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Step to equality by establishing equal parental leave

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Parental leave is often associated with maternity leave where mothers take leave from their work to spend time looking care of their children. This is because of a well-established stereotype that a mother has to be the caregiver and a father has to be the breadwinner. But this belief highly undermines the possibility that arises if the fathers are also given parental leave. Men should get paternity leave from work because it will lead to a stable family, healthier child development, and economic and health benefits to mothers most importantly equal parental leave can help close the gender pay gap and also is an effective way to achieve gender equality.

Women put in the long hours of pregnancy and childbirth, and some women breastfeed, but both sexes are equally competent in caring for babies and children. Gender equality will not be achieved unless care responsibilities, including raising children and domestic duties are distributed equally.

Men want to look after their children, but a lack of policies and a sometimes-toxic attitude in the workplace makes it difficult for them to do so because there are not any policies in place to help partners share duties fairly, women end up facing the majority of childcare responsibilities. Equal paternal leave should be granted for both men and women. Anything less entrenches gender inequality promotes women's lower-income, hinders their job progress in comparison to men's, deprives the men, and bound them to go to work.

According to research, women are more likely than males to face work disruptions as a result of care giving, particularly for children, which can have long-term negative effects for their earnings. Expanding paid and equal parental leave will enhance mothers' lifetime wages and help close the gender wage gap by supporting job continuity, employment, career progression, and labor force participation.

Paternity leave will result in a stable family. Females whose partners take paternity leave are often happy with the spouse resulting in a better relationship with them. The prime reason behind this is they both get to spend more time together looking after their newborn.

When men get paid paternal leave, it helps women keep their jobs, increase their employability, and boost their work prospects. Clearly, the availability of paid paternal leave increases the number of women in the workplace as experts have found that with paid leave, the probability of mothers returning to employment later also increases.

Likewise, it reduces women's care and domestic stress and it improves their health and well-being. Similarly, mothers having to go through postpartum depression, that plays a huge part in marital dysfunction, find a great relief if the partner shares the load of taking care of the baby

Also, the availability of the father to the child will help strengthen the father-child relationship, and make the children physically and emotionally strong. The likelihood of children becoming social, performing better in school and having higher IQs increases if they get to spend enough time around both their parents.

To sum up, paternal leave will benefit a family as a whole. The father will benefit from the leave as he gets time to spend with his newborn at the same time refreshing the mind from year's long mundane work. Fathers' leave has societal advantages at all levels, helping to the identification and redistribution of caring duties, as well as the change of deeply established gender imbalances.

Bibliography

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Do you need a brother? I don't.

Aashma Sapkota
YALC Member

It's obvious that humans seek affiliation; affiliation from society tends to give them an identity. A society is above everything and this everything includes relations, occupation, wealth, morals, and education. In a nutshell, God isn't whom people worship, they worship the society. So, is this highly figured aspect of life always good to people? The exact answer to this question is 'NO'. Well, at least for me it's no, for it has forced me to ride over potholes full of mud several times in my entire life. I have been encountered with many questions regarding my identity, ethics, studies, ambitions, works, and bodily features, and even about the dresses that I wear. Ever since my childhood, I have been asked a particular question that triggers me a lot—Don't you want a brother?

I now want to address a few questions that I always wonder about after my interactions with my extended family at family gatherings—Am I not capable to do everything for my parents, my family, and the society that they would expect from my brother if I had one? And isn't it cruel to be undermined and looked down even after I did everything that would be expected from my imaginary brother had he existed? Well, society will silence my questions with a simple, cold-hearted "NO". I would never want a brother as I have a sister with whom I have shared my entire life moments, a father who has taught me that there is no substitute for hard work and a mother who has blessed me with values such as integrity and resilience. Therefore, I do not see a reason to ask for more to make my life whole, for I am complete.

I was fifteen when I first heard about Amal Clooney, a British-Lebanese barrister who specialized in international law and human rights. She is an activist working for social justice but her work is regarded as an act of rebellion by countries like my own. I come from a culture where social justice and gender equality are topics people still tend to shy away from, and the patriarchy is so deeply rooted and women are restricted to such an extent that the most capable women are regarded as nothing more than accomplished housewives.

