



A Study of Awareness of Constitutional Safeguards for Women in India

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Abstract- The Constitution of India provides a comprehensive framework for ensuring Equality, Dignity, Liberty and protection of women. Constitutional safeguards such as Equality before law, prohibition of discrimination on the ground of sex, special provisions for women, Equality of opportunity in public employment, equal pay, maternity relief and the fundamental duty to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women constitute an important foundation for women's empowerment. However, the existence of constitutional safeguards does not automatically ensure their effective realization. Awareness of these provisions is an essential prerequisite for women to recognize their rights, seek appropriate remedies and participate effectively in social, economic and political life. The present study proposes to examine the level of awareness of constitutional safeguards among women belonging to different occupational groups in India. The study adopts a survey method and focuses particularly on comparison of awareness groups. A structured awareness questionnaire administered to women representing diverse occupational categories such as teachers, government employees, private-sector employees, homemakers, and agricultural workers. Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, including mean, standard deviation, t-test and one-way ANOVA employed to determine differences among occupational groups. The study revealed that Overall, the Tukey HSD results indicate that 7 out of the 10 pairwise comparisons were statistically significant, whereas 3 comparisons were non-significant. The pattern suggests that the occupational groups of teachers, government employees, and private employees were relatively similar to one another, while agriculture workers and homemakers differed significantly from most of the employment-based groups. The largest mean difference was observed between teachers and agriculture workers (14.00), followed by the difference between teachers and homemakers (12.42).

Keywords- Constitutional Safeguards, Constitutional Awareness, Women's Rights, Occupational groups, Gender equality.

I. Introduction

Women constitute nearly half of India's population and play significant roles in the social, economic, educational and political development of the country. Despite considerable progress in women's education, employment, political participation and legal protection, gender-based inequalities continue to affect women's opportunities and autonomy. One important dimension of women's empowerment is their awareness of the rights and safeguards guaranteed to them by the Constitution.

The Constitution of India establishes equality as a fundamental principle of the Indian democratic order. Article 14 guarantees equality before law and equal protection of the



laws. Article 15 prohibits discrimination on specified grounds, including sex, while Article 15(3) expressly permits the State to make special provisions for women and children. Article 16 guarantees equality of opportunity in matters of public employment and prohibits discrimination on the ground of sex. The Directive Principles of State Policy further reinforce the constitutional commitment to women's equality. Article 39(a) directs the State towards securing adequate means of livelihood for men and women equally, while Article 39(d) emphasizes equal pay for equal work for both men and women. Article 42 calls for just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief. The Constitution also places a responsibility on citizens. Article 51A(e) calls upon citizens to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women.

Thus, constitutional protection for women operates through a combination of fundamental rights, directive principles, fundamental duties, democratic representation and enabling legislation. However, constitutional rights become meaningful only when citizens are sufficiently aware of them. A woman who is unaware of her constitutional rights may be unable to recognize discrimination, challenge unequal treatment or access appropriate institutional remedies. Therefore, constitutional literacy is an important component of women's empowerment. The significance of institutional mechanisms is also reflected in the establishment of the National Commission for Women. Under the National Commission for Women Act, 1990, the Commission has functions relating to examining safeguards provided for women under the Constitution and other laws, investigating problems affecting women and recommending measures for their effective implementation. The present study therefore focuses on an important question: Do women belonging to different occupational groups differ significantly in their awareness of constitutional safeguards?

II. Constitutional Safeguards for Women in India

The major constitutional provisions relevant to women may be summarized as follows:

Table 1: Major Constitutional Safeguards for women

Constitutional Provision	Major Safeguard	Relevance to Women
Article 14	Equality before law	Establishes legal equality
Article 15(1)	Prohibition of discrimination	Prohibits discrimination on the ground of sex
Article 15(3)	Special provisions for women	Enables affirmative measures for women
Article 16	Equality in public employment	Ensures equality of opportunity in public employment
Article 21	Life and personal liberty	Supports dignity and autonomy
Article 23	Prohibition of trafficking and forced labour	Protects women from exploitation
Article 32	Constitutional remedies	Enables enforcement of fundamental rights
Article 39(a)	Adequate means of livelihood	Promotes economic equality



Article 39(d)	Equal pay for equal work	Promotes equality in remuneration
Article 42	Humane working conditions and maternity relief	Provides a constitutional basis for maternity protection
Article 51A(e)	Dignity of women	Calls for rejection of practices derogatory to women's dignity
Articles 243D & 243T	Reservation in Panchayats and Municipalities	Strengthens women's political participation

These provisions demonstrate that women's constitutional protection extends beyond formal equality. The constitutional framework seeks to address social and economic disadvantages as well as discrimination.

