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PATRIARCHY- Journey of an Ignoble Gap between Men and Women

By : Priya Rathi*

This article aims to throw some light on the bane of Patriarchy prevalent in our society since the time immemorial and how it is still affecting the lives of the gender (irrespective of their age group) which contributes almost 50% of the population on this planet called Earth. This article not just talks about the challenges faced by the women across the globe but also intends to share the courage which the women of 21st Century has shown to bring about the much-needed change.

The author has also tried to include the instances showing the laudable efforts made by people from various strata of the society, hailing from different backgrounds, different industries, academicians, Hon'ble Judges, the Legislature etc. in taking initiative to bring about equality at various levels.

In the end the author intends to showcase how even in the 21st Century, this ignoble gap between men and women still prevails in various forms across the globe. But at the same time, how the women of today are breaking boundaries by not just coming forward and addressing this issue by sharing their own experiences of sufferance but also making their voice heard through their work in diverse fields, and working very hard to claim their inherent rights, make their names in various fields and bringing fame to not just their families but are also making the nation proud.

Keywords: Patriarchy, Male-domination, Rights, Equality.

I. INTRODUCTION: What is Patriarchy?

The word PATRIARCHY literally means the rule of the father or the “patriarch”, and originally it was used to describe a specific type of “male-dominated family”. Now it used more generally to refer to male domination, to the power relationships by which men dominate women, and to characterize a system whereby women are kept subordinate in a number of ways.¹

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¹ Kamla Bhasin, (1993) What is Patriarchy?, Kali for Women, New Delhi, p.3, ISBN 81-85107-73-4

Patriarchy is a central concept in the history of women and is existing in our society since the time immemorial. It is a system of society or government in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it. It is nothing but a community organized on patriarchal lines where men predominately hold roles of political leadership, moral authority, social privilege and control of property. Some patriarchal societies are also patrilineal, meaning that property and title are inherited by the male lineage.

The renowned sociologist **Sylvia Walby** defines patriarchy as "a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women".² Social stratification along gender lines, in which power is predominantly held by men, has been observed in most societies.³

Aristotle's Natural Law argued that it was natural for a wife to be in subjection to her husband. Hence, she cannot be seen as a naturally free and equal person.⁴

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) Head- Mohan Bhagwat, was quoted as saying in a statement issued by the RSS, while addressing the workers who were present along with their family members, "Nowadays the number of divorce cases have increased a lot. People fight over trifle issues. The cases of divorce are more in educated and affluent families, because with education and affluence come arrogance, as a result of which families fall apart. The society also falls apart because society is also a family."⁵

II. MULTIPLE FORMS OF PATRIARCHY

Any woman/girl who has ever experienced even a subtle discrimination, bias, degradation or non-acceptance, feels and knows this, even though they may not be able to name it because of the innumerable ways in which it exists in our society. It starts from the time of birth, where SON is always preferred over a daughter because it is considered that only the son can take the family lineage forward (and the contribution of a woman in this process is totally ignored) and not the daughter because she will leave her paternal home after marriage and is hence considered as "parayadhan". This discrimination doesn't stop, and it exists in different

² Giddens, Anthony; Griffiths, Simon (2006). Sociology (5th ed.). Polity. pp. 473–4. ISBN 978-0-7456-3379-4. & Gordon, April A. (1996). Transforming capitalism and patriarchy: gender and development in Africa. Lynne Reiner. p. 18. ISBN 978-1-55587-629-6

³ Meagher, Michelle (2011). "patriarchy". In Ritzer, George; Ryan, J. Michael (eds.). The Concise Encyclopedia of Sociology. John Wiley & Sons. pp. 441–442. ISBN 978-1-4051-8353-6 & Hennessy, Rosemary (2012). "Patriarchy". In Harrington, A.; Marshall, B.L.; Muller, H. (eds.). Encyclopedia of Social Theory. Routledge. pp. 420–422. ISBN 978-1-13-678694-5

⁴ Eleonora Corsini, "Law Alone Cannot: Women's Empowerment in India", p. 5

⁵ <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/rss-chief-mohan-bhagwat-divorce-cases-more-in-educated-affluent-families-2181067> (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

ways in every society irrespective of the class or caste one belongs to. This issue was recently flashed across the globe when we saw the situation in Afghanistan with the Taliban's return to power in the country, and how everyone was concerned about the safety and security and future of the women in Afghanistan considering the plight of women and human rights violations in the past when the Taliban was in power⁶.

