

Fight Against Patriarchy; Rethinking Womens Sexual and Reproductive Rights.

Devseshan. R. B

Sociology, Researcher, Author, Chennai, India.

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.9020333>

Received: 14 February 2025; Accepted: 20 February 2025; Published: 22 March 2025

ABSTRACT

This study explores the patriarchal structure and women's exploitation. In every social system, women are vulnerable. Where men are the exploiters. Gender inequality plays a crucial role in social institutions like modern families (monogamous families), love and other similar structures. This system reflects the conflict between genders. Judith Butler (1990) expands this view by asserting that gender itself is a cultural performance rather than a biological fact. The study also draws attention to the fact that women frequently experience severe violence—not from strangers, but rather from their intimate partners. This study has looked at monogamous relationships and their influence on the women's community. Furthermore, sexual experiences are often not seen merely as acts of intimacy; they largely result in unintended pregnancies. Either she is going to carry the baby or to abort. Women must deal with the repercussions. Society tends to minimize the negative consequences of pregnancy while exalting being a mother. Since a woman has no rights over reproduction and her body in a relationship, during sexual activity, where men no longer need concerns in a relationship, the structure lacks democracy. The patriarchal monogamous family structure is a result of male ego and dominance. As the family evolved from matriarchy to patriarchy. The family advances as society advances, and changes as society changes. It is the creation of the social system and will reflect its culture (Engles ([1884] 2022, 88). This monogamous family system deprived the rights of women and merely treated them as servitude and sexual slaves. This study aims to contribute to discussing women's autonomy and bodily rights by examining the societal norms and patriarchal structure. The patriarchy is cant be reformed, it should be replaced. The research incorporated both qualitative and quantitative studies, relying exclusively on secondary data.

Keywords: Sexual and reproductive rights; patriarchy; intimate partner violence; Exploitation; monogamous relationship.

INTRODUCTION

Patriarchy functions as an institutionalized system designed to subjugate women. The roots of patriarchy can be traced back to the concept of private property (Engels, 1884). This system not only perpetuates the ownership of property but also facilitates the transmission of male dominance, discrimination, various forms of violence—be it physical, psychological, health-related, or sexual—and exploitation. Gerda Lerner (1986) traces cultural institutions that historically controlled women's bodies, linking reproductive oppression to early property and state formation. Consequently, women are systematically deprived of their rights across all domains. For example, it is essential to recognize that religious practices are often patriarchal; women are frequently excluded from religious participation during their menstrual cycles. Furthermore, societal expectations compel women to dedicate themselves to religious institutions such as churches and temples. Historically, during times of conflict, conquering nations would capture women from defeated territories, relegating them to the status of sexual slaves. Within a patriarchal structure, women lack autonomy and are reduced to mere instruments of the system. They are denied ownership of their bodily rights, a basic human right and their most fundamental right. This dynamic reflects the characteristics of the medieval patriarchal

structure, which has since evolved to maintain its relevance. This dynamic illustrates the traits of patriarchy, which has adapted over time to retain its significance. In numerous cultures, women's devotion is frequently directed towards their husbands, who are regarded as divine figures. This belief often compels women to abandon their familial residences upon marriage, moving into the households of their husbands, which are perceived as sacred spaces. This configuration reflects the dynamics of patriarchy. It is apparent that women, including those in royal positions, tend to have a higher number of offspring; however, the queen, despite her nominal authority, frequently finds herself unable to execute her duties due to extended periods of gestation. This situation is similarly applicable to women within the modern family unit. Pregnancy and motherhood serve as instruments of the patriarchal system, effectively constraining women's autonomy in a formalized manner, as these states are often revered. The frequency of childbirth among specific women has diminished, with many adopting two-child policies primarily under the guise of population control. However, it is imperative to prioritize women's rights and their autonomy over reproductive choices. This study does not delve into population theories; rather, it centres on women's rights. While the incidence of pregnancies among certain women has declined, the prevalence of exploitation and violence remains unchanged. The global discourse surrounding reproductive health highlights the occurrence of unintended pregnancies as a critical human crisis.

Unintended pregnancies arise from instances of unprotected sex, indicating a failure to utilize contraceptive methods or failure of the contraception methods. While this is one aspect that requires attention, we often overlook the fundamental cause of unintended pregnancies. The core issue is the denial of women's rights over their bodies. Women's bodily autonomy is shaped by gender roles and power dynamics within a patriarchal society.

