

The cost of Patriarchy: It's Expectations Affecting Mindset of Men.

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Abstract

Patriarchy is traditionally understood as a social system in which men hold primary authority in family and society. While the concept is often associated with the oppression of women, its effects on men are frequently overlooked. This research paper examines how patriarchal mindsets influence men's emotional well-being, social relationships, professional roles, and legal experiences, particularly within the Indian context, while also drawing on Peter Singer's Principle of Equal Consideration of Interests to explain its deeper moral implications. It explores how patriarchal mindsets influence moral reasoning and create unequal valuation of men's and women's interests. The study explores how rigid gender expectations pressure men to conform to traditional ideals of masculinity, such as being the primary breadwinner, suppressing emotions, and displaying dominance, and highlights that the capacity to suffer, rather than intelligence or social status, forms the true basis of equality.

These expectations often lead to stress, social isolation, and mental health issues. The paper also analyses certain legal and social challenges faced by men due to gender stereotypes, including issues related to custody battles, maintenance laws, and recognition of male victims of violence, while further showing how patriarchy harms both women and men by reinforcing rigid roles and emotional suppression. Through socio-legal analysis and interpretation of expert opinion, this study argues that patriarchy not only disadvantages women but also constrains men's emotional and psychological development. Overall, the paper calls for ethical reform and greater social awareness to achieve genuine gender and moral equality and promote healthier social relationships.

Keywords: Patriarchy, gender roles, emotional suppression, men's mental health, gender equality, social-legal challenges, breadwinner pressure, male identity, equal consideration of interests (Peter Singer).

Introduction

In many societies, patriarchy has historically shaped social structures, cultural values, and gender roles. The word "patriarchy" is derived from the Greek words patria (lineage/family) and arkhē (rule/domination), literally meaning "rule of the father" or "rule of the patriarch."¹ Historically, the term was used to describe a social organization in which the male head of the family exercised authority over household members, including his wife, children, and servants². This system was closely connected to patrilineality, where family

¹ Sylvia Walby, *Theorizing Patriarchy* (Basil Blackwell, 1990).

² Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

lineage, inheritance, and social identity were passed through the male line.³In ancient societies, patriarchy functioned as a mechanism to organize families, preserve property rights, and maintain lineage continuity.

Over time, patriarchy evolved from a family-based structure into a broader social and ideological system that shaped gender roles, power relations, and social expectations. In modern sociological discourse, patriarchy is understood as a system of gender hierarchy that often privileges masculine authority while assigning restrictive roles to both men and women. While discussions on patriarchy generally focus on its harmful effects on women, the system also imposes rigid expectations on men. Men are often expected to suppress emotions, maintain financial responsibility for the family, display dominance, and conform to narrow definitions of masculinity.

In India, the patriarchal mindset continues to influence social behavior, family structures, and even legal interpretations. Men are frequently viewed as the primary breadwinners, decision-makers, and protectors of the family. Although these roles may appear to provide men with social power and authority, they also create immense psychological pressure, emotional suppression, and limitations on personal freedom and self-expression.

This research paper examines how patriarchal norms affect men's identity, emotional well-being, social relationships, and legal experiences. By analyzing the psychological and socio-legal consequences of patriarchal expectations, the study aims to broaden the understanding of patriarchy as a system that impacts all genders and limits the emotional and personal development of both men and women.

Patriarchy Expectation and the Construction of Masculinity

Patriarchal societies tend to define masculinity through qualities such as strength, dominance, emotional control, and financial success. From childhood, boys are often socialized to avoid behaviors that are perceived as weak or feminine.

This social conditioning can limit men's ability to express vulnerability, creativity, or emotional sensitivity. Men who deviate from these traditional expectations may face ridicule, social exclusion, or questioning of their masculinity.

As a result, many men feel compelled to adopt behaviors that conform to societal expectations rather than reflecting their authentic personalities. This pressure to constantly prove masculinity can lead to identity conflicts and emotional distress.

The emphasis on stoicism and self-reliance under a patriarchal mindset can severely hinder a man's ability to form deep, meaningful connections with others. Men may struggle to communicate openly and be emotionally vulnerable with their partners, friends, and family. This can create a sense of emotional detachment and

³ Bhaswati Chakravorty, "Patrilineal Society and Gender Relations in India," *Indian Journal of Social Studies* 12, no. 2 (2018): 45.

isolation, leading to strained relationships and a lack of a strong social support system. The "lone wolf" stereotype of masculinity prevents men from building the very relationships that could offer them support and help them cope with stress and emotional challenges. This social isolation is another factor that contributes to poor mental and physical health outcomes.

1. Causes behind this mindset:

1.1 Patriarchal Socialization and the Formation of Male Identity

One of the major ways in which patriarchal mindsets affect men is through early socialization. From childhood, boys are often taught rigid gender roles that define how they should behave in society. Families, communities, and cultural institutions repeatedly reinforce the idea that men are naturally dominant, powerful, and the primary breadwinners, while women are expected to be submissive and responsible for domestic work. As a result, many boys grow up believing that their worth and identity are closely tied to their ability to earn money, control family decisions, and display authority. Although individuals can challenge these beliefs later in life, such deeply ingrained social conditioning makes it extremely difficult for many men to easily change their perspectives. Patriarchal upbringing therefore not only limits women's opportunities but also confines men within rigid expectations about masculinity and power.

1.2 Emotional Suppression and the Burden of Masculinity

Another harmful effect of patriarchal thinking is the expectation that men must always appear strong, emotionally detached, and dominant. Boys are often discouraged from expressing vulnerability, sadness, fear, or affection because these emotions are wrongly associated with weakness or femininity. Phrases such as "boys don't cry" or "men must be tough" are commonly used during childhood, gradually teaching men to suppress their feelings. Over time, this emotional repression can lead to mental stress, loneliness, and difficulty in forming healthy relationships. When men are unable to openly communicate their emotions, they may struggle to seek support during personal difficulties, which can negatively impact their mental health and well-being. Thus, the patriarchal expectation of emotional toughness harms men by denying them the freedom to express their true feelings.

1.3 Family Pressure and Conformity to Traditional Masculine Roles

Patriarchal values are also reinforced through family expectations and societal pressure. Many men feel compelled to behave in certain ways to meet the expectations of their parents, relatives, and community. For instance, men may feel obligated to act as strict authority figures within the household or to prioritize financial success over personal happiness. In many cases, men are pressured to conform to traditional masculine roles even when these roles do not align with their personal beliefs or aspirations. Such pressure can create internal conflicts where men struggle between their own values and the expectations imposed upon them. This

demonstrates that patriarchal norms not only influence women's lives but also limit men's freedom to shape their identities according to their own choices.