Amal has the most gleaming personality that I know of, and she speaks for humanity and works for vulnerable communities with ease even in difficult situations. She is engaging, confident, and stern, and the way she is always dressed is the best. Growing up, I was told that a girl who 'wastes' her time looking good can never be smart and successful. I grew up seeing women compromise and settle for something lesser than who they truly are in fear of being regarded as a pariah in society. And then there is Amal Clooney, an embodiment of everything that the world had declared a woman cant be, and yet she does this unapologetically. Amal is everything the fifteen-year-old me dreamt of being, even though I was told time and again that it was impossible. Through my dedication to work for the welfare of people and from the inspiration that I have got from her, I have decided to study the subject that will make me competent to bring justice and peace to society, even though it's the most intimidating thing I've done. There have been days in my life when I had to work twice as hard to express everything that I felt as my voice is the expression of every woman who did not have the strength to stand against our society. On days like these, my inspiration comes from women like Amal Clooney who are so unapologetic in being everything the world has told them not to be. This is another reason I want to grow out of the bubble constructed by society and work towards my goals to become a great daughter to my parents and my nation. Therefore, I do not need a brother and I have never wanted one.

I find myself surrounded by the chaos of thoughts—who am I?

Barsha Sedhain
YALC Member

While growing up, my mother always said “You are the pride of our home. You are our daughter.” I am the pride. I am their dear daughter. I smiled every time, I thought of this.

My father was different. He never admired me but stated where I was wrong. He made sure he pointed out my mistakes when needed. “He is concerned about me,” I said to myself whenever I felt criticized.

My brother was attentive enough to notice who looked at me when we were together on the road. His hands surrounded me. “I have a survivor.” I looked at him when he used to cover me while walking.

My family is so caring. They love me. They care for me. They protect me. I am the pampered child. My brother never had such pampering. Poor he!! Lucky me.

Poor he? Lucky me???

Am I lucky? Am I a lucky child because I was spoiled with their concerns? Or were they alert because of their GIRL child—their daughter????

My brother was never spoiled with extra concern because he was always safe in the outside world. I was never. The four walls of home made me safe. When I stepped out, I was vulnerable.

“Don’t wear such explosive clothes.”

“Don’t go out this late.”

“Don’t speak so loud.”

“Cover yourself.”

“Act like a GIRL.”

I heard this numerous times. Whenever I am out, they ask me to come home soon. They tell me to call if anything happens. If I am late even by a minute, my

phones get jammed by so many calls from my family. My mother's eyes roam around the road waiting for me when it's dark outside.

Are they concerned? —Yes, they are. Why are they concerned about those eyes who look at me when I am walking in the street? Why are they concerned about the people who come near to me while speaking? Why are they concerned about me when I am not in front of their eyes?

Because I am a GIRL.

They keep me under their arms. But I am not safe. I am constantly under observation. My actions must address my safety. I have to act like a girl. I have to keep myself under the shadow so people don't notice me.

As girls, we are grown up with different mindset. We are termed as "Girls" every time when we are addressed in front of society. Our family is worried when their "Daughters" are outside because the society isn't safe.

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The thought of who am I surround me these days.

Am I just a girl child for my family who is always under social pressure?

Am I just a daughter to my parents who is always afraid if her pride will go through something that she isn't supposed to?

Am I just a sister to my brother who is always afraid if some eyes are tracking me in the wrong way?

Am I just a GIRL who is always underestimated regarding abilities and capacities because I am a girl?

Will I be able to stand alone someday without the extra attention from my family? Someday, when I am the leader, I won't like to address as a "Female Leader". There is no gender to any position. The attitude is the same. The power is the same. I am a "Leader" who wants to lead a flock of humans who want to bring change to the way the world sees us.

"Act like a GIRL"

Let's make it even better.

"Act like a HUMAN."

It is not a great Deal

Rita Puri
YALC Member

One lovely morning as I got up, I had to attend a seminar, and I was rushing late. I grasped my regalia, put them on, and rushed towards the bus station. The burning sunlight, my red ears, and the bus full of passengers hurrying to their destination made me indeed tough to breathe.

After a few minutes of bending and carrying my backpack tight, I got a window seat. I opened the window, took a deep breath, and said, 'Ahh, finally got some fresh air.' I had prepared a short elevator pitch the night before and needed to figure out it formerly before attending the event. I opened the pages of my diary and started seeking the pitch that I drafted last night. Turning over and over, I found it on the in-between of the notebook full of a scramble, mess writing. I finalized and read it.

I heard the dude next to me murmuring about women's performances and responsibilities. I started noting his phone and noticed a teenager on the video call.

I stare at what actually they were speaking about..... The curiosity drew me to know his mindset towards the conversation that they were having on the call.

