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Rights of Women

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ABSTRACT

Since marry wall stone craft's seminal work - A vindication of the rights of women (1792), there has been almost centuries of the evolution of the rights women. The world has witnessed social, economic and legislative reforms around these rights. They are asserting their right to shape their life from within and not to have it shaped for them. Fortunately, the philosophy that a woman being equal is well recognized widely understood and also practically accepted. Still, there exist lack of knowledge how women gained the existing rights. Large number of concerns about the women's evolving personality and incidental claims are being countered at various levels. More participation of women themselves along with various activists is bringing transformation in this area. Some of the issues have indeed been settled, others not yet.

The historical development of their right is the main focus of this work. The core of the paper may be summed up in the words of Vance Thomson in woman (1917) - "Whether you like it or not woman is the paladin, enormous and strong, of the ideals of tomorrow. She is the future; she is the future home; she is the future state - for she is in the majority both in numbers and common sense and she has withal a kind of civic integrity, which may be unscrupulous, but which makes nevertheless for victory."

Keyword: History, International, Modern, Rights, Woman.

I. INTRODUCTION

In savage life, the great superiority of physical strength made man the absolute master, women the abject slave.² Every successive step in civilization lessens the distance between the sexes, and renders the situation of women safer and easier. In no state of society, however highly cultivated, has perfect equality yet existed.³ To bring women at par with man, the pre-requisite is to first provide her large opportunities, so that she is able to rise to become footing.

The position and function of women, their biological position and failures have been discussed and re-discussed with in flay for last centuries. The women's movement has been viewed from many angles. It has been seen as a sex problem, a domestic problem, an industrial problem, and

¹ Author is a student at Amity Law School, Amity, India.

² Susan Fenimore cooper, "Female Suffrage – Letter to the Christian Women of America", Harper's New Weekly Magazine, Vol XLI, June-November, 1870

³ Ibid

a political problem, according to the insight or the bewilderment, of the spectator.⁴ She is striving to be a woman - to get out of the sex - pen in which she has been cooped.⁵

"Women is an end in herself, and not merely a means to an end."⁶ With this framework in mind, the paper seeks to address the unfolding of the right of women over the time. The aim of this little paper is thus many fold - to explore the viewpoints regarding gender inequality; make out the case for women's equality and to enumerate the journey towards the grant of rights to women. The paper ends with concluding remark to improve the rights enjoyed by women. Thus an attempt has been made to study the incessant transformations of women's movements. This study is great importance for the reasons that it is step forward to trace evolution of women rights movement. The study has used doctrinal method of study and used historical study to outline the evolution of rights of women. [Amnesty International. (2020) Women's Rights, National Organization for Women (NOW) (2020) Women's Rights.]

(A) Methodology

Women, Business and the Law measures the enabling environment for women's economic opportunity in 190 economies. This year, the study presents two sets of data: Women, Business and the Law 1.0 (WBL 1.0) and an expanded version, Women, Business and the Law 2.0 (WBL 2.0).⁷

WBL 1.0 updates its index of eight indicators and is available for the period from 1971 to 2024 (calendar years 1970 to 2023). Thirty-five aspects of the law are scored across eight indicators of four or five binary questions. Each indicator represents a different phase of a woman's career. The methodology was designed as an easily replicable measure of the legal environment for women as entrepreneurs and employees. We update the data based on feedback from respondents with expertise in laws on family, labor and violence against women. Indicator-level scores are obtained by calculating the unweighted average of the questions within that indicator and scaling the result to 100. Overall scores are then calculated by taking the average of each indicator, with 100 representing the highest possible score. Detailed WBL 1.0 methodology is listed below, and in the WBL 1.0 Data Notes.

WBL 2.0 introduces a new framework for measuring the implementation gap. It analyzes laws—de jure— and examines the existence of frameworks supporting implementation of the law and gauges experts' opinions on the outcome of the law for women—de facto. Women,

⁴ F.G. Tuttle, *The Awakening of a Women* 7 (Abingdon Press, New York, 1915).

⁵ Vance Thomson, *Woman* 22 (E.P. Dutton & Company, New York, 1917) .22

⁶ Kant

⁷ Women, Business and the law

Business and the Law 2.0 also introduces two new indicators – Safety and Childcare – and revises its ongoing indicators. Please refer to the WBL 2.0 Data Notes for the methodology.

Browse the methodology of the WBL 1.0 indicators below or download the complete questionnaires used to collect data for the 2024 publication related to Family, Labor, Violence Against Women, and Expert Opinion.

[Wollstonecraft, M (1792) . A Vindication of the Rights of Women]

(B) Objective

a. Woman's Development

Women in development is an approach of development projects that emerged in the 1960s, calling for treatment of women's issues in development projects. It is the integration of women into the global economies by improving their status and assisting in total development. However, the priority of Women in Development later became concerned with how women could contribute to development of away from its initial goals of addressing equity. Later, the Gender and Development (GAD) approach proposed more emphasis on gender relations rather than seeing women's issues in isolation.

b. Women's Education

Female education is a catch-all term for a complex set of issues and debates surrounding education (Primary Education, Secondary Education, Tertiary education and Health Education in particular) for girls and women. It is frequently called girls' education or women's education. It includes areas of gender equality and access to education. The education of women and girls is important for the alleviation of poverty. Broader related topics include single sex education and religion education for women, in which education is divided along gender lines.

Inequalities in education for girls and women are complex: women and girls face explicit barriers to entry to school, for example, violence against women or prohibitions of girls from going to school, while other problems are more systematic and less explicit, for example, science, technology, engineering and mathematic(STEM) education disparities are deep rooted, even in Europe and North America. In some Western countries, women have surpassed men at many levels of education. For example, in the United States in 2005/2006, women earned 62% of associate degrees, 58% of bachelor's degrees, 60% of master's degrees, and 50% of doctorates.

