



## STATUS OF WORKING WOMEN IN MARKET AND FAMILY : A REVIEW

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*In India, we have differences in class, caste and community. Therefore, here we have immense complexities and heterogeneities which can be unbridgeable. So several conflicts and contradiction are prevailing within Indian societal structure. Therefore, to understand such conflicts in details, we have to examine the relationship among the different processes that exist within society and obviously dynamic in nature. Among such processes we have economical, gender, political, legal, cultural and so on other processes.*

*Family is the primary institution of society that helps to socialize an individual within society. That is why; one need to make a detail study on the liaison between family and society in order to reach our destiny- i.e.; the position of women within our society.*

*Key words: Society, Social Change, over-determination.*

### **Introduction**

Family is a web of relationships between the members of family. Its activities of production, reproduction and providing residence in an atmosphere of emotional and affectionate care that cannot be fulfilled by any other institution (Desai and Thakkar, 2009). However, family is such a site where security, care, consensus, tension and conflict all co-exist. The family can be formed by various combinations of relationships. Census authority uses household as residential unit in which members generally live, cook and dine together, rear the young and/or care for the old (Desai and Thakkar, 2009). Notwithstanding, family is a relationship which has been assigned a pattern of expected behavior amongst the members both by social cultural tradition and law in spite of remaining a residential unit as household. Therefore, family is an agency for socialization of members to accept and transmit the values and the ideology of the descent system.

Like the family, market is such an institution of society whose relevance in the daily life of an individual cannot be ignored. Though family is an important site of society – particularly the private domain of the society, the significance of market in a modern society cannot be ignored. Both family and market shape one's life. They determine how an individual behave, learn, work and communicate. In the recent time when world is becoming more and more integrated, the relevance of such institutions of a society is also altering. Rather, this relevance of family and market are quite complementary in nature on life of each male and female member of society in an overdetermined manner.

The objective of this paper is also to explore the overdetermined significance of family and market on women's life.

### **Liaison between Society and Family:**

Society is a web of social relationships and family is the fundamental and primary unit of

society. Society can never remain static site. It undergoes constant variation. This social change is used to describe variations of any aspect of social processes, social patterns, social interactions or social organization. Whenever one finds that a large number of persons are engaged in activities that differ from those which their immediate forefathers were engaged in some time before, one finds a social change (MacIver and Page, 1949). This apparent alteration in the mutual behaviour between individual commence from family. Hence change in society has a strong influence on the outlook of family.

The various aspect of social life is being continually transformed due to the effect of social change. The form of family, marriage, state, religion, culture, education system, and economic and social structures is continually changing and transforming, as a result of which, a change occurs in the life of the individual and subsequently in his relation with others (Sharma ,1989). As we have already mentioned that family is the primary unit of society through which society can exert its control on individuals, the result of social change can be well understood and realized by studying the history of the objectives, structure, forms, importance and function, etc of the family from the early past to the present day.

Basically within the family we have some members who are female and remaining are males. Over the centuries, sexual difference has been interpreted variously. Since men and women possess different genitalia, it was assumed that they are different in all other respect as well. In reality, two sexes become two world that are mutually exclusive. Therefore, we have to agree that since women and men are so dissimilar and possess perfectly opposite qualities ( i.e.; man are more powerful than woman, or that women are naturally kinder than men), there are only two options available: either men and women have to learn to see themselves as a complementary pair; or they have to accept that a war of the sexes is inevitable(Geetha, 2012). Idea of complementary assures women's role as homemaker and keeper of reproductive tasks whereas men's role in the world outside the home- in the market. Such notion discredits the arguments for women's equal rights. The other idea i.e.; the idea of war has a different resonance. This idea claims that men are inherently dominating, brutish and desire to control and subdue women. Therefore women must build a world that is free and independent of men (Geetha, 2012). However, of sexual differences are complex and varied. Masculine and feminine modes of behaviour are relevant in as far as they reflect social expectations. Men and women enact different roles, because societies where we live in expect them to act in the ways and reward them if they do, punishes them if they do not. Ideas of masculine and feminine virtue are not fiction. They are real and affects human's life in very fundamental ways. Human beings do not merely react to strictures; they also respond, invent and subvert rules. Historical explanations of masculinity and femininity are diverse. Their meanings and significance are myriad, dependent on time and place, influenced by social change. Societal thought and action construct the meanings and significance of gender ideology. That is why our prime objective to observe how the effect of social change affect the differences in gender attitude within the family.

