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“A Comparative Study Of Women’s Condition From Ancient To Modern Contemporary Society”

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ABSTRACT

Women are called the Devi, Laxmi or Goddess and has played the vital role in enhancing the society from the Ancient time of Rani Laxmibai to Modern Contemporary society of Finance Minister Mrs. Nirmala Sitaraman, P.V. Sindhu, and many more. This research paper will examine the historical and modern aspects of women and struggles in getting the empowerment. For this emphasis on girls education, government policies to uplift the women role in the society and role of women from housewife to working women are discussed. In the last recent years the role of women has enhanced in every sector from dependent to independent on itself through the tremendous knowledge, skill, education, creativity and self confident. Although the Women also face the various issues in society as lack of education, early marriages, Dowry system, girls’ security, lack of law implementation, discrimination, female foeticide, Infanticide, sex ratio, etc. Womens are facing the various challenges in their life as from become the world class top leader to taking care of their family, children and also play the role as a mother, wife, daughter in law and maintain the coordination between all the work in which she is engaged. She has to live that life which is full of responsibilities, hard work and she get her mostly time spend in kitchen in serving the family members. Women’s gets her life devoted to her family she live for others not for herself.

INTRODUCTION

In ancient culture of India women were treated as equal to men and treated women as “janani” which means mother. In Hindu Scripts women are compared as Devi and in ancient times women have equal right of education, they enjoy their full basics rights, they take part in spiritual activities with their husband as called Rishi and they treated as Ardhgani. They enjoyed their right to equality, freedom, wealth and property and restriction free life. There came a time women have to adopt the ‘pardah’ a veil that covers the body which also somehow restrict the freedom of a woman. It difficult the life of a women and it gives birth to various evils like Sati, child marriage, widow remarriage, Jauhar, girls have no education. But as of now the status of women has become changed a lot as compare to past as women has played the role in economics, law, politics, corporate world and social lives of countries generations. Women should have knowledge about their various rights like right to education, Right

to vote, rights of property, legal rights and freedom of movement. Although, the Government has taken initiatives measures to promote the women empowerment and uplift the status of women which have recorded the drastic changes from the ancient to the modern world. In ancient period the position of women in society gets deteriorated. As per census 2011, reports there were 1.2 billion people with 48.5 % female population and it is expected to grow its ratio in 2036 to 48.8 %.

ANCIENT PERIOD WOMEN CONDITION

In the ancient period the condition of women as per different stages are described below which will show the changes faced by women condition from different period in Ancient times.

INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION	RIG VEDIC PERIOD	LATER VEDIC PERIOD	UPANISHADS PERIOD	During Sutras and Epics	EVIDENCE FROM EPICS	DURING MAURYA EMPIRE	DURING GUPTA DYNASTY
Treating women as mother by highlighting the worship of mother goddess.	Women become continued to enjoy freedom in this period also.	Women enjoy educational Rights and Marriage rights.	The status of women during this period gets deteriorated due the marriage between female of a lower caste and male of higher caste prevailed during this period.	There is proper system of marriage and the age of bride between marriage is 15 or 16	In this period women used to guides men on religious and social questions.	In this period women had right of property which she gets as a gift by her parents on the occasion of marriage.	In this period emphasis is given on the women education.
Equal status of women as men in the society.	Women treating equal status with men.	Importance of Brahmas and rituals increased in this period. But the women getting lowered power in religious ceremonies.	When the wives of lower caste gets associated with women of higher class in the family the status of women gets lowered.	Rules prescribe here regarding the proper season of marriage and qualification for brides and bridegroom.	There were no independence of women as throughout her life she required protection.	Widows gets loose the right of property during this period but they can remarry.	Women are considered to be faithful wives and to give and receive sexual pleasure.
Given absolute freedom to the women.	In religious ceremonies women gave superior status than men.	The position of women gets lowered in this period.		Women gets allowed to sing , dance and enjoy their life.	This was the period of Ramayana and Mahabharata where the woman gets disrespected.		
Respecting and treating women well by	In household the	Women get involved in dying,		There were no systems	In this period women is treated as a		

everyone in society.	position of wife was an honored.	basket making and embroidery.		of Sati present.	commodity which could be bet and sold or purchased.		
		Sati pratha was not prevalent in this period.		Arrangement of widow remarriages.			