1.4 Limited Awareness and the Objectification of Women

A patriarchal mindset often stems from lack of awareness and education about gender equality. In societies where patriarchal values dominate, men may grow up believing that women exist primarily to serve men or fulfill domestic responsibilities. Such beliefs can lead to the objectification of women, where women are viewed as individuals whose purpose is to satisfy male desires rather than as equal human beings with their own rights and autonomy. This perspective can encourage controlling behaviour, where men attempt to dictate how women should dress, behave, or live their lives. However, when men are exposed to broader perspectives about equality and respect, they may begin to understand that women are not possessions or puppets but independent individuals deserving dignity and equal opportunities.

1.5 The Role of Social Norms in Normalizing Harmful Behaviour

Patriarchal culture can also normalize certain harmful behaviours among men. In some societies, practices such as domestic violence, infidelity, substance abuse, and aggressive behaviour are sometimes excused or minimized as typical "male behaviour." When boys grow up witnessing such actions being tolerated or even justified, they may internalize the belief that these behaviours are socially acceptable. Additionally, household responsibilities are frequently labelled as "women's work," which discourages men from participating in domestic labour. This division not only places an unfair burden on women but also deprives men of the opportunity to develop essential life skills and contribute equally within the household. As a result, patriarchal norms reinforce unhealthy behavioural patterns that ultimately harm both men and women.

1.6 Importance of Awareness and Gender-Sensitive Upbringing

Addressing the negative effects of patriarchal mindsets requires greater awareness and education about gender equality. Men need to understand how their actions, attitudes, and language can significantly impact the lives of women. Many harmful behaviours are not always intentional but arise from a lack of knowledge about the consequences of patriarchal thinking. Educational institutions, media, and social movements play an important role in promoting awareness about respectful relationships, emotional well-being, and shared responsibilities within families. Encouraging open discussions about gender.

2. Consequences:

2.1 Pressure of the Breadwinner Role

One of the most significant expectations imposed by patriarchal norms is the belief that men must serve as the primary financial providers for their families. This expectation places considerable economic and psychological pressure on men.

In many cases, men prioritize financial responsibilities over personal aspirations, hobbies, or emotional well-being. Failure to meet these expectations may result in feelings of inadequacy, shame, or social judgment.

The constant pressure to maintain financial stability can also lead to overwork, stress, and health problems. Studies have shown that men often neglect their physical and mental health due to the societal expectation that they must remain strong and resilient under all circumstances.

Patriarchal norms place immense pressure on men to be the sole or primary breadwinners for their families. This expectation is often prioritized over their personal aspirations and passions, creating a constant and overwhelming sense of financial burden. The inability to meet these high standards can lead to feelings of inadequacy and failure, directly impacting a man's self-worth. This pressure is a significant source of stress, which can manifest in both psychological and physical health problems. Men may engage in risky behaviors, overwork themselves, or neglect their health to maintain their role as a provider, which can lead to issues like heart disease and substance abuse.

2.2 Emotional Suppression and Mental Health Issues

Patriarchal norms often discourage men from expressing emotions such as sadness, fear, or vulnerability. From a young age, boys are often taught that “men should be strong” and that showing emotions is a sign of weakness. Because of these beliefs, many men learn to hide their feelings and maintain emotional control at all times. While society praises this toughness as a sign of masculinity, it can create serious emotional difficulties for men. When men suppress their emotions, they may struggle internally with problems such as anxiety, depression, and loneliness. However, many hesitate to seek help or talk about their feelings because they fear being judged or seen as weak by others. Over time, these suppressed emotions do not disappear but may appear in other forms such as anger, frustration, or aggressive behavior. In some cases, the inability to express emotions can also affect personal relationships, leading to misunderstandings and emotional distance between partners, family members, and friends. If emotional stress continues for a long time without support or healthy expression, it can seriously affect a man's mental health and overall well-being. Therefore, encouraging men to openly express their emotions and seek support when needed is important for promoting better mental health and healthier relationships in society.

2.3 Social Isolation and Relationship Challenges

Patriarchal norms often promote the idea that men should be independent, strong, and self-reliant. Men are expected to handle their problems on their own without asking for help. Because of this belief, many men feel that they should not discuss their personal struggles, emotional pain, or vulnerabilities with others. Society often encourages men to solve problems silently rather than seek emotional support from friends, family members, or partners.

Due to these expectations, men may find it difficult to build emotionally supportive relationships. While they may have many friends or family members around them, they often avoid talking about their feelings or personal challenges. As a result, their relationships may remain surface-level, focusing on activities such as work, sports, or daily responsibilities rather than deep emotional conversations. Over time, this lack of emotional openness can lead to feelings of loneliness and social isolation, even when a man is not physically alone.

The absence of emotional communication can also create misunderstandings in personal relationships. For example, partners or family members may feel that a man is emotionally distant, uncaring, or unwilling to share his thoughts. In reality, the man may simply have been conditioned by society to hide his emotions and deal with problems alone. This can weaken emotional bonds and make relationships more difficult to maintain.

Strong social support systems, such as close friendships, open family communication, and supportive partners, are very important for maintaining good mental health. They help individuals cope with stress, share burdens, and feel understood. However, patriarchal norms often discourage men from forming these emotionally supportive networks because seeking support is sometimes seen as a sign of weakness.

Therefore, these social expectations can unintentionally push men toward emotional isolation, which may negatively affect their mental health, relationships, and overall well-being. Encouraging men to communicate openly, build supportive friendships, and seek help when needed can help reduce isolation and promote healthier social relationships.

3. Legal Dimension and Challenges Faced by men

Patriarchal stereotypes do not only affect social behavior but can also influence legal perceptions and public attitudes. In many societies, including India, certain traditional beliefs about gender roles may affect how people interpret legal issues involving men and women. These stereotypes can sometimes create challenges for men within the legal system, particularly in areas related to family law, social protection laws, and recognition of victims.

3.1 Child Custody Disputes

In family disputes involving divorce or separation, courts are required to decide who will take care of the child. Historically, many legal systems have followed the belief that mothers are naturally better caregivers, especially for young children. Due to this assumption, mothers have often been granted primary custody, while fathers usually receive limited visitation rights. Although modern courts increasingly focus on the “best interest of the child,” many fathers still feel disadvantaged in custody battles because of traditional gender stereotypes. Some fathers argue that they should also have equal opportunities to receive custody or shared parenting rights when they are capable of providing a stable, supportive, and emotionally secure environment for the child.

