



DR.Saroj Kumari

HUMAN RIGHTS FOR WOMEN IN MORDEN INDIA

Associate,Professor- Political Science, SNDB, Govt PG College, Nohar
(Rajasthan) India

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Abstract: *This study reviews the condition of women in terms of rights availed by them since the ancient time till the present day. Despite various Acts and policies framed for the benefit of women, unawareness among women and dominance of patriarchal society continues to prevail since time immemorial. As India is still ranked among the developing countries, this paper attempts to compare the situation of women in Chak rata region of Uttarakhand with other regions of India..Practice of Polyandry makes women involved in various tasks resulting in resistance in growth of women. This paper attempts to highlight the reasons behind ill practices against women and their consequent effects. It has been prevalent in our society because women are considered a means of gaining pecuniary benefits. Modernization in the society has resulted in a somewhat improved condition of women.*

Key Words: unawareness, dominance, patriarchal society, resistance, consequent, Modernization.

We live in a world where goddesses are being worshipped while on the other hand women are being subjected to abuse, rape, kidnap etc. To keep a check on such issues so that such crimes do not occur in large numbers our government has provided few exclusive rights for women. Keeping into consideration the gender equality, there are few rights an Indian women holds such as right to equal pay, right to dignity, right against workplace harassment, right against domestic violence, right to free legal aid, right not to be arrested at night, right to register virtual complaints, right against indecent representation, right against being stalked and right to zero FIR. The status of women in India has been subject to many changes over a span of recorded Indian history..During 2018-19, mental harassment and harassment related to dowry were two of the most commonly reported cases in Uttarakhand with 377 and 182 cases respectively. Dehradun reported maximum number of mental harassment cases with 149 cases registered out of which 142 has been disposed of. Udham Singh Nagar exceeded Dehradun and other districts in dowry harassment cases. The district reported 59 cases of dowry out of 182 total cases.

To go back to history Mahabharata, the world famous epic gives an insight on happenings of the society. Draupadi, one of the heroines of Indian epic is one of best instances of Goddess being obsessed with marriage in which she is presented as the role model of the ideal, selfless, meek wife who is expected to remain faithful and devoted to her husband. Draupadi is not considered to be a human but a super human, worshipped by many in South Indian temples. As there are few women in Hindu mythology who were aggressive and did not let men dominate them. It has been noticed that polyandry was much accepted from the time of Mahabharata. Hence Draupadi was looked down upon for marrying the five pandavas. She is considered to be a submissive wife and a mother who maintained silence when pushed to a corner. She does so to uphold not only her honour but of her family and community too. Subsequently, she becomes the paragon of gender and resistance. The epical attitude is prevalent with women even today. We find that the human rights situation of women is disappointing in the sense that their basic rights are being violated by the patriarchal society.

Human Rights- Human rights are rights constitutional to all human beings, irrespective of nationality, place of residence, sex, religion or any other status. These rights are interrelated and non- discriminatory as all human beings are entitled to these rights but are not experienced by them equally. There are a variety of human rights such as Civil related to life, liberty and security, Political rights, Economic rights, Social rights, Cultural rights etc. These rights focus on freedom, protection, care, status and protection of right holders. Human rights are



universal. One does not have to be a particular kind of person to have human rights. Still there are feweligibility criteria required by a person to avail these rights such as for right to vote, one must be a citizen of one's own country. Secondly, the right to freedom is suspended for a person if he has committed a crime. Thirdly, some rights are specific to vulnerable groups. Human rights have high priority in order to contribute towards national stability, security, national and global prosperity etc. They are minimal as they are not too numerous and demanding.

India has always been a supporter of human rights. The greatest challenges to human rights in India are in the areas of maternal and child care, child labour, child abuse, trafficking etc. Human rights are practical as well as inspirational. Principally, these rights hold the vision of a free, fair and peaceful world in which all are aware of the minimum set standards for all in treating the people right. These rights empower people with minimum standards of action. Though violations of these rights also takes place in many instances of parents abusing a child, homeless family, school providing inadequate education, when women are paid less than men and also when one person steals from another.

