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Literary role of women empowerment in ancient time and modern era: A study

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Abstract

Ancient times to modern era there have been a lot of changes in the status of women, and their views. Situation of women in the society kept changing from time to time. In ancient times women were given high position in the society and had an important role to play. During that period, she had happiness prosperity and knowledge. in the yesteryear tradition in the society was to worship goddesses, as time passed in the society respect to women started decreasing. Women were divided into categories of social and political ideologies and society had started giving priority to male point of view. Gradually society changed into patriarchal society and women were being discriminated and treated unfairly.

According to the modern era women and men rights is equal, but in actual women have not got as much rights as men, they are struggling with many serious issues, in this paper we will discuss the following point in detail. Concept of ancient and modern era, historical development, Acts, reform movement and status of women.

Keywords: Ancient, modern, society, feminism, literature

Introduction

Ancient and modern era has seen a huge contribution of women in the literature. We will discuss about ancient period of literature in the description as vedic period, uattr vedic period, medieval period, theology period, and Morden times before and after independence. we will discuss the contribution of women since time immemorial, women have proven themselves in many forms- as a mother, as a daughter, as a housewife, but apart from these other areas in society like political field, cultural, and in religious field, also they play a big role. Women have supported Male freedom fighters in their struggle for the independence of the country and when necessary, they also have become revolutionaries themselves. In the field of education promoting women's education is savitree bai fule who has played a big role, the details of all the women will be discussed.

Ancient time's role of women

Vedic period: The status of women was advanced in the vedic period. During this period Rigveda was established and, in those time, women had an important place in the society and family. Women had equal rights in worship, yajna rituals could not be completed without women. If for some reason women are not present, then their statue was made to symbolise them. According to Manusmriti –"yatr narysttu pujyte, ramnte tatr devata" that is where women are worshipped gods reside there. In that era women had more freedom than in any other era and a lot of attention was given to women's education. In Vedic period education was divided into two parts for girls.

First part sadhovadhu and second part barmvadini. Sadhovadhu - girls were educated on some vedas, mantras and yogic prayers for married life. Barmvadini- girls devoted her life to getting education. they were educated on women shastra and art in this field was amazing. Some famous women did a lot of research through the scriptures, such as

1. Devmati who was a great moral person along with the strong knowledge of scriptures.
2. Shanklay devi was the first women to perform the yagya

3. Apala did research on somras juice. The reason behind this was she had leprosy after marriage, due to which her husband threw her out of the house which prompted her to do more research work and she came up with the idea of somras juice
4. Vaaku was another researcher working on finding a new seed for farming through the vedas.
5. Sulbha built a school for women's education. Etc in that era women were in very progressive position.

Uttar vedic period Dharm Sharstra kal

In this period started with women discriminated respected position and freedom. Yujveda, samveda, arthveda, emerged during in this time and many empires were also born. Vedic period rules were discarded, and religious sources instructed child marriage due to which education was hindered, for them vedas study was stopped and remarriage was banned. 'Husband is GOD' was the seed sown into their minds. Many of them Migrated and were given lower class status. That time women were not consider in politics, as necessary for economic development. women's education was prohibited mostly parents thought them at home by themselves or priests used to provide education. The formal education was abolished. women started being suppressed by patriarchy. In the words of Chandrvati lakhan pal "In vedic period women had strong personality, influenced the ideals of the country's literature and society now she is dependent and has become weak." manusamriti has written that women have no rights to freedom and husband is her god or marriage is the only sacrament of her life. Women were also deprived of property rights.

Medieval period

11 to 16 century period was considered to be medieval period. In this time Mughal empire was established. From the Mughals brahmins made strict rules to protect Indian culture. At that time, girls started getting married at the age of 5 to 8 year, with a age difference of 12 years or more between them. Purdah system was prevalent. Male having more than one wife had become a prestige in the society. In this period women were dependent fully on men. In this time some famous women like Nurjanha, Jahanaara, Roshanaara, Gulbadan begum, Gondvana ki Ranidurga bai, Jijabai, and Rajaram's widow Tarabai etc.

1. Nurjahan – the way the empire must, she made significant changes. They were patron of art, culture and architecture.
2. Roshan aara- she was an influential woman and a talented poet.
3. Gondvana ki rani Durgabai she was a great warrior. she didn't allow Akbar to rule over her kingdom.
4. Jeejabai she was a skilled horseman, strategist, diplomat and swordsman.

One side woman is victim of male dominated society, other side these women created their own dominance.