A significant example is the case of *Roxann Sharma v. Arun Sharma*⁴, which involved a custody dispute between separated parents. In this case, the Supreme Court emphasized that the welfare and well-being of the child should be the primary consideration rather than traditional assumptions based on gender. The Court acknowledged that fathers also play an important emotional and supportive role in a child’s life and that custody decisions should not be influenced by patriarchal stereotypes that automatically view mothers as better caregivers. The judgment reflected a gradual shift toward a more gender-neutral approach in family law and demonstrated how traditional patriarchal expectations can affect the legal and social position of men in custody disputes.

3.2 Allegations of Misuse of Laws

Certain laws are specifically designed to protect women from social injustices and violence, particularly in societies where women have historically faced discrimination. In India, laws relating to dowry harassment and domestic violence aim to safeguard women from abuse and cruelty. However, some men’s rights groups argue that in rare situations, such laws may be misused or falsely invoked during personal or marital conflicts. They emphasize that the legal system should ensure fair investigation and due process so that genuine victims receive justice while false accusations are also prevented. This debate highlights the importance of maintaining balance, fairness, and impartiality in gender-related legal frameworks.

An important case related to this issue is *Rajesh Sharma v. State of Uttar Pradesh*⁵, which dealt with concerns regarding the misuse of Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code. The Supreme Court observed that in some situations, false or exaggerated complaints could result in unnecessary arrests and mental stress for husbands and their families. The case is significant because patriarchal expectations often pressure men to remain emotionally strong and silent during legal and social conflicts. Men facing such accusations may experience anxiety, emotional distress, and social stigma but may hesitate to express vulnerability due to societal expectations surrounding masculinity. The judgment emphasized the need for fair investigation and the importance of balancing the protection of genuine victims with safeguards against misuse. It also reflected how patriarchal stereotypes and rigid ideas of masculinity can influence the legal and emotional experiences of men within society.

3.3 Maintenance and Alimony

In many legal systems, particularly in family law, men have traditionally been expected to provide financial support to their spouse or children after divorce or separation. This expectation is largely based on the assumption that men are the primary earners and financial providers within the family. However, modern society has undergone significant changes, and many women today are financially independent and professionally employed. Due to this social and economic shift, several legal scholars argue that maintenance and alimony laws should adopt a more gender-neutral approach, where financial support

⁴ *Roxann Sharma v. Arun Sharma* (2015, India).

⁵ *Rajesh Sharma v. State of Uttar Pradesh* (2017, India).

is determined according to the actual financial capacity and needs of both parties rather than gender alone. Such an approach would better reflect the realities of modern relationships and economic participation.

A significant case related to this issue is *Kalyan Dey Chowdhury v. Rita Dey Chowdhury*⁶, which focused on maintenance after separation and the financial responsibilities of spouses. In this case, the Supreme Court emphasized that maintenance should be decided fairly by considering the income, financial condition, and circumstances of both parties. The case is closely connected to the topic because patriarchal expectations often place heavy economic pressure on men and reinforce the belief that they must always financially support the family regardless of the situation. Such expectations can negatively affect men's mental and emotional well-being during marital disputes and legal proceedings. The judgment highlighted the importance of a more balanced and gender-neutral approach to maintenance laws based on actual need and financial capacity rather than traditional gender stereotypes and patriarchal assumptions.

3.4 Lack of Recognition of Male Victims

Patriarchal beliefs often portray men as strong, dominant, and incapable of being victims. Due to these stereotypes, male victims of domestic violence, emotional abuse, or sexual abuse are not always recognized or taken seriously by society. Many men hesitate to report abuse or seek legal assistance because they fear social stigma, embarrassment, ridicule, or disbelief. As a result, incidents involving male victims may remain unreported or ignored, limiting their access to justice and legal protection. These societal expectations also affect men's emotional and psychological well-being by forcing them to suppress vulnerability and emotional pain.

An important case connected to this issue is *Hiral P. Harsora v. Kusum Narottamdas Harsora*⁷, which dealt with the interpretation of the Domestic Violence Act and questioned certain gender-specific assumptions within the law. The judgment encouraged broader discussions regarding domestic violence and emphasized the need to recognize different forms of abuse within relationships. The case is significant because it reflects how patriarchal stereotypes can negatively influence the legal and social experiences of men by creating the belief that men cannot be victims of abuse. The judgment highlighted the importance of developing a more inclusive and balanced understanding of victimhood and legal protection, where emotional suffering and abuse are acknowledged regardless of gender.

3.5 Statistical Insights on Men's Mental Health and Social Pressure

Statistical data provides important evidence about the mental health challenges faced by men due to social expectations and pressures. In India, reports published by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) show that a large percentage of suicide cases involve men. According to the NCRB report *Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India*, about 70–72% of people who die by suicide in India are men.⁸ These numbers suggest that many men experience serious emotional, psychological, and social pressures in their daily lives.

Experts believe that one major reason for this situation is the strong societal expectations placed on men. In many cultures, men are expected to be financially successful, emotionally strong, and responsible for supporting their families. When men are unable to meet these expectations due to unemployment, financial

⁶ *Kalyan Dey Chowdhury v. Rita Dey Chowdhury* (2017, India).

⁷ *Hiral P. Harsora v. Kusum Narottamdas Harsora* (2016, India).

⁸ National Crime Records Bureau, *Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India* (Latest Report).

difficulties, or personal problems, they may experience stress, anxiety, and feelings of failure. Because society often views men as the “stronger gender,” they may feel embarrassed or ashamed to discuss their problems with others.

Another important factor is the reluctance of men to seek professional help for mental health problems. Studies conducted by the World Health Organization show that men are less likely than women to access mental health services, such as counseling or therapy.⁹ This reluctance is often connected to cultural ideas of masculinity, which encourage men to hide their emotions and handle problems alone. As a result, many men avoid seeking help even when they are experiencing depression, stress, or emotional distress.

The combination of social pressure, emotional suppression, and lack of support systems can negatively affect men’s mental health. Without opportunities to express their feelings or seek assistance, emotional stress may accumulate over time and lead to serious consequences such as depression, substance abuse, relationship problems, or suicidal thoughts.

These statistics and research findings suggest that patriarchal expectations not only affect women but can also create psychological challenges for men. By encouraging healthier attitudes toward emotional expression and promoting access to mental health support, society can help reduce these pressures and improve overall well-being for men.

Literature Review

Emma Watson delivered a powerful speech at the United Nations while launching the HeForShe campaign¹⁰. In this speech, she addressed the importance of gender equality and clarified the real meaning of feminism. According to Emma Watson, feminism simply means the belief that men and women should have equal rights and equal opportunities socially, politically, and economically. By explaining this definition clearly, she attempted to remove the negative image often attached to the word “feminism” and encouraged people to understand it as a movement for equality rather than conflict.

