

# WOMANHOOD AND ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION A THOUGHT MEANINGFUL IN EVERY REGION

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## Abstract

The main ingredient or the instrument possessed by the woman hood is their instinctive love of natural environment, that is the outer prakriti. But strangely the active role of womanhood in shaping the human environment is so very obvious and yet unobtrusive that its very existence, let alone its universal importance, usually goes almost unnoticed in this deceitful world of ours. Who does not know that in the all important domestic arena the mother is the only central figure around which the health and hygiene of all members of the household revolve? And, it has been rightly said the hand that rocks the cradle also turns the world. The feminine approach, at its head and hearth, is indeed that powerful. Yet not at all obvious at all and sundry. Not only in and around the hearth and hoe, but also in generating wealth out of the available environmental resources, the not-so-visible role of the female work force, is no small in every society all over the globs.

## Introduction:

Unfortunately in a hurry to gather more and more wealth from the immediate environment, the general social attitude has been virtually geared to destroy our own environment almost from the beginning of human history. In the country, the feminine force by nature tries to preserve the mother prakriti with tender womanly care and even reshape the environment for the better, while adding all the grace and beauty in that process. This being so, it is high time that we should now pay some more attention to this obvious. Yet so far neglected, feminine capability to re-establish the human environment and make it health, beautiful, substantial, and more so, sustainable. Let us examine, in brief all aspects of the role, which the humane and human mothers of the world have been playing in shaping the environment, whether within the precincts of a tiny household or out in the wide world outside. It has been well said that charity begins at home of which obviously, the mother is the focal point. In the correct Biblical sense the word, 'charity' means true love, that is intense affectionate desire or priti for the highest yet the dearest, and the deep love for nature. Truly,

this kind of charity or pure love towards all members of natural environment starts from the mother-instinct in each little home everywhere.

### **HOME ENVIRONMENT AND MOTHERHOOD:**

A healthy nation squarely requires a near and lively habitat for successful development of its human resources centered at each household here, under normal circumstances, an eco-conscious and watchful mistress of the little empire of her own is an all powerful factor. So, if we want to have a health environment anywhere we must have to begin at the beginning, this at each tiny home which is built around the mother figure (parkrit) of the household./ A Chinese proverb aptly sway. "Better to be kind at home that to burn incense in a far place". This is very much true in building up a better environment. which demand true motherly grace, tend care and affectionate efficiency . The quality of life and the supporting environment in and around a household depend in how it is organized with an attitude characteristic of a tender mother. All round environmental cleanliness has to start right from the mirth itself in each hoe, spreading out there from to the out yard then on to the surroundings and then finally further to the outer world. Obviously, the role of the woman (prakriti) in this respect has been regarded to be of paramount importance; and their aptitude and training must have to be necessarily geared up to a degree to meet the normal requirement of a clean environment in any society.

### **CLEAN AIR AND WATER ENVIRONMENT:**

It goes without saying that breathable air and potable water are the two basic equipments of a healthy home environment. An ever-alert womanly attention in this regard can only ensure proper circulation of the vital air, which must have to be fully charged with the required feel of oxygen on tent within a dwelling house Perhaps a woman knows, out of sheer intuition or otherwise, better than any body else, that a flowering creeper or a green tree planted around the house is capable of mopping up pollution from the air filling it with infusion of some oxygen. Thus, the domestic air can be kept free of dust, smoke and fumes if the watchful eye of the mistress of the household sees the house properly swept and swabbed at the required intervals and the appropriately designed health therein is fired with the right kind of fuel ensuring its fuller combustion to make it free as far possible. A mother can do it certainly better than any body else, as commonly found in India situation.

Similarly in the case with domestic water supply. The procurement, storage and distribution of the life giving fluid in a house hold usually depend on the tender care of a feminine figure, concerned for the health and hygiene within the family. Woman's acute sense of purity, coupled with her natural desired for maintaining cleanness , acts as the chief safeguard in the management of clear potable water within a dwelling unit. The total requirement of clean water in a family for drinking, washing cleaning and bathing is rigorously maintained however distant may be

the nearest source of this vital fluid for her house. A woman with a swinging water pot or a vessel of any sort, held gracefully somewhere about her person has been representing for ages what is truly the rural India.

Coming to the question of procurement and use of the scare energy resource like domestic fuel or for that matter as regards procurement, preparation and distribution of daily requirement of food within a dwelling unit, the role of the woman of the household is naturally supreme almost in all societies. Urban or rural modern or primitive or those lying anywhere in between.

