

Superstition, “The Cause of Malfeasance” “Women Empowerment in Context to Embark Education to Rural Women of North East India”

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Abstract: A woman is the one who have left the power of position managing to be a homemaker to top professionals. Still women are caged in the bars of inequity. Millions of women experience this trap of inequity in their home, workplace and public due to superstitions which lay in the minds of human especially the rural population as they are not exposed to education, a way to learning and practicality.

Women are the one who still can't have it all. Tint of education do not rule when the question come to luck, prophecy and spiritual being. This study is an attempt to prioritise the taste of education for their upliftment in the society and focus on the dark part of the shabbiness taken place causing to silent death of women and it attempts to fire out the pursuit of justice and create a healthy and divine atmosphere for women to live in.

The data collected are based on both primary and secondary methods of data collection. The primary data is been gathered by the means of interview, telephonic communication, observation and online questionnaire distributed in Orissa, Kolkata, Shillong, Agartala, Silchar and Guwahati city. The secondary data is been collected via internet, magazines and journals. The study further attempts to put forward suggestions in the empowerment of women up marking the respect of women free from superstition.

Keywords: Education, Human Behaviour, Justice, Malfeasance and Superstition.

1. INTRODUCTION

Humans are the most challengeable part of learning as they are dressed by incredible behaviour. Therefore perspective and ideologies matter from person to person. Attempts to satisfy certain needs by the thought processes that rule them is usually termed as human behaviour. These needs may be simple to understand and easy to identify, such as the need for food and water. They also may be complex, such as the need for respect and acceptance ¹. Psychology is the scientific study of human and animal behaviour with the object of understanding why living beings behave as they do. People often confound psychology with psychiatry, which is a branch of medicine dedicated to the cure of mental disorders ². But knowing human behaviour and observing the actions and reaction for reasoning theories as well as practical application for solving research queries related to human behaviour is not psychiatry. Some topics that 'pure' psychologists may study are the behavioural changes with development, when behaviour is instinctive or learned, how

persons differ, and get into trouble ².

When really strange things happen that cannot be explained, people will believe anything to find an answer. For Macbeth in the Shakespeare play Macbeth, he begins to believe everything that the witches say because of their first prediction. It makes him insane and relies on the witches to know how to act. All throughout the play Macbeth listens to the witches and his behaviour is affected by superstition ³.

The superstitious beliefs are those which have been demonstrated to be at variance with the objective facts, are likely to be shared among many members of a society. Few studies which have been conducted in India have reported the prevalence of superstitious beliefs ⁴. Superstition is the fear of what is unknown and mysterious. It is the belief that certain events bring good or bad luck which cannot be explained by reason or science. In short, superstition means blind belief. Superstition is a worldwide phenomenon. People in every country believe in one or the other superstition. Superstitions have come down to us from ancient times ⁵.

Superstition is propagated by lack of education, communication and social support. Education is enlightenment. It brightens up your mind and heart and does not put anyone in fear. But the places affected by the lack of education are high in rural areas, and rural people especially women fall prey in the hands of such blind belief. Such hindrance affects the communication to reach women and social injustice proves a pedestal which dominates the logical reasoning and is suppressed by the evil signs of superstition.

Malfeasance is an act of outright sabotage in which one party to the contract commits an act which causes intentional damage. Women have been treated as second rate citizens of all across the globe. The situation is almost the same everywhere-irrespective of the developed country or the developing country-caste, community, colour or creed a position which is comparable in many ways, with that of racial minorities. Women have been relegated to secondary position despite the fact that they numerically constitute about half the world population today.

This situation has caused immense loss to their self-dignity as human beings and also their independent entities, associated with men, apart from other matter, in context with intellectual and professional capability.

This study is an attempt to look forward to how empowerment plays its part in the eradication of superstition from the minds of the women in rural area of north eastern region of India as well as boost up the nation uplifting the women prior to dominance from such malfeasance.

2. OBJECTIVES

A study is been conducted and the objectives are

- To study the cause of superstition among rural women.
- To study the effect of malfeasance due to superstition in rural women.
- To study the consequence of empowerment in eradication of injustice.

3. METHODOLOGY

The methodologies obtained in collection of the data here are based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data is been collected from the nearby area of Kolkata, Shillong, Agartala, Orissa, Silchar and Guwahati City. The methods implemented for collecting primary data were observation, telephonic communication, interview and distribution of electronic questionnaire in the cities mentioned. Secondary data is based on journals, magazines, newspapers and web.

4. FINDINGS

In the view of the first objective, the cause of superstition among the rural women includes:

- Fear of death and being disowned by the community as regarded by 80% of the respondent as the cause of superstitious belief.
- Working as per religious terms and belief is been regarded as 78% of the respondents as the superstition being followed.
- Culture and caste based customs are the obligation to believe in superstition is regarded by 67% of the respondents.
- Lucky experiences is been regarded by 52% of the respondents for believing and cause of implementing superstition for ages.
- Television and lack of knowledge is the cause of superstition and is been regarded by 38% of the respondents for the prevalence of superstition.

Effects can be positive and negative. But in case of superstition most of the effects are negative. The attributes of the second objective giving the negative effect of superstition prevalence among the women of rural areas include:

- Health and nutritional imbalance on the women as regarded by 90% of the respondents as the effect of superstition.
- Mental disorder as regarded by 88% of the respondents as the consequence of superstition.
- Suicidal attempts as regarded by 80% of the respondents as the ultimate loss due to the effect of superstition.
- Loss of concentration in work and family as regarded by 68% of the respondents the effect of superstition.
- Hampering the development of individuals personality is been regarded by 62% of the respondent as the effect of superstition.
- Harm in socio economic condition is been regarded as by 45% of the respondents as the consequence of superstition.
- Crime is one harmful and dangerous effect of superstitious belief among the rural women as regarded by 30% of the respondents.

