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CUSTOMARY LAW AND GENDER DISCRIMINATION: PATRIARCHY AND WOMEN'S EXCLUSION AMONG ADI SUB-TRIBES OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH

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Abstract

The current study examines the concept of “gender prejudice” regarding status in the family and marital affairs under customary rights in the tribal societies of Northeast India, specifically focusing on women of four sub-tribes of Adi, i.e., Padam-Minyong, Bokar, and Bori. Tribal women are believed to hold a significantly better position than women in other regions of the world; specifically, women from the Northeast are reported to have more freedom and are treated on an equal footing with men. However, in practice, this is not as good as it seems. While Northeastern women may have some degree of status equality with men, it is not complete.³ While customary laws tend to favour men, despite the perception that women have a higher standing in tribal society, this indicates that traditional institutions are biased against women. Traditionally, women have been mere observers in administrations; they have had no formal participation in decision-making. Customary rules are unfavourable to women, even in matrilineal societies where women hold executive authority.⁴ The Adis are one of the major tribes in Arunachal Pradesh, comprised of several sub-groups. In this paper, women's rights and status have been discussed with respect to their participation and roles in occupation, family affairs, ownership, and marital affairs, with a particular focus on women from four sub-tribes of Adi.

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INTRODUCTION

India's northeastern states are well known across the country for the wide variety of ethnic groups that call this region home, as well as the numerous customs and cultures. North-East India comprises the eight states collectively referred to as the "seven sisters": Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, and Tripura. The "brother" state is Sikkim, a typical hilly region home to numerous tribes and considered one of the planet's most legendary locations. A dizzying array of tribal life makes this place home. India's folklife is a rich mosaic of rituals, laws, beliefs, politics, and history, all of which are distinctive to the tribal people of the northeast. Arunachal Pradesh's "Abor" Tribe, now known as "Adi," is one of these clans.⁵

The personal laws, customs, and usages of the tribes were not disturbed by the British, and the Union Government re-enacted and included all the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935, which upheld the separate rule in tribal territories, especially in the northeast. Further special measures are also provided in the Sixth Schedule to guarantee the continuation of governance in tribal territories in accordance with their usages and customs.⁶

The most vibrant natural landscape is found in the State of Arunachal Pradesh, which is the newest member of the Union of India. traditional attire and rituals, vivacious yet diverse environments and settlements, and captivating yet eclectic religious and cultural practices. Although its geographic and climatic features are not exceptional, it nevertheless has a major and incredibly privileged position under the Constitution. The area remains remote from modernization, with some parts remaining unreachable even now. With its deep gorges, swift-moving rivers, dense forests with a variety of flora and fauna, and hills and snow-capped summits, the state is sparsely populated. Although there are differences in terms of customs, culture, language, and ethnic beliefs, the population as a whole is primarily tribal.⁷

The Sixth Schedule's guiding principles and constitutional rights stipulate, among other things, that nothing shall be imposed upon them in the name of administration or law, that they should be free to follow their own path, and that their traditional arts and culture should be promoted. After providing them with the required training to make them fit, their own personnel should take over for administration and development. Over-administration and the

⁵ . Manjushree Pathak, Tribal Customs Law and Justice: A Teleological Study of Adis (2005)

⁶ . Tai Nyori, History and Culture of Adis (1993)

⁷ .Jogendra Nath, A Cultural History of the Adis of Arunachal Pradesh (2014)

influx of too many foreigners into their territory ought to be minimized or prevented, and the program ought to be implemented through their own social and cultural institutions rather than through rivalry. The amount of money invested should not be used to gauge the success of administration or welfare. Officially, the Adis are regarded as a significant stock within the clan. As we have already described, they can be broadly classified into two groups based on their cultures, customs, social structures, and related factors. The Padam-Minyong (i) and the Galo (ii).²⁹ The first group consists of the following nine sub-tribes: Boris, Padam, Shimogs, Panggis, Minyongs, Karkos, and Shimogs. The second group comprises the Galos, Pailibos, Ramos, and Bokars sub-tribes.⁸