It is well known that the immediate source of air pollution within the confines of a dwelling house is the kitchen fire. Air pollution thus created within the kitchen quickly spreads out into other areas of the house and then further into the neighborhood, usually affecting many a person. With the use of one efficient fuel, with introduction of better draft of the ventilation system and by wielding more appropriate kitchen appliances, the environmentally conscious mistress of the house can undoubtedly reduce the domestic air pollution level to a minimum. So, in these days of ecological crisis we indeed are in need of more and more of an environmentally alert woman in every household so as to keep the domestic air clean enough.

Clean air apart, it goes without saying that if family needs wholesome food to keep the blood and soul together and to effectively raise our children for the posterity. It requires indeed a lot of ingenuity to turn the raw materials available from the environment around into nourishing eatables for all members of the household young or old. Even for a small family norm as of these days the task of providing wholesome food for all is really stupendous. Under poorer circumstances or harsher environmental situation, which are more common, it can be well imagined how hard this terrible reality is for the woman presiding over a family of many hungry mouth around. And luckily, a benign and ingenuous mother is always there is every woman who is gracefully crying out this task of feeding the lot and building up a nation out of whatever resources as may be available from the environment around often under extremely adverse social and economic circumstances. However hard the situation may be, which unfortunately are very often man-made, the most astounding fact about the role of the woman especially in India, is that in them a kind motherly heart is invariably there with a dainty dish for all around her. Indeed Indian motherliness, being a wonderful phenomenon, is a strong fact effectively molding the environment of the country.

### **WASTE DISPOSAL:**

Since a lot of matter and energy are consumed in running a household, a substantial share of the same, in consequence, just come out of the dwelling house in the form of waste discharges comprising all kinds of things solid, liquid and gaseous. The pollution created thereby and its impact on the immediate environment is no small. Much of the domestic waste product can,

however, be discharged in an organized manner so as to cause little damage to the environment, if the woman in charge of a household keeps a constant vigil on the operation of waste disposal system. Every woman knows that domestic liquid waste discharge coming out of the kitchen or bathroom or the closet has to be disposed off properly at a safe distance without of course adversely affecting others in neighborhood . Same is the case with the gases and suspended m\particulate matter coming out the kitchen fire or other or wastes produced daily from an active household. All this needs operation of acute hygienic and civic sense amongst all especially in women, who are directly concerned in handling the household wastes. One has to go the nearest tribal village in India just to see literally learn from them how their ecologically wise women keep their village absolutely spick and span. A tribal or a so-called we touchable woman knows rural waste disposal technology much better than any body else. It could have been a wonderful thing if our cities and towns were also kept equally clean of all throwaway materials on the model of an Indian tribal village, the waste disposal system which is totally managed by the woman force only. In fact, there are many things to learn from Indian rural women in the matter of efficient management within the dwelling house and also outside the normal domestic fold .

### **ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION:**

It is equally obvious that the normal sense of personal hygiene and environmental cleanliness in being transmitted rather quality form generation though the intervention of motherhood operating naturally within the depth of a mother. The motherly woman is the best environmental teacher in this world, a million times more powerful than a schoolmaster. In this respect an appropriate. saying of Manusmariti is thus.

It states, " A professor is ten times more venerable than a school teacher; the father is a hundred times more than a professor but the mother is a thousand times more venerable than the father." Is this not an absolute truth? So. to a child if the very first lesson on environmental literacy comes from his/has own mother who is the best that one can think of . The mother is the most effective vehicle through the fine local cultures and environmental traditions and technologies can be more effectively preserved and transmitted from generation to generation; and this natural endowment of this country truly more conscious about the more and more complex ramification of environment is use of these days and their possible remedies on more scientific lines.

### **EDUCATION MOTHERHOOD:**

The mothers in ancient India were treated as the teacher of their wards not merely because they gave them birth but because-contrary to normal option-the were in fact equally educated as men and had to be given training in wider field and in diverse branches of science humanities, fine arts and culture top turn themselves into accomplished persons for the benefit of the entire society and the environment wake up . This kind of accomplishment made ancient Indian

mothers the fittest educators for the young generation and the very best protectors and promoters of healthy environment in every sense of the term . Where as true school gives teaching of the sciences (brahma-vadinis) or as the newly-weds (sadyo-vedus) to be the guardians of families, all ancient women of good breeding were always initiated in the path of knowledge and they had to undergo the usual investiture ceremony with a piece of outer garment thrown across the shoulders as token of the holy thread(yajnopavita) as commonly put on by the twice-born men fold of India. In this household nicely, leanly, scientifically and environmentally. Environmental awareness and the keen sense of cleanliness were parts of their natural education.

