

- Women Change the World
- Fewer Opportunities and Rigid Expectations
- Breaking Stereotypes
- Social Pressures on Boys and Girls
- Women in Industrial Work
- Learning for Change
- Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain and Her Dreams About Ladyland
- Schooling and Education Today
- Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Campaign
- Women's Movement
- Campaigning
- Protesting
- Showing Solidarity
- Solved Examples
- Practice Set
- Answer Key
- Quick Reference
- Glossary

Women Change the World

In this chapter, we explore the work of women outside the home and the challenges they face in society. We learn how certain occupations are traditionally seen as suitable for men, and how women have struggled for equality. Education has been a key factor in creating new opportunities for women. The chapter also traces the efforts of the women's movement in challenging discrimination and promoting women's rights.

Fewer Opportunities and Rigid Expectations

Many children associate women with certain jobs like nursing and men with others like army officers. This is because of stereotypes linked to traditional family roles. For example,

women are seen as more patient and gentle, making them suitable for nursing, while science and technical fields are often considered unsuitable for girls. These stereotypes limit girls' access to education and training in fields like engineering and medicine. Families often encourage girls to prioritize marriage over education or careers.

Exam Questions

Q: Why are women often associated with certain jobs like nursing?

A: Because of stereotypes that link women's roles in the family, such as being patient and gentle, which are seen as suitable for nursing.

Q: How do stereotypes affect girls' education?

A: They limit support for girls to study technical subjects and encourage them to focus on marriage instead of careers.

Breaking Stereotypes

Laxmi Lakra, a 27-year-old woman from a tribal family in Jharkhand, became the first woman engine driver for Northern Railways. Despite her parents being illiterate, they ensured she received an education. Laxmi overcame many challenges, including societal expectations and gender stereotypes, to pursue a career in electronics and railways. She believes in following her passion and living a lifestyle of her choice without harming anyone.



This image shows a train driver leaning out of the locomotive cabin to inspect the railway track, highlighting the role of the driver in ensuring safety and proper operation of the train.

Exam Questions

Q: Who is Laxmi Lakra and why is she significant?

A: She is the first woman engine driver for Northern Railways, breaking gender stereotypes in a male-dominated profession.

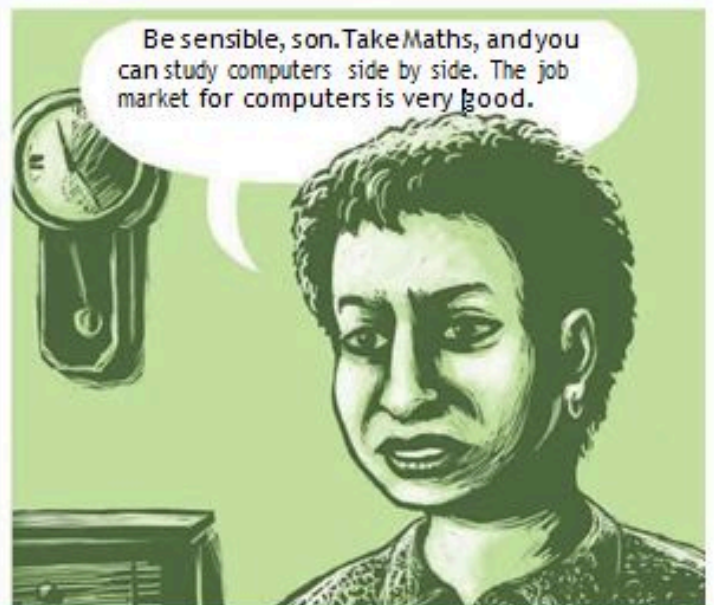
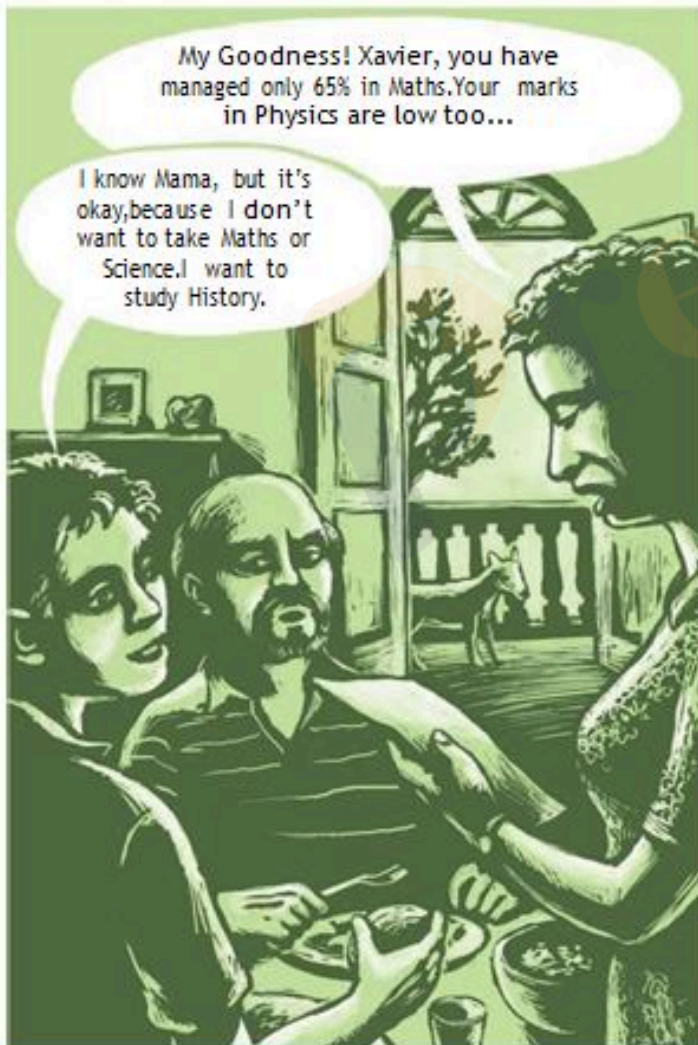
Q: What challenges did Laxmi face in her career?