Need and Significance of the Study

Constitutional safeguards are meaningful only when women know that such safeguards exist and understand how they can be used. The importance of the present study arises from several following considerations-

- Legal and constitutional awareness enables women to identify violations of their rights and make informed decisions.
- Women belonging to different occupational environments may have different levels of exposure to constitutional and legal information. Teachers and government employees, for example, may encounter constitutional provisions more frequently than women working in informal occupations.
- Occupational groups may differ in educational exposure, institutional interaction, access to digital information and participation in formal organizations.
- India has enacted several laws to supplement constitutional guarantees. For example, the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, explicitly aims to provide protection that is more effective to constitutional rights of women experiencing violence within the family.
- Women's participation in the labour market and public life is changing. According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey 2023–24, female labour-force participation in usual status (15 years and above) was substantially higher in rural areas than urban areas, illustrating the diversity of women's economic participation in India.

Consequently, examining constitutional awareness across occupational groups can help identify groups that may require targeted awareness interventions.

Statement of the Problem

“A Study of Awareness of Constitutional Safeguards for Women in India.”

Objectives of the Study

The present study will be conducted with the following objectives:

1. To assess the level of awareness of constitutional safeguards among women belonging to different occupational groups.
2. To find out the significant groups among different occupational groups.



3. To discuss the awareness status towards constitutional safeguards for different women occupational groups.
4. To recommend the suggestions for increasing women awareness regarding constitutional safeguards.

III. Hypotheses of the Study

Based on research objectives the following null hypotheses will be tested-

H01: There is no significant difference in the overall awareness of constitutional safeguards among women belonging to different occupational groups.

Following sub hypotheses will be tested using Tukey HSD post hoc analysis to find the groups with significant difference.

- **H0 1.1:** There is no significance difference in the awareness of constitutional safeguards between teachers and government employee.
- **H01.2:** There is no significance difference in the awareness of constitutional safeguards between teachers and private employee.
- **H01.3:** There is no significance difference in the awareness of constitutional safeguards between teachers and agricultural workers.
- **H01.4:** There is no significance difference in the awareness of constitutional safeguards between teachers and homemakers.
- **H01.5:** There is no significance difference in the awareness of constitutional safeguards between government employee private employees.
- **H01.6:** There is no significance difference in the awareness of constitutional safeguards between government employee and agricultural workers.
- **H01.7:** There is no significance difference in the awareness of constitutional safeguards between government employee and homemakers.
- **H01.8:** There is no significance difference in the awareness of constitutional safeguards between private employees and agricultural workers.
- **H01.9:** There is no significance difference in the awareness of constitutional safeguards between private employees and homemakers.
- **H01.10:** There is no significance difference in the awareness of constitutional safeguards between agricultural workers and homemakers.

Operational Definitions

- **Constitutional Safeguards-** For the purpose of this study, constitutional safeguards refer to provisions of the Constitution of India that directly or indirectly promote women's equality, dignity, protection, participation and socio-economic rights.
- **Awareness-** Awareness refers to the respondent's knowledge and understanding of selected constitutional provisions and their implications for women's rights.
- **Occupational Groups-** Occupational groups refer to categories of women classified according to their principal occupation, such as teachers, government employees, private-sector employees, self-employed women, homemakers, agricultural workers and other occupational categories.



IV. Research Methodology

The survey method was used for the study because it is appropriate for assessing awareness levels and comparing groups within a relatively large population. A descriptive and comparative survey research design was adopted. The descriptive component will determine the overall level of constitutional awareness, while the comparative component will examine differences between occupational groups. The population of the study will comprise adult women belonging to different occupational groups in India. For a manageable empirical study, the researcher delimit the study to the Bareilly district of Uttar Pradesh, India. A sample of approximately 300 women was selected for the proposed study as follows-

Table 2: Research Sample

Occupational Group	Proposed Sample
Teachers	50
Government employees	50
Private-sector employees	50
Homemakers	50
Agricultural/other workers	50
Total	250

A stratified or purposive sampling approach used to select the above study sample.