The objective of this research is to address the reproductive and sexual rights of women, particularly their bodily autonomy in a patriarchal structure and to eradicate it. Within relationships, women often find themselves devoid of rights over their bodies. The needs and concerns of women become secondary to the authoritarian nature of men in these partnerships, which disregards women's choices and feelings. While numerous laws and policies advocate for women's rights, these rights often remain superficial and illusory, with women's decision-making being significantly limited in relationships compared to outside those contexts. "Nearly half of the married women lack decision-making power over their sexual and reproductive health and rights" (UNSDG 2023). Consequently, this study seeks to investigate the dynamics of sexual relationships between intimate partners, including the causes and consequences of these interactions. Although sex is a natural aspect of intimacy, it frequently leads to unintended pregnancies. Intimacy plays a crucial role in relationships, yet it is often disregarded, leading to pregnancies. The man will not bear the additional burden of intended or unintended pregnancies. In a patriarchal monogamous relationship, the woman lacks her choice or selection which is a fundamental aspect of democracy. In a gynocracy society, women's rights are not suppressed by men; rather, it is the patriarchal system that stems from male dominance and ego that undermines these rights. Therefore, emphasising women's bodily rights is essential for advancing family planning efforts, supporting women's independence, and fostering gender equality inequality.

Gender equality is primarily to be ensured in the relationship structure of either married or unmarried couples. Moreover, every report on gender equality or similar reports shows women facing a high amount of violence, discrimination, and sexual assaults by their intimate partners. "Worldwide, almost one-third (27%) of women aged 15-49 years who have been in a relationship report that they have been subjected to some form of physical and/or sexual violence by their intimate partner" (WHO 2024). In the patriarchal relationship, women are subjugated to slaves.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE:

The literature review investigates essential concepts and facts from several sources that are pertinent to family planning, women's sexual and reproductive rights, and autonomy. Encompassing Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels's theory, feminist theorists Simon de Beauvoir and Gerda Lerner, and empirical investigations by international organizations such as the WHO, UNFPA, and others. These sources contribute to a better

understanding of recent trends in women's autonomy with their intimate partners and the constraints they experience while exercising control over their reproductive rights.

Engles's work, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884), has provided the evolution of family from the matriarchy to the patriarchal structure and establishment of monogamous relationships like marriage and love. He states that monogamous marriage is a first-class antagonism and first-class oppression of the female sex by the male sex. His works provided historical evidence of the deprivation of women's rights by the patriarchal cultural system where women were treated as sexual slaves and servitude by overthrowing their autonomy. Similarly, **K. Marx's (1863)** *Theories of Surplus-Value* [Volume IV of *Capital*] criticism of Malthusian theory paved the study of the research in other dimensions.

Judith Butler's seminal work, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990), interrogates the cultural frameworks that define and govern gender, sexuality, and bodily autonomy. Within the discourse of sexual and reproductive rights, Butler's concept of gender performativity serves as a critical lens through which to examine the influence of societal expectations on reproductive norms. This analysis is especially pertinent in contexts where patriarchal traditions, religious doctrines, and social customs impose restrictions on women's reproductive functions.

According to **S. de Beauvoir (1949)** in his book, *The Second Sex* states that sex or sexual activity is a means of communication between intimate partners as it strengthens the relationship social conventions restrict women's autonomy over their bodies and patriarchy governs women's role in reproduction. According to patriarchal ideals, pregnancy and motherhood are praised in society. She criticizes how pregnancy is romanticized and glorified in a way that limits women to conventional roles and minimizes their identity to biological processes rather than acknowledging their complete humanity and uniqueness. According to her, patriarchy uses this sanctification as a means of keeping women under control. Additionally, **Gerda Lerner's (1986)** book *The Creation of Patriarchy* criticized the patriarchal system for being a product of men's ego and power to subjugate women and their autonomy. These frameworks aid in our comprehension of how the patriarchal system deprived women of their autonomy over sexual and reproductive control and exalted pregnancy and motherhood.

Meston, C.M., and Buss, D. M. (2007), *Why humans have sex?* Meston and Buss' research focuses on the psychological and emotional reasons why people have sex. They identify several primary reasons for sexual behaviour, including physical attraction, emotional connection, social influences, and even insecurity. Their findings demonstrate that sexual decisions are impacted by a variety of factors other than the desire for reproduction. These findings are important for understanding women's family planning decisions, as emotional and social factors influence their choices concerning pregnancy and contraception.

Brandmaier (2015) investigates the concept of a matriarchal prehistory and its implications for comprehending patriarchal supremacy. She contends that historical accounts have been constructed to validate male power, frequently obscuring or distorting the contributions of women in ancient communities. This perspective resonates with feminist analyses of gendered power dynamics and their repercussions on women's sexual and reproductive rights. Through her examination of myth, culture, and patriarchy, Brandmaier's research establishes a crucial basis for understanding the ongoing effects of historical and cultural narratives on reproductive freedom and gender disparity.