The guy said, "One of the major reasons for girls' lacking behind in every sector is that they waste half of the day looking at the mirror and admiring themselves."

I went blank and numb, I turned my eyes around his phone and looked at the girl, She had eyes full of tears which wished to fall as thundering clouds with rain.

I felt the same.....She, someone I even don't know her name, who is a thousand miles away I could resemble.

The lad further added saying, "having a child isn't a great deal, being a woman you must deal with each and everything by yourself."

His words were not new to me but I felt sad for the young girl on the other side of the screen. Ending the call, he stood up and got off at the bus stop.

He gave a view on our practice, which is so normalized that looks like a regular talk.

They repeatedly condemn females for the reasons to be futile because of their natures. Seeing through the lens of societal assumptions, females must be appealing enough to grab the spotlight of a man, fulfill the desire of their spouse, and keep them happy. She must wear, talk and react for others' happiness.

Gossiping about the neighbors makes you a woman but speaking about business and architecture is not granted. Red nail colors make you a woman not black. Understanding and appreciating your partner and In-laws is your duty but carrying out decisions isn't. You should get married by your 20s, give birth to sons, look after the house chores, and look charming.

You can't go to work as you are a mom. You must take care of your kids and stay home. After all, It's your duty and It ain't a great deal.....

Feels like a toy with isolated control on society's palms. Sound's like a joke, right?

It's not.. But maybe, Sound's dumb but It is always the same. I may not be the first to express this but I am not the last one.

After All, we all are humans who might have been created with various body structures but for sure the same sentiments and rights.

Women's rights are Human rights. I repeat this each and every morning to remind myself that I am the same.

Gender Equality: Possible??

Shreesti Garu
YALC Member

"Gender Equality is a human right."
"Every body should treat each other equally."
"Equality is the key to success."

Growing up hearing this statements,I have become 21 years old,but these phrases are still waiting for it to be achieved one day.

What is gender?? What is gender equality?

Everybody talks about it. Everyone supports it. But does anyone take any action for it?

When it comes to taking any action relating gender equality,many people turn their head round.Even in a family when one try speaking to have the same facilities as other male members,they are shut down and behaved like they have done something very wrong.When their own family do not support them,they then accept the ongoing situation.

Probably YES there are people advocating and pitching about gender equality. But are the efforts of some activists and few organizations enough??I guess NO.

You may say: "it's 2022, why are we still talking about feminism and equality?"
-Because it is still an issue!!
-It is still a milestone to be achieved for 2030 listed in SDG goal 5.

Despite of many interventions made,gender equality is still not possible; why?

There are many reasons to it.One may be because gender differences begin from families and men donot want to lose their autonomy and women have accepted gender roles as their culture.Women who try to break the culture are often tagged as oversmart in the society.People often perceive gender

equality as fancy term used by higher class and rich people but in fact it is the basic right of every people.

Ever since the beginning of civilization, women have not been able to enjoy the same rights as men. They were not allowed to vote or inherit property on the same terms as men. Women were even disqualified from certain professions and did not have the right to equal pay as well. Consequently, their educational and occupational opportunities were severely limited. It was believed that a woman's role was only the welfare of her family, the upbringing of her children and submitting to her husband. To date, it is shameful to say, women have still not achieved equality.

Till now, chores at home are considered to be feminine roles. Many people believe that women in marriages should be responsible for doing the cooking, cleaning, laundry and buying the groceries and men should be the breadwinner, able to feed the families. Gender roles have become so grounded over the years that they are simply taken as the norm and women automatically assume these to be gender roles without even questioning it.

There are less female employees than men. Institutions don't want to hire females as they have to go through menstruation difficulties, pregnancy and maternal leave and they consider women will not be able to contribute for the productivity of the institution. No equal pay for women and men in many organizations despite both dedicating equal time, effort and doing same amount of hard work is still prevalent.

Another reason for prevailing gender injustice is the attitudes towards gender violence, where both males and females consider it is justifiable to beat or scold their female partners in case any mistake is done. Power imbalance is a hindrance to gender equality which includes male ownership of property, being continued in a patriarchal society. Media and technology also contributes to power imbalance. For example, if a female athlete wins a gold medal in a sporting event, they would still publish a football result and match report on the back page as they believe it is suitable for the readers and audience.

It is true that we live in a society where gender equality is not fully achieved. A female must work twice as hard in order to be named half as good as a male's work. Also, the LGBTQBIQ+ community people are stigmatized. In order to achieve equality, we must think equally.

