Literature Review


This paper begins by briefing about the marginal position occupied by the Indian woman in the society and also in the political process due to socio-economic constraints. It outlines the evolution of the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) against this backdrop. It then gives a brief account of the position of women in the PRIs before the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act. Finally, it examines the probable role of women in the context of the 73rd Amendment Act. It examines whether women will be able to exercise political power through this system, what hurdles are there on their way, and finally how they can overcome these?

Law and Gender Inequality: The Politics of Women’s Rights in India, Flavia Agnes, Oxford University Press, 1999,

This book explores the issue of gender and law reform with reference to the politics and history on India. It also explores the strategies, which could safeguard the of women's rights in a country like India, which has a typical social, cultural and political background. The book is divided in four parts. First part contains five chapters and speaks about Pre-colonial and colonial Legal Structures. Second part comprises of three chapters, and explores the post-independence developments. Third part of the book which consists of two chapters explains the Developments in the personal laws of non-muslim minorities. Fourt and last part of this book contains the analysis of the current trends of the debate on the Uniform Civil Code.
The article emphasises the magnitude of the problem of sex determination tests (SDT) in India which has resulted in sex selective abortions of thousands of female foetuses. The state of Maharashtra passed the Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act of 1988 to ban SDT. But inspite of stringent provisions, due to lack of proper implementation, this law has failed to curb the problem. There are many advocates of SDT, and they believe it will help control the population growth. Scarcity of women does not imply that their life will get better- it is a myth. The author decries the fact that often women themselves prefer a male child as shown from various studies due to social conditioning. The real solution lies in making families realize the value of their daughters; otherwise these SDT will never end.


The writers of the book have documented a process of self realization through self-examination of ones body. It potrays a process of self-help training experience in women's health and deals with issues that adversely affect women's health such as class caste and gender oppression in family and society, medicalisation of health, coercive and women targeting policies of the government and social stereo typing. It compiles the experience of eighteen women, in a ten months (Between February 1993 and November 1994) training on self-Help Training in Women's Health based in Hyderabad. The book contents issues related to gender sensitization and health politics of health and population, body politics and beyond fertility awareness and sexuality, gyn-ecological disorders and healing child-bearing support, the Experience
documented here are those of dalit, tribal and otherwise marginalized women made out of deliberate choice. Each chapter in the book gives objectives and the mythology used in the training. It also records the successes and failures of the training processes, yet is a friendly and practical guide for seeking alternatives. The form of the book is simple and illustrative. The illustrations in book reflect the experience and insight of the participants.


The work, taking cognisance of the increasing number of women in the total workforce of countries of the world and the consequent emerging patterns of social interaction views the work place as a new domain of conflict in the 'running battle of the sexes'. As the work presents a comprehensive profile of the working force in India drawing upon data from decennial Censuses, National Sample Surveys and small scale socio-economic surveys, it includes women's occupational profile as well as the social mores and family values that determine behavioral patterns specifically in the workplace. These survey results are analyzed for a further interpretation of the components of sexual harassment and male-female relationship in the workplace. Working women's search for identity is also addressed in the context of the traditional pattern of gender and sexual exploitation. The book brings out the distinctive and alarming aspects of gender confrontation and its sociological significance.