Sociologist Sylvia Walby⁷ has composed six overlapping structures (**State, Household, Violence, Paid work, Sexuality and Culture**) that define patriarchy and that take different forms in different cultures and different times. **Politics/State** is where women are unlikely to have formal power and representation. For example, even in the present times the percentage of females in politics and their representation in the Parliament is way too less as compared to the males, it is negligible. **Household** is where the women are more likely to do the housework and raise the children. It is an accepted notion by the society that household chores are a job of the female and her efforts are never acknowledged. But it is great to witness some small changes in the 21st Century, where a 9th Class student paints a picture of her mother doing all the work she does throughout the day and titles it "My Mother and Mothers in the Neighborhood"⁸. Appreciation to the makers of a short film titled "Ghar ki Murgi"⁹ showcasing the 24*7 struggle of a house maker with no salary, no leaves and no acknowledgment. Another latest Malayalam movie The Great Indian Kitchen¹⁰ showcasing a take on the prevailing patriarchy where a newly married woman tries to fit into the conventional mould that society has prescribed for married women and how this woman struggles to be the submissive wife that her educated husband and his family expect her to be. Another drama named Jhola¹¹, wherein the practice of Sati in Nepal was showcased and how after her husband death, a girl is forced to die due to this evil practice. It feels great to see that the film industries across the globe are taking keen interest in creating content driven drama for the audience and spreading awareness through their work. These are just tyo name a few, the internet these days especially the OTT platforms are full of content driven cinema and are not shying away from spreading awareness through their creative work. Also, the Indian Judiciary in the latest pronouncements of their judgments is acknowledging the equal efforts put in by the females in improving the Indian economy. Another form of Patriarchy is evident in case of **Violence**, it is nothing but a disease that has plagued the Indian society for ages now. Women are more prone to being abused and often they

⁶<https://www.reuters.com/article/factcheck-malala-taliban-takeover-idUSL1N2PQ1OD> (last accessed on January 17th, 2022)

⁷ Walby, Sylvia (1990). Theorizing patriarchy. Oxford, UK Cambridge, Massachusetts: Wiley-Blackwell. p. 20. ISBN 9780631147688.

⁸<https://krishijagran.com/news/my-mother-and-other-mothers-in-the-neighbourhood/> (January 13th, 2022)

⁹<https://youtu.be/D567scaLR6s> (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

¹⁰<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt13299890/> (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

¹¹<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3700482/> (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

do not realize that they are subjected to domestic violence and even when they do, protesting is not that easy as they are cowed down by the judgmental nature of the Indian psyche. Especially in the Indian context, the Covid-19 virus came as a shadow pandemic during which, according to the National Commission for Women Report, there has been enormous rise in the domestic violence cases¹², which was nothing less than a “intimate terrorism” and it was a time where even the Domestic Violence Act, 2005 couldn’t play much role due to multiple restrictions. Patriarchy has not shied away from spreading its wings in the working environment as well, despite working for equal number of hours, performing equal labor, women are likely to be **paid less**. This is a major concern of the 21st Century working women who are not just looking after their homes and doing the routine work but are also working hard to excel in their respective fields. This is a global issue and women in the recent past from various fields have started raising this issue. For example, the Hollywood celebrities are no exception to facing the issue of pay disparity as a result gender bias and this issue has gained more and more attention in the recent past by multiple renowned celebrities recently across all stages sharing their experiences as to how they are facing the same challenges as other workplaces across the globe¹³. **Women's sexuality** is more likely to be treated negatively. Advertisements these days treat women nothing more than sex objects. The Sexual harassment at workplace poses a great threat to the working class. The most recent issue that has popped up is the sexual assault case of a Malayalam Movie Star, the repercussions of which are still being felt today especially when the survivor herself came forward after almost five years and shared her feelings on a social networking site. This incident in today’s time seems to be throwing light on the issue of women safety in the film industry, which, since its inception is seen as a male-dominated workspace operating without any legal framework. Consequently, several questions have been raised as to why the Hema Commission Report has not yet been disclosed and brought in public domain and can’t even be accessed via RTI, also in the said film industry, the non-implementation of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment Act is another issue of concern¹⁴.