What can be done to step to equality??Below are some of the ways of achieving equality.

1. Education

Most of the girls often miss their schools due to pile of house hold chores and other daily activities to do as their families and females themselves consider study as their second responsibility. People perceive males have rights to beat and scold their female counterparts in case any mistakes is done. This perception should be changed, which is possible by education. We cannot totally change the beliefs of people but it can be altered so that it benefits the society. Such change is possible when people are awared.

2. Stop raising children differently according to their gender

We start pushing rules to children before they are born. "Blue is for boys and pink is for girls", "boys toys vs girls toys", "boys don't cry". All these things start shaping the way children think and behave. Children need to learn that all human beings are born with the same rights, despite of their gender.

3. Women empowerment

Change can only come when women believe themselves to be capable of doing stuffs and becoming leaders. For this, support of men is must. Our future generations should grow up to believe that there are no such things as gender roles. When this attitude happens only then gender equality will be achieved.

As a kick off, we should pay attention to our own actions. We, ourselves should not behave in different ways whether it's a man or a woman. LGBTIQ+ community should be acknowledged.

Gender Equality is possible. The dream of living in a gender equal place will certainly be fulfilled, not immediately, but ultimately. Small steps can lead to big impact.

"Gender Equality is not a woman's issue, it's a human issue that affects all."

Bibliography

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Are you a Feminist?

Simran K.C.
YALC Member

Last week, when I attended a seminar on “Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights of Women”, the facilitator asked us, “How many of you identify yourself as a feminist?” I raised my hand up in the air readily and confidently, as I thought everyone else would.

But, as I looked around, I saw three hands raised including me, out of fifteen women! I was baffled.

“Was I wrong to think everyone would be identifying themselves as feminists just because they were women? Or is the definition of feminism something more than what I had imagined it to be?” Amidst these dilemmatic thoughts of if I should be calling myself a feminist or not, the “Why would you call yourself a feminist?” question arose in the back of my head to which I had no answer.

Thankfully, the facilitator didn’t interrogate on this and went on with the rest of the topic.

So, what does the word “feminism” actually mean and when did it first come into practice?

The word “feminism” is believed to originate from its French translation called “Feminsme” and was first used by a French socialist Charles Fourier in 1837. As per the actual definition, it is known as the belief in the social, political, and economic equality of the sexes. It was brought into use to advocate for women’s rights and to respect diverse women’s experiences, identities, knowledge, and strengths. So, as we delve deeper into this topic, it’s mandatory to learn about the four important women’s rights movements involved with the history and origin of the term feminism.

The first wave of Feminism (Late nineteen and early twentieth century)

The first wave of feminism fought to achieve the political equality of women including the right to vote. It dealt with the social, civil, and religious conditions and rights of women and battled the suffrage of white women. Also, the

movement advocated for equal opportunities to education and employment, and for the right to own property.

The second wave of Feminism (the 1960s to late 1980s)

The second wave of feminism not only struggled to provide political equality for women but also to provide social equality. It fought for the freedom of women in sex, relationships, and access to abortions and contraception. It raised awareness against domestic labor, marital rapes, sexual harassment in the workplace, etc. It battled against deeply-rooted racism and sexism for a very long time.

The third wave of Feminism (Around the Mid 1990s)

The early third wave of feminism advocated for the power of women in workplaces and dealt with issues related to workplace harassment. Moreover, this wave questioned, reclaimed, and redefined the ideas and perspectives regarding womanhood, gender, beauty, sexuality, femininity, and masculinity. It also brought into highlight the rights of trans people as a part of intersectional feminism. The popular #MeToo movement is also a part of the third wave of feminism.

The fourth wave of Feminism (Started around 2012)

The fourth wave of feminism is characterized by a focus on the empowerment of women, the use of internet tools, and intersectionality. The fourth wave seeks greater gender equality by focusing on gendered norms and the marginalization of women in society. It also argues for equal pay in work, sexual harassment, body shaming, and rape culture, among other issues.

These movements in turn gave rise to different types of feminists:

Radical feminists: These feminists fought against the theoretical and political perspective that focuses on the domination of women by men and patriarchal values.

Marxist feminists: They abide by Marxism and analyze the ways in which women are exploited through capitalism and the individual ownership of private property

Liberal feminists: They focus on achieving gender equality through political and legal reform within the framework of liberal democracy.

Difference feminists: They believe that there are differences between men and women but that no value judgment can be placed upon them and both genders have equal moral status as persons.

