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Q5(e)

Does women's education help to eradicate patriarchal discriminations? Reflect with illustrations

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2023 · Sociology GS 1 · 10 marks · Sociology

Sociology - The Discipline: Modernity and social changes in Europe and emergence of sociology; Scope of the subject and comparison with other social sciences; Sociology and common sense.

Core demand of the question

- Does women's education help to eradicate patriarchal discriminations? Reflect with illustrations
- Keep the reflection within a 10-mark length

Revision summary

Education raises literacy, delays marriage, and opens work and office for women.

NFHS patterns, Phule's schools, and Kerala's female literacy illustrate the gain.

Patriarchy continues through unpaid care, dowry as capital, honour, and caste.

Bourdieu and Oakley explain why schooling can be absorbed without equality in the household.

Education is necessary help, not eradication by itself.

Introduction

Women's education raises skills, delayed marriage, and public voice. Patriarchy is a system of male control over property, labour, and sexuality. Education helps to reduce some discriminations. It does not by itself eradicate the system.

Body

Where education helps

- Literacy and schooling correlate with lower fertility, later age at marriage, and higher use of health services, as National Family Health Survey rounds show.
- Educated women enter paid work and public office in larger numbers, which weakens the claim that the political and occupational world is male by nature.
- Savitribai Phule's schools in Pune already treated girls' literacy as equality, not as household polish.
- Kerala's high female literacy sits with stronger indicators of women's survival and schooling than many north Indian states.
- Legal awareness of the Hindu Succession amendments and of workplace sexual harassment law travels more easily through educated networks.

Where it does not eradicate

- Educated women still face the **double day** of paid work and unpaid care, which Ann Oakley and later time-use surveys record.
- Pierre Bourdieu's cultural capital can become a dowry and marriage-market asset rather than an exit from the market.
- Honour violence, son preference, and occupational segregation persist among the educated, as seen in professional sex ratios and in campus and workplace harassment.
- Dalit and Muslim women face stacked exclusion. A generic girls' enrolment drive does not erase caste and communal gates.
- **Patriarchy reorganises:** the educated daughter-in-law may be asked to manage a modern household without sharing property.

Reflection

- Education is a necessary condition for a large reduction of discrimination. It is not a sufficient condition for eradication.
- Land rights, workplace law, political reservation, and a change in unpaid care must travel with the school.

Flow diagram

Women education -> Voice work delayed marriage
Voice work delayed marriage -> Reduced some discriminations
Property care honour caste -> Patriarchy continues
Women education -> Patriarchy continues

Conclusion

Women's education helps against patriarchal discrimination by delaying marriage, opening work and office, and spreading legal knowledge. Illustrations from **Phule**, Kerala, and **NFHS** support that help. Eradication fails where care, property, honour, and caste still organise the educated household. Schooling is necessary and not sufficient.

Facts & figures

Savitribai Phule

Opened girls' schools in Pune and treated literacy as social equality.

NFHS

Repeated Indian surveys linking women's schooling to fertility, marriage age, and health use.

Double day

Paid employment plus unpaid care that education does not automatically redistribute.

Bourdieu cultural capital

Credentials that can raise status in a marriage market without ending male control of property.

Hindu Succession amendments

Legal coparcenary rights for daughters that still depend on awareness and enforcement.

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