Engel's theory of gender has several criticisms. Engel believes that reproductive tasks are something pure and simple outgrowth of Nature and subordination of women will

end only when women enter into social production. Mitchell (1971) argues in her essays, 'Women: The Long Revolution' that sphere of reproduction may change – not merely due to changes in production, but in response to change in its own inner logic. Accepting the theoretical viability of the broad Marxist framework some critics argue that in the literal sense Nature intended women to be mother, but reproductive task that are cooking, cleaning, furnishing, caring, educating children and overall maintaining family are more than the physical act of giving birth (Geetha, 2012). Apart from that not only men, women shared the production tasks with men in the past as well as in the present. Actually studies showed that reproduction itself is a heterogeneous category and its formation varies along the different societies and communities. Sexual division of labour is somehow historical not the natural. Therefore description and interpretations of the evolution of the condition of women offered by women are richly suggestive but not universally acceptable. History proves decisive, for different cultures weighted reproduction differently.

Continuing this analysis how changes in society and family affects women's place in society, we must recall the work of Lerner (1986). Lerner tries to judge Engel's formulation about women's liberation in the light of evidence from ancient societies in her book 'The Creation of Patriarchy'. She also provided the insights of theory of patriarchy-a rule of father. She accounts that men's appropriation of women's sexual and reproductive capacity responsible for subordination of women in society. Such type of appropriation created the basis for the control of their offspring as well as the private property. Later as grain agriculture spread and kingdoms came to be established, law and legal strictures were invented to perpetuate the patriarchal family system. As men wielded over the mode of production, women could only get what they desired through the sexual ties they had with men. She also shows that women continued to be venerated and worshipped for their creative and fertile power. Still they failed to transcend their sexually and economically disadvantaged situation as patriarchal system systemically excluded them from education and to different sorts of knowledge. Her study has proved influential, for it was one of the first to link historical information with theoretical arguments.

Individuals have to adopt themselves to society. Individual's adaptation to social environment is called social adaptation (Sharma, 1989). In this way, a woman on going to a new society adapts herself to it because she wants to concur and to adjust within society. She has to suffer derision and sarcasm if she strikes a note of discord. On joining a new society, women not only acquire the various habits, they also adapt new values and obey new conducts. However, for social adaptation, there are every possibility that individual's wish does have some influence on the former. So, woman is not only influenced by society but she too in her turn influence and affects it. Now here the terms like 'domination', 'oppression' appear. Women may not influence and affect society and be an adaptor in several times. From the above said discussions we can get the status of women in family as well as in society.

Women today live a virtually infinite array of contradiction both inside and outside family. It is traditionally assumed that God or nature created women to remain within the periphery

of family because they are unfit physically and psychologically for the outside world and must be protected from unsuitable outer-world. Surprisingly, being intellectually and morally inferior to male, women are given the exclusive role of moral and intellectual guides for you people as mother and teacher (Fraad et al.2009). Apart from that, family is putting double or triple work burden (housework and child care in addition to outdoor employment) on such 'weak' shoulder. Blumenstein and Schwartch (1983) have shown that even an unemployed husband does less housework than the wife who is working a 40-hour week outside the home.

We have observed that society is not a static object and family be a primary unit of society also subject to change. Traditionally family performs several functions. It performs economic function, social function, religious and cultural function and provides recreation for its members. In the modern age the function of the family are changing because several agencies are now taking over its function

#### **Changes in the Function of Family:**

Previously family was the centre of economic activities. Agriculture was the primary occupation which was pursued jointly by the entire family. The work is divided among the member of the family. The male members generally do the outdoor work while female member generally take care of domestic chores. All people work co-operatively. The family makes the arrangements for an income in an effort to fulfill the needs of the family member. Family also possesses property and looks after this and in case such a contingency arises it also equitably distributes it among the members.