To explain her ideas more effectively, Emma Watson shared several personal experiences from her own life that demonstrate how gender stereotypes affect individuals from a very young age. She recalled that when she showed leadership qualities as a child, she was often called “bossy,” a label that is rarely used for boys displaying the same behaviour. She also mentioned how girls are sometimes discouraged from participating in sports because they fear appearing too muscular or unfeminine. These experiences show how society often limits girls by placing expectations on how they should behave or appear. By sharing such examples, Watson highlighted how these stereotypes can restrict confidence, ambition, and opportunities for young women.

⁹ World Health Organization, Mental Health and Gender Report.

¹⁰ Emma Watson, HeForShe Campaign Speech, United Nations (2014).

However, Emma Watson also emphasized that gender stereotypes do not harm only women; men suffer from them as well. She pointed out that many boys grow up being told that they must always appear strong, dominant, and unemotional. They are often discouraged from expressing their feelings or showing vulnerability. As a result, many men struggle with loneliness, emotional isolation, and mental health challenges. Watson argued that these rigid expectations create pressure on men and prevent them from living freely and honestly. Therefore, the struggle for gender equality should not be seen as a fight between men and women, but as a collective effort to free both from restrictive social roles.

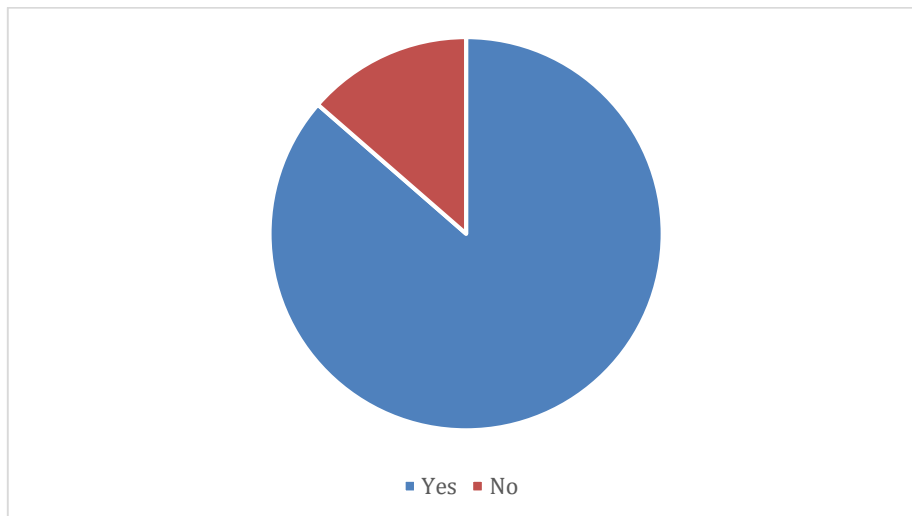
Finally, Emma Watson explained that true equality means allowing individuals to live without fear, judgment, or rigid expectations imposed by society. She suggested that gender should not be seen as two completely separate categories but rather as a spectrum where people should be respected for who they are. Real equality can only exist when individuals are free from stereotypes and allowed to express themselves without ridicule or pressure. Through her speech, Watson encourages society to rethink traditional gender roles and work together toward a more equal and understanding world where both men and women can enjoy dignity, freedom, and mutual respect.

Survey:

The survey presented in this research paper was conducted to understand people's mindset regarding patriarchy and its impact on both women and men. The study mainly focused on how patriarchal stereotypes not only restrict women but also negatively affect men, their mental health, emotional expression, and social behavior, which may further contribute to various societal problems. The survey also aimed to examine how such beliefs are developed during the upbringing and growth of individuals, showing that patriarchal thinking is often deeply rooted from childhood rather than formed suddenly. This survey was conducted within the premises of our College with the permission of the Principal and our professor. A total of 50 students participated by filling out the survey forms. In addition, several teachers were interviewed to understand their perspectives on the topic, and a few related questions were discussed with them to gain broader insights into the issue

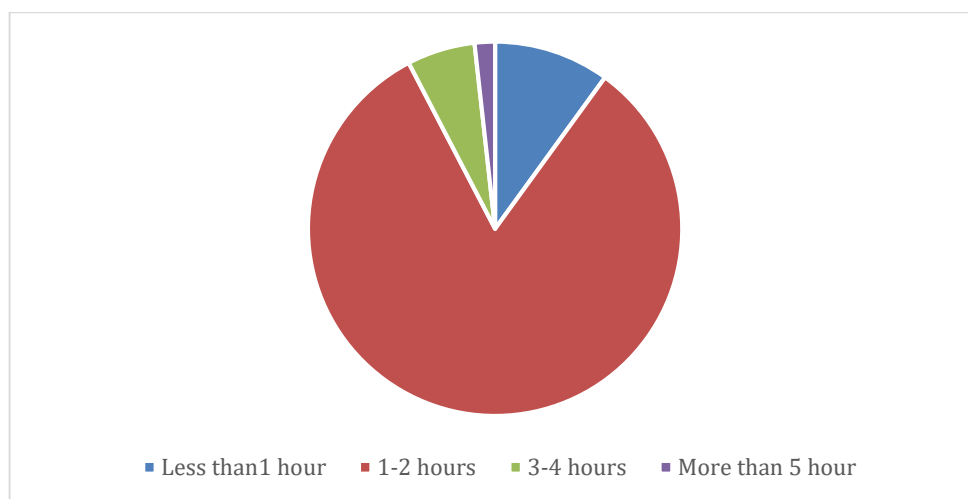
Responses from the survey we have conducted:

1. Do you contribute to household work?



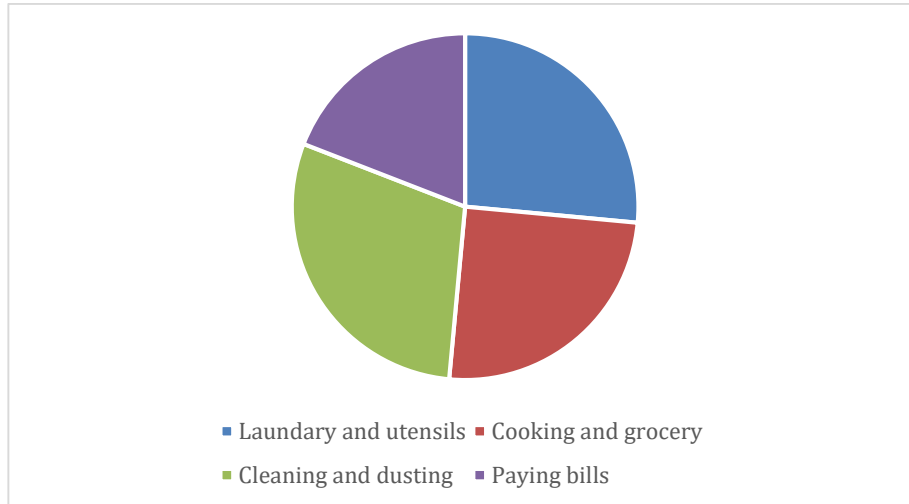
Answer: This question was intended to examine the extent to which traditional gender-based divisions of labour continue to influence individual participation in domestic responsibilities. The responses reflect evolving perceptions regarding shared household duties and indicate a gradual shift away from conventional patriarchal norms that historically associated domestic work exclusively with women.