Thus, it goes without saying that women are the best persons who can transmit the kind of environmental awareness, the acute sense of better health-care to their wards in a most natural and effective way. The educated women, it is needless to mention are also better equipped to ward off the poverty, which brings about degradation in the environment and also are better able to plan the family judiciously . This, in turn, helps in trimming down the population at appropriate level, in maintaining the natural environment on an even keel. We must have all out mothers adequately educated.

If women even in the ancient Vedic period could have enjoy equal rights for education (atrapistriyo pi adhikaah), as mentioned by Madhavacarya in his Nyaymala -vistra while commenting on Shabaa -svamin (Purva-mamsa 1/3 Shabra-bhashya), why Indian womanhood of today should not have the same opportunity opened up for them, so as to maintain the society and the environment clean and bright of generation to come?

### **WORKING MOTHERHOOD:**

The great female work is not merely pinned down to the domestic chores only . This will be more evident if one cares to look carefully at the common women folk of rural India. Women are there participating in every sector of economic activity everywhere. Deep in the forest fastness, women are found laboriously collecting the vitally needed fuel wood for the family. Out on to the fields can be seen a hard working woman transplanting saplings of paddy rice in rows, adding a dash of extra colour on the landscape . Within the cattle pens. Indian milkmaids are their tenderly feeding one milking the domestic and farm animals. Or, for the matter, on a cottage verandah a deft woman hand is commonsense, producing some priceless specimens of ethnic art hand craft, which are so characteristics of the great rural health land of India. In carrying out income generating productive work, whether inside the household or the wide world outside, it is the woman who effectively adds grace, poise and stability to the environment even when things are so very rough and crude to the extreme.

Let us look for an example. The woman knows better that the natural environmental resources have to be protected first before any thing can be produced to exploit there from.

Otherwise, how could the famous women fuel wood collectors, better known as the Chiplo vahins or the 'embracing sister' of garhwal Himalaya in the sixties could have fearlessly embraced round the giant chir pines just to protect the forest against the cruel access to the woodcutters? With this same but forceful non oil net tree embracing posture the Chipli vahins were successful in warding off the giddy killers of forest environment. The womenfolk of the Vishnoi sect some two hundred years ago laid down their lives in Rajasthan for protecting their forest from being felled by the king's woodcutters. Being in tune with nature, that is the mother prikriti, the womanhood is a better protector of forest wealth of the country, recent African and Indian experience in greening and reforestation programs has shown that given the freedom of choice in selecting the most appropriate tree species, the country womenfolk appreciates the local ecological and economical requirement of trees much faster and can go about planting a mix of the right varieties with grate case than perhaps been a professional planter who would usually prefer some commercially viable quick growing stand of a single species to be planted bypassing the sound ecological principle of mixed forestry comprising dives species . It goes without saying that there is now a great need to protect and promote the endangered biodiversity of this country. The possible role of the rural womenfolk of India in this great task is not small.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Not only in the green environment of the forest but also in all other sectors of the economy and society it will be seen that the role of female participation is of paramount importance be it in agriculture, industry, fishing, plantation, horticulture commerce or the service sector especially in matters relating to protection, conservation and development of the fragile environmental resources of the country, which are now severely affected by the long continued misuse, a closer motherly touch is required perhaps more than before. For that matter, it is now all more necessary for every body to be aware of the value of the role of the ever-benign mother principle inherent in Indian women in making us truly live in tune and not in conflict with nature .

No, wonder that a strong personality like Swami Vivekananda (1898), while addressing his young disciples, more than a century ago on the 19th June 1899 advised. "The true man is he who is strong as sturdy itself and yet possesses a women's heart. You must feel for the millions of beings and you, and yet you must be string and inflexible and you must also possess obedience, though it many seem paradoxical-you must possess these apparently conflicting virtues . It goes without saying that for better up keep of the environment-whether global, local or household-all persons, male or female, must emulate this great mother- principle (prakriti) within them. This is why our scriptures praise in unison the importance of women in our society which reflects in the following saying,. "Where women are worshipped God resides there".

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