II. GENDER EQUALITY

Women and girls represent half of the world's population and, therefore, also half of its potential. Gender equality, besides being a fundamental human right, is essential to achieve peaceful societies, with full human potential and sustainable development. Moreover, it has been shown that empowering women spurs productivity and economic growth.

Different schools of thought exist as to the backdrop upon the existing inequality between man and women. No one can deny the difference of environment that in the past has acted on women and on men. From a biological standpoint, it would seem that any present inferiority of women is mainly adaptation social, due to her to an arbitrary environment. It is only her own life - her own extraordinary beingness - she is concerned with; she proclaims her concern with men and children, with the state with civilization, with the future of the race.

(A) Sexual Violence

Sexual harassment is a type of harassment involving the use of explicit or implicit sexual overtones, including the unwelcome and inappropriate promises of rewards in exchange for sexual favours. Sexual harassment can be physical and/or a demand or request for sexual favours making sexually remarks, showing pornography, and any other unwelcome physical, verbal, or non-verbal (sometimes provocative) conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment includes a range of actions from verbal transgressions to sexual abuse or assault. Harassment can occur in many different social settings such as the workplace, the home, school, or religious institutions. Harassers or victims can be of any gender.

Sexual harassment by an employer is a form of illegal employment discrimination. For many businesses or organizations, preventing sexual harassment and defending employees from sexual harassment charges have become key goals of legal decision-making.

[Nussbaum M.C. (2000) . Women development]

(B) Research Question

1. How effective are international human rights instruments in promoting women,s rights?
2. What is the relationship between women,s rights and economic development?
3. What role do education and awareness play in promoting women,s rights?

(C) Research Hypothesis

a. Violence Against Women

1. Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant relationship between societal attitudes towards women and rates of domestic violence.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): Societal attitudes that objectify and degrade women are positively correlated with rates of domestic violence.

2. H0: Implementation of anti-trafficking laws does not reduce human trafficking cases.

H1: Effective implementation of anti-trafficking laws significantly reduces human trafficking cases.

b. Reproductive Rights

H0: Access to comprehensive sex education does not affect teen pregnancy rates.

H1: Comprehensive sex education programs significantly reduce teen pregnancy rates.

c. Economic Empowerment

H0: Microfinance programs do not improve women's economic independence.

H1: Participation in microfinance programs increases women's economic independence.

d. Education and Leadership

H0: Girls' education does not impact women's leadership in politics.

H1: Increased access to girls' education positively correlates with women's leadership in politics.

e. Intersectionality

H0: Intersectional identities (race, class, sexuality, disability) do not affect women's experiences of discrimination.

H1: Women with intersectional identities face compounded discrimination.

f. Policy and Social Change

H0: Strengthening laws and policies does not reduce gender-based violence.

H1: Strengthening laws and policies, combined with community engagement, reduces gender-based violence.

[Bunch C. (1990) Women Rights as human rights . Human rights quarterly 12(4), 486-498]

(D) Literature Review

a. Concept of Women's Rights:

Women's rights refer to the fundamental human rights and freedoms that women are entitled to, including equality, dignity, and empowerment. Women's rights are the rights and freedom

claimed by women to achieve equality, justice and dignity in all aspects of life . (UN Women, 2020)

b. History of Women's Rights :

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.” That was Margaret Mead's conclusion after a lifetime of observing very diverse cultures around the world. Her insight has been borne out time and again throughout the development of this country of ours. Being allowed to live life in an atmosphere of religious freedom, having a voice in the government you support with your taxes, living free of lifelong enslavement by another person. These beliefs about how life should and must be lived were once considered outlandish by many. But these beliefs were fervently held by visionaries whose steadfast work brought about changed minds and attitudes. Now these beliefs are commonly shared across U.S. society.

Another initially outlandish idea that has come to pass: United States citizenship for women. 1998 marked the 150th Anniversary of a movement by women to achieve full civil rights in this country. Over the past seven generations, dramatic social and legal changes have been accomplished that are now so accepted that they go unnoticed by people whose lives they have utterly changed. Many people who have lived through the recent decades of this process have come to accept blithely what has transpired. And younger people, for the most part, can hardly believe life was ever otherwise. They take the changes completely in stride, as how life has always been.

The staggering changes for women that have come about over those seven generations in family life, in religion, in government, in employment, in education – these changes did not just happen spontaneously. Women themselves made these changes happen, very deliberately. Women have not been the passive recipients of miraculous changes in laws and human nature. Seven generations of women have come together to affect these changes in the most democratic ways: through meetings, petition drives, lobbying, public speaking, and nonviolent resistance. They have worked very deliberately to create a better world, and they have succeeded hugely.

Throughout 1998, the 150th anniversary of the Women's Rights Movement is being celebrated across the nation with programs and events taking every form imaginable. Like many amazing stories, the history of the Women's Rights Movement began with a small group of people questioning why human lives were being unfairly constricted.

[National Women,s History Alliance (NWAH)]

III. CONCLUSION

The government and several NGOs are making efforts to empower women by creating awareness. The government is running a large no. of projects for education and skill development of women so that can get economic independence.

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The problem of woman's position or sphere of her duties, responsibilities, rights and immunities as woman attracts a large and still increasing measure of attention from the thinkers and agitators of modern times. The legislators have gradually commended to the popular comprehension and acceptance of the rights of the women.

- Women should endeavour to acquire strength, both of mind and body.
- The society needs to be sensitized about woman and their equal status.
- An unparalleled acceptance of woman as a human being (not merely equal but supreme & superior) having ability to give birth to new life and make lives warmer must be inculcated.
- Transformation of gender norms and relationships in society required.
