



Challenging Hegemonic Self Identities: An Analysis of the Resistances in Indian Society Subverting Patriarchal Self Images of Gender and Caste

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Abstract

Mainstream patriarchal discourses delimit the boundaries within which subjects construct and live their genders and caste. Gender and caste are hegemonic self-images dominating the self-representations in everyday life of people in India. Generally, people do not contravene the restrictions laid by the mainstream norms guiding those identities. Efforts to challenge them lead to negative repercussions on individuals. Mainstream social grooming persuades subjects to safeguard patriarchy. But those hegemonic norms have been challenged by recent developments such as compulsory free education, growing inter-marriages, Live-in relationships and legalization of same sex relationships. Patriarchal institutions are pervasive but not infallible. This paper discusses some avenues in Indian society to subvert patriarchal dominance by destabilizing institutions through which patriarchy exercises its dominance. Hegemonic authority, at the same time is expanding its boundaries through accommodating resistance so that resistance could be normalized. Though formal education is alleged of producing docile individuals, it also facilitates challenging hegemonic powers.

Keywords: Patriarchy, Self-image, Hegemony, Gender, Caste