Another form of patriarchy can be seen through the representation of women in media, and popular **Culture** is "within a patriarchal gaze" The submissive roles of women in the daily soaps where women are shown to be preoccupied with beauty and motherhood and how they are restricted to the homes. And then comes the **Capitalist Patriarchy**, herein the massive pornography and cosmetics industries that objectify women, as well as popular media and other male-centric industries that promote dangerous gender roles and stereotypes all comprise what

¹² Press Information Bureau, Government of India <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1657678>

¹³ <https://www.insider.com/hollywood-gender-pay-gap-examples-actresses-paid-less-than-actors-2019-4> (last accessed on January 17th, 2022)

¹⁴ <https://indianexpress.com/article/entertainment/malayalam/hema-commission-wcc-survivor-anjali-menon-interview-7719268/> (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

Kamla Bhasin refers to as "capitalist patriarchy"¹⁵.

III. EFFECT OF PATRIARCHY UNDER RELIGION AND CULTURE

Religion and culture are not homogeneous ideas but emerge from social, political and economic contexts. One of the most important features of both religion and culture are that they are both linked to power and are described and defined by people in power (because of patriarchy, the people in power are often men).

Both religion and culture reflect patriarchies and are used to maintain patriarchal structures. Articulations of patriarchy vary in different cultures and religions, nevertheless, cultures and religions privilege 'masculinities' while subordinating 'femininities'. Additionally, cultures and religions rely on specific masculinities and femininities to reproduce themselves, which more often than not is accomplished through violence.

Traditional cultural practices and beliefs reflect the values and beliefs held by members of a community for periods often spanning generations. Some of these are beneficial to all members, while others have become harmful to a specific group, such as women or LGBTI people. Some examples of harmful traditional practices include female genital mutilation (FGM), early marriage, the various taboos or practices which prevent women from controlling their own fertility, nutritional taboos and traditional birth practices, son preference and its implications for the status of the girl child, female infanticide and early pregnancy. Many people are unaware that these forms of 'tradition' run against their basic human rights, and even if aware of human rights frameworks and policies, many people are not in a position to exercise them.¹⁶

In Manusmriti we are told that a woman is subservient to men: to her father, brother and son. She must obey him, "as daughter women should obey their fathers, as wives obey their husband, and as widows obey their sons".¹⁷ In other words, her agency is taken away from her. But in Puranas, Sati and Parvati choose their own husbands and Lakshmi leaves Vishnu when she is not treated with respect. In Mahabharata, Ganga and Satyawati lay down strict conditions before agreeing to marry. In Ramayana, Sita insists she will follow her husband to the forest, despite his opposition. These show that Manusmriti was never "supreme" code as it is made out to be.¹⁸

¹⁵Kamla Bhasin, "Capitalist Patriarchy", 2016, *The Daily Star*, p. 4

https://ris.org.in/fidc/sites/default/files/Capitalist%20patriarchy_the%20new%20enemy_The%20Daily%20Star.pdf

¹⁶<http://spl.ids.ac.uk/sexuality-gender-faith/culture-tradition-and-faith/tradition-culture-and-patriarchy> (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