Even though these groups' cultural practices vary widely, upholding customary rights has become a habit that unites these communities. For the lakhs of groups residing in the area, these customs are ancient. In a way, these rights are similar even though they are steeped in a long history of tribal membership. These rights, which include a share of land, inheritance, and participation in political assemblies, are discriminatory toward women and limit their access to centers of power within sociocultural diversity. The current study examines the concept of "empowered women" in terms of status in family and marital affairs, according to customary rights, in the tribal societies of Northeast India, specifically focusing on women of four sub-tribes of Adi, i.e., Padam-minyong, Bokars, and Bori.⁹

The Adi, formerly known as the Abor, is a significant tribe in Arunachal Pradesh, comprising the Galo, Bori, Bokar, Pailibo, Ramo, Tangam, Ashing, Shimong, Karko, Milang, Padam, Pasi, Komkar, Panggi, and Minyong subgroups. The two main Adi tribe subgroups are the Padam and the Minyong. The Minyong-Padam identify as the offspring of their first ancestor, Tani. They celebrate Lutor, Yanying-Aran, and Solung as their three main festivals. They are animists and regard Donyi-Polo as the ultimate god.¹⁰

Padam- Minyongs

Padams-Minyongs belong to a patriarchal society; women are obligated to submit to men according to custom. The following discusses the women's standing in the Padam-Minyong tribes regarding family and marriage. Fathers are the ones who hold the authority within their homes. His oldest son assumes leadership of the family if his father is not present. Mothers also

⁸ . A. Hamilton, In Jungles of North East India (2003)

⁹ ..Obja Borah Hazarika & Sarmistha Das, Gender Implications of Customary Laws on the Women of Northeast India: The Case of Nagaland (2023).

¹⁰ .N.Mitkong, Padam-Miyong, Status of Women in Tribal Society A.P(1992).

assume authority in the household, whereas fathers pass away when their boys are still young. According to custom, the sons inherit everything that their father owns. Aside from this inheritance, the sons assume complete responsibility for the family and maintain the family's clan name. Conversely, daughters are only ever transient family members, since they must leave to live with their husbands. For this reason, male offspring receive priority in schooling and inheritance of property among the Padam-Minyong people. They also favour having sons.¹¹

Women's status in family affairs:

In Padam-Minyong, dads serve as the family's nominal chiefs, particularly in domestic matters. Women in households handle all aspects of housekeeping, including managing the family's food supply, tending to children and animals, weaving textiles, and performing household tasks such as fetching water, gathering vegetables and firewood, and cleaning and washing the entire family, as well as agricultural labour. However, the heavy work involved in building and maintaining houses, clearing forests for farming, tending to cattle, weaving, community projects, and legal work falls on the shoulders of the male members. The father and mother manage various facets of the family business, yet they help each other out when necessary. To find work, women are free to go out and spend time together outside their homes, or to openly engage with individuals of the opposite sex. However, their virginity is desired. They are prohibited from engaging in any sexual offences while working.¹²

Status of women in marital Affairs:

Male relatives take the most care to ensure the safety and virginity of women because they are by nature considered physically weak. However, conventional rules do not severely prevent women from being alone in their homes, from going out alone, from openly meeting people of the opposite sex, or from having a man accompany them. An unmarried woman or girl enjoys the freedom to interact, play, and joke with people of the other sex. In doing so, the majority of the girls select their life partners. Nonetheless, society only allows these single women to interact with or date single men. Unlike women from other castes across the nation, Padam-Minyong ladies have no indication of their marital status.¹³

¹¹ .Mora by Ritika, Moracollective.Org (Last Visited June 5, 2025)

¹² .N.Mitkong, Padam-Miyong, Status of Women in Tribal Society A.P(1992).

¹³ .Economic pursuits among the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh in Economic Pursuits Among the Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. Vol. I (Batem Pertin, RN Koley & Radhe Ampi eds., Directorate of Research, Govt of Arunachal Pradesh.