A: She faced societal stereotypes about women's roles and had to prove herself in technical fields traditionally dominated by men.

Social Pressures on Boys and Girls

Children face pressures from adults and peers about gender roles. Boys are often pressured to choose jobs with good salaries and to behave in ways considered masculine, such as not showing emotions. The story of Xavier illustrates the conflict between personal interests and family expectations regarding education and career choices.

Xavier was happy with the results of his Class X board exams. Though his marks in Science and Maths were not high, he had done well in his favourite subjects History and Languages. When his parents saw his report card, however, they did not look pleased at all...



This comic strip shows Xavier discussing his exam results and subject choices with his parents, highlighting the tension between his interests in History and his parents' preference for Science and Maths for better job prospects.

Exam Questions

Q: What dilemma does Xavier face?

A: He wants to study History, but his parents want him to choose Science and Maths for better job opportunities.

Q: What social pressures do boys face according to the story?

A: Boys are pressured to choose high-paying jobs and conform to masculine behavior, including not showing emotions.

Women in Industrial Work

The image of women working in a textile factory shows the important role women played in industrial labor, especially in the textile industry during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Women operated machines and contributed significantly to the economy, although their work was often undervalued.



Exam Questions

Q: What kind of work did women do in textile factories?

A: They operated machines like looms and handled fabric production tasks.

Q: Why was women's work in factories important?

A: It supported families and contributed to the economy during industrial times.

Learning for Change

Education has been a powerful tool for change. Historically, many communities did not educate girls, and women's contributions were often seen as supportive rather than skilled work. In the 19th century, schools became more common, but educating girls faced opposition. Women like Ramabai and Rashsundari Devi fought for women's education and independence, teaching literacy and skills beyond traditional roles.



Ramabai championed women's education and set up a mission to teach widows and poor women literacy and skills for independence.

Rashsundari Devi wrote the first known autobiography by an Indian woman, describing her secret efforts to learn reading and writing despite societal restrictions.

Exam Questions

Q: Who was Ramabai and what was her contribution?

A: She promoted women's education and independence by setting up a mission to teach literacy and skills.

Q: Why is Rashsundari Devi's autobiography important?

A: It provides a rare first-person account of a woman's life and struggles in 19th century India.

Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain and Her Dreams About Ladyland

Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain was a writer and educationist who overcame restrictions on girls' education. She wrote *Sultana's Dream*, a story imagining a utopian world called Ladyland where women ruled and men were secluded. Rokeya's education empowered her to help other girls go to school and build their dreams.



Exam Questions

Q: What is the significance of *Sultana's Dream*?

A: It is an early feminist story imagining a world where women have freedom and power, challenging traditional gender roles.

Q: How did Rokeya contribute to girls' education?

A: She started a school for girls and encouraged education and empowerment.

Schooling and Education Today

Today, more boys and girls attend school, but disparities remain. The 1961 census showed 40% literacy among males and 15% among females; by 2011, this improved to 82% and 65% respectively. However, the gender gap persists. Dropout rates vary by social group and education level, with Scheduled Tribes having the highest dropout rates, especially at secondary level.