- Sexual harassment is being regarded by 28% of the total respondent as a cause of injustice due to superstition.

Education being the help and guide to all blind and misunderstood situations helps in the eradication of superstition also. The attributes helpful in eradication of superstitions by education includes:

- Overcoming of the fear as regarded by 90% of the respondents as the help in dispelling superstition by education.
- Logical thinking is being regarded by 88% of the respondents as the view of elimination of superstition.
- Reasoning of ill effects is regarded by 75% of the respondents as the help of education in removal of superstitious acts.
- Developing the importance of the role of women as regarded by 68% of the respondents as the role of education in elimination of superstition.
- Employment acceptance is being regarded by 62% of the respondents as the educational benefit in eliminating superstitions
- Economic benefit and literary rise of nation is being regarded by 50% of the respondents as the role of education in eliminating superstitions through education.
- Peace and harmony in familial unrest as regarded by 44% of the respondent as the elimination of superstition by education.
- Social upliftment of the nation is regarded by 32% of the respondent as the role of education in removing the dark phase of superstition from the state as well as nation.

5. ANALYSIS

In the very beginning of civilization, women enjoyed a respectable position in society-at par with men. Gradually, they became dependent on men for food, protection for their other necessities. It was due to the strong built-up of men they risked their lives in course of hunting and food collection. It is really ironical that superiority is not accorded to the fair sex who are responsible for carrying forward lives on this planet but to men who have muscle power with the help of which they can subjugate others.

Superstitions naturally stem from the way our brain works. Human beings have an inclination to infer the cause behind every event. However, errors in identifying the causes of events are inevitable. Such errors in turn lead to superstitions ⁶. Fear would be the underlying factor. A scared person usually scares others around him and gullible people swallow trash easily. Culture has skeletons of superstition in closets and people who are ignorant would believe in that. Fear of the unknown, darkness, difficult people etc. would be the underlying factor of superstitions. Lies would certainly be another. We are what we choose to be and believe in.

Religion may cause some people to believe things that non-religious people think are ridiculous. Occasionally, everybody turns superstitious even though they think they're not. Personal accidents may make people superstitious. Some phobias can help create

more superstitions. But although stories told from natives have made up more than half of the superstitions people are scared of today.

Each culture has different stories that are passed on through generations. Some of these may cause fear and fear causes superstition. So culture-fear-superstition, in that order is the main cause of superstitious belief. For the women who can afford a television gets affected by the idiot box and finally falls prey of superstition. Living up to such beliefs may at times result satisfactory and lucky experiences. This further adds to the cause of superstition.

Superstitions have come down to us from ancient times. Primitive people were ignorant about the wonders of science. They were at the mercy of natural elements. They did not understand the causes of physical changes taking place around them. They respected and worshipped the force of nature like the sun, the moon, fire, wind, water, storms, etc. They believed that diseases were caused by the wrath of gods as well as evil spirits. Sacrifice of birds and animals to please the gods and goddesses and to atone for one's sins in a common practice. Thus, it is fear which gave rise to superstition and its evil and ill effects⁷. Health and nutritional imbalances, mental disorder and suicidal attempts are the most ill effects of the blind belief.

Lack of knowledge result the loss of concentration at work due to the effects of superstition and also hampers the development of an individual's personality. This is because the women are dominated by the ever implemented blind belief and thus results living under one of with no employment as well as recognition. This has a negative impact on the socio economy of the state as well as the nation.

Sexual harassment has been described as including such unwelcome sexually determined behaviour such as physical contact and advances, demand or request for sexual favours, sexually collared remarks, and any other unwelcome physical, verbal or nonverbal conduct of sexual nature⁸.

Education thus plays as the helper to the rural women imparting valuable knowledge by reasoning the superstitious and binging the awareness and ill effects on their population. It helps provide logical thinking as well as better understanding of the ongoing situation.

Education can never eradicate superstitions relating to death. Nobody knows how to stop death from claiming all of us. Nobody knows how to predict the time of death accurately for everyone of us⁵. But one can get the strength to face the fact of death and live life free of fear for superstitions death cause.

6. SUGGESTION

Education can make people less superstitious. At least educated people are more likely to send the sick to the hospital, than to call priests to cast out demons in order to cure the sick. Education provides an understanding of the diseases, the cause and the cure of the diseases⁵. Schooling in remote areas, recognition projects through handicraft and other agricultural work must be generated. Consultancies for the rights of women must

be empowered. Benefits of health and nutrition, importance of their living, mortality and birth of girl child must be entrusted upon. . The prohibition of sexual harassment should be notified published and circulated in appropriate ways. The rules and regulations of government or public sector bodies should included rules prohibiting sexual harassment and provide for appropriate penalties.

7. CONCLUSION

Today is the era of Information Communication Technology. Various tools are used to educate and inform the rural people. For generations, rural people have been living in complete isolation without much access to modern media of communication. The development of a society largely depends on the access to information. Even though we live in the modern era, today, in the rural areas, women are suffering from various problems such as less accessibility to modern information sources.

Superstitions, when shared by a large part of a community, can provide another evolutionary benefit. They may play the role of social glue and bind a community together. Therefore, even when superstitions are nonsensical in themselves, they can play important role by persuading a community to toe the line, hence promoting cohesion⁶. History of humankind gives an account of how many superstitions have prevailed and caused misery to human beings in the past. Even in this age, numerous superstitions continue in human society. Thus, many superstitions rule the minds of our people poison the minds of our people fatally and suppress the basic instinct to think and act. They implant an ideology of slavish servility and paralyse the will and mind⁷. Thus educating and imparting knowledge will be a great help not only to build the self being but raise the socio economic condition of the society as well as the nation.

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