The reports from Global organizations such as WHO, UNFPA, and UNDESA collectively emphasize the critical role of family planning in advancing women's health, rights, and socio-economic empowerment. **Bahadur (2015)**, explicitly focuses on women's sexual satisfaction and orgasm. The report emphasises the male attitude towards female sexuality often suppresses women's ability to express their sexual needs and desires. This finding shows that gender disparity even exists in sexual satisfaction. The **UNFPA, My Body is My Own: State of World Population 2021**, emphasises the significance of women's bodily as a fundamental human right. Stresses that women who assert their body rights will be empowered in all areas. The **WHO, Preventing Unsafe abortions (2022)** highlights family planning as crucial to sexual and reproductive health,

helping women avoid unintended pregnancies, reduce maternal mortality, and exercise control over their reproductive choices. It aims to lessen the risks of unintended pregnancies and unsafe abortion. **The UNFPA report, Unintended Pregnancies a Neglected Human Crisis (2022)**, draws attention to the worldwide problem of unplanned pregnancies as well as related problems like violence against intimate partners. To address this crisis and preserve women's bodily autonomy, the findings urge immediate investments in gender equality, family planning, and education. **UN SDG5 (2023)**, has provided comparative assessments of women's decision-making power over their sexual and reproductive and rights between married and unmarried couples. It emphasises gender equality in all spheres. **UNDESA (2023)**, provides insights that Family planning is essential to attaining gender equality and sustainable development. The report also provides a comparative assessment of contraception and sterilization methods. The report emphasizes the necessity of addressing the cultural and systemic hurdles that restrict women's autonomy. To protect women's rights and bodily autonomy. The literature emphasises the value of women's rights, body autonomy, and sexual and reproductive justice, sex is primarily to be the act of intimacy, democracy in relationships, and comparative assessment of contraception sterilisation methods. It also addressed intimate partner sexual, psychological, and physical abuse. The World Forum report states that family planning is essential to gender equality, the protection of women's rights globally, and the achievement of sustainable goals.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research incorporated both quantitative and qualitative studies, relying exclusively on secondary data from global reports and other research articles that have already been published, alongside the Marxist and Engelsian theories related to women's rights, and their bodily autonomy in the patriarchy and monogamous relationships (love, marriage, etc.). A thematic analysis approach will be used to identify the recurring themes in the literature, such as the barriers to women's sexual and reproductive rights, and also to ensure the sex is for intimacy rather than pregnancy and the impact of patriarchal relationship structure over women's autonomy. This study's hypothesis is that systemic inequalities and patriarchal control over women's health, body, sex, reproduction and their rights. The findings will provide a theoretical understanding of how patriarchal cultural and societal norms influence women and depriving their rights. The study aims to contribute to the broader discourse on women's rights and social justice.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the consequences of unplanned pregnancies alongside the effectiveness of family planning strategies.
2. To uphold women's health, reproductive and sexual rights, ensuring their autonomy.
3. The emphasis on understanding sex as a personal and intimate experience while rejecting the idealization of pregnancy.
4. To deconstruct the patriarchal structure that perpetuates discrimination, violence, and exploitation. And striving to eliminate these barriers to achieve a society rooted in gender equality.

The Family and Family Planning

The research encompasses the notion of family planning, which serves to formally address the issue of unintended births and pregnancies. This approach is implemented as a strategy to mitigate the occurrence of such unintended pregnancies. Family planning plays a crucial role in women's reproductive health by regulating the number of childbirths and pregnancies. It is important to recognize that this concept is not merely a remedial measure; rather, it represents a pathway to achieving autonomy over reproductive choices. As noted by Morgan, the family system has undergone four successive evolutions and is now in the fifth phase. The family system advances as society advances, and changes as society changes. It is the creation of the social system and will reflect its culture (Engles ([1884] 2022, 88). The monogamous family structure is a product of the patriarchal system, which historically transitioned from polygynous arrangements. Engles ([1884] 2022) argues that the monogamous patriarchal family is a consequence of private property rather than a natural development. This dynamic is similarly observable in various types of relationships, including

romantic partnerships and cohabitation, where male dominance, violence, and discrimination have tainted all forms of interaction. The patriarchy has fostered a monogamous framework that treats women as property to be controlled.

The concept of the family system may be viewed as a reformed version of slavery. The Latin term "famulus" denotes household slaves, and the notion of "familia" represents the totality of slaves belonging to one individual (Engles ([1884] 2022), 63). However, the family has played a crucial role in human society. In terms of Sociology, the family is viewed as the primary unit of social structure. Nevertheless, here the context of family extends beyond married couples. It emphasises that each individual, irrespective of their marital status.

For instance, the WHO (2022) states that family planning allows people to attain their desired number of children, if any, and to determine the spacing of their pregnancies. It is achieved through the use of contraceptive methods and the treatment of infertility. Contraceptive information and services are fundamental to the health and human rights of all individuals. Similarly, the UNFPA (2022) provides a piece of quite extensive information on family planning -The information, means and methods that allow individuals to decide if and when to have children. It includes a wide range of contraceptives as well as non-invasive methods such as the calendar method and abstinence. It also includes information about how to become pregnant when it is desirable, as well as treatment for infertility.

