



1. How do you think stereotypes, about what women can or cannot do, affect women's right to equality?

Answer: Women are considered inferior to men. There is a belief that women do not have technical mind and therefore they cannot be scientists. It is thought that women are good at only certain jobs such as teaching and nursing. These stereotypes about women's capability or incapability of doing certain jobs badly affect women's right to equality. It is due to this reason that women are not paid less wages than their male-counterparts.

2. List one reason why learning the alphabet was so important to women like Rashsundari Devi, Ramabai and Rokeya.

Answer: Learning the alphabet was so important to these woman because only after that they became able to write stories, letters and autobiographies which described their own experiences of inequality.

3. "Poor girls drop out of school because they are not interested in getting an education". Re-read the last paragraph on page 62 and explain why this statement is not true.

Answer: Poor girls do not leave school because they wish so but because they are compelled to do so, due to several reasons. In rural and poor areas of the country there are no proper schools. There is also dearth of teachers who can teach on a regular basis. If a school is not close to people's homes, and there is no transport facility, parents do not show their willingness to send their girls to school.

4. Can you describe two methods of struggle that the women's movement used to raise issues? If you had to organise a struggle against stereotypes, about what women can or cannot do, what method would you employ from the ones that you have read about? Why would you choose this particular method?

Answer: The women's movement used several methods of struggle in order to raise issues. Two out of them are:

(a) Campaigning. It is an important part of the women's movement. It fights discrimination and violence against women. Campaigns have also led to new laws being passed. For example, in 2006, a law was passed to give women, who are prey to domestic violence, some legal protection.

The women's movement also led the Supreme Court to formulate guidelines in 1997 to protect women against sexual harassment at the workplace. Women's groups also raised voice against dowry deaths. They demanded immediate justice for cases of young brides being murdered by their in-laws or husbands for more dowry. They did so by coming on to the streets, approaching the courts and by sharing information. As a result of their efforts, the dowry laws were changed to punish families who seek dowry.

(b) Protesting. The women's movement raises its voice when violations against women take place. Public rallies and demonstrations are a very powerful way of drawing attention to injustices.

If I had to organise a struggle against stereotypes, about what women can or cannot do, I would like to employ the method of raising awareness among public. What pressure cannot do, awareness can do effectively. If we skilfully convince people for

something it works excellently. We can brainwash the common mass through street plays, songs and public meetings. It is a permanent solution to a problem.

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