A married woman can be identified by her behaviour and level of style. Whether young or old, one of the key components of the female position is that, upon marriage, one must become a member of the marital community. It is likewise incorrect for a woman to be married to two men at the same time. Even having extramarital affairs with another man is against social norms. Adultery is a serious crime that carries a penalty. If the wife has an extramarital affair with a married or single man. She receives a penalty, a divorce, or punishment at a rate decided upon locally. Simultaneously, her spouse requests an adultery fine or penalty from the man with whom the wife had a sexual offence. Conversely, a husband is allowed to have an affair with an unmarried woman, but it is a significant crime to have an affair with a woman who still has a living spouse.¹⁴

The Padam-Minyong people rarely practice child marriage, although love marriage is common. The unmarried girls are free to do as they please, whereas the Padam-Minyong girls possess rights to love and marriage. As a result, they get married young. Her property rights may be somewhat impacted by the fact that ladies can even marry men from different castes and communities. At the time of the wedding, parents typically don't send anything for the future, such as cereal seeds, live pigs, or poultry. Second, she is ignored by the people of her original place, who do not willingly allow such women to build successful lives there. Thirdly, although substantial property is not awarded to the daughters who marry males outside of their tribe, they are not completely devoid of property rights. Should a marriage occur with parental approval, daughters will receive sufficient property as a dowry.¹⁵

A man and a woman who have been duly approved by society are said to be united in marriage. Married couples are entitled to start a family and have children. This regulation also applies to the Padam-Minyong society. Endogamy within a clan is not tolerated. Although uncommon, tribe exogamy is not unheard of. Social norms of selection, proposal, acceptance, and performance are followed throughout the marriage process. Having many wives is not unusual; monogamy is typical. It's forbidden to practice polyandry. Relationships outside of marriage are prohibited. Anyone discovered to be involved in extramarital affairs faces steep penalties. The Kebang operation resolves all disputes and misunderstandings in married life.¹⁶ Within the Padam Minyong society, divorce is accepted. The Kebang is prepared to resolve the matter if both the husband and wife decide to file for divorce. Wives are free to file for divorce

¹⁴ .Nuki Gammeng, Status of Women in Arunachal Pradesh vis-à-vis the Property Rights, 27 IOSR J.Human.& Soc.Sci.41, 41-44 (2022).

¹⁵ .Sachin Roy, Aspect of Padam-Miyong Culture (1997)

¹⁶ A.Chakraborty, Padam-Miyong, Tribal Village Council of A.P

and remarry, but they must give back all bride fees and compensation to the guy they were previously married to. A husband may also file for divorce from his wife, but he must compensate her for this.¹⁷

The reasons behind divorce cases in Padam-Minyong include infidelity in marriage on the part of the wife or husband, extramarital affairs by one of the parties, infertility in the wife, maintaining multiple wives, harsh treatment or maltreatment of one of the parties, impotence in the wife, and frequent arguments between the wife and husband on various occasions. If a wife reaches her breaking point or if her husband and she are unable to work things out, Adi's customs allow her to file for divorce. A wife may take custody of any female child upon divorce, leaving the male child with a divorced husband. Divorced women are typically not permitted to go back to their parents' house unless it is an uncle, aunt, or other relative's household.¹⁸

THE BOKARS:

Bokar is a sub-tribe of the Adi of Arunachal Pradesh. They are mainly found in the regions of Mechukha, Pidi, Tato and Manigong under the newly created district of Shi-Yomi.¹⁹ Bokar Adi is traditionally and culturally very rich. The Bokar region is located 1820 meters above sea level. The current study seeks to examine the position of women in the tribes through the numerous sociocultural facets of their lives and to observe any ongoing changes. Additionally, this study intends to identify the various issues that women confront with their social standing, the process of social adjustment, and any changes in their institutionalized behavioural patterns and the ensuing changes in the economy.²⁰

Role of Women in Marital Affairs:

Both males and females in the Bokar community are not allowed to have premarital sex. Only after getting married can they have a conjugal relationship. However, in real life, young boys and girls are frequently observed violating chastity. If anyone violates the rules, both parties are summoned before the traditional village council when such events are observed in the community, and they are typically granted the go-ahead on the condition that they marry according to customary law. In addition, if it is determined that the accused male is unwilling

¹⁷ . Tai Nyori, History and Culture of the Adis (1993)

¹⁸ . Dupak Eva, Status of Women in Arunachal Pradesh- A Case Study of the Adi of East Siang District (2016)

¹⁹ . *Shi Yomi District*, Shiyomi. nic.in (Last visited Jan. 3, 2025).