Both definitions mainly emphasised that all family planning viewpoints are on contraception and resources related to reproductive health. It is undeniable that the development of contraception has peaked. Additionally, it will undergo a revolution in the future, just as it did in the 19th century. No matter how advanced the contraceptives have become, it doesn't reflect on the unintended pregnancies. "Contraception is key but not enough" (UNFPA 2020)-Contraception has its roots in the Malthusian theory of controlling population. This study, however, does not concentrate on that aspect. Marx condemned the Malthusian theory, as the whole of his population theory as shameless plagiarism.

The issue of who possesses the authority to make family planning decisions is critical. Family planning is a principle that has gained acceptance in numerous United Nations and international discussions, aimed at reducing the incidence of unintended pregnancies. Despite various initiatives, research conducted by UNFPA (2022) indicates that there has been no substantial effect on the prevalence of unintended pregnancies. Additional findings suggest that women often lack autonomy across various domains, particularly concerning their bodily autonomy, rendering them unable to refuse their intimate partners. Their rights appear to be merely nominal and illusory. Therefore, it is crucial to underscore the importance of women's autonomy and rights, especially their capacity to make independent decisions. The right to family planning must be fundamentally acknowledged as a woman's right, as they are the individuals who will face the repercussions of pregnancy. While men contribute through their reproductive (seminal fluid) and financial investments, it is women who must manage the multifaceted challenges of pregnancy. This research aims to bolster women's authority over their sexual and reproductive rights, advocating for bodily autonomy and decision-making, not through legislative measures, but by challenging and transforming patriarchal cultural structures.

Sanctification of Motherhood

Throughout history, the presence of goddesses has been a common theme across various cultures. While women are often revered as divine figures, they frequently find themselves relegated to roles of servitude, sexual objectification, and childbearing. This societal structure effectively marginalizes women from participating in social production, confining them to the roles of mothers and wives. Patriarchal systems have idealized motherhood, using it as a means to undermine women's rights.

Motherhood—including getting pregnant, giving birth, nursing, and caring for a child—is portrayed in society as a divine endeavour. The religious and cultural communities sanctified the pregnancy, these communities reflect the attitudes of patriarchy. The sanctification of pregnancy buried the brutal consequences of pregnancy

and parturition. The invisible aspects of pregnancy and childbirth are depicted in the reports from international forums. A woman's physical and mental health deteriorates during the maternal period, which includes pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period. It even causes maternal death. Still, society ignores all of these drawbacks and praises them. "Every year, at least 40 million women are likely to experience a long-term health problem caused by childbirth" (WHO 2023).

The sanctification of pregnancy- makes one individual think giving birth is a holy spirit, one's duty or god's plan. The god's spirit or order doesn't make women pregnant or it doesn't protect a woman from childbirth injuries, unbearable pain or maternal death. Throughout pregnancy and following childbirth, women experience significant health issues. The health problems that women face are often overlooked by society. While pregnant, women may encounter health challenges such as elevated blood pressure, preeclampsia, gestational diabetes, feelings of depression and anxiety, nausea and vomiting, and iron deficiency, among others.

After giving birth postnatal conditions the women undergo severe complications; pain during sexual intercourse (dyspareunia), affecting more than a third (35%) of postpartum women, low back pain (32%), anal incontinence (19%), urinary incontinence (8-31%), anxiety (9-24%), depression (11-17%), perineal pain (11%), fear of childbirth (tokophobia) (6-15%) and secondary infertility (11%) (WHO 2023). We have discussed the maternal conditions of women during and after pregnancy. then what about her conditions during childbirth? Childbirth does not occur in heaven or not even before the god. It occurs in a hospital surrounded by doctors and midwives, with their equipment. The UNFPA report explicitly shows the brutal consequences of childbirth- "The day a woman gives birth is the day she is most likely to die. Approximately 800 women die every day from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth – one woman every two minutes. For every woman who dies, between 20 and 30 will experience childbirth injuries, infections or disabilities" (WHO 2020). During and after pregnancy, the women's health may be affected adversely. But the patriarchal society won't consider all the consequences which are mentioned above. Cause male uses sex and pregnancy to control the women. An instrument exploits women and it reduces them to their sexual and reproductive roles. "The original division of labour was between man and woman for the purposes of child-breeding" (Engles ([1884] 2022), 71).

Comparatively, than intended, unintended pregnancies have more effects on maternal-related issues. Further, a world forum report warns that unintended pregnancies are a human rights crisis

United Nation Report

The state of world population 2022 report, released by UNFPA. The groundbreaking report Titled: Seeing the Unseen: The Case for Action in the Neglected Crisis of Unintended Pregnancy, 2020. The report showed that, between 2015-19. Nearly half of the pregnancies are unintended. Totalling 121 million each year.

Report Highlights:

- Over 60% of unintended pregnancies end in abortion.
- An estimated 45 % of abortions are unsafe, causing 5-13% of maternal deaths.

Unintended Pregnancies

Unintended pregnancies have become a common aspect of societal norms, yet this acceptance should be questioned. As previously noted, culture or religion places motherhood as a highly valued thing, especially the journey of pregnancy and the act of giving birth.

