

Q1 "In the pandemic, women have borne a disproportionate burden of the severe disruptions to the life & the economy". Critically comment. (200W)

Ans:- The unprecedented pandemic COVID-19 has disrupted more or less every sphere of life viz. social, economic, psychological, mental sphere etc. but as compared to men, it has put disproportionate burden on women. The reason for this burden is -

Stress * vulnerability

i.e. COVID-19 pandemic put unequal stress on women in both social & economic life and apart from this women in Indian society are more vulnerable to such stress as compared to men.

Impact of COVID-19 on women

→ Economic burden

(i) Job loss

due to less job security to women in this pandemic.

(ii) Lesser availability of fallback employment arrangements like self-employment, daily wage work etc.

(iii) Lesser no. of women returned to jobs as compared to men after the first wave ended.

(iv) Work from Home facility

was also less utilised by women due to excess burden of domestic work & lesser access to ICT devices.

→ Burden on life

- (i) Increased Burden of home care
- (ii) Faced violence or harassment at home
- (iii) Mental stress due to lack of economic independence & economic security.

Consequences

- Lesser labour force participation of women & unequal pay - will lead to loss to GDP.
- It will lead to more unequal society & hence failure to achieve 'social welfare state'
- Wastage of demographic dividend \Rightarrow demographic disaster.
- Poor performance of India in HDI (137/180 countries).

India has slipped from 112 to 140 out of 156 countries in 2021 WEF Global Gender Gap Report. So it is high time to focus on the economic & social empowerment of women.