

## **Role of Women in India**

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### **Abstract**

Within the society, women have important roles to perform. The role of women are Primarily recognised in the social, political, economic, cultural and religious spheres, when they are possess efficient skills and abilities, so they are able to render their participation in an effectual manner. When women are performing various type of roles, they need to ensure that they work effectively towards promoting well- being of their family and community. The main areas that have been taken into account in this research paper includes, significance of Roles of women within society, and rules of women within employment settings. This paper attempts to analyse the changing status of women and modern India. This analysis shows that although women in modern India have made a considerable progress in every sphere of life, they still have to struggle against deep- rooted patriarchal mentality of society. The Indian Constitution grants women equal rights as that of men but they were never been effective to bring a remarkable change in the status of modern women. Equal footing with men is still an illusion for females because male dominant still prevails in the society.

**Keywords** : roles, society, employment settings, participation

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### **Introduction**

Women play a crucial role in the vision of India. Without women nothing is impossible for men. A women is the basic unit of society. She make a family, family make ahome, home a society and ultimately society make a country. A country cannot progress until and unless its women take initiatives for development works. The role of women in India is a very hot issue that is passionately debated everyday, as ever more women become conscious of the inequalities and bias they suffer from. All around the world, women are an untapped “resources “ to fight poverty and violence, and even though their potential have been very clearly revealed time and again in difficult circumstances men have to open lost sight of it in times of stability. Taking birth as a woman in the Indian society can be said as curse for the women.

Historically women in India were revered and the birth of a girl was widely believed to mark the arrival of Goddess Lakshmi. Women are also considered to be an embodiment of goddess Durga. Earlier to this women facing a lot of problems because of male dominated, patriarchal society

system, practice of old traditional beliefs etc. Women were only responsible to the traditional rolls like child bearing and child rearing. In the modern world, where women status has been improved a little while, still they are facing problems. They have to perform both family and professional responsibilities together without the help of their husbands. In some cases the condition of women become more embarrassed when they get tortured by their family members instead of getting help. They have to suffer a lot in their daily life to nourish their career as well as saving their family relationships.

When we think of modernisation the big thing that leaps out is the role of women. We in India are sometimes Complacent about the role of women in India. Andre Beteille said, the role of women in India today it is better than even Japan, which is otherwise a very advanced country.

### **Role in the Family and Society of Women**

Women are the pioneers of the nation. Indian culture gives importance to women, comprising half of the population of the world. Women constitute 50% of human resources, the most significant human resource next only to the man having great potentiality. Women are the key to sustainable development and quality of life in the family. Various roles of the women assume in the family are those of wife, leader, administrator, manager of family income and last but not the least important the mother.

#### **•As a Mother**

The whole burden of childbearing and the more significant part of the childbearing task are carried out by the woman in the family. She is responsible for the child's habit of self-control, orderliness, industriousness, theft or honesty. She is responsible for the maintenance of the discipline in the family. For her child, she is the first teacher. She transmits social heritage to the child. As there is intimate and sustained contact with the child, she can discover and nurture a child's unique traits aptitudes and attitudes which subsequently play the leading role in the shaping of his personality. She is the family health officer. She is concerned about the physical wellbeing of every member of the family, the helpless infant, the sickly child, the adolescent youth, and senescent parent. She organises the home and its activities in such a way so that each member of the family has proper food, enough amount of sleep and sufficient recreation. The woman performs the role of wife, partner, organiser, administrator, director, re-creator, disburser, economist, mother, disciplinarian, teacher, health officer, artist and queen in the family at the same time. Apart from it, a woman plays a vital role in the socio-economic development of the society. Modern education and modern economic life use to compel woman more and more to leave the narrow sphere of the family circle and work side by side for the enrichment of society.

#### **•As A Wife**

A Woman is man's helpmate, partner and comrade. She sacrifices her pleasure and ambitions, sets the standard of morality, relieves stress and strain, the tension of the husband, maintains

peace and order in the household. Thereby she creates the environment for her partner to think more about the economic development of the family. She is the source of inspiration for the high endeavour and worth achievements in life. She stands by him in all the difficult situations as well as she shares all success and results. She is the person to whom he turns for love, sympathy, understanding, comfort and recognition. She is the symbol of purity, faithfulness and submission and devotion to her husband.

#### **•As an Administrator**

A well-ordered household is essential to normal family life. The woman in the family assumes this function. She assigns duties among family members according to their interest and abilities. In the preparation and serving of meals, selection and care of clothing, laundering, furnishing and maintenance of the house she plays the leading role. As an administrator, she organises various social functions in the family for social development. She also acts as a director of the recreation. She plans more recreational activities to meet the needs of young and old members of the family.

#### **•A Manager of Family Income**

Woman acts the humble manager of the family income. It is her responsibility to secure a maximum return from every by spent. She always prefers to prepare a large budget instead of a deficit budget. She is very calculating loss and gains while spending money. She distributes the income judiciously. The woman in the family also contributes to the income of the family through her own earning within or outside the home. She has a positive contribution to the family income by the work. She performs in the house and uses waste products for productive purposes.

