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The Position of Women in Ancient society to Modern society in India

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Abstract:

No doubt the Rig Vedic Women in India enjoyed status in society and their condition was good. Even the ladies were provided opportunity to achieve high intellectual and spiritual standard. There was no sati system or early marriage. women started being distinguished against since the Later Vedic period in education and other rights and amenities, but from enjoying free and respected positions. within the Rig-Vedic society. The women's position like Child marriage, widow burning, the purdah and polygamy further deteriorated. In recent years the role and Status of women has undergone some drastic changes due to globalization and commercialism. So, keeping in sight this paper has the objectives (a) to review the role and standing of girls from ancient time. (b) The status of women in modern Indian society concerning Education, Equality, and Family life, Marriage Race and Gender, Culture and Religion is maintained or worsened whether to research This paper explores that because the society is developed in 21st century the position and respect of girls is deteriorated after numerous constitutional provisions aren't sufficient to get the respectable position in society. In times technology developed, globalization and commercialism are available to existence but the status and position of girls is quite deteriorated. Key words: Polygamy, Globalization, Commercialism, Spiritual, Position, Intellectual

Key Words: -Globalisation, Position, Intellectual, spiritual, commercialism

Introduction:

Any study of society is inadequate without study the status, role and even situation of women in it. Women constituted the keystone in the arch of Indian society. No doubt the Rig Vedic Women in India enjoyed status in society and their condition was good. Even the ladies were provided opportunity to achieve high intellectual and spiritual standard. There was no sati system or early marriage. The Rig Vedic society, women started being categorized in contradiction of since the Later-Vedic period in education 2 and other rights and facilities (Nandal and Rajnish, 2014). Indian society based on the spirit that women's cause is men; they rise or sink together, dwarfed or godlike, bond or free. There is little question that we are within the midst of an excellent revolution within the history of teenagers. The evidence is everywhere; the voice of women is increasingly

heard in Parliament, courts and in the streets (Sreenivasa, 2006). While women within the West had to fight for over a century to urge a number of their basic rights, just like the right to vote, the Constitution of from the beginning, India gave women equal rights with men.

Objective of the Study:

The present manuscript is aimed to (a) To study the role and status of women from ancient time. (b) The status of girls in modern Indian society about Equality, Marriage, Education and Family life, Religion and Culture is continued or worsened. This paper also intends to give an awareness and insight into the problems faced by women over the years and their role. The study will help us to imagine the participation of girls in social, religious, economic and household matters within the past.

Methodology:

The methodology of this paper is only descriptive and required information are collected from different secondary sources like Epics, Vedas, Smritis and Puranas and other publications concerning women in the ancient age. Hindu religious books like Vedas, Upanishads, Ramayana, and Mahabharata depict the true picture of ancient Indian society. In ancient Indian history. Vedas, the foremost adored Hindu scripture highlighted the respectable position of girls within the ancient society and provided valuable information needed for this manuscript. Rig Veda revealed the economic rights of a daughter who resides for ever with her parents. Review of Literature: 3 Literature survey reveals that women enjoyed equivalent status & rights like their males' counterparts in ancient India, (Altekar, (2014), Bader, (2013), Salawade, (2012) It is evident from the works of Grammarians like Katyayana and Patanjali that ladies were properly educated within the early Vedic period. Women also had the liberty to pick their husbands. This system was known as „Swayamvar“. In fact, during this point, women had superior position than the males. In ancient India, though patriarchal system was highly prevalent yet women enjoyed a position of respect and reverence, (Jayapalan, (2001), Mishra, 2006). The status of women and their activities can be divided into three main historical periods, the ancient, the medieval and modern, (Mishra, 2014).

Role and status of women in the Rig Vedic and Later Vedic period-

The Rig Vedic women in India enjoyed status in society. Their condition was good. The women were provided opportunity to achieve high intellectual and spiritual standard. There were many women rishis during this period. There was no sati system or child marriage. Women started being discriminated against since the later.

Freedom enjoyed by Ancient women:

The degree of freedom given to women to require part publicly activities indicates the character of the status enjoyed by women during Vedic period. Women never observed "Purdah". They enjoyed freedom and even they enjoyed freedom in selecting their male partner. They could educate themselves. Widows were permitted to remarry. Divorce was however not permissible to them. Even men didn't have the proper to divorce their wives.

