1. Critically examine the gender based discrimination and find out the causes of these forms of violence.

Ans:

2. Explain the relevance of Gandhian legacy for the contemporary women’s movements.

Ans: Contemporary feminists analysis on empowerment of women includes not only of sexism but also of racism, classism and imperialism as determining factors in shaping women’s status in the private and public realm. This development seems consonant with Satyagraha which for Gandhi was an inclusive quest to find creative solutions for all forms of oppression. In India and elsewhere, there are healthy movements of Gandhi’s followers, and there are more moribund Gandhians who speak in Gandhi’s name but also subvert the power of his theory and practice by failing to be open to new movements. Feminists and other women are engaged in many forms of action that Gandhi may not have anticipated. We have much to learn from Gandhi’s theory and practice, but not to the exclusion of modern ideas and movements. He was never against any idea/s coming from any quarter/s. He said: “I do not want my house to be walled on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I refuse to live in other people’s houses as an interloper, a beggar or a slave.” Compared to the momentous work of stalwarts like Sarojini Naidu, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Dr Muthulakshmi Reddy, Lakshmi N. Menon and Annie Besant and organisations like the All India Women’s conference, the Arya Samaj and many others during Mahatma Gandhi’s time, the collective or individual work of women in the political arena in the post independence era has been unremarkable.

This clearly does not take into account the phenomenon of an Indira Gandhi or the many successful efforts of various women's organisations in bringing about legislation to improve the status of women. Self Employed Women’s Association of Ahmedabad is a fine example of Gandhi’s ideas put into practice but it lacks political power to influence change in the society around it. The fact that women have never held more than 10 percent of the seats in parliament or jobs in the decision making levels of the administration shows that there is a long way to go before gender parity is achieved.

While in some spheres women have accepted Gandhi’s words about shedding their role as slaves and facing patriarchal challenges, women have largely slipped away from the paths of political action that Gandhi had opened out for them during the freedom movement. For instance, outside the home and far from the hearth individual women from the middle classes have achieved remarkable prominence in fields such as aviation, science and space technology, administration, education, literature and the arts. Unfortunately, the women of the rural classes are subjected to the same oppression as before, not only by the men within their caste but by upper caste communities who carry, out reprisals on communities from the under castes. The recent political empowerment of the backward castes has found a corresponding rise in the suppression of their own women, reflecting the existing ethos of rural society. Neither has an effective political leadership risen from amongst them to give courage to other nor are emancipated urban women able to provide the kind of sustained leadership rural women need largely because of class and caste differences.

India is far ahead in policies and legislation favouring women. It adopted universal franchise before many other nations. Yet men in the political structure refuse to acknowledge the relationships between social justice and gender justice while women outside the political system are unable to effectively implement and integrate these two most powerful national and international agendas. The increasing criminalization of politics and the use of vast sums of unaccounted money and muscle power by caste and criminal gangs present an entire hostile environment for women who wish to pursue a political vocation. With both caste and gender groups perpetuating traditional and modern divisions and indigenous human resources being replaced by western technologies the mission of Gandhi and the dreams of women are yet to be fulfilled.

3. Discuss various types of violence against women.

Ans: Violence against women can take a number of forms:

Rape
Rape is a type of sexual assault, usually involving sexual intercourse. Rape is usually perpetrated by men against boys, women, and girls; women are usually assaulted more often than boys and girls and usually all by someone they know.

Internationally, the incidence of rapes recorded by the police during 2008 varied between 0.1 in Egypt per 100,000 people and 91.6 per 100,000 people in Lesotho with 4.9 per 100,000 people in Lithuania as the median. According to the American Medical Association (1995), sexual violence, and rape in particular, is considered the most underreported violent crime. The rate of reporting, prosecution and convictions for rape varies considerably in different jurisdictions. Rape by strangers is usually less common than rape by persons the victim knows.

Following a rape, a victim may face violence or threats of violence from the rapist, and, in many cultures, from the victim's own family and relatives. Violence or intimidation of the victim may be perpetrated by the rapist or by friends and relatives of the rapist, as a way of preventing the victims from reporting the rape, of punishing them for reporting it, or of forcing them to withdraw the complaint; or it may be perpetrated by the relatives of the victim as a punishment for "bringing shame" to the family. This is especially the case in cultures where female virginity is highly valued and considered mandatory before marriage; in extreme cases, rape victims are killed in honor killings. Victims may also be forced by their families to marry the rapist in order to restore the family’s "honor". In Lebanon, the Campaign Against Lebanese Rape Law - Article 522 was launched in December 2016 to abolish the article that permitted a rapist to escape prison by marrying his victim.

Marital rape, also known as spousal rape, is non-consensual sex perpetrated by the victim's spouse. Once widely condoned or ignored by law, spousal rape is now repudiated by international conventions and increasingly criminalized. Still, in many countries, spousal