



## Mains Practice Question

**Q.** Amrita, a young IAS officer, has joined a government department. After working for a while in this department, she realizes that the position of women staff is subservient to male staff. The male staff does not want to take orders from senior women officers. Moreover, women are not taken on serious departmental projects and are discouraged from participating in such projects. Amrita through informal channels comes to know that even the Head of the Department is of the same mindset and believes that women should not be sent to this department. Discuss the course of action Amrita should take so that the work culture becomes conducive for women.

27 Dec, 2019 GS Paper 4 Case Studies

### Approach

- Suggest the course of action that Amrita should take
- Discuss why there is a need to change the work culture

### Course of Action

- **Leading by example:** Try to bring gender diversity and gender sensitivity in your own team and colleagues at work. E.g. publicly congratulating a female colleague on her achievements, standing up for other women employees.
  - Anything without leadership commitment does not sustain over a period of time. It will promote good work culture and set the standards of behaviour for the entire department.
- **Maintaining discipline in the work:** Sooner or later other officials will appreciate it. It will also influence other female subordinate staff and can enthuse a new sense of spirit in them.
- **Being receptive and broad-minded:** There can be prejudice at the workplace which is a reflection of societal prejudices. Thus gradual approach will help in bringing changes at the workplace.
- **Being emotionally intelligent:** It will help to understand and manage own emotions as well as those of others and thus taking good decisions at work. It will also help in attaining a work-life balance.
- **Determination to service:** The foundational value of the organization should be a motivating factor for the employees. When things get settled, she can introduce minor changes.
- **Inviting real-life achievers to the office:** With the help of self-help groups, real-life achievers can be invited to the office so that female member can be motivated.
- Since work culture is related to the attitude and behaviour of people, therefore, it takes time to change. Gender-sensitisation of male members can be done through debates and discussions. The persisting prejudices can be won over by social influence and persuasion, it can be won over.

The patriarchal society can be changed for the better with a gradual approach because when confronted directly, there may arise more complex issues.

By courage of conviction/exemplary behaviour/being receptive to patriarchal nuances, over a period of time change can be introduced as Kiran Bedi did in the case of Tihar Jail reforms.

