

Women's Foray Through Forbearance

Satya Phani Kumari

Abstract: From time immemorial, women have been in the state of familial anguish and societal agony. Either in private or public life, women face a number of problems and are destined to cross a number of hurdles in the journey of life. The road to success is not smooth especially in the case of women. She becomes a victim in the existing societal conditions and puppet in the hands of domineering people. History repeats and so is the case with women's plight. Times have changed. Situations have changed and the world is experiencing globalization. But still, the conditions of women remain to be same. Who is to be blamed for this? Is it the society or the socio-cultural conditions, the man or the woman herself? The present paper is an attempt to analyze the problems of women in real life through many examples and to arrive at a means for emancipation of women.

Keywords: Emancipation, Social Endangers, Atrocities, Socio-Cultural Conditions

1. INTRODUCTION

Woman is the soul of society. Woman is the half part of man.

Woman plays a vital role in the family as a mother, as a wife as a daughter, as a sister, as a sister-in-law, as a daughter-in-law and as a mother-in-law. There are Sanskrit quotations which show a great veneration to woman.

“Yatra naryastu poojyanthi, thatra ramanthi devatha”

“Kaaryeshu daasi, karaneshu manthri, bhojyeshu maatha and sayaneshu rambha”

“Mudithal nerwaga rani vidya kalade muddara nerpinchinan”

“You educate a man; you educate a man. You educate a woman; you educate a generation.”
—[Brigham Young](#)

When anyone is asked to tell about woman, these quotations, adages come to mind. Is woman really getting this type of reverence? If women are treated in this way, there is no place for the slogan ‘uplift the status of women’. Everyone agrees that there is no respect, no dignity, no freedom, and no rights for women. Women are marginalized in this global village. In this modern era also women face many atrocities, hardships from the male-dominated society.

2. ANGUISH OF WOMEN

All the good sayings, quotations, adages are completely changed in the present civilization. Now a person who “is battered, raped, tortured, murdered, prostituted, harassed that person is a woman”. A person who is hurt for fun, who is banged for entertainment, who is sold for finance, who is photographed for profit, who is persecuted for pleasure

that person is a woman none else. She is a puppet in the hands of perpetrator. She is a victim in the wrong deeds of man. She is a lifeless object in the minds of male. She is vandalized, destabilized and destroyed in the male-dictated society. Elizabeth Wright in her book, *Lacan and Post feminism* declares “Becoming a woman does not imply an opposition of sex and gender, but is the way a woman uses her freedom” (54).

Male violence against women is rampant in any society and it is a worldwide phenomenon. One international survey proved that every woman had experienced sexual abuse, physical carnage and punishment either in their childhood or after their marriage.

Arguably, it has been the feminist theorization of the notion of ‘resistance’ in popular culture that has grounded some of the more abstract debates” and it has been work on the specific consumption of popular culture modes or images (like romance or Madonna) that has led to new insights about the construction of female identity in popular culture. The men of all ages and classes see women as status symbols and ornamental goods following the ancient gender-based tradition. In India, women’s bodies seem to have become the major article on which male wrath emitting itself.

“The future of society is in the hands of mothers; if the world was lost through man, she alone can save it”. (Louis de Beaufort) But the future of society is smothered by the malicious feet of men. Day by day the values are decreasing because women are outcast and captured brutally. Gandhiji said, “When women tread alone at midnight safely, that is real freedom, nothing else”. But at present even small children are afraid to tread alone at day-time. Small girls, kids, even infants are savagely raped and battered. In olden days parents were frightened to send their teenage girls alone at day time. Now the parents are scared to send even small kids with their relatives and others. Crimes on small girls are very frequent in the present world. Parents are petrified to give birth to girl-children. Many people look at the women as beauty dolls and sexy objects not as human beings. Because of these reasons the ratio of women is decreasing drastically.

In India, according to 2001 census the sex ratio is 933 females per 1000 males. In this survey, the female population stands at 495.4 million out of 1028 million Indian population. Thus in the present population of 1.03 billion, there ought to be 528 million women. Instead, estimates show only 496 million women in the population today. The difference is 32 millions. How this difference occurs? Some cases are female feticides and some are brutally murdered cases. The ample reasons for this variation are superstitions, social and economical problems of the parents. Parents don’t hesitate to attempt female infanticide. In the garbage, public dust bins, thorny bushes, dirty mires, many new born babies are found. Simon de Beauvoir in her book *The Second Sex* said, “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman”.