So, in general, feminism can be seen as a movement to put an end to sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression and to achieve full gender equality in law and in practice. And the people who believe in equal rights and opportunities for all the sexes are referred to as feminists. Feminists are those who support these waves of feminism and abide by the ideologies raised in different periods of time by the popular feminists of history. They challenge the systemic inequalities women face on a daily basis and raise voices against any kind of gender-based oppression and advocate for equality, be it for men or women.

However, some people protested against the waves of feminism and opposed the ideologies proposed, hence calling themselves "anti-feminist". Similarly, there were people who blamed feminism as the cause of several social problems like a decrease in manliness in American culture, lower college entrance rates of young guys, and called it "hostility towards men". Besides that, some people refuse to be called "feminists" because they find the word "feminism" very extreme and against their personal beliefs and values. Also, some people believe that feminism is synonymous with men-hating so they ridicule the word "feminist".

No matter what people hear and say, as far as I have learned, feminism has nothing to do with belittling men. In fact, feminism does not support sexism against either gender. Feminism works towards equality, not female superiority. It is a powerful word that dates back to the late 1960s and holds a history of strong women who fought back against the-then societal norms to build a society free of social, cultural, political, and religious barriers for women. The movements advocated nothing but equal rights for women. So, you ask why do I call myself a feminist?

It's because I am someone who supports equal rights for all. We have come a long way to build a safe space for our fellow sisters, by fighting battles so that they get equal opportunity and freedom in every step. There's no way I believe any person in this world should be treated inferior to another because we are all built the same way. And women's rights are nothing but human rights.

I called myself a "feminist" then when I had no idea about its meaning and I proudly call myself a feminist now when I am confident about what it states because I believe in creating a prosperous society without any form of social injustice that provides fair resources to all. If you also believe in building an "all-inclusive" society then, without doubt, you're already a feminist!

When will we ever feel safe?

Sumanjari Pradhan
YALC Member

Being a boy or a girl didn't matter to me as a kid. The nicest thing was simply being carefree and happy in the time. As I grew older, I became more aware of issues such as gender roles, age, and so on. But at the time I had no clue what the meaning behind gender was. So, it still felt as if there wasn't any point for me to understand the term. 'You are a girl, you should be careful,' everyone told me while I was growing up. You must be cautious about what you wear, say, where you travel, and whom you associate with... I had no idea what they meant when they said that to me. As I grew older, I realized why they had constantly urged me to be cautious. Being followed, being whistled at, and being stared at. It was a nightmare.

The only thing I was ever taught to do was JUST IGNORE IT.

'Don't make a fuss about it; simply ignore them. You might get hurt.'

'There are a lot of people like that. You should not be concerned with such matters.'

This way, I didn't hurt anyone and didn't bother others.

But how could I not care? How could I not think that it was horrible?

'It's awful! Why do I have to be treated like this? There are times when I wanted to scream out and make everyone stop.'

It's not an easy task. The fear of being alone in the dark. Traveling by myself. Going to places where there are a lot of people. Going out late at night. Traveling in the bus. Even while doing such easiest of the task. Fear constantly lurks in the back of my mind.

Always have to consider the next steps if you ever find yourself in a difficult situation.

I am doing my best to be safe out there. Protecting myself from the evil hands that want to touch me. Protecting myself from the eyes that want to stare at me. The rising case of sexual assault and rape. The way society is ready to

blame the victim. It makes my heartbreak. How cruel can people be?

When will the day arrive when we don't have to think about keeping ourselves safe all of the time?

When will the world become a safer place, and the necessity to defend yourself become obsolete? When will it be a time when we can live our lives without constantly worrying?

A time when we won't have to be fearful. A time when everyone will realize that life shouldn't be filled with fear. I wish time would bring these things soon. Time is everything. And one day I hope time will bring happiness.