2. Household division of labour- On a typical week, how many hours do you spend on household chores (Cleaning, Cooking, Laundry, Grocery Shopping)



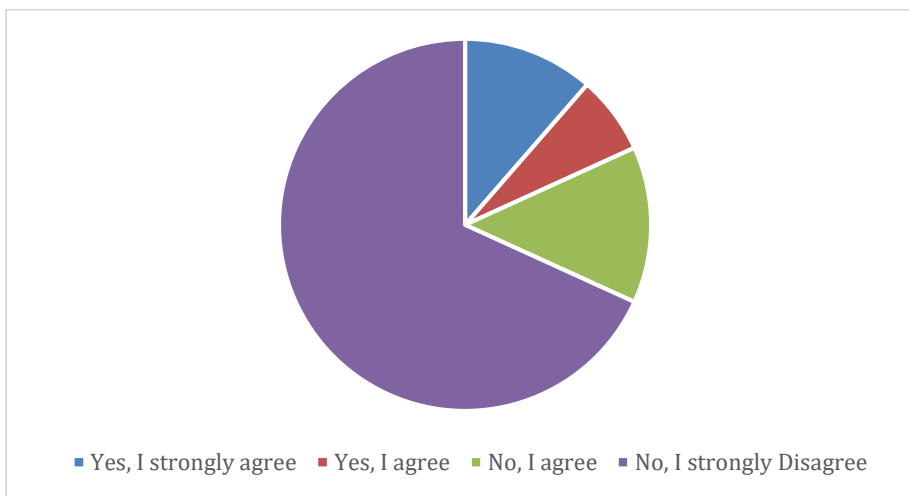
Answer: The objective of this question was to assess the practical involvement of individuals in unpaid domestic labour. The responses provide insight into how social conditioning, family structure, and culturally constructed gender expectations influence the allocation of time and responsibility within the household sphere.

3. In what tasks do you participate?



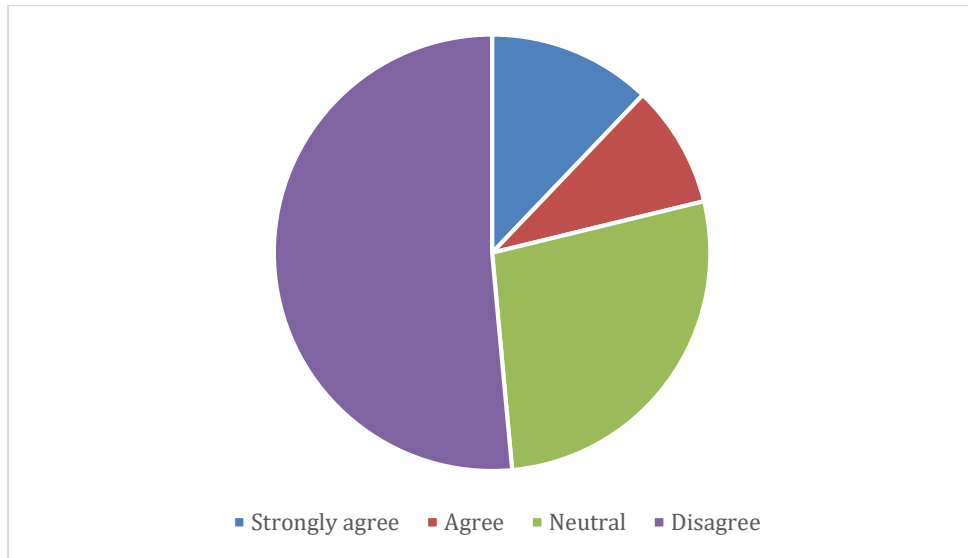
Answer: This question aimed to identify the nature of household tasks commonly undertaken by respondents and to evaluate whether certain domestic activities continue to be gender-stereotyped. The findings suggest that patriarchal perceptions still influence the categorisation of domestic roles and responsibilities.

4. Do you believe that household chores are primarily a woman’s responsibility?



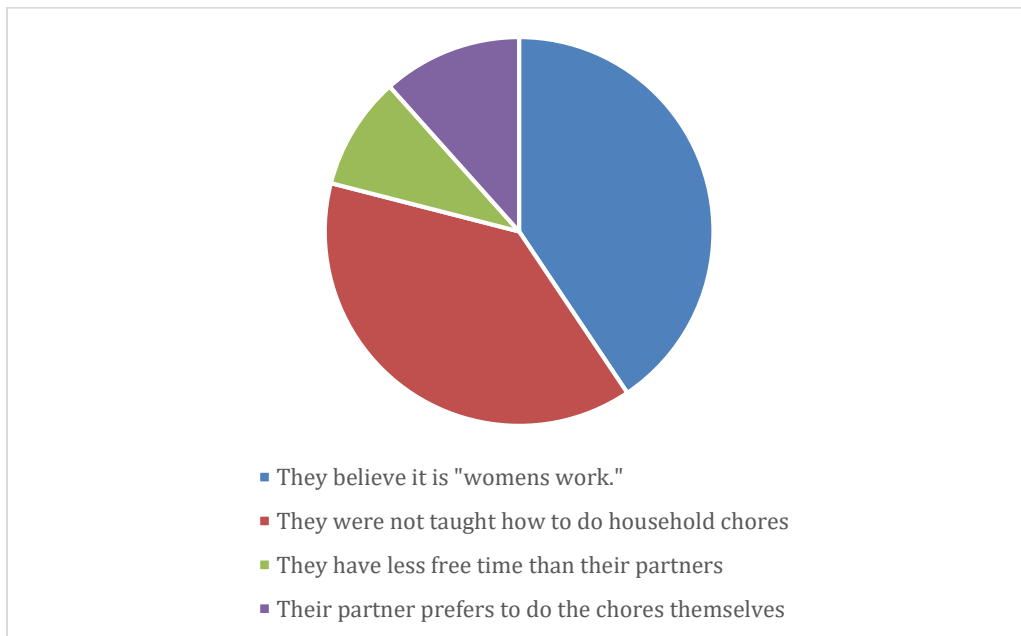
Answer: The purpose of this question was to analyse societal attitudes toward traditional gender roles within the domestic domain. The responses indicate the degree to which patriarchal ideology continues to shape beliefs regarding women’s responsibility toward caregiving and household management.