In the modern age of explosive population, many of the economic function which was previously better performed by the family are now being performed by factories, market, government aid and other association. With growing pressure of population on arable land, agriculture is no longer being rather failed to be the basic livelihood of the family. Member of the family have compelled to join the marketing activities which are no longer be a home based occupation. Women who previously receive income security from family are now compelled to join the market to earn income. So many of the functions that were previously performed by women, have been taken over by other agencies like hospital, baby clinics, crèches, baby sitters, hotel and restaurant,etc.

The modern family is no longer a permanent association. It can be rendered void at any time. The most difficult problem within the household is the lack of mutual adjustment among the member of the family. Women now participate into the outdoor marketing activities and into the public sphere jobs. Causes behind this participation may be many. Some cases they have compelled to participate and in some cases they have joined to be enlightened and empowered themselves. There may be such a possibility that after adopting the outdoor job in order to save the family and her from economic insecurity/crisis, they became no longer be an adaptor but also be empowered and enlightened. Such types of women have raised their voices to gain the equal rights. But in lot of cases male have not yet adjusted themselves to this situation. Previously women were confined within the household periphery and family stability survived despite the husband's dictatorship. But,

in this changed circumstances, husband have not yet adjusted themselves to this situation. Women who are neither the always privileged nor powerful are facing a distress condition both in market and within the household also. Returning exhausted from their work, does the family show the warm welcome for her in her 'sweet' home (!), or she is being blamed for not giving enough energy and time to attend her family member? Being educated, women earn as much as their husband or at least possess the capacity to do so. These, women now demand same fidelity which their men demand of them. When, the men do not want to have women on an equal footing with themselves, the result is a struggle due to which the family tends to become disorganized.

It is sometime argued that the modern family is based no longer on the relationship of domination but co-operation. If it be, then the stability of the modern family must be maintained by benevolence, sympathy and co-operation. However, it is not easy to create these qualities. Social, political, economical, cultural Ideologies, that prevailing within the family and market are responsible for this situation. However, whether and to what extent all social processes influence the status of women both within family and market should be explored.

To analyze the status of women within society as a whole, we have to cover woman's laboring activities that have occurred both in family and in market also. The class position occupied within households depend upon and shape the definition of gender lived by the member of such household. Gender is also a set of processes that are cultural or ideological processes (Barrett 1980). They involve the production and distribution of meanings which are attached to primary and secondary sex characteristics. As these gender processes are cultural and ideological, therefore, these processes have left deep impression within mind of member of family. Dhar and Dasgupta (2012) proposed a shift from 'gender' to 'sex-gender processes' that could be oppressive for woman and the girl child ( or for the boy child or even for man in some particular instances). They further conceptualized 'sex gender processes' as oppressive (where there is a objectification of women, where there is exchange of women and where there is an appropriation of women's labour) and non-oppressive. A particular sex gender process determines the place of women within the surplus labour focused class processes that exist within the family. Here we use the family instead of household. It is already discussed the functions of family where it is shown that great bondage of affection that prevails within the family are very much linked with culture and ideology. A member of a family who stay outside of the household may also exerts deep impact or power in the making of crucial decision of family. Therefore, we thing to capture the nature of sex-gender process it is better to use the broader term 'family' than 'household'. So, gender exists in the realm of ideology of family. It determines the relationship among the member of the family. Member of the family bear the responsibilities to produce, distribute and receive of such ideologies.

Gender(ing) and labour(ing) feed into one another, producing overdetermined effects-affects. Gender oppression and exploitation of labour are thus constitutive of one another. They are interlinked in an inalienable way, separation cannot give the totality.

A society produces multiple gender processes. Individual are pushed and pulled by the contradictory definitions of identities and proper lifestyles that are projected by alternative gender processes (Fradd et al.1994). Political, legal, economical, religion and cultural processes combine to form different gender processes projecting different conceptions of male and female within society.