¹⁷Eleonora Corsini, "Law Alone Cannot: Women's Empowerment in India", p. 6

¹⁸<https://www.dailyo.in/variety/hinduism-feminism-patriarchy-vagina-worship-linga-devdutt-pattanaik-jauhar-sati-rajputs-bollywood/story/1/22114.html> (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

IV. CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS SAFEGUARDING WOMEN'S INTEREST

The Constitution of India provides for various provisions for safeguarding the interests of women. Be it fundamental rights under Article 15(1), 15(3), 16(2), 23(1), or under Directive Principles of State Policy under Article 39(a), 39(d), 39(e), 42, or under Fundamental Duties under Article 51A(e). Also, Article 243-D (3) and Article 243-D (4) provides for seat reservation for women in Panchayat. And Article 243-T (3) and Article 243-T (4) talks about seat reservation for women in Municipalities.

V. LEGISLATIONS IN INDIA FOR THE PROTECTION OF WOMEN IN VARIOUS SPHERES

The Indian Legislature also keep coming up with various protective legislations for the welfare and protection of women from time to time for the protection from various kinds of evils prevalent in the society. Some of which are enumerated below:

- i. The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005
- ii. The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1986
- iii. The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986
- iv. The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987
- v. The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961
- vi. The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961
- vii. The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971
- viii. Pre-conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994
- ix. The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976
- x. The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986
- xi. The Hindu Succession Act, 1956 read with the Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005
- xii. The Minimum Wages Act, 1948
- xiii. The Mines Act, 1952 and the Factories Act, 1948
- xiv. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2013.
- xv. The Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016
- xvi. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 ("POCSO Act")
- xvii. The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019

VI. OTHER GENERAL LAWS IN INDIA FOR THE WELFARE OF WOMEN

- i. **Right to free aid:** A right under section 41-D of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 to get the free legal aid.
- ii. **Right to privacy:** Under section 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 the cops will have to give the privacy to the victim without stressing her in front of masses.
- iii. **Right to Zero FIR:** As according to the Supreme Court ruling a rape victim can register her police complaint from any police station under the Zero FIR. It was introduced on the recommendations of the Justice Verma Committee¹⁹.
- iv. **Right to no arrest:** According to section 46, sub-clause (4) of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973, a woman cannot be arrested after sunset and before sunrise. Except, in case the woman has committed a serious crime, the police require to get it in writing from the magistrate explaining why the arrest is necessary during the night.
- v. **Right to not being called to the police station:** According to section 160 of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 women cannot be called to the police station for interrogation. The police can interrogate a woman at her residence in the presence of a woman constable and family members or friends.
- vi. **Right to confidentiality:** Under no conditions a rape victim's identity of can be revealed. Neither the police nor media can make known the name of the victim in public. Section 228-A of the Indian Penal Code, 1872 makes the disclosure of a victim's identity a punishable offence.

Justice Verma Committee in 2013²⁰ made various recommendations to make changes in the offences of Sexual offences against women under IPC and the recommendations were brought into effect by virtue of the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013²¹ and now the:

- i. Section 354A provides for Sexual harassment and punishment for sexual harassment.
- ii. Section 354B provides for Assault or use of criminal force to woman with intent to disrobe.
- iii. Section 354C provides for Voyeurism.
- iv. Section 354D provides for Stalking.
- v. The definition of "Rape" under section 376 has been amended.

Recently, The Maharashtra Assembly on December 23rd, 2021, passed the **Shakti Criminal Laws (Maharashtra Amendment) Act** unanimously and therefore became the second state in India after Andhra Pradesh to approve death penalty for heinous offences of rape and

¹⁹<https://www.prsindia.org/uploads/media/Justice%20verma%20committee/js%20verma%20committe%20report.pdf> para 7, p.320 (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

²⁰<https://www.prsindia.org/uploads/media/Justice%20verma%20committee/js%20verma%20committe%20report.pdf> (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

²¹ The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013 <https://www.iitk.ac.in/wc/data/TheCriminalLaw.pdf>

gangrape²².

