

Status Of Women From Colonial Period To Modern Era

Ira Leo

Research Scholar, Sociology, LPU Jalandhar, India

Abstract—Centuries have passed to uplift the status of women in Indian society. But all efforts of Reformists and Indian Constitutions Acts made for women's rights are in vain. It has been observed that many laws have been made for women and men regarding equality to both. But, In this Patriarchial society women have not got the status which they deserved. 'Equality' as we say is only a word with no meaning in case of women. It is only printed in books and according to Indian Constitution that there are equal laws for men and women. Even some laws have given more benefit to women as compared to men. But where are those laws when women are suffering from societal evils like child marriage, sati pratha, domestic violence, dowry deaths and many more crimes. At the time of colonial period there were many inhuman practices which enforced on women, and there were number of restrictions imposed on them. Now, if we look at present scenario we did not find any tremendous change in their status, only few women are aware of their rights. This Research paper throws light on the conditions of women from colonial period to modern era. For the present research paper researcher has used secondary data from many sources.

Keywords— Women, Colonial Period, Modern Era

I. INTRODUCTION

India is the country of many faiths; some faiths are genuine and good for society. But some faiths are cruel and pacing discriminating attitudes towards human being especially, women. It is only in saying that there is no discrimination in men and women, but fact is that women are always discriminated on the basis of their gender. Preference has given only to male member every facilities has provided to him, female is kept after him. According to Hinduism women stands at lower status in society. According to Manusmriti or Manav Dharam Shastra "women are expected to stay at home and serve the husband and his family. When a girl is born, she is regarded as 'Paraaya Dhan' by her parents. This is because she is married off and then has to live with the husband and his family forever." Maximum of the cordial crusader endeavoured to motivate and restore the women's magnificence by the medium of discourse, compress and juncture. Between these people some of the leading meliorists are Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwarachandra Vidya sagar, Swami Dayanand saraswati, Kandukuri veersalingam, Durgabai deshmukh, Jyotiba phule and Ramaswami. Raja Ram Mohan Roy raised his voice against the injustice among women, he talked with diplomat william Bentick, to declare the sati pratha against the law . In this male dominated society it is very difficult for a woman to survive and live a life of freedom. But most of Indian leaders by the passage of time protest for women to get their rights and

improve their position in society. women's development is the main modifications of social evolutions in which several variation had come in ethics, traditions and faiths in the society intending to control women above the years. According to Vikash Nandal (2013) The position of women is an crucial part to discuss in every era . The position of women in vedic period was not so bad, they enjoyed equal status with men in every aspects of life. In Ancient era of indian society many kings were interested to provide education to their daughters. So the condition of women in past was not so inferior, as compared to modern era. In current Indian society the status of women remains intact or has collapsed in consideration to every aspects of tradition. Arpita Banerjee (2013) The condition of women at the time of independence was appalling . The predominance of male-centric culture and financial backwardness in India has put women on a platform to achieve a comparative level of opportunities to recognise as men. Post autonomy Indian coordinator and planning makers considered the issue and confined schemes and projects to women to break the status quo with men. In most of the northern states, the condition of women is still substandard so strict action should be done to improve it. Dr. Rekha Singh (2004) The worth of a occurrence can be estimated from the place given to women in the society. The situation of women in the Muslim era in India was very sad and it had a very bad effect on the status of women. Women were contradict of their advantage of conformity with men. Raja Ram Mohan roy started an evolution which was opposed this inhumane

International Journal of Science, Engineering and Management (IJSEM)
Vol 6, Issue 1, January 2021

behaviour to women. Mahatma Gandhi had asked women to participate in the freedom struggle so that they can prove themselves and make their important place in this society. And Because of this, today women have achieved all the status in society, like Teachers, Doctors, Engineers, pilot, and police officers and Lawyers. Women are now included in the commission in government offices. In all cases she participates in today's society.

II. CONTRIBUTION OF BRAHMO SAMAJ TO THE WELFARE OF WOMEN

The Brahmo Samaj was organised by Raja Ram Mohan Roy in 1825 and accomplished to erase limitations and detriment against women which had their roots in religion. These included child marriage, polygamy, sati pratha, rights of inheritance of property etc. A women's magazine named Bama-Bodini Patrika was started. The impact of the Brahmo Samaj was constricted to Bengal and North India.

