

Roadmap to Prominence of Woman

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Abstract: *This paper shows the change in position of women from one civilization to other. It also shows the major humiliating changes which came into the society. It reflects how women asserted her equality with men. With the rise of capitalism she was considered to be the key person of the household, she was much respected in the family. She also enjoyed religious freedom and had the freedom of making gifts to temples for the merit of herself, her husband, her parents or children. She started enjoying equal prominence with man in all fields. The government of India has been implement various schemes and programmes for the welfare and empowerment of women and it has been a propel area which is of great apprehension.*

Keywords: Position of women, empowerment, civilization, marriage system

1. Introduction

The growth of civilization can be better felt by the position of woman in society. Relationship of male and female are interdependent from the very beginning of civilization. Our whole society has been cultivated on the basis of this relationship only. In the early age human being used to live in caves and forests. Engels entitled it as 'wild era'. At those times men and women are equal to each other and they struggle together to earn their livelihood. The much perished thing about that era was they don't believe in dominating each other. There was no discrimination in work, progress, status, maintaining relationship etc particularly because of their gender. Each individual has its own existence. Even marriage system does not exist at those times or we can say that females are not bounded with forced relationships like we call women as a mother in that era because nature has blessed her with a special power to grew a new life in her womb to whom she give a beautiful world to live in. Because of her physical strength to grow a child which in turn increases the manpower, they lead a respectable life and has headship in the society. Women are considered as Goddess in maternal tribes.

The time came when the people started learning new methods of harvesting; new innovations came into their mind. Obviously with that sources of income also expended with huge rise, but as we have already discussed that in those times no marriage system exist and it's very difficult to recognize his or her own blood relationship. The problem then arises that how to distribute that sources of income among their own children. At that time the concept of marriage came into existence in which each individual realized that one woman should be bounded to one man so that it become possible to have a family.

With the beginning of marriage system, major humiliating changes came into the society. The man had started considering woman as their Private Property which in turn is demolishing the status of woman in the society. There starts the history of woman slavery and subjugation where they are deprived of their legitimate rights and are not considered equivalent to man.

The situation is getting even worst day by day. The worth of civilization can be better judged with its division in four different society's i.e. slavery, feudal, capitalism and

socialism. In the time of slavery woman was just remained a slave foe society and her life was considered just being foe her husband. If we talk about feudal system it becomes even worst. Woman was relegated to a plaything for man, an ornament to decorate the drawing room. She was very much bounded in that chauvinistic society in which she lives with the identity of the mother, wife, daughter or sister of the feudal. They were deprived of their rights of equality and were forced to face unwanted systems, castism, rituals such as Sati Pratha, Dowry system, Pardah Pratha, Child Marriage, Prostitution etc. According to Simone De Beauvoir:

Thus humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him; She is not regarded as an autonomous being. She is simply what man decrees; thus she is called 'the sex' by which is meant that she appears essentially to the male as a sexual being. For him she is Sex- absolute sex, no less. she is defined and differentiated with reference to man not he with reference to her; she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute-she is the other.

In the age of capitalism the position of woman had once again undergone a tremendous change. Women are not meant just for domesticwork rather with the enlightened leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Woman asserted her equalitywith man. The areas of opportunity arises almost every field. Women have distinguished themselvesin all spheres of life whether it was politics, teachers, lawyers, sports, industries, administration, and civilservices. There is hardly any field left without the presence of woman. Woman in India had now started enjoying more liberty and equality than before.

There comes another traditional conception of a socialist economy which mainly arises in the areas of Russia and China. There exist no inequality between man and woman. Both are treated equally in terms of work they are given as well as responsibilities. In socialism women are not be forced to choose between children and paid employment or o work out unhappy compromises and indeed there have been some important changes affecting woman. Socialist feminism is that branch that focuses upon both the public

and private spheres of woman's life. But this system remained for a very short span of time.

