriculum in schools to make sure that children are socialised in a gender neutral perspective and that will in turn eradicate many ills against women and may prove to be a successful approach in providing full humanity of women. ✓

In case of India, National education Policy 2020, also has various provision ensuring gender sensitisation. However, it needs to be kept in mind that despite striving for full humanity, the exploitation of women may still continue in many forms, and it requires a multifaceted approach. \*

Solutions

## Multifaceted approach to a graver problem of patriarchy:

Patriarchy being a much graver issue requires a multifaceted approach. This includes firstly, constitutional changes, providing women reservation in not just political domain, but also in education and employment, for a time that is adequate.

Secondly, all the laws (existing or new), Books needs to be made gender neutral, providing autonomy to women and more control of hers in taking these decisions.

Thirdly, Governmental schemes like Ladli Laxmi yojana or Sukanya sammriddhi scheme must continue and include more and more things in its ambit to make sure that discontent over birth of a girl child is reduced. Here, extreme focus should be to control foeticides and infanticides and for this strict laws are required, which can be implemented effectively.

(PCPNPT act) \* → (Silent —) → info → (boy or girl)

Fourthly, value based education equipped with critical learning should be imparted to students, ensuring gender sensitisation is done at a level satisfactorily. Simultaneously, contemporary women role models must be cherished i.e President Draupadi Murmu, Mirabai Chanu, Saina Nehwal, Nirmala Sitharaman or the like, in order to bring change in attitude of not just girls but also their families, that women are no less than anyone.



Fifthly, women's economic empowerment needs to be given adequate attention. As according to IMF, equal participation of women can lead to increase in GDP by 27%. Firstly by constitutional reservation and secondly by following SHG models like Kudumbashree of Kerala, making women financially independent and able to take their own decisions. This will also help India in achieving SDG-5,10 and many others focusing on gender equality, and will help in positive image building for India.

Sixthly, Social media and Electronic media needs to be much more responsible. It should not show anything that is against the modesty of women in any way and is promoting regressive mindset, showcasing women stereotypically. Movies, TV series must keep these things in mind while creating content that a positive impact is created, so that in entirety women can live a life full of dignity.

And Lastly, all this is possible, only if government or society can provide an environment full of safety for women. This requires usage of technology like CCTV's, street lights, SOS applications, increased Police Man power, and also social policing in a sense that women feel safe while being alone. Much more needs to be done in this regards and society as a whole should work towards making this possible and feminism as an ideology will make sure all this is happening in a proper manner, in a channelised way.

For this we need to strive the level of excellence that have been achieved by the likes of Marikom, Mithali Raj, Avni Chaturvedi, Kalpana chawla, Sunita Williams, Oprah Wintrey and so on and hence I urge all women and not just women, but the government and society as a whole.

For Start →

“start now,  
Start where you are,  
Start with fear,  
Start with pain,  
Start with doubt,  
Start with hands shaking,  
Start with voice trembling but start,  
Start and don't stop,  
Start where you are, with what you have.  
Just start”

✱

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On a whole, this can be said that feminism and its approach is not just seeking equality but full humanity of women, by ending all forms of discrimination and exploitation and creating an enabling environment where they can develop themselves to the fullest of their abilities. And if we follow multifaceted approach as discussed above, women will be able to live a life full of dignity, with respect and with her head high. The purpose of feminism and sustainable development are convergent and will lead to a progressive and peaceful society and world.

***“ There is no chance for the welfare of the world unless the condition of woman is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly on one wing ”. – Swami Vivekananda***

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# Thankyou