Unintended pregnancy: "A pregnancy that occurs to a woman who was not planning to have any (more) children, or that was mistimed, in that it occurred earlier than desired. This definition is applied independent of the outcome of the pregnancy (whether abortion, miscarriage or unplanned birth)" (UNFPA 2022). A

woman faces significant exploitation during and after her pregnancy. The experience alters her condition, leaving her different from her previous self. Pregnancies do not always happen by choice. They can be categorised as either intentional or unintentional. An intentional pregnancy refers to one that is planned, whereas an unintentional pregnancy indicates it was not planned. It is also important to distinguish between unintended and unwanted pregnancies, as they are not the same. Unwanted pregnancy means “A pregnancy that a woman does not want to have” (UNFPA 2022).

Planned pregnancy means the intimate partners have vaginal penetrative sex (vaginal intercourse) to get conceive and take deliberate steps toward parenthood, on the other side vaginal intercourse with a partner for physical intimacy results in pregnancy. That is pregnancy occurs without prior intention due to unprotected vaginal intercourse or due to the failure of the contraception is Unplanned pregnancy. A planned pregnancy involves careful organisation to address various outcomes comprehensively. This means families often prepare for health-related expenses, a balanced diet and potentially enhanced child care, alongside other considerations. However, even with careful planning, there can still be unavoidable effects on the health of women during these pregnancies. On the other hand, pregnancies that occur unexpectedly usually have a more significant influence on women’s health and can disrupt family dynamics. For families with limited financial means, the strain of unforeseen medical expenses can be challenging, making it difficult to provide adequate nutrition for both the mother and the developing foetus.

Unintended pregnancies occur due to a lack of sexual and reproductive health care and information, Contraceptive options that don't suit women's bodies or circumstances, Harmful norms and stigma surrounding women controlling their fertility and bodies, Sexual violence and reproductive coercion, Judgmental attitudes or shaming in health services, Poverty and stalled economic development, Gender inequality, etc (UNFPA 2022). Analyzing the elements that contribute to unplanned pregnancies requires a broader perspective. We should avoid confining our analysis to a few specific reasons.

An unintended pregnancy should not be seen merely as a pregnancy; instead, it represents a form of violence. This issue stems from persistent violence, discrimination, exploitation and harsh treatment directed towards women.

Confronting the fundamental issues surrounding the access and availability of contraceptive methods is essential, along with the advancement of contemporary contraceptive solutions and their effectiveness. The progress in male contraception and other previously mentioned factors should also be addressed. Nonetheless, our primary focus should be on the core issues. First, upholding women’s rights regarding their bodies and empowering them to make independent decisions is vital. Second, it is important to recognise that sex should not be viewed as only for reproduction. But how these objectives can be achieved?

Coitus Disparity

Sex fulfils multiple functions that extend beyond reproduction. It addresses our physical cravings and emotional requirements—a study by Cindy M. Meston and David. M. Buss (2007) has revealed, 237 reasons why humans engage in sexual activity. Notably, only one of these reasons focuses on, wanting to reproduce (David. M. Buss 2007). Engaging in sexual activity proffers multitudinous advantages or benefits; however, within human communities, the primary outcome is typically associated with pregnancy, which often occurs unintentionally. It is evident that vaginal intercourse is not solely about procreation; it encompasses a far broader range of significance. The intimacy fostered during sex strengthens the bond between partners, irrespective of their marital status. The closeness built through sexual activity enhances the connection between intimate partners. Intimacy plays a vital role in fostering a strong and healthy relationship. Sexual passion often becomes the first language of love, a bridge that brings two people together before words and emotions can catch up (de Beauvoir 1949).

However, sex has been more advantageous for men than for women. Women often find themselves unsatisfied with their sexual partners. The HuffPost (Bahadur, 2015) explored the truth about sexual encounters 72%

reported having a partner reach climax without trying to assist them, 57% of women experienced orgasm with their partner, while the figure for men was 95%. Additionally, the likelihood of achieving orgasm via masturbation surpasses that of vaginal intercourse. This illustrates or highlights the inequality between genders in sexual experiences.

Gender inequality extends beyond socioeconomic and political realms; it also permeates aspects of sexual fulfilment and attainment of orgasm. There are significant disparities regarding sexual climax, which have further implications. When engaging in unprotected intercourse, it is typically the woman who bears the consequences, whether that results in carrying a pregnancy to term or opting for an abortion.

Women are grappling with issues surrounding sexual dissatisfaction, unintended pregnancies, contraceptive methods, and the implications of abortion. This scenario highlights the nature of social structure. Men are empowered while women are relegated to a subordinate status. The dominance of men is a clear indicator of gender inequity, manifesting as systemic violence and discrimination against women.