Sex ratio is an important indicator of women’s status in the society. In 1901 there were 972 females per 1000 males. In 1971 the ratio has come down to 930 females per 1000 males. According to 1991 census there were only 926 females per 1000 males. While we take the sex ratio of the 0-6 age, there is a drastic decline from 945 in 1991 to 927 in 2001. Rural areas in India have 934 per 1000 and it is surprising that the urban areas have 908 per 1000. From this survey it is evident that educated people are reluctant to give to female children.

3. PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN

First problem faced by women is superstitions. As our society is patriarchal society, everyone believes that son must stand as an heir and daughters are secondary. Only son can do the funeral rituals of his parents and daughters are not eligible. Because of this blind belief many parents are waiting to give birth to the son. In this process either they give birth to many daughters or they kill the new born daughters. Female infanticide and fetal killing are very frequent in rural areas. Fetal killing has been a crucial problem in some urban areas. A medical diagnostic process called Amniocentesis is used to check possible deformities of the unborn child. But the parents are misusing this test and forcing the doctors to abort the female fetuses. There is a guess that in future the female ratio might be descended to 500 per 1000 males.

In *The Second Sex* Simon de Beauvoir explains that man: "thinks of his body as a direct and normal connection with the world, which he believes he approaches objectively, whereas he regards the body of women as a hindrance, a prison, weighed down by everything peculiar to it" (Quoted from *The male body*, Susan Bordo, 19)

4. ATROCITIES ON WOMEN

There are various forms of crime against women. Sometimes, it begins even before their birth, sometimes in the adulthood and other phases of life. In the Indian society, the position of women is always perceived in relation to the man, from birth onwards and at every stage of life, she is dependent on him. This perception has given birth to various social customs and practices. One important manifestation of these customs and practices has been that of Sati. It is seen as a pinnacle of achievement for a woman. This custom of self-immolation of the widow on her husband's pyre was an age-old practice in some parts of the counter, which received deification. The popular belief ran that the goddess enters into the body of the woman who resolves to become a sati. The practice of sati has been abolished by law with the initiative of Raja Ram Mohan Roy in the early decades of nineteenth century. However, there has been a significant revival of the practice of sati in the last few decades. Indeed, Rajasthan has been the focal point for this practice in recent years.

Violence against women both inside and outside of their home has been a crucial issue in the contemporary Indian society. Women in India constitute nearly about half of its population and most of them are drudging under the socio-cultural and religious structures. One gender has been controlling the space of the India's social economic, political and religious fabric since time immemorial. In 2011, according to the National Crime Records Bureau, 29,937 men between 18 and 30 were arrested for murder. Twenty years ago it was 38,961. Most of the murders were on women by their husbands because of suspicion or because of illegal affairs. Women are the scapegoats in the hands of husbands and in-laws. In 1991 according to some survey 8,864 men between 18 and 30 were arrested for rape and these cases are raised to 16,528 in 2011. Molestation and sexual harassment arrests from this cohort have also almost doubled, from 23,075 in 1992, the first year of which data is available, to 32,581 in 2011. Women are not responding to their

disenfranchisement by attacking men. Men with power can do sexual harassment or rape without any shame.

Another danger in India is that, Indian law does not differentiate between major and minor rape. In every ten-rape case, six are of minor girls. In every seven minutes a crime is committed against women in India. Every 26 minutes a woman is molested. Every 34 minutes a rape takes place. Every 42 minutes a sexual harassment incident occurs. Every 43 minutes a woman is kidnapped. And every 93 minutes a woman is burnt to death over dowry. One-quarter of the reported rapes involve girls under the age of 16 but the vast majority are never reported. Although the penalty is severe, convictions are rare.

According to National Crime Records Bureau between 2009 and 2011 more than 68,000 rape cases were registered but only 16,000 culprits were punished. In 2009, 22,397 cases were registered and only 5,316 were punished. In 2010 5,632 criminals were punished out of 22,172 cases and in 2011 out of 24,208 cases only 5,724 criminals were penalized. More number of rape cases are registered in Madhya Pradesh. 9,539 cases were recorded for the last three years and only 2,986 cases were proved in MP. It's shame to tell the punished cases in West Bengal. Out of 7,010 cases only 381 brutes were punished in West Bengal. In Assam out of 5,052 cases 517 louts and in Uttar Pradesh out of 5,364 cases 3,816 sadists were punished. There is no limit for eve teasing cases throughout the world.