नारीको चिनारी

Shambhawi Adhikari
YALC Member

भनिन्छ सृष्टिकी चिनारी हुन नारी,
साँच्चै ममताकी परिभाषा, हर्षकी खानी, सहनशीलताकी प्रतिमूर्ति संसार टेकाउने
आमा हुन नारी,
चिर आयुको कामना गरी सप्तरङ्गी रङ्गहरूले निधार भरिदिने दिदी - बहिनी हुन नारी,
घरलाई एक परीवार बनाउने बुहारी भनौ, परिवारमा खुसी छर्ने छोरी भनौ,
सधैं काँधमा काध मिलाएर हिँड्ने जीवनसङ्गिनी भनौ,
महिसासुरको संगार गर्ने दुर्गा भनौ,
सिंगो महाभारत रचाउने यज्ञासिनी हुन नारी,
मृत्यु सैयाबाट फर्काउने सावित्री हुन,
मृत शरीर सँगै जल्न सक्ने सती हुन नारी ।

तर यस्तै यस्तै पहिचान बोकेका नारीहरूको हक अधिकारका कुराहरू भने अझै ओझेलमा परेको पाइन्छ । समाजमा विद्यमान रुढिवादी विचार, मूल्य मान्यताले नारीका कदमहरू रोकेका छन जसले गर्दा अझै पनि महिला सशक्तिकरणक र लैङ्गिक समानताका नाराहरू हाम्रा गल्लीहरूमा गुन्जीरहन्छन । लैङ्गिक समानता आजको आवश्यकता मात्र हैन हिजो पनि त्यत्तिकै आवश्यकता रयो, थियो र भयो पनि । सभ्यता र विकासको दौडमा विस्तारै दुवै लिङ्गका बिच दूरी बढ्दै गएपछि आज आएर समानताको आवश्यकता बारे कलम अनि कदमहरू चालिनु परेको हो । माता सरस्वती, महालक्ष्मी, देवी दुर्गा पूजिने मेरो समाजमा आज पनि एसिड आक्रमण, घरेलु हिंसा, बलात्कार जस्ता जघन्य अपराधका घटना समाचारका शीर्षकमा पर्ने गर्दछन । अझै पनि ग्रामीण क्षेत्रका कैयौ महिलाहरू आधारभूत अधिकारबाट समेत वञ्चित हुनु परेको छ ।

जनसङ्ख्याले झन्डै ५४ प्रतिशत रहेका महिलाहरूको आज ३३ प्रतिशत अधिकारका बारेमा कुरा गरिन्छ, हरेक वर्ष नारी समानता, सहभागीता र सशक्तिकरणका लागि नारी दिवस मनाइने गरिन्छ तर हत्केलाले छेकेर घाम कहाँ छेकिन्छ र ? महिला सशक्तिकरणका लागि गरिने एकदिने पहल आवाज र नाराहरूले हाम्रो सिदान्तको नै खिल्ली उडाइरहेको देखिन्छ ।

त्यसैले यस्का लागि सामुदायिक स्तरबाट नै शिक्षा, रोजगारी, सहभागीताका अवसरहरूको ढोका खोल्न जरूरी छ । हिंसा र विभेदका किल्लाहरू जरै देखि उखेल्न जरूरी छ । अनि मात्र समृद्ध, सक्षम र दिगो विकासको कामना गर्न सक्नेछौ ।

म आशा गर्दछु कि,

प्रेमको लागि स्वार्थको बलिदान दिन सक्ने नारीहरू प्रेमकै नाममा तेजाबमा जलन नपरोस,

दाजोको नाममा जिउँदै बलन नपरोस

कहिल्यै बलत्कारका समाचार बन्न नपरोस् र

मलाई लाग्छ जुन दिन देखि हामीले हाम्रो भित्ते पालोमा रातो अक्षर अंकित नारी दिवसको दिन कुनै पीडा, आवाज र संघर्ष बिना साधारणतय मनाउन सक्ने हुन्छौ तब मात्र समानताको जीत हुनेछ र नारी सशक्तिकरणले व्यवहारिकता पाउनेछ ।

म नछुने भए रे.....

Monika Koirala
YALC Member

धर्तिमा जन्मिसकेपछी धर्तिमा जन्मिएकैबाट जगतको एक चोखो शरीर भनी कुनै दिन पुजा गरिने म, अकस्मात यहि जगतको अँध्यारो कोठा भित्र रहन बाध्य भए। एक अँध्यारो कोठामा जहाँ दिन र रातका पूरा पुर १२ घन्टा देखिन्थेनन अनुभव मात्र पूरा १ दिनको हुन्थ्यो कहाँ सोही दिन गन्दै गन्दै मैले १५ दिन कटाउनु पर्थ्यो। घामको किरण नहेरी १५ दिन कसैको अनुहार नहेरी बस्ने गर्दथे।