III. CONTRIBUTION OF PRARTHANA SAMAJ TO THE WELFARE OF WOMEN

The Prarthana Samaj was established in 1867 and had more or less similar objectives to those of the Brahmo Samaj. M.G.Ranade and Bhandarkar were the leading figures. Bhandarkar were the leading figures. Bhandarkar and N.G.Chandavarkar later became vice chancellors of the first women's university set up in 1916 in Bombay. This was later named SNDT Women's university.

Both these movements stressed women's education to bridge the widening gap between males who had the benefit of modern education and women of the family. Also these movements were the outcome of the reaction of urban, western educated men aimed at changing women's position with in the family.

IV. CONTRIBUTION OF ISLAMIC COMMUNITY TO THE WELFARE OF WOMEN

Women movements began with in the Islamic community in the late 19th century. People like the Begum of Bhopal, Syed Ahmad Khan and Sheikh Abdullah of Aligarh and Karmat Hussain in Lucknow spearheaded a movement to improve women's education. In 1916 the Begum of Bhopal formed the All –India Muslim Women's conference. The Conference in 1917 passed a resolution that polygamy should be abolished.

V. WOMEN AND THEIR STATUS IN SOCIETY

There are so many laws and Regulations which are made to improve the condition of women living in rural and urban localities. It has been observed that very few women knows

that there are some laws which are made for their benefit, for their equal right in society. If we look back to the history that is the colonial period we can see that at that time condition of women was very miserable women was like a curse to society. During British period tremendous changes has been found in the condition of women. Evils like sati pratha, slavery child marriage etc. Which was forcibly imposed on the women have been stopped by few Britishers and Indian reformers. During British period there were two major movements which affected the position of women. These were the Social Reform Movement of the nineteenth century and the Nationalist Movement of the twentieth century. At the time of Gandhi Ji's Satyagrahas movement many women from urban and rural area participated in the movement. Some Women's organisations such as Bharat Mahila Parishad (1904), Bharat Stri Mahamandal (1910), Women's Indian Association (1917), National Council of Women in India (1925) and All India Women's Conference (1927) took up issues like women's education, abolition of social evils, Hindu law reform, equality of rights and opportunities and women's suffrage. Many prominent women of India like Sarojini Naidu, Hansa Mehta, Renuka Rai and others were elected in elections of 1946. After Independence there were several changes made in the conditions of women they have joined many political parties and enjoyed equal rights with men. Nandal and Rajnish (2014) The universal declaration of human rights states that motherhood and childhood requires special care and protection. The constitution of India makes provision of equality, liberty and right to life to all the citizens of the country. The citizens of the country are also required to give up the customs and practices that imposed unfavourable effects upon the status of women. The constitution of India has incorporated norms and policies that are primarily focused upon enhancing the status of women. From 1950, with the introduction of democratic constitution, it has granted equal social and political rights to women.

After Independence it was observed that many steps were taken to raise the level of women, and women should given equal rights as a men to provide them equality in society. The prime task is to give education to women so that they can recognise their right and wrong, they must be able to maintain their dignity and fight for injustice against them. Several committees and commissions stressed the importance for equalisation of educational opportunities. Several schools and colleges were opened for women, to gave them best education. But this will restrain to urban women only, women belongs to rural area was not enjoyed any benefit of education. Over time, the condition of women also improved, but the condition of the women who belonged to the village and those of the small caste was still

International Journal of Science, Engineering and Management (IJSEM)
Vol 6, Issue 1, January 2021

the same. Even today due to lack of awareness in women of rural area, we noticed that the condition of women in the village is still as old. If we talk about the old times, then at that time the woman was less educated and she did not know her rights but women of today knows her rights, but this concept is not right in case of women belonged to villages. These rural women are still suffering from injustice and inequalities. The women of the villages are persecuted even today as they depend on the men for the survival of their life. So it is very important to provide opportunities to these women and to educate them so that they comes to know their worth. Dr. Sahab Singh (2013) In today's society endorsement of women living in villages is very essential and it is a crucial matter in present society. First of all we have to uplift the economic status of rural women by providing them some work which they can easily do. The monetary emancipation of rural women is being perceived now a days as an unusually eminent intimation of progress for a country. M. Suguna (2011) If a women of India is educated she can take for granted an essential role in the progress of the nation. Education is in the context of empowerment of women. They need to conduct to the problems for, and to stand up to their conventional role and change their life. So we cannot ignore the importance of education in the context of women empowerment.