Research Tool

A self-made structured questionnaire titled :- “Constitutional Safeguards Awareness Scale for Women (CSASW)” was developed by the researcher.

Validity and Reliability

To establish content validity, the questionnaire was submitted to three experts in constitutional law, women's studies, education, social sciences and research methodology. A pilot study also was conducted on approximately 50 respondents who were not included in the final sample. Experts found that the content and face validity of the Awareness Scale was satisfactory.

Reliability established using an appropriate coefficient, depending on the structure of the instrument. For a dichotomously scored awareness test, KR-20 considered appropriate. The reliability was established 79.12 of the tool, which was good.

Statistical Techniques

For the statistical analysis of collected data, frequency, percentage, Mean, Standard Deviation, t-test and ANOVA were used.



V. Analysis of Data

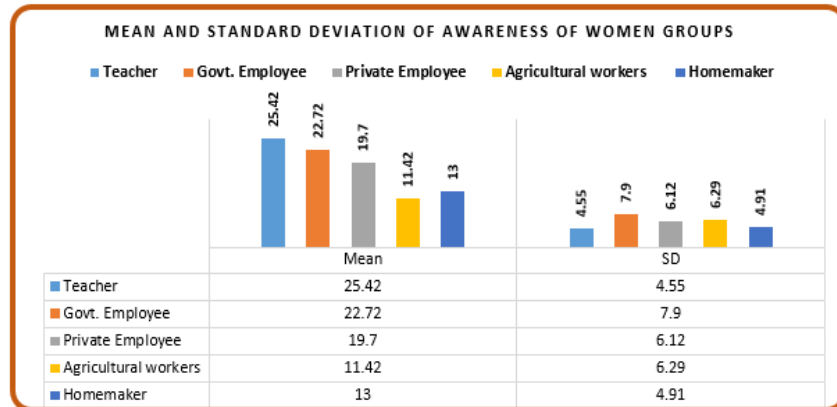


Figure 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Awareness of Women groups

Table 3: Mean score and Standard Deviation of various occupational groups

	Teacher	Govt. Employee	Private Employee	Agricultural workers	Homemaker	Total
N	50	50	50	50	50	250
Mean	25.42	22.72	19.7	11.42	13	18.45
S.D.	4.55	7.90	6.12	6.29	4.91	8.12

A one way ANOVA was conducted to examine the differences in scores across five occupational groups, namely teachers, govt. employees, private employees, agricultural works and homemakers. In table 3 results revealed a statistically significant difference among the groups, $F(4, 245) = 49.95$, $p < .001$. The mean scores were highest for teachers ($M=25.42$), followed by government employees ($M=22.72$), private employees ($M=19.70$), homemakers ($M=13$), and agricultural workers ($M=11.42$). Among the various groups, it is clearly indicated that teachers are the highest and agricultural workers are lowest aware about the constitutional safeguards for women.

Table 4: Summary of ANOVA

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p - value
Between Groups	7374.98	4	1843.74	49.95	<.001
Within Groups	9042.94	245	36.91		
Total	16417.92	249			

Description of the ANOVA Results

Table 4 presents the results of a one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) conducted to examine whether there were significant differences among the five groups in terms of their mean scores. The results indicate that the variation between the groups was substantial, with a sum of squares (SS) of 7374.98 and 4 degrees of freedom (df),



resulting in a mean square (MS) of 1843.74. In comparison, the within-group variation had a sum of squares of 9042.94 with 245 degrees of freedom, yielding a mean square of 36.91.

The obtained F-value of 49.95 was statistically significant at the 0.001 level ($p < .001$). This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference among the mean scores of the five occupational groups of women. Thus, the null hypothesis stating that 'there is no significant difference in the awareness of constitutional safeguards among women belonging to different occupational groups' is rejected. The finding suggests that group members has a significant influence on the variable under investigation.

The total sum of squares was 16417.92, indicating the overall variability in the scores across all 250 participants. Furthermore, the effect size calculated from the ANOVA results ($\eta^2 \approx 0.45$) indicates that approximately 45% of the total variance in the dependent variable can be attributed to differences between the groups, representing a large effect. Therefore, the findings demonstrate not only statistical significance but also a substantial practical difference among the five groups. However, since ANOVA establishes only that at least one group differs from another, a suitable post-hoc test, such as Tukey's HSD, is required to determine the specific groups between which significant differences exist.