Sexual Democracy in Patriarchy Relationship

The foundation of family planning begins with sexual activity or vaginal intercourse. During the intimate moment, both partners- the male and female, should engage with care. Additionally, the male partner must be prepared to honour the women's decisions, while engaging in sexual interactions. If she expresses 'NO' then it is vital for the man to act accordingly. The gateway to sexual engagement relies on the woman's affirmative response, her 'YES.' This means that her consensus is crucial. Engaging in sexual activity without her consent is considered an act of violence (specifically intimate partner violence). We cannot separate it from sexual assault. Nevertheless, the limitations imposed by society fail to identify it as rape, though the law does categorise it as marital rape. Cause socially sanctioned values outweigh the legal values.

Estimates published by WHO (2025) indicate that globally about 1 in 3 (30%) of women worldwide have been subjected to either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime. Most of this violence is intimate partner violence. The reports indicate that women face more significant suppression from their intimate partners. The dynamic of relationships has enabled men to dominate and mistreat women formally.

Do women show signs of rejection? As previously mentioned, men ought to behave with respect. However, many women face the difficulty of saying 'NO' to their partners. Women often lack complete autonomy over their bodies in a relationship. Nearly a quarter of women lack the power to say no to sex (UNFPA 2022). Is she forfeit all her rights, dignity, choice and individuality?

Those in a relationship, whether lovers, husbands or significant others, should emphasise the importance of women's choices, freedom of expression, personal autonomy and individual preferences, as these aspects are essential to democracy. Without choice, individual autonomy, preferences, and freedom of expression, a relationship devolves into authoritarianism and autocracy.

Within a patriarchal framework, a woman does not forfeit her rights that are taken away by dictators (men). "Only 57 per cent of women can make their own decisions over their sexual and reproductive health and rights" (UNFPA 2020).

Reign of Patriarchy

"Patriarchy in its wider definition means the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance over women in society in general. It implies that men hold power in all the important institutions of society and that women are deprived of access to such power" (Lerner 1986).

As previously discussed through various studies and their findings, we have prioritized the sexual and reproductive rights of women. This right takes precedence over others in importance. "A woman who has autonomy over her own body is more likely to gain strength in other spheres of her life" (UNFPA 2021). The women lack autonomy in every aspect of their lives in the patriarchal society. In this context, the choices made are not their own. Instead, such choices are shaped by the prevailing patriarchal social and cultural norms. She is a sexual slave and servitude in a monogamous relationship. When considering the dynamics within families or similar intimate relationships, the primary distinction between married couples and those in other similar relationships such as lovers.

Married couples are socially and legally sanctioned. Marx stated that marriage is a legalised prostitution. Scholars with similar viewpoints contend that monogamous culture such as love, marriage or family are the outcome of the male ego, possessiveness and jealousy. The idea of monogamy is developed under the patriarchy. The term monogamous primarily serves to restrain women, not men. By this men often impose their authority over women's independence, frequently disregarding her consent both physically and psychologically. This means a man can easily penetrate either his penis in the vagina or his decision in her mind without her consent, unlike the men who exist outside of those bonds.

The system or framework facilitates a pathway to sexual access, dominance and violence. These relationship systems are the outcome of patriarchal minds. Violence perpetrated outside this context is recognized as assault and rape, while similar acts within the relationship are categorized as domestic violence/intimate partner violence or marital rape. Women encounter considerable violence and discrimination, both in the family/marriage setting and beyond, with the only difference lying in the terminology used to describe the experiences. We frequently refer to concepts such as gender rights, gender equality, gender inequality, gender-based violence, etc. These phrases revolve around the rights and dignity of women rather than those of men.

But Who has taken away the rights of women? From whom do they demand their justice? Women do not require rights from anyone, as their fundamental rights are inherently theirs. yet, a major obstacle exists, known as patriarchy. Within the patriarchal framework, the freedoms, rights and self-determination of women are tightly restricted. This system has created a metaphorical cage using aspects like care, possessiveness, pride, love, economic factors, chastity, fear, control, abuse, emotional manipulation, and safety concerns. Moreover, the same elements have served as a mighty instrument to regulate women's behaviour.

In a Matriarchy society, there is an absence of male dominance. who has played a crucial in society and even in social production. They exercised their rights independently. Her right is her. In this type of community, lineage is identified through mothers rather than fathers. F. Engels ([1884] 2024, 62-63) described the transition as, a world-historical defeat for the female sex, the man seized the reins in the house also, the women were degraded, enthralled, the slave of man's lust, mere an instrument of breeding children. This viewpoint indicates that before the rise of patriarchal frameworks, women enjoyed a significant position within both their households and society. The individuals had sovereignty over their own bodies, which included sexual and reproductive rights. Nevertheless, the emergence of patriarchy has progressively diminished these rights, particularly through the lens of monogamy. This cultural paradigm engenders a significant discord between men and women, culminating in the exclusive authority of males (Engels [1884] 2024, 73). Such male supremacy has led to a range of detrimental effects, including unplanned pregnancies, the infringement of sexual rights, and various forms of violence against women, such as intimate partner violence and marital rape, ultimately undermining women's autonomy and capacity for decision-making. It is clear that the subjugation of females by males is a fundamental tenet of societal structure (Engels [1884] 2024, 72).