Average Annual Drop-out Rate in School Education (2014-15)

(in percentage)

| Level | All | | | SC | | | ST | | |
|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | Boys | Girls | Total | Boys | Girls | Total | Boys | Girls | Total |
| Primary (Classes 1-5) | 4.36 | 3.88 | 4.13 | 4.71 | 4.20 | 4.46 | 7.02 | 6.84 | 6.93 |
| Upper Primary (Classes 6-8) | 3.49 | 4.60 | 4.03 | 5.00 | 6.03 | 5.51 | 8.48 | 8.71 | 8.59 |
| Secondary (Classes 9-10) | 17.21 | 16.88 | 17.06 | 19.64 | 19.05 | 19.36 | 24.94 | 24.40 | 24.68 |

Source: Educational Statistics at a Glance, MHRD, 2018

Exam Questions

Q: What does the dropout rate table show?

A: It shows that dropout rates increase with education level and are highest among Scheduled Tribes.

Q: Why do children from Dalit, Adivasi, and Muslim communities leave school early?

A: Due to poverty, lack of schools and transport, discrimination, and preference for boys'

education.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Campaign

This government campaign launched in 2014 aims to save and educate the girl child. It addresses issues like female infanticide and promotes equal opportunities for girls to study and grow.



Find out about the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' campaign launched in 2014.

Exam Questions

Q: What are the two main goals of the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao campaign?

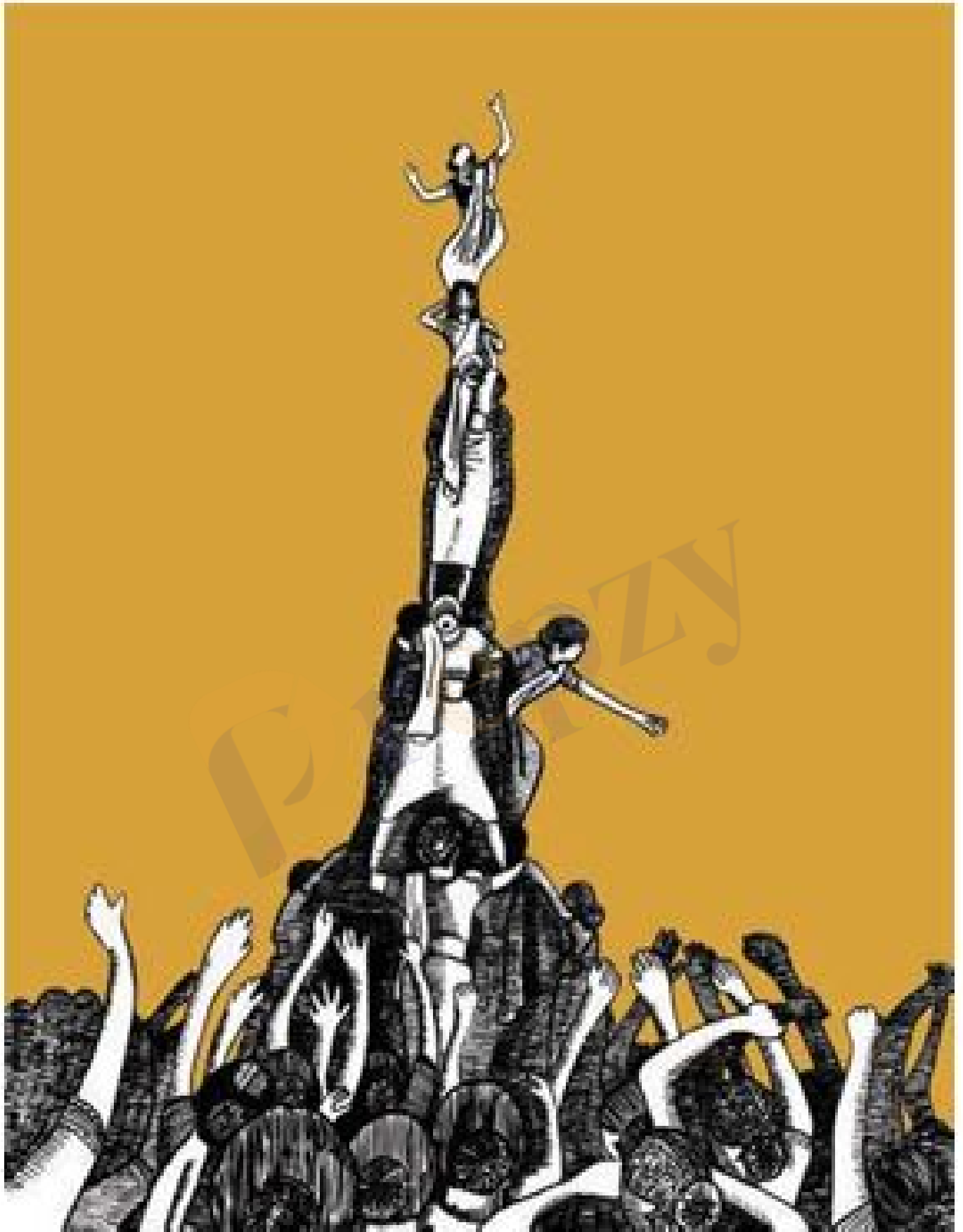
A: To save the girl child from discrimination and to promote her education.

