



STATUS OF WOMAN IN PATRIARCHAL INDIA

J. Jayapriya

Asst. Professor, SCSVMV, Kanchipuram.

ABSTRACT

Almost every country has been a male-dominated one, except very few countries. Traditionally, patriarchy was perceived to be the rule of a man in a family. This male-dominated society is also called a patriarchal society. However, patriarchy is now descriptive of all male-dominated social systems. The word patriarchy literally means the rule of the Male or Father. The structure of the patriarchy is always considered the power status of male, authority, control of the male and oppression, domination of the man, suppression, humiliation, sub-ordination and subjugation of the women. A women, no matter how smart or kind she may be looked down upon if she is overweight or does not conform to the concept of conventional beauty. In a patriarchal society, women are expected to be submissive and obedient at all times. The control of women is stressed. Women are not allowed to make decision. The patriarchy leads the women to accept male control. Men are the supreme authority and women are the followers. The woman has been given a secondary and inferior position in her family and society. All these can be changed when we provide good education to the woman. It is a powerful tool to create drastic changes in the life of the woman. In this article, I will attempt to show that the status of woman in patriarchal India.



KEYWORDS : Patriarchal system, Male dominance and women.

INTRODUCTION

India is one of the countries where the female population is counting in less proportion to male population. Patriarchy is based on a system of power relations which are hierarchal and unequal where men control women's production, reproduction and sexuality. It imposes masculinity and femininity character stereotypes in society which strengthen the iniquitous power relations between men and women ^[1]. Patriarchy is a social structure in which men are considered to have a power on women. The Indian constitution grants equal rights to both men and women, but strong patriarchal traditions made woman as slave to man. In India male dominance is accepted by the society that leads to violence towards women accepted in home and streets. Generally, a woman identity is defined in terms of her relationship with man as a daughter, a wife and a mother. It shows that woman does not have an identity of her own. Man always wants her to be the object, to perform work for his family, taking care of his parents and fulfill his sexual desire. Woman has to forget her identity and she must follow her man. Day by day situations are changing woman becomes an integral part of the world, even though they are controlled and governed by males. They should be given freedom to make her choices in all aspects. To eradicate patriarchy system human attitude towards woman has to change.

MEANING OF PATRIARCHAL SYSTEM

Patriarchy literally means "the rule of the father". It derived from the Greek word patriarkhes. It means "father of a race" or "chief of a race, patriarch". Historically, the term patriarchy was used to refer to

autocratic rule by the male head of a family. However, in modern times, it more generally refers to social systems in which power is primarily held by adult men.^[2]

Definition of Patriarchal system

A patriarchal social system can be defined as a system where men are in authority over women in all aspects of society.^[3]

Status of women in Patriarchal India

A patriarchal society believes that men are capable of administering social, moral, political and economic life. Women are believed to be weak in physical, mental, intellectual, emotional and thus incapable of making important decisions. Obedience is one of the important elements in a patriarchal society. Women have to obey the order of her husband or the male who is holding primary power in the family. Every wish of the man of the house is satisfied by the women with humility, restraint and respect. Women and children are should not speak or do things against the patriarch says or does. Woman is not allowed to share the world in equality with men. It is not necessary for the man to define himself as an individual of a particular sex. However, the woman is required to define herself as a woman. She is not regarded as a free and independent individual. She has no existence apart from her male-counter-part^[3]. The patriarch will take decision of their children studies and marriages. Rarely some of them may ask their wife suggestion. Parents arrange marriage based on the economic condition of both parents. After the marriage ceremony the women has to move from her family to husband family. She has to stay in her in-laws home, there she face adjustment problem with persons and their lifestyle. For the sake of doing work for them she sacrifices her desires and dreams. Without complaint about anything she has to adjust there. It is unwritten rule that woman has to adjust not the men. Like a maid, she has to do all the works day and night in home. Women nature is expected to be soft, obedient, caring, calm and kind. At the very young age male children are taught to be bold, strong and they should not cry if they come across any problem in their life. It makes them to think that they should be emotionally strong and the women are weak. Because of these outlook male children develops superiority over female. They start to dominate women from their childhood. In patriarchal society preference will be given to male children. Parents have attitude that female children will go to her in-laws home, Male children stay with us and they take care of them in their old age. They think that women are burden to them. Father is the first guardian of the woman. In the absence of her father, his role is performed by her brother or her male relatives; and when she is married the guardian work naturally is transferred to her husband. Women are facing physical and mental harassment from the men. Boys are discouraged to do house hold works. Married woman are facing number of problems in the family. However woman has to live with her husband. Because Patriarchal societies believe that a father's presence is necessary for the child. Hence, divorce is generally opposed in India. Male children of the family receive their share of the family property; it is not applicable to woman. The biological factor to bear children is linked to the social position of women's responsibilities of motherhood: nurturing, educating and raising children by devoting themselves to family^[1]. Patriarchal society offers esteemed position only to men. Women are more likely to do the housework and raise the children. In workplaces women are paid less. Even children are not paying much attention to their mother words. Men are ruling in parliament but the participation of women is very less. The work, women doing in the home are less valued. Women are not allowed to go out from the home for fear of harassment and rape. Some of the activities like sports, scientist and pilot etc. Women are encouraged to look beautiful, wear good clothes, and jewel promotes them in order to be attractive to men. This is a hidden form of patriarchy. Women are perceived to be more emotional and incapable of handling stress. Violence against women was increasing daily. Woman has been facing issues such as female infanticide, gender-discrimination, sexual harassment, marital-violence, dowry, child marriage, malnutrition, preference for a male child etc. Women do not like to live within the four walls of the house. They would like to see the world and want to lead a happier life. But still men are forcing them

to stay in home. Most educated woman also facing the same problem. An ideal society is one where both men and women are given equal importance, only then can we say we are civilized. So we have to treat both men and woman as equal.

CONCLUSION

In recent days, women are breaking obstacles and playing variety of roles. But patriarchy still exists in the mindset of the people. It is up to us to realize when and how we're pushing women into the background, and strive to avoid that. In urban India, the girls are getting equal opportunities to education with the boys. However, in rural India, they are less educated than the boys and fewer girls are enrolled in schools, and some of them drop out in the course of education. We should respect the qualities of woman and we should improve their status. We should change the way we look at the females. Mere provisions made for them by the government only not help them, the minds and attitude of the people should change. Women's development has to be related to national development. Women need to make themselves strong, confident, bold, and assertive and emerge as new women ready to fight for their rights. Woman is stronger and bolder than man in many respects. She suppressed her feelings, emotion and desires and working towards the betterment of the family. In a modern world woman has to play the dual role in her life one for the family and the other one is her work. We should appreciate and improve their status. It is possible only through education; it gives them self- confidence, self-determination, self-awareness, self-realization, self-confidence, self-concept, self-esteem, self expression and self-assertion.

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