Class processes exist both inside and outside (that is market here) the family. However, concepts of gender are basically determined within the family. Because, family is the primary unit through which Society can exert and control its culture, ethnic and religion and these factors determine the shape of gender processes. Now the class processes that exist within market influence the class processes as well as gender processes within family also. Similarly, how the individuals participate in the production, appropriation and distribution of surplus labour inside the family and within market will be determined by conceptualization of gender.

Women today face several contradictions both in market and within family. In spite of being a weaker and second sex, she is now bread-winner. She is also performing surplus labour within family.

Now when a woman has stepped her feet outside the family to earn income to revive her family from economic suffering, she have to adjust her time with weekend or evening meetings, unexpected overtime, pressure of work-load and after-work socialization. Does it possible for her to produce same amount of surplus labour within family after getting exhausted from market? Not only that women are involved in such type of marketing activities which need extra time that she have to bear for such activities within family.

Further, surplus labour performed by women in feudal family is determined by the access to property. Propertylessness may push them into feudal family. Women face discrimination in markets or societal institutions that prevents them from completing their education, entering certain occupations and earning the same income as men-economic losses are result. When women farmers lack security of land tenure, the result is lower access to credit and to inefficient land use, reducing yields. The direct payoff to correcting this failure, many rooted into the markets and institutions function, is large. The, Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) estimates that equalizing access to productive resources between female and male farmers could increase agricultural outputs in developing countries by as much as 2.5 to 4 per cent (FAO IFAD and ILO 2010). If laws and economic condition help women to hold property, then this effort becomes conducive to reduce and/or eliminate exploitative and oppressive surroundings for women. This is by no means that political process of ownership itself undermines feudal family. Whether and to what extent it does so depend on all other processes that produce such family. So it becomes unjust to measure gender equality as equality of opportunities. By attempting to equalize outcomes one can break the vicious circle of low aspirations and low opportunities (Sen 1999; Booth and Nolen 2009; Croson and Gneezy 2009;; World Bank 2011 as cited in World Development Report 2012). It is difficult to measure opportunities separately from outcomes. Rather they are interlinked tightly.

### **Status of Working Women in Market and in Family**

The traditional family performed a variety of functions, which may be subsumed as economic, protective, educational, religious, recreational, biological, affection and status giving. This multi-functional pattern no longer exists, except in an attenuated form. The changing society has shifted functions from one institution to the other and has removed first one and then another of its traditional functions from the family, until today it is in many respect a mere shadow of its former self(Madan1981). Meanwhile Market and its significance within the society has been flourishing. Modern, family cannot breathe without market. Therefore, to determine the status of women in recent time we cannot proceed without market.

Market is a variety of arrangements that allow buyers and sellers to exchange( the right over) any type of goods and services subject to a set of rules that means it is experiencing different class process which are economic in nature. Market can also be influenced and shaped by formal and informal institutions. Formal institutions consists all aspects that pertain to the functioning of state, including laws, regulatory frameworks and the mechanisms for the delivery of services that the state provides( like, judicial services, police services, basic infrastructure, health and education).The repeated experience of performing gender roles affects widely shared beliefs about men's and women's attributes and one's own sense of identity( Agarwal 1994,1997; Fehr Ficshbacher and Gatcher 2002; Kabeer 1999; Sen 1990 as cited in World Development Report 2012). Existing political, sex-gender and cultural processes can affect the bargaining power of an individual in both in market and repeated practices of this power can also strengthen the other social processes.

There is no doubt that women's life has changed over the past decade. Previously, women were very behind. They used to be only at home doing household work. But now they are in market, they are in politics. They do not depend a lot on men as it used to be. They have some cash for themselves and this assists them in being free from men and to some extent controlling their lives. In all, 136 countries now have explicit guarantees for the equality of all citizens and non-discrimination between men and women in their constitutions. Despite, these positive changes, they now faces many challenges in their daily lives. However, it has not come evenly to all women or across all dimension of gender equality. The gender inequality that persists in market and within family does matter the development process of society. The World Development Report (2012) argues that there are two reasons behind this. First, gender equality matters intrinsically, because the ability to live the life of one's own choosing and be spared from absolute deprivation is a basic human right and should be equal for every one independent of whether one is male or female. Second, gender equality matters instrumentally, because greater gender equality contributes to economic efficiency and the achievement of other key development outcomes.