Property Rights:

Women rights were very limited in property. A married daughter had no share in her father's property. Women had control over gifts and property etc. received by a woman at time of marriage but the bulk of the family property was under the control and management of the patriarch. As a wife, a woman had no direct share in her husband's property. A widow was expected to lead an ascetic life and had no share in her husband's property. Position of girls in matters concerning marriage and family affairs: Marriage within the Vedic period was considered a social and non-secular duty and united the couple an equal looting. Women had the proper to stay spinsters throughout their life. Marriage was not forcibly imposed on them Child marriages were unknown However, monogamy was frequently mutual, the comfortable section of the society spoiled in polygamy. There was no sati system or child marriage. Women started being discriminated against since the later Vedic period in education and other rights and amenities. widow burning, Child marriage, the purdah and polygamy further deteriorated the women's position. Women in the Vedic and post Vedic periods: The Indian cultural tradition begins with the Vedas. It is generally believed that the Vedic period is spread over from 300 b.c. to 600 b.c. Some general observations discussed in this paper regarding the status of women during this vast period.

Equal Education Opportunity for Women:

They also got education like boys and went through the "Brahmaachary" Discipline including the "Upanayana" ritual. The authors of the Vedic hymns, Women studied the Vedic literature like Men and some of them like Lopamudra, Ghosa and Sikta-Nivavari figure among. Religious ceremonies and sacrifices were performed jointly by the husband and the wife. Women even participated actively in religious discourses. There was no bar for women to read or study any of our sacred literature Women during the Period of Dharmashatras and Puranas: During the period of Dharmashastras and puranas the status of girls gradually declined and underwent a serious change. The girls were deprived of formal education Daughters were regarded as women had the right to select their life-partners. Girls were given in marriage only after adolescence that too after effecting their education. Women Role in the Religious Field: wife enjoyed full rights and regularly participated in religious ceremonies with her husband, In the religious field.

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Role of Women in Public life:

They usually occupied a prominent place in social gatherings but they were denied entry, into the "Sabha's" because these places besides being used for taking political decisions

were also used for gambling, drinking and such others purposes. Women's participation in public meetings and debates, however, became less and less common in later Vedic period. Status of girls during the Epic period: the ladies of Epic India enjoyed an honourable position reception. Both Ramayana and Mahabharata Epics had given a good place for women; women had been called the basis of Dharma, prosperity and delight in both the epics. We find vast references of the expression of courage, strong willpower and valour of girls like Kaikeye, Sita, Rukmani, Satyabhama, Savitri, Draupadi et al.

Status of women during the Epic period:

The Mahabharata also outlines the duties and the attitude of the wife to the husband. Women during the amount of Dharmashastras and Purans: During the amount of Dharmashastras and puranas the status of girls gradually declined and underwent a serious change. The girls were deprived of formal education Daughters were regarded as second class citizens. Freedom of women was curtailed. Sons got more weightage than daughters Girls were prevented from learning the Vedas and becoming Brahma charinis. At no stage shall she deserve freedom.

Restrictions imposed of social problems:

In women freedom Due to the various restrictions imposed on the freedom of women some problems started creeping in. Denied to woman, custom of 'Sati' became increasingly prevalent, purdah system came into vogue and practice of polygyny came to be tolerated. Restrictions imposed of economic problems in women freedom in the economic field a lady was totally denied a share in her husband's property by maintaining that a wife and a slave cannot own property. In the religious field, she was forbidden to offer sacrifices and prayers, practice penance and undertake pilgrimages. Factors That Caused the Degradation of Women: Prabhati Mukherjee, the renounced sociologist has identified some reasons for the status of girls in post Vedic period.

At no stage shall she deserve freedom Women within the Buddhist Period:

The status of girls improved a touch during the Buddhist period though there was no tremendous change. Some of the rigidities and restrictions imposed by the caste system were relaxed. Buddha preached equality and he tried to enhance the cultural, educational and non-secular statuses of girls. During the benevolent rule of the famous Buddhist kings like Chandragupta Maurya, Ashoka, Sri Harsha et al., women regained a neighbourhood of their lost freedom and standing due to the relatively broadminded Buddhist philosophy. Women weren't only confined to domestic work but Women were permitted to become "Sanyasis". Many women took a number one role in Buddhist monastic-life, women had their sangha called the Bhikkhuni Sangha, which was guided by an equivalent rules and regulations as these of the monks. The sangha opened to them avenues of cultural activities and social service and ample opportunities for public life. Their political and economic status however remained unchanged also they might resort to an academic career if they so desired.