उमेरले भरखर १३ लागेको म, १५ दिन एकैठाउमा रहे। बिहान सबैरै आमासगै खाना बनाउने म भान्छामा जे पाक्छ त्यही आफै झिकेर खाने म अब बाहिर ढोकामा ल खाना ल्याइदेछु भनी अलक्क राखिदिएको खाने भएछु। हजुर आमाले औसिमा पुजा गरेर टीका लगाउने बेलाखै नातिनी औसिको टिको कन्य केटिलाइ लगाउनु पर्छ भनेर मलाइ खोजूहुन्थ्यो,म त अब कहिल्यै कन्य नहुने कस्तो अनकन्टार अकन्य कोठामा पुगेछु, जहाँ बस सुह्र भएदेखी पुजा कोठामा पस्र नहुने भएछु।

अँध्यारो कोठामा ओच्छ्याइएको पातलो गुन्द्रीमा बस्दा धेरै पटक खपिनसक्नु तल्लो पेट दुख्दथ्यो। पिडाले पेट समाती समाती म कराउथे, रुन्थेजहाँ खै छोरी तिम्रो पेट दुख्यो हो भनेर बाले एकपल्ट भन्न सम्म नमिल्ने म भएछु। बालाई पनि त लागदो हो,छोरिको पेट समातिदिउ,अँध्यारो कोठामा एकलै बसिरहेकी छोरी सम्झेर आमालाइ पनि त लागदो हो, गएर सगै बसु भनेर तर बा, आमा दुबै समाजको कुरूप सस्कारसग बाधिनु भएको छ, जहाँ न दुखेको पेट समात सक्नु हुन्छ न सगै आएर बस्र नै।

अँध्यारो कोठामा १५ दिन बिताएपछीनिस्किदा देखिएको उज्यालो सन्सारमा म साच्चिकै सन्सारबाट नछुने भएछु।

नेपालको संविधान र लैंगिक समानता

Puja Bisunke
YALC Member

सभ्यताको प्रथम चरणलाई छोड्ने हो भने निजि सम्पतिको विकासँगै या भनी परिवारको उत्पत्ति सँगै महिलालाई दोस्रो नागरिकको रूपमा लिईएको ईतिहासलाई नमान्न सकिँदैन।

सामाजिक मुल्य मान्यताको आडमा र राज्यले निति नियमहरूको आडमामा महिला माथिको शोषण कायम नै राखिनु स्वभाषिक कार्य सरह थियो। महिलालाई राज्य सञ्चालनमा र निति नियमनमा प्रत्यक्ष संलग्न गरिनु दुर क्षितिजको कल्पना थियो।

तर,

नेपालको सन्दर्भमा कुरा गर्ने हो भने ऐतिहासिक जनयुद्ध र जनआन्दोलनको जागमा महिला समानता र समावेशीताले वैधानिक पाएको छ र यस साम्बन्ध बुँदाहरू संविधानको धाराहरूको रूपमा कोरएका छन।

मुलतः संविधानलाई देशको मुल कानूनको रूपमा व्याख्या विश्लेषण गरिन्छ। राज्यमा बात्रे साबै कानून यसै कानूनको अधिनमा राहि बन्छन र यदि यस कानूनसँग बाझिन आएमा अमान्य हुन्छन। ३५ भाग र ९ अनुसूचीमा यस संविधान विभाजित छ। यस आलेखमा हामी संविधानमा व्यवस्था गरिएका लैंगिक समानताको बुँदाहरू माथि चर्चा गर्छौं।

१. नागरिकता

यस संविधानले धारा ११ मा कुनै व्यक्ति जन्म हुँदा निजको आमा वा बुवा नेपालको नागरिक रहेछन भने निज व्यक्ति नेपालको नागरिक ठहरिने व्यवस्था गरेको छ।

साथै बाबुको पहिचान नखुलेको नेपाली आमाबाट जन्मिएको बालकले आमाको नाम बाट नागरिकता पाउने व्यवस्था यो संविधानले गरेको छ। साथै नेपाली आमा र विदेशी बाबुबाट जन्मेको र नेपालमै बसोबास गरेको र निजले अन्य देशको नागरिकता नलिएको खण्डमा उक्त बालकले आमाको नामबाट नागरिकता पाउने प्रावधान रहेको छ।

यो प्रावधानहरूले माहिलाले आफ्नो सन्तानको नागरिक पहिचानको निम्ति एक पुरुषको साहाराको अनिवार्यतालाई अन्त्य गरेको छ।