²⁰ .B.B.Pandey, Status of Women in Tribal Society, Arunachal Pradesh (1997).

to marry the girl, he will be imposed with a penalty for having illicit relations, and he has to reimburse the accused girl's father or family in kind, cash, or both.²¹

Generally speaking, a woman has no right to select her life partner. Parents frequently have the final say in the choice of partner. In this sense, daughters are voiceless and have no choice. It is improper for girls to talk to their parents about getting married or to give their own opinion. As they believe it is pointless to influence their parents' choices, most Bokar girls don't seem to have any views on mate selection. Furthermore, at such a young age, they are frequently married off.²²

The Bokar custom of bride price, or NYAMNE-ARE, is still prevalent and is practiced with great Vigor. The Bokar community does not use the dower system. In contrast, the boy's parents must pay the bride price. There can be no marriage without a bride price. This kind of bride price payment is also common across all the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. In the Bokar community, the bride price can be paid in cash or in kind, including Mithun, cow, hog, goat, Balla (a crossbreed between a cow and a Mithun), handmade beer (OH or millet beer), or both. This is a long-standing custom that has gained popularity. There is also a general understanding of the significance of bride price. According to conventional beliefs, a daughter's role is to provide financial support and assistance to her parents and the rest of the family. As a result, the bridegroom's parents are charged a bride price to compensate the bride's parents for this loss. Therefore, it might just be a metaphor for a woman's worth and a way to make up for her parents' loss.²³

The social implications of bride prices among the Bokars are limited to their economic relevance and their marketability and buyability. It is important to note that if the economic significance of the bride price cannot be ignored, it would be incorrect to interpret its payment as a sign of a sale or purchase, according to renowned and groundbreaking anthropologist R. Lowie (1934). However, it would not be incorrect to interpret the cultural significance of paying a bride price as signifying a sale and purchase among the Bokars.²⁴

Their society rarely performs religious solemnizations for marriages; instead, paying a bride price is the standard way for them to get married. To improve the family's financial situation, women have historically been led to believe that they must perform all household chores in addition to carrying out their duties. Moreover, they believe that men in their culture

²¹ . Joshua Project, joshuaproject.in (last visited Mar. 3, 2025).

²² *Id*

²³ . B. Banerjee, Bokar, Tribal Village Council of Arunachal Pradesh (1999).

²⁴ . N. Lego, History of the Adis of Arunachal Pradesh (2006).

are the only ones susceptible to deception throughout the day. Given that the bridegroom has always had a claim regarding the dowry and the marriage present, the dowry and the marriage present should not be identical. However, the bridegroom or his parents are not allowed to make any claims against the bride's parents regarding the bridal present.²⁵

Women have ownership rights over the items they bring to their father-in-law's home as wedding presents. She is forced to comply with her husband's orders if he requests any of the things for his use, a move that blatantly displays the poor position of women. Among the Bokars, divorce is a common practice that can be initiated by either party leaving their spouse or by refusing to live together. Based on factors such as infidelity, adultery, sterility, impotence, neglect of the wife's domestic duties, temperamental incompatibility, and so forth, the Bokars allow either side to request a divorce.²⁶

Among the various variables that impact divorce, female infertility is given the highest priority. A woman gains a valuable place in the family and the community when she becomes a mother. If the woman does not bear any child, no one respects her or shows concern for her well-being. Not even as a wife does she have value. Even though being a mother increases a woman's workload and responsibilities, she still needs to resume her regular responsibilities as soon as she gives birth and cares for the newborn.²⁷

