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How Religion Shape and Define Role For Gender

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Abstract

The religious structure and the gender structure work together to form and define a culture, creating the defining structures of equality and uniformity. Furthermore, the religion of a culture usually directly corresponds or is influenced by the culture's gender structure, like the family structures and/or the state. Present laws regarding Gender must not formulate as per Religion and customs .laws related to gender's day to day life must formulate on the enlightenment and righteousness. Laws related to Marriage, property's right, education must be same for all kind of religion. Laws institution should not considered religion into making laws regarding education, Marriage' age and right of property.

Keywords: Religion, Gender, Education, Culture and Custom.

Introduction

All over the world, religion is formed around a divine, supernatural figure. While the idea of the divine, supernatural figure varies from religion to religion, each one is framed around different concepts of what it means to be male and female. Furthermore, the religion of a culture usually directly corresponds or is influenced by the culture's gender structure, like the family structures and/or the state. Therefore, the religious structure and the gender structure work together to form and define a culture, creating the defining structures of equality and uniformity.

Research objectives

- 1) How Religion limited the participation of women in Political institution and social institution?
- 2) How far Religion supported Men's participation in social institutions as well as political institution?
- 3) How religion defines role of women with comparison to Men?

- 4) How the daily life and habits are influenced by religion. “How and under what conditions different roles and functions been defined for each sex; how the very meanings of the categories ‘man’ and ‘woman’ varied according to time and place?

Gender is the range of characteristics pertaining to, and differentiating between, masculinity and femininity. Depending on the context, these characteristics may include biological sex (i.e., the state of being male, female, or an intersex variation), sex-based social structures (i.e., gender roles), or gender identity. Most cultures use a gender binary, having two genders (boys/men and girls/women); those who exist outside these groups fall under the umbrella term *non-binary* or *genderqueer*. Some societies have specific genders besides "man" and "woman", such as the hijras of South Asia; these are often referred to as *third genders* (and *fourth genders*, etc.).

Sexologist John Money introduced the terminological distinction between biological sex and gender as a role in 1955. Before his work, it was uncommon to use the word *gender* to refer to anything but grammatical categories. However, Money's meaning of the word did not become widespread until the 1970s, when feminist theory embraced the concept of a distinction between biological sex and the social construct of gender. The social sciences sometimes approach gender as a social construct, and gender studies particularly do, while research in the natural sciences investigates whether biological differences in males and females influence the development of gender in humans; both inform debate about how far biological differences influence the formation of gender identity. In some English literature, there is also a trichotomy between biological sex, psychological gender, and social gender role. Gender based discriminations are rampant and the socio-culturally defined characteristics, aptitudes, abilities, desires, personality traits, roles, responsibilities and behavioural patterns of men and women contribute to the inequalities and hierarchies in society. Gender differences are man-made and they get legitimized in a patriarchal society. The difference is constructed historically and has legitimized by several ideologies, social practices and institutions such as family, religion, caste, education, media, law, state and society. "Male" and "female" are sex categories, while "masculine" and "feminine" are gender role.

Background: The attitude of women towards religion as well as women's role in various religious teachings and institutions has been the focus of scholarly studies since the 1960s and the 1970s and arose with the development of gender studies and the emergence of

concepts like androcentrism and gynocentrism - the privileging of the human male, or female, respectively.

As the body of literature dedicated to women and religion grows, several main approaches to exploring the matter have been distinguished. The first is studying of women's religious lives and their role in religious movements. Scholars exploring these problems have argued against androcentrism that has dominated theological accounts of the lives of important religious figures. Women's studies, instead, sought to draw attention to the role of women in religion. A seminal publication in this field is the collection of essays *Unspoken Worlds: Women's Religious Lives* (1980).

This approach stresses that there are religious movements and sects, such as Afro-Brazilian healing cults, Japan's Ryukyu religion, and Black Carib religion, which can be defined as women's religions since their leaders and most of the adherents are female. In many cultures women are cherished for their sacral power through roles as ascetics, healers, shamans or witches. Women are often organizers and participants in rites of purification and fertility and birth. Although leadership in religion is most often associated with men, women can also take leading roles, whether as preachers in certain Christian denominations, priestesses in traditional African religion and Haitian vodou, or as Buddhist teachers or Liberal or Reform Rabbis in Judaism. There are many women gurus in modern Hinduism, such as Ananda Mayi Ma (1896-1982). Women assume special roles in some religions, like Buddhism and Christianity, which exempt them from certain conventional arrangements like childbirth or marriage.

