

REDRESSAL OF PUBLIC GRIEVANCES

The effective redressal of public grievances is a cornerstone of good governance and an essential element of a responsive democratic system. It ensures that the voices of citizens are heard and that their issues are addressed promptly and transparently. A robust grievance redressal mechanism helps build public trust, enhances the legitimacy of government institutions, and fosters accountability. However, achieving this requires a systemic approach involving efficient processes, the use of technology, and the active participation of citizens and authorities alike. The grievance redressal system must be easily accessible to the public. Citizens should be able to file complaints through various channels, including online platforms, helplines, and physical offices. This inclusivity ensures that people from all backgrounds, including those without digital access, can voice their concerns.

A successful grievance system requires clearly defined procedures and timelines. Citizens must be informed about the process, how to lodge complaints, and what to expect in terms of resolution. Transparency in handling complaints—such as publishing the status of grievances and outcomes—helps hold authorities accountable and deters corruption or negligence.

A key factor in addressing public grievances effectively is the timely resolution of issues. Delays in addressing complaints can lead to frustration, diminishing public trust in the system. Setting reasonable time limits for resolving complaints and implementing escalation procedures in case of delays ensures that grievances are not sidelined.

Authorities responsible for addressing grievances must be held accountable for their actions. Monitoring systems, including periodic audits and performance evaluations, help ensure that complaints are handled efficiently. Additionally, assigning responsibility to specific officials or departments and tracking the resolution process through dashboards or public reports creates a sense of responsibility. Modern technology, such as online portals, mobile apps, and artificial intelligence (AI)-driven systems, plays a pivotal role in enhancing the effectiveness of grievance redressal. These platforms not only make it easier for citizens to register their complaints but also allow for real-time tracking of their status. AI can help prioritize issues based on urgency and severity, improving response times.

Engaging citizens in the grievance process is crucial. Public feedback and community involvement can help identify systemic issues and potential solutions. Public consultations, focus groups, and surveys allow authorities to understand citizens' concerns better and adjust policies accordingly.

Regular communication with the complainant is essential throughout the grievance process.

Aging and Physical Change in Women: Thematic Side Effects

■ DR. RAJKUMAR SINGH

Aging brings a range of physical changes for women, often tied to hormonal shifts, especially during and after menopause: a. Skin and Hair Changes: Skin: Collagen and elastin production decline, leading to reduced skin elasticity, thinning, and dryness. Wrinkles, fine lines, and age spots may become more pronounced. The skin's natural barrier weakens, making it more prone to irritation and dehydration. Hair: Hair may become thinner and drier, with some women experiencing hair loss or changes in hair texture. Hair graying is common as melanin production decreases. b. Bone Density and Muscle Mass: Bone Density: Estrogen plays a key role in bone health, so as levels drop, the risk of osteoporosis rises. Women may experience a gradual loss of bone mass, making fractures more likely. Muscle Mass and Strength: Sarcopenia, or age-related muscle loss, affects both men and women. Muscle tone decreases over time, impacting strength and flexibility, which can affect mobility and balance. c. Weight Distribution and Metabolism: Metabolic Rate: With age, metabolism typically slows down, making it easier to gain weight, especially around the abdomen. Reduced muscle mass also contributes to a slower metabolism. Weight Distribution: Hormonal changes can lead to a redistribution of body fat, often increasing around the waist and abdomen. d. Menopause-Related Changes: Reproductive System: Menopause, which generally occurs between ages 45 and 55, leads to a reduction in estrogen and progesterone. This causes menstrual cycles to stop, leading to potential symptoms like hot flashes, night sweats, and mood swings. Vaginal and Urinary Changes: Lower estrogen can lead to vaginal dryness, reduced elasticity, and a higher risk of urinary tract infections, which can impact comfort and sexual health. e. Mental and Cognitive Changes: Memory and Cognitive Function: Some women experience mild cognitive

changes, like "brain fog," which can be related to both aging and hormonal shifts. However, maintaining a healthy lifestyle can support cognitive resilience. f. Eyesight and Hearing: Vision: Many women experience presbyopia (difficulty focusing on close objects) as they age, along with a higher risk of cataracts and macular degeneration. Hearing: Hearing loss can begin in midlife, often affecting the ability to hear higher frequencies first. g. Posture and Joint Health: Posture: With bone and muscle changes, women may experience a decrease in height, curvature in the spine, or joint stiffness. Joint Health: Joint pain, stiffness, and even arthritis become more common as cartilage naturally wears down over time. Thus, aging in women is multifaceted and influenced by genetics, lifestyle, and overall health.