Concept of Citizenship rights- The Citizenship rights include civil, political and social rights. It involves the freedom of individuals to live wherever they choose to, freedom of speech and religion, the right to own property and the right to equal justice before law. Political rights include the right to participate in elections and elect their representatives. Women had to wait a longer time for this right too. Citizenship rights include the social rights too which allows every individual to enjoy minimum standard of economic welfare and security. Such rights are health benefits, unemployment allowance, setting of wages etc. As of now, the social rights are being attacked by liabilities and hindrances to the growth.

Role of Social Institutions in providing constraints and opportunities to women- Institutions are the major factors connecting developmental outcomes. Family is the most natural social entity. We tend to think that all families are like the ones we live in. Practically, the specialization of roles within a family involves the husband adopting the role of breadwinner and wife to be an emotional domestic character. The belief that the male child will support the parents in the old age and female child will leave after marriage insists families to better take care of males. These were the humanly devised constraints which restrict the growth of an individual. Instead the biological fact says that female baby has better chances of survival than a male baby. The effect of Social Institutions related to gender inequality affects decisions of households. Also the decisions pertaining to educational investments are affected by gender inequality. Traditions like paying a dowry increases cost and negatively affect parents' decisions to educate their daughters.

Social institutions related to gender inequality also affects the returns to Education. They are generally lower for girls and higher for boys i.e. boys are meant to be more productive because of less entry restrictions and wage gaps.

Marriage has a variety of forms which could be identified on the basis of number of partners and the rules which are not equal for men and women. In terms of the number of partners, we have two forms i.e. monogamy and polygamy. Monogamy refers to the practice of having one spouse at a time. Under this system, a man can have only one wife and a woman can have only one husband. As we all know, remarriages on the death of a wife had been a norm for men but the women were deprived of this right. Isn't it discrimination and inequality of rights provided to women?

Status of women in India- As quoted by Swami Vivekananda rightly, 'Just as a bird can not fly with one wing only, a Nation can not march forward if the women are left behind'. Men and women are the two poles of a perfect group or society. Strength is borne of their union, their separation results in weakness. She completes a man. 'HE' comprises of 'SHE'. Therefore women ought to be respected. The relation of male and female is very well explained in our sacred books and Nyaya Darshan.



There is no doubt that we have observed a tremendous revolution in the history of women. The evidence is there for everyone to see; the voice of women is increasingly heard in Parliament, courts and in the streets. Earlier the situation was when women had to fight with men for centuries to get some of their basic rights. Unfortunately, women in this country are mostly unaware of their rights because of illiteracy and the oppressive traditions. The scenario of women is changing at a greater pace now. Names like Kalpana Chawla: The Indian who fought her way up into NASA and was the first woman in space, Indira Gandhi: The Iron Woman of India was the Prime Minister of the Nation, Beauty Queens like Aishwarya Rai and Sushmita Sen, and the legendary Mother Teresa but unfortunately such women are only a handful and cannot represent and reflect the true condition of Indian women.

Violence towards woman- There are certain reasons why women are unable to avail their rights fully. Since time immemorial, women have been the victim of domestic violence creating a mental block or resistance to socialization. Eve teasing, bride burning, mental and sexual harassment is common in public places. Violation of women voting rights, personal dignity, honor killing etc are few normative reasons for women to be a victim of differences within the society. These incidents stop women to be a karta of the family due to lack of important status of women in society. Several issues of female foeticide, infanticide, sex trafficking have been revealed and are increasing day by day. Several reports have been identified revealing that thousands of girls of marriageable age from rural parts of India like Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Odisha, Bihar and many more have been either brought or 'bought' for the purpose of marriage.