5. Please rate the following statement: “A man’s primary role is to be the breadwinner, while a woman’s primary role is to take care of the home and family.”



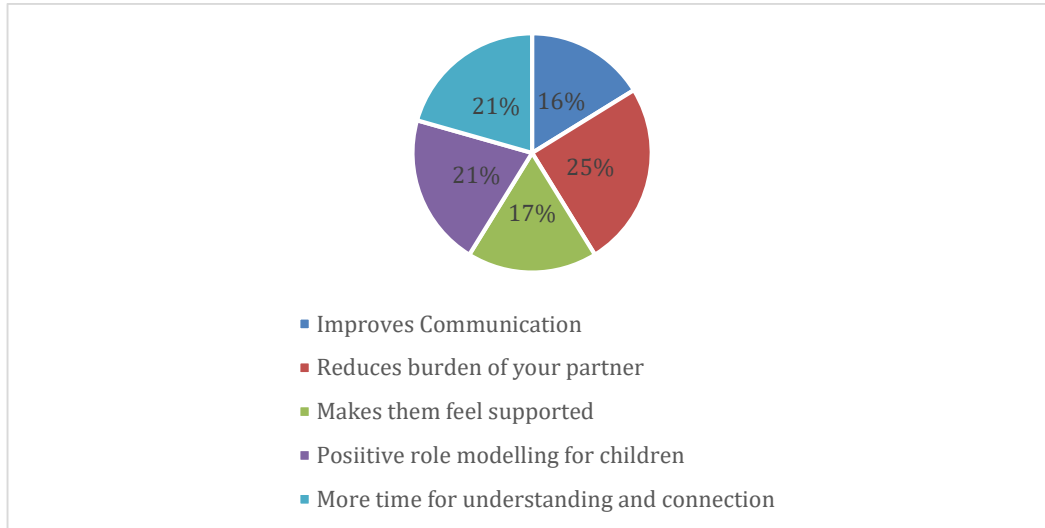
Answer: This question sought to evaluate the persistence of conventional patriarchal beliefs concerning gender-specific responsibilities. The responses demonstrate how deeply embedded societal expectations continue to impose economic and emotional pressure upon men while simultaneously reinforcing restrictive domestic expectations for women.

6. In your opinion, what is the main reason why some men do not participate equally in household chores?



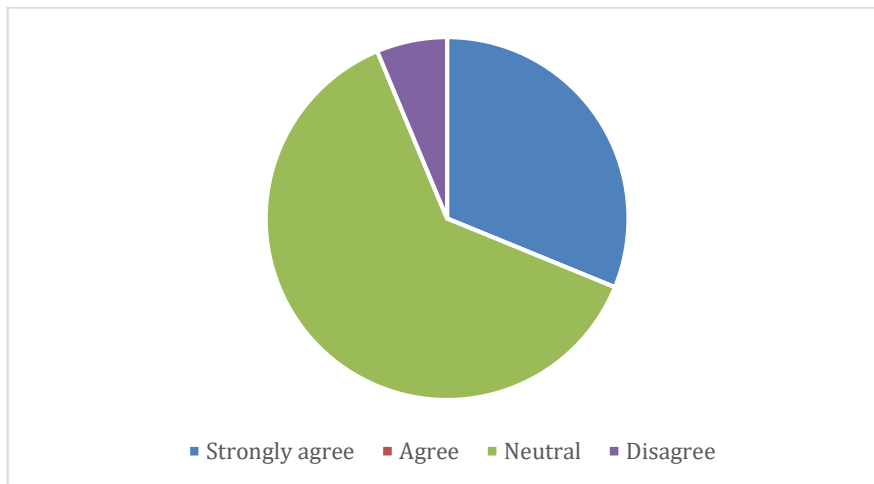
Answer: This question was designed to explore the influence of upbringing, socialisation, and cultural conditioning on male participation in domestic labour. The responses suggest that unequal household participation is significantly associated with inherited patriarchal values and gender-based social norms established during childhood.

7. What if any, are the benefits you've experienced from sharing household duties with your partner?



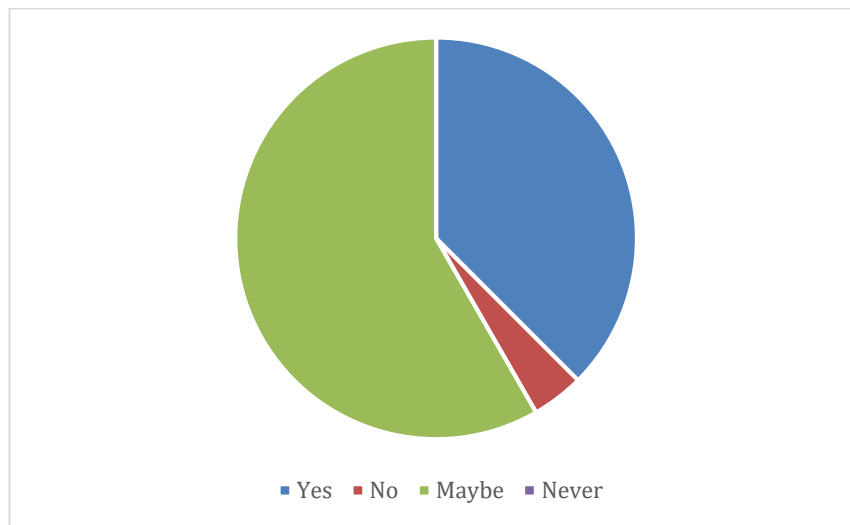
Answer: This question aimed to examine the social and emotional outcomes associated with the equitable distribution of domestic responsibilities. The responses indicate that shared household participation contributes to improved interpersonal understanding, emotional support, mutual respect, and healthier relationship dynamics.