Many policies, schemes and laws have been made for the benefit of women, but they are beneficial only when the women of cities and villages are aware of its use. We often seen that women of 21st century is not behind men in any field, she handles both at home and outside, yet she is not getting the same respect and value as men. Harapriya Mohapatra (2015) Women have never been specified the essential significance in India society in any area of working whether it is in outside the home or inside the home she had not designated in any area. According to author the past is full of atrocities with women we could not even imagined the inhumane and barbaric treatment which Indian woman had faced. woman is the core and the whole world is rotating around her. Women is epitome of love she performs her each and every role with wholeheartedness, whether she is in home or in office she maintained every work easily with full enthusiasm. To quote Dillip kaur, Tiwana, (2012) in this context, "when she takes birth, you become gloomy, when sits back home, you call her crazy, when she marries you, you burn her, but can you live without her? Your daughter, your mother? Your sister? Your wife?"

It is very important in today's scenario that the policies and schemes which are made by government for women should be well implemented in all needed area, where the girls are deprived of many good things of life included education. We all know that through the ages, importance is

given to male child only and the female child is always not welcome with happiness. But despite of all these humiliation many women build their career in reputed jobs and also participated in fight for freedom. But the desired statuses of women is still not achieved because very few women enjoyed good status, very few are educated, knows their right and wrong, raise their voice for injustice against them. But many women sill are not educated do not know their rights, every time they faced humiliation by the society. Their parents do not support them they were not given any type of freedom or priorities to girls. They were always considered them as a burden in their life. We have to take steps to change the minds of these people towards girl child.

VI. CONCLUSION

It is concluded from the above text that centuries passed but women did not get the desirable respect and position, that they should get in the society. It has always been observed that women do not get the same respect as men, society always keep women behind men. If a woman is on high job and a man in a small place, then there is a lot of trouble for a man to work under her. The status of women in any society can be uplifted only when she should take stand for her decisions. Every woman has to help herself and other women to make their place in this society. If we talk about women empowerment in today's society, we see a lot of times that empowerment existed only for few women, a lot of women are still deprived of it. If we talk about women lived in rural area still there is no development in the status of women the condition of women is still bad in villages. The Government has to take necessary steps to improve the conditions of women in villages one of the important instruments is education which helps a lot to uplift the status of women. If a woman is educated at least she will know her rights, raise her voice against injustice. If in our constitution, equal rights has given to both men and women, then where is that equality? when will the time come when women could enjoy equal status as men? We have seen many working women performs her duties very well in homes and in offices, but even then, they are suffering from domestic violence, why don't they raise their voice, why they bear everything silently? From whom she fears, who is responsible for all evils against her. It is society that forces her to bear everything, to bear every injustice against her, when she comes to her home after marriage she is treated as a guest why it is so, that is the same home where she spend her half life, then why that home does not belong to her? Many Authors have written so many things to define the conditions of women from colonial period to modern era. Women will have to take steps to protect themselves and

International Journal of Science, Engineering and Management (IJSEM)
Vol 6, Issue 1, January 2021

maintain their status in society.

REFERENCES

- [1] N, Vikash. (2013). Status of women through ages in India. International journal of social sciences, 3,(1),21-26.
- [2] Banerjee, Arpita. (2013). Status of women and gender discrimination in India. International journal of development research, 3, (2), 057-064.
- [3] S, Rekha. (2004). Status of women in Indian society. Trustees of Boston university
- [4] Nandal, V. and Rajnish, M. (2014). Status of women through Ages in India. International research journal of Social Sciences, 3,(1), 21-26.
- [5] S, Singh, Thakur, Gaurav, Gupta, P, C. (2013). Case study on women empowerment in rural areas. IOSR JBM, 9, (6), 123-126.
- [6] M, Suguna. (2011). Education and women empowerment in India. IJMR, 1, (8).
- [7] M, Harapriya. (2015). Status of women in Indian Society. Journal of research in Humanities and social sciences, 3, (6), 33-36.
- [8] UGC Net Sociology.(2015). Truemian Book Company, Danika Publishing Company