Table 5: Tukey HSD Post-hoc test result

S.N.	Group Comparison	Mean Difference	Significant?
1.	Teachers vs Govt. Employee	2.70	No
2.	Teachers vs private Employee	5.72	Yes
3.	Teachers vs agriculture workers	14.00	Yes
4.	Teachers vs Homemakers	12.42	Yes
5.	Govt. Employee vs Private Employee	3.02	No
6.	Govt. Employee vs agriculture workers	11.30	Yes
7.	Govt. Employee vs Homemaker	9.72	Yes
8.	Private Employee vs agriculture workers	8.28	Yes
9.	Private Employee vs Homemaker	6.72	Yes
10.	Agriculture workers vs Homemakers	1.58	No

Tukey HSD critical difference = 3.34

Description of Tukey HSD Post-hoc Test Results

Table 5 presents the results of the Tukey HSD post-hoc test, conducted to identify the specific group pairs that differed significantly following the statistically significant one-way ANOVA. The analysis compared the mean scores of five occupational groups: teachers, government employees, private employees, agriculture workers, and homemakers.



The results show that there was no statistically significant difference between teachers and government employees, with a mean difference of 2.70. Similarly, the difference between government employees and private employees was not statistically significant, with a mean difference of 3.02. The comparison between agriculture workers and homemakers also failed to reach statistical significance, with a mean difference of 1.58. In contrast, several statistically significant differences were observed among the occupational groups. Teachers differed significantly from private employees, with a mean difference of 5.72. A larger significant difference was found between teachers and agriculture workers, with a mean difference of 14.00. Teachers also differed significantly from homemakers, with a mean difference of 12.42.

Government employees likewise showed significant differences from agriculture workers and homemakers, with mean differences of 11.30 and 9.72, respectively. Significant differences were also observed between private employees and agriculture workers (8.28) and between private employees and homemakers (6.72).

Overall, the Tukey HSD results indicate that 7 out of the 10 pairwise comparisons were statistically significant, whereas 3 comparisons were non-significant. The pattern suggests that the occupational groups of teachers, government employees, and private employees were relatively similar to one another, while agriculture workers and homemakers differed significantly from most of the employment-based groups. The largest mean difference was observed between teachers and agriculture workers (14.00), followed by the difference between teachers and homemakers (12.42).

These findings further substantiate the significant overall ANOVA result and suggest that occupation is an important factor associated with differences in the scores on the variable under investigation. However, the direction of these differences should be interpreted in conjunction with the respective group means to determine which occupational group obtained higher or lower scores.

VI. Discussion

The present study examined awareness of constitutional safeguards for women among five occupational groups, namely teachers, government employees, private employees, agricultural workers, and homemakers. The study included 250 respondents, with 50 respondents from each occupational group. The findings revealed substantial differences in awareness scores across occupational categories. Teachers obtained the highest mean score ($M = 25.42$, $SD = 4.55$), followed by government employees ($M = 22.72$, $SD = 7.90$), private employees ($M = 19.70$, $SD = 6.12$), homemakers ($M = 13.00$, $SD = 4.91$), and agricultural workers ($M = 11.42$, $SD = 6.29$).

The occupational pattern observed in the present study is consistent with the broader argument in previous research that awareness of women's rights is closely connected with access to education, information, institutions, and opportunities for social participation. Eswari and Anji (2021), in their study of rural women in Vellore District, specifically examined awareness of women's legal rights and highlighted the importance of legal literacy in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.



Their work provides a useful point of comparison with the relatively lower scores obtained by agricultural workers and homemakers in the present study.

The relatively high awareness score among teachers in the present study may be explained by their greater exposure to formal education, educational institutions, professional training, and information concerning citizenship and constitutional values. Government employees also obtained comparatively high scores. Their occupational environment may provide greater exposure to government policies, welfare provisions, administrative procedures, and institutional mechanisms. The absence of a statistically significant difference between teachers and government employees (mean difference = 2.70) supports the interpretation that these two groups have relatively comparable levels of awareness.