Adultery and other sexual offences are particularly considered to be the most serious crimes that are penalized. Any extramarital affair is considered adultery, regardless of who has committed the wrong, the husband or the wife. The male partner typically receives harsh punishment. Females are occasionally punished as well in cases of adultery. Sometimes the husband of an adulterous woman finds it difficult to remarry her. If an adulterer is discovered having an affair with his wife, he has the right to demand a hefty fine from him that is almost twice as much as the bride price. The adulteress therefore becomes the adulterer's wife in such circumstances. If their husbands mistreat them, Bokar women are also entitled to file for divorce. The party seeking the dissolution may occasionally be required to reimburse the opposing party for damages. Kebang, a traditional village, is where the entire case is decided. The traditional village council has the right to penalize and fine a husband who forcibly leaves his wife without giving any justification. However, she must make arrangements for the return of the money her husband paid for her if she deserts him or is discovered to be in an adulterous

²⁵ *Indianetzone*, indianetzone.com (last visited Jan. 21, 2025)

²⁶ . Bikash Banerjee, *The Bokars: An Anthropological Research on Their Ecological Settings and Social System* (1991).

²⁷ *Joshua Project*, joshuaproject.net (last visited Feb. 1, 2025).

relationship.²⁸

There is no hard-and-fast rule governing the inheritance of children after divorce, but in practice, under customary law, male children stay with the father and female children go with the mother. The divorced husband is free to retain custody of all the children if he wishes to. Therefore, this kind of incongruity in the children's inheritance again points to the woman's poor position. A woman is not entitled to claim maintenance or compensation if she is divorced for grave reasons, such as adultery or another sexual felony. However, she is entitled to compensation if her divorce was brought about by infertility or other fabricated reasons which are made by her husband or his family members. The village council decides how much compensation a woman is entitled to get or receive, taking into account the amount of movable goods she brought from her parents to her husband's home during their marriage.²⁹

On the other hand, divorced women are not looked down on by society. After the divorce, she can get married again. Divorced women can live a normal life, just like any other unmarried woman, without their status being impacted. Widows have the same status as married women. Among the Bokars, widow remarriage is also common. She is, however, prohibited from getting married outside of her late husband's family or clan, except for circumstances in which no male mate is available within his family or tribe. A widow is never looked down upon by society. A woman's usual position remains unaltered when she marries someone outside of her tribal group.³⁰

Role of women in Family Affairs:

The Bokar women enjoy a favourable position in the family, particularly regarding women's status in family matters, household tasks, and home administration. Women contribute significantly to both childrearing and meeting the family's financial demands. In addition to their outside work, they have the regular responsibility of preparing meals and beer (Oh). Meals and beverages are served exclusively by women. In addition, they have full authority to provide their children with regular parental care and to attend to their health and education. A woman works from sunrise to nightfall. Often, when needed, their husbands will assist them with home duties as well. Except in certain minor ways, a woman does not have the complete authority to manage the family budget. Men spend the most money when it comes to important economic transactions, especially the head of the family. This blatantly displays

²⁸ *Id*

²⁹ *Id*

³⁰ *Id*

women's inferior status in terms of economic standing. That being said, men typically consult women on certain significant business deals.³¹

THE BORIS

The Boris are one of the sub-tribes of the Adi inhabiting the Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh. They follow a patrilineal line of descent. A patrilocal residence is upheld, and inheritance is exclusively passed down via males. Clans serve as the core of the village community, providing members with constant support and cooperation. They are usually monogamous, but it is not forbidden to have more than one wife. Because of the patriarchal system to which the Bori community belongs, the father is the head of the family and the only source of authority.³²

It is the right of every man and woman to publicly show their delight. Women are free to engage in any recreational activity without any limitations or barriers. Men and women in the Bori community equally enjoy the Ponung, a well-known Adi folk dance.³³

Bori women in Family Affairs:

Sex-based division of work is common when it comes to status and family matters, including household responsibilities. The women of Bori are skilled weavers. Their primary source of income is agriculture, supplemented by food collection. The girls' dorm is always located in the village's corner. They continued to work until dusk. Women's duties include gathering firewood, sweeping, fetching water, cooking, and caring for infants. She feeds the entire family, including household pets such as dogs, pigs, and chickens.³⁴

After completing all these tasks, she returns to her agricultural job to gather firewood or produce food for the entire household. Her primary responsibility is to greet guests and serve them local beer (Apong) whenever they visit. Occasionally, the spouse assists her with domestic duties and farm work. Aside from births and deaths, rituals, marriages, and celebrations, women play the main role. Women hardly have leisure time. In their leisure time, they weave, and their primary motivation for working is to support her husband financially. She is the main participant in all home activities. In terms of offspring, sons are typically preferred. Where a daughter cannot, sons are considered guardians of their family lineage. Sons

³¹.Jogendra Nath, A Cultural History of the Adi, Arunachal Pradesh (1st ed.2014).