CONCLUSION- KNOCKING DOWN OF PATRIARCHY

This research underscores the multifaceted dynamics at work. It initially focused on the disassembly of the patriarchal structure, which is fundamentally defined by male authority and self-importance. Although the study critiques monogamy, it does not endorse polygamy as an alternative. Rather, it advocates for the removal of patriarchal and feudal characteristics within the framework of monogamy, conceptualizing this as a form

of negation through negation. Patriarchy does not function as an isolated institution; rather, it is embedded within religious and cultural frameworks. Thus, it can be argued that both religion and culture exhibit patriarchal characteristics. Additionally, Judith Butler (1990) broadens this perspective by positing that gender is fundamentally a cultural performance, rather than a mere biological reality. Cultural norms dictate what is deemed acceptable behaviour for women, thereby reinforcing heteronormative standards and gender binaries. Cultural norms surrounding gender have entrenched the notion of males as the primary sex, positioning women in subordinate role. This hierarchy is evident in numerous inhumane practices. Women are frequently viewed as mere instruments of sexual and reproductive labour, deprived of independent choices and autonomy. This situation has resulted in a high prevalence of unintended pregnancies. Although contraception is an important aspect of reproductive health, it does not serve as a complete solution. The true remedy is to champion the rights and dignity of women.

Contraception should not be viewed as a comprehensive solution to the issue of unintended pregnancies; rather, it serves as a crucial component in addressing this challenge. Various factors, such as the effectiveness of methods, accessibility, unsuitable contraception and economic considerations, influence its use. Individuals who have the financial means, knowledge and access to contraceptive options should be encouraged to carry them at all times. In this case, women can also opt for long-term reversible methods rather than short-term methods. Considering that sexual activity may not always align with a predetermined schedule, as it can be stimulated by both physical and psychological motivation. So it is preferable to carry contraception in hand. For those who have reached their desired family size, undergoing a sterilization procedure may be a necessary consideration. Analysis of contraception and sterilization statistics demonstrates a considerable gender disparity, with female sterilization reported at 219 million and male sterilization at just 17 million. This discrepancy reflects the hypocrisy and patriarchal structures that permeate our society, often leading to unintended repercussions. Further “Countries with higher levels of gender inequality had higher rates of unintended pregnancy” (UNFPA 2022). Gender inequality is nothing but the existence of a patriarchal system. Unintended is a global crisis, a patterned discrimination and violence, the society's generalised it as a normal event. We found that both intended and unintended pregnancies have severe health consequences on women's physical and mental health. We neglected to address that. But we always tend to glorify pregnancy or motherhood as a glory thing. As its tool to oppress women formally.

Sexual intimacy is a fundamental aspect of human relationships, necessitating an understanding of individual sexual desires and their fulfilment. Many women experience dissatisfaction with their sexual experiences, often due to a lack of attention from their male partners, who may prioritize their climax over mutual satisfaction. Men must adopt a responsible approach, which includes respecting women's consent during sexual activities and acknowledging their choices regarding reproduction and contraception. Men must overthrow their patriarchal dominance and ego. If sexual encounters are not intended for procreation, they should not lead to unintended pregnancies. However, a significant challenge arises from the inability of women to assertively decline sexual advances, a situation exacerbated by the autocratic nature of patriarchal relationship dynamics. The challenges associated with unintended pregnancies, as well as the decision-making processes regarding health, sexual, and reproductive rights, are predominantly outside the control of women. Furthermore, the fulfilment and enjoyment of sexual intimacy with partners are often compromised. Current contraceptive methods do not adequately address the issue of unintended pregnancies, nor do existing policies and measures effectively tackle this concern.

Additionally, the legal frameworks and policies fail to adequately address issues such as marital rape, domestic violence, and intimate partner violence, reducing these serious matters to mere technical terms that obscure the reality of violence and exploitation within intimate relationships. The prevalence of violence is notably higher within relationships than in external contexts, indicating that the relationship itself serves as a fundamental unit of gender inequality, discrimination, exploitation, and violence.

Monogamy emerges as a consequence of patriarchal societal frameworks, which have historically positioned women as mere sexual objects and reproductive agents. This arrangement plays a pivotal role in the systematic control and exploitation of women through established institutions such as marriage, family, and romantic

partnerships. "Monogamy was a great historical advance, but at the same time, it inaugurated, along with slavery and private wealth, that epoch, lasting until today, in which every advance is likewise a relative regression, in which the well-being and development of the one group attained by the misery and repression of the other" (Engels [1884] 2022, 71).

The challenge does not stem from the nature of relationships, monogamy, family dynamics, or marriage institutions, nor is it fundamentally about men themselves. Instead, the crux of the issue is the omnipresence of patriarchy in all structures that involve women.