२. मौलिक हक

यस संविधानले लैंगिक तथा कुनै पनि आधारमा भेदभाव नगरिने प्रावधान समानताको हक अन्तर्गत धारा १८मा व्यवस्था गरेको छ साथै महिला तथा अन्य उत्पिडित समुदायलाई दिइने संरक्षणलाई असमानता नमानिने बताएको छ।

धारा ३८, महिलाको हक अन्तर्गत प्रत्यक माहिलालाई लैंगिक भेदभाव बिनाको समान वंशीय हक, सुरक्षित मातृत्व र प्रजनन स्वास्थ्यको हक, कुनै पनि धार्मिक या साँस्कृतिक प्रचलन या अन्य कुनै पनि आधारमा शारीरिक/मानसिक या अन्य कुनै पनि हिसालाई दण्डनिय मानिएको छ।

साथै समानुपातिकता र समावेशिताको सिद्धान्तको अंगिकार गर्दै महिलालाई शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य, रोजगारी र सामाजिक सुरक्षामा सकारात्मक विभेदका आधारमा अवसर र साम्प्रति तथा पारिवारिक मामिलामा दम्पतीको समान हक जस्ता प्रावधान समेटिएको छन्। साथै महिलाको राज्यका निकायमा सहभागिताको हक पनि सुनिश्चित गरेको पाइन्छ।

३. राज्यका निर्देशक सिद्धान्त, नीति तथा दायित्व

राज्यका निर्देशक सिद्धान्त, नीति तथा दायित्वलाई राज्यको मार्गनिर्देशनका रूपमा बुझिन्छ। भाग ४ मा व्यवस्था गरिएको उक्त सिद्धान्तलाई हेर्ने हो भने समतामूलक, समानुपातिकता र समावेशितामा आधारित राज्य निर्माणको लक्ष्य बोकेको बुझिन्छ।

४. व्यवस्थापिका

व्यवस्थापिकालाई सामान्य रूपमा कानून निर्माणको थलोको रूपमा बुझिन्छ। संघिय संसदमा देशको जनसंख्या र भूभागको आधारमा १६५ प्रतिनिधि सदस्य प्रत्यक्ष अन्तर्गत निर्वाचित हुन्छन भने ११० सदस्य समावेशिताको सिद्धान्त अन्तर्गत समानुपातिक तर्फबाट निर्वाचित हुन्छन। जसले गर्दा नीति नियम निर्माणमा महिला एवं अन्य पिछडिएको वर्गको प्रतिनिधित्व र उनीहरूको प्रत्यक्ष भूमिका रहन्छ। जसले गर्दा उत्पिडितहरू स्वयं आफ्नो हकको निम्ति कानून कोर्ने ठाउँमा प्रत्यक्ष उपस्थिति जनाउन पाउँछन।

साथै राष्ट्रिय सभामा पनि अनिवार्य रूपमा समावेशिताको सिद्धान्त अपनाउन पर्ने व्यवस्था रहेको छ।

राष्ट्रिय सभा, प्रतिनिधि सभा र प्रदेश सभामा अनिवार्य रूपमा सभाध्यक्ष र उपाध्यक्ष मध्य एक महिला र एक पुरुष हुन अनिवार्य छ।

५. राष्ट्रपति र उपराष्ट्रपति

राष्ट्रपति र उपराष्ट्रपतिको निर्वाचन फरक फरक लिंग वा समुदायको प्रतिनिधित्व हुने गरी गर्नु पर्नेछ। (धारा-७०)

६. राष्ट्रिय महिला आयोग

१ अध्यक्ष र ४ सदस्य रहने गरि एक राष्ट्रिय महिला आयोगको स्थापना संवैधानिक आयोगको रूपमा गरिएको छ। (धारा-२५२)

महिला हक हितसँग सरोकार राख्ने निति, कार्यक्रमको कार्यान्वयन, यस सम्बन्धित कानूनको अनुगमन र कार्यान्वयनको उपाय, लैंगिक समानता र सशक्तिकरण, महिला अधिकारको प्रयोग जस्ता कार्य यस आयोगको काम कर्तव्यको रूपमा रहेको छ।

अन्ततः नेपालको संविधानले लैंगिक समानता र समानुपातिकताको सिद्धान्त अंगिकार गरेको प्रावधानहरू हेर्दा बुझिन्छ। यसको परिपुरकका रूपमा अन्य ऐन कानूनको निर्माण भएको छ। तर यसका व्यवहारिक जटिलता समाधानको निम्ति यथेष्ट प्रयास भएको भने देख्न र अनुभव गर्न सकिँदैन।