The present findings also demonstrate that awareness is not distributed uniformly among occupational groups. Private employees occupied an intermediate position, with a mean score of 19.70. The difference between government employees and private employees was not statistically significant (mean difference = 3.02), suggesting that these two groups may have broadly comparable exposure to formal information sources. However, private employees scored significantly higher than agricultural workers and homemakers, with mean differences of 8.28 and 6.72, respectively.

The relatively low scores among agricultural workers and homemakers are particularly important from the perspective of women's empowerment. Agricultural workers recorded the lowest mean score ($M = 11.42$), while homemakers recorded a mean score of 13.00. Their difference was not statistically significant (mean difference = 1.58), indicating that these two groups had relatively similar levels of awareness. This finding is particularly relevant because rural and economically less-exposed women may experience greater barriers in accessing information about constitutional and legal rights.

Previous research supports the importance of awareness in enabling women to claim their rights. Mehapara and Kumar (2025), in an empirical study of women's awareness and demand for equal inheritance rights in agricultural land in India, identified lack of awareness of rights and procedures as an important barrier to the effective realization of women's land rights. Their findings are particularly relevant to the present study because agricultural workers constitute the group with the lowest awareness score. The study suggests that merely establishing legal rights does not necessarily ensure their effective utilization unless potential beneficiaries are aware of those rights and the procedures through which they can be exercised.

The findings of the present study are also consistent with research conducted in rural Haryana. A sociological study of rural Haryana reported that respondents recognized the importance of constitutional provisions and legal rights in bringing changes in women's socio-economic status. The study also reported changes in women's awareness and social status across generations. This supports the present study's broader conclusion that constitutional and legal awareness can be viewed as an important component of women's empowerment and social transformation.



The one-way ANOVA results provide strong statistical evidence for differences among the occupational groups. The obtained value of $F(4, 245) = 49.95$, $p < .001$ indicates that the differences in mean awareness scores were statistically significant. Thus, the null hypothesis of no significant difference among the occupational groups was rejected. The effect size ($\eta^2 \approx 0.45$) indicates that approximately 45% of the observed variance in awareness scores was associated with differences between occupational groups. This represents a substantial effect and demonstrates that the occupational pattern observed in the descriptive statistics is not merely a random fluctuation in the sample.

The Tukey HSD post-hoc analysis further clarifies the nature of these differences. Teachers differed significantly from private employees (mean difference = 5.72), agricultural workers (14.00), and homemakers (12.42). Government employees also differed significantly from agricultural workers (11.30) and homemakers (9.72). Private employees differed significantly from agricultural workers (8.28) and homemakers (6.72). However, teachers and government employees did not differ significantly, government and private employees did not differ significantly, and agricultural workers and homemakers did not differ significantly.

This pattern is important because it suggests that the major differences are not between every occupational group but particularly between groups with relatively greater institutional and educational exposure and groups with comparatively lower exposure. The largest difference was between teachers and agricultural workers (14.00), while the second-largest difference was between teachers and homemakers (12.42). These results strengthen the argument that access to education, information, and institutions may play an important role in shaping awareness of constitutional safeguards.

The findings also correspond with the broader literature on the gap between formal rights and their realization. Recent scholarship on constitutional and legal rights in India emphasizes that although the Constitution and legislation provide extensive safeguards for women, significant challenges remain in translating formal guarantees into effective rights in everyday life. Tripathi (2025), for example, highlights the continuing gap between constitutional and legal protections and their practical implementation and emphasizes the importance of awareness and effective implementation. Similarly, recent research on constitutional safeguards for vulnerable groups identifies a continuing gap between formal rights and their practical realization.

The present findings therefore have an important theoretical and practical implication. Constitutional safeguards can provide a normative framework for equality, dignity, non-discrimination, and protection, but their effectiveness depends partly on whether individuals know that such safeguards exist and understand how they can be accessed. Awareness should consequently be regarded not merely as knowledge of constitutional provisions but as rights consciousness, including knowledge of available remedies, institutions, procedures, and support mechanisms.

The findings should nevertheless be interpreted cautiously. The present study establishes an association between occupational group and awareness scores; it does not establish that occupation itself causes higher or lower awareness. Differences may



also be influenced by educational qualification, age, socio-economic background, and rural-urban location, access to digital information, family environment, and previous exposure to legal or constitutional education. Therefore, the occupational differences observed in the present study should be understood within a broader social and educational context.