These women are called as 'molkis' as the buyers pay money to buy these girls from their parents. Such girls are mostly under age who face difficulty in adjusting with the culture of others and have to pass through 'Agni pariksha' in the form of physical, mental, moral and emotional torture. There have been cases of using these purchased brides as forced labour, denied by their basic rights. Social problems in India are associated with cultural connections, as in the case of dowry system. Women are humiliated in the name of dowry, despite the fact that it has been prohibited by law since 1961. Pregnancies are planned taking into consideration the differential contraception. Foetal sex is determined by pre-natal techniques after which female foetus are aborted. Social discrimination against women has promoted the preference of sons. According to the decennial Indian census, the sex ratio in the 0-6 age group in India has risen from 104.0 males per 100 females in 1981, to 105.8 in 1991, to 107.8 in 2001, to 109.4 in 2011. The ratio is significantly higher in certain states such as Punjab and Haryana.

Point of discussion- The status of women in Chakrata region of Uttarakhand was a notable area of this study. Chakrata is divided into two regions Jaunsar and Bawar, both have common culture and tradition. Jaunsar is the lower half and Bawar is the snow covered upper half region of Chakrata. The region possesses a unique community as the people have remained cut off from the remaining world. These superstitions have resulted in bonded labour and child marriages. Changing the form of own and that of spirits into that of another human or animal is very common in the Himalayan region. The means of livelihood of people of this region are Agriculture, Bee keeping and Domestication of animals/ animal husbandry.

Jaunsar-Bawar region is known for its resources in the form of forest areas in the hilly region including trees of Deodar, Pine, timber and spruce. The people of Jaunsar are believed to be the descendants of Pandavas and people of Bawar, the descendants of Kauravas of Mahabharata. This region witnesses the fraternal polyandry where a woman has several husbands who are co-resident brothers. This reflects that the society does not give due importance to women and their role is rather neglected. One unique custom is being practiced here that is the culture of bride price. Women in Jaunsar are considered to be the economic asset for a family because of two reasons: Firstly, when the daughter is married, family gets the price fixed for the bride. Secondly, women contribute with men equally in the fields for more and more produce. Families with greater land holdings possess more



number of wives than a person with less land. Condition of women in such cases is seen to be benefitting to the men as the services by women are paid by males. Not only women in this region are characterized by working in the fields but they are responsible for each and every household chore.

Colorful attire and festivals are also the key characteristics of people of Jaunsar. They are well known for their polyandrous family system. The Brahmins and Rajputs of this region live in joint families where all the brothers are married together, have one or more wives in common. In case of fraternal polyandry, the wife comes to live with a group of husbands in their house. In case of maternal polyandry, women remains in her own house and her husbands come to live by turns as casual visitors. Typically, woman comes on mare to the house of bridegroom during the marriage ceremony.

Instances of evil practices with women- A 20 year old rape victim was unable to cope up the trauma after getting raped in Jaunsar area of Dehradun, making it the second such tragedy within a week in Uttarakhand. Crime against women in Uttarakhand rose from 1,942 cases in 2014 to 2,042 in 2016. In 2014, 245 cases of rape were reported in the state, followed by 273 in 2015 and 333 last year.

In October 29, 2017, a girl committed suicide after being raped by her own father.

Household activities- The various household activities done by Jaunsari are classified on the basis of their livelihood procedures and traditional commitments which includes house work, extended housework and activities performed outside the home. Household tasks comprises of gardening, cleaning and washing, cooking, care for children, weaving, knitting, drying paddy, seed etc. Extended house work includes marketing, community work, personal care and cultural activities which come into practice during their traditional festivals like Bissu Mela, Magh Mela etc. Activities performed outside the home include collection of firewood, hunting, feeding animals, collection of fodder for animals, agricultural practices etc.

