



Challenges women face in accessing justice in India

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ABSTRACT :

Each stage of the legal justice system contains a large number of obstacles for women in India that result in inadequate legal justice. One such obstacle, which stands out the most, is the oppressive social norms that exist in our society, which do not permit even a peep of women's rights or their voices in legal aspects. There is also a high chance that many women do not comprehend their lawful rights, hence seeking any assistance or even making use of the justice system's processes becomes impossible for them.

In addition, gender bias amongst law enforcement may also result in ineffective responses to crimes like domestic violence and sexual abuse of women. Built-in complications such as judicial congestion are, in addition, lengthy delays are enough to force a woman to abandon justice. In addition, the low number of practising lawyers means that the remaining women may be denied the needed assistance to uphold their righteousness.

Financial constraints, legal restrictions and unavailability of legal aid further compound and create difficulties around these issues. It is vital to address these problems in order to create an appropriate and balanced legal system that enables women to be at the forefront of legal processes and ensures that their opinions are both heard and respected throughout the legal system.

13 challenges women face in the legal justice system in India:

- 1. Social Stigma:**
Women often face societal judgment and stigma when they come forward with legal complaints, especially in cases of sexual assault or domestic violence.
- 2. Lack of Awareness:**
Many women are unaware of their legal rights and the resources available to them, which hinders their ability to seek justice.
- 3. Gender Discrimination:**
There is often bias against women within law enforcement and judicial systems, leading to unfair treatment.
- 4. Judicial Delays:**
Lengthy court processes can discourage women from pursuing justice, as cases may take years to resolve.
- 5. Limited Legal Representation:**
Many women lack access to affordable legal counsel, making it difficult to navigate complex legal proceedings.
- 6. Cultural Barriers:**
Traditional norms and cultural expectations can prevent women from reporting crimes or seeking legal recourse.
- 7. Victim Blaming:**
Women often face victim-blaming attitudes, which can discourage them from coming forward and seeking justice.
- 8. Inadequate Support Services:**
There is often a lack of support services, such as counseling and shelters, for women facing legal issues.
- 9. Corruption:**
Corruption within the legal system can lead to unfair outcomes and discourage women from pursuing their cases.
- 10. Retribution Fears:**
Women may fear retaliation from their abusers or family members if they pursue legal action.

11. Language Barriers:

For women from marginalized communities, language differentiation can create legal challenges in assessing legal help.

12. Limited access to information:

many women do not have easy access to the information in legal help.

13. Economic constraints:

financial difficulties can prevent women from affording legal assistance and seeking justice.

Some remedies that can help address the challenges women face in the legal justice system in India:**1. Legal Awareness Programs:**

Implementing community-based programs to educate women about their legal rights and available resources can empower them to seek justice.

2. Gender Sensitization Training:

Training law enforcement officials and judicial personnel on gender sensitivity can help reduce biases and improve the treatment of women in the justice system.

3. Expedited Legal Processes:

Establishing fast-track courts for cases involving violence against women can help reduce delays and ensure timely justice.

4. Access to Legal Aid:

Expanding access to free or affordable legal representation can support women in navigating the legal system effectively.

5. Support Services:

Creating more shelters, counseling services, and support hotlines for women facing legal issues can provide essential assistance.

6. Community Support Networks:

Encouraging the formation of community groups that support women in legal matters can help them feel less isolated and more empowered.

7. Anti-Corruption Measures:

Strengthening anti-corruption initiatives within the legal system can help ensure fair treatment and outcomes for women.

8. Victim Protection Programs:

Implementing measures to protect victims from retaliation can encourage more women to report crimes and seek justice.

9. Multilingual Legal Resources:

Providing legal information and resources in multiple languages can help women from diverse backgrounds access the help they need.

10. Financial Assistance Programs:

Offering financial support for women pursuing legal action can alleviate economic barriers and encourage them to seek justice.

11. Public Awareness Campaigns:

Running campaigns to change societal attitudes towards women and promote gender equality can help reduce stigma and victim-blaming.

12. Collaboration with NGOs:

Partnering with non-governmental organizations that focus on women's rights can enhance resources and support available to women in legal situations.

By implementing these remedies, the legal justice system in India can become more accessible and equitable for women, ensuring their rights are protected and upheld.

Conclusion:

As a summary, the difficulties concerning access to justice by women in India are not only a product of legal frameworks, but also of socio cultural and structural factors embedded within the country. Such circumstances are often caused by patriarchal practices, stereotypes and gender discrimination that have existed for centuries and continue to be prevalent in societal perception as well as institutional arrangement. It can be difficult for countless women to pursue justice, ranging from a lack of knowledge on legal recourse available to them, to a self-imposed inhibition in seeking the help of the

authorities due to fear of societal backlash or being tips. For some women, this is not just any simple stigma they face against seeking justice – it is the overwhelming societal expectations that do not exist in urban contexts. Women in rural regions, in particular, are at more risks as they are bereft of the means of information, legal aid services and support systems.

Among the most important of these is gender discrimination which cuts across all facets of the legal and law enforcement systems. Women MPs, law enforcement officers, hanging judgements and all may hold stereotypes which predispose them in deciding how to deal with women related cases especially in the areas of domestic violence, rape and dowry harassment. Women are further victimized through harassment and questions which many times are disrespectful towards other women who file a crime complaint. This leads to their disillusionment and reluctance to pursue justice in the first place.