The Hon'ble Supreme Court has on multiple occasions in the last two decades have acknowledged the plight of the women in the patriarchal society and has taken positive approach towards overcoming the issues faced by women on daily basis. Following are a few landmark judgments from the recent past that have not just changed the perspective towards women but also have encouraged women to know their rights and fight for them. In the case of ***Vishaka & Ors v. State of Rajasthan***²³, the Apex Court in this case defined 'sexual harassment' and set guidelines for employers to alleviate the problem of sexual harassment in 1997 to guarantee the fundamental right of gender equality, right to work with human dignity in Articles 14, 15 19(1)(g) and 21 of the Indian Constitution, which led to the enactment of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 ("Sexual Harassment Act"). In the case of, ***Joseph Shine v. Union of India***²⁴, the constitutionality of Section 497 of IPC read with Section 198 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 was challenged being violative of Article 14, 15 and 21 of the Constitution of India and being arbitrary and discriminatory based on gender and that such a law demolishes the dignity of a woman. The apex court struck down Section 497 of Indian Penal Code, 1872 and held that Adultery is better left as a ground for divorce and not a crime. In the case of, ***Indian Young Lawyers' Association & Ors. v. State of Kerala & Ors***²⁵, a Constitutional bench 4:1 majority held that the temple's practice of excluding women is unconstitutional. It held that the practice violated the fundamental right to freedom of religion - Article 25(1) of the Constitution of India- of female worshippers and struck down various relevant provisions under other laws. In the case of, ***The Secretary, Ministry of Defence v. Babita Puniya & Ors***²⁶, the apex court in this landmark judgment ordered the grant of permanent commission in 10 non-combat service units and held them to be eligible to hold command posts by enervating the existing ceiling. It also provides equal opportunity for women in the Indian Army by providing them long term job security. In the case of, ***Kirti v Oriental Insurance Co Ltd***²⁷, the Supreme Court has recently clarified that a "notional" income should be considered for deceased, non-earning victims (including homemakers) of motor vehicle accidents, and that prospects should be assessed based on such notional income in order to arrive at fair, just, and reasonable compensation. The Supreme Court's judgment negates the notion that homemakers do not "work" or that they do not add economic value to the household or otherwise. In the case of,

²²<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-maharashtras-shakti-act-that-approved-death-penalty-for-rape-7694231/> (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

²³ (1997) 6 SCC 241

²⁴ (2018) SC 1676

²⁵ (2018) SC 1690

²⁶ (2020) SCC OnLine 200

²⁷ 2021 SCC OnLine SC 3, decided on January 5th, 2021

*MJ Akbar v. Priya Ramani 2021 Delhi Court*²⁸, the court recognized that the right to equality and dignity are often denied to survivors of sexual harassment. By noting that the woman has a right to put up her grievance on any platform and even after a long time, the court affirms what survivors of sexual violence have been arguing for, for years. Women who face sexual violence often are unable to access legal remedies such as filing police complaints or even filing complaints before the internal complaints' committees. This should not cast any doubt on the truth of their claims. Further, the court recognizes that limitation should not be a bar, especially in sexual assault and harassment claims, because survivors are often unable to address sexual violence until years later. In a landmark judgment, *Vineeta Sharma v Rakesh Sharma, 2020 SC*²⁹, the case revolved around the concept of joint Hindu family and coparcenary rights of the daughters in India. The court in this case has cleared many lacunas in law such that notional partition is not actual partition, the provisions are retroactive in nature, whether father is dead or alive on and after 9 November 2005 is immaterial to the conferring of equal rights to the daughter as same as the son and that the rights of coparcenary are conferred on daughter by birth. Supreme Court has also interpreted the legislation according to its objects which was to make good a fault in law as the unamended section 6 of Hindu succession act was discriminatory in nature.³⁰