Beginning of physical change

Physical changes in women typically begin in early adulthood and can be subtle at first, often intensifying as they approach their 30s and 40s. An overview of the early stages of these changes include: a. In the 20s: Skin: Collagen production remains high in the 20s, so the skin usually stays firm and resilient. However, lifestyle factors like sun exposure and smoking can start affecting skin health, leading to early signs of fine lines or pigmentation. Bone Density: Bone density continues to build through the mid-20s, reaching its peak. After this, maintaining bone health through diet and exercise becomes essential. Metabolism: The metabolic rate is generally higher in the 20s, making it easier to maintain body weight with moderate lifestyle habits. b. In the 30s: Skin: Collagen and elastin production gradually begin to decline, leading to the appearance of fine lines, especially around the eyes and mouth. Cell turnover slows down, which can contribute to duller skin and more visible pores. Hair: Hair may start to lose some of its fullness, and graying can begin for some

women, often influenced by genetics. Muscle Mass and Tone: Muscle mass can start to decrease slightly, but this is typically gradual and subtle in the 30s. Staying active with strength training can counteract muscle loss and support metabolism. Fertility and Reproductive Health: Fertility generally peaks in the 20s and begins to decline in the 30s, with a more noticeable drop after age 35. Hormonal fluctuations related to menstruation may also become more noticeable for some women, potentially affecting mood, skin, and energy. c. In the Early 40s: Perimenopause: Some women begin experiencing perimenopause (the phase before menopause) in their early 40s, though this varies widely. Symptoms like irregular periods, mild hot flashes, or mood changes may begin during this phase. Weight Distribution: Weight gain, especially around the midsection, becomes more common, even with similar eating and exercise habits. This can be due to metabolic changes and hormone shifts. Joint Health: Joint stiffness or mild discomfort may begin in the 40s, especially in women with sedentary lifestyles or those who experience repetitive strain injuries. These early changes are often gradual, and lifestyle choices in these years can have a strong impact on how physical aging progresses.

Overall effects of physical change

The physical changes that occur in women as they age can significantly affect their thinking, emotions, and behavior. These impacts are often interconnected, with biological shifts influencing psychological well-being, self-perception, and social interactions: a. Menopause Changes and Mood: Perimenopause and Menopause: Hormonal fluctuations during perimenopause and menopause, particularly decreases in estrogen, can lead to mood swings, anxiety, and irritability. Many women report feeling more emotional or sensitive, which can affect their relationships and daily rou-

ties. Anxiety and Depression: Changes in hormones, especially during menopause, can increase the risk of anxiety and depression. This can lead to feelings of low motivation, fatigue, and reduced interest in previously enjoyed activities. b. Self-Perception and Body Image: Appearance and Confidence: As physical signs of aging, like wrinkles or weight gain, become more noticeable, some women may experience a decrease in self-confidence. For those in cultures that highly value youth, this can impact self-esteem and lead to self-consciousness about appearance. Body Image: Changes in weight distribution, skin elasticity, and hair texture can alter a woman's self-image, which may lead to behavioural changes. For example, some women may choose to alter their fashion choices, avoid social situations, or engage in new fitness or beauty routines. c. Social and Family Dynamics: Role Changes: Aging can coincide with changes in family roles, such as children growing up or becoming caregivers for aging parents. These shifts, coupled with physical changes, can influence a woman's identity and her focus on personal goals versus family responsibilities. d. Sexuality and Relationship: Emotional Intimacy: For some, aging brings a stronger desire for emotional closeness and connection. This can shift relationship priorities toward deeper, more meaningful interactions. Thus, while aging can bring about challenges, it also often brings self-acceptance, confidence, and a greater sense of purpose. Embracing these changes can empower women to live fully and with authenticity, fostering positive shifts in thinking and behavior as they navigate each stage of life.

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Human science and human values

■ SURJIT SIGH FLORA

In today's scientific era, the popularity of products made through scientific inventions is increasing in all fields. Trains, airplanes, movies, medical equipment, computers, and smartphones are everywhere in our daily lives.

While humans strive for scientific progress, values like faith, compassion, honesty, kindness, love, and restraint are declining in today's era. Man is becoming more individualistic and materialistic, prioritizing progress through exploitation rather than welfare.

