

FULL PAPER ON; TITLE - “PATRIARCHY & WOMANHOOD”

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ABSTRACT

Patriarchy is a system of relationships, beliefs, and values embedded in political, social, and economic systems that structure gender inequality between men and women. Attributes seen as “feminine” or pertaining to women are undervalued, while attributes regarded as “masculine” or pertaining to men are privileged. a system of society or government in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it.” Due to most modern societies being patriarchal, women are restricted access to the power and privilege that is attributed to men.

Fathers, sons, uncles and grandfathers began living near each other, property was passed down the male line, and female autonomy was eroded. As a result, the argument goes, patriarchy emerged. Those characteristics are Male Domination, Male recognition, Male solipsism, and Obsession with Control.

Patriarchy reinforces structural violence against women by projecting discriminatory gender roles that often place limitations on how far they can go. Excluding women from collective resources paves way for male domination. Male domination means that a level of power superiority is instituted against women.

Patriarchy is a socially-constructed system where men have primary power. It affects many aspects of life, from political leadership, business management, religious institutions, economic systems and property ownership, right down to the family home where men are considered to be the head of the household.

Keywords— *Patriarchy, Embedded, Masculine, Solipsism, Discriminatory*

INTRODUCTION

Patriarchy, hypothetical social system in which the father or a male elder has absolute authority over the family group; by extension, one or more men (as in a council) exert absolute authority over the community as a whole. Building on the theories of biological evolution developed

by Charles Darwin, many 19th-century scholars sought to form a theory of unilinear cultural evolution. This hypothesis, now discredited, suggested that human social organization “evolved” through a series of stages: animalistic sexual promiscuity was followed by matriarchy, which was in turn followed by patriarchy.

Though more and more women are becoming doctors today, men are still frowned upon or ridiculed if they choose to become a nurse instead of a doctor. This is an example of patriarchy, where a man cannot play the role of a nurse, one that is supposedly less authoritative than a doctor.

WOMEN IN INDIAN SOCIETY

As per review of literature, India is one of the countries where the female population is less than the proportion of the male population. According to UNICEF India’s Report on Child Sex Ratio, the birth of female’s children is dropping steadily. Figures from 1991 revealed that the sex ratio was 947 girls for 1,000 boys. Since 1991, 80% of all districts in India had recorded a declining sex ratio, with the state of Punjab being the worst in leading the statistics. States like Maharashtra, Gujarat, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Haryana have recorded more than a 50 point decline in the child sex ratio in the same period. Kerala is the only one in India where the overall sex ratio is constantly in favourable to women. However, the numbers today have started to upgrade once again.

THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN INDIA

Women’s configuration about half of the population of the country, but their situation has been grim. For centuries, they have been deliberately denied the opportunities for growth in the name of religion and socio-cultural practices. At the social-political plain, women suffered from the denial of freedom even in their homes, repression and unnatural indoctrination, an unequal and inferior status, rigid caste hierarchy and even untouchability. Religious tradition and social institutions have a deep bearing on the role and status of women.

Protest movements within the Hindu fold, like Buddhism, Jainism, Vaishnavism, Veera Shaivism and Sikhism contributed to some improvement in the status of women. Particularly regarding religious activities. However, they continued to regard women primarily as mothers and wives, inferior to the men in the society. From the middle of 19th century, reform movements like

Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj, Ramakrishna Mission, etc. upheld the cause of women, but nothing concrete could be achieved. It is also momentous that upliftment of women was an important item in the agenda of Raja Ram Mohan Roy.

EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN

A woman in Indian society has been a victim of humiliation, torture and exploitation. There are many episodes of rape, murder, dowry, burning, wife beating and discrimination in society. Men predominate the Indian society, hence women are a victim of male domination in the respective sphere of life; especially in economic life, over decision making on resources, on the utilization of her earnings and her body. Hence, a woman's life lies between pleasures at one end and danger at another end.

THE VULNERABILITY OF WOMEN

The condition of women is more miserable in rural India with respect to various socio-economic aspects:

POVERTY

Poverty is one of the important characteristics of India, and nearly 45% of rural people are below poverty line. Most of them are just surviving with their day-to-day earnings. If we take the International Poverty Line (1994) into consideration, in India, there were 47% of the population at below \$1 a day category and 87.5% at below \$2 a day category. Better healthcare and higher educational opportunities are far reaching dreams for their children. She (girl child) is treated as a 'silent lamb' born to suffer all evils in male-dominated societies.

VIOLENCE

Culture and tradition have bound the Indian society since ancient times. The patriarchal system and the gender stereotypes in the family and society have always shown a preference for the male child. Sons are regarded as a means of social security and women remained under male domination. Due to her subordinated position, she has suffered fears of discrimination, exploitation and subjugation. She became the victim of several social evils like child marriage, sati, polygamy, purdah system, female infanticide, forced pregnancy, rape etc.

In such incidents, many times, the mother-in-law of the woman also has a role to play. This discrimination and violence against women affect the sex ratio in India also. The main causes of violence are unequal power relations, gender discrimination, patriarchy and economic dependence of women, no participation in the decision-making process etc.

ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION

In the world, women and girls together, carry two-thirds of the burden of the world's work, yet receive only a tenth of world's income. The condition of women in India is also miserable in every field of social life. They are paid half of the money their male counterparts earn for the same job. In India, a predominantly agricultural country, women do more than half of the total agricultural work. But their work is not valued. On an average, a woman worked 15 to 16 hours a day unpaid at home and underpaid outside.