³² . *Siang District Portal*, siang.nic.in (last visited Jan. 5, 2025).

³³. *West siang district*, westsiang.nic.in (last visited Jan.5, 2025).

³⁴.Bori Adi Tribe, boriaditribe.yolasite.com (last visited Jan 27, 2025).

and daughters are treated equally in terms of affection and care; therefore, having a preference for boys does not imply discrimination against a girl's child.³⁵

Status of Women in Marital Affairs:

The virginity and modesty of a female are the cornerstones of society when it comes to status around sex and marital affairs, and they are rigorously adhered to across the community. However, men are not affected by this. The girl's perspective was never considered before her marriage. However, as love marriages predominate in today's society, the girl's opinion is now sought before her wedding. In the past, child marriage was common, but it has since completely disappeared. Given that society accepts love marriages, it follows that any boy or girl may choose their spouse.³⁶

Bridal prices are accepted and still prevalent. In this case, the bride's parents' status affects the bride price. If the bride comes from a wealthy family, the bride price starts at five mithuns and must be given in cash or kind. The price can range from two to three mithuns if the bride comes from a low-income household. The nonpayment of a bride price in the Bori culture has numerous societal ramifications. The husband will be viewed as incompetent in their culture if he is unable to pay the bride price. Both the husband and the woman are considered to be at fault for adultery. The typical punishment for a husband is a hefty fine. Women have the legal right to divorce their husbands in the event of a divorce. There are some different reasons why a husband may file for divorce, including incapacity to support the family financially, mistreatment and cruelty towards the wife, taking a second wife, and animosity between the husband and the woman's parents.³⁷

In the event of a divorce, the husband is entitled to custody of the children, while the wife may occasionally also be granted custody of the girl. She is entitled to support in the form of a fine, either in cash or in kind, if she gets divorced without a good reason. For example, if she divorced her husband for no reason, she would not be able to recover any costs; instead, she would have to pay hefty fines and deduct additional fees from her bride price. Women who have been divorced are generally viewed negatively by society. She can run into issues if she decides to remarry. In their communities, she is socially ignored. In the event of a widow, society respects her and shares her emotions in all spheres of life. However, if she so chooses,

³⁵ .West Siang District Portal, westsiang.nic.in (Last visited Feb.7,2025)

³⁶ .Examine the Interplay Between Tribal Customary Laws, arunachal.pscnotes.com (last visited May.7, 2025).

³⁷ .*The Adi Tribe of Arunachal Pradesh in India A General Discourse on Roles of Musup koo*, pasighat.wordpress.com (last visited Jan. 22, 2025).

she may remarry only to her late husband's closest relatives, who are also clan members. She is not allowed to marry into her late husband's family after this. According to their customary rule, it is forbidden. Despite these customary restrictions, she must refund her bride price in full as a penalty if she breaks the law by marrying a guy from another tribe.³⁸

It has been discovered that the Bori community is quite traditional when it comes to marriage. According to custom, they marry within their tribe rather than to someone from another tribe. Within their respective communities, the boy or the girl selects their companion. However, it has recently been noted that some changes are occurring in the area of marriage, with boys and girls being found to be married outside of their communities. But, in the past, a girl was viewed as an outcast, and her marriage to someone outside of her tribe was seen as a transgression of social norms. Her status as a member of their community had diminished. Her reputation was lost in most cases, and she was also deprived of her mother's possessions, such as jewellery, bangles, and beads. Her interactions with her parents and her community, on the other hand, also had some influence.³⁹

Conclusion:

