Society & Social Justice · GS - I

‘Women’s movement in India has not addressed the issues of women of lower social strata.’ Substantiate your view.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2018	GS - I	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Intersectionality; caste and class inequalities; labour rights; Dalit feminism; tribal women; informal employment; movement diversity; inclusive representation

Model Answer

Introduction

The women’s movement in India has challenged patriarchy and advanced legal and social reforms. However, concerns remain that the priorities of relatively privileged women have sometimes overshadowed the experiences of women from disadvantaged social groups.

Arguments Supporting the View

1. **Class bias:** Early organised movements often gave greater attention to education, legal rights and employment concerns affecting urban, middle-class women.
2. **Caste discrimination:** The specific experiences of Dalit women facing both caste oppression and gender-based violence have not always received adequate attention.
3. **Informal labour:** Domestic workers, agricultural labourers and other informal workers often face wage exploitation, unsafe conditions and limited social security.

4. **Tribal women's concerns:** Displacement, forest rights, land alienation and access to resources require greater representation in mainstream feminist agendas.
5. **Unequal representation:** Women from marginalised communities may have limited influence in leadership and policy-setting spaces.

Counterarguments and Progress

The criticism does not apply uniformly to all movements. Dalit feminism, tribal women's organisations, labour movements and grassroots campaigns have brought intersectional concerns into public debate. Self-help groups and local mobilisation have also expanded participation.

Way Forward

Women's organisations should strengthen leadership from disadvantaged communities, recognise unpaid and informal labour, build alliances across social groups and address caste, class, disability and regional inequalities together.

Conclusion

The women's movement has achieved significant gains but remains incomplete without inclusive representation. Gender justice requires recognising the diverse experiences of women and ensuring that the most marginalised help shape the agenda.

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