There is no denying fact that woman had made her step forward towards considerable progress but yet they have to struggle for their rights from which they are deprived, social evils in the male dominating society. As for example till now the widow re-marriage is subjected to lot of restrictions, they are forced to live a pious life even after the death of their husband and were restricted to enter in any type of celebration. Sometime the condition becomes more worst when the heads of widows were also shaved down. Some case studies can be discussed as below:

2. Marriage System

Marriage in India is steeped in traditional and deep rooted cultural beliefs. They are taught to abide by the whims and fancies of their husband. She is always deprived from taking her own decision to choose her path of life. She is not even allowed to choose her partner, in that case also there occurs practices like honour killing, acid attack etc.

3. Female Foeticide

Female foeticide is the act of aborting foetus because it is a female. Female foeticide is a wide spread social evil. It is selective elimination of the girl child in the womb itself, done deliberately by the mother after the detection of child's gender. This is usually done under familial pressure from and husband or the in-laws or even sometimes by the women's parents. Female foeticide is the root cause for foeticide lies within the cultural norms as well as socio-economic policies of the country where this practice prevails.

4. Maternal Mortality

The mortality rate in India is among highest in the world. It is associated with women's status and economic dependency. In societies where fertility is high maternal mortality tends to be high. Maternal mortality is a strong indicator of health status of the population and should be decrease as the level of economic development increase. This requires great levels of industrialisation, Education and Urbanisation.

5. Mistreatment

In India violence against women is a common evil. They are not safe neither at their home nor at their workplace. Women can be made to dance like puppets, but man cannot be abused in the same way. Gender discrimination runs deep throughout all the countries. They always work under the fear of perhaps being assaulted or raped on their way home from work late at night, not just in remote areas but in cities also women bear the brunt.

In ancient India the position of woman does not appear to have been a very happy one. Generally woman seems to have been looked upon as being inferior to man. Their freedom was extremely limited. The general view appears to be that they had to be under the care or their parents in the

childhood, under the protection of husband in their youth; and in their old age they had to be under the control of their sons.

As the time passed the position of women underwent changes in all spheres of life. Before capitalism women lost their political right of attending assemblies. Child marriage also came into existence. Emergence of social evils like Sati Pratha, Dowry system, Pardah Pratha Prostitution began to rise.

Woman in general in ancient and medieval India had various responsibilities like looking after the comfort of her husband, bringing up children, serving elders, showing compassion to guest etc. Though an average woman received a little education, she had good knowledge of morals, religious rights and rituals to make her an ideal woman in all respects. But with the rise of capitalism she was considered to be the key person of the household, she was much respected in the family. She also enjoyed religious freedom and had the freedom of making gifts to temples for the merit of herself, her husband, her parents or children. She started enjoying equal status with man in all fields of life whether it is education, politics, civil services, art, corporate, industries, media etc.

The position of woman in modern India has changed considerably. Her sufferings from Sati, Child marriage, Institution of Temple prostitution do no longer exist. Today women have the right to receive education inherit and own property and participation in public life. She has become economically independent. She can seek employment anywhere and remains a free individual.

Throughout history and in many societies including India gender inequality was part or parcel of an accepted male dominated culture. Discrimination was one of the major problems in the contemporary India. The traditional mentality assumes that women are mainly confined to the household activities like "kitchen and kids". They have been considered as the sex, object and inferior to men in different spheres of life. At present number of women's organisations have created a sense of consciousness for gender equality but rape, dowry deaths, humiliations, domestic violence, honour killing against women have become common in our society today. Woman constitutes almost half of the population but till then just 8% is covered by women in the parliament. Now the government of India has been implementing various schemes and programmes for the welfare and empowerment of women and it has been a thrust area which is of great concern. These are only we people and we should take it as a responsibility to raise the power of women and her upliftment in the society. This is our group efforts by which women can attain a respectable place in upcoming days.

References

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Author Profile

Dr. Jaspreet Kaur is an Assistant Professor of Punjabi working at Swift Group of Colleges. She is Ph.d in Punjabi from Panjab University, Chandigarh. She has vast area of experience in research. She has total 2 years of experience in Teaching. She has keen interest in doing research in the field of Literature.