Status of Women in the Medieval India:

The Medieval period proved to be highly disappointing for the Indian women, for his or her status further deteriorated during this era. Medieval India wasn't women's age it's

alleged to be the 'dark age' for them. When foreign defeaters like Muslims attacked India, they brought with them their own culture. For them women were the only property of her father, brother or husband and she or he doesn't have any will of her own. This type of thinking also crept into the minds of Indian people and that they also began to treat their own women like this. The decline in women's status and freedom was that original Indians wanted to shield their women from the barbarous Muslim invaders. It was one more reason as polygamy was a norm for these aggressors, they picked up any women they wanted and kept her in their "harems". In order to guard them Indian women started using 'Purdah', (a veil), which covers body. Their freedom also became affected, due to this reason they weren't allowed to manoeuvre freely and this caused the further deterioration of their status. These problems related with women resulted in a changed mindset of individuals. Now they began to think about a woman as misery and a burden, which has got to be shielded from the eyes of intruders and wishes extra care. Whereas a boy child won't need such extra care and instead are going to be helpful as an earning hand. Thus, a vicious circle started during which women were at the receiving end. All this gave rise to some new evils like Child Marriage, Sati, Jauhar and restriction on girl education.

Sati:

The ritual of dying at the pyre of the husband is understood as "Sati" or "Sahagaman". According to a number of the Hindu scriptures women dying at the pyre of her husband go straight to heaven so it's well to practice this ritual. Initially it had been optional for the ladies but if she practiced such a custom, she was highly respected by the society. Sati was considered to be the higher option than living as a widow because the plight of widows in Hindu society was even worse.

Jauhar:

It's also more or less almost like Sati but it's a mass suicide. Jauhar was prevalent in the Rajput societies. When people of Rajput clan became sure that they were getting to die at the hands of their enemy then all the ladies arrange an oversized pyre and set themselves afire, while their husband wants to fight the last decisive battle referred to as "Shaka", with the enemy. Thus, protecting the sanctity of the ladies and therefore the whole clan.

Child Marriage:

It had been a norm in medieval India. They weren't allowed access to education and were treated because of their material being. The plight of girls were often imagined by one among the shloka of Tulsidas where he writes "Dhol, gawar, shudra, pashu, nari, ye sab tadankeadhikari". Meaning that animals, illiterates, lower castes and ladies should be subjected to beating. The child marriage alongside it brought some more problems like increased birth rate, poor health of girls thanks to repeated child bearing and high death rate of women and children.

Restriction on widow remarriage:

They were not treated as human beings and were subjected to a lot of restrictions. They were alleged to live a pious life after their husband died and weren't allowed entry in any celebration. Their presence in any good work was considered to be a nasty omen.

Sometimes heads of widows were also shaved down. They were not allowed to remarry. This cruelty on widows was one among the most reasons for the massive number of girls committing Sati. In medieval India living as a Hindu widow was a kind of a curse.

Purdah System:

It was wont to protect the lady's folk from the eyes of foreign rulers who invaded India in medieval period. But this system curtailed the freedom of women. Girl Education: the women of medieval India and particularly Hindu society weren't given formal education. They were given education related to household chores. But a famous Indian philosopher 'Vatsyayana' wrote that ladies were alleged to be perfect in sixty-four arts including cooking, spinning, grinding, knowledge of drugs, recitation and lots of more. Better status of women in Southern India comparatively Northern India the status of girls in Southern India was better than the North India. While in Northern India there have been not many ladies' administrators, in Southern India we will find some names that made women of that point proud. Priyaketadevi, queen of Chalukya Vikramaditya ruled three villages. Another woman named Jakkiabbe want to rule seventy villages. In South India women had representation in each and each field. Domingo Peas, famous Portuguese traveller testifies to it. He has written in his account that in Vijayanagar kingdom women were present in each and each field. Nuniz, another famous traveller to the South also agrees thereto and says that ladies were employed in writing accounts of expenses, recording the affairs of kingdom, which shows that they were educated. There is no evidence of any public school in northern India but consistent with famous historian IbnBatuta there have been 13 schools for women and 24 for boys in Honavar.

Devadasis:

But it was the custom of Devadasis. Devadasis was a custom prevalent in Southern India. In this system girls were dedicated to temples within the name of gods and goddesses. The girls were then onwards referred to as 'Devadasis' meaning servant of god. These Devadasis were alleged to live the lifetime of celibacy. All the wants of Devadasis were fulfilled by the grants given to the temples. In temple they want to spend their time in worship of god and by singing and dancing for the god. Some kings want to invite temple dancers to perform at their 10 court for the pleasure of their courtier.