Women currently feel safe because laws and government safeguard them from exploitation. Despite having equal rights and advantages in the present era, girls nonetheless feel inferior to men since they are obligated to uphold their traditions of serving and being devoted to men. Concurrently, women today lead secure lives under the protection and guidance of government agencies, and their standing has somewhat improved. After the creation of administrative units and block levels for local transactions, the Panchayat system, which gave local influential people responsibility for local developments, the establishment of schools in villages, the push for equal education for boys and girls under Article 21A of the Constitution, the implementation of various programs for women's welfare, and the application of the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act of 1956, the Maternity Benefit Act of 1961 (Amended in 1995), the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961, the Equal Remuneration Act of 1976, the Child Marriage Restraint (Amendment) Act of 1979, the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act of 1971, the Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition Act, 1986), the Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act of 1987, the National Commission for Women Act, 1990, the Domestic Violence Act of 2005, the Sexual Harassment Act of 2013 and Bharatiya Nayaya Sanhita,

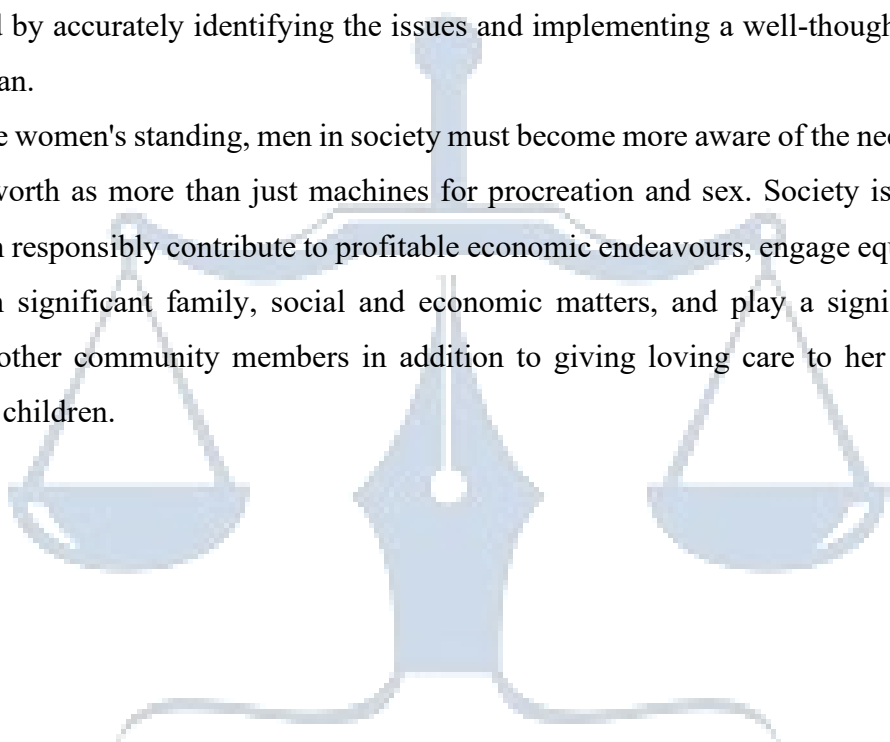
³⁸ *IIPA 2015 dissertation 0040*, repository.tribal.gov.in (last visited Nov. 17,2025).

³⁹ *Manorama Year Book*,613(1998).

2023(the Indian Penal Code) are a few Acts with special provisions to protect women and their interests and the changes started to take place gradually.

Undoubtedly, the Constitution aims to bring about a social revolution by utilizing the legal system as a tool for direct social transformation. Achieving women's status equality was one of the particular goals that the Directive Principles of State Policy and the Preamble to Fundamental Rights specially Article 15(3), both implicitly stated. However, there is now a noticeable disconnect between social goals and accomplishments, legal framework and empirical reality, and symbols and facts. However, the development process could be accelerated by accurately identifying the issues and implementing a well-thought-out, action-oriented plan.

To improve women's standing, men in society must become more aware of the needs of women and their worth as more than just machines for procreation and sex. Society is aware that a woman can responsibly contribute to profitable economic endeavours, engage equally with her husband in significant family, social and economic matters, and play a significant role in educating other community members in addition to giving loving care to her husband and raising her children.



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