Modern time role of women

This is the modern era it was the starting period in which India was under the rule of the British. That time many efforts were being made for the social reform of women, but they did not get any support from the British government. It can be divided into two parts. First part before independence and second part after independence women before independence: The country was under the British rule. In this time also women condition was not that great it was becoming worse in the country. At that time, purdah system, sati system, child marriage such evils were at their peak. Women's group came forward that group was unique and they took steps to change the status for women in the country. Some women didn't follow the rules of society and they fought against the system some of them are- aanandi bai Joshi, Sarojani Naydu, Savitree Bai Fule, Ramabai, Fatima Shekh, Tarabai Shinde, etc

1. Tara Bai shinde she was the first feminist lady and a writer, she wrote a book in Marathi in 1882 "shri purush thulana" in that book she had written about gender and casteism, along with savithri bai and her husband. Tara bai shide built a group called "sathya shodak" to work towards building a better society for women.
2. Savithri bai phule -first women teacher, she established first girls' school in 1848.she worked towards bringing equality in education and remove castesim from the society. After establishing the first school, by 1851 she had established three more schools where students were taught English as one of the subjects and scholarship was offered to students if they would like to excel further.
3. Panditha ramabhai-Was an Indian social reformer. she was the first women to be awarded the title of pandita as a Sanskrit scholar and sarasvati after being examined by the faculty of the university of Calcutta. She founded "Mukti Mission" in the late 1890's.

There were numerous women along with the support of men who fought for various issues prevailing during their era.
After several years, At the time of exit before leaving India, mindset of Britishers changed, they came up with plans to improve the situation of women in India. Like

1. Abolition of child marriage- child marriage act in 1929
2. Property right for women- women property right in 1937,
3. Compensation after Separation from husband- divorce act 1946.

After independence for women in India there was a drastic change in all fields, like education, employment, inclusion in politics etc. they were given equal rights with men, due to these rights social harassment was reduced to a great extent. Due to women revolutionaries Modern Women compared with the medieval period grew to better position both in government and private organisation. they had the right to choose their husband, filling divorce, work equally with men. they were not fully dependent on men, even in politics they were not less compared to men, she is a Lok Sabha speaker, MLA, Chief Minister, Prime Minister, President, Governor, Municipality head, ward member, village head there is no post in the field of politics women have not entered.

Table 1: Chart on female representatives in parliament.

Election year	No. of female representation	Percentage
1991	39	7
1996	40	7
1998	43	8
1999	49	9
2004	45	8
2009	59	11
2014	66	12
2019	78	14

Women were not left behind in the field of sports, they achieved laurels and trophies, like in Athletics, boxing, wrestling, cricket, shooting, tennis, bow and arrow.
P.T. Usha in athletics, Mithali Raje in cricket, Geeta Phogat in wrestling, Mary Kom in boxing, Sania mirza in Tennis etc. They were strong women who carved a place for themselves in the male dominated society.

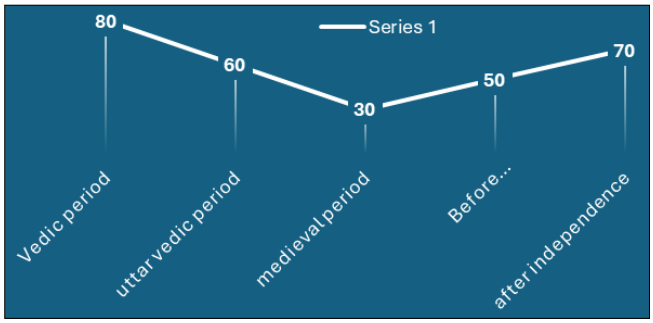

Chart 1: Showing the status of women in different period.

From the above chart we can get an insight of status of women in different period. In Vedic period women were given higher status, gradually decreased in the Uttar Vedic period and reduced drastically in the medieval period, in the modern before independence status of women grew a little and after independence there was good growth but not as compared to the Vedic period.

Conclusion

In this study we got an insight of status of women in different era and their changes in the thought process over a period, other than Vedic period status of women in the society was very bad they were suppressed, and they were not given any importance and all their rights were taken away. They had to go through a lot of struggles to make a name for herself in the society she rose to great heights slowly with her own intellectual ability and will power, but even with so much struggle the graph kept falling. In the modern era there was change in the situation the graph grew gradually. Mahatma Gandhi quoted words for women of modern Era “Women is the best creation of GOD” she is the best in her field of work. These words of mahatma Gandhi is truly blooming in the current era.

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