Modern Indian Women:

The status of girls in modern India may be a kind of a paradox. If on one hand she is at the height of ladder of success, on the opposite hand she is mutely suffering the violence afflicted on her by her circle of relative's members. As compared with past women in times have achieved tons but actually, they need to still travel an extended way. Their path is filled with roadblocks. the ladies have left the secured domain of their home and are now within the battlefield of life, fully armoured with their talent. that they had proven themselves. But in India they're yet to urge their dues. The sex ratio of India shows that the Indian society remains prejudiced against female. There are 933 females per thousand males in India consistent with the census of 2001, which is far below the planet average of 990 females. There are many problems which women in India need to undergo daily. These problems became the part and parcel of lifetime of Indian women

and a few of them have accepted them as their fate. The main problems of Indian women include: 12

Lack of education:

from the medieval India women were debarred from the tutorial field. consistent with medieval perception women need just household education and this perception of medieval India still persists in villages of India even today. Girls are alleged to fulfil domestic duties and education becomes secondary for them whereas it's considered to be important for boys. the shortage of education is that the root cause for several other problems. An uneducated mother cannot take care of her children properly and she or he isn't conscious of the deadly diseases and their cure, which results in the poor health of the youngsters.

Lack of power:

In India an outsized percentage of girls don't have power. they can't take decisions independently not even associated with their own life. they need to require permission of male members for every and each issue.

Poor Health:

The malnutrition leads to poor health of girls. they're not breastfed for long. within the want of a son the ladies want to urge pregnant as soon as possible which decreases the caring period to the girl child whereas the male members get adequate care and nutrition. Women aren't given the proper to free movement meaning that they can't go anywhere on their own if they need and that they need to take the permission of male member of family or need to take them along.

Maternal Mortality:

The death rate in India is among highest within the world. As females aren't given proper attention, which ends up within the malnutrition then they're married at an early age which results in pregnancies at younger age when the body isn't able to bear the burden of a toddler. All this leads to complications, which can cause gynaecological problems, which can become serious with time and should ultimately, cause death.

Mistreatment:

In India violence against women may be a common evil. they're subjected to physical and mental violence. they're the one 13 who work most but aren't given their due. the ladies aren't safe anywhere neither reception nor at workplace. Every hour a lady is raped in India and each 93 minutes a lady is burnt to death thanks to dowry problem. There are many laws like The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955, The Hindu Succession Act of 1956, The Hindu Widow Remarriage Act of 1856, The Hindu Women Right to Property Act of 1937, The Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961, to guard women and punishment is severe but the conviction rate of crime against women is extremely low in India.

Overworked

Indian women work quite men of India but their work is hardly recognized as they mainly do unskilled work. Their household chores aren't counted as a piece,

if a lady is functioning during a field to assist her husband it'll even be not counted as a piece average works for around 7-8 hours, (Gadhre, 2015).

Dowry

It's a serious issue. Courts are flooded with cases associated with death thanks to dowry harassment by husband and in laws. In past women got 'Stridhan' once they departed from the house of their parents. This amount of cash was given to her as a present which she will use on her and her children but her in-laws didn't have any right that quantity. This amount was alleged to help the girl in time of need. Slowly this tradition became obligatory and took the shape of dowry. Nowadays parents need to give hefty amount in dowry, the in laws of their girl aren't concerned whether or not they can afford it or not. If a woman brings great deal of dowry, she is given respect and is treated well in her new home and if she doesn't bring dowry consistent with expectations of her in laws then she has got to suffer harassment. Due to this evil practice many newlywed women of India need to lose their lives.

Female infanticide/foeticide

As women were alleged to be and in some areas of India are still considered to be curse by some strata of society their birth was taken as a burden. So, in hobbies they were killed as soon as they were born. In a number of the Rajput clans of Rajasthan newly born girl child was dropped during a large bowl of milk and was killed. Today with the assistance of technology the sex of the unborn baby is decided and if it's a woman child then it's aborted down. In all these 14 procedure women don't have any say they need to try to consistent with the wish of their husbands albeit she doesn't want to abort she have any choice. The National Crime Records Bureau reported in 1998 that the expansion rate of crimes against women would be above the increase rate by 2010. Earlier, many cases weren't registered with the police thanks to the social stigma attached to rape and molestation cases.

Trafficking

Traffic act was passed in 1956. However, many cases of trafficking of young girls and ladies are reported. If women are either forced into domestic work, prostitution or child labour.

Conclusion:

It may thus be concluded that in Vedic India, women did not enjoy an inferior status rather they occupied an honourable place. They had ample rights in the social and the religious fields and limited rights in the economic and the political fields. They were not treated as inferior or subordinate but equal to men. We have honoured our country as our Motherland "Bharat Mata" and our nationalism has grown up from the seed Mantra "Vande Mataram". Position of girls in society is that the index to the quality of social organisation. Through this study we come on conclusion that because the women have

equal participation in human development. She is half of the human race. But she lacks in society. Women aren't treated with respect as within the ancient Indian society. Constitutional provisions are not sufficient to get the respectable position in society. Some certain changes inside mind-set of women as well as men

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