Apart from sharing the leadership with men, women have also sought to establish new religious movements (NRMs), which aim to differentiate themselves from all traditional religions. The birth of the NRMs was in the 18th century, with the movement of the Shakers, founded by Mother Ann Lee (1736-1784). Another example is Japanese NRM Tenrikyo, founded by Nakayama Miki (1798-1887) in the 19th century. The late 20th century saw a great variety of feminist spiritualities, non-official religious movements that defied institutional structures, hierarchies and rigid forms of worship.

Mother Teresa of Calcutta (1910-1997) once said: "By blood, I am Albanian. By citizenship, an Indian. By faith, I am a Catholic nun. As to my calling, I belong to the world. As to my heart, I belong entirely to the Heart of Jesus." At the age of 18 she recalls wishing to become

a missionary and joining the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In 1946, Mother Teresa established a religious community in Calcutta where she helped poor families. She received numerous awards for her work, including the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979. In 2003, Pope John Paul II beatified Mother Teresa in recognition of her spiritual and charitable work.

Another main approach to studying women and religion focuses on the reconstruction of female symbols from religious texts, their analysis and interpretation. The proponents of this approach have shown considerable interest in the study of divine female figures like bodhisattvas in Buddhism, goddesses in Hinduism goddesses and celestials in Daoism. An example is the concept of heterosexuality, defended by major religions but challenged by theories developed by gay, lesbian and feminist theologians. LGBT studies have explored the relation between religion and sexuality. These studies, influenced by the work of French philosopher Michel Foucault (1926-1984), deal primarily with race and gender.

A third approach in studying the place of women in religion has sought to offer a more various and contextualized perspective on every problem. Thus, the wearing of hijab (veil) in Islam can be interpreted in different ways by non-Muslims, who see this as a sign of religious oppression, and as a traditional custom by Muslim women who prefer to wear the veil. This approach has emerged to a large extent as critique of the dominating tradition of religious studies, led by scholars like Mircea Eliade (1907-1986). Women's studies in religion have criticized the traditional approach for being too rigid and abstract. An example is the *mujerista* theology of Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz (b.1943), who coined the term to express the combination of religious beliefs and suffering from poverty and racism of Latin American women in the United States. Feminists argue that gender is an ideology because a. It naturalizes what is a social performance (the women's role) b. It naturalizes inequality between the sexes by proposing that the biological differences are the determining factors rather than economic, social or educational ones. c. It reinforces the difference in social performance (men's role, women's role) as natural, pre-ordained and unalterable.

Pandita Rama Bhai, "THE HIGH CASTE HINDU WOMEN". In order to understand the life of women, it is necessary to know the religion and social customs of the nation. Every act is done in a prescribed manner. Virtues such as truthfulness, forbearance, fortitude, purity of heart and uprightness, are common to men and women, but religion, as the word is commonly understood, has two distinct natures in the Hindu law; the masculine and the feminine. The

masculine religion has its own peculiar duties, privileges and honours. The feminine religion also has its peculiarities. “Hear now the duties of women,” says the law-giver, Manu:—“By a girl, by a young woman, or even by an aged one, nothing must be done independently, even in her own house.” “In childhood, a female must be subject to her father, in youth, to her husband, when her lord is dead, to her sons; a woman must never be independent.” This shows how religion discriminate men and women based on gender. ***Mother India*** (1927) is a **Polemical** book by American historian Katherine Mayo which attacks Indian society, religion and culture, pointed to the treatment of India's women, the untouchables animals, dirt, and the character of its nationalistic politicians. A large part of the book dealt with the problems resulting from the marriage of young girls. ***Recasting Women: Essays in Colonial History*** is a book by Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid,

The anthology attempts to explore the inter-relation of patriarchies with political economy, law, religion and culture and to suggest a different history of 'reform' movements, and of class and gender relations. Definition of gender in the context of Religion: - “gender” as referring to both “male/masculine” and “female /feminine” roles and characteristics as representative of a society’s view of the acceptable behaviour for each sex. But there is no enquiry into the origin or genealogy of these roles. 3 Differences created by Religion between Men and women

4 How Far Religion affected life of Gender in all field of life:- Division of work between men and women in prehistoric times, now how to consolidated in Gender roles.

Conclusion

Major conclusion of this research is that the chief needs of women are:—1st, Self-Reliance; To improve their condition in society. 2nd, Education: To be independent economically.

Research findings will provide evidence for the betterment of human beings in the following context. Present laws regarding Gender must not formulate as per Religion and customs .laws related to gender’s day to day life must formulate on the enlightenment and righteousness. Laws related to Marriage, property’s right, education must be same for all kind of religion. Laws institution should not considered religion into making laws regarding education, Marriage’ age and right of property. All laws should be same for all human beings irrespective of religion.

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