Overall, the findings of the present study are broadly supported by previous research indicating that women's awareness of rights is an important condition for the effective realization of legal and constitutional protections. The convergence of the present findings with previous studies also suggests that constitutional literacy, legal awareness, educational exposure, and accessibility of rights-related information should be treated as important dimensions of women's empowerment. Particular attention should be given to groups such as agricultural workers and homemakers, among whom the present study found comparatively lower levels of awareness.

VII. Suggestions and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the present study, the following suggestions are proposed for improving awareness of constitutional safeguards for women:

1. Targeted constitutional literacy programmes

Special constitutional literacy programmes should be organized for occupational groups that demonstrated comparatively lower awareness, particularly agricultural workers and homemakers. These programmes should use simple language and practical examples rather than relying exclusively on legal terminology.

2. Awareness programmes at the community level

Awareness campaigns should be organized at the village, block, and community levels so that women who have limited access to formal institutions can obtain information about their constitutional rights. Panchayats, community centres, schools, colleges, and other local institutions can serve as important platforms for such programmes.

3. Focus on practical knowledge of rights

Awareness programmes should explain not only constitutional provisions but also their practical implications. Women should be informed about equality before law, protection against discrimination, equal opportunity, protection from exploitation, dignity, and special provisions for women's welfare and advancement.

4. Information regarding grievance-redressal mechanisms

Constitutional awareness should be accompanied by information about available institutional and legal mechanisms for addressing violations of women's rights. Participants should be made aware of where and how complaints can be submitted and what forms of assistance are available.

5. Strengthening awareness among homemakers

The relatively low awareness score among homemakers indicates the need for special outreach initiatives. Self-help groups, women's groups, adult education programmes,



Anganwadi/community networks, and local women's organizations can be used to disseminate information regarding constitutional and legal safeguards.

6. Special initiatives for agricultural workers

Agricultural workers recorded the lowest mean score in the present study. Therefore, awareness initiatives should be taken directly to agricultural and rural communities. Mobile awareness camps, village-level meetings, audio-visual materials, street plays, local-language information campaigns, and community educators may be particularly effective.

7. Integration of constitutional education into teacher training

Since teachers demonstrated the highest awareness in the present study, they can be effectively utilized as resource persons and community-level constitutional literacy facilitators. Constitutional values and women's rights may be given greater emphasis in pre-service and in-service teacher education.

8. Use of digital and mass media

Digital platforms, social media, radio, television, and mobile-based communication can be used to disseminate concise and reliable information regarding women's constitutional safeguards. However, digital initiatives should be supplemented by offline approaches to ensure that women with limited digital access are not excluded.

9. Strengthening legal literacy

Legal literacy programmes should be conducted in collaboration with appropriate educational, governmental, and legal institutions. Such programmes should help women understand the relationship between constitutional safeguards, statutory rights, government schemes, and available support institutions.

10. Development of locally relevant educational materials

Awareness materials should be prepared in simple Hindi and other locally appropriate languages, using examples from everyday life. Posters, pamphlets, short videos, info graphics, case-based examples, and question-answer booklets may make constitutional information easier to understand and remember.

11. Focus on disadvantaged and less-exposed groups

Future awareness programmes should give special attention to women who experience limited educational, economic, social, or institutional opportunities. A differentiated approach may be more effective than treating all occupational groups as having identical information needs.

12. Regular assessment of awareness programmes

Government departments, educational institutions, and civil society organizations should periodically assess the effectiveness of constitutional and legal awareness programmes. Pre-test and post-test assessments can be used to determine whether such interventions produce measurable improvement in awareness.



13. Strengthening collaboration among institutions

Effective constitutional awareness requires cooperation among educational institutions, local government bodies, women's organizations, legal-aid institutions, community organizations, and other relevant agencies. Coordinated programmes can improve both the reach and sustainability of awareness initiatives.

14. Inclusion of constitutional values in educational programmes

Constitutional values such as equality, justice, liberty, dignity, fraternity, and non-discrimination should be integrated more systematically into educational programmes. Such education can contribute to the development of a rights-conscious and gender-sensitive society.

VIII. Concluding Suggestion

The central implication of the present study is that constitutional safeguards become more meaningful when people are aware of their rights and know how to exercise and protect them. Therefore, efforts toward women's empowerment should move beyond merely providing legal and constitutional protections and should place equal emphasis on constitutional literacy, accessibility of information, institutional support, and practical empowerment.

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