The characteristics of these two trends show that human values are declining because of scientific progress. Is there a cause-and-effect relationship between the two, or is it just a coincidence that an increase in one causes a decrease in the other? In daily life, our decisions are based

on human values. A value is the criterion used to measure the truth of an event, its impact on individuals and society, or the quality of a thing. Values determine and prioritize the qualities, traits, and abilities of a thing or person.

Human value degradation is widespread all around the globe. The decline in human values is a major threat to the country's development and existence. The decline in youth values is alarming, although change is inevitable over time. Parents, teachers, and society are responsible for teaching young people important values.

Culture, religion, education, personal experience, and social norms shape human values. There is increasing worry about the erosion of these values. Some argue that this decline is due to factors such as individualism, materialism, and a

decrease in religious and moral values. This applies to religious leaders and ordinary people alike. Everyone is self-centered and greedy.

Individualism is a major factor in the degradation of human values. Many societies have shifted from collectivist to individualistic values. This has resulted in prioritizing personal gain over community and social responsibility. People often prioritize their own wants and needs without considering how they affect others. This leads to selfishness, a lack of empathy, and disregard for the common good.

Materialism contributes to declining human values. Material wealth and possessions are becoming more important in many societies. People prioritize material goods and status symbols over meaningful aspects of life like relationships, family, and community. This has created a con-

sumerist culture where people are urged to acquire more things without considering the consequences for themselves or others.

Declining religious and moral values contribute to the decline of human values. Religion has influenced cultural and moral values in many societies. In recent years, religious practices and moral values have declined. This can result in people lacking guidance and structure, leading to selfish and immoral behavior.

Technology is impacting human values too. Technology has transformed communication and interaction. Social media and technology enable harmful behaviors like cyberbullying, spreading misinformation, and invading privacy. Technology's anonymity and distance are causing people to feel less accountable for their actions, resulting in a decline in compassion, honesty, and responsibility.

The education system contributes to the degradation of human values. Many societies prioritize academic achievement and job preparation over character development and moral education in their education systems. This has distracted us from important values like compassion and responsibility.

In conclusion, individualism, materialism, the decline of religious and moral values, technology, and education are just a few of the complex factors that have an impact on how human values are declining. To create a fair society, people must come together and embrace positive values. The main goals are to build community, promote compassion and love, foster intimacy, walk together, and teach youth about morality.

Human values are decreasing in society today. People often prioritize

wealth, power, and status over humanity. Narrow-mindedness in real life can lead to problems like violence, greed, theft, drug addiction, and terrorism. Schools prioritize efficiency over developing good citizens or humans. Many people think moral values are declining in today's society.

The education system doesn't prioritize human values. Despite increased knowledge, human suffering is neglected in the current education system. The saying "Education changes man" is no longer significant. Aimless education burdens life. Education is crucial for our own and our family's well-being. It is also important for social progress. Value-based education is crucial for achieving these goals.

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Empowerment of Rural Youths

■ DR. BANARSI LAL

The globalisation process has brought certain changes whose implications for the rural society and the rural youths need to be thoroughly understood. The onset of market economy has witnessed a massive growth in industrial activity which requires large workforce. Migration of rural youths in urban areas in search of employment has risen fastly. This has resulted a decline in workforce in the agricultural sector. The advent of free market has been able to generate employment opportunities in the private sector which requires highly skilled workers. A majority of rural youth may not meet the criteria of private sector for a variety of reasons, like lack of advance technical expertise, inadequate trainings etc. According to the UN youth is defined as a person in 15-24 years of age group whereas the census of India treats people in the age group of 15-29 years as youths. According to Baizerman (1991), in the third world countries youth have not been able to play a vital role in the developmental process and has remained a marginalized group. The participation of the rural Indian youth can be more impressive if more attention is paid on them. Mass media does not pay more attention on rural youths. Due to their proximity to institutions like universities, colleges, institutions of mass communication, political centres and by virtue of being an integral part of modernisation process like developing a rational outlook, adopting different subcultures and promoting cosmopolitanism, the urban youth continuously remains in the limelight. Rural areas are slow in their socio-economic development, slow pace of modernisation, industrialization, overpowering presence of powerful but retrogressive social institutions, inequitable distribution of land and most significantly and underutilisation of human resources. The



stereotype of rural youth is gullible, conservative and he himself tries to fastly change but cannot escape from the adverse impact of the aforementioned problems.