This patriarchal influence is deeply embedded in cultural, social, and historical frameworks that favour male power and control over women. It manifests a belief system that regards men as natural leaders and decision-makers, relegating women to lesser roles. Consequently, these prevailing stereotypes have positioned women as the subordinate sex and men as the superior one. Additionally, patriarchy is frequently rationalized through myths, ideologies, or pseudo-scientific theories that depict the subordination of women as both natural and beneficial for societal progress. To address these pervasive stereotypes and biases, an educational approach is essential. By examining historical cultural changes and the transition from a matriarchy to a patriarchy, individuals can gain insights into the pivotal roles women previously played in families and communities, all of which were ultimately overshadowed by the patriarchal system benefiting men. The concept of superiority or inferiority based on birth, gender, sexual orientation or masculinity must be rejected, as these are constructs of patriarchy meant to perpetuate exploitation. The patriarchal system is inherently entrenched and demands comprehensive elimination. To achieve gender equality in all aspects of life, it is crucial to first foster equality within family, marriage, and intimate relationships. The endeavour for gender equality is a shared responsibility that significantly contributes to dismantling patriarchal systems and creating a more equitable society for everyone. The insights of Periyar, Marx, and Ambedkar indicate that the progress of society is evaluated based on the empowerment of women. For an egalitarian society to flourish, it is vital to uproot patriarchy. This initiative must commence with men, who need to critically examine their beliefs through lived experiences and education, gaining insights into the nature of patriarchy, religion, culture, gender roles, and societal norms, as well as the biological characteristics of both genders, to eliminate inequality and gender discrimination. It is imperative for women to firmly advocate for their essential rights, including those that are enshrined in law. They engage in a critical analysis of religious and cultural norms, aiming to dismantle practices that perpetuate patriarchy. While legal rights can act as a means of resistance, they do not constitute a complete solution. The realization of women's liberation is a process that must be driven by women, rather than relying on men.

Author

Devseshan R. B has earned a Bachelor of Engineering in Mechanical Engineering, an MBA, and a Master of Arts in Sociology. He is a researcher and published author with expertise in sociology, gender studies, and the relationship between family structures and capitalism. ORCID: 0009-0004-0167-7125. Connect on Facebook: Devseshan. R.B and Twitter: Devseshan.

REFERENCES

1. Bahadur, Nina. 2015. "Cosmo's Female Orgasm Survey Tells You Everything You Need to Know." HuffPost (blog). March 23, 2015. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/cosmo-orgasm-survey_n_6923934.
2. Butler, Judith. 1990. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. United Kingdom: Routledge.
3. Brandmaier, Grace Varada. 2015. *Patriarchy and the Power of Myth: Exploring the Significance of a Matriarchal Prehistory*. Senior Projects Spring 2015. 119. United States: Bard College.
4. De Beauvoir, Simone. 2014. *The Second Sex*. United Kingdom: Random House.
5. Engels, Friedrich. ([1884] 2022). *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*. Reprint, People's Publishing House.
6. Lerner, Gerda. 1986. *The Creation of Patriarchy*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.

7. Malthus, T. R. (1803) 2018. *An Essay on the Principle of Population: The 1803 Edition*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
8. Marx, Karl. ([1863] 2022). *Theories of Surplus-Value [Volume IV of Capital]*. Edited by Julio Huato. Mark-up by Hans G. Ehrbar. eBook prepared by J Eduardo Brissos. Scan by YongLee Goh. Downloaded from holybooks.com.
9. Meston, Cindy M., and David M. Buss. 2007. "Why Humans Have Sex." *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 36:477–507. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-007-9175-2>.
10. United Nations Population Fund 2021. *State of World Population 2021: My Body Is My Own*. https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/sowp2021_report_-_en_web.3.21_0_0.pdf.
11. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. 2022. *World Family Planning 2022: Meeting the Changing Needs for Family Planning: Contraceptive Use by Age and Method*. https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/files/documents/2022/May/un_pop_2022_5.pdf.
12. United Nations Population Fund. 2022. *State of World Population 2022: Seen and Unseen*. https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/EN_SWP22%20report_0.pdf.
13. United Nations. 2023. *Goal 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls - Fast Facts*. https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Goal-5_Fast-Facts.pdf.
14. World Health Organization and Johns Hopkins University. 2022. *Family Planning Handbook: 2022 Edition*. <https://fphandbook.org/sites/default/files/WHO-JHU-FPHandbook-2022Ed-v221115a.pdf>.
15. World Health Organization. n.d. "Contraception." World Health Organization. https://www.who.int/health-topics/contraception#tab=tab_1.
16. World Health Organization. 2023. "Violence Against Women." <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women>.
17. World Health Organization. 2024. *Maternal Mortality*. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/maternal-mortality#:~:text=Every%20day%20in%202020%2C%20almost,most%20could%20have%20been%20prevented.>