It is shame to show the data that how many teenage and small girls are raped and deceived by their relatives and kinship. Molestation spreads rapidly in Indian society like a contagious disease. No doctor is there to control this rampant virus. We have many cases in every city and every village. The entire world was shocked by Delhi gang rape case. Whenever the case is remembered the women are terrified about the torture the lady has experienced in the hands of ruthless barbarians. There are no words in the dictionary suitable to such perfidious sadists. We get the doubt whether we are living in the society or elsewhere. Are they human beings or cruel sadists?

Taslima Nasreen, a great writer of Bangladesh, bravely wrote the violence and sexual crimes against Hindu women done by Muslim in her book 'Lajja'. The entire world was appalled; particularly our Indians were dismayed when they read the incidents illustrated by her. But what happened in Gujarat against Muslim women, very few people knew. The whole world would be shuddered when they knew the violent deed of men against Muslim females in Naroda Patiya, Shah Alam and Danilimda villages. In these villages mobs even raped girls as young as 3 to 11 years. Babies were cup up and flung into pyres. Young girls are forced to remove their clothes in front of 1,000 – 2,000 strong mobs that humiliated them. Eight to ten men raped them. After this, attackers inserted sharp swords, knives or others objects into their bodies and tortured before burning them alive. Are these people called humans? Even wild animals feel ashamed of their ghastly and beastly behavior. Observing the services of women Mary Astell questioned the world, "If all men are born free, how is it that all women are born slaves?"

5. SOLUTION

It is very difficult to give proper solution for this uphill task. At least the society and the government must try to reduce the horrors on women. If the punishment is severe, the criminal can't dare to do wrong doings. In Delhi rape incident lakhs of people advised our Indian government to change the criminal law. The central ministry proposed the ordinance to give severe punishment to the boors and President Pranab Mukherjee accepted the ordinance. According to that ordinance 'judgment will be given in a fast way. The Report of the Committee on Amendments to Criminal Law headed by Justice J.S.Verma is the moment of triumph – the triumph of women's movements in India. In terms of the definition of rape, the committee recommends retaining a redefined offence of 'rape' within a larger section on 'sexual assault' in order to retain the focus on women's right to integrity, agency and bodily integrity. For all types of sexual harassments, punishment will be given according to Justice Varma's suggestions. The accused were hanged if the rape case is proved or the sufferer is dead or remained in coma. 20 years sentence for rape criminals. (Source from Ms. Kalpana Kannabiran's article in The Hindu, dt.25-01-13)

Women must know the welfare programs conducted by the government like ICDS – Supplementary Nutrition Program, Nutrition and Health Education, Health Referral, Health Check-up, Immunization, Stree Shakti, Kishori Shakti Yojana, Nutrition Program for Adolescent Girls (NPAG), Santhwana, Karnataka Mahila Abhivruddhi Yojana, Financial Assistance to run hostels for girls from rural areas, Special Cell for Eradication of Social Evils, Financial Assistance to Women Law Graduates, Scheme of Assistance for the Construction/Expansion of Hostel Building for Working Women (GOL), Short Stay Homes for Women and Girls (GOL), Swadhar (GOL), DWKRA, Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP) etc.

6. CONCLUSION

It's endless to tell the atrocities on women and difficulties faced by women. It's herculean task to solve the problems of women and give them a secured, protected, liberated life. Yet we anticipate a good and safe life for women. In the words of Iris Murdoch, "I think being a woman is like being Irish ... Everyone says you're important and nice, but you take second place all the time". Let us wait to get the first place and give the true meaning of the words said by Saddam Hussain, "Women make up one half of society. Our society will remain backward and in chains unless its women are liberated, enlightened and educated." Let us take the examples of brave ladies like Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Tasleema Nasrin, Tehmina Durrani, Azar Nafisi, Malaala, Nirbhaya etc. to pave a strong path for getting a better world.

7. REFERENCES

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*IM.A. M.Ed. M.Phil. (Ph.D), Asst. Professor in English, PVP Siddhartha Institute of Tech.,
Kanuru – Vijayawada – 7, Krishna Dist. Andhra Pradesh*