The globalisation process has brought certain changes whose implications for the rural society and the rural youths need to be thoroughly understood. The onset of market economy has witnessed a massive growth in industrial activity which requires large workforce. Migration of rural youths in urban areas in search of employment has risen fastly. This has resulted a decline in workforce in the agricultural sector. The advent of free market has been able to generate employment opportunities in the private sector which requires highly skilled workers. A majority of rural youth may not meet the criteria of private sector for a variety of reasons, like lack of advance

technical expertise, inadequate trainings etc.

Present era is an era of information. Communication network has combined the world into a cyber-frame. The transaction in all the sectors is now being carried through computers. The rural youths in this field are left behind their urban brethren. The urban youths have access to computer education while the exposure of youth to computers in rural areas is still limited. The 1990s witness a rapid expansion of television networks. The cable and satellite television made a mark in India and television emerged as the most effective medium of entertainment. It plays a key role in dissemination of information and entertainment. In some of the rural areas still the rural youths miss the opportunity to view the informative programmes. Even

in some of the downtrodden rural areas still the youths do not get information through print media. The latest information should be reached to the rural youths of these remote areas. There has been a sustained campaign by the market forces to increase their rural marketing operations as three-fourths of the consumers live in rural areas and more than half of the national income is generated in rural areas. It has been observed that mostly television is the forte of the market forces and continuously promote consumerism which stimulates unrealistic desires in the rural youths. The political processes at the village level are intertwined with the operational aspects of the existing social hierarchy. It has been observed that rural youths are encouraged during elections campaign but the number of elected representatives from this segment is very low. Thus, despite their sincere efforts in the democratic processes they have a long way to go in holding positions and decentralisation of political power has not resulted in major changes in the social structure of villages. It has been observed that increasing population, over-exploitation of biological resources, construction activities and changing consumption has led to the loss of bio-diversity. For all this rural population cannot be held responsible for excessive consumption as it is the youth of urban areas whose consumption levels reached new heights leading to enormous pressure on the natural resources. The industries release untreated effluents contaminating the water reserves which will expose the nearby rural population to waterborne diseases. The toxic wastes of the industries are dumped in the waste lands on the outskirts of the urban areas or nearby villages which poses a serious impediment to the wasteland development projects. Watershed development is a major agricultural activity. It is the youth

of village who take the responsibility in the success of watershed projects like construction of check dams and water tanks. The educated rural youths can prevail on the rest of population to take steps to preserve ground water resources. Joint forest management is another dimension of environmental protection. The youth in the villages can be mobilised to take care of illegal felling of trees and make social forestry programme successful.

In rural areas gender discrimination is very high. Less literacy rate and traditional thinking of the people are the major reasons for the inferior status to the rural women. It has been observed that a large number of women representatives are chosen. Despite their success the rightful ascendancy of women is questioned by the male dominated society and the position of rural female remains secondary in all aspects of life. Rural female youths in many cases have to marry below the stipulated age because of family pressure and obsolete norms of the community. The higher death rate of the rural female youths indicates the lack of availability of proper medical facilities during pregnancy and delivery, poor diet and lack of care of their family members towards their health. Early motherhood combined with lack of proper education and inadequate physical and mental maturity will compound the problems of women. There is a dire need to motivate the rural female youth to take part in her decision making. With the implementation of employment generating schemes, efforts should also be made to sensitise the rural youths on various social issues. The mass media, whose influence on society is quite significant, should be prevailed upon to increase the focus on developmental issues and social concerns.

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YOUR COLUMN

Professionalism in Teaching

Dear Editor,

Teacher professionalism has relevant significance in education in that it affects the role of the teacher and his or her pedagogy, which in return affects the student's ability to learn effectively. Teacher pro-

fessionalism has already created the ability to teach students in a meaningful way, develop innovative approaches to mandated content while motivating, engaging, and inspiring young adult minds to prepare for ever-advancing technology. Due to the growing autonomy being given to educators, professionalism remains one of the most influential attributes of education today. However, teacher professionalism contains three essential characteristics - competence, performance, and conduct, which reflect the educator's goals, abilities, and standards, and directly impact the effectiveness of teaching through the development of these qualities. A profes-

sional teacher is trained to handle all situations, as most episodes in the classroom require quick thinking. Also, teacher professionalism extends beyond one's ability to understand content; the educator must discover if the students are being taught in an effective way. With the role of "teacher" becoming more autonomous, an educator must be competent in their studies, perform well under the eye of the administration and parents, while maintaining good conduct to facilitate quality communication.

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