

7

Do We Care? Continual Problems of Indian Women

Dr. Bharat M. Pithadia

Associate Professor, Dept. of Commerce, Nagindas Khandwala College, Mumbai.

Abstract

In ancient India, women enjoyed a very high status in society, which is evident from the fact that many rituals were not regarded as complete unless they were present. But with the change in the social, political and economic pattern of the country, the status of women witnessed a decline. The Constitution of India declares: "The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds of sex, religion, race, caste or place of birth or any of these".

Although the Constitution grants equal status and rights to everyone without any discrimination of sex, women in most cases cannot avail themselves of the opportunities because of various factors such as illiteracy and poverty, and social conventions. This paper focuses on Women's issues that haven't changed since decades and need immediate attention of Government and Society at large.

Key words: Rigvedic Civilization, Later-Vedic Civilization, Post-Vedic Period, Constitution.

Introduction

The status of women in India is subjected to many changes over the past few millennia. With a decline in their status from the ancient to medieval times, to the promotion of equal rights by many reformers, the history of women in India has been eventful. Even though, women's rights are secured under the Constitution of India, Indian women continue to face numerous problems, such as violent victimization through rape, dowry killings, marital rapes many more.

Women have been treated as 'objects' by the male-dominated society in India. They are treated as inferior in their own families. Even the rich in the countryside have put restrictions on women's higher education, migration and jobs. The fact is that women have been made dependent by men and by the social milieu they have created for them.

Rigvedic Civilization

In the Rigvedic civilization, women enjoyed equal status with men. Vedic period in general was a very advanced period. Women received education, had jobs, had the freedom to choose one's partner, widows had the right to remarry. Women and men both shared equal status. Political rights were shared between husband and wife in a couple. This policy was followed even in larger bodies like the Sabha and the Samiti.

Many women of the upper class would host Swayamwars to choose the husband of their choice. Thus they were given equal treatment in all respects. Though, they weren't treated like Goddesses but certainly guaranteed perfect equality.