

Nomadic Woman In India

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Abstract:-

In the 21st century, nomadic women, while facing the challenges of a rapidly changing world, continue to embody strength, resilience, and a deep connection to their cultural heritage, often balancing traditional practices with modern realities. They navigate the complexities of their nomadic lifestyle, whether it's through pastoralism, agriculture, or other forms of livelihood, while also seeking opportunities for education and participation in broader societal advancements. Here's a more detailed look Balancing, Tradition and Modernity, Cultural Preservation.

1. Introduction: -

A nomadic woman is a woman who belongs to a nomadic group, meaning she moves from place to place rather than settling in one location. Nomadic women, like their male counterparts, participate in the group's seasonal migrations, often in search of food, water, or grazing land for their animals. Their lives are characterized by a mobile existence, with no fixed home.

Key Words:- Nomadic Woman, Challenges, Mobility

Nomadic Lifestyle:

Nomadic societies traditionally rely on hunting and gathering, pastoralism (herding), or a combination of both to sustain themselves. Women in these groups play a vital role in these activities, contributing to the group's survival.

Mobility:

Nomadic women share the responsibility of packing and moving camp, often carrying belongings and sometimes even young children. Their lives are not static; they are constantly on the move.

No Permanent Home:

Unlike settled communities, nomadic groups do not build permanent structures. Their dwellings are often tents or other easily transportable shelters.

Cultural Practices:

The specific roles and responsibilities of women within a nomadic society vary across cultures, but their contributions are essential to the group's overall well-being and survival. Nomadic women play a vital role in preserving their cultural heritage, traditions, and ancestral knowledge, often passing these down to younger generations.

Livelihoods: They engage in a variety of activities, including animal husbandry, agriculture, and other forms of work that sustain their communities.

Adaptation: While maintaining their cultural identity, nomadic women also adapt to the changing world, seeking opportunities for education and participating in modern economies where possible.

Spiritual Center: For some, the nomadic lifestyle is more than just a way of life; it's a spiritual center, deeply connected to their ancestors and the land.

In essence, nomadic women in the 21st century are not relics of the past but dynamic individuals who are actively shaping their lives and contributing to their communities, often while navigating the complexities of a rapidly changing world. In the 21st century, nomadic women continue to navigate a blend of traditional practices and modern influences, often adapting their lifestyles to both preserve their cultural heritage and engage with contemporary society. While some maintain a strictly traditional nomadic existence, others integrate aspects of modern life, such as education, healthcare, and even technology, into their daily routines.

2. Traditional Roles and Adaptations:

Community and Family: Nomadic women play vital roles in their communities, often responsible for childcare, food preparation, and maintaining social structures. Some women, like Deepa Pawar, emerge as leaders and advocates, working for the betterment of their communities.

Resourcefulness: They demonstrate resilience and adaptability in managing household tasks, often utilizing local resources and traditional skills.

Cultural Preservation: Many nomadic women actively work to preserve their cultural heritage, passing down traditions, stories, and knowledge to younger generations. Nomadic women often play a crucial role in preserving and transmitting their community's cultural heritage, customs, and religious practices.

Modern Integration: Some nomadic women are embracing education, healthcare, and even technology, adapting their lives to incorporate these elements while still maintaining their cultural identity.

Economic Activities: They participate in various economic activities, including animal husbandry, trade, and other forms of labor, contributing to their family's and community's livelihoods.



3. Challenges faced by Nomadic woman: -

In India, nomadic women are part of diverse communities with unique roles and challenges. These women, often part of nomadic and denotified tribes, contribute to their communities' cultural preservation and economic activities, while also facing social barriers like limited access to education and resources. Organizations like Anubhuti Trust are working towards the upliftment of these communities, particularly focusing on women's empowerment and addressing issues like sanitation and health.

1. Socio-economic hardships:

Poverty and marginalization:

Nomadic tribes are often excluded from mainstream society and face economic hardship due to limited access to resources and opportunities.

Lack of access to basic amenities:

They struggle to access clean water, sanitation facilities, and healthcare services, leading to health issues and a lower quality of life.

Limited access to education:

Due to their nomadic lifestyle and traditional gender roles, girls are often denied education, leading to low literacy rates and limited opportunities.

Food insecurity:

Frequent migration and reliance on traditional occupations like pastoralism or seasonal labor make them vulnerable to food shortages and malnutrition.

2. Social and cultural barriers:

Social stigma and discrimination:

Nomadic communities are often stigmatized as criminals due to past colonial policies, leading to prejudice and discrimination from other communities and law enforcement.

Gender inequality and violence:

Traditional norms within nomadic communities often perpetuate gender inequality, leading to domestic violence, subjugation of women, and sexual harassment.

Limited access to healthcare:

Geographical seclusion and discrimination within healthcare institutions result in inadequate access to maternal and reproductive healthcare services.

Language barriers:

Language differences between nomadic women and healthcare providers can hinder access to medical care.

3. Human rights violations:

Vulnerability to violence and exploitation:

Nomadic women are often targeted for verbal, physical, and sexual harassment, and they may be victims of human trafficking and forced labor.

Lack of legal protection:

They may face difficulties in accessing legal aid and justice due to lack of awareness of their rights, language barriers, and social stigma.

Criminalization of their lifestyle:

Historical policies like the Criminal Tribes Act have led to the criminalization of nomadic communities, impacting their access to basic rights and services.

4. Impact of climate change:

Increased vulnerability to extreme heat:

Nomadic communities are highly susceptible to the impacts of climate change, including extreme heat waves, which can lead to health problems, loss of livelihood, and displacement.

Water scarcity and sanitation issues:

Climate change exacerbates water scarcity, making it harder for nomadic women to access clean water for drinking and hygiene, increasing health risks.

4. Efforts for Empowerment:

Organizations like Anubhuti Trust: These organizations work to empower nomadic women by providing education, healthcare, and livelihood support.

Advocacy and Awareness: Efforts are being made to raise awareness about the issues faced by nomadic communities and advocate for their rights and inclusion.

Promoting Education: Encouraging girls and women to pursue education is crucial for breaking the cycle of poverty and social exclusion.

Fostering Entrepreneurship: Supporting women in developing their entrepreneurial skills can enhance their economic independence.

5. Conclusion:-

Women of these nomadic communities live under the most horrible conditions. They face humiliation due to the stigma, the community suffers from. They are also looked down upon by people of other communities. The social neglect, discrimination and prejudiced attitude of mainstream society make them the most marginalized in society. They have minimum opportunities to enjoy as her work household involves too much of burden and drudgery.

Since these communities want to maintain their distinct cultural identities and refuse to be a part of the mainstream society, their problems need to be viewed and addressed in a different social context. There is also a need for a focused intervention in dealing with the problems of women of these communities, as a general approach and policy of development for all communities may not prove very helpful.

The situation is changing very fast as women of these communities are more aware now, and are beginning to fight for their rights. The community can also play an important role in bringing about a positive change in the attitude of people toward their women & girls.

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