But recently, there arose situations where even the Courts in India fell into the patriarchal trap. Recently, the Nagpur bench of the Bombay High Court observed that grabbing 12-year-old girl's breast and attempting to undo her salwar did not count as sexual assault under the POCSO Act³¹ because there was no "skin-to-skin contact" but would fall under outraging the modesty of woman under section 354 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860.³² But, the Hon'ble Supreme Court set aside this judgment a few months later clarifying that the most important ingredient in convicting sexual offenders under the POCSO Act is "sexual intent and not skin-to-skin contact"³³

Jhuma Sen, professor at Jindal Global Law School and co-founder of the Indian Feminist Judgment Project blames the entire ecosystem of practices for such judgments and says, "Judges are part of the same society as we are and that society is patriarchal. Objectivity is the greatest myth in law and some judges bring their beliefs about ideal family, ideal woman, ideal victim, into the reasoning table." "Lawyers makes gob smacking arguments, judges pick it up

²⁸ <https://indiankanoon.org/doc/52182353/> decided on February 17th, 2021

²⁹ (2020) 9 SCC 1

³⁰ Prashant Tiwari, "Vineeta Sharma v. Rakesh Sharma; An Case Analysis", (2020) *Legal Service India E-Journal* <http://www.legalserviceindia.com/legal/article-4710-vineeta-sharma-v-rakesh-sharma-an-case-analysis.html>

³¹ *Id.* at p.12

³² <https://thewire.in/law/bombay-hc-pocso-act-minor-sexual-assault-pushpa-ganediwala> (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

³³ Attorney General of India v. *Satish and Anr* LL 2021 SC 656

and validate them through their judgments and so on.”³⁴ In another shocking order of the Indore Bench of the Madhya Pradesh High Court in July 2020 has granted bail to a man accused of sexual harassment on the condition that he will request the complainant to tie a ‘rakhi’ on him with a promise to protect her “to the best of his ability for all times to come”. In June 2020, Guwahati High Court grants divorce to man after *woman refuses to wear 'sindoor', 'shaka'*.³⁵ Karnataka High Court while granting bail to a rape accused: “The explanation offered by the complainant that after the perpetration of the act she was tired and fell asleep, is unbecoming of an Indian woman; that is not the way our women react when they are ravished.”³⁶ Senior Advocate Rebecca John says, “Women are constantly put on trial, there is an expectation about how women should behave and there is no such expectation from men”³⁷

VII. BREAKING BARRIERS

21st Century Women have taken several initiatives and have proved themselves in various fields in some way or the other. Below mentioned are a few which could make the headlines:

- i. **All-Women Pilot Team:** On January 12th, 2021, in a historic move, Air India's longest direct route flight with the all-woman pilot team landed at Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru from San Francisco, flying over the North Pole. The flight covered about 16,000 kilometers. All-Women pilot who took the 18hours direct flight to USA.³⁸
- ii. **Ritu Karidhal,** Deputy Operations Director, Mars Orbiter Mission (MoM): Ms Karidhal has worked on several projects at ISRO, including the prestigious Mars mission, which has thrust her and her colleagues into the limelight. She says being a mother of two it was not easy to maintain a work-life balance, but support from her family, husband and siblings helped her in fulfilling her personal and professional obligations .³⁹
- iii. **Mary Kom:** Mary’s story is about her fight to get into the boxing ring as a young girl growing up in poverty in a deeply patriarchal society, to fighting at the Olympic Games. And she says, “it is not easy to be visible; to break through all barriers starting from the state level, national, and then international. Only a lucky few with outstanding

³⁴<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/when-courts-fall-into-the-patriarchy-trap/articleshow/80611729.cms> (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

³⁵<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/gauhati-high-court-grants-divorce-to-man-after-woman-refuses-to-wear-sindoor-shaka/articleshow/76705018.cms?from=mdr> (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

³⁶<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/when-courts-fall-into-the-patriarchy-trap/articleshow/80611729.cms> (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

³⁷<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/when-courts-fall-into-the-patriarchy-trap/articleshow/80611729.cms> (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