Q: Why is this campaign important?

A: It helps address gender inequality and ensures girls have equal opportunities.

Women's Movement

The women's movement is a collective struggle by women and supportive men to fight discrimination, violence, and inequality. It uses various strategies like campaigns, protests, and awareness programs to bring about legal reforms and social change.



This image symbolizes teamwork and collective effort, essential qualities in the women's movement.

Exam Questions

Q: What is the women's movement?

A: A collective effort by women and supporters to fight for women's rights and equality.

Q: How does teamwork help the women's movement?

A: It allows individuals to support each other and achieve common goals.

Campaigning

Campaigns have led to important legal protections for women, such as laws against domestic violence and sexual harassment. Women's groups have also fought against dowry deaths by raising public awareness and pushing for legal reforms.



Exam Questions

Q: What issues have women's campaigns addressed?

A: Domestic violence, sexual harassment, dowry deaths, and discrimination.

Q: How do campaigns help bring change?

A: By raising awareness, influencing public opinion, and pushing for new laws.

Protesting

Public rallies and demonstrations are powerful ways for the women's movement to draw attention to injustices and demand change.



Exam Questions

Q: Why are protests important for the women's movement?

A: They raise public awareness and pressure authorities to address women's issues.

Q: What do raised fists symbolize in protests?

A: Resistance, solidarity, and empowerment.

Showing Solidarity

The women's movement also shows solidarity by supporting other women and causes, celebrating achievements, and renewing struggles on occasions like International Women's Day.

Below: On 8 March, International Women's Day, women all over the world come together to celebrate and renew their struggles.



Women come together on International Women's Day to celebrate progress and continue the fight for equality.



Above: Women are holding up candles to demonstrate the solidarity between the people of India and Pakistan. Every year, on 14 August, several thousand people gather at Wagah on the border of India and Pakistan and hold a cultural programme.

Women hold candlelight vigils to show peace and solidarity between India and Pakistan, promoting friendship despite political differences.

Exam Questions

Q: What is the purpose of International Women's Day?

A: To celebrate women's achievements and raise awareness about ongoing struggles for equality.

Q: How do candlelight vigils symbolize solidarity?

A: They represent hope, peace, and unity among people.

Solved Examples

Example 1: Explain how education has helped women change their status in society.

Answer: Education has empowered women by providing knowledge and skills, enabling them to pursue careers, question discrimination, and participate in social movements. Educated women like Ramabai and Rokeya started schools and inspired others, leading to greater independence and equality.

Example 2: Describe one way the women's movement has influenced laws in India.

Answer: The women's movement campaigned against domestic violence, leading to the 2006 law that provides legal protection to women facing violence at home.

Practice Set

Easy

- What is a stereotype? Give an example related to gender roles.
- Who was Rashsundari Devi?

Moderate

- Explain the significance of the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao campaign.
- What challenges do girls from Scheduled Tribes face in education?

Challenging

- Discuss how the women's movement has used different strategies to fight discrimination.
- Analyze the impact of societal expectations on boys' and girls' career choices.

Answer Key

- **Stereotype:** A fixed idea about a group; example: girls are only good at nursing.
- **Rashsundari Devi:** First Indian woman to write an autobiography, who taught herself to read and write.
- **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao:** Campaign to save and educate girls, promoting gender equality.
- **Challenges for Scheduled Tribes girls:** Poverty, lack of schools, discrimination, and high dropout rates.
- **Women's movement strategies:** Campaigns, protests, awareness programs, legal reforms.
- **Societal expectations:** Pressure on boys to choose high-paying jobs; girls to focus on marriage or certain jobs.

Quick Reference

- **Stereotypes:** Fixed ideas limiting opportunities.
- **Education:** Key to women's empowerment.
- **Women's Movement:** Collective struggle for rights.
- **Legal Reforms:** Laws against domestic violence and harassment.
- **Campaigns and Protests:** Tools for social change.
- **Solidarity:** Unity among women for common goals.

Glossary

Stereotype

A fixed belief about a group that ignores individual differences.

Discrimination

Unfair treatment of people based on prejudice.

Violation

Breaking a law or rule or showing disrespect.

Sexual Harassment

Unwanted physical or verbal behavior of a sexual nature.

Prepzy