

Status of Women in History

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ABSTRACT

The status of women is one of the important aspects to study in every era. The present study is related to status of women in Indian society from ancient days till today. In ancient society the status of women was quite satisfactory. In present the role of women has undergone some drastic changes due to commercialism and globalization.

Key Words: women, society, status.

INTRODUCTION

One way to judge the state of nation is to study the status of its women. In reality the status of women represents the standard of culture of any age. The position of women is a difficult and complicated problem. In the course of Indian history from prehistoric to modern times there were distinct stages of the rise and fall in the status of women. A study of ancient literature reveals that during peace time the position of women was not very satisfactory. The status of women was considered to be equal to that of the sudras and killing of women was also not considered as a disgraceful act.

Vedic Period

The position of women during Vedic period was glorious on account of freedom and equality. The position of women in Vedic period can be judged by the way in which the birth of a girl was received. The girls were educated like boys. Many of them became distinguished poetesses and were honored by having their poems included in Vedic literature. Widows of this age were permitted to remarry.

Post Vedic Period

There were gradual changes in the position of women in this period .women were not allowed to participate in the performance of sacrificial ceremonies. The social status of the wife was not satisfactory .Widow marriage was prohibited. The practice of sati was recommended. Over the property of her husband it was generally considered that a woman had no right.

Muslim Period

In the Muslim period the position of women further deteriorated. Women faced a number of hardships and cruelties due to evil practices like child marriage, sati, widowhood, prostitution and the devadasi system. Life became insecure. Restrictions on her rights and freedom and her resultant hardships were aggravated. Women were forcibly taken away to be slaves or to marry into Muslim homes. They did not enjoy a separate world of their own. Until quite recently their very existence was almost merely a base necessity and taken to be an indispensable appendage to the male population. They were totally and forcefully subjugated to male superiority physically and intellectually.

British Period

When the British came to India Women's status had dropped to the lowest level. It was the worst period in the history of the country because of child marriage and sati system etc.Cousion, referring to the status of women at the end of 19th century ,states that the condition of women was at its lowest point of literacy. For the upliftment of women several factors were responsible. The first one was the direct Influence of the British noted for their courtesy towards women. The position of girl's women and widows was improved during British period.

Contemporary Period

Due to the principles of democracy the role of women changes towards greater emancipation from man's domination. The new freedom brought new changes in the role of women. These changes have caused profound influence on different dimensions of the family system and women's status in the society.

Objective of the study

1. To study the status of women from ancient Indian society to modern times.
2. To know the status of women is maintained

Methodology

The paper is based on secondary sources of data and other relevant literature wherever necessary.

Conclusion

Thus we come to conclude that the women have equal participation in human development. She is half of the human race but she lack in human society. In modern times technology developed, globalization and commercialism come into existence but the status and position of women is rather deteriorated.

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