8. Do you think men are often pressured to suppress their emotions due to societal expectations?



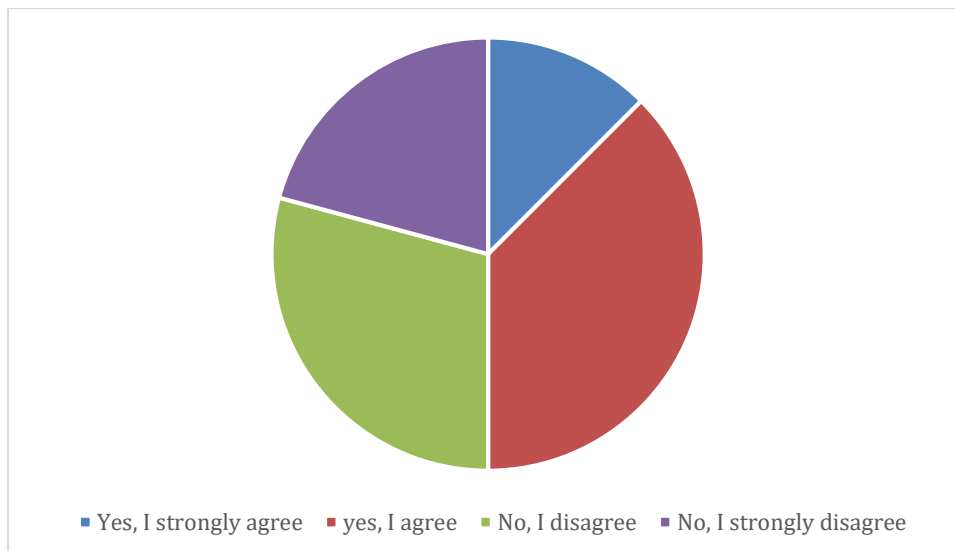
Answer: The purpose of this question was to analyse the psychological impact of patriarchal masculinity on emotional expression among men. The findings suggest that societal expectations surrounding masculinity frequently discourage emotional vulnerability, thereby contributing to emotional suppression and adverse mental health consequences.

9. Do you believe this pressure can lead to strained relationships or negative coping mechanisms like substance abuse?



Answer: This question sought to investigate the broader psychological and social consequences of emotional repression among men. The responses indicate a perceived association between patriarchal pressure, deteriorating interpersonal relationships, and the adoption of harmful coping mechanisms, including substance dependency and emotional withdrawal.

10. Do you think patriarchal pressure on men can lead to aggression, domestic violence or other harmful behaviour ?



Answer: This question aimed to evaluate the relationship between patriarchal expectations and the manifestation of harmful behavioural patterns. The responses suggest that prolonged emotional suppression, societal pressure, and rigid masculine norms may contribute to aggression, domestic conflict, and other forms of destructive behaviour.

Analysis of the Survey:

The survey responses provide a clear picture of how deeply patriarchal thinking still influences people's attitudes and everyday behaviour. Many respondents said that they do participate in household work, which shows that some change is happening in society and people are becoming more aware of shared responsibilities. However, when we look at the number of hours spent on household chores, most respondents reported spending only a limited amount of time on these tasks. This suggests that even though people may believe in equality, the actual division of work at home is still not fully balanced. At the same time, a large number of participants disagreed with the traditional belief that household work is mainly a woman's responsibility and that a man's role is only to earn money. This shows that many people today understand that such ideas are outdated. However, the survey also revealed that many men still do not participate equally in household work because of social conditioning. From childhood, many boys are not taught household skills or are made to believe that such work is meant for women. Because of this upbringing, these ideas continue to influence behaviour even when people intellectually support equality.

The survey also highlights another important aspect of patriarchy—its effect on men's emotional lives. Many respondents agreed that men often feel pressure from society to hide their emotions and appear strong all the time. This expectation can make it difficult for men to express their feelings openly, which can sometimes lead to stress, frustration, or unhealthy ways of coping. Some respondents also mentioned that they have seen men behave aggressively or try to act "tough" because they feel that society expects this from them. These responses show that patriarchal norms do not only affect women but also create strict expectations for men about how they should behave. Overall, the survey suggests that patriarchal ideas are still deeply rooted in society. Even when people consciously reject traditional gender roles, these beliefs continue to influence daily practices, especially in small and ordinary matters like household work or emotional expression. Therefore, the findings of this survey support the idea that patriarchy shapes social behaviour in subtle ways and affects both men and women, making it important to question and challenge these long-standing norms.

Interview:

To gain a better understanding of patriarchy, gender roles, and societal expectations, we conducted interviews with teachers and professors as our resource persons. The purpose of these interviews was to collect informed opinions, understand real-life experiences, and gain deeper insight into how patriarchal thinking affects both men and women in society. Their responses helped us connect theoretical concepts with practical social issues such as household responsibilities, emotional pressure on men, gender inequality, domestic violence, and mental health. These interviews also allowed us to explore how societal expectations influence behaviour, relationships, and moral perspectives in everyday life.

The following questions were asked during the interviews:

1. Do you contribute to household work or not? If yes, how many hours?

2. Are girls and boys equally treated at your home in terms of household chores?
3. If you disagree with the idea of equal division of labour, what are your reasons?
4. Do you think men are often pressured to suppress their emotions due to societal expectations? Why?
5. Have you ever witnessed or experienced a situation where a man felt he had to act tough or aggressive to fit in with societal norms?
6. Do you think societal expectations can be harmful to men? In what ways? And do these expectations also affect women?
7. Do you think societal pressure can contribute to domestic violence, harmful behaviour, or strained relationships?
8. In your opinion, how does patriarchal pressure affect men's mental health?

Analysis and Interpretation of Professor's opinion from the Interview conducted:

Patriarchy emerges as a deeply internalized social system that significantly shapes the mindset and behaviour of men from an early age. Unequal participation in household work and the differential treatment of boys and girls in domestic responsibilities are not merely individual choices but outcomes of long-standing social conditioning that associates domestic labour with femininity and authority with masculinity. Resistance to an equal division of labour often stems from ingrained beliefs surrounding male dominance and the fear of losing traditional masculine identity. Patriarchal norms also impose emotional restrictions on men by discouraging the expression of vulnerability, sadness, or fear, thereby promoting emotional restraint as a defining feature of masculinity.

These expectations frequently pressure men to adopt aggressive or dominant behaviours to conform to societal norms, even when such behaviour contradicts their emotional reality. Consequently, men experience heightened stress, emotional isolation, and reluctance to seek help, while these dynamics simultaneously reinforce gender inequalities that continue to burden women. Patriarchal pressure can further manifest in strained relationships and harmful behavioural patterns, including domestic violence, as suppressed emotions are redirected into anger or control. Overall, patriarchy not only disadvantages women but also constrains men psychologically and emotionally by prioritizing dominance over emotional well-being and equality.