³⁸<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/air-india-longest-flight-women-crew-lands-in-bengaluru-1757771-2021-01-11> (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

³⁹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-38253471> (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

achievements get any support. For a raw and fresh athlete, it is done by you, and you are alone.”⁴⁰

- iv. **Indian Women Hockey Team @ Tokyo Olympics** have made themselves and Indian proud with a valiant effort despite losing the Bronze Medal match.⁴¹
- v. **Indian mathematician Neena Gupta, third woman wins Ramanujan Prize 2021** for her work in algebraic geometry. In her interview, she talks about how there is a general perception about boys usually being better than girls in a calculative subject like mathematics but stressed that the trend is now changing as she sees more women following career in mathematics which was not that case while she was pursuing her Post Graduate degree in this subject and was the only girl in her class.⁴²
- vi. **Harnaaz Sandhu** is the third Indian who won the **Miss Universe Title** after 21 years. Harnaaz draws her inspiration from her mother, who broke generations of patriarchy to become a successful gynaecologist and led her family. Driven to support other women the same way, Harnaaz grew up working with her mother at health camps addressing women's health and menstrual hygiene.⁴³

CONCLUSION

Patriarchy is an ideology that benefits men in almost every regard, though exceptions can be seen in today's times where a few men can be seen trying their best to bring some change against this negative notion of patriarchy by giving women equal respect, equal rights in every possible way, but even this is not appreciated by the society at large because we have been following this patriarchal notion since the time immemorial that it seems to be natural, which of course isn't and this is one of the reasons that it is not always easy to appraise its gigantic effect on society because people usually don't know the alternatives to the way they live, especially the women as they seem to have accepted this as a way of life. And often we see women (especially in the rural areas in India) to be following and appreciating this patriarchal ideology right from the start of the birth of the child where we see how the birth of a male child is celebrated but this is not the case when a female child is born.

The recent living example was the spate of incidents of criminal offences against women in India during the COVID-19 pandemic, some of which even hit the headlines, showing how, in times of meagre restrictions a man can let-out his bottled up frustration on a

⁴⁰ <https://medium.com/@ipsita/mary-kom-5249e06d751c> (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

⁴¹ <https://www.indiatoday.in/sports/tokyo-olympics/story/tokyo-olympics-hockey-india-women-fight-hard-but-lose-bronze-medal-match-3-4-to-great-britain-1837453-2021-08-06> (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

⁴² <https://indianexpress.com/article/education/ramanujan-prize-2021-winner-neena-gupta-says-work-in-mathematics-field-7673906/> (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

⁴³ <https://www.missuniverse.com/delegates/harnaaz-sandhu> (last accessed on January 13th, 2022)

woman irrespective of how educated or affluent he is. Pandemic or no pandemic, every woman is accustomed to fight since birth. The overall problem is rooted in the patriarchal notion of the society.

But a few examples of the 21st Century women as mentioned above show that the women of today are breaking boundaries not just to make a living but also to make their names and bring fame to their families who have supported them in various ways, the most difficult of which was fighting the patriarchal notion of the society. They are clearly not below or above the men in the society but are EQUAL and hence MUST BE TREATED as EQUALS in all spheres of life. The Hon'ble Chief Justice of India, Mr. NV Ramana, also, recently addressed the issue of shortage of female judges in the Indian Judiciary and encouraged women to claim 50% reservation in the Indian Judiciary as their inherent right and not as charity because they represent 50% of the population and how if the women unite this direction, they won't lose anything⁴⁴.

This brings us to the famous lines by **Mary Astell** (1666-1731), an English Philosopher, and makes us think deeply:

“If all men are born free, how is it that all women are born slaves?”

⁴⁴<https://www.opindia.com/2021/09/cji-nv-ramana-quotes-the-communist-manifesto-to-ask-women-to-demand-50-reservations-in-judiciary/> (last accessed on January 20th, 2022)