EDUCATIONAL DEPRIVATION

In India, the literacy rate of women is much lower than men because boys receive more schooling than girls. India is one of the 43 countries in the world where the male literacy rate is at least 15% higher than female rates. Educational deprivation is intimately associated with poverty.

However, in India, modest improvement is gradually coming up in the educational level of women. After the independence, many steps have been taken to improve the lots women. The present govt's program "Beti Bachao, Beti Padoo" is also remarkable step by the government to fulfilment the need and aspiration of the girl child. Many laws have also been passed. A National Commission for Women was set up to act as a watchdog on the women issues in 1992. Many programs in the areas of education, health, and employment have been initiated for development of women, rural as well as urban.

The review of the status of women in India tells the story of a fall in the status of women to an abysmally low position from a relatively high-status and notability of the Vedic times. The fall in status has led to a socio-economic and religious-cultural deprivation of women.

Of course, there are certain initiatives in the country, especially after the independence towards raising the status of women. But still, there are many miles to go to reach out the goal of gender equality.

THE PATRIARCHAL NATURE OF THE INDIAN SOCIETY

The man took command in the home also; the woman was degraded and reduced to servitude, she became the slave of his lust and a mere instrument for the production of children.

Indian debates on socialism and patriarchy are complicated by a significant shift in the analysis. The subject of research and debates was not just capitalism and its relationship to patriarchy. Rather, patriarchy came to be discussed in term of the modes of production and reproduction, specific to Indian realities. These were understood regarding the family and household; kinship and caste; culture and religion, and the Indian state, whose policies have a dynamic bearing on all other social structures. Indian discussion addressed and added their concerns to the more substantial feminist arguments.

Patriarchy” is not a stable concept. It has fallen in and out of fashion, flourishing at moments of feminist renewal. Nevertheless, feminism began without it. Patriarchy” sprouted dozens of reformulations and refinements as feminists attempted to theorise it into a coherent system of domination.

Criteria for comparisons are highly biased, subjective, flawed, and purposefully manufactured.;

“Patriarchy” seems exactly the word to explain the continued existence of pervasive, seemingly ineradicable inequality. The moment of #Me Too brought this into relief: it revealed to many feminists that despite all those years of working hard, of leaning in, of waiting till unfairness gradually ebbed away, of absorbing and internalising sexism, of building starry careers or else toiling away in menial jobs in the hope that their children would have it better, you could still be pinned to a bed or cornered at a party or groped, or leered at or catcalled by a man – simply because of your woman’s body.

In this moment, the concept of “patriarchy” has offered itself as the invisible mechanism that connects a host of seemingly isolated and disparate events, intertwining the experience of women of vastly different backgrounds, race and culture, and ranging in force from the trivial and personal to the serious and geopolitical.

“Patriarchy” is one of them.

The word literally means “rule of the father”, from the ancient Greek. There are many different ideas about its extent and force. Some people have used it to describe patterns derived from the structure of the family; to others, it is an entire system of oppression built on misogyny and the exploitation and brutalisation of women. It is not simple, in fact, to produce a concise definition of patriarchy. But at its simplest, it conveys the existence of a societal structure of male supremacy that operates at the expense of women – rather in the way that “white supremacy” conveys the existence of a societal structure that operates at the expense of black people.

Part of the idea of “patriarchy” is that this oppression of women is multilayered. It operates through inequalities at the level of the law and the state, but also through the home and the workplace. It is upheld by powerful cultural norms and supported by tradition, education and religion. It reproduces itself endlessly through these norms and structures, which are themselves patriarchal in nature; and thus it has a way of seeming natural or inevitable, or else, in a liberal context, it is obscured by piecemeal advances in gender equality. Because it offers the idea of a structure of power relations, rather than a series of specific sexist acts, “patriarchy” accommodates the idea that not all men enthusiastically uphold it or benefit equally from it; and that some women may, on the other hand, do a great deal towards supporting it. It also allows for the fact that however much we might loathe it, we all, perforce, participate in it.

Only “patriarchy” seems to capture the peculiar elusiveness of gendered power – the idea that it does not reside in any one site or institution, but seems spread throughout the world. Only “patriarchy” seems to express that it is felt in the way individual examples of gender inequality interact, reinforcing each other to create entire edifices of oppression.

Once you see the world through the lenses of “patriarchy”, the thought naturally arises: what would the world be like if it weren’t there? Some feminists have argued that if women gain equal rights in society, patriarchy will be at least sufficiently tempered. Others have argued that even if equality were achieved, patriarchy would still exist, because human institutions – political, legal, educational, and cultural – are themselves, in their bones, patriarchal structures. But it says something about the nature of this inquiry that it has most vividly been answered by writers of speculative fiction. In the 19th-century novel

CONCLUSION

Equality is an attitude, Equality will never happen unless we all believe that we are equal. Everyone can be equal despite their differences – race, gender, sexuality, and background, mental and physical abilities. Differences do not mean someone is better than someone else. Especially when criteria for comparisons are themselves highly biased, subjective, flawed, and purposefully manufactured.

Patriarchy is nimble and lithe. Its margins of operation always seem to be expanding. Feminists have naturally tended to arrange their battle lines in front of the aspect of oppression that they have regarded as the most pressing. If “patriarchy” has returned as an idea in public debate, it is because feminism has returned with renewed vigour; because inequality has not been eradicated.

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