Patriarchy also operates subtly by shaping men's emotional, behavioural, and psychological patterns within everyday social contexts. While men are not entirely emotionally suppressed, prevailing norms discourage open emotional and creative expression, reinforcing expectations of toughness and conformity, particularly in rural settings where rigid gender roles remain more entrenched. These pressures, combined with insecurities, learned family behaviours, and the burden of being the primary financial provider, contribute to stress, health neglect, and, in some cases, harmful conduct, though such actions remain unjustifiable. Patriarchal expectations affect men's mental health across various life stages, often leading to unrecognized anxiety and

depression with serious physical consequences. These pressures also create collateral effects on women through relationship strain and disproportionate accountability in areas such as health and fertility. Despite these challenges, gradual social shifts are evident, including increased acceptance of emotional openness, shared domestic responsibilities based on capability rather than gender, and growing recognition that men's emotional well-being is essential for achieving genuine gender equality.

The initial reaction to the research focus was marked by surprise at the idea that patriarchy could significantly affect men and their mindset, reflecting how deeply normalized the perception has become that patriarchy primarily disadvantages women. This response itself highlights a prevailing stereotypical framework within which men's emotional, psychological, and social struggles under patriarchal norms are often overlooked. Although patriarchy does not affect all men uniformly, many are compelled to conform to or sustain patriarchal practices due to peer pressure, social expectations, emotional isolation, and the suppression of vulnerability.

This realization formed the core motivation for the present research, which seeks to broaden the discourse on patriarchy by examining its effects on all genders, identifying its root causes, and contributing to the development of a more open, inclusive, and equitable social structure in which no gender is constrained or harmed by patriarchal norms.

Linking Patriarchal Mindset with Singer's Principle of Equal Consideration

Equality is one of the most important ideas in philosophy and society, especially in discussions about justice, rights, and fairness. However, equality does not mean that all individuals are identical in intelligence, abilities, or social roles. Philosopher Peter Singer explains that equality should be understood as a moral principle rather than a statement about human similarities. According to Singer, all individuals deserve equal moral consideration because their interests and experiences matter equally. This idea becomes especially important when examining systems such as patriarchy, where men are often given greater authority and women are placed in subordinate positions.

Patriarchy not only affects women but also shapes the attitudes and behaviour of men. From childhood, many men are taught to value strength, emotional control, and dominance. These expectations can influence how men see women and may lead to the belief that women's suffering or interests are less important. Such thinking creates inequality in relationships, workplaces, and society. Singer's principle challenges this mindset by arguing that moral decisions should not prioritize one group over another simply because of gender.

Singer's Principle of Equal Consideration of Interests states that the interests of all individuals should be given equal weight when making moral decisions. He rejects the idea that intelligence, physical strength, or social status should determine moral worth. If intelligence were the basis of equality, then highly intelligent people would deserve more rights than others, including people with intellectual disabilities. Singer argues that this conclusion is unfair and unethical. Instead, he claims that the real basis of equality is the capacity to experience suffering and pleasure. If a being can suffer, then its suffering deserves moral consideration.

This principle has important implications for gender equality and discrimination. Singer compares sexism with racism because both involve treating one group as naturally superior to another. Historically, women were denied education, political participation, and independence because they were considered less rational or capable than men. Singer argues that even if differences exist between individuals or groups, these differences do not justify unequal treatment. Women's experiences, suffering, and interests are morally as important as men's and should be treated equally.

Patriarchal societies often teach men to prioritize their own interests and authority over women's, which directly conflicts with Singer's Principle of Equal Consideration. Patriarchy encourages dominance, emotional suppression, and rigid gender roles, leading many people to dismiss women's emotions, ambitions, and experiences. As a result, male comfort and authority are often treated as more important than women's well-being and autonomy. This creates an unequal moral system where women's interests are given less value.

Singer's philosophy argues that moral decisions should be free from gender bias and based on equal respect for everyone's interests. According to his principle, similar interests deserve equal moral consideration regardless of gender. Patriarchal thinking therefore violates moral equality because it places one gender above another. Such attitudes affect relationships, workplaces, and social expectations, creating inequality for both men and women.

In conclusion, Singer's philosophy shows that moral equality is based on equal consideration of interests rather than differences in intelligence, ability, or gender. The ability to suffer and experience happiness is what gives individuals moral importance. Patriarchal attitudes that value male interests more than female interests therefore violate the principle of moral equality. By applying Singer's ideas and promoting education, awareness, and social reform, society can challenge sexism and build a fairer world based on mutual respect and equal moral consideration for all individuals.

Conclusion

This research highlights that patriarchy is not merely a system that disadvantages women, but a deeply rooted social structure that also significantly affects men's emotional, psychological, and social well-being. While men may appear to benefit from positions of authority within patriarchal systems, this study demonstrates that such perceived advantages come at the cost of rigid expectations, emotional suppression, and constant pressure to conform to traditional ideals of masculinity.

The findings of this study, supported by survey responses, expert opinion, and socio-legal analysis, reveal that patriarchal norms restrict men's ability to express emotions, build meaningful relationships, and seek support during times of distress. The expectation of being the primary breadwinner, combined with societal pressure to remain strong and dominant, often results in stress, isolation, and mental health challenges. Additionally, the legal dimension shows that gender stereotypes can sometimes influence perceptions of justice, creating complex challenges for men in areas such as custody, maintenance, and recognition as victims.

By applying Peter Singer's Principle of Equal Consideration of Interests, this research further establishes that patriarchy creates a moral imbalance by assigning unequal value to the experiences and suffering of individuals based on gender. Singer's philosophy emphasizes that the capacity to suffer not gender, intelligence, or social role should be the foundation of moral equality. However, patriarchal thinking often fails to uphold this principle, leading to both the undervaluation of women's experiences and the neglect of men's emotional struggles.

The study ultimately argues that patriarchy is a restrictive system for all genders. It not only perpetuates inequality but also limits human potential by enforcing narrow roles and expectations. Therefore, achieving

true gender equality requires a shift in both social attitudes and moral reasoning. This includes promoting emotional openness among men, encouraging shared responsibilities within families, ensuring fairness in legal frameworks, and fostering gender-sensitive education from an early stage.

In conclusion, dismantling patriarchal mindsets is not about weakening one gender but about creating a more just, empathetic, and balanced society. By embracing ethical principles of equality and mutual respect, society can move toward a future where individuals are valued not for their gender roles but for their shared humanity and equal capacity to feel, experience, and thrive.

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