Statistics represents that so called gender gaps have been reducing in the market slowly. Outlook towards working women has been definitely changing. Consideration of gender equality issue in world Development Report surely indicates that change in attitude, perception, expectations and social norm that associated with the behavior of women.

### **Categorization of Women in the Light of Over-deterministic Approach.**

In reality, when a woman have participated in the market she will face variety combination of social processes both in market and within family. To understand the increasing feminization of labour, coverage of both market based outdoor jobs and sphere of private family sphere is essential.

Conclusion : Analysing the status of women the study emphasised on the substantive question on womens' subordination and on the factors that determines their cocrcion our study conclude that :

- 1) Woman may face exploitative class processes both in market and within family. Simultaneously, she is facing oppressive political processes, non-cooperative gender and cultural processes in both market and within family. Here the women may compel to join the market to earn income and secure family from economic suffering, but family extract the entire surplus labour from her through capture her earned income in the market as well as produced use-value within the family. Woman under such circumstances could not be able to enhance its perception and may caught in productivity trap that is working hard on an uneven playing field with unequal access to productive inputs. Differences in access to inputs may be further compounded by differences in the availability of 'market' time which can make same investment less productive for women. Here, women unable to convey their ability to lead. Different responsibilities for family work means that women lack the flexibilities or time to invest on their marketing activities as well as on political participation , such that they can enhance their productivity, perception and voices . The lack of voices makes it more difficult to ascend their position both in market and family. This trap imposes significant cost on women's living standard and economic opportunities.
- 2) Family has financial need. Women have joined market to earn income in order to protect family from economic suffering. Family is following co-operative gender processes. Under such circumstances, even if the women face exploitative class processes in the market, she can spend time to enhance her productivity, perception and voice so that she performs competently in market.
- 3 ) it is generally argued that owning income substantially enhance women's voice and agency in the family. But if the gender processes stressing the propriety of women being mother and obedient wives , then women may perform more feudal surplus labour without imagining the possibility of using their power and agency to resist their family decision. If the women are unwilling to change the non-co-operative gender processes and dedicated themselves to produce more surplus labour for feudal family, then they may be categorized as silent adaptor.
- 4) There may be such circumstance, where the family is in financial crisis. Co-operative gender processes is running within family. No pressure on women to do domestic chores. But family capture her earning and she has no control over her earning .women are here silent adaptor, not empowered.
- 5) Family has no need for female member's income. Non-cooperative gender processes



demands that women must produce surplus labour for family and does not allow woman to join market even she is willing to join. Political conservatism, gender processes resisting changes in the conception of woman, economic processes consigning women to produce surplus labour-all these social processes make the woman non-empowered.

6) Among the house wives, we may have some women who are facing co-operative gender process and also facing communitic class process. Apart from that we may also have some women who perform domestic chores without any help but have sole control over her produced used value. These economically dependent women are empowered women where no n-oppressive cultural and political processes ensure her such environment. Family have no need for female member's income. Cooperative gender processes demands that both men and women perform domestic chores equitably. Women can freely participate market. Here women able to convey their ability to lead. Her control over her earning helps her having more voices over family decision. She is empowered women.

7) There may be such family which does not need female income but looking for her active participation in market to raise family status. Woman is unwilling to join the market. In spite of having co-operative gender processes, woman is non-empowered as she lacking behind to take her own decision about her life.

8) Women may also involve in their family business that creates exchange value. Under such situation we may have some women who are empowered by facing co-operative gender process, non-oppressive cultural and political process. Under such situation some women may be adaptor and not empowered due to presence of non-cooperative gender, oppressive cultural and political processes.

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