Case Study 1- Ekta Chauhan, a girl of 25, on interrogation explained that their customs and rituals are different from that of the people of mainland. With providing education, girls are being trained in domestic chores too as a suitable boy from nearby village is chosen to be her bridegroom. The criterion usually is that the boy should own a piece of land for earning the living. Girls are chosen on the basis of capability to cook food, work on farms etc. When there is a mutual understanding between the two, boys's father along with elders present a token to girl's father (preferably money) as the bride price. The boy's father is then shown a herd of goats which the girl's father own out of which few goats are chosen by boy's father to be cooked in the feast. In future, if the boy wishes to marry another girl, he has to return the amount paid by girl's father. Even if girl's father wishes to get her married to some other place, he cannot do it without returning the price given by boy's father.

Case Study 2- Madhu, the younger sister of Ekta Chauhan is a school going girl. She is of the view that she would not marry into a polyandrous household, not because she is against the culture of people around her but she fails to assure others for handling such family pressure. She states that she has seen her mother working towards the happiness of many at a time. She prefers to have two fathers rather than two husbands.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY-

- * To study the increasing cases of ill treatment to women in the era of modernization, digital India, more awareness etc.
- * To study the condition of women in Chakrata region of Uttarakhand in order to relate the resources present with their condition.
- * To study the means of livelihood for people of Jaunsar-Bawar.

METHODOLOGY- In this study, Jaunsar-Bawar is as the target area, a subdivision of Dehradun as it is near the city for study to be smoothly conducted. The objectives of this research and their aspects have been studied in two villages i.e. Sakani and Kanbua situated in the Chakrata block of Dehradun through survey and purposive



sampling method. It is a descriptive study. Survey method was used to collect the data. To observe the socio-economic background, historical approach was used.

Demography- The motive behind choosing Sakani and Kanbua was that Sakani has a sex ratio of 154 females per 172 males as per population census 2011. The male literacy rate stands at 83% while that of females was 58%. This village has lower literacy rate as compared to villages of Uttarakhand in the plains. On the other hand Kanbua is a medium sized village which has a better female sex ratio than Sakani but lower literacy rate.

Literacy rate of Sakani Village

Year	Total	Male	Female
2011	70	89	53
2019	75	92	64

Literacy rate of Kanbua Village

Year	Total	Male	Female
2011	72	85	61
2019	79	90	68

CONCLUSION- Educated women are most likely to gain power in the system. It is the most powerful tool for self esteem in the society. Educating women can play a very important role in the development of the country, making the women competent enough to fight against the miss happening observed. Tribal lifestyle is changing fast according to time and place. Earlier, the issues related to social background included age, sex, Education, qualification, type of family, religion, marriage etc and some general were namely problems of health facility, unemployment, agriculture etc. According to survey, the practice of assuming women as a source of pecuniary benefits is reducing gradually. There is an increase in the literacy and awareness level of women in Jaunsar region. The region is full of flora in the form of forest areas in the hilly region including trees of Deodar, Pine, timber and spruce and also the people possess a large patch of land which makes them think of involving women in agricultural activities. Today, Dehradun is growing and expanding various Educational centres, job opportunities which are giving space and better chances to the people of Chakrata and other regions nearby. Urban Life style is affecting the marriage pattern of Jaunsari. There is a positive impact of Education and media on the marriage patterns. The choice of both the parties is given importance. Hence, a remarkable change is seen.

RECOMMENDATIONS-

1. For the people to come in the mainstream, awareness regarding Indian laws, rights and duties is must.
2. People here are hardworking and laborious; job opportunities should be open for them exclusively in their area.
3. Facilities of Disaster management, road connectivity, health facilities should be made available to them.
4. System of marriage (Polyandry) should be changed as it negatively affects the health of women.
5. Training for digitization should be provided to one and all residing for connectivity with the world.
6. New degree colleges should be established. Scholarships/ Attractive Schemes should be made accessible for the girls of Jaunsar so that they are not left behind in gaining Education.
7. Integration of media and Education is must for them.

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