#### **Women Role in the Religious Field:**

In the religious field, wife enjoyed full rights and regularly participated in religious ceremonies with her husband. 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.

#### **Modern Indian Women**

The status of women in modern India is a sort of a paradox. If on one hand she is at the peak of ladder of success, on the other hand she is mutely suffering the violence afflicted on her by her own family members. As compared with past women in modern times have achieved a lot but in reality they have to still travel a long way. Their path is full of roadblocks. The women have left the secured domain of their home and are now in the battlefield of life, fully armored with their

talent. They had proven themselves. But in India they are yet to get their dues. The sex ratio of India shows that the Indian society is still prejudiced against female.

There are 933 females per thousand males in India according to the census of 2001, which is much below the world average of 990 females. There are many problems which women in India have to go through daily. These problems have become the part and parcel of life of Indian women and some of them have accepted them as their fat. **The main problems of Indian women include:**

### **Lack of education**

In India women education never got its due share of attention. From the medieval India women were debarred from the educational field. According to medieval perception women.

### **Lack of power**

In India a large percentage of women do not have power. They cannot take decisions independently not even related to their own life. They have to take permission of male members for each and every issue.

### **Poor Health**

The malnutrition results in poor health of women. The women of India are prejudiced from the birth itself. They are not breastfed for long. In the want of a son the women wants to get pregnant as soon as possible which decreases the caring period to the girl child whereas the male members get adequate care and nutrition. Women are not given the right to free movement that means that they cannot go anywhere on their own if they want and they have to take the permission of male member of family or have to take them along.

### **Maternal Mortality**

The mortality rate in India is among highest in the world. As females are not given proper attention, which results in the malnutrition and then they are married at an early age which leads to pregnancies at younger age when the body is not ready to bear the burden of a child. All this results in complications, which may lead to gynecological problems, which may become serious with time and may ultimately, lead to death.

### **Mistreatment**

In India violence against women is a common evil. Not just in remote parts but in cities also women bear the brunt. They are subjected to physical and mental violence. They are the one who work most but are not given their due. The women is not safe anywhere neither at home nor at workplace. Every hour a woman is raped in India and every 93 minutes a woman is burnt to death

due to dowry problem. There are many laws such as 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 protect women and punishment is severe but the conviction rate of crime against women is very low in India.

### **Overworked**

Indian women work more than men of India but their work is hardly recognized as they mainly do unskilled work. Their household chores is never counted as a work, if a woman is working in a field to help her husband it will also be not counted as a work. A study conducted by Mie's in 1986 states that in Andhra Pradesh a woman works around 15 hours a day during the agricultural season whereas a male on an average works for around 7-8 hours.

### **Dowry**

It's a serious issue. Courts are flooded with cases related to death due to dowry harassment by husband and in laws. In ancient times women were given 'Stridhan' when they departed from the house of their parents. This amount of money was given to her as a gift which she can use on her and her children but her in-laws did not have any right on that amount. This amount was supposed to help the girl in time of need. Slowly this tradition became obligatory and took the form of dowry. Nowadays parents have to give hefty amount in dowry, the in laws of their girl are not concerned whether they can afford it or not. If a girl brings large amount of dowry she is given respect and is treated well in her new home and if she does not bring dowry according to expectations of her in laws then she has to suffer harassment. Due to this evil practice many newlywed women of India have to lose their lives.

### **Female infanticide/foeticide**

As women were supposed 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 past times they were killed as soon as they were born. In some of the Rajput clans of Rajasthan newly born girl child was dropped in a large bowl of milk and was killed. Today with the help of technology the sex of the unborn baby is determined and if it is a girl child then it is aborted down. In all this procedure women do not have any say they have to do according to the wish of their husbands even if she does not want to abort she have any choice. Crimes against women Police records show high incidence of crimes against women in India. The National Crime Records Bureau reported in 1998 that the growth rate of crimes against women would be higher than the population growth rate by 2010. Earlier, many cases were not registered with the police due to the social stigma attached to rape and molestation cases.

## **Trafficking**

The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act was passed in 1956. However many cases of trafficking of young girls and women have been reported. These women are either forced into prostitution, domestic work or child labour.

- **Some special initiations have been taken in recent years in this regards viz:** National Commission for Women In January 1992, this statutory body with a specific mandate to study and monitor all matters relating to the constitutional and legal safeguards provided for women, review the existing legislation to suggest amendments wherever necessary was set up.
- Reservation of women in Local Self Govt. The 72nd and 73rd constitutional Amendment Acts passed in 1992 by Parliament ensure one-third of the total seats for women in all elected offices in all Rural and Urban Local Bodies.
- The National Plan of Action for the Girl Child (1991-2000 AD) The Action Plan is to ensure survival, protection and development of Girl Child with the ultimate objection of building up a better future for the girl child.
- National Policy for Empowerment of women, 2001 The Department of Women and Child Development in the Ministry of Human Resources Development has prepared a 'National policy for Empowerment of Women in the year 2001. The goal of this policy is to bring about the advancement, development and empowerment of women.

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