MODERN PERIOD WOMEN CONDITION

In modern women society the status of women get enhanced due to government support and amendment in constitution. The various factors which affects the government support are : -

I. Constitution support of women :-

- Constitution provides equality of sex to the women.
- Constitution offers protection to women against exploitation.
- It provides voting rights to women.
- It provides fundamental rights to women as right to participate in social, cultural, religious, educational, economic and political activities.

II. Legislative Support of women :-

The Government of India has taken initiatives measures to protect the interest of women through legislature measures. Some of them are discussed as:-

1) The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 :-

This act provides the rights to women to divorce and remarry. It also prohibits the polygyny , polyandry and child marriage also.

2) The Hindu Succession Act , 1956 :-

It gives the right to the parental property for the women so that they can get share in the parental property.

3) The Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956 :-

If the women get divorced by her husband and she is also childless women the act gives right to women to adopt child and claim maintenance.

4) The Special Marriage Act , 1954 :-

The Act has fixed the minimum age of marriage for males at 21 and females at 18. This act also gives freedom to the women for inter-caste marriage, love marriage and registered marriage.

5) The dowry prohibition Act, 1961 :-

It prevents the women from unlawful activities and prevents the exploitation of women due to dowry.

6) The Suppression of immoral Traffic of women and Girls Act 1956 :-

This act protects the women from kidnapping and forced to become prostitute and provides protection to women.

7) The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act 1971:-

It provides the rights of women due to mental and physical health it legalizes abortion of women.

8) The Criminal Law Amendment Act 1983 :-

Its gives protection to the women from against several crimes.

9) The Family Court Act 1984 :-

This act provides justice to a woman who gets involved in the family disputes.

10) The Equal Remuneration Act 1976 :-

This Act removes the wage discrimination for women against men.

2) WOMEN IN EDUCATION FIELD:-

The literacy rate of women in modern period get enhanced it rose from 0.6% in 1901 to 39.42% in 1991 and in 2001 increased up-to 64.1 %. Various benefits have been provided to the women who go for higher education such benefits are: free-ship, scholarship, loan facility, hostel facility are provided to women. Girls' educational performance in high school and college level prove better than that of boys. A woman also gets awarded by the Sahitya Academy by giving their tremendous contribution in literature, Hindi Writings, Oriya Literature, Punjabi language etc. The women also played the important role in the women editors, journalists and columnists by showing their talent, skill and knowledge.

3) Women in Employment field:-

From villages to the cities and towns there being remarkable increase in the number of women to get the employment and getting out of the four walls of household works. In the market of employment women have given the successive competition to the men. The rate of women employees getting higher day by day since 1991 but in small number. The women has also given the opportunity to the women to get recruited in the various governments job requirement like Army force, Air force, Naval force also.

4) Women in Economic field:-

Women have also given great contribution in the economic prospects of the country also by getting engaged in the employment and generate income for the economy. There are various women who are in the top level position having position of CEO of the Company, some women are running their Startups as per government schemes. Women has increased the capital formation rate and bridge the gap between savings and investment.

5) Women in the field of Politics: -

The number of women representatives has increased in the parliament and assemblies. There are number of women chief ministers who has shows the skill and quality of leadership to the country. The women have proved that they can take the responsibilities as administrators, ministers, ambassadors. Political awareness shows growth in upper and middle class women than the lower class women.

6) Women in the field of sports field:-

In the Sports field also the women has shown the tremendous growth in the various sports events such as: - swimming, high jump, long jump, running race etc. There is a famous name who takes initiatives in the field of sports and games called the P.T. Usha .

7) Women in the field of Arts and culture:-

Women has also shows the great interest in the field of Arts and Culture as in terms of Fine Arts, Paintings, Creativity, Innovation, communication ,dance and music. In every field of Arts also women has given its great contribution.

COMPARISON BETWEEN ANCIENT AND MODERN CONDITION OF WOMEN

The condition of women has gets well equip in the modern time as the freedom is given to the women to educate, become independent choose her field of love as her carrier where she has great interest as the great care is given on the need and desire of women in the present times, as compared in the ancient period where the condition of women gets lowered they have given unequal rights to the women in terms of education and creativeness.

CONCLUSION

As per the above discussion it is being state that the condition of women gets enhanced in the modern times in comparison to the ancient times. But the situation of women now also require the drastic changes as in terms of social security, discrimination, women empowerment, women harassment and equality of women as men in every field . The steps should also be taken for the protection and safety of women in terms of the female foeticide, abortion and early recognition of sex during pregnancy which bridge a large gap between the sex ratio of men and women.

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